

Social Skills for Primary School Students: Needs Analysis to Implement the Scientific Approach Based Curriculum

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Abstract

This research aims to position the social skills of elementary school students as an important aspect in implementing the 2013 curriculum with a scientific approach. This research uses a descriptive-qualitative approach and applies purposive sampling to select the informants, which comprised 20 students in three different elementary schools (SDN), namely SDN Sonorejo 01, SDN Bekonang 1, and SDN Kemasan 01. The data-collection techniques used by the researcher include observation and documentation, with the subsequent data being analyzed using data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion-drawing techniques. The results show that 35% of students (7) have a good mastery of social skills, while the remaining 65% of students (13) did not demonstrate a solid mastery of social skills in class. The data implies that the social skills of elementary school students are still limited, which could in turn cause the implementation of the scientific approach to be less than optimal in the 2013 curriculum.

Keywords: social skills, scientific approach, 2013 curriculum, elementary school

Introduction

Fostering harmonious social relationships with other individuals is a skill that must be prepared from the early years of an individual's life. This skill, however, is not a theoretical concept that can simply be conveyed through teaching and guidance but rather a practical skill that must be directly learned by an individual through his or her interactions with others and the forming of relationships with other students at school. Social skills then become an important aspect in the realization of students' activities and social values.

Social skills are an important part of the socialization process between students, with them affecting their manner of interacting, both in terms of communication and their behavior toward others. These skills are essential for the future lives of students, who will continue developing to overcome various conflicts that occur in the community and learn from real situations. Possessing

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the knowledge, understanding, and skills to engage in social relationships is a must for everyone (Dinh, 2019; Kotluk & Kocakaya, 2018; Ririh Pintoko Jati, 2018).

These social skills reflect the importance of students' ability to interact with one another. One aspect of social skills that students must certainly possess involves communication skills. Communication skills are one of the most basic abilities a human being must have (Maulana Yusuf, 2018). The other aspects of social skills include: 1) providing opportunities to other people in the group to enjoy the same rights and obligations; 2) encouraging group members to respect other members and have a positive view of them; 3) being sensitive to others, so one can feel others' sufferings and wish to help; and 4) learning to control oneself and be a leader. In a group, fostering a harmonious atmosphere among group members requires rules to be established. This control is very important for a group's continuity, and everyone should know the penalties for breaking the rules. What is more, 5) the habit of expressing opinions can foster bravery and readiness to accept others' opinions, even when they differ from one's own opinions (Sriyanto, Febrianta & Yuwono, 2019).

Social skills are essential for socializing and interacting with other people, both in terms of one's communication and behavior toward others. Moreover, the various stages of cognitive, social, and psychological development act as the basis for elementary school students in future. These skills are essential to the later lives of these individuals, who will continue to develop to overcome various conflicts that can occur in society and constantly learn from real life. Having the knowledge, understanding, and skills to engage in social relationships is vital (Ririh Pintoko Jati, 2018).

In addition to improving students' social relationships, social skills are also essential for their academic and non-academic achievements, so any students with problems related to limited social intelligence need to be guided through a process to improve their social skills (Hasbahuddin, 2018).

For elementary school students in the classroom, good social skills are inseparable from the students' learning progress. Indonesia is currently implementing the 2013 curriculum, which follows a scientific approach. The main objective of a scientific approach to curriculum development is to achieve learning that meets the standard for an improved quality of education while also helping students to achieve their full educational and other potentials, including attitudes (religious and social), knowledge, and skills (Susilana & Ihsan, 2014). This concurs with

the aims of the Ministry of Education and Culture in their Teacher Training Material Implementation of the 2013 Curriculum (2013), which can be downloaded from www.puskurbuk.net. This scientific approach encompasses the 5Ms (in Indonesian terms and so further we identify as 5Ms) for learning, which includes observing, asking, experimenting, reasoning/associating, and networking/communicating.

