

# Social-emotional learning profile of junior high school students in Java

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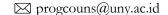
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### **Abstract**

Social-emotional learning is an essential aspect of an individual's development. This research aims to determine the profile of social-emotional learning and differences in socialemotional learning scores based on gender and grade level among junior high school students in Java. This research uses a quantitative approach with a comparative research type. The sample in this study was 2036 junior high school students on the island of Java. The data collection technique in this research used a social-emotional learning scale, which was tested for validity and reliability using the RASCH model. Data analysis techniques were carried out using descriptive statistics and the ANOVA test. The results show that the majority of junior high school students in Java had a high score in social-emotional learning (N=65.4%), and only 0.1% of students categorized in deficient. Students' social-emotional levels were not influenced by gender or grade level. The selfmanagement aspect had the lowest score, and the self-awareness aspect had the highest score in social-emotional learning. It is hoped that the results of this research can provide an overview of the conditions of social-emotional learning in students and become a reference for the development of social-emotional learning program in schools. Guidance and Counseling teachers can improve the lowest aspect of social-emotional learning through various techniques and methods so students can have good social-emotional learning skills in all aspects. Future research needs to explore the factors that influence high levels of SEL in students and expand the research sample to obtain broader generalizations.

**Keywords**: Social-emotional learning, Junior high school, Students





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### Introduction

Current developments in education have recognized that other things are essential to pay attention to apart from students' academic achievements at school, one of which is social-emotional development. Social-emotional skills are crucial for students today (Lertbumroongchai et al., 2020). According to Carter (2016), social-emotional development for students includes several things, namely: (1) forming safe relationships with their peers, (2) experiencing, managing, and expressing various kinds of emotions, and (3) exploring all environmental learning, both family, community and cultural environments. Social-emotional development for students has various benefits for academic and career development. Social-emotional development can improve school results, adaptation to future learning, well-being, and the ability to manage good behavior (Alzahrani, 2019). A study by Kanopka et al. (2020) also shows that developing social-emotional learning in students can increase student achievement and success in the academic and career fields. Students who have good social-emotional skills will tend to have a sense of prosperity in their lives, contribute actively to their surrounding environment, be able to establish good relationships with other people, feel comfortable in studying and working in their environment, have high optimism, and have an empathetic attitude towards other people (Helaluddin & Alamsyah, 2019). Besides supporting the learning process, social-emotional development is significant for students' college, career, and life readiness (Bobek et al., 2021).

Social-emotional learning has been proven to have various positive impacts on students' personal, academic, social, and career development at school. However, students face multiple problems that are influenced by social-emotional aspects. According to Cefai et al. (2018), many students come to school carrying quite heavy social and emotional burdens, including poverty or social inequality, oppression or bullying, family conflict, consumerist attitudes, media exploitation, technology addiction, academic pressure, human trafficking, mobility, and migration. This condition certainly affects the psychological aspects of students, so it severely impacts the learning process at school (Helaluddin & Alamsyah, 2019). Quoting Paolini (2022), not all students come from families full of love and unconditional acceptance. The results of Martinsone (2016) state that problems are also caused by the surrounding environment, in the form of changes in family structure, minimal contact with the community, and the increasing influence of the media are believed to be the sources of these problems. This condition has an impact on children's minimal ability to communicate and their low level of social awareness. Thus, social-emotional development that can overcome these conditions is needed in schools.

Guidance and counseling service programs, as an integral part of the education sector, play an essential role in developing students' social and emotional development. Apart from that, the various social-emotional problems among students make the role of guidance and counseling teachers increasingly complex. Guidance and counseling teachers are also considered to be advocates, leaders, agents of change, observers, collaborators, facilitators, defenders, cheerleaders, mentors, supporters, mentors, saviors, and many more (Paolini, 2022). Guidance and counseling teachers are significant in helping students develop social-emotional skills through school guidance and counseling programs (Bobek et al., 2021). In addition to ensuring students can develop technical skills and become proficient in academic fields, guidance and counseling teachers are also encouraged to integrate social-emotional components into guidance and counseling programs to prepare for college and careers and help students learn higher-order thinking, job skills, organization, teamwork, life skills, and problem-solving (Paulini, 2019). Guidance and counseling

services aim to develop students' potential in the personal, social, learning, and career fields. Socialemotional learning is part of personal and social guidance and counseling that needs to be developed by school guidance and counseling teachers.

