

Social-Emotional Learning Workshop for Creating a Positive School Environment

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ABSTRACT: The objective of this activity is to ensure that participants understand and apply social and emotional learning based on mindfulness, with the goal of creating a school environment that supports both moral and intellectual development. Additionally, it is expected that participants will grasp educational values centered on tolerance, inclusivity, and respect for student rights, and will be capable of creating a comfortable environment for both students and teachers. The activity is conducted using an andragogical approach through the MERDEKA framework, which involves self-introspection, concept exploration, collaboration, contextual demonstration, and guided reflection. The participants are teachers and staff from Dr. Wahidin Senior High School, totaling 18 individuals. The event is held online via Google Meet, with a duration of 8 teaching hours. The final outcome of the activity is a plan for participants' self-management in leading instruction, along with policies and programs that respect student rights.

Keywords: Workshop, Social-Emotional Learning, Senior High School



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INTRODUCTION

A safe and supportive school environment is a crucial foundation for effective teaching and learning (Putri & Siswanto, 2024). When students feel emotionally and socially secure, they are more likely to engage in learning and fully develop their potential (McCall et al., 2022). Schools that focus not only on academic achievement but also on students' emotional well-being tend to produce graduates who are not only intellectually capable but also emotionally and socially mature.

However, creating a safe and comfortable school environment is not an easy task (Chiriac et al., 2023). Factors such as academic pressure, bullying, and social conflicts among students can hinder the establishment of a conducive atmosphere (Mahaye & Ajani, 2023). Additionally, teachers and educational staff often feel inadequately equipped to manage students' social and emotional aspects, which can ultimately impact the quality of the relationship between students and the school environment.

Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) has emerged as an effective approach to address these challenges. SEL aims to develop students' skills in understanding and managing their emotions, building healthy relationships, and making responsible decisions (Siswanto, Samsinar, et al., 2024). Through this learning, students are encouraged to be more aware of the social and emotional conditions in their environment, which in turn helps create a more inclusive and supportive school climate.

Research (Sandilos et al., 2023; Ulla & Poom-Valickis, 2023) shows that the implementation of SEL in schools has a positive impact on students' development. According to (Fu et al., 2024), students involved in SEL tend to demonstrate improved empathy, collaboration, and communication skills, which are essential for social interactions. Additionally, (Lee et al., 2023) notes that SEL has been proven to reduce school violence, increase student attendance, and enhance a more productive and confident learning environment.

Nevertheless, the success of SEL in schools heavily depends on the ability of teachers and educational staff to apply this approach effectively (Siswanto, Alghiffari, et al., 2024; Thierry et al., 2022). Unfortunately, many teachers have not received adequate training in managing students' social and emotional aspects. Therefore, specialized workshops or training are needed to equip teachers with the knowledge and skills to implement SEL in the classroom, helping to create a safe and supportive school environment (Wahyuni et al., 2024).

SEL workshops serve as a strategic tool to enhance teachers' competencies in guiding students through social and emotional challenges. Through this training, educators learn not only the basic concepts of SEL but also practical methods that can be directly applied in daily interactions with students. Additionally, these workshops provide a platform for teachers to share experiences and strategies for handling various social and emotional situations in school.

With the implementation of SEL workshops, it is hoped that all components of the school, including teachers, students, and staff, will have a heightened awareness of the importance of social and emotional health (Alam et al., 2023) (Putri et al., 2024)). This is expected to foster a school environment that is not only conflict-free but also proactive in supporting the social and emotional development of each student. A safe and supportive school environment will offer students the space to grow and learn without fear of failure or peer pressure (Pisriwati et al., 2024; Thierry et al., 2022).

Through the Social-Emotional Learning workshop, the school aims to create a more inclusive environment where students and teachers can interact positively and support one another. Social and emotional well-being should be a primary focus in character development, as it helps students become more balanced individuals, prepared to face various challenges in the future. Establishing a safe and comfortable school environment is essential for nurturing a resilient, empathetic, and community-oriented youth. Therefore, the goal of this activity is to ensure that participants understand and apply mindfulness-based social and emotional learning, thereby fostering a school environment that supports moral and intellectual development.

