



Me and My Emotions: Learning to Manage Feelings and Behave Well at School

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ABSTRACT

Bullying is often interpreted as part of aggressive behavior. This aggressive behavior is also caused by elementary school children's difficulty in regulating their emotions. Elementary school education is a particular focus because it is the level of education that experiences the most cases of bullying and violence. The psychoeducation program "Me and My Emotions: Learning to Manage Feelings and Behave Well at School" was conducted as a community service with the aim of increasing students' knowledge of emotional regulation skills as a means of preventing bullying behavior among 6th grade students at SDN 1 Curahmalang. The results of this effort show that psychoeducation provides significant benefits for participants. Of the 36 students who were given post-test questions, the results show that psychoeducation had a positive impact on participants. From these results, it can be concluded that psychoeducation has an impact on good emotion management. In addition, students also showed an increase in understanding about bullying and efforts to improve emotional regulation as a preventive measure against bullying, both from the perpetrators and victims.

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A. INTRODUCTION

At the elementary school level, children begin to learn more about themselves, their feelings, and how to get along with others, both at school and in other social situations. Creating a comfortable and healthy learning environment that will help children grow into well-rounded individuals is crucial for them to learn how to manage their emotions, control themselves, and be kind. Beyond academic achievement, having a positive attitude toward others and themselves can significantly impact how well they make friends and communicate with their teachers. Therefore, it is crucial for schools to help students learn



how to handle their feelings in a positive way and develop attitudes that will help them excel in school and in life. Zins et al. (2004) stated that Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) programs in elementary schools can help children acquire social and emotional skills, which will be beneficial for their school life and future. This level of education significantly enhances students' character development, which in turn helps create individuals who are responsible, caring, and able to work well with others.

In social and emotional development, regulating emotions is an important psychological ability. Emotional regulation is the ability to recognize one's feelings and control them so that one's actions are appropriate to the social situation at hand. Goleman (2004) states that this skill is related to how a person controls and directs their feelings. During elementary school age, the ability to manage emotions is crucial for maintaining mental health, helping students adapt to their social environment, and improving their academic performance. Children who can regulate their feelings well are usually better able to control their impulsive actions, remain calm under pressure, and adapt more easily when interacting with others. Therefore, encouraging emotional management from an early age is important in shaping positive behavior in children (Aulia, 2025).

Although emotional regulation abilities do develop across the board in all students, they are uneven. Many students continue to struggle with managing negative emotions like anger, sadness and frustration. This can influence their responses to other people and occasionally produce inappropriate reactions. Students with low emotional regulation also tend to have higher rates of impulsivity, and are more likely to tease and fight with peers than those with more emotional control. In a school setting, it may interfere with social dynamics and lead to less optimal learning situations.

Bullying is an aggressive behavior that frequently occurs in school settings. It takes place when an individual intentionally and repeatedly attempts to harm, humiliate, or exert control over another person, either physically or psychologically (Gusdiansyah, 2024). Bullying may arise in various contexts, including schools, social environments, and online platforms. In general, bullying is categorized into several forms: physical, verbal, social (relational), and cyberbullying. Verbal bullying occurs in the form of teasing, threatening, belittling, or spreading false information that is harmful. Social or psychological bullying occurs when a person is ignored, left out, or separated from their peers. Cyberbullying is a form of bullying that is carried out using information technology and social media, with the intention of hurting or embarrassing the victim (Setiowati & Dwiningrum, 2020).

Bullying does not only occur in Indonesia but also occurs in various countries. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) estimates that around 245 million children worldwide experience bullying every year (Zhou et al., 2023). The data shows that bullying is an educational problem that occurs in various settings and has a wide impact on children's well-being. In Indonesia, an upward trend in cases can also be seen based on data from the Indonesian Child Protection Commission (KPAI) and the Indonesian Teachers' Union Federation (FSGI), which recorded an increase in the number of cases from 119 cases in 2020 to 226 cases in 2022. In addition, a report by the Central Statistics Agency (BPS) in the 2022 Indonesian Sustainable Development Goals Indicators shows that the percentage of bullying cases among fifth-grade elementary school students nationwide reached 26.8%. The data also shows that male students are more likely to be victims (31.6%) than female students (21.64%). In terms of type, physical bullying is the most common, accounting for 55.5%, followed by verbal bullying at 29.3%



and psychological bullying at 15.2%. These findings show that bullying in elementary schools is a real, structured issue that needs to be taken seriously in the teaching and learning process.