Some public and private elementary schools in Sukoharjo Regency apply the 2013 curriculum following the 5M scientific approach. These elementary schools include SDN Sonorejo 01, SDN Bekonang 1, and SDN Kemasan 01. In the pre-observation, it was ascertained that as the teachers explained the material, the students actively participated in the learning process. The teacher solicited action by directing questions to them, so the students also played a role in the learning process. However, some things arose during learning in class, which included, among other things, some students who busied themselves talking with nearby friends; students who lacked the confidence to present before the class; some students who were hardly willing to argue; and some students who did not cooperate in group discussion activities. In addition, the teacher sometimes found it difficult to relate teaching material when applying the 5Ms in a scientific approach. Based on the problem analysis, this research set out to examine how the social skills of elementary school students are an important aspect in implementing the 2013 curriculum with a scientific approach.

Methods

This research employed a descriptive-qualitative approach, because a qualitative approach was preferable for describing the learning process led by teachers in the classroom when implementing the 2013 curriculum with its scientific approach. In addition, this approach seemed a more effective candidate for use in this research because it would enable the research data to be explored in depth. Purposive sampling was used to select the informants, and this process involved elementary school teachers in Sukoharjo Regency. The subsequent informants comprised 20 students in three different Public Elementary Schools (SDN), namely SDN Sonorejo 01, SDN Bekonang 1, and SDN Kemasan 01. The data-collection techniques used by the researcher included observation and documentation. Observation is an activity that helps to gather in-depth data for phenomena that arise during the research period, which in this case is the social skills of V SD class students in Sukoharjo Regency when being taught through the 5M scientific approach as part of the 2013 curriculum. Documentation, meanwhile, involves searching for data through archives, documents,

photos, and the files/portfolios used by teachers for the learning process under the 2013 curriculum. The overall data obtained through observation and documentation were then processed through interactive data analysis, which included stages for data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion.

Results and Discussion

This research seeks to address the research problems and objectives by describing the social skills of elementary school students as an important aspect in implementing the 2013 curriculum with its scientific approach.

5M Learning Process

In the learning process of the 5M scientific approach of the 2013 curriculum, like with the previous curriculum, the teacher conducts three phases of activities including opening activities, core activities, and closing activities. The students' task is to listen and be actively involved in the classroom. The teacher, meanwhile, is a facilitator who conditions the class and coordinates students, so that when learning takes place, the students act appropriately.

When learning takes place through the opening, core, and closing activities, students listen carefully to what the teacher is saying. A phenomenon that arose during the learning process using the 5M scientific approach in SDN Kemasari 01 concerned how the teacher of class V was unable to optimize the 5M activities by observing the students' learning activities in class and engaging them by asking them questions about the material being taught. Questioning activity was used more in learning at SDN Sonorejo 01. In reasoning activity, the teachers asked the students to provide reasoning according to what they knew about the teaching materials given in the classroom. For experimental activity, the teachers allocated time for students to play an active role in learning, such as by reading examples in student books. For the networking activity, the teachers organized reciprocal activities between teacher and teacher or students and students. In this class, the students sang in front of the class. The teachers had not conditioned this class or coordinated its students, so some students were noisy during the learning process. This may be because teachers are less able to condition classes with higher student numbers, such as a class of 32 students. This happened in SD N Bekonang 1 with a large, parallel number of students.

In addition, several matters emerged during observation when the teacher explained the teaching material to the students: Some still talked with friends. Student engagement was not seen in learning, and the teachers dominated the teaching–learning process more in class V of SD N Kemasan 01. This can be explained by the fact that the teachers did not engage students by directing questions to them. This was also observed in SD N Sonorejo 01, which also did not solicit student activity in the classroom. Students’ activities appeared only in response to encouragement from the teacher for students to present in front of the class. This implies that students do not have individual awareness of presenting in front of the class. Likewise, during group discussions, the students rely solely on their smarter friends. Meanwhile, the smarter students preferred to work on discussion assignments independently, as evidenced by how they wrote their answers directly in their books without appreciating other members in their group.

Implementation of Social Skills in 5M

The implementation of the 2013 curriculum with its 5M scientific approach in the three elementary schools of Sukoharjo Regency cannot be separated from one aspect of assessment, namely the student’s social skills. Table 1 shows the observation results for the social skills of the 20 students in three elementary schools.

