

The Relationship Between Emotional Intelligence and Student Learning Achievement

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Abstract

This study aims to examine the relationship between emotional intelligence and student achievement at the junior high school level. Emotional intelligence includes an individual's ability to recognize, understand, and manage their own emotions and establish interpersonal relationships effectively. In the context of education, emotional intelligence is believed to have a significant influence on learning motivation, stress management, and social interaction in the school environment. This study used a qualitative approach with observation techniques and in-depth interviews with students and teachers in three different schools. The findings showed that students with high levels of emotional intelligence tend to have better learning achievements, characterized by stable academic grades, positive learning attitudes, and the ability to work together with peers. Conversely, students with low emotional intelligence tend to have difficulty in managing conflict, lack focus in learning, and show symptoms of stress that have a negative impact on academic achievement. These findings emphasize the importance of strengthening aspects of emotional intelligence in the learning process in order to create a more holistic learning environment and support students' academic success.

Keywords: Emotional Intelligence, Learning Achievement, School Education

Introduction

In the modern world of education, students' academic success is not only determined by intellectual intelligence alone, but also by the ability to understand and manage emotions. This



concept is known as emotional intelligence, which includes self-awareness, self-control, empathy, social skills, and motivation. In the school environment, students are not only faced with academic challenges, but also social pressures, interpersonal conflicts, and demands for achievement, all of which require mature emotional abilities.

Emotional intelligence has become a topic of increasing attention in educational psychology because of its central role in determining student success. Goleman (1995) stated that emotional intelligence can be even more important than IQ in many aspects of life, including education. Students who are able to recognize their emotions and adapt to the social environment of the school tend to have a higher enthusiasm for learning, are able to work together in groups, and are more resilient to academic stress.

In Indonesia, the national curriculum tends to focus on cognitive aspects, with assessments centered on exams and academic grades. In fact, various studies show that students with high emotional intelligence tend to have better academic achievement. This phenomenon shows the need for a balance between the development of cognitive and emotional abilities in the education process. One of the major challenges faced by junior high school students is the transition phase from childhood to adolescence, which is marked by intense emotional changes and the search for identity. If not handled properly, this phase can cause various problems, such as decreased motivation to learn, conflict with peers, and even behavioral disorders.

Student achievement is influenced by many factors, such as family support, teaching quality, school environment, and of course the student's ability to manage themselves, including their emotional aspects. Therefore, it is important for educators and education policy makers to understand the role of emotional intelligence as a determining factor in students' academic success.

This study was conducted to examine the relationship between emotional intelligence and student achievement at the junior high school level. The focus of the study was directed at how aspects of emotional intelligence affect students' attitudes and behaviors in daily teaching and learning activities. By using a qualitative approach, this study aims to provide a deeper

understanding of the phenomenon, through direct interviews with students and teachers, as well as observations of student activities in the school environment.

This study is important considering the lack of attention to emotional aspects in formal education, especially at the junior high school level. In many cases, students with low academic scores do not necessarily have poor intellectual abilities, but rather experience emotional barriers that interfere with their learning process. For example, students who experience high anxiety, family conflict, or difficulty socializing are often unable to reach their maximum academic potential. On the other hand, students who have good self-control and social skills are usually better prepared to face academic challenges.

By understanding the relationship between emotional intelligence and learning achievement, teachers can design learning strategies that are more inclusive and responsive to students' emotional needs. In addition, schools can also develop self-development programs that focus not only on academic skills, but also on emotional and social skills. This is in line with the holistic education paradigm that emphasizes the development of all aspects of students.

In the global context, various developed countries have begun to integrate social-emotional education into their national curricula. For example, in the United States, Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) programs have been widely implemented at various levels of education with positive results on student achievement and behavior. In Indonesia, several similar initiatives have begun to develop, although they are still limited to pilot projects or specific school initiatives.