The impact of bullying is not only felt physically by the victim; it can also affect a child's psychological well-being and social development. Rosmaharani (2021) also states that bullying can disrupt physical and psychological health and lead to exclusion from social groups. As a result, individuals can feel anxious, feel unable to cope, and struggle to maintain good social relationships. In addition, children who are victims of bullying may experience depression, low self-esteem, and difficulty interacting with others (Twistiandayani et al., 2024). These conditions can disrupt their focus on learning and make students less interested in participating in teaching and learning activities at school.

Based on this explanation, bullying in elementary schools has a strong relationship with regulating students emotions. Failure to recognize and manage negative emotions can increase the likelihood of someone behaving aggressively and can worsen the psychological impact on the victim. Therefore, preventive efforts are needed that emphasize strengthening the ability to manage feelings from an early stage through organized methods that can be applied in the school environment. The “Me and My Emotions: Learning to Manage Feelings and Behave Well at School” program was held at SDN 1 Curahmalang as part of psychoeducation and counseling activities. The goal was to help students understand their feelings, learn to manage their emotions appropriately, and create positive behaviors, thereby making the learning environment more comfortable and safe.

B. LITERATURE REVIEW

In developmental psychology, the final stage of childhood for sixth-grade elementary school children falls between the ages of 10 and 12 years. This phase is a transitional phase before the onset of adolescence and is marked by rapid development in cognitive, emotional, and social areas. According to Erik Erikson's psychosocial developmental theory, school-age children go through the stage of industry-inferiority. At this stage, children seek to acquire a sense of competence through achievement in academic and social circles. They have a need to feel competent, valued, and recognized by their environment, especially by teachers and peers. Positive support from the environment will help children build self-confidence, while experiences of failure, rejection, or negative treatment can lead to feelings of inferiority and arrogance. This implies that the school's social environment influences the psychosocial development of the child.

One important aspect that develops in late childhood is emotional regulation. Emotional regulation refers to an individual's ability to understand, manage, and express their emotions appropriately. Gross (2015) explains that emotional regulation is the process by which individuals influence their emotions, including how they perceive and express them. Good emotional regulation skills have a positive impact on an individual's behavior, physical health, and psychological well-being. Conversely, difficulty regulating emotions can increase the risk of aggressive behavior, social conflict, and adjustment problems.

This view is supported by Adynski et al. (2024), who stated that emotion regulation plays a crucial role in children's social adjustment in the school environment. This study showed that emotion regulation skills are associated with the quality of peer relationships and students' academic achievement. Furthermore, Alarcón-Espinoza et al. (2024)



explained that developing emotion regulation in the classroom context helps students respond more adaptively to conflict and social stress.

These results suggest that inadequate emotional regulation skills may be associated with heightened likelihood of peer conflict at school. Bullying is a type of interpersonal conflict that commonly takes place among elementary school children. (Gaffney et al., 2021) demonstrated that school-based interventions effectively decreased bullying and improved social climate.

Taylor et al. (2017) showed in a meta-analysis that school based SEL (Social and Emotional Learnings) interventions are effective with regard to the enhancement of social-emotional competencies, among them self-regulation, as well as reduction of problem behavior in this age. Results supported the use of a psychoeducational intervention that was structured and included the concept of bullying delivered in conjunction with emotional regulation components.

C. METHODS

In implementing community service activities, psychoeducation is used to provide insight into the definition of emotions, various types of emotions, the importance of emotional regulation, efforts to improve emotional regulation, the role of emotional regulation in bullying prevention, various types of bullying, and strategies for bullying prevention in elementary schools. Prior to conducting psychoeducation, researchers will conduct a pretest. The purpose of this pretest and posttest is to determine the participants' baseline condition before receiving psychoeducation and to evaluate them after psychoeducation.

According to Walsh (2010), psychoeducation is an intervention method that focuses on educating participants about challenges or problems in life. This intervention can be delivered to individuals, families, and groups, helping participants develop sources of support and social support to face these challenges, and develop coping skills to address them. It can be argued that psychoeducation is the method of intervention in this study.

The implementation of this activity includes: initial observation to identify the condition of the participants, administering a pretest to measure the level of knowledge and ability to regulate emotions and understanding of bullying, delivering material by the resource person regarding emotional regulation and bullying prevention, showing educational videos related to the topic, administering a posttest to evaluate changes after the intervention, a question and answer session to open a discussion between participants and the resource person, and providing rewards as an appreciation for the participants' participation. At the closing, reflections were also given by the resource person to the participants regarding the material obtained from the activity.



C. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This community service activity was conducted at SDN Curahmalang 1 and began with a preliminary test to assess participants' knowledge of emotional regulation and bullying. This was followed by psychoeducation, presenting material on emotional regulation and bullying. The material was delivered using an interactive approach, along with open discussions.



