Twenty Years of the Social Skills Learning in Elementary Schools: A Bibliometric Analysis

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ABSTRACT

Social skills learning is important to be implemented in elementary schools to help students interact with their friends at school and society and be able to overcome conflicts effectively. This study aims to determine the trend of writing articles on social skills learning in elementary schools, the trend of articles with the highest number of citations, the classification of journal rankings, the origin country of the journal, and mapping in finding the trends in international scientific publications with the Scopus database. The method used was bibliometric analysis. Research data from 562 documents published from 2002 to 2022 were obtained from the Scopus database. The data were stored in Microsoft Excel as data processing material in VOS viewer software. The trend of writing articles on social skills learning in elementary schools has increased significantly from 2002 to 2022. The VOS Viewer software mapping analysis has four themes related to social skills learning in elementary schools. The dimly colored themes such as autism social behavior, child preschool, game-based learning to improve social skills, and mental health in social behavior are the themes that are still rarely researched and become themes of novelty in this research. These themes can be an opportunity to be conducted for further research.

Keywords: Bibliometrics, Learning, Social Skills, Elementary Schools.

1. INTRODUCTION

Education is not only about acquiring academic knowledge but also involves the development of social skills that is essential for daily life (Voogt et al, 2013; Agusniatih, 2019). Good social skills can help students interact with others, build healthy relationships and resolve conflicts in effective ways (Kehoe, 2018; Maftuh, 2010). Therefore, it is important to include social skills learning in the educational curriculum at all levels, including elementary schools. Social skills include the ability to communicate with others, cooperate in groups, understand others' feelings and perspectives, and manage their own emotions (Halberstadt, Denham & Dunsmore, 2001; Hackman & Johnson, 2013). These social skills are particularly important for students at the age of elementary school, as it is the time when children begin to build more complex social interactions outside the family.

The fact is that these social skills do not get enough attention in the educational curriculum, which focuses more on academic aspects (Yuliati, 2013). If children do not have adequate social skills, they can have difficulties in adapting to the social environment around them, and this can even have an impact on their mental health and safety. Therefore, learning social skills in elementary school is very important (Ginanjar, 2016). In this learning, students are taught to interact well with peers and adults and resolve conflicts healthily and effectively. In the process, students also learn to understand differences and accept others more inclusively.

Several studies related to social skills learning in elementary schools show that social skills learning programs can have a positive impact on students' social and emotional development. One study conducted by Helaluddin & Alamsyah (2019) showed that social skills learning programs integrated with the school curriculum can improve students' social and emotional skills and reduce negative behaviors such as drug use and violence. In addition, research conducted by Wijaya (2015) showed that social skills learning programs that focus on interventions in at-risk children can improve social skills and reduce behavioral problems such as violence and aggression. Another study by Kurniawan et al. (2018) showed that the use of technology such as educational games and applications on tablets can be effective in teaching social skills to children in elementary schools.

Although the importance of social skills learning has been recognized by many practitioners and researchers, there are still challenges in implementing effective social skills learning programs in elementary schools. One way to address these challenges is to conduct a bibliometric analysis from previous research related to social skills

learning in elementary schools. Bibliometric analysis can provide an overview of research trends related to social skills learning in elementary schools, the most discussed research topics, and the leading researchers in this field. Bibliometric analysis of the 2002-2022 Scopus database on social skills learning in elementary schools can provide valuable insights for educators and educational practitioners to develop more effective learning programs in the future.

2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Bibliometric methods or scientometrics are part of research evaluation that can be carried out using specialized methods. Various published literature allows bibliometric analysis to be carried out with descriptive methods that can describe the characteristics of literature (Ellegaard & Wallin, 2015). Bibliometric analysis is conducted for various reasons, one of which is to reveal trends in articles and journals (Donthu et al., 2021). In this research, the methodology of bibliometric analysis is used to study the bibliographic content and citation analysis of each article taken from the Scopus database, so that it can help researchers in understanding the characteristics of the literature related to the research topic.

The data for this study was obtained in May 2023 from the Scopus database using the document search service. The researchers chose Scopus as the main source of information because it is considered a trusted and reliable database of scientific publications by academicians. In this study, the researchers used the VOS viewer ver. 1.6.16 for co-occurrence analysis and analyzed documents related to social skills learning in elementary schools. Co-occurrence analysis was conducted to identify keyword relationships and a fully systematic computational technique to generate a network of keyword maps for the research theme (Ranjbar et al., 2017).

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The bibliometric analysis results of this study, referring to Ellegaard & Wallin (2015), consist of performance analysis which includes the yearly number of publications, articles with the most citations, journals with the most articles, journal rankings, and countries with the most articles, as well as data mapping.

