

**Supporting Students' Social-Emotional Learning in  
Indonesian Primary Schools**

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## ABSTRACT

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The large amounts of time children spend in school every day put schools in a role of significant influence in not only a student's academic achievement but also the conceptualization of their social and emotional being. Schools provide support in social-emotional learning (SEL) through a variety of ways such as through teacher-student interaction, curriculum design, and a network of school-based support. In Indonesia, character education is integrated into the national curriculum to provide guidance for teachers, schools, and communities in developing students' social and emotional skills.

Using CASEL's five competencies of SEL as a framework, this qualitative study aims to explore the various forms of SEL support teachers and schools provide for primary school students in Indonesia. This study utilizes teacher interviews and classroom observations using a case study research design to examine the application of SEL both in the classroom and school.

The findings of this study suggest that teachers and schools have demonstrated efforts to support the SEL competencies through various forms of support in attempt to reinforce students' social and emotional development. However, the observed practices were insufficient in supporting CASEL's model of SEL. In this case, cultural factors need to be considered when contextualizing these results. Thus, future studies on the effects of SEL interventions on students as well as further development of SEL practices in schools are recommended.

**Keywords:** social-emotional learning, Indonesian schools, primary school, character education, teacher-student interaction

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# 1 INTRODUCTION

Children spend a large amount of time in schools, with Indonesian students spending some of the largest numbers of days in school in the world with 240 days per year (Parinduri, 2014). Due to such extensive involvement in students' lives, school becomes a large influence on not only academic achievement but also how students conceptualize themselves as social and emotional beings. Socialization in schools can influence a student's character, behavior, engagement with others, and perception of the future (Chen & Vasonyi, 2012, Durlak, Domitrovich, Weissberg, & Gullotta, 2015). The recognition for psychological support in schools renders social-emotional learning (SEL), defined as "the processes of developing social and emotional competencies" (CASEL, 2013, p. 9), increasingly more important. SEL improves the learning experience by creating an engaging, challenging, and meaningful learning environment, which can cater to a broader group of children by providing flexible and adaptive strategies (CASEL, 2013, Durlak, Weissberg, Dymnicki, Taylor, & Schellinger, 2011). In the long term, SEL can also encourage school success and prevent risky behaviors such as drug abuse and violence (Chen & Vasonyi, 2012, Denham et al., 2012).

Due to the promising prospects of SEL, schools, communities, and governments across the globe have developed SEL interventions that were implemented in their educational programs. The United States, being the birthplace of SEL, has been the leader of SEL development, with most states integrating SEL practices into the learning standards of K-12 classrooms (Humphrey, 2013). Notable SEL programs from the US include e.g. Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies (PATHS), which focuses on the implementation of a series of lessons for SEL development, and the Caring School Community (CSC) which focuses on school environment improvements (Humphrey, 2013). In Asian countries, the SEL in the classroom are more commonly seen in the form

of citizenship education and values education, with the goal of strengthening of national values and identity as well as teaching the knowledge needed to compete in a highly globalized society (Torrente, Alimchandani, & Aber, 2015). Indonesia also similarly follow this trend, with a curriculum that combines character education, civics education, and local contents curriculum (Kemendikbud, 2017, Kusumawati & Rulviana, 2017, Sunarso, 2009).

Despite the long history of social and emotional support in the curriculum design, classes that target social and emotional development in Indonesia are ineffective due to the classes taught in isolation from the rest of the curriculum and focus heavily on the theoretical aspect of character education (Satria, 2012). Moreover, the quality of support given to students may vary depending on a host of factors which may include school facilities, teacher qualities, and location of the school (Usman, Akhmadi, & Suryadarma, 2007). Due to the lack of research on the implementation of SEL in Indonesian schools, the next natural step would be to investigate the prevalence of SEL implemented in classrooms to address social and emotional needs of students in Indonesian primary schools.

For this research, I would like to explore how the Indonesian education system, specifically in the primary school level, teaches social and emotional competence through the lens of CASEL's dimensions of SEL. Using observations and interviews, I will be investigating how SEL is applied directly in the classroom and through the policies designed by the school. Specifically, I want to examine how classroom practices and various forms of school interventions, both through direct and indirect interventions, can support the development of students' SEL. This study is essential as it analyzes the implementation of SEL in Indonesian classrooms and provides information on the forms of support students receive through direct and indirect interventions by teachers and schools. The present qualitative study was conducted using the case study method through observations of classrooms and interviews of teachers of second-grade classrooms in different primary schools in a large Indonesian city.

This introduction chapter hopes to convince the reader about the importance of SEL in education and the need to further investigate the

application of SEL interventions in the Indonesian context. Throughout the rest of this thesis, I will be exploring further into the topic of SEL and its implementation in Indonesian primary schools. In the second chapter, I will be diving into the theoretical framework of SEL by defining the concept of SEL and relating its model to other theories. In the third chapter, I will further expand on SEL by exploring its practical implications by referring to previous studies. In the fourth chapter, I will be discussing and rationalizing the process of conducting my research as well as discussing the ethical considerations of this study. In the fifth chapter, I will be presenting the results of my study through interpretations of the gathered data. Finally, in the sixth chapter, I will be discussing the findings of my study in relation to the theoretical framework and literature review, explaining the trustworthiness of my research, as well as mentioning a few recommendations for future studies and practice.

## 2 SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LEARNING

### 2.1 Defining the concept

The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) defines social-emotional learning as “the process through which children and adults acquire and effectively apply the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions” (CASEL, 2017). In addition, Elias et al. (1997, p. 2) outlined social and emotional competence as “the ability to understand, manage, and express social and emotional aspects of one’s life in ways that enable the successful management of life tasks” to facilitate everyday demands which involves the self, such as problem solving, learning, and adapting to change, and others, such as forming relationships and cooperation.

CASEL (2017) have identified the five core competencies of SEL encompassing interpersonal, intrapersonal, and cognitive competencies (Weissberg et al., 2015), which are as follows.

1. *Self-awareness* is the ability to identify and process one’s thoughts, emotions, and values and how they can influence one’s behavior. In addition, the ability to assess one’s strengths and weaknesses, and possessing self-efficacy, optimism, confidence, and “growth mindset” are included in self-awareness. Qualities of self-awareness are “identifying and recognizing emotions, accurate self-perception, recognizing strengths, needs, and values, self-efficacy, and spirituality” (Zins, Bloodworth, Weissberg, & Walberg, 2004, p. 7).
2. *Self-management* refers to the ability to regulate one’s emotions, thoughts, and behavior in different environments through managing stress, controlling impulses, motivating oneself, and possessing the capacity to set and work towards personal and academic goals. Qualities of self-management are “impulse control and self-management, self-motivation and discipline, and



goal setting and organizational skills” (Zins, Bloodworth, Weissberg, & Walberg, 2004, p. 7).

3. *Social awareness* includes the ability to empathize with others through perceiving and respecting perspectives of others of different backgrounds and cultures, internalize social and ethical norms of behavior, and recognizing different means of social resources and support in family, school, and community. Qualities of social awareness are “perspective taking, empathy, appreciating diversity, and respect for others” (Zins, Bloodworth, Weissberg, & Walberg, 2004, p. 7).
4. *Relationship skills* refer to the ability to establish social relationships with others and possess the capacity to socially engage effectively through clear communication, good listening, positive cooperation, resisting inappropriate social pressures, negotiating conflicts constructively, and seeking help when needed. Qualities of relationship skills are “communication, social engagement, and building relationships, working cooperatively, negotiation, refusal, and conflict management, and help seeking and providing” (Zins, Bloodworth, Weissberg, & Walberg, 2004, p. 7).
5. *Responsible decision-making* connects with the ability to make personal and social choices and decisions that are based on ethical standards, safety, and social norms and considers the consequences of those decisions realistically to oneself and others. Qualities of responsible decision making are “problem identification and situation analysis, problem-solving, evaluation and reflection, and personal, moral, and ethical responsibility” (Zins, Bloodworth, Weissberg, & Walberg, 2004, p. 7).

A wheel of SEL competencies designed by CASEL (2017) can be seen in Figure 1. The wheel consists of the five core competencies of SEL as well as the practitioners of SEL and the different approaches which can be used to support SEL in different settings.



FIGURE 1. CASEL's five competencies wheel (CASEL, 2017).

## 2.2 Theoretical Framework for SEL

The SEL framework design can be explained using several theories that guide its construct. Brackett, Elbertson, and Rivers (2015) identified a few theories to inform the content and implementation strategies of SEL, including systems theories, learning theories, child development theories, information-processing theories, and behavior change theories. Humphrey (2013), on the other hand, has suggested that two major theoretical concepts to become the backbone for SEL framework which are emotional intelligence and developmental psychology. His conceptual explanation of SEL can be shown in a conceptual map of SEL and similarly related terms shown in Figure 2 with the goal of further understanding the placement of SEL within a structure of other similar concepts. For this study, I will be expanding on three theories to framework the SEL concept which are *emotional intelligence*, *developmental psychology*, and *social learning theory*. Furthermore, the theoretical framework for the process of application of SEL interventions can be explained using *theory of change* as suggested by Rimm-

Kaufman and Hulleman (2015), shown in a conceptual framework in Figure 3 on page 12.

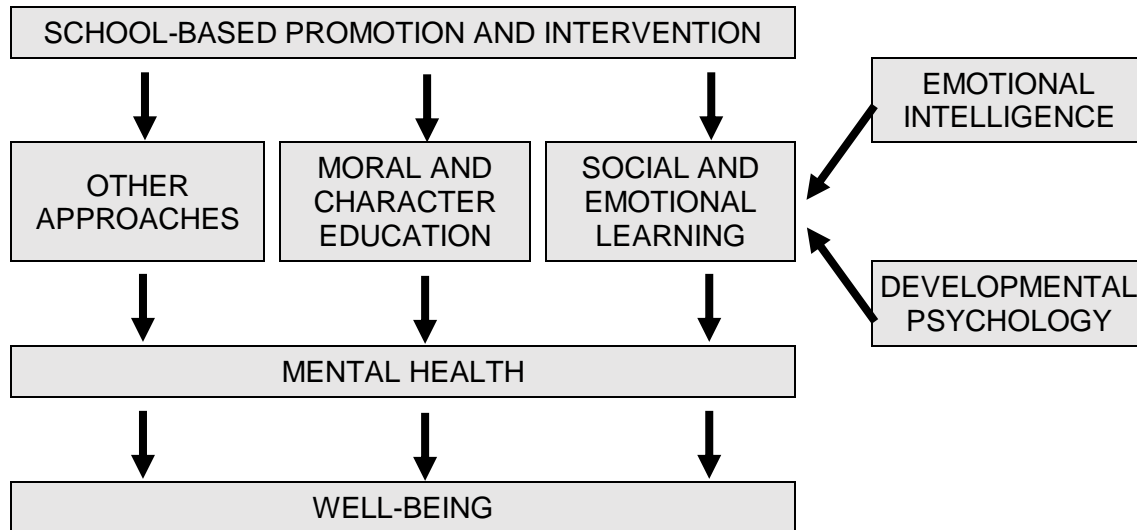


FIGURE 2. Conceptual map of SEL and other related terms (Humphrey, 2013, p. 26).

### 2.2.1 Emotional intelligence

Emotional intelligence (EI) can be defined as “the competence to identify and express emotions, understand emotions, assimilate emotions in thought, and regulate both positive and negative emotions in the self and in others” (Matthews, Zeidner, & Roberts, 2002, p. 3). The construct of EI has been popular with the growing movement of embracing intelligence beyond intellectual competences and the idea being there are many factors that may contribute to one’s success. EI also rejects intellectual elitism, often leveraged by socioeconomic advantage, offering an egalitarian answer to open doors to individuals who were not as intellectually or socioeconomically privileged (Matthews, Zeidner, & Roberts, 2002). Unlike intellectual intelligence, which is often deemed as more static and untrainable, EI is believed to be more adaptable to intervention and experience (Goleman, 1995 in Matthews, Zeidner, & Roberts, 2002).

While the conceptualization of emotions and emotional intelligence has been a complicated endeavor by numerous scientists, it can be argued that the essence of emotional intelligence does not draw from the output of physical

central systems of an individual, but rather reactive of cues, i.e. how one reacts to their external environments (Matthews, Zeidner, & Roberts, 2002). This suggests that coping is essential to emotional intelligence. The five factors that mediate this mechanism include having a variety of resources to cope with stressful situations, the awareness of one's consciousness, effectively regulating one's emotions during stressful situations, the ability to use emotional and social skills to face problems, and having flexible coping strategies (Matthews, Zeidner, & Roberts, 2002). The ability of managing one's emotions entails that a person is fully aware of their emotions and have the capabilities of regulating them, essential for positive development in the classroom.

### **2.2.2 Developmental psychology**

To understand how children learn, it is important to consider their psychological development and learning processes. Throughout the years, several psychologists have theorized how we develop psychologically using different lenses. Two theories have exemplified the social aspect of development, which is Vygotsky's social-historical theory of cognitive development and Erikson's stages of psychosocial development. These two theories will explain the need for social interaction in the optimum development of an individual.

*Vygotsky's zone of proximal development.* Lev Vygotsky was a Soviet psychologist, most known for his work in developmental psychology in the 1920s and 1930s. Vygotsky's work contradicts the most popular developmental psychology theory of the time, Piaget's stages of cognitive development, which highlights the internal factors of individual development (Pass, 2004). Vygotsky, on the other hand, emphasized the social impact of learning which highlights the important role of social culture on children's development (Pass, 2004). Vygotsky noted the significance of instruction which can help a child to construct complex ideas by providing framework to abstract systems and what Crain (2016) refers to as "consciousness in the child's thinking" (p. 242).

In education, it is important to consider a child's own ability when introducing new concepts. Moreover, Vygotsky recognized that an individual will perform better when supported by others who are more knowledgeable, reinforcing the social aspect of learning. The core concept of Vygotsky's theory is called the *zone of proximal development (ZPD)*, defined as "the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers" (Vygotsky, 1935 in Crain, 2016, p. 244). ZPD has created interest in the teaching process where teachers can be a vital factor in a child's development by implementing strategies to support a child's individual abilities. This support process is now often referred as *scaffolding*, a method of teaching where teachers will provide assistance that will slowly decrease as the child learns to grasp the new concept or skill. Teachers not only help their students with academic skills but are also determinant to the development of social and emotional skills as well, putting the role of teachers important in a child's SEL. Thus, according to Vygotsky's concept of learning, instruction on SEL is plays a vital role in developing a child's social and emotional competences.

*Erikson's stages of psychosocial development.* Erik Erikson, a German-American developmental psychologist, and psychologist, is best known for his theory on the stages of psychosocial development. Erikson's stages were constructed based on Freud's stages of psychosexual development. However, Erikson expanded this idea beyond physical stimulation to understand a more thorough understanding of an individual's encounter with the world. Erikson divided the human life into eight stages, prominently characterized by psychological crisis where developmental achievements or issues can develop depending on how successful that individual can navigate through the obstacles that occur in each stage (Crain, 2016). During each stage, there are important relationships that the individual will respond to which will help or fail in their quest to achieving virtue.

