

IMPLEMENTATION OF MARKET DAY ACTIVITIES TO IMPROVE CHILDREN'S SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL ABILITIES IN KINDERGARTEN IT INSAN MULIA

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ABSTRAK

Anak usia dini (0–6 tahun) berada pada masa *golden age* yang sangat menentukan perkembangan sosial emosional, meliputi kemampuan mengelola emosi, berinteraksi, bekerja sama, dan berempati. Fakta di lapangan menunjukkan bahwa masih terdapat anak yang mengalami kesulitan dalam berinteraksi sosial dan mengelola emosi, termasuk di TK IT Insan Mulia. Salah satu upaya untuk mengembangkan kemampuan tersebut adalah melalui kegiatan *market day*, yaitu pembelajaran berbasis simulasi jual beli yang melibatkan anak secara langsung. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mendeskripsikan implementasi kegiatan *market day* dalam meningkatkan kemampuan sosial emosional anak serta mengidentifikasi faktor pendukung dan penghambat pelaksanaannya. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan metode penelitian lapangan (*field research*). Teknik pengumpulan data meliputi observasi, wawancara, dan dokumentasi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa kegiatan *market day* di TK IT Insan Mulia terlaksana dengan baik dan mampu mengembangkan kemampuan sosial emosional anak, yang ditunjukkan melalui peningkatan kemampuan berkomunikasi, bekerja sama, berbagi, dan mengelola emosi sesuai indikator Standar Tingkat Pencapaian Perkembangan Anak.

Kata kunci : Kegiatan Market day, Kemampuan Sosial Emosional, Anak Usia Dini

ABSTRACT

Young children (ages 0–6) are in the “golden age,” a critical period for social-emotional development, including the ability to manage emotions, interact, collaborate, and empathize. Field observations indicate that some children still struggle with social interaction and emotion regulation, including at TK IT Insan Mulia. One approach to developing these skills is through “market day” activities—simulation-based learning involving buying and selling that directly engages the children. This study aims to describe the implementation of market day activities in enhancing children’s social-emotional skills and to identify factors that support and hinder their implementation. This study employed a qualitative approach using field research methods. Data collection techniques included observation, interviews, and

documentation. The results of the study indicate that the market day activities at TK IT Insan Mulia were successfully implemented and were effective in developing children's social-emotional skills, as evidenced by improvements in their ability to communicate, collaborate, share, and manage emotions, in accordance with the indicators of the Child Development Achievement Standards.

Keywords: *Market Day Activities, Social-Emotional Skills, Early Childhood*

INTRODUCTION

Social-emotional development is a crucial aspect of early childhood development because it relates to a child's ability to understand and manage emotions, form social relationships, and interact effectively with their environment. Denham (2006) states that social-emotional development encompasses empathy, self-control, and the ability to interact with peers, which form the foundation for a child's future social relationships.

Early childhood is the "golden age"—the period from birth to age six—characterized by rapid development and requiring appropriate stimulation (Nazia Nuril, 2022). Early childhood development encompasses six aspects: religious values and noble character, Pancasila values, physical and motor skills, cognitive development, language, and social-emotional development (Ministry of Education and Culture Regulation No. 10 of 2025). Of these six aspects, social-emotional development plays a crucial role as it forms the foundation for children to adapt to their social environment, particularly when entering formal education such as kindergarten (Kumalasari & Hasibuan, 2023).

Optimal social-emotional development contributes to children's psychological well-being and academic success. Zins et al. (2004) state that children with strong social-emotional skills tend to be better able to manage stress, form positive social relationships, and achieve better academic performance. Conversely, suboptimal social-emotional development can lead to low self-confidence, difficulties in social interaction, and the emergence of behavioral and mental health issues later in life (McLeod, 2007).

In Indonesia, the development of social-emotional aspects in early childhood has not yet been a primary focus in early childhood education (PAUD). Several

studies indicate that learning tends to emphasize early academic aspects, while social-emotional development has not been systematically designed (Sari, 2020). Additionally, teachers' limited understanding in designing learning activities that stimulate empathy, cooperation, and emotional regulation also acts as a barrier to children's social-emotional development (Kumalasari & Hasibuan, 2023). Family environmental factors, such as parenting styles that do not sufficiently support children's social interactions, also contribute to suboptimal social-emotional development in children (Rahmawati, 2019).