3.1 Result

3.1.1 Productive Countries Publicizing Social Skills Learning in Elementary Schools
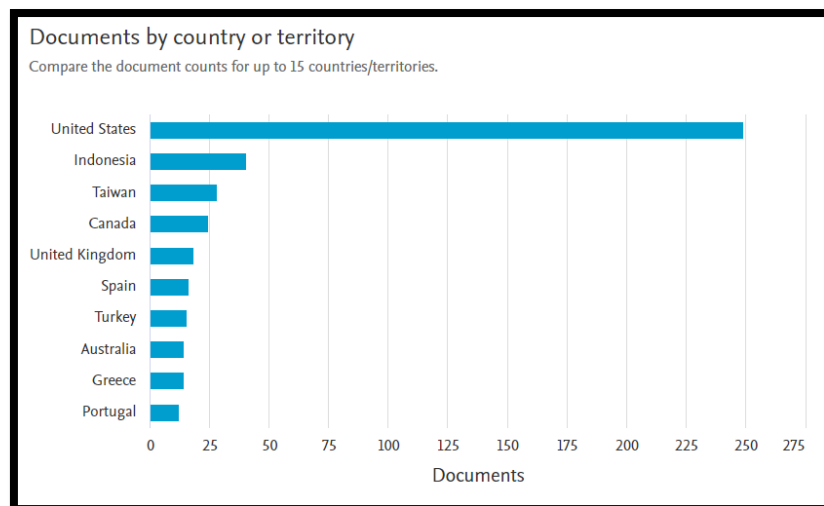

Figure 1 Most Polarized Countries in Publications

The countries that have published the most research on social skills learning in elementary schools are the United States and followed by Indonesia, Taiwan, Canada, the United Kingdom, Spain, Turkey, Australia, Greece, and Portugal.

3.1.2 Institutional Affiliation in Social Skills Learning Publications in Elementary Schools

One of the results of the bibliometric analysis in this study is about the most common institutional affiliations in publications on social skills learning in elementary schools. Based on the data, the top ten research institutions with the most publications are Pennsylvania State University and followed by nine other institutions such as Arizona State University, National Taiwan Normal University, New York University, The University of

Texas at Austin, University of Florida, University of Wisconsin-Madison, Universitas Sebelas Maret, Harvard University, and National Central University.
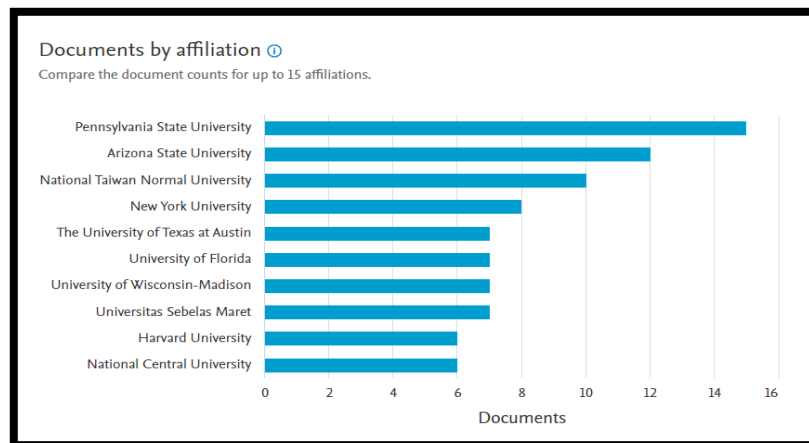
Figure 2 Institutional Affiliation in Publications

3.1.3 Authors with the Most Publications

The authors with the highest number of publications in international research on social skills learning in elementary schools are Bierman, K.L., Brown, J.L., Nix, R.L., Jones, S.M., Low, S., Welsh, J.A., Domitrovich, C.E., Gest, S.D., Heinrichs, B.S., and Musthafa, B.
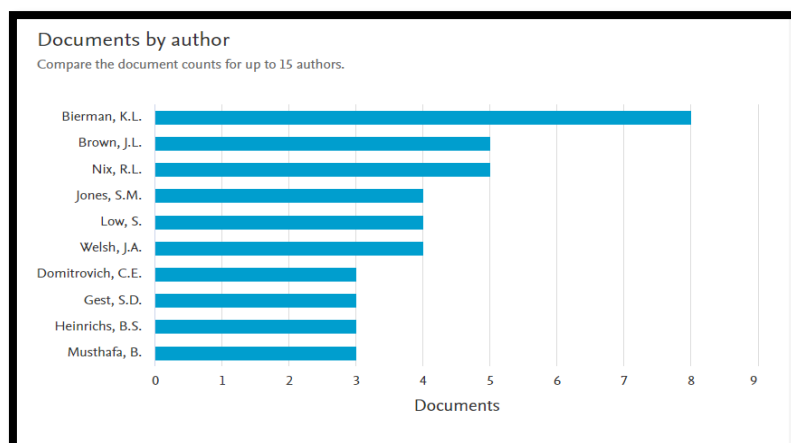
Figure 3 Author with The Most Number of Publications

3.1.4 The most researched subjects in the publications on Social Skills Learning in Elementary Schools

The most researched subject in international publications on social skills learning in elementary schools is Social Sciences with a percentage of 38.6%. In addition, another subject that is quite widely researched is Psychology with a percentage of 19.3%, followed by Medicine with a percentage of 9.3%, Computer Science at 8.5%, