



SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING PRACTICES OF FOREIGN TEACHERS: ITS IMPACT TO KINDERGARTEN LEARNERS IN INDONESIA

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to identify the social and emotional learning practices of the foreign teachers for kindergarten learners in Indonesia. This study was conducted in kindergarten school in Indonesia during the School Year 2024-2025. The study included sixty (60) kindergarten foreign teachers as the respondents of the study. The results of the study were used as basis for foreign teachers' training program on the implementation of social-emotional learning methods among kindergarten learners in Indonesia. The results revealed that most of the respondents are female, 31-40 years of age, teaching 1-10 years in Indonesia, and taking their postgraduate course. Foreign teachers' practices in implementing social and emotional learning have very high impact to Indonesian kindergarten learners' competencies in terms of self-awareness, self-management, relationship skills, and responsible decision making. Furthermore, the teachers in kindergarten always observed that adaptation to local norms, communication, emotional expression, and parental expectation are the identified cultural barriers the foreign teachers faced in implementing social and emotional learning (SEL) to Indonesian kindergarten learners. Likewise, the teachers in kindergarten always observed that alignment to curriculum, availability of learning resources, collaboration, and teacher's training on social and emotional learning (SEL) are the identified educational barriers the foreign teachers faced in implementing social and emotional learning (SEL) to Indonesian kindergarten learners. There are significant differences in the impact of foreign teachers' practices in implementing social and emotional learning to Indonesians' kindergarten learners' competencies when grouped according to respondents' sex, age, years in teaching in Indonesia, and highest educational attainment. Moreover, the findings also revealed that there is no significant relationship between the the impact of foreign teachers' practices in implementing social and emotional learning to Indonesians' kindergarten learners' competencies and the cultural barriers faced by the foreign teachers in implementing social and emotional learning (SEL) practice. However, the results showed that there is a significant relationship with educational barriers faced by the foreign teachers in implementing social and emotional learning (SEL) practice.

KEYWORDS: Social and Emotional Learning Practices, Indonesian Kindergarten, Cultural Barriers, Educational Barriers, Impact of SEL Practices to Kindergarten Learners, Kindergarten Foreign Teachers

I. INTRODUCTION

Social and emotional learning (SEL) has become a crucial aspect of early childhood education, promoting well-rounded development in children. Indonesia's Ministry of Education and Culture aims to enhance children's learning abilities through Early Childhood Development (ECD) programs. A child ready for school has positive characteristics such as social and emotional health, confidence, and good peer relationships. ECD interventions include teaching and supporting parents, providing services to children, increasing caregiver and teacher capacity, and leveraging mass communications to improve knowledge and practices. Programs can be center- or home-based, structured or informal, and may involve parent education.

The integration of social and emotional learning (SEL) into kindergarten curriculums in Indonesia presents unique challenges for foreign educators who bring diverse educational philosophies and practices. Indonesia's educational landscape is characterized by a rich tapestry of cultural values and traditions,

requiring foreign educators to navigate these nuances while implementing effective and culturally appropriate SEL strategies. Culturally responsive teaching involves recognizing students' cultural backgrounds and incorporating this understanding into the teaching process. This involves adapting teaching methods, building relationships with students and families, and using culturally relevant materials, local traditions, and inclusive practices.

Despite the growing recognition of SEL's importance in early childhood education, there is a significant gap in literature regarding the strategies employed by foreign educators in culturally diverse settings. This gap is critical as foreign educators bring diverse educational philosophies and methodologies that may enrich and challenge Indonesia's existing practices. Empirical data on foreign educators' challenges and barriers in implementing SEL in Indonesian kindergartens is lacking. Understanding these obstacles is essential for developing targeted support mechanisms and professional development programs that can enhance the



effectiveness of foreign educators in promoting SEL. This study aims to fill these gaps by exploring the strategies employed by foreign educators in Indonesia to develop social and emotional learning among kindergarten students.

The study was based on Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) and Social Learning Theory, cited by Bond (2020), which emphasizes developing essential emotional and social skills for personal and academic success. The theory emphasizes five core competencies: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making. The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) encourages educators to integrate these skills into academic curricula and everyday interactions. SEL helps students develop resilience, empathy, and effective collaboration, especially in culturally diverse settings.

SEL theory emphasizes creating supportive learning environments for students, fostering personal growth and academic achievement. It has positively impacted student outcomes, including enhanced performance, emotional regulation, and improved social interactions. Integrating SEL into education promotes a transformative approach, integrating academic, emotional, and social growth. (Binfet et al., 2023).