A similar phenomenon was also observed at TK IT Insan Mulia. Initial observations indicate that some children still struggle with interacting with peers, managing emotions, sharing, cooperating, and resolving simple conflicts. This suggests that the children's social-emotional development has not yet reached its full potential and requires more contextual and meaningful learning experiences.

One learning activity that can be used to stimulate children's social-emotional development is the "market day" activity. The market day activity directly involves children in a simulated buying and selling scenario, thereby encouraging them to communicate, collaborate, take turns, and understand social roles in real-life interactions (Kumalasari & Hasibuan, 2023). Through this activity, children also learn to express emotions, develop prosocial behavior, and enhance their self-confidence and independence (Rahmawati, 2019; Fitriani, 2021).

Based on these issues, this study aims to examine "The Implementation of Market Day Activities to Improve Children's Social-Emotional Skills at TK IT Insan Mulia."

DISCUSSION



Figure 1. The children are getting ready for Market Day

Figure 1 shows a child getting ready to sell their wares, with prices ranging from Rp 1,000 to Rp 2,000. Each class offers a variety of items; for example, Class A4 is selling jasuke for Rp 1,000.



Figure 2: A teacher is explaining to the children the rules for the market day activity

In Figure 2, a teacher is explaining the rules for conducting the market day activity



Figure 3: Children are buying and selling their goods

In Figure 3, the children are selling various foods to their friends. The children's social-emotional development is evident here because they are interacting with their friends or customers.

Market day activities are closely linked to the social-emotional development of young children. This study aims to examine how children's social-emotional development is fostered through the implementation of market day activities at TK IT Insan Mulia. Children's social-emotional development in this study was analyzed based on the indicators used in the thesis, namely emotion regulation, caring behavior, sharing, and cooperation.

Emotion Regulation

Emotional regulation refers to a child's ability to recognize, express, and control emotions appropriately in response to the situation at hand. During the market day activities, the children at TK IT Insan Mulia demonstrated a fairly good ability to regulate their emotions. The children appeared enthusiastic, happy, and

confident when playing the roles of both sellers and buyers. Although at the beginning of the activity some children felt shy or hesitant to interact, they gradually adapted to the situation and became actively involved in the buying and selling process. The children also began to learn to control their emotions when they had to wait their turn, deal with unmet desires, or follow the rules set by the teacher.

Showing Empathy

Empathy is evident in a child's ability to notice and respond to the circumstances of their peers. During the market day activity, children demonstrated empathy toward peers facing difficulties, such as those who ran out of money or did not yet understand how to make a transaction. One example of this empathy was when children were willing to help their peers by inviting them to shop together or offering assistance without being asked. This behavior indicates that children are beginning to understand others' feelings and demonstrate empathy in social interactions.

Sharing

Sharing behavior is a key indicator of children's social-emotional development. Research findings indicate that the market day activity provides children with an opportunity to learn to share in a tangible way. Children appear willing to share the food or drinks they have with friends who did not bring money or who have not yet obtained an item. This sharing behavior emerges spontaneously during the activity and reflects the development of positive social attitudes, particularly in building harmonious social relationships with peers.

Cooperation

The ability to cooperate is evident when children are able to interact and engage in joint activities to achieve a specific goal. During the market day activity, children cooperate with their peers by taking on the roles of both sellers and buyers. They take turns in these roles, follow the teacher's instructions, and engage in social interactions such as offering goods and conducting simple transactions. Cooperation is also evident when children are able to adapt to group rules and complete activities together without significant conflict.

Overall, the research findings indicate that the market day activity at TK IT Insan Mulia effectively stimulates children's social-emotional development, particularly in the areas of emotion regulation, caring attitudes, sharing, and cooperation. This activity provides real and meaningful social experiences, thereby helping children develop their social-emotional skills optimally.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research findings, it can be concluded that the implementation of Market Day activities at TK IT Insan Mulia has proven effective in enhancing the social-emotional development of young children. Through simulated buying and selling activities, children demonstrated improved emotional regulation skills, such as adapting to situations, controlling their emotions, and following rules throughout the activity.

Additionally, the Market Day activity fosters a caring attitude in children, evident in empathetic behavior and concern for peers. Sharing behavior emerges naturally when children are willing to help and share items with peers in need. Collaboration skills also develop through the division of roles as sellers and buyers, as well as interactions that occur in an orderly and polite manner.

Thus, the Market Day activity serves not only as an enjoyable contextual learning experience but also as an effective learning strategy for developing children's social-emotional skills, particularly in the areas of emotion regulation, social concern, sharing, and cooperation.

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