

INKLUSI INTEGRATION OF SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LEARNING IN A HAPPY SCHOOL: A CASE STUDY OF AN INCLUSION CLASS

***Umi Nadhiroh, Indana Zulfa Majidah, Muhammad Mukhlis Roziqi, Anas Ahmadi, dan Agus Harminto**

Universitas Negeri Surabaya

✉ umin0397@gmail.com

Abstract

This study examines the integration of Social Emotional Learning (SEL) in the inclusive education program at SMP Negeri 40 Surabaya. The research aims to integrate social-emotional learning within the school well-being framework and to understand how the inclusive classrooms at SMP Negeri 40 Surabaya incorporate social-emotional learning into inclusive education. This research uses a qualitative case study method to apply SEL to support inclusive student interaction and emotional well-being. The study results indicate that SMP Negeri 40 Surabaya has made significant strides toward creating an inclusive and supportive learning environment by implementing an accommodating curriculum, support from special assistant teachers, and an adaptive assessment system. Although challenges such as resource needs and teacher training remain, integrating SEL has positively impacted the inclusive learning environment. This study emphasizes the importance of sustained commitment to resource development and training to optimize SEL in inclusive education.

Keywords

Social Emotional Learning (SEL); Inclusive Education; School Well-Being.

Introduction

Introduce the Problem

In the era of globalization and increasingly fierce competition, investment in education is becoming increasingly important for every country. In inclusive education, every student has the same right to receive quality education, and the integration of social-emotional learning plays an important role. Happy schools or school well-being is relevant in creating an inclusive learning environment and empowering students to face everyday challenges. Education is critical in improving a person's quality of life (Smith, 2015). One essential aspect of education is social-emotional learning. Social-emotional learning aims to provide understanding, appreciation, and the ability to manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, and improve students' social and emotional abilities (Jones & Kahn, 2017). In the context of inclusive education, social-emotional learning is essential to improve the ability of inclusive students to interact with regular students and face various challenges in everyday life (Williams, 2019).

A conducive learning environment is vital in providing a meaningful educational experience for every student, especially in the context of inclusive education. Happy school or school well-being is a very relevant concept in inclusive education. This concept focuses on creating a positive, safe, and enjoyable learning atmosphere for students and increasing students' ability to face various challenges in everyday life (Anderson & Graham, 2018). In the context of inclusive education, happy schools are fundamental to improving the ability of inclusive students to interact with regular students and to face various challenges faced in everyday life (Thompson et al., 2020).

The inclusion class at SMP Negeri 40 Surabaya is an example of implementing inclusive education, which is very relevant in social-emotional education. In this class, inclusive students receive not only academic education but also social-emotional education, which is very important to improve their ability to interact with regular students and face various challenges in everyday life (Martin & Thompson, 2016).

This article will discuss how the inclusion class at SMP Negeri 40 Surabaya integrates social-emotional learning in inclusive education. Discussions will be held about how the curriculum, assessment system, and resources provided by schools can improve the ability of inclusive students to interact with regular students and face various challenges in everyday life (Brown & Green, 2014; Larson & Silverman, 2015). In addition, it will discuss how vital roles are played by teachers who teach inclusive students, such as Special Assistant Teachers (GPK), in improving the ability of inclusive students to interact with regular students and face various challenges in everyday life (Peterson, 2018; Davis, 2020).

Based on this description, this article aims to discuss how inclusion classes at SMP Negeri 40 Surabaya integrate social-emotional learning in inclusive education, as well as how teachers and schools can improve the ability of inclusive students to interact with regular students and face various challenges faced in everyday life. -day (Kim & Axelrod, 2021).

Theoretical Basis

Social Emotional Learning (SEL)

Social-emotional learning (SEL) is an educational approach emphasizing the importance of developing students' social and emotional skills as an integral part of the learning process. According to the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL), SEL helps students develop essential competencies that support academic success, mental health, and long-term well-being (Durlak et al., 2011).