The CASEL 5 consists of five competencies: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making. These competencies are adaptable and functional at various stages of development, from early childhood to maturity. They are suitable for implementation in various cultural settings. The adaptability of the CASEL 5 has enabled schools to incorporate these abilities into structured learning requirements for preschool through high school.

This research study examines foreign educators' strategies in Indonesian kindergartens using Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) theory. The study aims to assess the effectiveness of SEL strategies, aligning with the CASEL 5 framework. The research focuses on how foreign educators adapt SEL principles to respect local norms, fostering environments where students feel understood and valued. The study highlights the importance of SEL's alignment with students' backgrounds, age-appropriate tasks, and developmental stages. By incorporating SEL theory, the research can provide practical strategies and policies to improve social and emotional learning in multicultural classrooms, supporting holistic development in Indonesian kindergartens.

Albert Bandura's social learning theory (1977) suggests that humans are proactive information processors who learn new behaviors by observing and imitating others' actions. This theory emphasizes the importance of observational learning, where individuals gain knowledge, skills, attitudes, and beliefs by seeing the actions of others and their consequences. Bandura's theory goes beyond direct experience with one's surroundings, suggesting that learning can occur through observation and modeling. Most human behavior is learned observationally through modeling, which serves as a guide for

action. Social learning is an efficient method for observing and imitating productive workplace actions.

Bandura's Social Learning Theory is applied to Indonesian kindergartens to teach Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) through observation, modeling, and imitation. The theory suggests that children learn new behaviors by observing others, and foreign educators can shape these skills through positive interactions and emotional regulation. The four key elements of attention, retention, reproduction, and motivation are relevant in culturally diverse classrooms. By modeling CASEL 5 competencies, foreign educators can encourage constructive choices and empathy in multicultural contexts. This helps children internalize these competencies through attentive observation and reinforcement, enhancing their personal development and ability to navigate diverse social environments.

This study aimed to identify foreign teachers' social and emotional learning practices for kindergarten learners in Indonesia during the School Year 2024-2025. The research involved 60 kindergarten foreign teachers and used a descriptive research design and a questionnaire to gather data. The study focused on the impact of foreign teachers' practices on Indonesian kindergarten learners' competencies in self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making. Cultural barriers, such as adaptation to local norms and communication, were identified. Educational barriers faced by foreign teachers included curriculum alignment, availability of learning resources, collaboration, and teacher training on social and emotional learning (SEL).

1.1 Statement of the Problem

1. What is the profile of the respondents in terms of age, sex, years of teaching in Indonesia, and highest educational attainment?
2. What is the composite mean on the Impact of Foreign Teachers' Practices in Implementing Social and Emotional Learning to Indonesian Kindergarten Learners' Competencies in terms of Self-awareness, Self-Management, Relationship Skills, and Responsible Decision-Making?
3. What is the composite mean on the Cultural and Educational Barriers the Foreign Teachers Faced in Implementing Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) to Indonesian Kindergarten Learners?
4. Is there a Significant Difference in the Impact of Foreign Teachers' Practices in Implementing Social and Emotional Learning to Indonesians' Kindergarten Learners' Competencies When Grouped According to Respondents' Profile?
5. Is there a Significant Relationship Between the Impact of Foreign Teachers' Practices in Implementing Social and Emotional Learning to Indonesians' Kindergarten Learners' Competencies and the Cultural and Educational Barriers Faced by the Foreign Teachers in Implementing Social and Emotional Learning Practices?



2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Research consistently affirms the significant role of social and emotional learning (SEL) in the early developmental stages of children. Rothmeier (2022) emphasizes that SEL is fundamental to a child's readiness to learn, which includes competencies like self-regulation, problem-solving, and emotional control—skills echoed in the CASEL framework, which outlines five core areas: self-awareness, self-management, relationship skills, social awareness, and responsible decision-making.

Akintayo et al. (2024) and Ferreira et al. (2021) actually legitimize such an understanding by investigating the way international teachers in Indonesian kindergartens integrate SEL in a culturally tuned context. Their research indicates that international teachers, through blending global SEL strategies with endogenous principles like gotong royong (cooperation), create emotionally responsive and caring classroom learning environments. The great influence of these techniques on children's emotional expressiveness, social behavior, and empathy confirms the facts in the table. Moreover, Ferreira et al. (2021) argue that the way foreign teachers use play and group learning to educate their students promotes respect of one another, tolerance, and cooperation—all of which are vital elements of self-control and relationship skills.