Figure 1. Pretest



Figure 2. Presentasion of Material

A pretest was conducted at the initial stage before psychoeducational material was given to students. The purpose of the pretest was to obtain an initial picture of students' understanding of emotion regulation and bullying behavior. The pretest instrument was designed in the form of simple written questions and was tailored to the characteristics and developmental level of elementary school students.

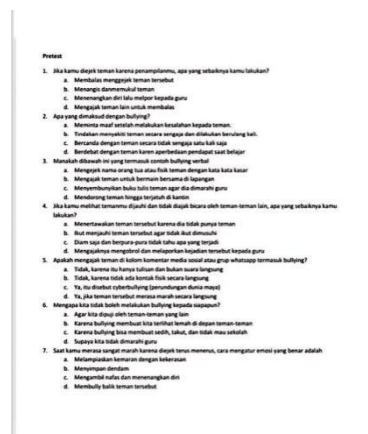


Figure 3. Sheet Pretest

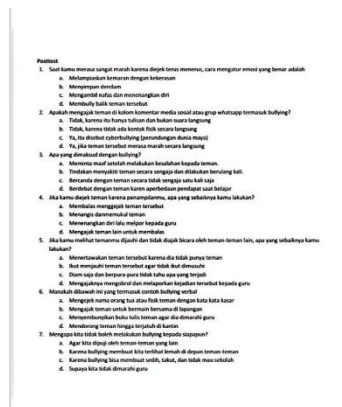


Figure 4. Sheet Postest

The program continued with an anti-bullying video screening and a question-and-answer session. This session encouraged two-way communication, making the activity interactive. It also served to strengthen students' understanding of the importance of managing healthy emotions and preventing bullying in schools.



Figure 4. Video Screening



Figure 5. Q&A Session

Based on the available data, an average pre-test score of 88.43% was recorded, increasing to 95.14% in the post-test. This represents an increase of 0.47 points, or 7.59%, from the initial score. The average N-Gain score was found to be 0.12%, which, according to the classification (Hake, 1998), falls into the moderate improvement category. These results indicate that the psychoeducational and reflective methodologies integrated into the program have proven successful in achieving self-concept understanding.

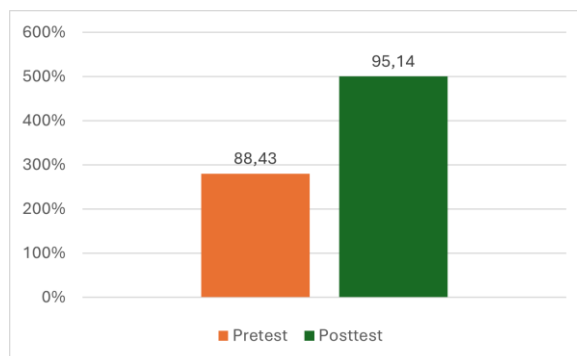


Figure 6. Result Pretest and Posttest



D. CONCLUSION

In Jombang, at SDN 1 Curahmalang, the “Me and My Emotions: Learning to Manage Feelings and Behave Well at School” program successfully addressed crucial issues related to emotional regulation and bullying behavior in elementary school students. Through a psychoeducational approach, students demonstrated improved emotional control. Furthermore, there was increased awareness of the impact of bullying, whether as perpetrators, victims, or witnesses, as well as increased empathy and prosocial behavior at school. These results align with the program’s goal of helping students develop emotional regulation skills. By better understanding emotions and managing behavioral responses, students are expected to be able to build positive social relationships and minimize conflict and bullying. However, because the program was implemented for a short time, its long-term impact is still limited. Therefore, it is recommended that this program be integrated sustainably into the school guidance and counseling curriculum. Furthermore, regular follow-up sessions involving teachers, parents, and the entire school community are needed so that learning about emotional regulation and bullying prevention can be consistently reinforced in various contexts of students’ lives. With optimal sustainability and collaboration, this program has the potential to provide a more significant and sustainable impact on the social-emotional development of students at SDN 1 Curahmalang.

E. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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In conclusion, the authors would like to emphasize that the initial goal of this program was to assist the students of SDN Curahmalang 1 in their psychological development, by emphasizing the strengthening and development of emotional regulation and anti-bullying prevention.



F. AUTHOR CONTRIBUTION

A team consisting of Psychology and Guidance and Counseling (BK) students contributed to the entire psychoeducational program for students at Faculty 2 of Curahmalang Elementary School, from planning to evaluation. These contributions included developing and coordinating psychoeducational materials, administering pre- and post-tests to assess student understanding, and facilitating reflection sessions using sticky notes. Furthermore, the team contributed to the preparation and revision of a scientific article to report on the program.

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Other Contributions: Material Development: Tri Puji Lestari (TPL)

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