For a young child who is entering primary school, their stage of middle childhood renders them the crisis of *industry versus inferiority* (Crain, 2016). During this stage, children begin their life in formal education where they begin the journey of learning skills that would prepare them to live and work in the broader society. This will also be the stage of ego growth where children will begin to learn to work and play with others. Children at the stage become more self-aware of themselves and the failures that they experience, both in the classroom and the playground, can develop into feelings of inadequacy and inferiority (Crain, 2016). Good teachers can help children manage through these feelings and inspire them to become competent individuals. In its application in SEL, teachers must understand a child's psychological condition in order to facilitate the student's social and emotional development as this understanding will equip teachers with the knowledge of what they should or should not do while teaching.

### **2.2.3 Social learning theory**

Learning as a process can be understood as the process of acquiring "knowledge, skills, attitudes, values, beliefs, emotions, and senses" (Jarvis, Holford, & Griffin, 2003). The process of learning for humans is often regarded as a social process, whether it involves non-formal, such as families or peers, or formal forms of society, such as educational institutions. Ideas on learning have expanded throughout the years, and it is commonly acknowledged that the learning process happens throughout a person's lifetime and occurs both in and outside of formal educational institutions. The forms of learning have also broadened, shifting from the idea of theories as the only form of transferrable knowledge to practical application also becoming a part of the repertoire of learning.

One of the objectives of education is not only teaching academic skills but also, as Jarvis, Holford, and Griffin (2003) refer to as, 'hidden curriculum', an objective of learning that is beyond the traditional view of education and expands into the teaching of social relationships in the classroom. A few explanations of the role of schools as an authority of social etiquette may lie in the purpose of

schools itself, which is to elevate a group of people to acquire a higher level of achievement that will allow them to further themselves in society. Learning is also a social construct, meaning that society determines what individuals need to learn. This can mean the form or content of learning that they will be exposed, will be dependent on their society, as well as the different values and norms of behavior will be transferred differently depending on their own culture. Sociology refers to this understanding of learning as *socialization* (Jarvis, Holford, & Griffin, 2003).

Canadian-American psychologist Albert Bandura remarked that people learn much faster when they observe and imitate others, also called *observational learning*, rather than learning through trial-and-error and consequences (Crain, 2016). Not only does observation help with acquiring new skills or knowledge, but it also helps in teaching possible consequences of wrong behavior in a process called *vicarious reinforcement* (Crain, 2016).

Through observational learning, individuals can go through the process of socialization, which is influenced by culture. One of Bandura's most famous experiment, the Bobo doll experiments, places children in a setting where they can learn aggressive behavior by watching and imitating older male models engaging in such behavior (Crain, 2016). Children's response would then change if they see the model being punished or if they get rewards regardless of the male model's consequences. Repeated exposure of modelling and socialization throughout the years of a person's life will help develop a person's own complex understanding of social norms. The setting of personal standards for personal behavior that should be rewarded or punished is a process called *self-regulation* (Crain, 2016). Schools facilitate this with designed interventions or from daily interactions between teachers and students.

#### **2.2.4 Theory of change**

Rimm-Kaufman and Hulleman (2015) suggest that SEL interventions are designed to the *theory of change*, a process planning, executing, and evaluating core components of a long-term goal by creating systematic pathways and

breaking down long-term goals into more manageable short-term goals. Two outcomes are planned when making these interventions: *proximal outcomes*, which are the immediate outcomes of an intervention, and *distal outcomes*, which are the long-term goals that are planned. Distinguishing between proximal and distal outcomes is used as a strategy to ensure the intervention is going according to plan. Proximal outcomes are a direct result of interventions, which can signal whether the intervention is heading towards the distal outcomes. When the distal outcomes do not meet the expectations, practitioners can then adjust the intervention accordingly to ensure the distal outcome will be met in the future.

In the context of SEL programs, the distal outcomes expected are improved performance in academic and social skills both in and out of schools. Thus, the proximal outcomes that can lead to this long-term goal include among others improved relations with teachers and peers and improved skills relating to oneself. Rimm-Kaufman and Hulleman (2015) created a conceptual framework of SEL interventions (Figure 3) aligned with the theory of change.

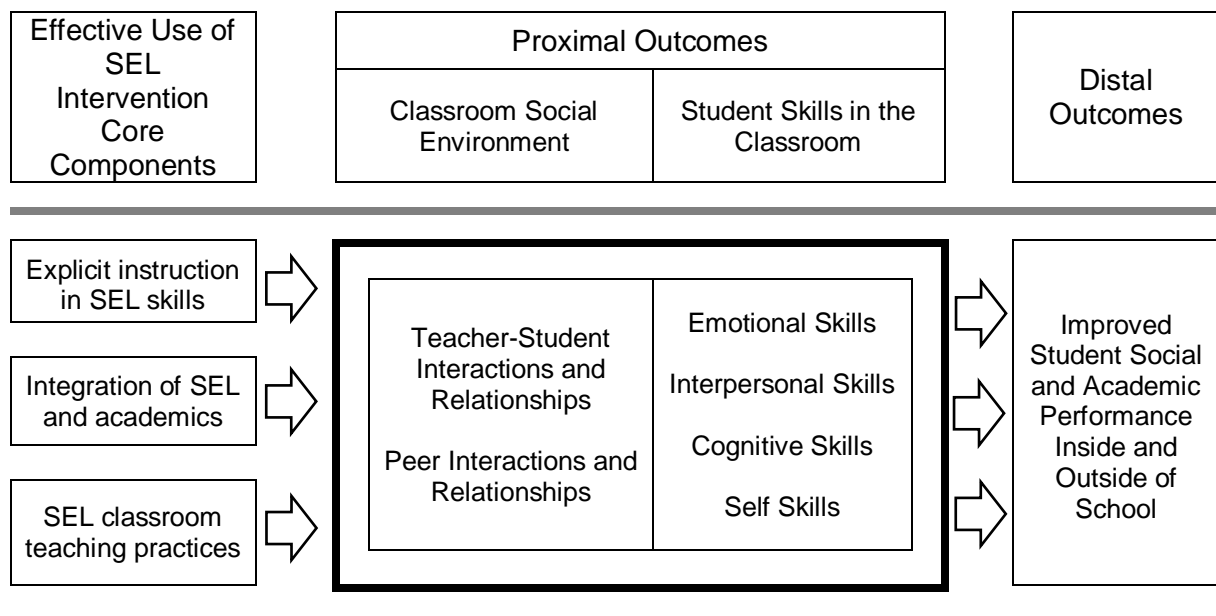


FIGURE 3. Conceptual framework of SEL interventions using proximal and distal outcomes (Rimm-Kaufman & Hulleman, 2015, p. 153).



## **3 SEL IN EDUCATION**

### **3.1 Importance of SEL in education**

There is an increasing need to prepare children with the skills to navigate through the complex social structures of today's world, especially with the saturation of social media and internet in day-to-day activities which requires more nuanced social competences (Reid Chassiakos, Radesky, Christakis, Moreno, & Cross, 2016). Moreover, through globalization, classrooms have become more multicultural and multilingual with teachers often having difficulties managing such a diverse group of students equally and higher estimates of students becoming disengaged in class (Weissberg et al., 2015). SEL was developed from the need to provide "thoughtful, sustained, and systemic attention" that guides children to become "knowledgeable, responsible, and caring" individuals (Elias et al., 1997, p. 1). Thus, SEL programs are designed to establish positive personal and social skills and habits that can be maintained for a long period of time.

A meta-analysis by Durlak, Weissberg, Dymnicki, Taylor, and Schellinger (2011) of social-emotional learning programs in schools ranging from kindergarten to high school suggests that students who possess social and emotional skills such as self-confidence, self-discipline, stress-management, and organization show improved school performance and social attitudes. Interpersonal support, which is encouraged in SEL interventions, has also shown to improve academic success through supportive encouragement from peers and teachers and positive school environments that are engaging, supportive, and committed to support academic success and advocate positive behavior (Durlak et al., 2011).

A study on the relationship between SEL programs and social engagement by Yang, Bear, and May (2018) revealed that there is a positive and significant association between the two factors. Students who received instructional support from their classroom teachers displayed more positive emotional engagement to their teachers, peers, and school in general by developing their prosocial skills

and better at managing positive relationships (Yang, Bear, & May, 2018). Furthermore, student engagement relates positively with academic achievement, especially behavioral engagement, which means that students who participate and are actively involved in school activities are more likely to have high academic achievement (Lei, Cui, & Zhou, 2018).

Social and emotional education aims to help students in cultivating skills necessary to become holistically “healthy and competent” by developing their attitudes, behaviors, and cognition (Elias et al., 1997, p. 2). Effective SEL programs involve two key components, which are education and environment (Yang, Bear, & May, 2018). The education component consists of systemic instructions by teachers and the application of SEL skills by students, while the environment component consists of the creation of safe and supportive environments in classrooms and schools and establishing positive and supportive relationships between individuals in schools (Yang, Bear, & May, 2018). Four elements of effective SEL approaches have been suggested by CASEL (2017) to form the acronym SAFE which represents sequenced, active, focused, and explicit. CASEL (2017) implied that an effective SEL approach will have activities that are connected and coordinated to support skill development, use active forms of learning to help students learn social and emotional skills. SEL also comprise of at least one component dedicated to the development of personal and social skills, and targets skills specific to social and emotional development (CASEL, 2017).

On a practical level, some considerations must be deliberated when implementing effective SEL programs. The teachers should be provided professional development and training by providing them strategies that can be used in the classroom (McCormick, Cappella, O’Connor, & McClowry, 2015). Organized and well-planned classrooms support emotional learning by being highly responsive to students’ emotional needs through respectful interactions, fair discipline, organized teaching, and appropriate and effective instructions (Pianta, La Paro, & Hamre, 2008 in McCormick, Cappella, O’Connor, & McClowry, 2015; Hagelskamp, Brackett, M. Rivers, & Salovey, 2013).

Additionally, frequent interactions in smaller peer groups may allow for close relationships that can influence stronger interpersonal engagement (Yang, Bear, & May, 2018).

### 3.2 Taxonomy of SEL interventions

In the pursuit of framing the concept of SEL, Humphrey (2013) has identified three dimensions of SEL interventions. These dimensions will help identify the forms of interventions that are often used in classrooms, schools, and the community in general.

1. Intervention reach: this dimension distinguishes the target of intervention delivery, differentiating between *universal* interventions which are preventive and target the student body as a whole, often with more moderate interventions conducted over a long period of time, or *targeted/indicated* interventions which are reactive, focus on at-risk students, and are often more intensive in nature.
2. Component structure: this dimension distinguishes the structural composition of the delivered interventions. It is differentiated between *taught curriculum* where specifically designed, often teacher-led, lessons and activities are implemented that directly support SEL for students, *school environment* targets on improving school climate through changes in school policies and rules, and *parents and the wider community* where the focus becomes broadening SEL outside of the school environment.
3. Prescriptiveness: this dimension refers to methods of reinforcement and authority of instructions of SEL interventions and are distinguished into two subsets: *top-down/prescriptive* where interventions are guided by detailed instructions and manuals which school staff will then carry out step by step, whereas *bottom-up/flexible* where school staff adjust and develop their own methods according to their own needs.

Identifying the dimensions applied in specific interventions are not singular in nature and often interventions comprise of a combination of the different

subsets in each dimension. For example, an intervention can be both prescriptive and flexible in its prescriptiveness by giving school staff a general guideline and set of instructions which they can modify on their own.

### **3.3 SEL in the classroom**

#### **3.3.1 Teacher-student interaction**

A conclusion can be made from the theories of developmental psychology and the social learning theory that the teacher's interactions with students are an important aspect of teaching social and emotional skills. Pianta, Hamre, and Allen (2012) have identified three domains that support teacher-student interaction in the classroom in their Teaching Through Interactions (TTI) framework, originally conceptualized by Piata and Hamre (2007, in Pianta, Hamre, & Allen, 2012), with each domain possessing their own dimensions, with a total of nine dimensions that consists the TTI framework. For this research, I will be using only the first two dimensions which are emotional interaction and classroom organization. This is because these two dimensions relate directly to the development of social and emotional competencies compared to the third domain, instructional interaction, which targets the development of knowledge by expanding beyond simply learning facts by understanding one's thinking process in order to connect acquired learning into "usable knowledge" (Pianta, Hamre, & Allen, 2012, p. 375).

The first domain is *emotional interaction*, which is based on two developmental theories, attachment theory, and self-determination theory, and focuses on emotional connectedness between teachers and students that will support the social and academic progression of students (Pianta, Hamre, & Allen, 2012). The first dimension of the emotional interaction domain is *classroom climate*. It can be distinguished into two qualities of climate: a positive climate, which fosters joy in learning and engaging with other peers and adults in the classroom highlighted by warm and caring relationships, and a negative climate created by an environment that causes students discomfort through ineffective

social engagement, such as yelling, humiliation, or irritation. The second dimension is *teacher sensitivity*, which is a teacher's sensitivity and responsiveness to a student's needs in the classroom is an important aspect of teacher-student interaction as it reinforces a classroom environment that is safe and supportive for learning. The last dimension is *regard for students' perspectives*, which spotlights on how often the teacher considers students' ideas and opinions into the daily running of the class and how flexible a teacher is willing to act in response to the students' reactions.

The second domain of TTI is *classroom organization*, which focuses on the strategies of a well-functioning and well-organized classroom, which is a hallmark of effective educational practice implemented with the organization of behavior, time, and attention (Emmer & Stough, 2001 in Pianta, Hamre, & Allen, 2012). The first dimension is *behavioral management*, narrowly defined as to "promote positive behavior and prevent or terminate misbehavior" (Pianta, Hamre, & Allen, 2012, p. 374). It is characterized by classrooms with clear behavioral expectations, monitoring and seeking prevention of potential problems in the classroom, redirecting minor problems with effective and efficient strategies to reinforce good behavior in the classroom, and allocating only small amount of time to manage behavioral issues. The second dimension is *productivity*, characterized by a classroom whose players are aware of their roles and tasks, teachers with a productive classroom spend more of their time on the main learning activities and less time on basic management activities, such as preparing materials. The last dimension is *instructional learning formats*, which the use of various socially and cognitively engaging modalities of learning that can encourage students to actively participate and stay motivated in classroom activities.

The TTI framework will be used for the analysis of this study because it specifically targets behaviors that occur in the classroom that is led by the teachers, either through direct interaction or through classroom management strategies. These two dimensions will specifically help to answer the first research question which is

Elias et al. (1997) have also outlined a few ways teachers can help students with their SEL. These concepts are related to the theories that have been discussed previously. The first way a teacher can guide students in SEL is through *modelling*. This mirrors the concept of social learning theory that was discussed in Chapter 2. Modelling, or teaching by example, can be a great way for children to understand how to behave in a good manner through seeing their teacher's behavior. Humor can also be a way teacher's can model for their students, allowing students to embrace a more fun approach to learning. The next is *cueing and coaching*, which have elements of Erikson's psychosocial stages of development. Teachers are important actors in children's lives by guiding them through the right and wrongs ways of social and emotional navigation and using instructions and social cues can be used as intentional guidance to provide this. The final method is through *scaffolding dialogue*, which takes directly from Vygotsky's zone of proximal development. Scaffolding is not limited to learning academic skills, but as mentioned in cueing and coaching, it is also an important tool to help children learn social and emotional skills. In dialogue, teachers and educators can prompt children with questions or remarks that can help them discover their skills in their own way.

