
Emotion Regulation Strategies To Enhance Intelligence In Elementary School Children

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Abstract

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Every child possesses unique characteristics shaped by various factors, such as self-reaction, developmental challenges, and environmental influences. Consequently, children often display a range of behaviors, including sadness, anger, aggression, and learning difficulties. This study focuses on the impact of emotional development on elementary school students. Employing a literature review approach, this research analyzes and interprets content from

School Program multiple sources. The findings emphasize the importance of addressing various aspects of elementary school children's lives, including their health, family dynamics, peer relationships, parental aspirations, as well as the guidance and educational approaches provided to them. Furthermore, emotional balance is considered crucial and can be achieved through environmental control and the development of skills to manage and respond to emotions in a balanced manner.

Abstrak

Kata Kunci: *Setiap anak memiliki karakteristik unik yang dibentuk oleh berbagai faktor, seperti reaksi diri, tantangan perkembangan, dan pengaruh lingkungan. Akibatnya, anak-anak sering menunjukkan berbagai perilaku, termasuk kesedihan, kemarahan, agresi, dan kesulitan belajar. Studi ini berfokus pada dampak perkembangan emosional pada siswa sekolah dasar. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan tinjauan pustaka, penelitian ini menganalisis dan menafsirkan konten dari berbagai sumber. Temuan tersebut menekankan pentingnya menangani berbagai aspek kehidupan anak-anak sekolah dasar, termasuk kesehatan mereka, dinamika keluarga, hubungan dengan teman sebaya, aspirasi orang tua, serta bimbingan dan pendekatan pendidikan yang diberikan kepada mereka. Lebih jauh, keseimbangan emosional dianggap penting dan dapat dicapai melalui pengendalian lingkungan dan pengembangan keterampilan untuk mengelola dan menanggapi emosi secara seimbang.*

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Introduction

Each child has unique developmental traits that can sometimes be surprising. This uniqueness may pose challenges for adults, such as parents, if not well understood and may even seem disruptive. As a result, adults may respond inappropriately to children's behavior, and similar misunderstandings can occur within the school environment by teachers.

One aspect of development that often challenges parents and teachers is emotional development. Children frequently experience issues in their emotional growth, often marked by behaviors labeled as mischief. While such behavior is generally normal as part of their developmental stage, there is also the possibility that it could indicate underlying emotional turbulence or disorders (Andi Widodo, 2018).

Emotional disorders in children are often considered an important indicator of their overall development, playing a significant role in determining future success in life. Even if a child has high intellectual intelligence, inadequate emotional balance can hinder their progress in life.

Numerous factors influencing a child's emotional development require in-depth attention, whether these factors are internal to the child, stem from developmental conflicts, or arise from environmental causes (Sari et al., 2020). Therefore, it is crucial for parents and teachers to understand the stages of emotional development in elementary school children to provide proper guidance.

Sarlito Wirawan Sarwono argues that emotions represent any condition within an individual accompanied by affective coloring, ranging from mild (superficial) to broad and profound levels (Syamsu, 2014). Emotions can encompass feelings of anger, fear, happiness, love, surprise, disgust, and sadness. All emotional manifestations, such as anger, fear, joy, hope, as well as conflict, stress, anxiety, and frustration, influence physical changes in an individual (Rena, 2019).

Emotions are represented through behaviors that express comfort or discomfort arising from current situations or interactions (Darmiah, 2020). Additionally, emotions can be defined as intrapersonal conditions, such as feelings, certain states, or motor activity patterns (Setiani, 2013).

Emotional components can be identified based on their complexity levels, which include pleasant or unpleasant feelings, facial expressions, and specific driving conditions. Thus, emotions are affective experiences that involve internal adjustments within the individual to their mental and physical conditions, which are reflected in observable behavior.

Based on this, the author presents this study, recognizing the essential role of teachers and parents as strategic figures in supporting and guiding children's emotional development. Their active involvement and their role as references for emotional education become a necessity, as children in elementary school exhibit developmental-stage-specific vulnerabilities. Therefore, this paper aims to address two questions: the level of emotional development in elementary school children and its implications for the learning process.

Method

This study was conducted through a literature review, focusing on children's emotion regulation and intelligence. Data collection involved reading, note-taking, and processing research materials from various literary sources. Information obtained from the literature review was sourced from three primary objects—written texts, individuals, or places—which provide relevant and necessary insights for this research (Arikunto, 2016).