1. Self-Awareness

Self-awareness refers to a person's ability to recognize their emotions, strengths, weaknesses, values, and beliefs. This competency also involves understanding how these factors influence behavior (Elias et al., 1997; Schonert-Reichl, 2017). Research conducted by Suryani (2018) shows that self-awareness can increase students' learning motivation and reduce academic anxiety.

2. Self-Management

Self-management regulates emotions, behavior, and thoughts in various situations, including pressure or challenges. These include self-regulation, impulse control, and self-motivation (Zimmerman, 2000; Bandura, 1991). Hasanah and Akbar (2018) noted that good self-management can facilitate more positive student social interactions.

3. Social Awareness

Social awareness relates to the ability to understand and respond effectively to the needs and feelings of others. This includes empathy, appreciation for diversity, and recognition of social norms for behavior in a society or group (Jones & Bouffard, 2012; Goleman, 1995). According to Raharjo and Setiawan (2020), social awareness helps students understand and manage interpersonal relationships at school.

4. Relationship Skills

Relationship skills involve the ability to form and maintain healthy and rewarding relationships. This includes effective communication, cooperation, conflict negotiation, and seeking help when needed (Asher & Rose, 1997; Welsh et al., 2001). Laksmi (2021) found that relationship skills training can significantly reduce conflict and increase cooperation among students in the classroom.

5. Responsible Decision Making

This competency involves the ability to make constructive choices about personal behavior and social interactions based on ethical norms, social safety, and the welfare of others. This includes evaluating the consequences of various actions (Eisenberg et al., 2005; Killen & Smetana, 2006). Pratiwi and Jatmiko (2020) demonstrate how a well-designed curriculum can improve character education and responsible decision-making.

Happy School (School Well-being)

The concept of a "Happy School" refers to an educational environment that focuses not only on academic achievement but also on the well-being and happiness of students. Happy schools foster a supportive atmosphere, respect individual diversity, and ensure students feel safe, valued, and actively involved in learning (Seligman et al., 2009; Waters, 2011).

1. Definition of a Happy School and its Relationship with Student Well-being

Happy schools are educational institutions that integrate practices that support students' psychological and social well-being. This approach understands that student well-being directly influences learning ability, motivation, and educational outcomes (Shoshani & Steinmetz, 2014; Kristjánsson, 2012). Research conducted by Raharjo and Setiawan (2020) shows that schools prioritizing student welfare tend to improve academic performance and social harmony among students.

2. The influence of a positive and safe environment in schools

A positive and safe environment is the key to creating a happy school. Research shows that when students feel safe and valued, they are more likely to actively engage in learning and demonstrate improved mental health (Thapa et al., 2013; Cohen et al., 2009). This supportive environment includes fair disciplinary practices, positive relationships between teachers and students, and policies that support student well-being (Blum & Libbey, 2004; Kidger et al., 2012).

3. Key Factors in Creating a Happy School

It is essential to realize that students' emotional well-being is not only an individual responsibility but also a reflection of the culture and policies established by the school. Ecclestone and Hayes (2009) emphasize that creating happy schools cannot be separated from an inclusive and supportive school culture. This involves integrating mental health and happiness into school curricula and policies, where teachers and staff are trained to recognize and support students' emotional needs (Suldo et al., 2011; Jennings & Greenberg, 2009). Research by Laksmi (2021) shows that teacher training in pedagogy sensitive to students' social-emotional aspects significantly improves the school climate.

4. Positive Impact of Happy Schools on Students

The benefits of happy schools include improved mental health, fewer disruptive behaviors, increased school attendance, and better learning outcomes (Suldo et al., 2009; Lyubomirsky et al., 2005). Furthermore, Pratiwi and Jatmiko's (2020) research shows that schools that practice happy school principles increase school satisfaction and general student happiness.