### **3.3.2 Classroom management**

A well-managed classroom is an important element of classrooms that will enable effective learning for the students and teaching for the teacher. Jones, Bailey, and Jacob (2014) identified four elements to an effectively managed classroom, which are planning and preparation, quality relationships, effective environment, and observation and documentation. An essential quality to all these elements is that they are all preventative measures, which are deliberate and thought-out instead of only reacting to the situation. These four elements encompass the different phases of a classroom activity, starting from before the students step into the classroom, their social and physical space during learning, and assessments after class is completed, ensuring that methodologically thoughtful design becomes an important aspect of a well-managed classroom.

This concept is similarly connected to Piata and Hamre's TTI framework, specifically the second dimension of classroom organization and extends the idea beyond the behavioral component and into the physical world of the classroom.

Hue and Li (2008) remarked that there are two distinct purposes to classroom management. The first is to provide a "supportive, respectful learning environment" (p. 5), meaning that a positive learning environment is as important as providing good order and discipline in the classroom. The second is taking a proactive approach to students' development socially and emotionally. Allowing students to grow in a positive, supportive classroom will empower them with self-esteem, motivation, a sense of achievement and control over their behavior.

An essential part of classroom management is retaining order in the classroom. While rigidity is not the main goal for classroom management, as teachers must remain flexible enough to allow for any changes that will happen in a classroom, a classroom with good order gives structure and organization to classroom activities, ensuring that the aims of learning can be achieved effectively. Doyle (2006) noted that order can be achieved through different strategies such as the physical setting of the classroom, rules and procedures, establishing routines, and organizing classroom activities.

### **3.4 Facilitating SEL support**

#### **3.4.1 Professional development for teachers**

Developing highly qualified teachers is a core element to providing high quality education and providing teachers with support in their career development is an important part of the teaching process that will allow for optimum learning in the classroom. There are different ways a teacher can further develop their professional careers, such as in-service training or advancing one's degree, which includes various ways a teacher can expand their knowledge, skills, and disposition to improve their quality of teaching in order to become more effective

and supportive to students (Whitebook, Gomby, Bellm, Sakai, & Kipnis, 2009 in Egert, Fukkink, & Eckhardt, 2018).

Aside from formal professional development, such as training, workshops, or improvement of teaching qualifications, other means teachers can use to develop their teaching is through informal learning, a method of learning gained through everyday practice of teaching (Grosemans, Boon, Verclaire, Dochy, & Kyndt, 2015). Embracing informal learning also means embracing life-long learning, entailing teachers can continue their professional development outside of formally organized training. Teachers can utilize a variety of sources and strategies to expand their learning. As an example, in a digital world like today, social media has become a source for teacher to expand their learning beyond their school grounds (Kelly & Antonio, 2016).

### **3.4.2 Parental involvement**

While it is easy to assume that the role of education falls firmly on the shoulders of teachers, the role of parents is crucial as well, since they and other family members have a major significance in a child's life. Parental involvement in education has many positive effects to a student, including higher academic achievement, lower dropout rates, fewer retention rates, and fewer special education placements (Anderson & Minke, 2007). However, teachers often see a lower level of parental involvement in education, perhaps because parents sense they need to be more involved at home than at school (Anderson & Minke, 2007). Other factors such as a parent's sense of efficacy in helping their child to succeed in school, their belief of their role in their child's education, the family's socioeconomic status, and the child's grade level may contribute to a parent's involvement in school (Anderson & Minke, 2007; Green, Walker, Hoover-Demsey, & Sandler, 2007).

School-family partnerships have been linked to more than just academic success as family involvement also benefits a child's self-esteem, behavior, and improvement in attitude towards school (Albright, Weissberg, & Dusenbury, 2011). School and family collaboration is important as it helps create consistent



and continued expectations of behavior (Albright, Weissberg, & Dusenbury, 2011). Thus, in order to fully establish the support of SEL for students, it is important to involve not only the teacher and schools but also parents as well.

### **3.5 SEL in Indonesia**

The Ministry of Education and Culture views character education as an effort to instill national values of Pancasila, the five principles of Indonesian foundational philosophy, and the 1945 Constitution of Indonesia amid national moral dilemmas such as the loss of national cultural values and the weakening of national independence (Kemendiknas, 2011). The National Long-Term Development Program [*Rencana Pembangunan Jangka Panjang Nasional*; RPJPN] 2005-2025 declared a program which aims to create a noble, moral, ethical, cultural, and civilized society based on the philosophy of Pancasila (Kemendiknas, 2011). The design of the character education program encompasses four dimensions of development, including cognitive [*olah pikir*], physical [*olah raga*], affective [*olah hati*], and socio-cultural [*olah rasa dan karsa*], which covers 18 desired values (Kemendiknas, 2011). The program consists of three different strategies, which are intervention through policy, practical experience, and program revitalization through extracurricular activities. These strategies are planned to be implemented simultaneously through activities in classroom activities, development of education culture, and implementation of co-curricular and extracurricular activities (Kemendiknas, 2011).

Prior to the implementation of character education, the Indonesian education system has a long history of teaching social and emotional competencies through civic education and local contents curriculum. Civic education, defined as “the formation through the process of schooling of the knowledge, skills, values, and dispositions of citizens” (Cogan, Morris, & Print, 2002, p. 24), began as early as 1947 in some educational circles in Indonesia and became an official component of the Indonesian education curriculum in 1962 (Sunarso, 2009; Iswati, 2015). The basis of Indonesian civics education has been

Pancasila, the five principles of Indonesian philosophical theory, and the 1945 Constitution of Indonesia [*Undang-undang Dasar 1945*]. Civics education has evolved over time, applying different names which integrate moral education or specific studies on Pancasila, but throughout its history, the main goal of civics education is to instill a sense of nationalism and civic duty to young Indonesians especially in an archipelago country consisting of hundreds of different cultures (Sunarso, 2009). Sunarso (2009) has noted that the intentions of civic education shifted during the different regimes, specifically, the first two regimes notably called the Old Order (*Order Lama*, 1945-1965) lead by Soekarno and the New Order (*Orde Baru*, 1966-1998) lead by Soeharto. During these two regimes, civic education was less about educating civic duty and more about political indoctrination (Sunarso, 2009). While the instruction of the ruling political ideologies is no longer the objective of the current civic education, the contents still put students in a position of receiving ideas of desired behavior and puts little emphasis on the students' abilities to investigate civics and politics that reflect real-world actuality (Sunarso, 2009).

*Muatan lokal* or local contents is a curriculum designed to encourage students to learn about the natural, social, and cultural environment of their surrounding area. This curriculum is intended to allow students to understand about their place of living more intimately with the aim of learning and further developing their close surroundings (Musanna, 2010). Culture education is also established in the Indonesian education system to maintain local identity practice among the new generation. Thus in 1987, a new local-focused curriculum called local content curriculum (*muatan lokal*) was developed (Kusumawati & Rulviana, 2017). This curriculum specifically focuses on particular local issues, such as nature, society, and culture, and highlights the cultural diversity of Indonesia (Kusumawati & Rulviana, 2017). This curriculum is complementary to the civics education and allows students to understand the direct environment that they live in with the hope that they can conserve and continue the cultural uniqueness of their region. The local contents curriculum is meant to be a separate curriculum different from other subjects as the content would be adapted

according to the area of the schools. The development of the local contents curriculum arrived from the need to understand one's culture in order give realistic contribution to the area according to their special needs. It is also meant to act as a form of cultural preservation, especially considering the vast diversity of cultures available in Indonesia. (Kemendiknas, 2011)

The development of these two curriculums continued in 2017 where a presidential decree was given to develop a new approach to support student development in what is called the strengthening of character education [*penguatan pendidikan karakter*] (Kemedikbud, 2017). Character education is a learning program designed to advocate social competencies and cooperative abilities (White & Warfa, 2011). This new program is intended to be more integrative into the main curriculum, while also highlighting on the importance of extracurricular activities and the involvement of the school, the family and society in the development of a student's character. According to the Presidential Regulation No. 87, 2017, Article 2, the character education program is aimed to equip students with the right tools to adapt to a dynamic future, prioritize character education through different platforms of education, and revitalize and strengthen the potential and competence of students with five core values including nationality, religiosity, integrity, independence, and mutual cooperation. Article 7 paragraph 3 also states that the program specifically targets non-academic skills and is intended to expand potential, talents, interests, aptitude, personality, cooperation, and independence of students.

A few studies has been done in Indonesia on the application of character education and other similar subjects, which relates to the practice of transferring social-emotional skills in the classroom. Several studies have been done on character education in Indonesian classrooms. An important introductory report on character education was written by Judiani (2010) on the piloting program for the character education curriculum. This report provided the details of the grounding principles for character education in Indonesia. On a field level, a study is done by Qoyyimah (2016) who studied the instruction of character education through interviews with English as foreign language (EFL) teachers,

specifically on teacher's perceptions on the transmission of secular and religious moral values in classrooms. This research concludes that, while the curriculum itself remains quite secular, the teacher's personal views and implementation of moral values are heavily influenced by their religious values. Religion is also a strong influence in research about Indonesian character education. A few literature review studies on character education in Indonesia reviewed the curriculum from the religious aspects of this program, such as Eka (2017), Nadhif (2012), and Prawitasari, Mujahidin, and Fattah (2015), which all analyzed the character education curriculum from an Islamic perspective. Rasna and Tantra (2017), on the other hand, explored character education from the language learning curriculum through the lens of local Balinese wisdom and Hindu philosophy.

A few studies have also been conducted on social competences transferred in Indonesian classrooms. A preliminary study by Kurniawan and Dewi (2016) indicated that the perception of connectedness to school is correlated to a student's awareness of their emotions. This study was done on junior high school students and was done outside of any reported additional character education or SEL programs, although it can be assumed the students were participating in the mandatory character education and civics classes. This finding was reflective of the meta-analysis by Durlak, et al. (2011) which suggested that school involvement directly correlated with social and emotional competence. Another study by Supriatna (2005) sought to seek the effectiveness of character education through textbook designs of the social studies subjects. The study concluded that character education can be implemented effectively into class lessons through deliberate lesson plans and various methods of learning that can further develop students' character and social skills.

### **3.6 Cultural aspects of SEL**

Social and emotional competencies are highly affected by the cultural context of the locality (Torrente, Alimchandani, & Aber, 2015). CASEL, the main center for

SEL research and intervention development, is located in the USA. Subsequently, most research done on SEL is done in North America, which mirrors the cultural context of the birthplace of SEL. A meta-analysis by Durlak, et al. (2011) noted that 87% of their literature was from the United States, which meant that research done on SEL was heavily American-centered. Surely, Indonesia as a developing Southeast Asian nation is vastly different from the context of the majority of previous SEL studies.

Perhaps the most culturally appropriate approach is to compare Indonesia with other countries in Asia, specifically other Southeast Asian nations. Torrente, Alimchandani, and Aber (2015) noted that the most common form of SEL intervention in international settings are through citizenship education. Citizenship education varies between different countries, with different studies that involve a range between nationalism to cultural and religious values. However, most citizenship education involve some form of development of students' social and emotional skills. In Asia specifically, values education is commonplace and becomes a prominent mode of learning social and emotional skills. Lee, Grossman, Kennedy, and Fairbrother (2004, in Torrente, Alimchandi, & Aber, 2015) points to a few similarities of citizenship and values education among Asian countries which include "harmony, spirituality, and self-cultivation or improvement that occur through collective realization" (p. 577). It can be concluded that relationality, especially between oneself and the people around them, is an important aspect of social and emotional learning in many Asian countries. An additional aspect of SEL in Asian countries is the importance of the transfer of traditional value systems to the younger generation, which is also emphasized in Indonesian character education.

## **4 METHODOLOGY**

In this chapter, I will be describing the research process of my study, which begins with the research questions and design, participants of the study, research procedure and data collection methods, data analysis, and concluding with ethical considerations.

### **4.1 Research questions**

The aim of this study is to investigate the application of social-emotional learning in Indonesian primary school classrooms using CASEL's dimensions of SEL. This study is intended to be descriptive research regarding social-emotional learning in Indonesian primary schools.

To complete this research, a few research questions must be made to guide the structure of the research. For this study, the following research questions will be used.

1. How do Indonesian teachers support students' SEL in the classroom?
2. How do Indonesian schools support the different facilitators of SEL?

### **4.2 Research design**

The purpose of this study is to explore the application of SEL in Indonesian primary school classrooms. The qualitative research approach will be used as it aims towards "complex processes, exploration, and discovery" (Suter, 2012, p. 346). Cresswell (2013, in Cresswell & Poth, 2018) has constructed a definition of qualitative research as "the use of interpretive/theoretical frameworks" on the basis of assumptions to understand individuals or groups in the context of "a social or human problem" (p. 44). In essence, qualitative research is a method of interpreting the world by understanding the meaning of human representations (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011).

In this study, I will employ a case study research design which is a method of qualitative research which explores a bounded system or systems over a certain amount of time through the inquiry of information from various sources (e.g. observations, interviews) in detailed and in-depth data reported in case descriptions and case-based themes (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Yin (2014) also expanded that there are two distinct features of a case study design. The first is the scope of the case study, which involves an investigation of a real-life phenomenon but bound by contextual conditions. The second feature is that the case study design is comprised of a variety of methods that can be used to inquire the in-depth data necessary to explore the themes of the study, which is often built upon theoretical foundations.

The case study research design is distinguished by narrowing the scope of the study to one or a few cases with the goal of descriptively illustrating an issue (Cresswell & Poth, 2018). This is distinctive to other qualitative research methods; for example, narrative research and ethnography both use similar methods of data inquiry but aim to explore, respectively, individual experiences or stories of groups or individuals in the context of their cultural setting (Cresswell & Poth, 2018). Distinguishing the research design is important for conducting research to ensure that the process of the study is done correctly in order to answer the questions that were brought forth. In this case, it is important to determine the goal of the study, so the data inquiry, data analysis, and interpretation are in line with one another.

For this study, using a case study is more appropriate as I wanted to explore the application of SEL in primary schools using different schools as different cases. This topic is quite narrow in its application and the subject of study is specific, which are primary school classrooms and primary school teachers in Indonesia. In the case study research design, it is important to make sure that there are a variety of data samples to ensure a rich description of the case. For this study, I will be mainly using observations and interviews, as well as textbooks used by the teachers to add more substance to the data set.

### 4.3 Participants

The study involves four second-grade classes from four different schools in a large city in Indonesia. The second grade is chosen because they are the younger primary school students but who are expected to be more settled into the school routine. In the participating schools, and Indonesian schools in general, students in the second grade of primary school are generally in the ages of between 7 to 8 years old.

Three of the schools were private schools and one was a public school. The public school and one of the private schools followed the national curriculum, which at the time of observation was the 2013 Curriculum (*Kurikulum 2013/Kurtilas*), while the remaining two private schools followed a modified version of the national curriculum. The schools were chosen through personal contact and school visits, while the classes were chosen by the principals based on the length of time the teachers have been with the schools, preferring teachers who had more teaching experience in the school. The classes had between 23 to 32 students, with two classrooms having one homeroom teacher per class and two classrooms have one homeroom and one assistant teacher per class, and all the schools involving additional teachers for some subject classes.

Observations were done on homeroom teachers and assistant teachers and any observations regarding students were done as mostly as a general whole which regards the teachers' relationships with the students at large. Three of the homeroom teachers are female and one homeroom teacher is male, and both assistant teachers are female. Homeroom teachers have been teaching in their respective schools for between 8 to 15 years. Homeroom teachers were interviewed separately after the observations were completed. A complete description of the participating schools and teachers is provided in Table 1.