Rodriguez et al. (2020) assert that the social-emotional competencies of teachers are significant. Teachers with elevated emotional competence and well-being foster classrooms that promote social and emotional development in children. This aligns with the idea that culturally responsive and intentional practices of foreign educators can significantly impact students' emotional regulation and decision-making processes.

Ng et al. (2021) argue in their analysis of shared book reading that teacher facilitation improves social-emotional learning (SEL) on intrapersonal as well as interpersonal levels. Through the use of stories, teachers can help youngsters identify emotions and grasp social cues, so helping them to develop good interpersonal skills and self-awareness.

Furthermore, Bason-Hodges (2020) ascertained that structured SEL programs based on role-play and interactive instruction result in tangible gains for children's peer relationships, social behaviors, and language. Along the same vein, Larsen et al. (2023) identified instructional play led by teachers as one of the vital contexts for reinforcing self-management skills and relational competence, with explicit instructional practices identified as crucial for SEL development.

Ferreira et al. (2021) highlight that the implementation of SEL in multicultural settings such as Indonesia can be hampered by cultural and systemic differences. Gimbert et al. (2021) describe how SEL's focus on emotional openness tends to clash with Indonesian cultural norms favoring social harmony and indirect communication. A partnership with local bilingual teachers has been suggested to enhance contextual understanding and communication (Ulutas et al., 2021). The Indonesian cultural values of emotional control (Gepp, 2022)

can be in conflict with the objectives of Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) regarding emotional expression, as noted by Jeong et al. (2021). Rahmawati (2019) also points out that lack of access to SEL materials in resource-constrained environments compromises implementation. Parental support also has a significant part; engaging parents through workshops enhances SEL effectiveness and cultural fit (Eden et al., 2024; Twiner et al., 2022). Casey (2022) and Drew et al. (2024) have demonstrated that children are more likely to adopt SEL practices when their parents offer continuous support at home.

These findings confirm that the successful implementation of SEL in Indonesia is contingent upon the professional development, local collaborations, and cultural orientation of foreign teachers. The integration of indigenous practices, such as gotong royong, facilitates the adaptation of SEL (Sadiyah et al., 2024; Slikkerveer, 2019). In contrast, Nainggolan et al. (2023) contend that culturally-based education fosters the development of identity and improves the accessibility of learning. King (2023) and Lawal (2021) assert that the effectiveness of social-emotional learning is limited by insufficient language competency and a lack of familiarity with emotional vocabulary. This notion is corroborated by Rahiem et al. (2020), who highlight the misinterpretation of expressive vocabulary. A potential barrier could be language. King (2023) and Lawal (2021) assert that insufficient language skills and a deficiency in emotional vocabulary hinder the efficacy of social-emotional learning. This perspective is corroborated by Rahiem et al. (2020), who emphasize the misinterpretation of emotional language. Language functions as an impediment.

Schiepe-Tiska et al. (2021) states that the instructor is crucial in boosting students' social and emotional learning (SEL). This study utilized a convergent, parallel mixed-method approach to examine teachers' familiarity, views, training, and perceived school culture about social and emotional development, specifically focusing on self-awareness, self-management, and social awareness. Educators expressed ambiguity and a deficiency in professional competencies and knowledge regarding implementing SEL training, particularly in self-awareness and self-management. Consequently, in all study segments, educators demonstrated a pronounced interest in obtaining professional social-emotional learning (SEL) training. Nevertheless, educational institutions infrequently furnish resources (instructional materials, specialized courses or activities) or establish conditions (teacher training, allocating teaching hours, augmenting the number of counsellors, obtaining administrative backing) that would facilitate the instruction of Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) by educators. The findings enhance researchers' understanding of teachers' familiarity with social-emotional learning (SEL), their views, training, and school culture. They also provide valuable insights for policymakers, administrators, and school personnel by highlighting essential factors that hinder effective SEL implementation in educational settings.

Akintayo et al. (2024), which highlighted that organized SEL activities enhance children's current and future social competence, a skillset applicable in any environment and which indicates Indonesian kindergarten students can gain from SEL irrespective of the foreign teacher's cultural heritage. Hiriyati



(2022) further contributes that foreign teachers enhance SEL through locally relevant ideas, allowing children to connect lessons to their daily lives. Even though no meaningful statistical correlation between cultural challenges and the effectiveness of SEL was identified through the study, it highlights the need for cultural adaptation.