5. Implementation Strategy

Implementing happy schools involves developing policies that support student well-being, such as reducing excessive academic pressure, providing space for relaxation and creativity activities, and integrating lessons that focus on developing life and emotional skills (Seligman, 2011; Greenberg et al., 2003). Research conducted by Raharjo (2019) shows that integrating character education and SEL in the curriculum is a practical step in achieving this goal.

Thus, happy schools are a concept and an essential practice in creating an educational environment conducive to student well-being and success. Various studies reveal that a more effective and enjoyable learning environment is created when schools pay attention to student welfare.

Inclusive Education

Inclusive education is an educational approach that aims to maximize the potential of each student by integrating students with special needs into the general education system. This approach is based on the principle that every student has the right to receive quality education in a supportive environment, without discrimination (UNESCO, 1994).

1. Basic Principles of Inclusive Education

The basic principles of inclusive education are accessibility, equality, participation, and respect for diversity. Regardless of physical or intellectual abilities, every student must have equal access to quality education and equal opportunities to participate in all aspects of school life (Booth & Ainscow, 2002; Florian, 2014). Ahmadi (2011:115) states that in the perspective of humanist psychology, every individual is considered to have a uniqueness that cannot be compared. Inclusive education also recognizes the uniqueness of each individual and adapts teaching approaches to meet their needs.

2. Policy and Implementation of Inclusive Education in Indonesia

In Indonesia, inclusive education policies are regulated by the National Education System Law, which states that education is the right of all citizens. This policy aims to provide educational services that suit students' particular needs in an inclusive learning environment (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2013). Research by Mustadi (2018) shows that although challenges still exist, schools in Indonesia are increasingly paying attention to the needs of students with special needs through curriculum modifications and teaching strategies.

3. The Importance of Teacher Support in Inclusive Education

Teachers play a crucial role in the success of inclusive education. They must have the proper knowledge, skills, and attitudes to support each student's needs. Teacher training should include differentiated teaching strategies, the use of assistive technology, and practical communication approaches to suit various learning styles and abilities (Loreman et al., 2005; Sharma et al., 2009). Research by Laksmi (2021) shows that practical training can increase teacher confidence in implementing inclusive practices.

4. Adapt the Curriculum to Meet the Needs of Inclusive Students

The curriculum in inclusive schools must be flexible and adaptable to meet the needs of diverse students. This includes developing accessible teaching materials, fair assessments, and resources that support all students' learning. Curriculum adaptations must recognize individual abilities and support the success of each student (Ainscow et al., 2006; Westwood, 2011). Research by Nurdiana and Saputra (2019) shows that effective curriculum adaptation can significantly improve the learning outcomes of inclusive students.

Based on this definition, it can be concluded that inclusive education is a complex process that requires commitment from all parties in the education system. With the right policies, practical teacher training, and curriculum adaptations, schools can become supportive environments for every student, regardless of their specific needs. Implementing inclusive education enriches the learning experience of students with special needs and the school community.

Method

The research method used in this research is qualitative research with a case study approach. This research was conducted at SMP Negeri 40 Surabaya, which has implemented an inclusive education program with inclusion classes integrated with regular classes. This research aims to integrate social-emotional learning in happy schools and discover how inclusion classes at SMP Negeri 40 Surabaya integrate social-emotional learning in inclusive education.

The sample for this research was inclusive students and teachers who taught inclusion classes at SMP Negeri 40 Surabaya. This data was collected through in-depth interviews with teachers and students and direct observations in inclusion classes from February to April 2024. In-depth interviews were conducted using a list of previously prepared questions, and direct observations were carried out to obtain data about how the inclusion class was conducted. SMP Negeri 40 Surabaya integrates social-emotional learning in inclusive education.

Data analysis was carried out using qualitative analysis, namely data analysis that focuses on the meaning and interpretation of the data collected. This data analysis was carried out using data analysis techniques based on the research objectives: to integrate social-emotional learning in happy schools and find out how the inclusion class at SMP Negeri 40 Surabaya integrates social-emotional learning in inclusive education.

