

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents an introduction to my research. There are six sections consisting of the background of the study, formulation of research questions, research purpose, research significances, scope and limitation of the study, and the definition of applied key terms that each provides the information and overview of the whole research concept.

1.1 Background of The Research

In recent years, school-aged students' mental health awareness has been warmly praised. A study conducted by Gojali (2019) revealed that students present emotional concerns that result in the substantial need to provide education, curricula adjustment, school healthcare improvement, better child-parent communication, psychotherapy attendance, and life skill competencies training in school. Schools are expected to provide appropriate teaching and learning experiences while taking into account the iceberg considerations. The student's attitudes and aptitudes can be influenced by their feelings towards the school environment, including pupils, teachers, the learning process, subject materials, and, more deeply, how they can interpret their emotions without being judged and rejected. It is nothing new that diversity may impact students in various ways, including their learning opportunities and achievement (Anisa et al., 2019). It is understandable that social and emotional awareness plays an important part in their academic and personal growth.

The overarching goal of schools is to help children develop their potential in areas such as social-emotional competence, character, health, and civic involvement. Anugerahwati & Saukah (2010) identified that in developing a quality education system in schools in Indonesia, teachers must have four competencies: educational, professional, social, and personality. From the perspective of acquiring English as a Foreign Language (EFL), English is not a compulsory subject at the elementary school level in Indonesia, as stated in the research conducted by Suganda et al. (2018). Since studying a foreign language through a supportive social and emotional learning strategy can assist students in being more motivated and happier, the English subject may require specific attention. Positive emotional responses and a sense of pleasure in learning are undeniably obvious (Billy & Garríguez, 2021). Teachers should examine this crucial aspect and pay attention to how their pupils might learn new things with enjoyment and delight when they are teaching in their classrooms.

Social and Emotional Learning, which over and above will be written as SEL, are the skills that enable students to integrate cognition, affect, and behavior to deal effectively with daily tasks and problems. According to CASEL (2012), these include self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making, which can be attained in the learning process by regulating emotions, maintaining interpersonal relationships in interactions, providing direct instruction and feedback, and asserting social ability influencers. A study done by Alhodiry (2016) resulted in the implementation of SEL by

having supportive and encouraging teachers. Teachers' and students' emotions in class are closely related, and teachers' emotions explain progressive changes in students' emotions in addition to their instructional behavior. Teachers must recognize the power of their emotions and that teaching comprises more than the emotions that teachers bring to the classroom that significantly impact their students' emotions (Becker et al., 2014).

As a further justification, teachers' social and emotional competency is thought to impact students' cognitive and emotional development. Teachers who lack social and emotional competence do not appear to be able to teach students as successfully as teachers who are socially and emotionally competent (Jennings & Greenberg, 2009). It is understandable that teachers' attitudes reflect their social-emotional skills, but students' interests convey their overall development. Moreover, emotionally drained teachers are more likely to become cold and uncaring. They may finally feel they have nothing to contribute or gain by staying in the classroom and leaving the profession. Others may continue, if unwillingly, to survive by maintaining a restrictive classroom atmosphere driven by unpleasant and often aggressive methods, working at a poor performance level until they retire. Burnout has a major impact on teachers, students, schools, governments, and society in any circumstance. Exhausted teachers and the learning environments they provide can be devastating to students, particularly those at risk of mental health problems.

In the recent Indonesian educational system, SEL is promoted as *Pembelajaran Sosial dan Emosional (PSE)*, which is already integrated into all aspects of teaching and learning, as well as social life in schools (Ramadansyah, 2021). Its more abstract use happens in the classroom when the teacher presents content. It is considered abstract because a teacher has done a lot to use this ability without being aware of it. As reinforcement for what a teacher has done thus far, knowledge of Social Emotional Competence (SEC) is described and researched. Teachers need to be conscious of and consistent in incorporating SEC into the learning process.

As we can perceive from the latest investigation of SEL implementation in Indonesia, SEL has not been fully adopted (Wirajaya et al., 2019). SEL is only used on an irregular basis. This is attributable to a variety of reasons, including academic competency, which continues to predominate as evidenced by curricular content, teaching practice, and assessment and evaluation. So far, the focus of learning has remained on cognitive aspects, which have taken priority over other domains (Adams & Richie, 2017). In reality, the use of SEL is extremely important and relevant in the context of education in Indonesia.