Table 1

Recapitulation of Social Skills of Elementary School Students in Sukoharjo Regency

| NO | SOCIAL SKILL ASPECT | PERCENTAGE (%) | | | TOTAL % |
|----|--|-----------------|----------------|----------------|--------------|
| | | SDN Sonorejo 01 | SDN Bekonang 1 | SDN Kemasan 01 | |
| 1. | Student teamwork in a group | 26 | 24 | 25 | 25% |
| 2. | Helping others who need help | 17 | 23 | 20 | 20% |
| 3. | Expressing and listening to opinions | 22 | 25 | 28 | 25% |
| 4. | There are students who do not notice that there are absent students | 29 | 26 | 35 | 30% |
| 5. | Presenting in front of the class without being instructed by the teacher | 12 | 14 | 19 | 15% |
| 6. | Choosing to work on problems in groups when the teacher asks students to discuss working on the problems | 36 | 32 | 45 | 37% |
| 7. | Academic competition during learning | 18 | 22 | 20 | 20% |
| | Total | - | - | - | 24.5% |

Table 1 reveals the low level of social skills shown by the elementary school students in Sukoharjo Regency. From the preliminary observations conducted by the researcher in the three sample

elementary schools in Sukoharjo, 35% (7) of students demonstrated mastery of social skills at a good level, while the remaining 65% (13) of students did not show good social skills in class. A quarter of students (25%) did work well with others in a team, and a fifth (20%) of them helped each other out. Some 25% of the students were happy to express and listen to opinions. Other attitudes demonstrated low social skills: For example, 30% of students did not notice friends who were absent, and only 15% of them presented something in front of the class without being instructed to by the teacher. In addition, only 37% of students worked on problems in groups when the teacher asked them to discuss a problem, and 20% of them lacked academic competition when learning in class. This low level of social skills is illustrated in Figure 1.

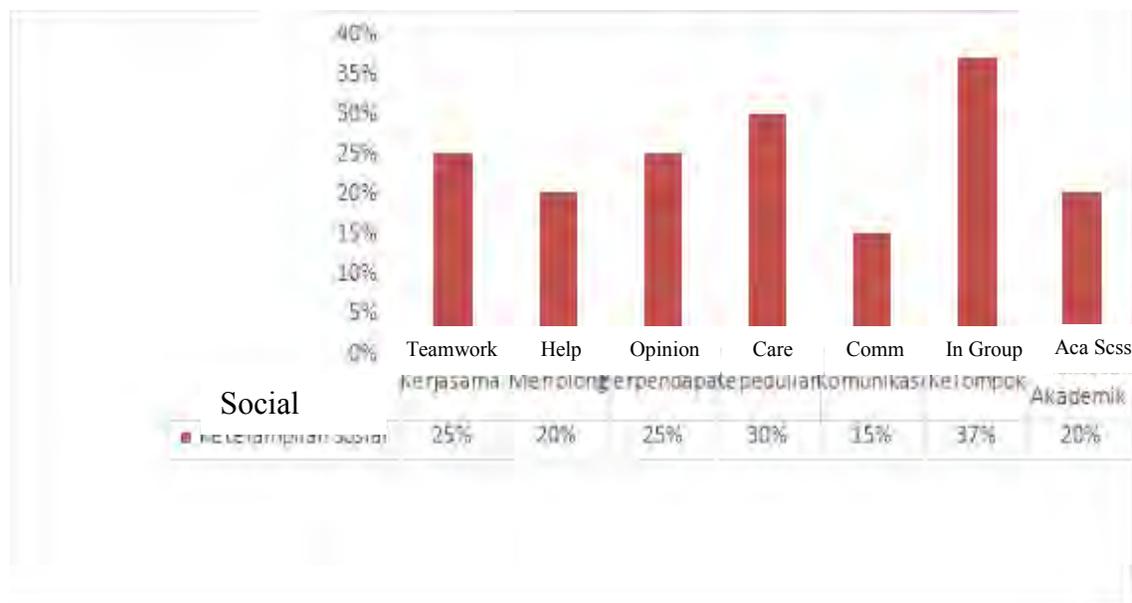


Figure 1. Elementary school students' social skills in Sukoharjo Regency

The first indicator of social skills was assessed by looking at the 25% collaboration rate among students in groups. In this activity, many students seem to have not mastered how to cooperate with other group members. These students simply wrote their answers in their respective books without any discussion with other group members. This phenomenon was studied by Rusmana Dahlan, and Andriyanto (2018), who stated that aspects of cooperation ability could be developed through several aspects: 1) experiencing student togetherness in completing project assignments, 2) discussing project planning appropriately, 3) exchanging opinions, and 4) showing cohesiveness in completing project assignments (Rusmana, Dahlan & Andriyanto, 2018).