In this research, the researcher acts as an observer and does not interfere in learning. Researchers only act as data collectors and data analysts. This research was conducted using research ethics and applicable research standards.

Result and Discussion

To integrate Social Emotional Learning (SEL) in a happy school atmosphere, SMP Negeri 40 Surabaya has adopted an inclusive education model that provides various supporting initiatives for inclusive students. The results of interviews and observations at this school revealed several important aspects of this implementation that provide valuable insight into the effectiveness and challenges of the implemented system.

Integration of Inclusive Students into Regular Classes

The data shows that several Children with Special Needs (ABK) attend regular classes during certain hours (7 to 10 am). This integration is essential for social inclusion and academic stimulation in the broader environment. However, this transition and integration pose particular challenges, especially regarding regular students' social and emotional readiness and the supporting infrastructure. The presence of special accompanying teachers is an essential factor in supporting inclusive students while they are in regular classes.

Role and Division of Duties of Special Assistant Teachers (GPK)

SMP Negeri 40 Surabaya has two special accompanying teachers who divide teaching duties into various classes. This division ensures that inclusive students receive sufficient attention and support. These two teachers have educational backgrounds relevant to the needs of inclusive students, namely special education and psychology, which gives them particular expertise in dealing with students' various emotional and learning needs.

Curriculum and Assessment System

This school implements an "Accommodative Curriculum" designed to adapt to the individual needs of inclusive students. The assessment system is also tailored to needs, using regular report cards and narratives that provide a comprehensive picture of student progress. This shows the school's commitment to providing fair and inclusive assessments, which directly support the principles of social-emotional learning by recognizing and responding to the uniqueness of each student.

Learning Methods and Academic Support

The learning approach in this inclusive class includes classical learning, peer coaching or peer tutoring, and a group system. This method allows inclusion students to learn in various settings, increasing their social interactions and building social skills. Peer coaching, in particular, is essential in helping inclusion students develop their interpersonal skills.

Social interaction

Social interaction between inclusion and regular students is reported to be quite good, although some inclusion students still experience problems with self-confidence. This suggests that while inclusion measures have provided some success in social integration, there is still room for improvement in helping inclusion students feel more confident and accepted in the school environment.

Resources and Facilities

SMP Negeri 40 Surabaya School provides facilities such as wheelchairs and Educational Learning Equipment (APE) to support the physical needs of inclusive students. However, comments from one teacher regarding optimizing teaching with the one-teacher-per-student method indicate that human resources are still a limitation that needs to be addressed.

Evaluation of Inclusion Policies and Practices

Based on observations and interviews, it is clear that SMP Negeri 40 Surabaya has made significant progress in integrating social-emotional learning (SEL) into its curriculum. However, improvements are still needed regarding resources, teacher training, and assessment methods to optimize the potential of each student further. In addition, regular students' understanding and support for their inclusion friends needs to be further improved through more intensive social-emotional learning (SEL) awareness and training programs.

In conclusion, SMP Negeri 40 Surabaya has made great strides towards creating an inclusive and supportive learning environment. However, these findings suggest that successful social-emotional learning (SEL) integration in inclusive education requires ongoing commitment to resources, teacher training, and curriculum adaptation.

Conclusion

The conclusion of this study shows that the integration of Social Emotional Learning (SEL) in the context of inclusive education at SMP Negeri 40 Surabaya has shown positive results, illustrating the importance of implementing diverse approaches in education. SEL implementation supports inclusive students' emotional and social well-being, strengthens their relationships with their regular peers, and improves the holistic learning environment.

Although there has been significant progress, this research also highlights several challenges that need to be overcome in implementing inclusive education. This includes more significant resources, intensive teacher training, and improved supporting infrastructure for inclusive education. Therefore, recommendations for the future include increasing resource allocation, developing more comprehensive teacher training programs, and improving policies that support further integration of social-emotional learning (SEL) approaches.