II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The study utilized a descriptive research design, analyzing quantitative data to identify patterns, trends, and relationships, influencing decision-making and validating existing theories. (Tuthill et al., 2020). Furthermore, The descriptive research design was used to evaluate hypotheses, characterize traits, assess perceptions, estimate population behavior, and identify interconnected variables for forecasting or predictions. Thus, Descriptive research provides a systematic explanation of a population or circumstance using quantitative data collected through a survey using a questionnaire, making it quantitative for statistical analysis.

The researcher described the impact of foreign teachers' social and emotional learning practices on Indonesian kindergarten learners, as assessed by the teachers. The study aimed to identify these impacts and the cultural and educational barriers the teachers faced in implementing SEL.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Profile of the School Head-Respondents in Terms of Age, Sex, Length of Service, Position, and Number of Teachers in the School.

Table 1 Demographic Profile of the Respondents in terms of Sex

	Frequency	Percent
Male	26	43.3
Female	34	56.7
Total	60	100.0

Table 1 shows a gender gap in Indonesian kindergarten education, with 43.3% of respondents being male and 56.7% being female. More female teachers are included in the study, highlighting the importance of gender diversity in early childhood education. The inclusion of more male kindergarten

Population and Sampling

The total population was sixty (60) foreign kindergarten teachers in Indonesia. Total enumeration was used to select the sample, with all population members serving as respondents to the study.

Respondents of the Study

The study's respondents comprised sixty (60) foreign kindergarten teachers from selected elementary schools in Indonesia. The researcher identified them as foreign teachers instructing Indonesian kindergarten learners. In total, sixty (60) foreign kindergarten teachers participated in the study.

Statistical Treatment

The study analyzed data using frequency and percentage distributions to determine respondents' profiles, weighted mean to assess the impact of foreign teachers' practices on Indonesian kindergarten learners' self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making competencies, and weighted mean to identify cultural and educational barriers to adaptation to local norms, communication, emotional expression, parental expectation, and alignment with the curriculum. A paired t-test was used to determine significant differences in the impact of foreign teachers' practices on Indonesian kindergarten learners' competencies, and Pearson r was used to determine a significant relationship between these factors.

teachers could enhance the SEL experience for young children. Schools and administrators should consider the value of male gender diversity in early childhood education, ensuring equal support for both male and female teachers in professional development efforts.

Table 2 Demographic Profile of the Respondents in terms of Age

	Frequency	Percent
21 - 30	10	16.7
31 - 40	33	55.0
41 - 50	16	26.7
51 and above	1	1.7
Total	60	100.0

Table 2 shows that the majority of foreign teachers in Indonesian kindergartens are aged 31-40, with the majority falling between 31-40. This age group is likely to have excellent teaching experience and professional maturity, making them

adept at utilizing social and emotional learning (SEL). They have developed firm instructional practices, classroom management, and adaptability to educational and cultural diversity, enhancing young students' SEL development. The



study suggests that policymakers and schools should provide career development support, such as leadership training and advanced SEL workshops, to improve teaching skills. Long-

term retention of veteran teachers through promotion and professional support can ensure the success of SEL programs in Indonesian kindergarten education.

Table 3 Demographic Profile of the Respondents in terms of Years of Teaching in Indonesia

	Frequency	Percent
1 - 5	31	51.7
6 - 10	25	41.7
11 - 15	3	5.0
16 - 20	1	1.7
Total	60	100.0

Table 3 shows that 51.7% of respondents have taught in Indonesia for 1-5 years, with 41.7% teaching for 6.10 years. The majority of respondents have taught for 1-10 years, indicating their familiarity with the local education system, culture, and classroom environment. This experience likely informs their capacity for social and emotional learning (SEL) as they have adjusted competencies to align with Indonesian children's kindergarten requirements. The study suggests that foreign teachers' 1-10 years of experience significantly impact the SEL competencies of kindergarten learners, as they can

inculcate self-awareness, self-management, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making abilities. However, some teachers may still be adjusting to Indonesia's educational and cultural environment. Schools and policymakers should offer continuing professional development to fine-tune SEL teaching strategies, such as mentorship with veteran instructors and workshops on local standards. Maintaining high-caliber foreign teachers for over 10 years may ensure the long-term achievement of SEL in kindergarten schooling in Indonesia.

