

OPTIMIZING EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE THROUGH COLLABORATIVE LEARNING IN GRADE III ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

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Abstract

Emotional intelligence is an important ability that every student must have. However, many students still have not mastered emotional intelligence well. As a result, learners find it difficult to control emotions and establish communication with peers; this can have an impact on social interactions and also the teaching and learning process in the classroom. Collaborative learning emerges as one of the effective methods that can be used to overcome these difficulties because this method allows students to practice and develop learners' emotional skills through active interaction and cooperation with classmates, which can improve emotional intelligence. The purpose of this research is to find out how collaborative learning can contribute to improving learners' emotional intelligence. The research method used is qualitative with a descriptive approach, with the third-grade teacher of SDN Dadaprejo 01 as the main informant of the research. Data were collected through observation, interviews, documentation, and field notes. The results showed that heterogeneous grouping strategies, role assignment, encouraging communication, and presentation positively contributed to increasing students' emotional intelligence. Engaging in collaborative learning provides opportunities for students to interact directly with friends, which can improve communication skills, empathy, and the ability to control emotions in various social contexts; with this, students' emotional intelligence can develop regardless of students' academic success.

Keywords: Optimization; Emotional Intelligence; Collaborative Learning.

Abstrak

Kecerdasan emosional merupakan kemampuan penting yang harus dimiliki oleh setiap siswa. Namun, banyak siswa yang masih belum menguasai kecerdasan emosional dengan baik akibatnya, siswa merasa kesulitan dalam mengendalikan emosi, kesulitan dalam menjalin komunikasi dengan teman sebaya, sehingga hal ini dapat berdampak pada interaksi sosial dan juga proses belajar mengajar di kelas. Pembelajaran kolaboratif muncul sebagai salah satu metode efektif yang dapat digunakan untuk mengatasi kesulitan tersebut, karena metode ini memungkinkan siswa untuk berlatih dan mengembangkan keterampilan emosional siswa melalui interaksi yang aktif dan kerjasama dengan teman-teman sekelas, yang dapat meningkatkan kecerdasan emosional. Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk mengetahui bagaimana pembelajaran kolaboratif dapat berkontribusi terhadap peningkatan kecerdasan emosional siswa. Metode penelitian yang digunakan adalah kualitatif dengan pendekatan deskriptif, dengan Guru kelas III SDN Dadaprejo 01 sebagai informan utama penelitian. Data dikumpulkan melalui observasi, wawancara, dokumentasi dan catatan lapangan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan melalui strategi pengelompokan secara heterogen, penetapan peran, dorong komunikasi dan presentasi menunjukkan kontribusi positif terhadap peningkatan kecerdasan emosional siswa. Terlibat dalam pembelajaran kolaboratif memberikan kesempatan untuk siswa berinteraksi secara langsung dengan teman-teman, yang dapat meningkatkan kemampuan berkomunikasi, empati dan kemampuan untuk mengendalikan emosi dalam berbagai konteks sosial, dengan ini kecerdasan emosional siswa dapat berkembang terlepas dari keberhasilan akademis siswa.

Kata Kunci: optimalisasi; Kecerdasan Emosional; Pembelajaran Kolaboratif

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Introduction

Education has a goal, which is to educate the nation's life (Hermanto, 2020). Education is closely related to human life and brings about changes that lead to progress and the nation's welfare. (Eti Muliani, 2022) This is stated in the 1945 Constitution No.20 of 2003, which defines education as the function of developing abilities and forming a dignified character and civilization to educate the nation. (Sujana, 2019) The purpose of education is to help students achieve physical and spiritual maturity to make a whole human being from the intellectual, emotional, and spiritual aspects. (Wisudayanti, 2020) So far, many people think that intellectual intelligence (IQ) is the only factor that affects student success, but in reality, many other factors influence it (Halawa & Fensi, 2020)

Intellectual intelligence is not the only factor that influences the achievement of educational success, and many other factors influence it. This is in line with what Goleman stated that other intelligence determines 80% of success and intellectual intelligence (IQ) only contributes approximately 20% in determining success. Thus, intellectual intelligence is not the main factor that can be used to determine one's success (Eti Muliani, 2022; Warastri, 2021). This fact encouraged experts to conduct research, which eventually found other intelligences that have a greater influence, namely emotional intelligence (EQ) and spiritual intelligence (SQ) (Syarifah, 2019)

Emotional intelligence is an important skill that needs to be developed early. (Denham & Liverette, 2019). Elementary school is an ideal time to teach emotional intelligence because, during this time, students are in the early stages of self-recognition and character-building (Sulistiyowaty et al., 2023). Emotional intelligence in elementary school covers aspects such as understanding and recognizing the emotions of oneself and others, interacting, empathizing, resolving conflicts peacefully, and working together in groups. In addition, emotional intelligence students will be better prepared to face obstacles and challenges in the school environment (Widyasari et al., 2023).