TABLE 1. Description of participating schools.

School	Type	Class size	Curriculum	Observation time	Interview time
School A	Private, general	25 students, 1 homeroom teacher, 1 assistant teacher	Modified national curriculum	3 days; 16 hours 20 minutes	18 minutes
School B	Private, religious	33 students, 1 homeroom teacher, 1 assistant teacher	Modified national curriculum	3 days; 9 hours 45 minutes	18 minutes 15 seconds
School C	Private, general	23 students, 1 homeroom teacher	2013 National Curriculum	3 days; 10 hours 20 minutes	20 minutes 25 seconds
School D	Public	31 students, 1 homeroom teacher	2013 National Curriculum	4 days; 5 hours 40 minutes	30 minutes 41 seconds

For this research, of the four schools that I studied, three were private schools and one was a public school. Private and public schools have different social associations in Indonesia, as Indonesian public schools are free and private schools, especially the elite, well-facilitated ones, are notoriously expensive. Due to this difference, public and private schools bring in different sets of students. Public schools are subjected to the zoning system since 2017 (Regulation of the Ministry of Education and Culture No. 51, 2018, Article 16) which meant that 90% of the students in a public school live in the surrounding neighborhoods. Private schools, which are often religious- or curriculum-based, are not subjected to the zoning system, but their expenses tend to determine their students based on the family's socioeconomical qualification.

Because of this, there tends to be a broader range of differences in facilities between private schools than between public schools. Elite private schools tend to be better facilitated than elite public schools as the private schools have direct control over their own expenses, compared to public schools, which tend to be relatively similar compared to other public schools in the same area. The difference can be seen in the teacher-to-student ratio. For example, while the class

in School B has the greatest number of students, they also have an assistant teacher. The public school that I visited also has a shared class system, which meant that the grades 1 and 2 share classrooms with grades 3 and 4, where the younger classes go to school in the morning and the older classes attend school in the afternoon. This is a common system in many schools in Indonesia, specifically public schools, which usually enroll many students in smaller sized buildings. Because of the shared space and split time, this also meant that students attend school in lesser time than in schools where classes are on their own. As an example, for this study, in School A, students attend school for 5.5 hours per day, while students in School D attend school for only 2 hours per day.

#### **4.4 Research procedure and data collection method**

This research was conducted using two primary methods, which were direct observations and interviews of teachers. Each classroom was observed over the course of three to four days, with the number of hours observed between 5 h 40 m to 16 h 20 m per classroom ( $M = 10$  h 31 m;  $SD = 4$  h 24 m); total observation time was 42 h 5 m. The method of data collection for the observations was descriptive pen-and-paper field notes. This method of data collection was chosen because it was the most practical method as video recordings and pictures of the classroom activities were not allowed to be taken. The notes produced were in the form of *scratch notes*, meaning that brief jottings are done during the duration of the observation (O'Reilly, 2009). Scratch notes are intended to capture the essence of the situation and are meant to trigger the memory for what fully happened at that moment. The scratch notes were divided into 30-minute periods in order to keep track of how much time the observation has been done. Below are a few sample notes from the observations. Texts in brackets are written after the observation session as to further explain the scratch notes.

After 25 minutes of [students doing] shape task [on their own], teacher asks students to read aloud text [written on the board] together even though some students were still not done [doing their task]. [The texts were reviewing the different shapes, their names, and characteristics.]

Poetry reading. [During poetry reading where each student read aloud their written poetry, after a few students reading, the other students began to lose their attention and started chatting among themselves.] [Teacher] shushes the class. [This happened a few times.] [Teacher then] threatens [students] with not going home.

I came into this research with the background as a former early childhood teacher, so my understanding of Indonesian primary schools come mostly from my personal experience as a student more than 15 years ago. Thus, I came into the field without much understanding of the real practice currently done in Indonesian primary schools. My role as a researcher in this study was non-participatory, which meant that I was only in the setting to watch the activities occur instead of being involved in the activities directly. This role of a researcher during observations is commonly used in case studies because it endeavors to capture behavior and settings as naturally as possible (Mills, Durepos, & Wiebe, 2010). I undertook covert observation, which meant that my presence as an observer was known to any person in the room, both observed participants and non-observed participants. This was done because cameras were explicitly not allowed in the classrooms so I must be in the room to observe the activities directly. Only behaviors of and interactions related to homeroom teachers and assistant teachers were used for analysis. Detailed observations of individual students were initially considered, however, there was a lack of time and resources to observe individual students in each classroom. Thus, any observations that involve the students were with the interaction of the teachers.

After completing the observation period in each class, the homeroom teachers were interviewed regarding their views of SEL in the classroom and about inquiries of any form of support given by the school to support the development of students' SEL through direct and indirect interventions. The interviews were face-to-face and semi-structured, which were documented by audio-recording and note-taking. Semi-structured interviews are interviews with only a basic outline, or as Olsen (2012) referred to as "scaffolding". It provides a more systematic and pre-planned method of interviews that still allow for further exploration of the subject matter. This method of interviewing was chosen as I

had several questions constructed from the literature review, but I wanted to allow the teachers to provide any additional insight they might have regarding the theme that may be outside of the topics provided from the literature review. The interviews lasted between 18 m to 30 m 41 s ( $M = 21$  m 50 s;  $SD = 5$  m 59 s); total interview time 1 h 27 m 21 s. The interview questions were designed (Appendix 1) to further probe the component structure of SEL applied in the classroom and the wider educational environment, such as specific curriculum-based interventions, the organization of school and class environments, and the involvement of parents and the wider communities.

The primary data from observations and interviews were regarded as complementary. Observations function to identify the application of SEL in the classroom, whereas interviews function to illustrate the teacher's personal principles of SEL and to inquire about SEL support students receive that is not apparent during the observation time. In the case study research method, it is highly recommended to provide triangulation of evidence to support the study. Triangulation is "the convergence of data collected from different sources, to determine consistency of a finding" (Yin, 2014, p. 241). The goal is to provide rich evidence across various sources that can increase the accuracy and credibility of the findings (Yin, 2014). For this study, I will provide *data triangulation*, which is the supplement of multiple data sets for evidence.

To complete data triangulation of this study, I will also use textbook materials as a secondary source, which provide a thorough guide of what teachers should be teaching in the classroom, to provide a richer data set for this study. Textbook materials will serve as supplementary to the primary data of observations and interviews and will serve as reflections of the main data sets. The textbooks I will be using are the teacher's guidebook versions of the Integrated Thematic Curriculum 2013, 2017 Revised Edition book series for primary school grade 2 published by the Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia. This book series is comprised of eight books, four for each of the two semesters in one school year. The main features of each book include Core Competence for each book, four subthemes, competence maps for

each subtheme, learning activities, development targets, and evaluation criteria. Only two books will be used for data analysis, which are *Tema 1: Hidup Rukun* [Theme 1: Living in Harmony] (Astuti, 2017) and *Tema 5: Pengalamanku* [Theme 5: My Experience(s)] (Taufina, 2015), both of which are the first books of each semester of the school year.

#### **4.5 Data analysis**

The data were analyzed through content analysis which is a “research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from texts (or other meaningful matter) to the contexts of their use” (Krippendorff, 2004, p. 18). Data collected from the study were further analyzed by finding patterns, which will be contextualized to the practice of SEL in classrooms. The process for each data analysis will be further clarified below.

Observations were done using field notes which were written with pen and paper and were transferred on Google Sheets using font Arial size 10 single spacing, accumulating to between 4 to 5 pages on A4 sheets per classroom. I sorted through the notes to make sure that the interactions were from the homeroom or assistant teachers as they were the teachers who interact the most with the students and are directly responsible for their development throughout the academic year. For the content analysis of the observations, I decided to use deductive content analysis guided by Pianta, Hamre, and Allen’s dimensions of teacher-student interactions (2013) and CASEL’s dimensions of SEL (2013). Deductive content analysis is a structure of content analysis where analysis is operationalized based on previous knowledge (Elo & Kyngäs, 2007). The codes and categories are determined beforehand using predetermined theories and data will be categorized according to those categories. For the observations, data were focused on interactions between teachers and students, so I specifically used Pianta, Hamre, and Allen’s dimensions of teacher-student interactions (2013) to categorize the observed interactions based on the forms of interactions that were expressed. Subsequently, the interactions were then identified using

CASEL's dimensions of SEL (2013), focusing on the goals of each interaction with the qualities of the SEL dimensions.

After transferring the notes onto a spreadsheet, I categorized each action by three domains of classroom quality, classified by Pianta, Hamre, and Allen (2012), specifically on teacher-student interactions, which are emotional support, classroom organization, and instructional support. A chart of the observation analysis process is pictured in Figure 4 with the codes that were used in parentheses. For this study, I focused mainly on the first two dimensions of teacher-student interaction, which are emotional support and classroom organization, as they directly relate to social-emotional learning, and I decided to exclude interactions that were grouped in the instructional support domain as this domain focuses mainly on the social aspect of cognitive development and

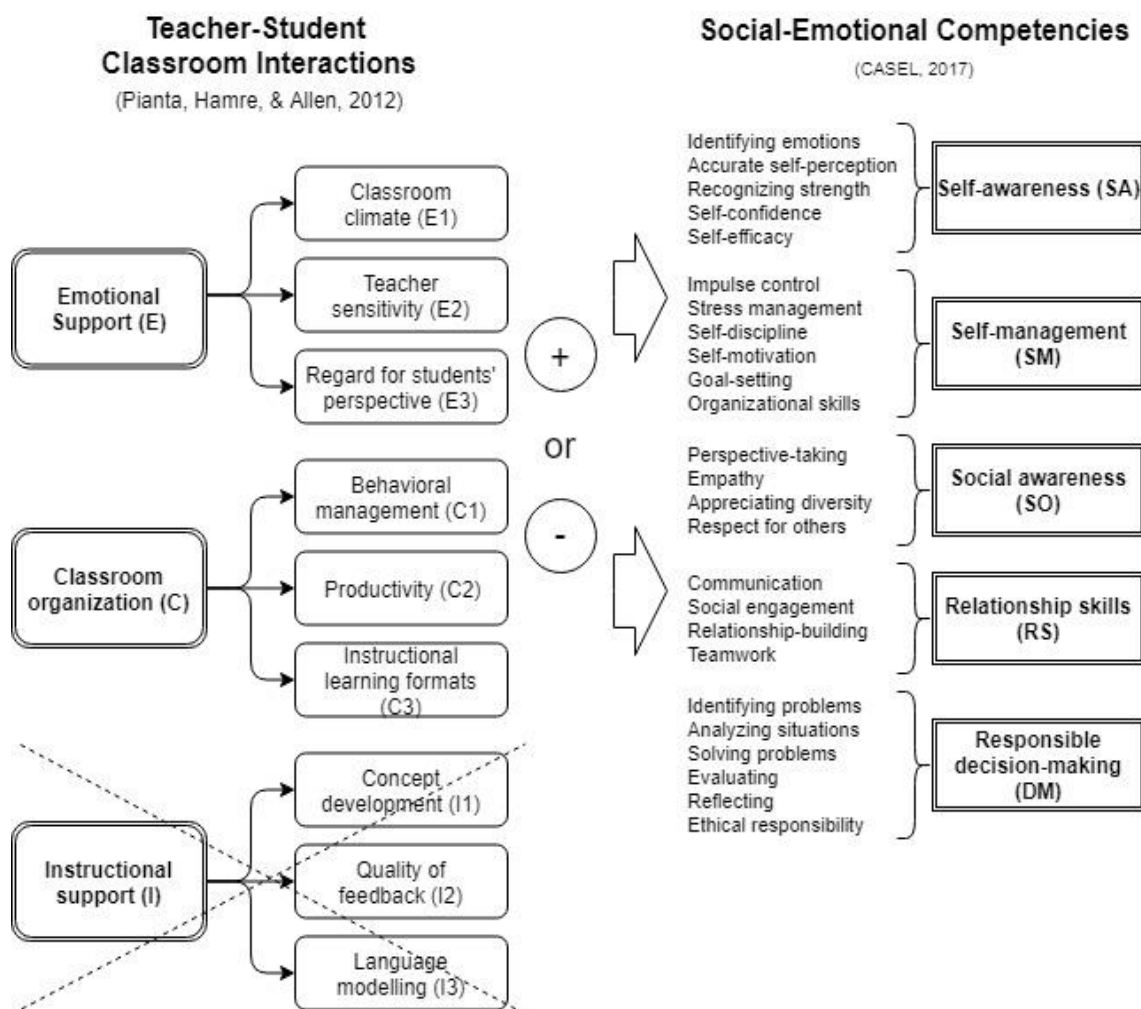


FIGURE 4. Deductive content analysis for observations.

academic comprehension. Each item was then identified by more specific indicators of each domain. These included e.g. classroom climate, teacher sensitivity, and regard for students' perspectives for the emotional support domain.

Next, the indicators were rated for the quality of the interaction with either a positive or a negative quality for each indicator, meaning whether the observed interaction supported or discouraged the quality of the indicator. Identifying the interaction indicators made it easier to classify each item into the five competencies of SEL it supported. It must be noted that, because the observations were done on the teachers, the effect of these interactions on the students' own SEL experience is only speculated. The final stage of the analysis was synthesizing the items for common themes as well as identifying differences between teachers.

While the observations focused on the type of interactions that directly related to the SEL domains, interviews were done to examine a teacher's personal philosophies on approaching SEL in the classroom as well as to enquire any additional support of SEL for students provided by the school or community, which was not identified during the observation period. First, the interviews were transcribed verbatim on Google Sheets using font Arial size 10 single spacing which accumulates to 3 to 4 pages on A4 sheets per teacher. Then, the answers were sorted to categorize per items firstly by categorizing the actors of the item (teacher, school, or community). After further categorization, I highlighted specific phrases that would further specify each item. Next, I followed the content thematic analysis process by Marks & Yardley (2004) and Bengtsson (2016). Interview answers were first divided into meaning units, which are the smallest unit of a context that contains insight needed for the research (Bengtsson, 2016). Meaning units can be comprised of whole paragraphs or sentences and are taken directly from the source materials. The source materials were then read over and over to achieve the most condensed version of the data. After obtaining a condensed meaning unit, each meaning unit was then given a code. Because the analysis process is inductive, codes were

determined as the analysis process went on. The coding process is meant to decontextualize the data so researchers can better understand the data that was obtained (Bengtsson, 2016). The codes that have been generated were then further categorized into sub-categories, categories, and themes, so that the patterns and themes of the various data sets can be concluded. Below in Table 2 is an example of the analysis process in an interview answer. The answer has been translated from the original Indonesian to English, with italicized words being original terms used in the original answer.

TABLE 2. Process of inductive content analysis for interviews.

Step	Sample quote	Analysis Process
1	Um... in case of interacting with friends and teachers, first is clearly they must use polite language. Especially to teachers. So indeed, you are taught that children must interact with <i>polite</i> language, politely. Then... uh... it's actually... what is it... connected to the Indonesian language class. Currently we are learning about apologizing, inviting others. So, there is a language that... words that they must use to... if they did a mistake, they have to say sorry. Sorry, <i>bla bla bla</i> . Then, if they want to... um... ask for help, they have to say please, like that.	Meaning unit
2	Students must learn how to use polite language when interacting with friends and teachers. They must learn how to use specific, proper words and languages when communicating with others for specific situations.	Condensed meaning unit
3	Politeness	Code
4	Respectful interaction	Sub-category
5	Socialization	Category
6	Teacher-student interaction	Theme

The content analysis of the textbooks follows similarly to the inductive content analysis process of the interviews, albeit in a less detailed manner as the textbooks were supplementary data for the study. After reading through the textbooks to find content that is related to social and emotional learning, I coded the meaning units before I categorized each code into sub-categories, categories,



and themes. The textbook content went through an open coding process, where meaning units are coded in relation to their context (Bengtsson, 2016).