Table 4 Demographic Profile of the Respondents in terms of Highest Educational Attainment

	Frequency	Percent
Bachelor's Degree	1	1.7
With master's degree Unit	28	46.7
Master's Degree Graduate	15	25.0
With Doctorate Degree Units	3	5.0
Doctorate Degree Graduate	13	21.7
Total	60	100.0

Table 4 reveals that 46.7% of Indonesian kindergarten teachers have a master's degree, followed by 25.0%, 21.7%, and 5.0% with doctorate degrees. Most are taking postgraduate courses, indicating continuous learning and professional development. This level of education can enhance the use of social and emotional learning (SEL) in education. Foreign teachers with doctorate degrees bring theoretical knowledge and pedagogical competence to teaching, ensuring effective integration of SEL

practices. Collaboration between schools and the government is needed to establish opportunities for academic advancement and research partnerships. Mentorship initiatives can help teachers implement their knowledge in classrooms, and funding for teacher professional and academic development can improve early childhood education performance and SEL implementation.



Composite Mean on the Impact of Foreign Teachers' Practices in Implementing Social and Emotional Learning to Indonesian Kindergarten Learners' Competencies in terms of Self-awareness, Self-Management, Relationship Skills, and Responsible Decision-Making.

Table 5 Composite Table on Impact of Foreign Teachers' Practices in Implementing Social and Emotional Learning to Indonesian Kindergarten Learners' Competencies

	Mean	Std. Deviation	Verbal Interpretation
Self-Awareness	3.81	0.14	Very High Impact
Self- Management	3.75	0.19	Very High Impact
Relationship Skills	3.75	0.19	Very High Impact
Responsible Decision Making	3.81	0.15	Very High Impact
Impact of Foreign Teachers' Practices in Implementing Social And Emotional Learning to Indonesians' Kindergarten Learners' Competencies	3.78	0.09	Very High Impact

Legend: 4 - (3.50 - 4.00) *Very High Impact* 3 - (2.50 - 3.49) *Moderate Impact* 2 - (1.50 - 2.49) *Low Impact* 1 - (1.00 - 1.49) *Very Low Impact*

Table 5 reveals that foreign teachers' practices in implementing social and emotional learning significantly impact Indonesian kindergarten learners' self-awareness, self-management, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making competencies. The results indicate that these practices have a "Very High Impact" with a mean range of 3.75 to 3.81. The teachers in kindergarten agree that these practices have a very high impact on the competencies of Indonesian kindergarten children. The findings suggest that foreign teachers' implementation of SEL strategies significantly enhances the ability of preschool children to understand their emotions, regulate their behavior, build good relationships, and make reflective decisions. The findings suggest that schools should encourage SEL-based instructional strategies and provide proper training for proper implementation. Encouraging interaction between foreign and local instructors can create an excellent learning environment. Policymakers should also consider strengthening SEL programs in kindergarten curricula to enhance their long-term impacts on young children.

Research consistently affirms the significant role of social and emotional learning (SEL) in the early developmental stages of children. Rothmeier (2022) emphasizes that SEL is fundamental to a child's readiness to learn, which includes competencies like self-regulation, problem-solving, and emotional control—skills echoed in the CASEL framework, which outlines five core areas: self-awareness, self-management, relationship skills, social awareness, and responsible decision-making.

Akintayo et al. (2024) and Ferreira et al. (2021) actually legitimize such an understanding by investigating the way international teachers in Indonesian kindergartens integrate SEL in a culturally tuned context. Their research indicates that

international teachers, through blending global SEL strategies with endogenous principles like gotong royong (cooperation), create emotionally responsive and caring classroom learning environments. The great influence of these techniques on children's emotional expressiveness, social behavior, and empathy confirms the facts in the table. Moreover, Ferreira et al. (2021) argue that the way foreign teachers use play and group learning to educate their students promotes respect of one another, tolerance, and cooperation—all of which are vital elements of self-control and relationship skills.

Rodriguez et al. (2020) assert that the social-emotional competencies of teachers are significant. Teachers with elevated emotional competence and well-being foster classrooms that promote social and emotional development in children. This aligns with the idea that culturally responsive and intentional practices of foreign educators can significantly impact students' emotional regulation and decision-making processes.