Daniel Goleman defines emotional intelligence as a set of skills that a person has, such as the ability to recognize and control one's emotions, motivate oneself, recognize the feelings of others, and be able to foster social relationships (Warastri, 2021). This means that emotional intelligence has a very important position; someone who does not have emotional control will have difficulty overcoming challenges related to education, work, and other fields in the future (L. A. Sari et al., 2020). Students with high emotional intelligence can be interpreted as having the ability to act and behave well to control and manage emotions, empathy, responsibility, independence, and foster social relationships (Nugraha & Susilawati, 2022). Conversely, students who act and misbehave are interpreted as having low emotional intelligence (Wisudayanti, 2020).

Every student at school has a diverse background, including in terms of behavior. As a result, these differences cause some students to have difficulty adjusting to their friends and cannot complete the learning process optimally, which is caused by a lack of confidence in their abilities (Aprilia Afifah et al., 2022). Therefore, students need to develop strong self-confidence to utilize their potential and prevent negative things that hinder their ability to face the learning process (Handayani, 2020).

One of the efforts to optimize emotional intelligence with active and interactive learning methods is collaborative learning (Kadek et al., 2021). Collaborative learning is closely related to student skills in terms of social and emotional intelligence (Sari, R. et al., 2022). Collaborative learning is a learning process carried out by two or more people working together (Fitriasari et

al., 2020). Collaborative learning will develop social skills through interactions involving students and teachers to gain and improve each other's knowledge (Napitupulu et al., 2020).

To achieve the goal of collaborative learning, there are problems with emotional intelligence, bullying, physical conflict, difficulty empathizing with friends' difficulties, difficulty building social relationships, and other negative things. This is not in accordance with the educational goals mentioned above. Based on observations and interviews with the third-grade teacher at SDN Dadaprejo 01, it was found that students have high intelligence because their social and emotional skills are pretty good. It can be seen that some students mingle with each other, indicating that their social interaction is good. Meanwhile, some children are easily distracted, even so, students will respond well and return to concentration when reprimanded. This is in line with the results of the interview with the third grade teacher, who said that the students in the class are easy to direct and manage.

Previous research shows significant results on the relationship between collaborative learning and children's social-emotional at 4-5 years old (Sari, R. et al., 2022). This is in line with other research, which reveals that this learning model approach has significant potential for the quality of education, but things like task division, time management, and educator support must be considered (Wahyuningrum, 2022). Meanwhile, another study revealed that there is a need to redesign collaborative learning strategies in the classroom and to teach students the importance of teamwork to expand their ability to communicate, which can improve their social skills (Selvi Nabila Muliawati, Ahmad Syachruraji, 2020).

Based on the discussion above, the novelty lies in the research results, which integrate the findings from the previously mentioned research regarding the relationship between collaborative learning, emotional intelligence, and learning quality, as well as an emphasis on a specific age group or grade III elementary school level which can be an added value and novelty in research. Another novelty is seen from the results that can be used as media to significantly contribute to understanding the effectiveness of collaborative learning methods on developing students' emotional intelligence.

The problem formulations in this study are, first, how collaborative learning can improve students' emotional intelligence. Second, how is collaborative learning implemented? Third, what are the supporting and inhibiting factors in implementing collaborative learning? This research aims to find out how collaborative learning contributes to improving students' emotional intelligence, find effective implementation strategies in the implementation of collaborative learning, and find out what factors support and hinder collaborative learning.

Research Methods

This research uses a qualitative method with a descriptive approach. A descriptive qualitative method is a research approach that aims to describe and understand phenomena in detail, pouring in writing or a series of words (Fadli, 2021). This research was conducted at SDN Dadaprejo 01, located at Jl Martorejo, Dadaprejo, Kec. Junrejo, Batu City, East Java, in the academic year 2024/2025 odd semester. The subjects of this study were all third-grade students of SDN Dadaprejo 01, totaling 18 students, consisting of 8 female students and 10 male students, as well as the third-grade teacher who has an important role as the main source of informants. This research is to discover how collaborative learning can improve students' emotional intelligence.

Researchers describe all events that occur in the field without intervening in the research process involving teachers and students. The data collection techniques were observation, interviews, documentation, and field notes. The observation method is used to find out the actual situation in class III SDN Dadaprejo 01, both observation of the collaborative learning process, observation of student characteristics, and observation of the school environment. The interview method used is an in-depth interview or interview with the primary informants, namely teachers and third-grade students who provide important information related to the research, and the documentation method is used to strengthen track records or records. Also, the field note method was used as a tool to document what was seen, heard, and noticed during the research. Recording this information produces a comprehensive picture of the actual situation, which can be used for analysis and lesson planning.