Therefore, this article aims to present research results that can contribute to the development of educational policies that are more in favor of students' holistic needs. By highlighting the relationship between emotional intelligence and learning achievement, this study is expected to be the basis for the development of educational programs that are more humane, adaptive, and oriented towards the formation of students' characters that are intellectually and emotionally balanced.



Research methods

This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach. Data collection techniques were conducted through in-depth interviews with 15 students and 5 teachers in three junior high schools in Yogyakarta. Participatory observation was also conducted to capture the emotional dynamics of students in daily interactions in the school environment. Data analysis used data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing methods, in accordance with the Miles and Huberman model.

Discussion

Emotional intelligence (EQ) is the ability to recognize, understand, and manage one's own and others' emotions. Goleman (1995) classifies emotional intelligence into five main domains: self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills. In the context of education, these five aspects contribute significantly to the formation of students' learning behavior and mindset.

Self-awareness allows students to understand their own feelings and recognize how those emotions affect their learning attitudes. Self-control helps students regulate negative impulses that can interfere with the learning process. Motivation plays a role in maintaining enthusiasm for learning, even in the face of difficulties. Empathy allows students to understand the emotions of their peers and foster healthy social interactions, while social skills support cooperation and communication in group learning.

Emotions play a central role in learning. Positive emotions such as enthusiasm, curiosity, and self-confidence encourage active engagement and deep understanding. Conversely, negative emotions such as anxiety, anger, or disappointment can hinder concentration and reduce motivation to learn. In a school environment, students who have good emotional control tend to be better able to cope with exam pressure, compete healthily, and build positive relationships with teachers and peers.



In the interviews, students who had difficulty managing emotions—especially in the form of social anxiety and frustration—reported that they often lost focus during lessons and felt less confident when doing assignments. The teachers interviewed also highlighted that students with low emotional skills were more prone to conflict, both with friends and teachers.

The results of observations and in-depth interviews in three schools showed a consistent pattern. Students with high emotional intelligence showed positive learning attitudes, such as activeness in class discussions, the ability to work together, and discipline in completing assignments. One teacher informant said that "students who can understand their own and their friends' feelings are usually more cooperative and quick to grasp lessons."

In contrast, students with low emotional intelligence often exhibit passive behavior, avoid group activities, and have fluctuating academic grades. One student interviewed admitted to often having conflicts with his deskmate, which resulted in difficulty concentrating while studying. Classroom observations reinforced these findings: students with high EQ showed better levels of participation and communication.

Several factors influence students' emotional intelligence, including parenting at home, the social environment of the school, and the pedagogical approach of teachers. Students who are raised in an environment that is supportive and open to the expression of emotions tend to have higher EQ. Similarly, schools that foster a culture of empathy, collaboration, and open communication contribute to increased emotional intelligence in students.

In practice, social-emotional education (SEL) needs to be integrated into teaching and learning activities. Teachers can design project-based learning that emphasizes group work, self-reflection, and interpersonal problem solving. In addition, providing feedback that focuses not only on cognitive but also emotional aspects will help students develop awareness of their own feelings.

Strengthening teacher training on emotional management and communication skills is also an important step. Teachers who have good emotional intelligence will be better able to create a classroom climate that is conducive and responsive to students' emotional needs. School-based



interventions such as group counseling, conflict resolution training, and mindfulness programs can also be implemented to support students' EQ development.

Overall, this discussion confirms that emotional intelligence is not an additional concept in education, but rather an essential element that must be integrated systematically to achieve comprehensive and sustainable educational goals.)

Conclusion

The results of the study showed that there is a close relationship between emotional intelligence and student learning achievement. Students who are able to recognize and manage their emotions well show more stable academic abilities, are able to work together in teams, and are more easily motivated. Education that emphasizes the development of student emotions has been shown to improve the quality of the learning process and outcomes. Therefore, the development of emotional intelligence needs to be integrated into educational and learning strategies in schools.

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