As a final step, findings from the observations, interviews, and textbook material were synthesized and compared to generate an overarching theme for the study. Interpretations were also done that incorporates data from between the source materials. I utilized a thematic analysis approach to interpreting the data. Thematic analysis is a method of data analysis used to identify patterns in data by finding meaning through themes that will answer to the research questions (Willig, 2017). I identified similar themes that occurred in the data from both the observations and the interviews. Conclusively, the major themes that were identified were teacher-student interaction, classroom management, supporting teacher's careers, and parental involvement.

#### **4.6 Ethical considerations**

Permissions to observe the classrooms were given by the principal of each school after a thorough discussion of the study and a presentation of the research proposal. All the schools gave permission to conduct the study through verbal agreements. At the beginning of the study, when students were considered part of the subject of study, none of the schools required further forms of consent from the parents of the students. However, due to time restrictions, specifically the lack of resources to observe 20 to 30 children in one classroom in a short amount of time, ultimately the students did not become the main participants of the study.

Informed consent is an important part of the research process as it informs the participants on the purpose of the study and notifies of any potential risk about their involvement in the study which may include confidentiality, or ensuring identifying data will remain private, and access to interview and observation material (Brinkman & Kvale, 2017). Teachers were asked for written and signed consent to be observed and interviewed, with the interviews being audio-recorded. Anonymity and confidentiality were ensured, and no pictures

were taken during the duration of the data collection. Participants were also informed that they may stop being part of the study at any point of the research process if they change their mind. I also offered the possibility of sending the transcript to the participants if they requested. Thus, to maintain anonymity throughout this study, I will not be identifying the interviewees using any specific identification, including age and gender. The location of the study was also not identified.

In keeping the ethics on analyzing and reporting the data for qualitative research, it is important to present the various perspectives obtained from the data in a true manner (Creswell & Poth, 2018). That means the report should not skew positive and it is important to explore negative results as truthfully as they are presented. Other ways to ensure reliability and validity in qualitative study includes being explicit and transparent about the research process, acknowledging biases that may occur throughout the process of the study, seeking out comparisons and similarities with other cases, using detailed descriptions from the data to support findings, and data triangulation to support findings (Noble & Smith, 2015). Further clarification regarding the trustworthiness of this study will be explained in Chapter 6.

## 5 RESULTS

In this section, I will report the results of this research through data analysis and interpretation of findings. The findings are divided into two sections according to the research questions, which are SEL in the classroom and SEL in school.

### 5.1 SEL in Indonesian classrooms

#### 5.1.1 Teacher-student interaction in the classroom

*Lesson-based interaction.* In general, teachers in the observed classrooms were the initiators of interactions with students. Most of this interaction was related to giving instructions, often generally to the whole class. Academic activities were mostly teacher-directed instruction, where teachers would give instructions of the lesson which the students must follow. A typical teaching hour consisted of a lecture-type session, where teachers would explain the concepts that they would be learning that hour, and an assignment that followed, most often completed individually. In classrooms with only one homeroom teacher, once lectures were completed, the teacher mostly remained at their desk and did not interact with the students unless it was reactive, either reactive to a student who comes up to their desk to ask questions or to audibly disturbing students (Example 1). In classrooms with more than one teacher, it was more common for teachers to go around the classroom as the students are working on their assignment to observe their progress or provide any necessary help.

#### *Example 1*

Classroom D, Day 1, 10:40

The students were learning about shapes. [I think they're reviewing a previous lesson.] They then completed an assignment together: the teacher would ask the question aloud, then several students would shout their answers, then the teacher would give the correct answer to the whole class. After completing this one assignment, the teacher asks the students to complete another assignment, this time on their own. The teacher retreats to her desk and begins to check the students' homework. There was a buzz in the room but for the most part, the teacher didn't care. Then the class began to become audibly loud and the teacher

said, “what should be working?” [Referring to mouths working/talking and not hands working/writing] This doesn’t make the class quiet, but less loud. Throughout the assignment task, a few students would come up to confirm their answers with the teacher.

*Example 2*

Classroom A, Day 2, 9:00

Homeroom teacher (HT) teaches math, introducing a new concept. She gave a set of problems and worked them out together with the class. During her lessons, she was engaging and gave lots of praises to the students. Before she moved on to the assignment, she reviewed the lesson one more time. Then, during the assignment, HT and the assistant teacher (AT) would go around the classroom to make sure the students understood the task. AT was more active helping the students, while HT remained at her desk to do administrative work.

Based on the two examples above, it can be seen that the homeroom teachers had similar patterns of teaching, which was reflected in all the teachers in general. However, classrooms with an assistant teacher gave the students more learning support because the homeroom teachers spent a lot of their time on administrative work, specifically checking on homework that must be returned to the students immediately.

In the learning setting, students were expected to remain seated in their chair and stay quiet through the lecture time. This expectation of students to remain relatively still during class had aroused some tension in the classroom, which will be discussed further in this chapter. However, many classrooms explored more active learning modes to keep students engaged in various forms of learning. A common form of active learning modes some classrooms have explored is group activities. A few examples of group activities are as follows.

*Example 3*

Classroom C, Day 3, 13:00

The students were tasked to create a mosaic. Teachers provided the worksheet that they must use and glues to stick the beans. They had to bring seeds and beans from home, each student bringing one or two types. The students were divided into four groups and they must share the beans they brought from home with their peers. Each group was also responsible for keeping their area tidy, both during and after the activity.

*Example 4*

Classroom B, Day 1, 10:30

The students were grouped into groups of 4 to 5 students, and they must work together to come up with a list of good social qualities. Some groups were better at working together than others. In groups where students had difficulties carrying out this task, the teachers would go around to help them. After the group task, each group must present their work.

*Example 5*

Classroom D, Day 4, 10:10

The students were tasked to bring a balloon from home. Students were called to the front of the class in groups, and their task was to blow the balloon as they were walking across the classroom. As the students had to wait for their turn, however, the class became rowdy as the students became excited. Some of them had blown the balloons before their little activity and one of the balloons popped before then. The teacher tried to give warnings to the students who were playing with the balloon and even threatened to take away their balloons, but the teacher did not follow up what she said.

During these activities, the children were free to communicate with their peers to solve the problems at hand. They also practiced how to negotiate and cooperate with their friends, either to solve a problem together (Example 4) or to make sure their resources are used properly together (Example 3). During these activities, because the students were expected to be communicative with their peers, the teachers did not spend a lot of time managing the classrooms. Group activities may also be done where the activities were less collaborative and more collective (Example 5). This was done mainly due to the lack of space in the classroom for all the students to do their activity all at once and the lack of teachers or adults to supervise the activities, hence the rowdiness that happened during the activity.

Aside from group activities, students were also encouraged to learn social skills in the classroom by doing presentations in front of the class. Students may present their own work, such as reading one's own poetry in Classroom C, or to read aloud a story in Classroom A. While this activity had many good intentions behind it, as it encourages students to learn public speaking, it often did not work out well. Some problems include the presenting student did not have a loud enough voice for all the other students to hear or the presentation was carried

out for too long, so the other students become disengaged with the presentation or the presentations went on for too long. In general, it seemed students would remain relatively engaged for the first three or four presentations, and rowdiness would occur subsequently. The following is an example of an activity that was conducted in one of the classrooms.

*Example 6*

Classroom A, Day 1, 7:40

Story presentation: teacher assists the student in presenting a story they were reading, and the teacher would help sum up the story with the student. The presentations were quite short, between 2 to 3 minutes long. In the first presentation, the students were still quiet. However, starting from the second presentation, the students became restless and started doing other things like talking and doing busywork at their desk. The teacher still focused on the presenting student. There were only 2 presentations that day.

From Example 6, it can be noticed that students at this age could give extended attention to their peers who were presenting. Some of the students who were presenting were often only presenting to their teacher or they have small voices that were not audible to the whole class. In Example 6, students can stay somewhat engaged during the first presentation, but without further engagement from the teacher, the students start to drift off the longer the presentations become. During this presentation session, there were only a few presentations so the classroom remained under control. However, a few other occasions show that extended disengagement could create negative classroom climate, which will be discussed further in this chapter.

Textbooks can provide the target goals that teachers may utilize to guide their teaching. In each textbook, there are four core competencies that become the overarching targets in each semester. These core competencies comprise of target traits that the students are expected to learn during the semesters, such as honesty, discipline, politeness, confidence, care, and responsibility (Astuti, 2017, Taufina, 2017). Teachers are also given instructions on how to use the teacher's guidebook. Some of these instructions include traits that the teacher should have in order to effectively conduct the activities in the book, such as

wholeheartedness while teaching, enthusiasm, creativity, love, and understanding (Astuti, 2017, Taufina, 2017). Teachers are also encouraged to involve the students in the lessons without discrimination, with the belief that children have their own unique abilities and applying various methods of teaching to ensure students' involvement (Astuti, 2017, Taufina, 2017). On a more practical level, social and emotional learning are applied through two subjects: *Pendidikan Pancasila dan Kewarganegaraan* [Pancasila dan Civics Education] (PPKN) and Indonesian language. Through these two subjects, students are encouraged to understand SEL through reading about the target traits, retelling stories of personal experiences that include the target traits, discussing with friends about the target positive traits, finding and observing behaviors that follow the target positive traits (Astuti, 2017, Taufina, 2017). Below are some translated examples of the suggested activities provided in the textbooks that teachers can do to support SEL in the classroom.

*Example 8*

Students discuss about the solidarity that must be maintained while dancing. Solidarity is an example of the third principle of Pancasila [the Indonesian national philosophy] in the playground. Students should identify behaviors that are appropriate with the third principle of Pancasila in the playground. (Astuti, 2017, p. 75)

*Example 9*

[Students are shown a picture in their book of a boy playing monkey bars and his father comes to help him as he is falling off. A short text was also included that described the situation.] Students observe the picture of the father helping Beni [the young boy] (observation). Students ask and answer about the picture that they observe (asking questions). (Taufina, 2017, p. 41)

The textbook texts show that there are some lessons that involve the development of SEL in the form of classroom instructions. The SEL lessons were always related to the topic that was taught and was specific to certain lessons; thus, SEL was not consistently taught throughout the lessons. The instructions also placed students as observers of SEL, instructing them to observe or discuss certain actions, and not actual participants of SEL.

*Interaction for socialization.* These forms of lesson plans served to stimulate social interaction between the students. This principle of encouraging good interaction between students was reflected in the teacher's interviews. Teachers hoped that their students could learn how to socialize well with others, stating qualities like politeness, safety, and friendliness which they hope to teach their students. Below are some examples from teacher's interviews regarding their goals of socialization in the classroom.

*Example 10*

Teacher A: In here every morning we have *morning reflection* too. During *morning reflection* there are themes. Such as *responsible*, and then there's *take care*, and then... what else... *core teamwork*. So, there are a lot. And they are uh... connected to their everyday lives. So, from here, we also teach them how uh... to be caring to their friends around them, then how to work in groups, for example, tolerant with their friends.

*Example 11*

Teacher C: Well, as a teacher I hope that the kids can be better. Better in their conduct or their character (*akhlak*). Then in their behavior. Because here the children in second grade their behavior [shows that] they don't understand what is dangerous or not. So, when they interact with their friends, they hit and kick, but if for example, we oversee them, we see, we immediately give them "this is not right, this is not right". So, we teach them nicely. So, the children can change their less good behavior or behavior that they don't understand to be better and more understanding.

Based on the example above, teachers may rely on specific lessons to show students the expected behavior, such as through morning reflection sessions in Classroom A (Example 10) or through specific instructions and interactions after the unwanted behavior takes place (Example 11). In these cases, teachers either approach the students directly or ask them to come to the teacher's table; in both cases, the teachers would solve the problem privately between the involved students.

Perhaps unique principles that teachers would transfer to students would relate to the local cultures, where teachers hoped students to learn the societal norms of their culture. The most often mentioned societal norm that the teachers expected students to learn would be respecting elders. While the teachers wanted



students to show politeness to everyone that they interact with, there was a certain emphasis on learning the proper way to interact with people who are older, especially teachers in the classroom. Interacting with elders should be different from interacting with peers, where students must use respectful titles when communicating with teachers (e.g. Ms. or Mr.) and using polite language. Another common Indonesian act of respect that was specifically reinforced by Muslim teachers would be greeting teachers with hand-kissing. Below is an example of how this tradition was established in the classroom.

*Example 12*

Classroom D, Day 1, 13:10

The class has ended. The classroom leader announced to the class to pray before they leave and greet the teacher using the Islamic way of greeting. The non-Muslim students stayed quiet. The teacher then asked me to come to the front of the class. She calls out the students per row and they have to hand-kiss the teacher and me goodbye, telling the students “don’t forget to hand-kiss Ms. Dini”.

This interaction highlighted two cultural principles in the classroom. First, elders are to be respected and there are specific cultural norms that must be followed. In this case, elders, specifically teachers, must be greeted using a hand-kiss and must be referred to using a formal title, in this case, Ms. (or *Bu* in Indonesian). The elders in this situation extend from beyond the teachers and include other elders that interact with the classroom, such as myself. The second is that, at least in the area that the school is in, the Islamic cultural norm was used because it was the majority religion. Thus, the students greeted their teacher, who was also a Muslim, using the Islamic greeting even though there are non-Muslim students as well. Hand-kissing is also traditionally observed among Muslim Indonesians.

Religiosity is an important aspect of Indonesian culture that teachers hope to ingrain. One of the schools I visited was a religious school, so their application of religious principles was more explicit than the other schools and was even applied to me, the observer who was a guest to their classroom. A memorable anecdote that happened can describe the situation, described in Example 13.

*Example 13*

Classroom B, Day 2, 7:30

I just arrived in the class and as I was standing, I started drinking. Then one of the students gleefully exclaimed that I was befriending the devil. The teacher agreed and retorted that that is not a behavior that should be done, and instead, they should always sit when drinking, as following the principles of the prophet.

This was a manner that was quite specific to the religion which I knew but did not observe in my personal life, thus the “outing” by the students. The outing was more explicit perhaps because I was also observing this religion and the students probably expected me to also follow this rule as well. Otherwise, even in non-religious schools, religion was something that children was expected to be aware of because most Indonesians observe some form of religion. This could be applied more directly such as in Example 12 or more of a general understanding which was stated by Teacher A below.

*Example 14*

Teacher A: In Civics class, we learn uh... we are now learning about, we're learning about Pancasila. There is diversity, right? So, in this class, there are more or less 1, 2, 3, 4 religions in this class. Catholics, [Protestant] Christians, Buddhists, and Muslims. They must appreciate the diversity too. There are also a lot of ethnic groups. [They are] taught this in Civics class. There are more than one ethnic groups, there are lots of ethnic groups. There are the Javanese, Sundanese, Betawinese. [Which ethnic group] is in the class, they have mentioned it at the beginning of class and are taught. From there we form a *statement* that uh... even though there are a variety of ethnic groups, we must respect each other.