Integrating social-emotional learning has become the main focus in developing guidance and counseling service programs and preparing prospective guidance and counseling teachers competent in the social-emotional field. Through research published by ACT Research in collaboration with ASCA, Bobek et al. (2021) stated that 91% of pre-service school counselor practitioners in the U.S. consider that social-emotional learning is a critical focus in developing service programs in the future. The report also stated that 65% of school counselor educators were identified as developing training programs focused on preparing school counselors to develop students' social emotions. Guidance an]d counseling teachers can create a safe, inclusive, engaging, and disciplined learning climate that encourages students' learning success. The development of a guidance and counseling service program based on social-emotional learning should be prepared when prospective guidance and counseling teachers are in their education period. Therefore, adequate information on students' social and emotional conditions is also needed.

Several previous studies have examined the social-emotional learning conditions of students at various levels of education. Surya et al. (2023) have researched the importance of applying social-emotional learning to elementary school students in countries with a paternalistic learning culture. Kismiati (2019) also examined the implementation of social-emotional learning values through the auditory system monopoly game in elementary school students. This research shows that social-emotional values are essential to develop in elementary school students and can be implemented through game media. Furthermore, the development of SEL in junior high school students was carried out by Wirajaya et al. (2019), who researched to determine the condition of social-emotional competencies and their influence on English language skills in junior high school students in Indonesia. The results of this research show that students have social-emotional abilities that are in the medium category. At the high school level, the results of research by Kurniawan & Farozin (2019) show that high school students have an increased need to develop social and emotional aspects of learning, especially regarding self-awareness and responsible decision-making.

Previous studies have shown that social-emotional learning needs to be developed at all primary and secondary education levels. Students must have good social-emotional skills from childhood to late adolescence. However, junior high school has more urgent needs because students face the transition from childhood to adolescence. Teenagers must have good social emotions to succeed academically and in their careers (Van De Sande et al., 2022). However, adolescents are generally experiencing a hard time since they have rapid physical, social, and emotional development (Neth et al., 2020). Adolescents at the junior high school level have passionate feelings about finding their identity, so they are more vulnerable to experiencing problems in the social and emotional field. This research aims to determine the social-emotional learning profile of junior high school students on the island of Java. Hopefully, this research can provide an overview of the social-emotional learning profile of students experiencing adolescence. This research can also be a reference for guidance and counseling teachers in implementing various services to improve the social-emotional aspects of students at school. The findings of this research can provide new information regarding social-emotional learning as part of the field of personal social guidance and counseling in Indonesia.

#### Method

The method used in the research is quantitative with a comparative research type. The sample in this research was 2036 junior high school students on the island of Java. The sampling technique in this research used accidental sampling; students who filled out the research instrument were designated as the sample. The data collection technique in this research uses a social-emotional learning scale, an adaptation of the Social Emotional Competence Questionnaire scale developed

by Zhou & Ee (2012). The research scale consists of 25 items arranged based on five indicators of social-emotional learning: self-awareness, social awareness, self-management, relationship management, and relationship decision-making. Self-awareness is the ability of students to be aware of their condition, talents, interests, strengths, and weaknesses. Social awareness is students' awareness of the conditions of their social environment, and self-management is the student's ability to organize and direct themselves to achieve the desired goals. Meanwhile, relationship management is the student's ability to manage relationships with others. At the same time, responsible decision-making is the student's ability to make decisions and accept the risks of these decisions responsibly. The validity test was carried out using the RASCH model, and 20 valid and five invalid statement items were obtained. The reliability test results obtained a Cronbach Alpha value of 0.89, which is included in the excellent category in the Rasch Model. Data analysis techniques were carried out using descriptive statistics and hypothesis testing using the ANOVA test to test differences in social-emotional scores in students.

# Findings and Discussion

# **Findings**

Based on distributing the social-emotional learning scale to junior high school students, data was obtained that describes the condition or profile of students' social-emotional learning. The following are the findings regarding the social-emotional learning profile of junior high school students on the island of Java.

Table 1. Categorization of Social and Emotional Learning in Students

| Category  | Frequency | 9/0  |
|-----------|-----------|------|
| Very High | 410       | 20.1 |
| High      | 1331      | 65.4 |
| Medium    | 281       | 13.8 |
| Low       | 12        | 0.6  |
| Very Low  | 2         | 0.1  |
| Total     | 2036      | 100  |

The analysis results show that most students have social-emotional scores in the high category, namely 65.4%. Only 0.1% of students have social-emotional scores in the deficient category. Overall, the average social-emotional score of students is in the high category, with a score of 65.22. Then, the data is analyzed based on each aspect's average score to determine which aspect is the lowest and which is the highest. The data is presented in the following table.