Furthermore, many students did not seem to listen to differing opinions from their friends. This could be seen in the group activities when discussing a worksheet. There were some group members who expressed their opinions, while others listened carefully. There were even some students who acted indifferently in the group and only replied to the teacher's questions. It seems some of them justified an answer without considering the opinions of the other group members because they believed their answers were not appropriate or not correct, despite every student having the right to be him or herself and express feelings freely. This right can be developed through assertive training, which is a behavioral change procedure that teaches, guides, trains, and encourages clients to express themselves and behave decisively in certain situations. Assertive training is designed to guide people in expressing, feeling, and acting based upon the assumption that they have the right to be themselves and to express their feelings accordingly. Arzia Purita and Sumedi Nugraha (2015) and Octavian (2015) found increases in interpersonal communication skills after conducting assertive training for eighth-grade students at junior high school. Their findings are also supported by the research of Marini (2008) and Rian Pratama (2014), which found an increase in self-confidence after using assertive training techniques (Rusmana et al., 2018).

In the aspect of social skills, a caring attitude manifests through students noticing, and caring about, when other students do not attend school. This is easily observed when absent students do not answer when the teacher reads out that student's name during an attendance check. It seems students give information to friends if they live nearby, but for students living far apart, it does not seem to be any of their business.

Furthermore, only 15% of the students presented something in front of the class without being asked to by the teacher. This emergence of passive students in the classroom is an important observation. Students tend to enjoy writing answers in their books, but when asked by the teacher to come forward and present the results of their work discussion, the students tend to point to each other, and there is no willingness to present themselves in front of the class. In addition, 37% of the students worked on problems in groups when the teacher asked them to do so. In this activity, however, the students wrote the results of ideas and answers in their own books and did not engage in a dialog with other members of the group to ensure correct answers. Therefore, due to the actions of students with the above skill indicator, they lacked maximum academic competition when learning in class (20%). The students often surrendered and showed passive learning, especially in group discussions, because they relied on the smartest students in the group.

Based on the low level of social skills shown in the data described above for students when being taught with the 5M scientific approach, it can be surmised that this lack of social skills is not just due to an inability by teachers to develop them but also the students not exploring and subsequently developing such skills. Social skills can only come about by fostering an attitude that encompasses independence, confidence, courage to communicate, and respect for others' opinions. On instilling these attitudes, students will be able to interact with their social environment (Ririh Pintoko Jati, 2018).

This is why social skills have become an important aspect when implementing the 5M scientific approach. It also plays a key part in organizing a learning process for streamlining the 2013 curriculum. Students become individuals with the right to express opinions and ideas but also the obligation to respect those of others. They should be able to exchange ideas in discussion groups, or between friends in class, while showing a social attitude and sensitivity to the students and the environment around them. Efforts to improve these should in turn improve the social skills of elementary school students and prepare them to engage in a wider social context in future.

Conclusion

This research addresses the objectives that have been elaborated upon in previous findings and discussions that position the social skills of elementary school students to be an important aspect for implementing the 2013 curriculum with a scientific approach. It can be concluded that the social skills of elementary school students are still regrettably low. This is evidenced by the observation data for the sample of students from three elementary schools in Sukoharjo Regency, with the average percentage for social skills being just 24.5%. Social skills are an important factor when implementing a 5M scientific approach (Observing, Asking, Experimenting, Reasoning and Communicating) for the 2013 curriculum.

This research also has limitations, however, because the researcher selected a sample of students in Sukoharjo Regency from just three elementary schools. What is more, future research could build upon the data collection through observation and documentation by applying questionnaire-based data collection or using a quantitative or experimental form of research.

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