In particular, the researcher aimed to analyze and understand the relevance between emotion regulation and stages of children's intelligence development. The objective was to identify the negative impacts if emotional regulation is not implemented early for elementary school children, especially from the perspective of emotional intelligence.

The primary research objects in this study were books that specifically discuss emotional intelligence and emotional development in elementary school children. These books were analyzed to explore the relevance between the concept of emotion regulation and discussions on emotional intelligence in the context of children's development. For detailed data analysis, the researcher employed several methods to comprehend, study, and analyze the collected data, utilizing content analysis and content interpretation (Arafat, 2018).

Result and Discussion

The research findings highlight the importance of addressing various aspects of elementary school children's lives, including their health, family dynamics, peer relationships, parental aspirations, as well as the educational and guidance patterns provided to them. Furthermore, emotional balance is also deemed essential, which can be achieved through environmental management and the development of skills to manage and respond to emotions in a balanced manner.

Table 1: The Relationship between Health and Emotions in Elementary School Children

Health Condition	Impact on Emotions
Healthy	Able to manage emotions well, not easily stressed, cheerful
Sick	Easily angered, sad, anxious, fussy
Malnutrition	Difficulty concentrating, easily fatigued, easily angered

It is also known that the family serves as the primary environment for children to learn how to manage their emotions. A positive and supportive relationship between children and parents can help children develop healthy emotional responses.

Characteristics and Classification of Emotional Development in Children

Every child has various ways of expressing their emotions, both through positive and negative behaviors. There are several characteristics that can indicate different types of emotions in children. First, emotions are subjective, involving processes of observation and thought. Second, emotions are fluctuating, meaning they can vary over time. Third, emotions are connected to sensory perception, indicating that emotions can be influenced by events occurring around the child.

The categories mentioned above are classified based on their individual characteristics. According to Yudrik Jahja (Darmiah, 2020), emotions can be categorized into two types: first, sensory emotions, typically triggered by external stimuli affecting the body; and second, psychological emotions, which arise from psychological reasons. Psychological emotions are demonstrated through intellectual feelings, social feelings, moral feelings, aesthetic (beauty) feelings, and religious feelings.

The stages of emotional development in children and adolescents go through various phases that may have positive or negative impacts on their behavior. Some phases of emotion in children can alter behavior, including:

First, emotions can enhance motivation, occurring when one feels pleased or satisfied with an achieved result.

Second, emotions can weaken motivation, occurring when one feels disappointed due to failure, sometimes escalating to despair or frustration.

Third, emotions can hinder concentration in learning, occurring when one experiences emotional tension, leading to nervousness and speech difficulties.

Fourth, emotions can disrupt social adjustment, particularly when one feels jealousy or envy.

Therefore, the emotional experiences individuals have in childhood can influence their attitudes toward themselves and others in the future.

Canon Bard, as cited in Wigati, I. (2013), formulated a theory on the physiological influence on emotions, suggesting that certain situations can trigger neural processes in the child's body. These situations involve interactions between the thalamus—the link between the lower brain and the neural system—and the cerebellum and cerebral cortex, the parts of the brain located near the inner surface of the skull, associated with higher-level mental processes.

James and Lange suggested that emotions are induced and influenced by individual physiological changes. For example, one cries because they are sad, laughs because they are happy, runs because they are afraid, and fights because they are angry (Hm, E. M., 2016).

Lindsley proposed the "Activation Theory," which states that emotions are caused by intense activity in the human nervous system, particularly in the brain. For instance, during frustration, the nervous system works intensely, leading to the secretion of specific glands, which can increase brain activity and trigger emotions. John B. Watson identified three primary emotional patterns: fear, anger, and love. Each displays a particular response to a given stimulus, although modifications (changes) may also occur (Fajri, A., 2021).

Factors Influencing Children's Emotions

According to Novi Ade Suryani (2019), several factors can influence children's emotional development, as follows:

First, the child's condition: A child's individual condition, such as physical disabilities or personal limitations, can greatly impact emotional development and may even affect the child's personality. For example, a child may develop low self-esteem, become easily offended, or withdraw from their environment.