To ensure the validity of the research data, researchers checked the data, which is also known as triangulation. The triangulation used is as follows. Source triangulation is checking data obtained from several sources, technique triangulation is a variety of techniques used to get data from the main source, and time triangulation is collecting data from the same sources and techniques but in different times and situations. (Mekarisce, 2020). The research instrument used is an interview guide, discussing important aspects of this study, including open-ended questions that aim to explore information in detail. The interview guide can be used as a framework for asking relevant and in-depth questions to informants. (Jailani, 2023).

The data collected in the research must be analyzed before being presented to gain a deep understanding. In this study, data analysis was carried out using the Miles & Huberman flow. This technique has several steps, consisting of data collection, data reduction, data display, conclusion drawing, and verification. (Harfiani & Setiawan, 2019).

Results and Discussion

Based on the results of the study, third-grade students of SDN Dadaprejo 01 as a whole have a high level of emotional intelligence, which is characterized by the ability to recognize and manage emotions, the ability to interact effectively with peers, empathy for the feelings of others, the ability to resolve conflicts well and the ability to work together in groups. Emotional intelligence is a student's ability that refers to self-awareness of emotions and social interaction skills (Zhoc et al., 2020).

Collaborative learning emerged as one of the alternatives to develop students' social skills, as expressed by informants that this learning method provides space for students who feel shy and reluctant to speak in class discussions and are more comfortable and confident when in groups, thus facilitating the active involvement of each student. This aligns with the statement that to gain a deeper understanding of quiet students, collaborative learning can be utilized as one method (Medaille & Usinger, 2020).

For students at SDN Dadaprejo 01, especially in class III, the collaborative learning process has proven effective in encouraging the development of students' emotional intelligence. The informant said that students at the school are easy to manage. In low-level classes, it is said to be easy to manage because basically, children at that level have a concentration that is easily broken, often move actively in the classroom, chat rather than listen to the teacher's explanation, are easily distracted by small things around them and often need to be reminded repeatedly to complete the assigned tasks. However, if students in the class experience this, they are easy to manage, showing a quick and good response to directions or reprimands given by the teacher, which indicates that students in the class can control emotions effectively.

To achieve the goal of collaborative learning, the intended aspects must be clear so that it can be achieved optimally. The third-grade teacher confirmed that in collaborative learning, the main focus lies on group management, cooperation, and student socialization. This group management includes joint problem solving and responsibility for their respective roles, which requires emotional control in students. The cooperation aspect in collaborative learning emphasizes the importance of interaction and communication within the group, students learn to listen to the opinions of others. In the context of collaborative learning, socialization refers to the process in which students learn to build relationships and social networks in groups, involving the ability to adapt to other people. Socialization in collaborative learning helps students develop social skills. This means that in the context of collaborative learning, educational goals that emphasize interaction between students and active teamwork are closely related to the development of emotional intelligence aspects. Collaborative learning that emphasizes shared achievement is a method that provides opportunities to develop empathy, social skills, and understanding and management of emotions in addition to strengthening cognitive aspects of learning (Haataja et al., 2022).

Strategy in the learning process is the main key to determining the success of a learning process. Great attention must be paid to the learning strategy that will be applied (Ninin Dwi Novita et al., 2019). Based on the interview results, several strategies in collaborative learning can be implemented, one of which is group formation, where in the division of study groups students who have the same ability are not collected in one group. Instead, students will be grouped with different abilities from each other, or called heterogeneous groups. This aims to help children who have higher abilities to help children who have lower abilities. The purpose of dividing groups with different abilities is to optimize social skills in a group. (Andajani, 2022). Interacting in groups that have diverse backgrounds can develop empathy, tolerance, communication, and emotional control when facing conflicts or differences of opinion. Group heterogeneity can be a driver for developing social skills because interactions with people with different backgrounds and experiences can broaden perspectives, foster empathy, and improve cooperation and communication abilities (N. L. M. Sari, 2023).

Then, assign roles and responsibilities. This ensures that each student has a clear task and can contribute optimally. In collaborative learning, roles such as group leader, note-taker, and presenter can be implemented to provide a structure that supports effective cooperation. By assigning these roles and responsibilities, students gain academic knowledge and social and emotional skills that are crucial for future development (Ekaprasetya et al., 2022). These skills include teamwork, communication, and individual or group accountability.

Furthermore, it encourages communication and collaboration in collaborative groups that work synergistically to identify, research, analyze, and formulate solutions to self-discovered tasks or problems. Good communication and cooperation between group members will strengthen the process of identifying and solving problems and enable deeper understanding through productive collaboration. With good communication, students can share thoughts, information, opinions, ideas, and knowledge, making learning more effective and enjoyable. One of the important components of education is communication (Pratiwi et al., 2022). In connection with this, it can be done by applying the think pair share method or ice breaking to encourage communication or reduce tension in the classroom.