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Furthermore, Bason-Hodges (2020) ascertained that structured SEL programs based on role-play and interactive instruction result in tangible gains for children's peer relationships, social behaviors, and language. Along the same vein, Larsen et al. (2023) identified instructional play led by teachers as one of the vital contexts for reinforcing self-management skills and relational competence, with explicit instructional practices identified as crucial for SEL development.



Composite Mean on the Cultural and Educational Barriers the Foreign Teachers Faced in Implementing Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) to Indonesian Kindergarten Learners.

Table 6 Composite table on Cultural Barriers the Foreign Teachers Faced in Implementing Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) to Indonesian Kindergarten Learners

	Mean	Std. Deviation	Verbal Interpretation
Adaptation to Local Norms	3.77	0.19	Always Observed
Communication	3.78	0.17	Always Observed
Emotional Expression	3.76	0.20	Always Observed
Parental Expectation	3.74	0.16	Always Observed
Cultural Barriers that the Foreign Teachers Faced in Implementing Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) to Indonesian Kindergarten Learners	3.76	0.11	Always Observed

Legend: 4 - (3.50 - 4.00) Very High Impact 3 - (2.50 - 3.49) Moderate Impact 2 - (1.50 - 2.49) Low Impact 1 - (1.00 - 1.49) Very Low Impact

Table 6 presents that foreign teachers in Indonesia face significant cultural barriers in implementing social and emotional learning (SEL) to Indonesian kindergarten learners. These barriers include adaptation to local norms, communication, emotional expression, and parental expectations. The teachers believe that these cultural barriers are always observed, with a mean range of 3.74 to 3.78. These challenges highlight the importance of cultural adaptation in successful SEL implementation. Teachers must adapt their teaching practices to align with local practices, making building strong relationships with students and parents challenging. The findings emphasize the need for cultural orientation programs and professional development opportunities for foreign teachers in Indonesia. Schools should offer training in local norms, communication patterns, and parental involvement strategies, and collaboration between foreign and indigenous educators can bridge cultural gaps and ensure the best implementation of SEL practices in Indonesian kindergarten classrooms.

Ferreira et al. (2021) highlight that the implementation of SEL in multicultural settings such as Indonesia can be hampered by cultural and systemic differences. Gimbert et al. (2021) describe how SEL's focus on emotional openness tends to clash with Indonesian cultural norms favoring social harmony and indirect communication. A partnership with local bilingual teachers has been suggested to enhance contextual understanding and communication (Ulutas et al., 2021). The Indonesian cultural values of emotional control (Gepp, 2022) can be in conflict with the objectives of Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) regarding emotional expression, as noted by

Jeong et al. (2021). Rahmawati (2019) also points out that lack of access to SEL materials in resource-constrained environments compromises implementation. Parental support also has a significant part; engaging parents through workshops enhances SEL effectiveness and cultural fit (Eden et al., 2024; Twiner et al., 2022). Casey (2022) and Drew et al. (2024) have demonstrated that children are more likely to adopt SEL practices when their parents offer continuous support at home.

These findings confirm that the successful implementation of SEL in Indonesia is contingent upon the professional development, local collaborations, and cultural orientation of foreign teachers. The integration of indigenous practices, such as gotong royong, facilitates the adaptation of SEL (Sadiyah et al., 2024; Slikkerveer, 2019). In contrast, Nainggolan et al. (2023) contend that culturally-based education fosters the development of identity and improves the accessibility of learning. King (2023) and Lawal (2021) assert that the effectiveness of social-emotional learning is limited by insufficient language competency and a lack of familiarity with emotional vocabulary. This notion is corroborated by Rahiem et al. (2020), who highlight the misinterpretation of expressive vocabulary. A potential barrier could be language. King (2023) and Lawal (2021) assert that insufficient language skills and a deficiency in emotional vocabulary hinder the efficacy of social-emotional learning. This perspective is corroborated by Rahiem et al. (2020), who emphasize the misinterpretation of emotional language. Language functions as an impediment.