Table 2. Average Aspects of Social-Emotional Learning

| Aspect                      | Mean  |
|-----------------------------|-------|
| Self-Awareness              | 3,627 |
| Social Awareness            | 2,827 |
| Self- management            | 2,808 |
| Relationship Management     | 3,210 |
| Responsible Decision-Making | 3,179 |

Table 2 shows that the lowest to highest aspects are self-management, social awareness, responsible decision-making, and relationship management. Self-awareness has the highest score of social-emotional learning. Apart from that, the gender differences can be seen in the following table.

Table 3. Differences in Levels of Social-emotional Learning can be een from the Students' Gender.

|     |                                      | Levene'<br>for Equ<br>Varianc | ality of                 | t-test for | Equality of | Means  |            |            |        |       |
|-----|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|------------|-------------|--|------------|------------|--------|-------|
|     |                                      |                               | Sig. (2- Mean Std. Error |            |             | 95%<br>Confidence<br>Interval of the<br>Difference |            |            |        |       |
|     |                                      | F                             | Sig.                     | t          | df          | tailed)  | Difference | Difference | Lower  | Upper |
| SEL | Equal variances assumed              | 3,023                         | 0,082                    | -1,708     | 2034        | 0,088  | -0,570     | 0,334      | -1,224 | 0,085 |
|     | Equal<br>variances<br>not<br>assumed |                               |                          | -1,673     | 1494,974    | 0,095  | -0,570     | 0,341      | -1,238 | 0,098 |

It can be seen from Table 3 that the results of the statistical test show that there is no significant difference in the level of students' social-emotional learning in terms of gender differences. This can also be seen in the average social-emotional learning scores between women and men, where the average scores are not much different and are in the same high category.

Table 4. Social and Emotional Learning Scores based on Student Gender

| Gender | Total | Mean Score | Category | p-value |
|--------|-------|------------|----------|---------|
| Male   | 760   | 64.87      | High     | 0.002   |
| Female | 1276  | 65.43      | High     | 0.082   |

This is not much different when comparing the level of social-emotional learning based on class level, namely between grades 7, 8, and 9. The results can be seen in the following table.

Table 5. Social and Emotional Learning Scores Based on Class Level Differences

|                 | Type III Sum of     |      |             |            |       |                     |
|-----------------|---------------------|------|-------------|------------|-------|---------------------|
| Source          | Squares             | df   | Mean Square | F          | Sig.  | Partial Eta Squared |
| Corrected Model | 91.484 <sup>a</sup> | 2    | 45,742      | 0,862      | 0,423 | 0,001               |
|                 |                     |      |             |            |       |                     |
| Intercept       | 7903136,222         | 1    | 7903136,222 | 148904,871 | 0,000 | 0,987               |
| Class_Level     | 91,484              | 2    | 45,742      | 0,862      | 0,423 | 0,001               |
|                 |                     |      |             |            |       |                     |
| Error           | 107901,614          | 2033 | 53,075      |            |       |                     |
| Total           | 8768823,000         | 2036 |             |            |       |                     |
| Corrected Total | 107993,098          | 2035 |             |            |       |                     |
|                 |                     |      |             |            |       |                     |

a. R Squared = .001 (Adjusted R Squared = .000)

The table 5 explains that there is no significant difference in the level of social-emotional learning based on class level. This indirectly shows that class level does not affect students' social-emotional learning levels.

# Discussion

The research findings show that most students have social-emotional scores in the high category, with a mean score of 65.22. Junior high school students in Java Island already have good social-emotional learning skills. This condition is excellent because students with good social emotions will experience

success in academics and careers. This follows research by Arieny et al. (2023), which shows that social-emotional learning can increase achievement in student learning activities. Dermody et al. (2022) also stated that students who have good social-emotional learning skills will tend to have good communication, conflict management, and cooperation skills with other people around them. The results of this study support the research results of Fronda & Dolandolan (2022), which show that students in junior high schools have a good awareness of their social-emotional conditions, which include self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and self-efficacy. The role of the teacher, learning environment, and peer interaction can be factors causing high levels of social-emotional learning in students (Kayhan & Meltem, 2020).

In general, students in their teenager experience many challenges, problems, and problematic behavior (Yaeger, 2017). The results of this research show that even though students are in a transition period, which causes various changes in themselves, students have managed to overcome this and have good social-emotional learning. This can be caused by multiple factors, including internal factors originating from the teenager himself or internal factors from the family and friendship environments. This follows the research results of Giang et al. (2023), which state that family, individual, and multicultural factors influence social-emotional behavior in adolescents. Teenagers with good adaptation and self-control skills, have supportive families, and are not under pressure because of their culture or ethnicity tend to have healthy social and emotional conditions. High SEL scores in students can have implications for increased self-esteem, peer relationships, and good academic achievement at school. This follows the research results by Demirci et al. (2022) that show that aspects of relationship skills and self-awareness can positively impact peer relationships in adolescents.