Most public schools focus on the academic part of education, ignoring its other aspects. Students who get only academic education in school encounter more complicated academic and social challenges to be successful and adjust to society (Yaqoob & Hafeez, 2019). In research from Helaluddin & Alamsyah (2019), it was given the view that educational professionals often refer to social-emotional learning as the missing piece.

That is, while SEL is a crucial component of children's education, it is still undervalued. The missing piece term also refers to its current definition, which implies that SEL is a component of education that helps academic performance but has not been officially acknowledged or given greater emphasis so far.

Grounded on this framework, this research analyzes teachers' perspectives on how SEL is applied in the English classroom environment in a modern Islamic school in Indonesia. Some considerations were taken to determine the focus of this research since the discussion of SEL was mostly done in the elementary stages. Also, the point of modern Islamic schools brought a higher interest to investigate further.

Based on the study conducted by Udawiyah et al. (2020), contextually different from most public schools in Indonesia, students who attend boarding/full-day schools typically experience anxiety as a result of their separation from their parents, change of accommodation, and greater coursework, particularly religious subjects. Anxiety may affect people of all ages, including students, particularly those who attend boarding/full-day school. Besides, the reason why this research is selecting modern Islamic schools is the teachers' attendees, high peer interaction, and strong social involvement that both teachers and students have to follow. The researcher means to observe and describe how teachers in modern Islamic schools view SEL as one of the method implementations by taking into account the previous considerations.

Teachers were instructed to answer the following themed questions in order to assess their perspectives on SEL implementation in the EFL classroom context of modern Islamic schools:

1. Teacher's knowledge of SEL activities implementation in EFL classroom
2. SEL implementation in their teachings

Because SEL learning has not been widely applied in the classroom, it is probable that many teachers, although having adopted SEL-based activities, do not comprehend the notion of SEL learning. Furthermore, knowing how teachers see and evaluate modern Islamic schools is predicted to have a favorable influence on teachers, students, and schools in attaining a better and more complete learning process. If teachers have adopted SEL by knowing its background, this approach is predicted to offer up greater possibilities for improved implementation by taking into consideration the experience that the teacher who has implemented it has carried on. If the idea of SEL learning is new to teachers, it is believed that they would notice greater advantages for both student growth and teacher awareness.

When students are equipped with social and emotional skills, they are better able to focus, manage their emotions, and establish positive relationships with peers and teachers. These factors contribute to a conducive learning environment, fostering greater engagement and motivation among students. As a result, students' English performance tends to improve, as they are more likely to participate actively in class, express themselves confidently, and effectively communicate in English.

Furthermore, SEL plays a vital role in EFL teaching and learning by addressing the affective factors that influence language acquisition. Language learning is a social and communicative process, and emotions can significantly impact students' language development. When students feel safe, supported, and connected in the classroom, they are more likely to take risks, experiment with the language, and engage in meaningful interactions with their peers and teachers.

Another supporting reason is that many teaching approaches are being influenced by research. Schools and educators may engage in academic methods that include SEL. Furthermore, teachers are adapting conceptual research that analyzes how students' brains process information in classroom settings. Educators across the country are becoming more informed about SEL and implementing that understanding in the classroom setting (Perkins et al., 2020).

Underlining the considerations of the importance and urgency of incorporating the SEL approach in the classroom, the research problems are addressed with the focus on SEC as the result of SEL that the teacher can obtain. Both SEL and SEC are crucial for students' achievement and general well-being. SEL stands for the process of learning how to comprehend and control one's emotions, create and attain constructive objectives, feel and demonstrate empathy for others, build and sustain healthy relationships, and make wise judgments. SEC, on the other hand, refers to the specific competencies that people acquire through SEL, such as self-awareness, self-

regulation, social awareness, relationship skills, and decision-making with integrity.

1.2 Statement of The Research Problems

The framework of four research questions underpins this study. The research questions are formatted to fulfill the main purpose of the study and to probe into the participants' perspectives SEC; self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skill, and responsible decision-making; in order to obtain information from their responses:

1. What are modern Islamic school teachers' perspectives on implementing self-awareness competencies for students in the classroom?
2. What are modern Islamic school teachers' perspectives on implementing self-management competencies for students in the classroom?
3. What are modern Islamic school teachers' perspectives on implementing social awareness competencies for students in the classroom?
4. What are modern Islamic school teachers' perspectives on implementing relationship skill competencies for students in the classroom?
5. What are modern Islamic school teachers' perspectives on implementing responsible decision-making competencies for students in the classroom?