Significant Difference in the Impact of Foreign Teachers' Practices in Implementing Social and Emotional Learning to Indonesians' Kindergarten Learners' Competencies When Grouped According to Respondents' Profile

Table 7 Test of Significant Difference in the Impact of Foreign Teachers' Practices in Implementing Social and Emotional Learning to Indonesians' Kindergarten Learners' Competencies When Grouped According to Respondents' Profile

	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Decision	Remark
Sex - Impact of Foreign Teachers' Practices in Implementing Social and Emotional Learning to Indonesians' Kindergarten Learners' Competencies.	-32.996	59	0.000	Reject	Significant
Age - Impact of Foreign Teachers' Practices in Implementing Social and Emotional Learning to Indonesians' Kindergarten Learners' Competencies.	-18.051	59	0.000	Reject	Significant
Years of Teaching in Indonesia - Impact of Foreign Teachers' Practices in Implementing Social and Emotional Learning to Indonesians' Kindergarten Learners' Competencies.	-25.105	59	0.000	Reject	Significant
Highest Educational Attainment - Impact of Foreign Teachers' Practices in Implementing Social and Emotional Learning to Indonesians' Kindergarten Learners' Competencies.	-5.013	59	0.000	Reject	Significant

Table 7 presents the significant differences in the impact of foreign teachers' practices on Indonesian kindergarten learners' competencies based on their sex, age, years in teaching in Indonesia, and highest educational attainment. The results suggest that demographic and professional factors affect foreign teachers' implementation of social and emotional learning (SEL) practices and how they encourage students' social and emotional growth. Differences in educational, expressive, and communication styles among teachers may lead to different methods of SEL implementation. Younger teachers can introduce new, research-based practices, while older teachers would be practice-based. The large gap using years of experience teaching in Indonesia emphasizes the need for knowledge about the Indonesian education system and culture. Graduate-degree teachers may possess more pedagogical content knowledge and SEL strategies, which can be directed into improved teaching practices. Higher levels of education indicate greater exposure to SEL best practices, theory, and research, making them more informed and practical to implement.

The findings support Schiepe-Tiska et al. (2021) that the instructor is crucial in boosting students' social and emotional

learning (SEL). This study utilized a convergent, parallel mixed-method approach to examine teachers' familiarity, views, training, and perceived school culture about social and emotional development, specifically focusing on self-awareness, self-management, and social awareness. Educators expressed ambiguity and a deficiency in professional competencies and knowledge regarding implementing SEL training, particularly in self-awareness and self-management. Consequently, in all study segments, educators demonstrated a pronounced interest in obtaining professional social-emotional learning (SEL) training. Nevertheless, educational institutions infrequently furnish resources (instructional materials, specialized courses or activities) or establish conditions (teacher training, allocating teaching hours, augmenting the number of counsellors, obtaining administrative backing) that would facilitate the instruction of Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) by educators. The findings enhance researchers' understanding of teachers' familiarity with social-emotional learning (SEL), their views, training, and school culture. They also provide valuable insights for policymakers, administrators, and school personnel by highlighting essential factors that hinder effective SEL implementation in educational settings.



Significant Relationship Between the Impact of Foreign Teachers’ Practices in Implementing Social and Emotional Learning to Indonesians’ Kindergarten Learners’ Competencies and the Cultural and Educational Barriers Faced by the Foreign Teachers in Implementing Social and Emotional Learning Practices

Table 8 Correlation Between Impact of Foreign Teachers’ Practices in Implementing Social and Emotional Learning to Indonesians’ Kindergarten Learners’ Competencies and the Cultural and Educational Barriers Faced by the Foreign Teachers in Implementing Social and Emotional Learning Practices

		Cultural Barriers that the Foreign Teachers Faced in Implementing Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) to Indonesian Kindergarten Learners	Educational Barriers that the Foreign Teachers Faced in Implementing Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) to Indonesian Kindergarten Learners
Impact of Foreign Teachers’ Practices in Implementing Social and Emotional Learning to Indonesians’ Kindergarten Learners’ Competencies	Pearson Correlation	0.220	.267*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.092	0.039
	N	60	60

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 8 The study examines the impact of foreign teachers' practices in implementing social and emotional learning (SEL) on Indonesian kindergarten learners' competencies and the cultural and educational barriers they face. The results show no significant relationship between the impact of foreign teachers' practices and the cultural challenges they face in Indonesian kindergarten classrooms, suggesting that cultural differences do not significantly hinder the effectiveness of SEL practices. However, the study also found that Indonesian kindergarten learners can be receptive to SEL practices regardless of the instructor's cultural orientation. Inequalities in instructions, assessments, and availability of facilities could lead to a complicated assimilation of SEL principles into routine pedagogy. Language differences and lack of familiarity with regional learning standards could also impact the success of SEL implementation.