METHOD

The implementation of this activity employs an andragogical method, which emphasizes the exploration of conceptual understanding through participant reflection (Budiwan, 2018). The process follows the MERRDEKA framework starting from oneself, concept exploration, collaborative space, contextual demonstration, and guided reflection (Budiono & Hatip, 2023). In the "starting from oneself" phase, participants are asked to respond to reflective questions related to their social and emotional experiences and conduct a self-assessment of the five Social-Emotional Competencies. The concept exploration phase includes watching videos to enhance awareness, reading articles on Ki Hajar Dewantara (KHD) educational principles, Social-Emotional Learning, and student rights.

The collaborative space session involves group discussions on the student rights that need to be addressed in schools, strategies for developing tolerant and inclusive policies, and the roles of various stakeholders in creating a safe and comfortable school ecosystem. The guided reflection session requires participants to answer questions about the greatest challenges in creating a safe and comfortable school environment and how to overcome them, concluding with a wrap-up.

The workshop involved 18 teachers and staff from Dr. Wahidin Senior High School in the Special Region of Yogyakarta and was held online on Saturday, February 24, 2024, for a duration of 8 hours using Google Meet. In addition to Google Meet, applications such as Jamboard, Padlet, Mentimeter, and Google Drive were also utilized to enhance the online experience. Participation in Social and Emotional Learning workshops is essential for high school educators to cultivate a positive school environment, as these workshops focus on improving student well-being by teaching emotional management and relationship-building skills. By understanding social and emotional principles, teachers can create better interactions and minimize conflicts among students, leading to a safer learning atmosphere. An emotionally supportive environment further boosts student motivation and engagement, equipping them to tackle future challenges effectively.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The workshop commenced with an introduction by the facilitator, who outlined the objectives and agenda of the session. The facilitator also explained the learning rules to be followed throughout the workshop. The primary aim of this workshop is to understand Social and Emotional Learning based on the CASEL framework (Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning) and mindfulness. Additionally, participants are expected to learn strategies for developing policies that respect student rights and acquire skills for creating policies and programs relevant to social and emotional learning.

Following the opening, participants engaged in self-reflection using a reflection worksheet. This worksheet is designed to help participants analyze their own social and emotional competencies and assess their understanding of these aspects. Through this activity, participants are

encouraged to identify areas needing development and apply these insights to policy formulation and the creation of student-centered educational programs.

Before delving into the core material on social and emotional learning aimed at fostering a safe and comfortable school environment, participants were asked to reflect on their roles as leaders through a series of reflective questions. These questions are intended to help participants, especially principals and supervisors, understand their responsibilities in shaping a positive learning environment. This reflection is expected to help participants recognize their personal strengths and weaknesses in leadership, thereby enabling more effective school management.

Social and emotional understanding is crucial for creating a conducive school environment (Ahmed et al., 2020; Ibarra, 2022). By gaining deeper awareness of social and emotional aspects, school leaders can make more informed decisions, build better relationships with teachers, students, and parents, and ensure that policies support the well-being of the entire school community (Siswanto, Listyanti, et al., 2024). This forms a solid foundation for achieving a safe, comfortable school environment that supports both academic and emotional development.

Participants were then instructed to download and review the reflection worksheet, focusing on their experiences in their respective school roles. This reflection aims to uncover deeper insights into the challenges and successes faced, and how these experiences can enhance leadership and school management. By using the worksheet, participants are expected to evaluate their interactions with students, teachers, and staff, and consider strategies for improving school dynamics.

In the subsequent session, participants explored key concepts through videos and articles on mindfulness, the educational principles of Ki Hajar Dewantara (KHD), and student rights. After reviewing these materials, they engaged in in-depth discussions about student rights within schools, including how to create an inclusive and tolerant environment. Strategies for implementing safe schools and the roles of various stakeholders, such as principals, teachers, parents, and the community, were also discussed.

The collaborative session continued with discussions in breakout rooms, where each group tackled specific topics such as policy implementation for student rights, creating inclusive schools, and applying mindfulness in school management. This discussion aimed to deepen participants' understanding and encourage collaboration among principals and supervisors. Each group presented their findings to the larger audience, facilitating a rich exchange of ideas.

In addition to group discussions, participants shared their experiences in applying social and emotional learning in their schools. These shared experiences served as a source of reflection and learning for all participants. At the end of the session, participants were asked to refine their action plans, incorporating new elements gained from group discussions and presentations. These action plans are intended to guide the implementation of policies and programs that support the creation of safe, inclusive schools that respect student rights.

At the conclusion of the workshop, participants presented concept maps they had created during the session. These maps illustrated the connections between various topics covered, including

social and emotional learning, mindfulness, student rights, and strategies for creating inclusive schools. Each participant demonstrated how these concepts interrelate and how they can be applied in their leadership contexts. This activity not only reinforced participants' understanding but also served as a platform for sharing inspiration on applying the knowledge gained.