By focusing on developing and implementing effective strategies, schools in Indonesia and around the world can be more effective in facilitating inclusive and supportive environments for every student. These steps will help achieve academic success and prepare students to become empathetic and productive citizens in an increasingly diverse society.

It is hoped that the research results will emphasize the importance of continued commitment from all stakeholders in education to support and expand the principles of

inclusive education. Partnerships between educational institutions, governments, and communities will be crucial in overcoming existing challenges and optimizing the potential of each student.

References

- Ahmadi, Anas. 2011. *Pembelajaran Sastra Lisan Jawa di Sekolah: Upaya Penguatan Pendidikan Karakter Dan Humanisme*. Malang: Universitas Negeri Malang.
- Ainscow, M., Booth, T., & Dyson, A. (2006). Inclusion and the standards agenda: Negotiating policy pressures in England. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*.
- Anderson, L., & Graham, A. P. (2018). School well-being: A framework for improving student outcomes. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 110(4), 567–583.
- Asher, S. R., & Rose, A. J. (1997). Promoting children's social-emotional development through research and practice. *Psychological Science in the Public Interest*.
- Bandura, A. (1991). Social cognitive theory of self-regulation. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*.
- Blum, R. W., & Libbey, H. P. (2004). School connectedness—Strengthening health and education outcomes for teenagers. *Journal of School Health*.
- Booth, T., & Ainscow, M. (2002). *Index for Inclusion: Developing learning and participation in schools*. Centre for Studies on Inclusive Education (CSIE).
- Brown, J. D., & Green, T. D. (2014). *The Essentials of Instructional Design: Connecting Fundamental Principles with Process and Practice*. Routledge.
- Cohen, J., McCabe, E. M., Michelli, N. M., & Pickeral, T. (2009). School climate: Research, policy, teacher education, and practice. *Teachers College Record*, 111(1), 180–213.
- Davis, M. (2020). Strategies for teaching inclusive classrooms. *Journal of Inclusive Education*, 24(3), 300–315.
- Durlak, J. A., Weissberg, R. P., Dymnicki, A. B., Taylor, R. D., & Schellinger, K. B. (2011). The Impact of Enhancing Students' Social and Emotional Learning: A Meta-Analysis of School-Based Universal Interventions. *Child Development*.
- Ecclestone, K., & Hayes, D. (2009). *The Dangerous Rise of Therapeutic Education*. Routledge.
- Eisenberg, N., Cumberland, A., Guthrie, I. K., Murphy, B. C., & Shepard, S. A. (2005). Age changes in prosocial responding and moral reasoning in adolescence and early adulthood. *Journal of Research on Adolescence*.
- Elias, M. J., Parker, S. J., Kash, V. M., Weissberg, R. P., & O'Brien, M. U. (1997). Social and emotional learning, moral education, and character education: a comparative analysis and a view toward convergence. *Review of Educational Research*.