Respecting the diversity in religion and ethnic groups is an important value that Indonesian education hopes to instill their students, especially considering the large variety of groups that inhabit this country. The lessons taught by Teacher A as explained in Example 14 was a common lesson that is often carried out in Indonesian classrooms, specifically under the lesson of Civics class when learning about the principles of Pancasila.

*Reactive and disciplinary interaction.* Aside from teacher-initiated interactions that were primarily lesson-centered, teachers also often initiated interactions in response to a students' action, most likely due to the misbehavior of students. The most common types of misbehavior that occur during the observations were rowdiness during lessons, not following the teacher's instructions, or conflict between students. The interactions can be done both to the whole class and to specific students. A few examples will be listed below.

*Example 15*

Classroom A, Day 1, 8:40

During ICT class [the teacher is a subject teacher]. The teacher was explaining about a few functions on Microsoft Paint. She has a quiet, monotonous voice. The students were expected to follow her example on their own computer. The assistant teacher (AT) was in the class as well. She walks around the classroom to check on everyone. The lesson seems difficult to follow by many of the students and it goes on for quite long without many direct instructions, so the classroom became rowdy. AT yells at the whole class, "your voices are so loud!" AT also yells right above a student who was not following the class "are you done or not?"

*Example 16*

Classroom C, Day 1, 11:00

During an Indonesian language class, the class moved to the library to do a poetry reading of poems they wrote. The students were relatively quiet for the first two readings but became rowdier by talking with one another as more presentations went by. The teacher first threatens to students of not going home if they keep being noisy. The class quiets for a moment but became rowdy soon after. The teacher then calls specific students and tells them to go out if they will remain to be noisy. This was not followed through. To engage the students, the teacher asks the other students to appreciate their peers by clapping before and after reading. The class becomes rowdy again, and she instructs the chatty students to sit in different places. This worked for a while until the students continued being rowdy, after which the teacher stopped the poetry reading and reprimands them for not respecting their friend while they are doing presentations.

As observed from the two examples above, students often become rowdy when they were not fully engaged in the activity, during either boring or difficult activities or tasks. When a class started to get rowdy, the teachers most often only reprimanded them verbally, often to the whole class, and often without any other

change. This type of reprimand only worked for a few minutes before students become rowdy again as there was no follow up action that can prevent further disturbances. One example of this exception would be in Classroom C (Example 16) where, after several verbal attempts to calm down the students, the teacher decided to separate students who were chatting together. However, this change did not affect the students' engagement level as they continued being rowdy in the classroom.

When students interacted with teachers, they often sought help during their assignment. The two most common methods students use to seek attention from their teacher were either to approach the teacher directly or to shout the teacher's name. Some classrooms have asked their students to raise their hands, specifically during lessons, but only Classroom B strictly enforces it. Student-initiated interaction would occur more often in positive or mostly positive classroom climate versus classrooms with negative climate, which will be discussed more in the next section.

Other forms of interaction, specifically casual interaction between teachers and students, were not recorded either due to the conversations taking place using a personal tone thus not audible to the observer or due to the lack of casual interaction completely. However, the case of the latter occurred more frequently than the former. While teachers were friendly with their students, they kept a certain distance between themselves and the students. Teachers mostly came to the classroom only during teaching hours so there was little time for them to interact casually with the students. A few excerpts from the interviews explained the teacher's view of themselves in the classroom.

*Example 17*

Teacher A: We as homeroom teachers, as their moms in the school, of course automatically, well we scold them spontaneously for sure. Scold them if they do something wrong.

*Example 18*

Teacher D: In the lower level classes, at the beginning of course discipline, obedience, responsibility, and independence [must be taught]. Those are the priorities.

Teachers often regarded themselves as authoritative or parental figures for the students in school, so they placed themselves socially higher than the students do. Teacher D also mentioned obedience as a trait that she hoped students will learn in class, establishing the authoritative figures of teachers in the classroom. While the other teachers did not explicitly mention this expectation in the interviews, their interactions with the students reflected that many teachers still hope their students to listen to their words without much opportunity for negotiation. An example of this behavior is represented in the following.

*Example 19*

Classroom B, Day 1, 11:30

After students finish their task, they're told to read quietly. However, it was obvious that some students want to do other things, such as playing with the balloons in the class. The balloons are forbidden to be played with, but they are accessible to the students. Thus, the teacher spent some time telling the students not to play with the balloons and continued to instruct them to read.

In Example 19, students were only instructed on what they should do even after completing their obligation, which was completing a task. They were not given options to do other things and were discouraged to do the things they wanted to do, such as playing with the balloons, despite having the access to do them. This may be because the teacher wanted the students to fill their time with a quiet activity as their peers still had to finish their task.

### **5.1.2 Classroom management**

*Classroom climate.* According to the classroom climate categorization by Pianta, Hamre, and Allen (2012), most classrooms that I have observed can be categorized as having a positive or mostly positive classroom climate. Teachers used a warm, friendly tone when communicating with students, apart from instances when they are reprimanding them. One example of a positive classroom climate was explained by Teacher B below.

*Example 20*

Teacher B: And children are much happier when they are praised than when we say negative words. And I try to use positive mindsets with the children. Like if there is a parent that says, "this child likes to fight back", let's lift the child "oh *alhamdulillah* now he is better" so we don't say "why are you like this fighting with your parent?". No, but "*alhamdulillah* your parents say your prayer is already good" so with this we can motivate and build a positive *mindset* with the children.

As the previous example shows that there was a deliberate choice to create a positive climate in the classroom by explicitly using positive words of affirmation to the students as well as having a positive mindset when interacting with the students. To further establish a positive classroom climate, Classroom B also utilized several strategies to reinforce good behavior. The following example is a morning session during one of the observation days.

*Example 21*

Classroom B, Day 2, 7:30

The children sat in 5 rows. The homeroom teacher (HT) would do simple games which involve physical exercise where the students must follow certain commands with certain movements. The key is that the whole group is responsible for each other. The group who wins gets rewards. This was mentioned repeatedly. When HT makes a mistake, he apologizes.

Through this example, it can be seen that Classroom B utilized several strategies to have a positive classroom climate. First, the teacher had a structured classroom system that is clearly established, such as repeating that the game must be done in groups and there will be a reward to groups who succeed. The reward system mirrored the interview (Example 20) where Teacher B tried to exude positive energy to the students. The students were frequently given various opportunities to get rewards and were given words of affirmation throughout the lessons. Classroom B also utilized a grouping system where each student was assigned to a group, mostly for classroom upkeeping activities and morning circle activities. Students must be responsible for not only themselves, but also their groupmates, and failure to cooperate would result in losing privileges, such

as losing their time to play because it would take them longer to clean up the classroom.

A few other examples from other classrooms that exhibit qualities of positive classroom climates are as follows.

*Example 22*

Classroom A, Day 3, 8:00

After writing the morning reflection, the homeroom teacher (HT) transitions into the next class using a warm, inviting tone. The class was morals class. HT shows a video of the topic they were learning that day which was responsibility. After the video was complete, HT opens the floor for questions the students may have about the video. HT encourages the students to raise their hands to ask. If a student began to shout their answer, she tells them “can you please raise your hand?” The assistant teacher (AT) also joined the lesson by instructing some of the students to pay attention to. AT also tries to lighten up the mood by joking, but soon the class became rowdy with laughter, which was followed by an instruction to be quiet.

*Example 23*

Classroom B, Day 1, 11:30

The teacher reviews the test the students will take [the next day]. She asks questions to the students to see if they know what they need to do. She responds to the student who answers the correct answer with “[you’re] smart”. She then allows students to ask questions. During this time, she tells the other students to stop talking and listen to their friend’s question.

*Example 24*

Classroom D, Day 4, 9:20

At the beginning of the class, the teacher gives tells them about their plans for doing the science activity in the afternoon [with the balloons]. She reminds them that the activity will be done after the test and that they should keep their balloons in their bag. Before the experiment begins, she reminds them again to keep their balloons in their bags.

These examples show that the classrooms mostly exhibit positive classroom climates. The teachers were friendly and open with the students when the students were engaged in the classroom activities and even joked around with them when the moment was right (Example 22). They also used words of affirmation and encouraged respectful behavior in the classroom (Example 23). The teachers also established structure in the classroom by setting expectations

for the class activities (Example 24), although this may not be successful due to other factors (see Example 5).

Despite all the classrooms exhibiting moments of positive classroom climates, unfortunately there were moments in the classroom that exhibited characteristics of a negative classroom climate as characterized by Pianta, Hamre, and Allen (2012), which is highlighted by an environment that creates discomfort by the use of ineffective social engagement which includes yelling, intimidation, and humiliation. These social engagements were often used as a form of disciplinary strategy, exhibited in Example 15 and 16. Disciplinary strategies which include threats or intimidation are ineffective because they create discomfort in the students and does not alleviate the original problems. Classroom A especially exhibits a lot of these actions, further exemplified below.

*Example 25*

Classroom A, Day 1, 8:10

During ICT class, the subject teacher (ST) shows a video about the potential and limitation of computers. After the video, the students must complete a worksheet. The assistant teacher (AT) goes around the classroom to repeatedly instruct students such as “write” or “don’t forget to zip your bags”. AT was seen physically pulling a student’s shirt so he sits back. The class grew loud during the task and AT yells “hey! Are you here to chat or to study?” AT also shouts to a student “(Name)! You’re still chatting!”

The event in Example 25 was the predecessor of Example 15, so it can be concluded that this particular hour was especially chaotic. Due to the lack of engaging instructions from the teachers, combined with the difficult topic that was introduced, the students were struggling with the class. The teachers were too focused on keeping order in the classroom and were insensitive to the students’ difficulties that they failed to alleviate the students’ struggles. The chaos eventually accumulated when one student cried because she could not understand and complete the task. During this time, the assistant teacher had no choice but to help this student one on one.

Insensitivity to students’ struggles and inflexibility in the classroom are major factors that create disengagement among the students, which eventually results to a chaotic classroom. This pattern of implementing ineffective teaching



strategies was observed in all the classrooms, despite some of the classrooms not explicitly exhibiting characteristics of negative classroom climate. Furthermore, teachers would often not follow up with their words, meaning that their words become more like nagging and less like instructions (see Example 5 and 19). This meant that classrooms often lacked meaningful social structure, which may create confusion among the students. Further implications will be discussed in the Discussions section of the final chapter.

*Physical environment of the classroom.* The physical space of the classroom can also be a form of supporting students' SEL as it may affect the way students interact with other people in the classroom. Each teacher employed different ideas for the layout of their classes, although it must be mentioned that classroom layout was heavily dependent on the size of the room in ratio to the number of students in the classroom. Classroom A, for example, had quite a small space for the number of students they have in the class, thus the rows of desks layout may be the only formation of seating this class could occupy. Another case is of Classroom D which must share their room with another class in shifts, thus the layout must remain relatively consistent. Only Classroom B utilizes different sections in the classroom for different activities, such as a reading corner and a class meeting space. This was due to their classroom space being the largest among the four classrooms. Classroom C used seat rolling system, giving the students different places to sit every two weeks, and switches out their classroom layout every month to provide variety for the students in their learning environment, stating health and negating boredom of the students as the main reason for this practice, as mentioned in the interview below.

*Example 26*

Teacher C: So, it's like this. Children in grade one, grade two, until grade three, have a level of boredom that often [happens]. So, if the children sit in the same position all the time, they might get bored. ... And for health. Well, for the health of [their] eyes. So, if you are in the front [up close] you don't only see to the front [up close], if in the right not always in the right, in the left always the left, not like that. ... And if we have group activities, we will sit on the floor, we will use

carpets. So, the children, if for example, they become bored or fatigued. That's how I [alleviate the problem]

Teacher C is aware of the boredom a child may feel if they must sit in the same place throughout the school year, so she alleviated this by constantly changing their seat. This would motivate the students by giving them variety in their classroom space. She also often chose different modes of learning, such as using carpets for group activities (see Example 3) or the library during language class (see Example 16) with the hope that the different learning spaces will create interest in the students.

The layout of the classroom did affect the way students would go about with their activities. In most classrooms where students have designated seats, the children can only occupy their own space and are often reprimanded when they sit in another seat or wanders around outside of their seat, although some teachers are stricter about this than others (see Example 25). Any changes of seats would need to be agreed upon between the students and the teacher due to the lack of space.

The change of seating would most likely occur due to the instruction of the teacher, either through deliberate seat rolling plans (see example 26) or alleviate problems in the class such as to bring a student who needs help closer to the teacher or to separate conflicting students. A few examples can be seen below.

*Example 27*

Classroom C, Day 3, 9:30

During a test. Several students have completed their test and were getting ready to do their project (see Example 3). One student was still not done, so he was called to the desk in front of the teacher's desk and was monitored closely to ensure he completes his test.

*Example 28*

Classroom A, Day 1, 10:40

Craft time. The conflict between two students sitting back to front happened. (The conflict or conflict management by the assistant teacher (AT) was inaudible.) Finally, AT instructs the students to separate. Because the seats are all full, one of the students involved in the conflict had to switch seats with another student.

These examples demonstrate that despite the limitations of a classroom, teachers would find a way to solve problems that relate to the living space of the classroom. It must be noticed though, in these cases, the teacher did not ask the student's opinion of the change and instead ordered the students to change seats according to the teacher's request, meaning that the classroom layout is very much in the control of the teachers.

Classroom decoration was also an important aspect of the Indonesian classroom environment, not only to set the space of the classroom but also to instill a sense of identity of the class. The decorations that may occupy a classroom included learning guides such as the time's tables and students' work display. Because I observed the classrooms during the beginning of the year, there were not that many works that were displayed in the classroom, although all the classrooms have designated areas where student's work would eventually be displayed.

## **5.2 Facilitating SEL support**

### **5.2.1 Supporting teachers in teaching**

Another form of support schools could provide to help a student's SEL was through providing guidance to the people who they most interact with, in this case, teachers and parents. The two most frequent forms of teacher support were through training and peer support. All four schools mentioned their schools provide in-service training for their teachers. However, only School B provided training that specifically targeted building social and emotional skills for the students. The difference in the type of training provided for the students was obvious in the classroom practices as Teacher B was able to utilize a variety of strategies in the classroom to help support students socially and emotionally, such as conscious use of positive affirmations and deliberate structuring of classroom policies through group systems and frequent rewards (see Example 20 and 21).

Nonetheless, in many cases, the teachers report in their interviews that peer support was an effective form of support that could help them face social and emotional issues in the classroom. Teachers would often share any problems they have experienced in classes and sought peer guidance for advice. These meetings could be formally organized by the school and were often attended by many teachers as well as the school principals, or in most cases, these conversations were done informally as different interests or problems arise, as noted by a few teachers in the interviews below.

*Example 29*

Teacher A: Especially um... when I was starting out here, that means, what is it... my experience to handle children are still little so I need to ask teachers who are more... [have been] longer here. So, about children's characters or how to handle certain children. That... that is very helpful for me personally.

*Example 30*

Researcher: If you experience any difficulties in the classroom, what would you do?

Teacher D: We usually... usually consult with other colleagues. Usually with colleagues of parallel classes. For example, the community of children is different between the classes. From... what, economi[cal background], the parent's attention, the children's intelligence, from... so we sometimes, we usually communicate first with our colleagues.