The aspect that gets the highest score in students' social emotionality is the aspect of self-awareness. Self-awareness is an individual's ability to recognize and be aware of one's condition, including strengths, weaknesses, emotions, and other things within oneself (Deli et al., 2021). A high score in this aspect shows that students have realized their condition is related to their emotional elements. The results of this study support the research results (Lailatussaidah et al., 2021) that junior high school students have heightened self-awareness. Students have realized their potential and weaknesses, can direct themselves, and are confident in expressing their desires and opinions regarding something.

The results of the analysis show that self-management is the lowest aspect among other social-emotional aspects. Jazimah (2015) explains that self-management means managing all elements of personal potential, controlling the will to achieve good things, and developing various aspects of life to achieve goals. This opinion is supported by Asim (2016), who states that the purpose of self-management is that students can plan, organize, manage, and control themselves in carrying out activities and use their time effectively and efficiently. A low score in self-management means that students cannot manage themselves to carry out various activities in daily life. Low self-management in students can be influenced by multiple factors, such as socioeconomic conditions, academic abilities, and the environment in which they live (Claro & Loeb, 2019).

The analysis also shows no differences in the level of social-emotional learning based on gender. It is also explained that in the emotional aspect, there is no difference between women and men because both have the same confidence in displaying their emotions appropriately, even though the method is adjusted to the role of each gender (Natalia & Lestari, 2015). The results follow Risma's (2020) research, which shows that gender differences do not influence students' social abilities. So, it can be concluded that gender differences do not affect students' social-emotional learning. The results of this study follow the research results (Ummah & Fitriasari, 2020) that there are no differences in social-emotional learning conditions based on gender in adolescents aged 10-13 years.

When viewed from the class level, the research results show no differences in social-emotional conditions in learning for students in grades VII, VIII, and IX. Students tend to have similar social-emotional learning conditions because they have the same developmental characteristics; they are in the adolescent category. The results of this study support the research results (Loeb et al., 2019) that social-emotional learning for elementary and junior high school students is different. Still, the conditions for

social-emotional learning between classes for junior high school students tend to be similar. Research results by Bora & Sebastian (2023) show that friendly relationships with peers and interactions with family greatly influence the conditions of social-emotional learning in adolescents. Meanwhile, research by Rachman et al. (2023) obtained results that socio-economic conditions, interactions with parents, problematic behavior and technology addiction, psychological conditions of parents, attachment, parenting, and school learning programs can also influence the social-emotional conditions of adolescents.

Overall, the social-emotional learning scores of students on Java Island are excellent. The social and emotional scores of students on the island of Java are higher than those of students in other regions of Indonesia. Research results by Wirajaya et al. (2019) show that most secondary school students in Palembang, Sumatra Island, have a social-emotional learning score in the medium category with a percentage of 76.7%. Research by Marheni et al. (2019) also shows that teenagers in Denpasar, Bali Island, have social skills that are in the medium category. Junior high school students on the island of Java who have higher social and emotional scores than students from other regions can have better academic achievements. Students on the island of Java can have better self-control abilities, better social relationships, and more optimal academic achievements.

This research provides an overview of the conditions of social-emotional learning in junior high school students on the island of Java, which is one of the components that need to be developed in the field of social-personal guidance. This research also provides an understanding of differences in social-emotional learning regarding gender and grade level, which shows no differences based on these indicators. However, this research has several limitations, namely the number of samples. The number of students and schools participating as samples for this research is not too large and still needs to be increased. This research also did not explore what factors influence high levels of social-emotional learning and why there are no differences in social-emotional learning based on gender and grade level. Exploring the causal factors and increasing the sample size in future research will provide a clearer picture regarding the social-emotional conditions of junior high school students on the island of Java.

#### Conclusion

The research results show that most junior high school students on the island of Java have social-emotional scores in the high category, and only a few students have social-emotional scores in the deficient category. Students' social-emotional levels are not influenced by gender or grade level. However, there are differences in the average scores for each aspect, where the self-management aspect is the lowest aspect and the self-awareness aspect is the highest aspect possessed by junior high school students on the island of Java. The results of this research enrich previous research related to social-emotional learning in the field of personal and social guidance and counseling. This research is expected to become a reference for developing social-emotional learning as part of Personal-Social Guidance and Counseling in schools. Guidance and Counseling teachers can improve the lowest aspect of social-emotional learning through various techniques and methods so students can have good social-emotional learning skills in all aspects. Future research can explore the factors that influence high levels of SEL in students and expand the research sample to obtain broader generalizations.

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