- Florian, L. (2014). What counts as evidence of inclusive education? *European Journal of Special Needs Education*.
- Goleman, D. (1995). *Emotional Intelligence*. Bantam Books.
- Greenberg, M. T., Weissberg, R. P., O'Brien, M. U., Zins, J. E., Fredericks, L., Resnik, H., & Elias, M. J. (2003). Enhancing school-based prevention and youth development through coordinated social, emotional, and academic learning. *American Psychologist*.
- Hasanah, U., & Akbar, P. R. (2018). Implementasi kurikulum dalam pendidikan inklusi di sekolah menengah pertama. *Jurnal Penelitian dan Pengembangan Pendidikan*.
- Jennings, P. A., & Greenberg, M. T. (2009). The prosocial classroom: teacher social and emotional competence about student and classroom outcomes. *Review of Educational Research*.
- Jones, B., & Kahn, J. (2017). *The Power of Social and Emotional Learning: Why SEL is Essential in Every Classroom*. Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
- Jones, S. M., & Bouffard, S. M. (2012). *Social and Emotional Learning in Schools: From Programs to Strategies*. Social Policy Report.
- Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan. (2013). *Undang-Undang Sistem Pendidikan Nasional*. Jakarta: Kemendikbud.
- Kidger, J., Araya, R., Donovan, J., & Gunnell, D. (2012). The Effect of The School Environment on The Emotional Health of Adolescents: A Systematic Review. *Pediatrics*.
- Killen, M., & Smetana, J. G. (2006). *Handbook of Moral Development*. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Kim, S., & Axelrod, Y. (2021). Enhancing teacher practices for inclusive education. *Educational Researcher*, 50(2), 123-137.
- Kristjánsson, K. (2012). Positive psychology and positive education: Old wine in new bottles? *Educational Psychologist*.
- Laksmi, S. (2021). Pengembangan kompetensi sosial dan emosional siswa melalui pendidikan inklusif. *Jurnal Ilmiah Pendidikan Dasar*.
- Larson, R., & Silverman, S. (2015). Structured learning for student engagement. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, 59(1), 11–22.
- Loreman, T., Deppeler, J., & Harvey, D. (2005). *Inclusive Education: A Practical Guide to Supporting Diversity in The Classroom*. Routledge.
- Lyubomirsky, S., King, L., & Diener, E. (2005). The benefits of frequent positive affect: Does happiness lead to success? *Psychological Bulletin*.
- Martin, A., & Thompson, K. (2016). The impact of inclusive practices on student well-being and performance. *Teaching Exceptional Children*, 48(3), 48–56.
- Mustadi, A. (2018). Evaluasi implementasi pendidikan inklusi di yogyakarta. *Jurnal Pendidikan Inklusif*.
- Nurdiana, I., & Saputra, W. N. E. (2019). Adaptasi kurikulum di sekolah inklusi di indonesia. *Jurnal Pendidikan Khusus*.

- Peterson, R. (2018). The role of special education teachers in inclusive settings. *Journal of Special Education*, 52(1), 26–40.
- Pratiwi, V. W., & Jatmiko, D. (2020). Praktik dan tantangan sekolah bahagia: Studi di sekolah-sekolah di Yogyakarta. *Jurnal Pendidikan Karakter*.
- Raharjo, T. J., & Setiawan, B. (2020). Efektivitas pembelajaran sosial emosional dalam konteks sekolah menengah di Indonesia. *Jurnal Pendidikan Indonesia*.
- Schonert-Reichl, K. A. (2017). Social and emotional learning and teachers. *Future of Children*.
- Sharma, U., Moore, D., & Sonawane, S. (2009). Attitudes and concerns of pre-service teachers regarding inclusion of students with disabilities into regular schools in Pune, India. *Asia Pacific Journal of Teacher Education*.
- Smith, J. (2015). Educational outcomes and societal impacts of education. *Educational Review*, 67(2), 193–214.
- Suryani, A. N. (2018). *Pembelajaran Inklusif di Indonesia: Studi Kasus di Sekolah Dasar*. Yogyakarta: Penerbit Ombak.
- Thompson, R., Davidson, J., & Barber, L. (2020). Creating happiness in the classroom: school well-being practices. *Journal of School Health*, 90(8), 651–659.
- UNESCO. (1994). *The Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education*. Paris: UNESCO.
- Westwood, P. (2011). *Commonsense Methods for Children with Special Educational Needs*. Routledge.
- Williams, H. (2019). Emotional intelligence in education: integrating social and emotional learning. *Journal of Youth Studies*, 22(4), 567–582.

Acknowledgment

None

Funding Information

None

Conflicting Interest Statement

There is no conflict of interest in the publication of this article.

Publishing Ethical and Originality Statement

All authors declared that this work is original and has never been published in any form or any media, nor is it under consideration for publication in any journal. All sources cited in this work refer to the basic standards of scientific citation.