Based on the interview with Teacher A, peer support was especially important during the early stages of a teacher's career. At this point in a teacher's career, they might come across obstacles that were not expected during their training, such as the different variety of children that they would have to teach. Seeking peer support, especially from more experienced peers, would allow them to ask for advice on these issues. Seeking peer support from other teachers also allow the teachers to cooperate to solve problems that occur in the classroom.

Aside from peer support, another form of informal training that could be used by teachers was the use of internet resources and social media, which broadened the teacher's library of knowledge beyond their school grounds. A few of the interviewed teachers have mentioned browsing through the internet

for teaching inspirations, especially for any materials or techniques that were not covered by the training or manual books.

*Example 31*

Teacher B: I will also use [the material from the training sessions] and want to continue to learn. So, I don't only rely on what I learn [from the school], I also learn from YouTube, the games that are available, so we just develop it ourselves.

*Example 32*

Teacher D: We don't actually receive training specifically for character education, not really. But there are also a lot [of resources] on the internet. We can see it; we can find it ourselves. We can take from example what we think is good, what is appropriate for the children, what we can apply [in class].

Internet materials were also important sources for finding information that could support the teacher's learning and resources that could supplement their teaching. Internet sources were especially important for teachers like Teacher D whose school does not provide formal training on the modules that must be implemented in the class, such as character education. Digital literacy is an important skill for teachers to have to help support their own teaching by giving them access to a wide range of resources that can be used.

### **5.2.2 Parental involvement**

Based on the character education curriculum, one aspect of education was the involvement of the community around the school, which includes parents. There were generally two ways in which parents could be involved in schools, which were through academic involvement with their children and involvement with school activities. During the interviews, I focused mostly on parents' involvement in school activities, although some mentions of parents' academic involvement were also discussed.

Parents' involvement in schools could be in the form of creating activities for themselves or activities for the students. For themselves, parents could receive some form of training from the schools, organized either by the school or by the parents association. Some schools held these events annually, while some

only when it was decided it was needed. These parent training were mostly regarding students' behavior at home.

*Example 33*

Teacher C: Usually we would call a psychologist once a year for the parents. Seminars for the parents on how to handle their children [at home].

*Example 34*

Teacher A: From the school, workshops and other similar [activities for the parents] are um... not routine. But we have, we've had it. Like once for grade three and four, *parents* are invited to um... how to handle *gadget* addiction with their child. And then how... yea... the *gadget*. And then for example grade five and six there is how especially for the children guidance for uh... what we call pre-teen guidance. For parents, [training] is not routine, we usually there are some.

These training provided guidance for parents by giving them resources through activities led by experts, in most cases child psychologists. This would allow parents to get informed about their own child's development and provided guidance on how to deal with the changes that may occur with their child. These training sessions, when conducted, were voluntary, so despite the opportunity given by the school, not all parents would use the services provided.

The interviews revealed that parents have limited involvement with students' activities in school. Aside from communication relating to the students' behavior in the school, parents have little involvement in the students' lives at school. In fact, some parents were discouraged to involve themselves too much, as Teacher B below regards this as the teacher's "prerogative right".

*Example 35*

Teacher B: In terms of how we teach, we tell the parents at the beginning of the year what... with what goals our teaching [will be], with our syllabus and our curriculum. They hand over the method of teaching completely to the teacher. *Insya Allah* they trust us with what we deliver ... So, we never expose our teaching methods to the parents. There are certain times when they can [observe their children studying] ... But for every day, maybe they can watch from outside, but still, it's prerogative right of the teacher. So no, parents can't be overly involved. Unless they have an input. So, we don't have much intervention from parents "oh, I want it like this or that", because everyone is different.

Through the example above, teachers hoped and expected to have their own control in how they conduct their class without the excessive input from outside sources. As the professional in the classroom, he hoped that they will be trusted to teach well using methods they have developed for their own classroom.

While some teachers regard the parent's trust in teachers as a positive measure, as it allowed autonomy for teachers, Teacher D admitted that she wished parents could be more involved in students' school life.

*Example 36*

Teacher D: ...from the students' parents too. I have a lot of expectations, their attention to their children. Because for the lower level maybe [the parents still pay attention to students' school activities]. When the children come out [from the classroom], I see parents who will open their children's books. They check every day what they did that day if it was scored or not. Sometimes the ones left behind [must finish tasks] which should be done in class, instead, it becomes homework. Well, that. That kind of attention. But for the upper level, parents' attention became less. Rarely do they come to school to ask information about their children. Then [the parents'] participation in school is not enough. That's what I hope. Maybe because in a public school like us the environment is like this, their economical [level] is middle to lower. That is something we have to understand. So, it is clear that cooperation between teachers and parents is needed.

Parents' involvement in the school was not limited to their involvement in classroom activities but also their involvement in the students' academic life. Parents were expected to involve themselves in guiding the students' academic activities at home. However, due to various reasons such as parents' busyness or socio-economic backgrounds may affect how involved parents are in a child's academic life. This became even more of an issue as the current Indonesian curriculum demands its students to study more independently than before. Lessons were not only activities done in schools but are expanded to other tasks and projects that must be completed at home. In the 2013 Curriculum, parents were encouraged to be more involved in their children's academic life. After the lesson of the day, parents were given instructions, written in the child's textbooks, to conduct simple activities that they can do with their children that

support their learning at school. An example of the instructions for the teachers of activity with parents is described below, translated into English.

*Example 37*

Students sing the song Friendly and Polite with parents. If parents don't know the song, it is suggested that they listen to the student to sing. Students explain to their parents about the length of notes and the strength and weakness of the song. Students also discuss with parents to find similar words of the phrases used in the song. The activity is to be reported in the communication book between parents and the school. (Astuti, 2017, p. 27)

Most of these activities involved students reviewing what they learned at school or discussing the topics that they learned at school in the context of their home to their parents. Parents were then encouraged to write down the activities that were done which will then be reported to the teacher. However, several requirements must be met for parents to complete this activity. First, parents must have the time to sit down with their child to discuss their school activities. Next, parents must have a certain level of understanding about music and language to discuss the topic further. Finally, parents must have the ability to write a report to the school about these activities. This may be discriminative to students with busy parents who do not have enough time to sit down and discuss with the students and to students whose parents have lower education backgrounds who may not understand the concepts introduced in the instructions. Implications of parental involvement in students' academic life will be further discussed in the final chapter.



## 6 DISCUSSIONS

### 6.1 Supporting SEL in Indonesian primary schools

#### 6.1.1 Teacher's role in supporting students' SEL

This study was aimed to understand the application of CASEL's dimensions of social-emotional learning in Indonesian classrooms primarily through observations and interviews. Through the study, it can be seen that elements of SEL were demonstrated in classroom practices. Despite none of the schools used specifically a SEL-guided intervention, their approach to SEL can still be identified through Humphrey's taxonomy of SEL interventions (2013). In general, the Indonesian schools used a universal intervention reach, meaning that they initially intended to provide preventive action for the student body as a whole. Targeted/indicated interventions, if available, were only used in specific cases. The component structure of the interventions would be categorized as taught curriculum, as the teachers used curriculum materials and planned class lessons to guide them with students' SEL. This could be seen through textbook instructions that give specific goals of the SEL intervention (see Example 8 and 9 on page 43). Lastly, the prescriptiveness of the interventions was mostly considered a mix between top-down/prescriptive and bottom-up/flexible (see Humphrey, 2013). All the classrooms used curriculums that provide guidelines to SEL intervention, such as the character education curriculum guideline (Kemendiknas, 2017), but teachers have the flexibility to change their approach according to the needs of the classroom.

Looking through the teacher-student interactions that were observed, SEL dimensions that could be recognized were mainly self-management, social management, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making (CASEL, 2017). Perhaps due to the data collection method, dimensions relevant to relating one's self to the social world were more apparent, as both social management and relationship skills directly linked to conducting one's self in relation with others, whereas the responsible decision-making dimension related to skills

relating to personal and social situations. Specifically, socialization appeared to be an essential goal that teachers sought to teach to students. This was reflected further in interviews, where teachers emphasized on teaching students the social skills and local norms of the classroom (see Example 11 on page 44). Socialization in the classroom can be the practical display of Vygotsky's zone of proximal development where teachers helped their students learn about social norms using the scaffolding method with instruction or encouragement (Crain, 2016). Teachers and subsequently formal education are also an important factor in children's social development according to Erikson's psychosocial stages of development as during this stage children learn how to adjust to society with the help of teachers (Crain, 2016).

Self-management is slightly different in that it focuses on regulating one's self in different situations (CASEL, 2017). This could be an important element of learning in a classroom, as children must possess skills such as self-motivation, impulse control, and goal setting skills in order to achieve specific targets in the classroom (Zins, Bloodworth, Weissberg, & Walberg, 2004). Indonesian teachers guided their students to learn self-management through instructional lessons, individual or classroom guidance of expected behavior, and environment adjustment such as using seat-rolling systems or changing the learning settings by conducting class in different locations.

The self-awareness dimension, categorized by understanding one's strengths and weaknesses, identifying and processing one's thoughts, emotions, and values, and possessing self-efficacy, optimism, confidence, and "growth mindset" (CASEL, 2017), seem to be missing in the interactions observed in the classroom. One hypothesis to this is due to the large size of the class, where children were not given enough opportunity to explore their emotions with supervision by the teacher since there were too many children under the responsibility of the teachers. A study by Blatchford, Bassett, Goldstein, and Marin (2003) on the relation of class size to classroom processes reported that teachers in large classes generally exhibited less time teaching and less time interacting with students compared to teachers in small classes. Children in large

classes also tended to be less active in class and more disengaged in classroom activities (Blatchford, Bassett, Goldstein, & Marin (2003). Class size is especially important for primary school children as the effects of class size would continue as they progress in their education as having a more manageable class size would allow teachers to be more hands on and direct in interacting with the students.

Another possible explanation could be the social status of the child in the Indonesian society. There has yet to be research done on the active social role of children in Indonesian society. However, looking through the laws concerning children's rights could provide an insight as to how the Indonesian society views children. Generally, children are seen as individuals who must be protected by adults and not as individuals with their own agency. In fact, Indonesia has an agency called the National Child Protection Commission [*Komisi Nasional Perlindungan Anak*] whose function is to provide supervision for child protection and uphold children's rights based on the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) Law No. 4 Year 1979 on Children's Welfare also only mentions children in the context of adults with the need to be protected and cared for. Granted, children's rights in Indonesia is still a way's away from ideal, with issues such as child labor (e.g. Griffiths, 2016) and child marriage (e.g. Wismayati, 2018) still an ongoing problem in the country. These cases, despite their extreme nature, provide a reflection to how children are regarded in Indonesian society: they are dependent and reliant on adults. In the classroom, this would then translate in the condition where children become objects of education instead of participants.

The natural progression of this discussion would be to determine whether the interventions given by the teachers and established by the school were fulfilling the need of students' SEL. Bearing in mind that the students' perceptions of their own SEL development were not collected and subsequently analyzed, the effect of the interventions on the students' SEL are speculative on the basis of theories and prior studies. To determine the application of SEL interventions in Indonesian classrooms, I will mainly focus on teacher-student interaction and classroom management.

According to the data obtained from the observations, it can be concluded that in general, Indonesian classrooms were not able to fulfill the social-emotional learning models in the classroom when analyzed through teacher-student interaction and classroom management. In general, the classrooms were not able to meet the criteria for positive teacher-student interaction using the criteria of the Teaching Through Interactions (TTI) framework conceptualized by Pianta and Hamre (2007, in Pianta, Hamre, & Allen, 2012). While there were frequent interactions between teachers and students, teachers were more responsive to academic needs of the students but less so when it came to supporting and engaging with the students' emotional needs, resulting in less emotional connectedness between the teacher and the students. The most apparently lacking dimension would be teachers were not able to have regard for students' perspectives which was discussed previously. Meaningful discussions between the teacher and students about students' social and emotional states rarely took place in the classroom, and teachers rarely asked or considered students' input seriously into the classroom. Teacher-student relationship is an important factor in a child's engagement in school and to a lesser extent their academic achievement and school adjustment (Roorda, Koomen, Spilt, & Oort, 2011), meaning failure to create positive relationships between teachers and students could deter a student's success in school.

Classroom management was also studied mainly through observations of activities conducted in the classroom. Teachers engaged in a variety of classroom management strategies, such as management of physical space through seat rolling or free seating, instructional engagement using various methods of learning, and using reward and punishment strategies (see Hue & Li, 2008). However, teachers still had trouble with managing certain misbehaviors in what Bru, Stephens, & Torsheim (2002) refer to as "off-task orientation" such as talking during class and "opposition toward teachers" such as not listening to teacher's instructions. Due to the observations being done in the beginning of the year, it was put into consideration that the students may not yet be well-adjusted to their new classrooms. Generally, in these instances, teachers relied on reactive

strategies to respond to their classroom, which often resulted in rowdy and sometimes chaotic classrooms. Reactive strategies are teacher's actions that responds to a child's behavior (Clunies-Ross, Little, & Kienhuis, 2008). If this reaction is a disciplinary action, then it would occur after a child's inappropriate behavior and often in the form of negative behavior management. Beaman (2006, in Clunies-Ross, Little, & Kienhuis, 2008) also found that teachers who react to children's misbehavior in a negative way results in more disengaged students in class. By dismissing the importance of classroom management or proactive teaching strategies, teachers miss the opportunity to provide an engaging learning environment for students (Hue & Li, 2008).

### **6.1.2 School's role in facilitating SEL support**

All the schools that were visited provided regular in-service training for the teachers. In-service professional development is an important factor to improving the quality of teaching and subsequently help support children's development (Egert, Fukkink, & Eckhardt, 2018). The forms of in-service professional development that most often occurred among the visited schools were in the form of training and workshops. Most of these training was curriculum-related or regarded classroom management. However, schools did not provide training that specifically targeted the support of students' social and emotional development, even for schools who follow the 2013 Curriculum, which integrates character education. Perhaps this is due to the phase of implementation of the character education curriculum, which, during the time of the visits, were in the second phase of gradual implementation (Kemendikbud, 2018). Based on a report on prior implementation of the curriculum, workshops that focuses on character education should be expected in the future (Kemendiknas, 2011).

Instead, to supplement their professional development needs, teachers rely heavily on informal sources of professional development, such as peer support and social media. Peer support is an important tool for professional development as it allows teachers to feel included in the workplace, share teaching strategies,

and provide feedback (Boyle, Topping, Jindal-Snape, & Norwich, 2011; Kelly & Antonio, 2016). Subsequently, teachers can expand their support network with the use of internet-based tools such as social media (Kelly & Antonio, 2016). Social networking sites such as Facebook can provide a more centralized group for support whereas other sites such as YouTube, Pinterest, and blogs can provide a more general, often practical, sources for teaching.

While the teachers in the schools I visited were well-qualified, unfortunately, the quality of professionals in Indonesian education is still generally lacking. Indonesian teachers often claim their motivation for professional service is as a form of passion or genuine dedication, unfortunately without considering skill level or competence (Kurniasih & Izati, 2017). While passion is a great motivator for good teachers, it is only one factor among many that is required for an expert teacher. Hattie (2003) developed a 16-dimension conception of expert teachers, many of which require extensive qualification for the job and professional development. There are changes in recent regulation, such as teachers must have a bachelor's level education to be a civil servant teacher, according to Law No. 14 Year 2005 Article 8 on Teachers and Lecturers. However, this law has not reflected in reality, as 19% of primary school teachers still hold an education or lower than bachelor's level (Kemendikbud, 2016). There are some efforts to boost teacher quality, such as salary increase (de Ree, Muralidharan, Pradhan, & Rogers, 2017) and quality improvement programs like the Teacher Quality Improvement (TQI) program (Ramdhani, Ancok, Swasono, & Suryanto, 2012) or the Teacher Certification program by the Ministry of Education and Culture in Indonesia (Kusumawardhani, 2017). However, these efforts show no extensive results to the improvement of education in Indonesia (Kurniasih & Izati, 2017). The issue of teacher qualification is an important problem that needs to be solved in order to increase the overall quality of Indonesian education.