Second, learning factors: A child's learning experiences will determine the potential reactions they may use when expressing anger. Learning experiences that support emotional development include: a) Learning through

trial and error: Children who learn this way experiment to express their emotions, sometimes resulting in behavior that provides partial satisfaction or fails to satisfy. b) Learning through imitation: Imitation is a method of observation that enables children to replicate what they see, including the emotional responses of others. By observing others' emotional responses, children often react with similar emotions and behaviors. c) Learning through identification: In this type of learning, children mirror the emotional reactions of others who inspire them. With the same stimuli, children emulate the emotional expressions of those they admire, creating a strong emotional bond. d) Learning through conditioning: In this type of learning, objects or situations that initially fail to provoke an emotional response may eventually succeed when combined with association. Conditioning occurs easily and quickly early in life because children are less able to rationalize or recognize the irrationality of their reactions. e) Learning through guidance and supervision: Children are taught acceptable ways of reacting to aroused emotions. With training, children are encouraged to respond emotionally to stimuli that typically elicit positive emotions and to refrain from reacting emotionally to stimuli that provoke negative emotions.

Third, conflicts in the developmental process: Every child encounters various conflicts during developmental phases, which are typically navigated successfully. However, if a child struggles to handle these conflicts, they may experience emotional disturbances.

Fourth, the family environment: One of the family's roles is to socialize family values regarding acceptable attitudes and behaviors. The family is the first institution to teach individuals (through parents' examples) how to explore their emotions. As the primary and earliest environment for children's development, the family plays a crucial role in establishing fundamental emotional experiences, as it provides the child's first experiences. The family serves as an initial learning and growth institution that prepares children for further development and learning.

Parenting styles greatly influence a child's emotional development. If a child is raised in a family environment with positive emotional expressions, the child's emotional development will tend toward positivity. However, if parents habitually express negative emotions—such as venting anger with aggression, becoming easily angry, disappointed, or pessimistic when facing challenges—the child's emotional development may also become negative (Febiola & Hazizah, 2019).

Stages of Emotional Development

Three of the strongest emotional reactions are anger, stiffness, and fear, which can be triggered by external events or indirect processes. These reactions can manifest in individuals by increasing the activity of certain glands and altering body temperature. Typically, these reactions will diminish with maturity, as the type of emotional reaction varies according to an individual's level of development. The level of emotional development is also related to an individual's emotional stability, which can be categorized as follows:

First, stable emotions. Individuals with stable emotions tend to have self-confidence, calmness, and precision. They can maintain a calm mindset even in critical situations, while those around them may lose control.

Second, average emotional stability. Individuals with average emotional stability tend to have a good balance of emotions, patience, objectivity, and calmness. They are not easily affected by anxiety and may occasionally display unusual emotions, though this is rare.

Third, labile emotions. Individuals with labile emotions tend to be hasty, passionate, sentimental, and easily influenced. They are vulnerable to life's pressures and tend to be affected by both negative and positive events without attempting to cope with those situations.

Emotional Development in Elementary School Children

Emotional Development in Children through Various Phases (Maria & Amalia, 2018):

Phase One: Infancy to 18 Months. 1) In this phase, infants need to learn

and understand that the environment around them is safe and familiar. The treatment they receive during this phase plays a crucial role in forming their self-confidence, worldview, and interactions with others. Example: Regular breastfeeding provides a sense of security to the infant. 2) By the third or fourth week, infants begin to smile when they feel comfortable and calm. By the eighth week, infants start smiling when they see familiar faces or hear the voices of those around them. 3) Between the fourth and eighth month, infants begin to express emotions such as joy, surprise, anger, and fear. By 12 to 15 months, the infant's dependency on their caregiver increases, and they may become anxious when approached by unfamiliar people. By 18 months, infants begin to observe and imitate emotional reactions displayed by those around them in response to certain events.

Phase Two: 18 Months to 3 Years. 1) In this phase, children start exploring the rules and boundaries of their environment. They begin to recognize the consequences of their actions, which significantly influence their emotional responses to their position in their surroundings. Children begin to learn to differentiate between right and wrong as they seek to fulfill their desires. 2) At the age of two, children are still not able to express their emotions verbally, but they start understanding the connection between facial expressions and feelings. Parents can assist children in expressing emotions verbally by interpreting their facial expressions and gestures. 3) Between the ages of 2 to 3 years, children start to express their emotions verbally, adapt to failure, and learn to control their behavior and self-regulate.