The research indicates a significant gap regarding education barriers, with foreign teachers' ability to apply SEL practices being dictated by pedagogical, policy, or education system issues. The findings emphasize the importance of introducing targeted professional development programs and institutional assistance for foreign teachers to better navigate the Indonesian education system. Collaborative efforts among foreign and domestic teachers can help create a more unified delivery of SEL, sharing knowledge and adaptation of best practices. The study concludes that resolving cultural and educational barriers against foreign teachers' performance in delivering SEL among kindergarten children requires the help of policymakers and school administrators.

Barriers to education—such as gaps in instructional practices, policy alignment, and access to resources—persist and require resolution through institutional support and collaborative teaching methodologies to optimize the implementation of social-emotional learning in Indonesian classrooms. The study

found that educational and cultural barriers, such as language disparities, lack of instructional resources, and unfamiliarity with local curriculum requirements, did not significantly hinder the effectiveness of SEL practices. Upon the analysis of the study, the effectiveness of SEL is realized through teachers' power to implement it in accordance with good practice, and cultural differences tend to play a lesser role in implementation than systemic and policy barriers within the education system. A combination of foreign workers and native teachers can effectively bridge gaps, develop teaching methodologies, and incorporate social-emotional education in Indonesian nursery schools, as well as across cultures.

The research highlights the necessity of incorporating social-emotional learning concepts into standard classroom instruction and addressing current knowledge deficiencies by providing educators with high-quality professional development opportunities and institutional support. Collaboration among international and local educators enhances the integration of social and emotional learning (SEL) in Indonesian kindergartens, improves pedagogical methods, and addresses cultural barriers. To effectively train teachers in integrating SEL principles into their daily practices and address existing gaps, the findings indicate a need for targeted professional development programs and institutional support.

The results concur with Akintayo et al. (2024), which highlighted that organized SEL activities enhance children's current and future social competence, a skillset applicable in any environment. This is echoed by Table 8, which indicates Indonesian kindergarten students can gain from SEL irrespective of the foreign teacher's cultural heritage. Hiriyati (2022) further contributes that foreign teachers enhance SEL through locally relevant ideas, allowing children to connect lessons to their daily lives. Even though no meaningful statistical correlation between cultural challenges and the



effectiveness of SEL was identified through the study, it highlights the need for cultural adaptation.

IV. CONCLUSION

The study focuses on the impact of foreign teachers' practices on Indonesian kindergarten learners' competencies in terms of self-awareness, self-management, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making. The majority of respondents are female, aged 31-40, with 1-10 years of teaching experience in Indonesia. The study identifies cultural and educational barriers that foreign teachers face in implementing social and emotional learning (SEL) to Indonesian kindergarten learners. These barriers include adaptation to local norms, communication, emotional expression, and parental expectations. Similarly, the study identifies educational barriers such as alignment to the curriculum, availability of learning resources, collaboration, and teacher training on SEL. There is a significant relationship between the impact of foreign teachers' practices and the cultural and educational barriers faced by the teachers. The study's findings led to the development of a training program for Indonesian foreign kindergarten teachers, empowering them to effectively apply SEL in Indonesian kindergarten classrooms. This program aims to develop competencies in early skills development, such as self-awareness, self-management, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making. The program aims to empower foreign teachers to effectively apply SEL in Indonesian kindergarten classrooms.

The study reveals that most respondents are in their early to mid-career stages, with experience and professional development. Foreign teachers' implementation of social and emotional learning (SEL) significantly improved Indonesian kindergarten learners' emotional understanding, behavior regulation, and decision-making. However, they face cultural barriers, learning challenges, and limited resources. Demographic and professional factors also influence the implementation of SEL practices. The study concludes that SEL is best implemented through human interactions, pedagogical practice, and cross-cultural classroom engagement. Overall, SEL is best achieved through effective communication and collaboration.

The study recommends that policymakers and schools should consider the profile of foreign teachers when designing training opportunities and professional development programs to support SEL implementation in early childhood education. Schools should continue encouraging SEL-based instructional strategies in kindergarten but ensure proper training for foreign teachers. Cultural orientation programs and professional development opportunities should be considered. A structured framework for SEL implementation should be modified for uniform implementation. School administrations should strengthen mentoring and peer-study schemes, review tailored training packages, and provide professional development programs for foreign teachers to better navigate the Indonesian education system. Another study could address gaps in SEL practices of foreign teachers towards Indonesian kindergarten learners.

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