While parents were not the focus of this study, they play an important role in students SEL and were touched briefly during the interviews. Anderson & Minke (2007) have reported that parental involvement provides a variety of

positive values for the students. This study showed that parents have a limited role with their involvement in school, mostly limited to scheduled meetings. This pattern, as mentioned by Anderson & Minke (2007), was natural for parents, especially since teachers were regarded to be the authority in school. This was reflected in this study as well as a previous Indonesian study (Syamsudduha & Ginanto, 2017). One potential concern would be the socioeconomic status of the family, which greatly affects parents' overall involvement in students' education (Green, Walker, Hoover-Dempsey, & Sandler, 2007). This became a concern to one of the teachers who taught in a middle to lower class neighborhood (see Example 36). As 10% of Indonesia's 260 million people are considered poor (Renaldi, 2018), this is an important factor to consider when discoursing education in Indonesia.

### **6.1.3 Cultural aspect of SEL**

Perhaps one of the most important factors that needs to be considered when conducting this research was the cultural aspect of education and how that relates to the application of SEL in the classroom. Based on interviews of the teachers, as well through the character education curriculum itself (Kemendiknas, 2011), there were several principles that were considered important in the Indonesian context that were not present in the conception of the dimensions of SEL. In general, the goal of Indonesian emphasizes the integration of the self into a community. A local term of *gotong royong*, referring to communal work, entails that individuals must be responsible for one another and help others in the community. This term was used in textbooks (e.g. Taufina, 2017), often in the form of stories describing desirable behavior in society. There is a shift in attitude towards this concept, where the current Indonesian society has become more individualistic or calculative (Hatu, 2011; Irfan, 2016), but the emergence of the character education curriculum entails that it is a concept that the Indonesian government hopes to reestablish (Kemendikbud, 2018). As previously mentioned, the self-awareness dimension was not present in classroom activities. The collective nature of Indonesian society, where

individuals were encouraged to consider the prosperity of the group and discouraged to stand out, may be a reason why teachers were not keen to instill self-awareness in their students.

Social hierarchy is also an interesting cultural aspect of Indonesian society that may affect the way SEL is implemented in the classroom. Social etiquette is an important aspect when socializing with others and is greatly affected by the social hierarchy of an individual. For example, when referring to another person in Indonesia, it is more respectable to add a title (i.e. Mr. or Ms.) before someone's name. However, this etiquette is even more important for children, who not only must call adults with a title but also anyone else who are older than them. Children are expected to be respectful in the classroom to their peers but especially to the teachers, as reflected in the interviews and the observations. This may create a barrier in the interaction between teachers and students, where teachers must be respected and students respectful. Students are encouraged to think with the group's interests in mind and suppress their own personal desires, which was also mentioned in the Hong Kong context, a country whose society also abides to collectivism, by Hue and Li (2008).

Additionally, religiosity is an important factor in Indonesian society. Despite having a constitutionally secular state, religiosity permeates in the society beginning from Pancasila, the pillars of national philosophy, with its first pillar entailing the statement of the divinity of God. Indonesia is also the country with the largest Muslim population in the world (Pew Research Center, 2015), making up 87% of the population (Badan Pusat Statistik, 2010), with five other religions officially recognized by the state; Indonesia requires its citizens to declare a religion as it is an official requirement for identification. Religiosity is also one of the priority characters in the character education curriculum (Kemendikbud, 2018). Religion permeates in society in social norms, such as hand-kissing among Muslim teachers and students, daily habits, such as praying before class, and activities in school, such as bible reading.



## 6.2 Trustworthiness and limitations of the study

Presenting the trustworthiness in a qualitative research is a vital step to ensure that a study has undergone rigor and incorporated deliberate measures to maintain the validity and reliability of the study (Shenton, 2004). The standard construct of establishing trustworthiness remains the four criteria of naturalistic enquiry created by Lincoln and Guba (1985) which include credibility, transferability, dependability, and conformability. In this section, I will be discussing my effort to establish trustworthiness in my study and any limitations that may occur throughout the research process.

Lincoln and Guba (1985) refer to credibility as the “truth value” (p. 294) or how representative the research is to reality; in other words, the internal validity of the research (Shenton, 2004). The two main tasks that must be fulfilled to ensure credibility are the execution of inquiry, or how data is collected, and the demonstration of findings, or how the research findings are presented (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). There are several techniques to ensure credibility of these two aspects of research; in this study, I will focus on prolonged engagement and triangulation. A researcher must have sufficient knowledge and data about the subject of research in order to be able to have a representation of the subject itself, and prolonged engagement, or researching about a subject matter for an adequate amount of time, will further ensure the researcher can have a better grasp at understanding their subject (Lub, 2015). For this study, I spent three full days with each school in order to have a better understanding of how they behave from a day to day basis. During the planning process, this three- to four-day process was deemed enough as it was expected to capture the everyday of a classroom. However, in hindsight, due to the short school hours in some primary schools and the decision to focus on homeroom and assistant teachers, it would be recommended to devote a few more days to ensure that plenty of observation data was obtained. To fill the gap of the prolonged engagement, I also implemented triangulation, specifically data triangulation, to ensure that there will be enough data enquired to support the findings and a variety of data

sources were provided to establish consistency of findings (Yin, 2014). In this study, the data triangulation includes observations and interviews as the main complementary data and textbook materials as supplementary data.

Transferability refers to the applicability of the study to other contexts, essentially expressing the external validity of research (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The responsibility of the researcher is not to provide an “index of transferability” (p. 316), meaning the researcher is not tasked to provide the different contexts for which their research can be applied, but rather the researcher must provide enough data that would allow for proper judgement for other applications (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The main way a qualitative research can provide transferability is through providing “thick description” (p. 316) by presenting the widest range of relevant information as possible (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In this study, I provided as thorough of data sets as I possibly could give under the umbrella of ethical considerations to describe the research process, which includes descriptions of the participants, explanations of the method of data collection and analysis, and other potential contextual data such as cultural or demographic factors. The decision process of the research should be considered when transferring this data to other studies. For example, when contextualizing this data with the general population of Indonesia, the location of this study, which is in a large city, needs to be considered. While this may seem like arbitrary context, it must be noted that there are significant differences between urban and rural schools, such as multi-grade teaching, lack of toilet and electrical facilities, and teachers without sufficient qualification were more commonly found in rural area schools (Usman, Akhmadi, & Suryadarma, 2007). Thus, the location and quality of the school need to be considered in this case.

Dependability, or the consistency of the results and interpretation, attempts to answer inquiries regarding reliability of a qualitative research (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The phenomenological basis of qualitative research meant that consistent, repeatable result would be difficult to achieve (Shenton, 2004). However, some measures can be taken in order to ensure the research process was appropriate to enquire the results and that the report of the study was

reflective of reality. The research process must be conducted according to standard practice. To support this, I provided detailed description of my research process which were verified through detailed descriptions of common standard practice of qualitative research. Aside from detailed descriptions of the research process, thorough descriptions of evidence were provided to support research claims. In this study, I have provided sufficient original examples from the data inquiry that supported my interpretation of the study.

Lastly, maintaining objectivity and neutrality, or as Lincoln and Guba (1985) refer to as confirmability, is important to ensure that the research is not biased and instead grounded by data. Qualitative research may be prone to bias due to the subjective nature of the data inquiry, however several steps can be taken to ensure that the research and its interpretation is as objective as possible. In qualitative research, the main goal of objectivity is to provide confirmation to all claims that were made. The “audit trail” (p. 319) is the availability of detailed, systematized descriptions of data that can be traced back (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Two approaches to the “audit trail” is through data and theory (Shenton, 2004). In this study, I have provided thorough proof of data through thick descriptions and sufficient original examples as well as a thorough description of theoretical framework and previous research that can support the interpretations I have constructed for this study. The development of the study was kept transparent using details descriptions each step of the way.

Despite rigorous precaution of the trustworthiness of this study, there are some limitations that have come up throughout the process of the study. Perhaps one of the most notable limitations that I have come across during the whole procedure of this study is my lack of experience in qualitative research. While I have done a few small qualitative methods studies in the past, this is the first time that I must conduct a substantial qualitative study on my own. It took some time for me to get acquainted with doing field research, so looking back through the data I have acquired, I noticed a few gaps in how I went through with the study. However, through the rigor in the reliability and validity using means of trustworthiness and continuous self-reflection throughout the process improved

the quality of the research overall. It would be recommended for any first-time field researchers to do a practice run with the method of inquiry that will allow the researcher to familiarize themselves with the process of doing a field study and to polish their skills and fill in any gaps before conducting the main study.

### **6.3 Recommendation**

As this is the first study to analyze SEL in Indonesian classrooms, this study can be a starting point for further research of SEL in Indonesia. This study only mainly focuses on teacher practices, so other forms of analysis on curriculum, the role of other professionals in the school, school rules, and others should be considered. Perhaps the most important element would be the implementation of SEL on students and the effectiveness of SEL interventions on students. As previously discussed, the application of SEL in Indonesian classrooms still needs improvement. Further studies on SEL can detect further shortcomings in classrooms, which can become a reference to the development of SEL intervention that is specific to Indonesia. Various elements of the SEL construct that were mentioned in this research could be further studied as well. As the main subject of SEL interventions in schools are students, it would be imperative to determine how SEL affects them directly. Other elements of SEL that could be further studied include the role of school environment and parent involvement in the success of students' SEL.

On a practical level, this study can be evidence for the need to further develop SEL in the classroom. This development can be in the form of teacher professional development, parental guidance, or change in school environment. However, cultural aspects must be taken into consideration when transferring CASEL's dimensions of SEL into Indonesian context.

## 6.4 Conclusion

This research posed the questions of “how do Indonesian teachers support students’ SEL in the classroom?” and “how do Indonesian schools support the different facilitators of SEL?”. These questions sought to explore how SEL is implicated in the Indonesian education school system through a small selection of second-grade primary school classrooms. Through this study, it can be concluded that, despite the lack of interventions directly based on CASEL’s dimensions of SEL, Indonesian classrooms exhibited several characteristics of classroom practices that are in line with the concept of SEL. However, some improvements of classroom practices and school support can be done to further encourage students’ SEL. Furthermore, there is still little known about the functions of SEL in students or the wider assessment of SEL throughout the educational system which could be a motive to further the study of SEL in Indonesia.

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## **APPENDIX 1: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS**

1. What are your intentions or aims when interacting with your students?
2. Do you have any expectations towards children's behavior in the classroom?
3. What instructions do you give to students to encourage SEL?
4. How do you plan your lessons to include SEL? Is there a specific module given by the school that incorporates SEL in the classroom?
5. Are there any forms of evaluation to see the student's progress in SEL?
6. What training did you receive for developing students' SEL? What kind of support does the school provide that will help teachers? Do you have access to materials that can expand your SEL support? Do teachers receive evaluation on their teaching?
7. How are the parents involved in student's social-emotional development? Is there any parent training?

## APPENDIX 2: FORM OF CONSENT IN INDONESIAN

UNIVERSITY OF JYVÄSKYLÄ

FACULTY OF EDUCATION AND PSYCHOLOGY

### RESEARCH PERMIT

Nama saya Dini Rahmawati dan saat ini saya sedang menyusun tesis saya dalam rangka menyelesaikan studi saya di program Master's in Educational Sciences di University of Jyväskylä. Penelitian saya adalah mengenai interaksi sosial dan emosional antara guru dan siswa, dengan target partisipan siswa dan guru kelas 2 SD. Penelitian saya bertujuan untuk menggambarkan implementasi social and emotional learning di kelas-kelas SD di Indonesia.

Supervisor tesis saya adalah dosen universitas Merja Koivula, Ph.D. (e-mail: [merja.e.koivula@jyu.fi](mailto:merja.e.koivula@jyu.fi)).

Data untuk penelitian ini berupa observasi dan wawancara. Observasi dilakukan selama 3-4 hari, sedangkan wawancara berlangsung selama kurang lebih 30 menit. Data dari observasi berupa catatan tertulis, sedangkan data wawancara berupa catatan tertulis dan rekaman suara.

Partisipasi dalam penelitian ini bersifat sukarela, dan persetujuan bisa ditarik setiap saat selama proses penelitian berlangsung. Data dari penelitian ini akan digunakan secara rahasia. Data dari penelitian akan di presentasikan agar identitas pribadi masing-masing partisipan tidak bisa diungkapkan. Data dari penelitian akan ditangani sesuai dengan prinsip manajemen data dari the University of Jyväskylä.

Untuk informasi lebih lanjut mengenai penelitian ini, saya bisa dihubungi lewat email [dini.d.rahmawati@student.jyu.fi](mailto:dini.d.rahmawati@student.jyu.fi).

Saya memohon persediaan Ibu/Bapak untuk mengikuti penelitian ini.

Terima kasih atas perhatiannya.

Hormat saya, Dini Rahmawati

**Dengan ini, saya memberikan persetujuan saya untuk berpartisipasi dalam penelitian ini.**

iya

tidak

**Saya memberikan persetujuan saya agar wawancara saya direkam rekaman suara.**

iya

tidak

Apabila Ibu/Bapak ingin dikirimkan laporan akhir dari penelitian tesis ini melalui surat elektronik, mohon sertakan email Ibu/Bapak di garis dibawah ini:

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Tempat dan tanggal

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Tanda tangan dan nama lengkap



## APPENDIX 3: FORM OF CONSENT IN ENGLISH

UNIVERSITY OF JYVÄSKYLÄ

FACULTY OF EDUCATION AND PSYCHOLOGY

### RESEARCH PERMIT

I am Dini Rahmawati and I am working on my Master's thesis in Education. In my research, I investigate the implementation of social and emotional learning in primary schools through observation of interactions between teachers and students in 2<sup>nd</sup> grade of primary school. My research helps illustrate the current implementation of social and emotional learning strategies in Indonesian classrooms.

The supervisor of my thesis is University Teacher Merja Koivula, Ph.D. (e-mail: [merja.e.koivula@jyu.fi](mailto:merja.e.koivula@jyu.fi)).

Data for this research is observation and interview. Observation will be conducted for 3-4 days, while interviews will be conducted around 30 minutes. Observation data will be recorded using written notes while interviews will be recorded using written notes and voice recording.

The participation in this study is voluntary and your permission can be withdrawn any time throughout the research process. Research data is handled and used in a confidential manner. Research data is handled and presented in a way that research participants' personal identity cannot be revealed. Research data is handled according to the data management principles of the University of Jyväskylä.

I gladly provide you further information about the research; please feel free to contact me via e-mail: [dini.d.rahmawati@student.jyu.fi](mailto:dini.d.rahmawati@student.jyu.fi).

Thank you for considering my request.

With best regards,

Dini Rahmawati

**I give my permission to participate in this research.**

yes

no

**I give my permission to record my interview.**

yes

no

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Date and place

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Signature and clarification of name