Finally, each group presents the results of the discussion. Each group member is required to take part in the presentation process to ensure active participation and equal contribution from each individual in the group. In each presentation session, each group is required to present

the results of their work, and after the presentation is complete, each group is also expected to provide responses or suggestions to other groups' presentations. Presentations in the context of collaborative learning can develop communication skills acquired when presenting the results of discussions and also help build emotional skills through receiving responses and suggestions from other groups. Thus, through the presentation experience, students can develop various aspects of emotional intelligence such as self-awareness, empathy, and social skills, as well as emotion management, which can improve students' ability to interact with others more effectively and empathetically. This is in line with the results of research conducted previously that presentation techniques can improve speaking ability and encourage progress in communication skills (Suryana & Nurhayani, 2022). Adequate application of presentation techniques not only helps students improve their speaking ability and communication skills but also helps build positive interpersonal relationships to bridge various opportunities and profitable relationships in the future.

During collaborative learning, students show improvement in their ability to manage emotions. For example, when facing conflicts in the group, students learn to resolve them positively and constructively. Students learn to not only express their feelings but also listen to and understand the feelings of their peers. Collaborative learning encourages students to work together in groups. This helps develop empathy by understanding the perspectives and feelings of others. In addition, students' social skills also improve, as seen from their increased ability to cooperate, communicate, and help each other in completing group tasks. Collaborative activities force students to communicate openly and clearly with group members. Students learn to express opinions in a good way and receive input from others. These skills are essential for developing emotional intelligence as they help children manage interpersonal relationships.

Students who engage in collaborative learning show higher motivation and greater engagement in learning activities. Students feel more eager to learn because this method makes learning more fun and relevant to daily life. The results show that collaborative learning significantly positively impacts optimizing the emotional intelligence of grade III students. This method improves academic ability and helps develop social and emotional skills. Collaborative learning provides a supportive environment where emotional intelligence can be developed naturally and interactively. Students learn to cooperate, communicate, and manage emotions through interactions with classmates. In addition, teachers also play an important role in creating a positive and supportive environment, as well as providing guidance and constructive feedback. However, to achieve optimal results, teachers need to understand and implement collaborative learning strategies effectively. This includes designing engaging and challenging activities, providing clear directions, and facilitating student discussion and reflection.

In every process, there are supporting factors and inhibiting factors that can determine the success or failure of a process. (Sutisna et al., 2023). In line with what was stated by Slameto, Syah (2014) that the factors that play a role in achieving learning outcomes consist of internal and external factors, internal factors that influence the object come from within, both supporting factors and inhibiting factors and external factors come from outside themselves, both supporting factors and inhibiting factors. (Sutiyono, 2022). As for the supporting factors that influence the effectiveness of collaborative learning in optimizing emotional intelligence, as stated by informants motivation, desire to interact, teacher skills and availability of resources such as books, media tools and others help in facilitating collaborative learning because not all schools have adequate availability of learning media. The provision of resources, including media tools and books, is beneficial in promoting collaborative learning. (Wibowo, 2023). The quality of learning in the classroom is influenced by the teacher's ability (Mashari et al., 2019).

The teacher's ability to create and manage challenging yet interesting classroom activities adds value to the collaborative learning process. In addition, the extent to which students are willing to be actively involved in learning, their acceptance of suggestions and feedback, and their enthusiasm for interacting with peers affect the success of collaborative learning.

In addition, the inhibiting factor affecting the effectiveness of collaborative learning is the instability of family conditions, including where students may have a broken home family situation, which is one factor affecting students' emotional intelligence (Mumtaz et al., 2023). Since students spend most of their time at home, therefore, the daily interaction of the family has a significant influence on the emotional and social growth that students can create, such as emotional support, behavioral models, and communication patterns of parents have a significant impact on how students develop their emotional intelligence. The character of emotional and social intelligence is greatly influenced by the way parents guide and direct it (Fleckman et al., 2021).

Conclusion

Based on research at SDN Dadaprejo 01 related to Optimizing Emotional Intelligence Through Collaborative Learning in Grade III Elementary School Students, it can be concluded that collaborative learning methods improve students' emotional intelligence. Through the utilization of well-designed strategies, which include grouping, establishing clear roles, encouraging communication and delivering presentations. This succeeded in achieving the set goals and created cohesiveness between members, which certainly contributed to achieving more optimal results. The implication of this study shows that integrating emotional intelligence in the collaborative learning process can significantly improve the quality of holistic education for students at the primary school level.

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