The final session involved a collective reflection on the concrete actions needed after the workshop. Participants were encouraged to outline specific steps for implementing the workshop outcomes in their schools. An evaluation of the workshop was also conducted to gather feedback on the effectiveness, relevance of the material, and its impact on participants' understanding. This evaluation aims to improve and enhance the quality of future workshops, ensuring participants derive maximum benefit from the event.

The findings from the workshop on Social and Emotional Learning based on the CASEL framework and mindfulness have several practical and theoretical implications. Practically, this workshop provides participants with the knowledge and skills necessary to develop inclusive policies that respect student rights. Through self-reflection and collaborative discussions, participants can gain insights into their leadership styles, enhancing their self-awareness and enabling more effective management practices. Additionally, the focus on social-emotional competencies helps school leaders implement strategies to improve student engagement and well-being, while group discussions encourage ongoing collaboration among educators. The refinement of action plans offers concrete steps for participants to apply their learning in their schools.

The theoretical implications of this workshop highlight the importance of the CASEL framework in today's educational context. Reflective activities contribute to the understanding of literature on educational leadership, emphasizing social and emotional awareness in effective school management. The outcomes of the workshop can serve as a foundation for future research on the implementation of Social and Emotional Learning and its impact on student rights and inclusivity. Moreover, by integrating the principles of Ki Hajar Dewantara, this workshop underscores the significance of culturally relevant educational practices. The final evaluation process also contributes to the theoretical understanding of workshop effectiveness in professional development, demonstrating the need for continuous feedback to enhance educational programs. Overall, this workshop represents a vital intersection of theory and practice, equipping educational leaders with the tools to create environments that support both academic and emotional growth.

This study focuses on evaluating the effectiveness of a workshop designed to enhance participants' understanding and skills related to social and emotional learning, mindfulness, and student rights within the school environment. The workshop commenced with an introduction by the facilitator, who outlined the goals, agenda, and learning rules. The primary aim of this workshop was to introduce the CASEL framework for social and emotional learning and mindfulness and to equip participants with the skills necessary to develop policies that respect student rights. As an initial step, participants used a self-reflection worksheet to analyze their social and emotional competencies, which assisted in self-assessment and identifying areas for development. This approach aligns with research by (Siswanto & Peni, 2023; Zarra-Nezhad et

al., 2024) , which indicates that participants can integrate reflection results into the creation of policies and programs that focus more on student development and their social-emotional needs.

Subsequently, participants explored key concepts through various media such as videos and articles, followed by in-depth discussions on student rights, creating an inclusive school environment, and the roles of different stakeholders in shaping a safe school ecosystem. Group discussions in breakout rooms focused on issues like implementing student rights policies and mindfulness approaches in school management. This session was designed to deepen participants' understanding and encourage collaboration among them. This is consistent with research by (Siswanto, Alam, et al., 2024; Zamzam et al., 2024), which suggests that such activities enrich participants' experiences and enhance their ability to apply learned concepts.

At the end of the workshop, participants presented concept maps reflecting the relationships between the various topics covered. This activity aimed to reinforce participants' understanding of how these concepts apply in the context of school leadership. The final session included reflection and evaluation of the workshop, providing crucial feedback for improving future workshops. This evaluation aligns with research by (Astiwi et al., 2024; Du et al., 2022), which indicates that participants can plan concrete steps to implement workshop outcomes in their schools and continuously enhance a conducive learning environment. Furthermore, research by (Voith et al., 2020) demonstrates the positive impact of social and emotional learning programs on students' social-emotional development. Additionally (Silva et al., 2023), highlight the importance of mindfulness in education and how this approach can improve student well-being and teaching efficacy.

CONCLUSION

Based on the explanation above, it can be concluded that the workshop was successful in enhancing participants' understanding of managing their social and emotional aspects. Participants also demonstrated tolerant behavior and designed school policies and programs that respect student rights, as reflected in the evaluation results and the highly positive outcomes of the self-reflection worksheets. The implication of this workshop is that the policies developed during the session can be implemented by teachers in their educational institutions, thereby creating a positive school environment where members of the school feel safe and comfortable. However, a limitation of this workshop is that not all teachers from the learning committee were able to participate. Therefore, it is hoped that similar activities can be conducted with broader participation in the future.

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