Phase Three: 3 to 5 Years. 1) Children begin to develop the ability to take initiative, build friendships, joke, and start to empathize with others by understanding their feelings. 2) During this phase, children first learn that a single event can provoke different emotional reactions in different people. For example, in a competition, the winner feels happy while the loser feels sad.

Phase Four: 5 to 12 Years. 1) Ages 5-6: Children begin to learn societal norms and rules, including the concept of fairness and secrecy. They also learn

to keep secrets. 2) Ages 7-8: At this stage, children internalize feelings of shame and pride and start to articulate and understand the emotional conflicts they experience. As children grow older, they become more aware of both their own feelings and those of others. 3) Ages 9-10: Children can regulate their emotional expressions in social situations, respond to emotional distress in others, and control negative emotions such as fear and sadness. They begin to understand what makes them feel sad, angry, or scared, and they start to adapt in order to manage these emotions. 4) Ages 11-12: Children's understanding of concepts of good and bad, as well as societal norms and values, becomes more mature and flexible. They begin to understand that moral judgments and rules can change depending on the situation. Their emotional nuances become more diverse.

Methods for Developing Children's Emotional Intelligence

According to Harmoko (2005) as cited in Hidayati (2014), emotional intelligence refers to the ability to recognize, manage, and appropriately express one's emotions, as well as to motivate oneself, understand others' emotions, and build relationships. It is clear that individuals with high emotional intelligence tend to lead happier and more successful lives due to greater self-confidence and emotional mastery, contributing to good mental health. Factors such as maturity, learning experiences, and other conditions impact one's emotional development. In the development of students' emotional skills, learning factors hold significant importance since these can be more actively managed. Various methods can be employed to shape the emotional learning environment, either to strengthen desired emotional responses or to eliminate undesirable reaction patterns.

Emotional development can be facilitated through the following methods (Yanti Fauziah, 2005):

First, learning through trial and error, particularly involving reaction aspects. Children experiment with expressing emotions in acceptable ways.

Second, learning by imitation, where children observe others and adopt similar emotional expressions in response to specific stimuli. Children learn to react by mimicking observed behaviors of those they see as role models.

Third, learning by identification, where children emulate admired individuals or those with whom they have a strong emotional bond, rather than copying just anyone.

Fourth, learning through conditioning, which involves associating a stimulus with a response. Conditioning occurs more quickly in young children who are developing emotional responses, given their limited reasoning and life experience.

Fifth, learning through training under the guidance of teachers or parents. Through training, children are encouraged to respond to particular situations and learn to manage their environment and emotional responses.

Each individual, including elementary school students, has dominant emotions—one or more emotions that strongly influence their behavior and shape their personality, especially in personal and social adjustments. Dominant emotions tend to be formed by the child's environment and interactions with significant people in their life. Factors such as health, family dynamics, relationships with family members, interactions with peers, parental aspirations, and parental guidance play a crucial role in shaping a child's dominant emotions.

These dominant emotions influence the child's temperament and tend to be stable. For instance, a cheerful child is likely to perceive challenges as easily manageable. Similarly, positive emotions such as love and happiness foster a sense of security, which enables children to approach problems with calm, confidence, and conviction. Such children respond to challenges with minimal emotional distress and are better able to maintain emotional balance.

Emotional balance can be achieved by controlling the environment so that unpleasant emotions are quickly offset by positive ones. Building tolerance toward emotions is also essential; it refers to the ability to cope with negative emotions such as anger, anxiety, and frustration while accepting joy and affection. An imbalance between pleasant and unpleasant emotions can lead to a child becoming withdrawn, easily angered, and displaying other negative behaviors.

To address such issues, “emotional catharsis” becomes essential, meaning the release of pent-up emotional energy to reveal underlying causes and cleanse the mind and body of emotional disturbances. Elevated emotions may stem from physical conditions like poor health or chronic illness, psychological factors such as low intelligence, anxiety, or failure to achieve aspirations, and environmental factors like tension from conflicts, authoritarian attitudes from parents or teachers, among others.

Conclusion

Emotion is a dominant aspect that significantly influences a child's life and tends to be stable. If emotional challenges are trivialized in a child, it can hinder their progress, both in their early, middle, and adult stages of development. On the other hand, emotional influences such as love and happiness can create a sense of security, helping the child face problems with calmness, confidence, and conviction to overcome them. They will respond to challenges with minimal emotional tension and are able to maintain emotional balance.

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