

IMPLEMENTATION OF OUTDOOR LEARNING IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE IN PRIMARY SCHOOL CHILDREN

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Abstract

Emotional intelligence is one of the important skills that must be developed in elementary school children. Along with the advancement of educational approaches, outdoor learning has emerged as one of the effective methods in helping children develop aspects of emotional intelligence. In this learning context, children are given the opportunity to interact with the natural environment, peers, and situations that stimulate emotional management and social skills. This article aims to discuss comprehensively how outdoor learning can make a significant contribution to the development of emotional intelligence in elementary school children. With a more natural and practical approach, outdoor learning offers a space to facilitate children's understanding of emotions, stress management, empathy, and collaboration in a more dynamic and enjoyable educational environment.

Keywords: emotional intelligence, outdoor learning, elementary school children, holistic education

INTRODUCTION

Emotional intelligence is an important aspect of child development, especially during the early childhood years (approximately 6–12 years old), which is the initial phase of character, emotional, and social skill formation. The concept of emotional intelligence popularized by Daniel Goleman (1995) emphasizes the importance of the ability to recognize one's own emotions and those of others, manage emotions, motivate oneself, and build healthy social relationships. In the field of education, this aspect is increasingly recognized as a determinant of children's success, both in academic contexts and in daily social life (Goleman, 1995; Mayer, Salovey, & Caruso, 2004). Unfortunately, the education system in Indonesia still places significant emphasis on cognitive aspects and academic performance as the primary indicators of student success (Zuchdi, 2011).

Elementary school-aged children often face various social and emotional dynamics, ranging from adaptability, cooperation, to managing frustration and conflict. However, classroom learning that is too focused on sitting, reading, and writing indoors often limits natural movement and social interaction (Marjohan, 2002). This can slow down the development of their emotional intelligence. Therefore, innovative approaches to learning are needed that can integrate real-life experiences, physical activities, and emotional stimulation in a balanced manner (Suparno, 2010).