1.3 Objectives of The Research

From the problem figured out above, the objectives of the research are as follows:

1. To figure out modern Islamic school teachers' perspective on implementing self-awareness competencies for students in the classroom.
2. To figure out modern Islamic school teachers' perspective on implementing self-management competencies for students in the classroom.
3. To figure out modern Islamic school teachers' perspectives on implementing social awareness competencies for students in the classroom.
4. To figure out modern Islamic school teachers' perspective on implementing relationship skill competencies for students in the classroom.
5. To figure out modern Islamic school teachers' perspective on implementing responsible decision-making competencies for students in the classroom.

1.4 Significance of The Research

The findings of this study are expected to be contributed to the following:

1. For the teachers, the study's result is expected to highlight the SEL implementation in the EFL classroom, its importance, and the possible approaches. It can also be an overview of the SEL for the teachers who

might not be familiar with the concepts to purposefully be applied in their EFL classroom.

2. For the students, the result of the study is expected to explain the SEL implementation done by their teachers and how the teachers perceive it. By knowing the teachers' perceptions, students can be more aware of the approaches given by the teachers and actively participate in their SEC.
3. For future researchers, the result of the study is expected to be a reference to conduct further research dealing with SEL implementation in the EFL classroom context. After knowing how the teachers perceive it, they can go deeper with the best practices.

1.5 Scope and Limitation of The Research

To avoid being too broad and redundant, this study applies scope and limitation to restrict the concept elaboration as well as the research context. Straightly from the title, this study focused on social-emotional learning implemented in the EFL classroom and how the teachers perceive it. The perception covers the perceived benefit, students' SEC accomplishment, applied approaches, and hinder barriers to SEL implementation.

The research context is limited to the participants and settings; English teachers of a modern Islamic school. As the qualitative paradigm is followed, instead of covering a broad perspective of a large number of

participants, this study deeply examined the perception of teachers with several objective-related questions.

1.6 Operational Definition of Key Terms

To prevent misunderstanding and misconception, the following terms are necessary to define:

1.6.1 Learning

Learning is a complicated conception and action. In addition to the cognitive components of learning, reasoning, and problem-solving, most students and teachers would agree that the social and emotional aspects of learning are important (Banerjee, 2010). Learning, in general, is a process that results in change as a result of experience and enhances the possibility for enhanced achievement and future understanding. In practice, the scope of learning includes activities in the classroom, at home, and in society because learning is something that students do for themselves rather than something that is done to them. It is determined by how students comprehend and adjust to their experiences.

1.6.2 Social-Emotional Learning

SEL is defined in the literature as “the process through which children and adults recognize and control their emotions, create and attain good objectives, feel and express empathy for others, build and sustain meaningful relationships, and make responsible decisions.” (CASEL, 2012). Herrera (2020) emphasizes that

individuals' personal growth, as well as their academic and behavioral development, benefit from SEL. To be clear, SEL is a technique that may be practiced at all levels, including PreK-12, adult education, and higher education.

1.6.3 EFL Class Settings

EFL Class settings represent English lessons in the overall course of the school subjects. The teachers are those who specialize in English Education with a certain degree, spending several years of college with a focus English Education major. In the Indonesian context, English subject is given as compulsory for secondary school, both junior and senior high level.

1.6.4 Modern Islamic school

As the oldest educational institution in Indonesia shifted from traditional to modern, private Islamic schools emerged as a new trend in delivering education for children and adolescents in Indonesia by integrating science and religion. With few modifications, formal instruction in the traditional manner (teaching in the classroom) and an integrated curriculum were implemented. (Anwar & Julia, 2021). Moreover, Fatmawati et al. (2020) found that private Islamic schools have seen significant transformations, whether in the educational structure or in instructional components. The Islamic school has been properly structured, with extremely tidy management and administration, and its teaching system has been

handled with equal parity between religious instruction and general education, as well as a better comprehension of Arabic and English.

1.6.5 Teachers Perspective

Teachers' perspective here is how teachers view SEL and its implementation in the classroom as the model and facilitator in the classroom. Concerning implementing SEL, teachers play critical roles in building students' social and emotional skills. Consequently, teachers and responsible policymakers must create policies that can encourage students' SEL competencies in the classroom. Teachers who acknowledged having less expertise in their teaching subject indicated a lower tendency to create lessons or teaching materials that may aid in greater retention and increased interest levels in the issue (Hmelo-Silver & Barrows, 2006)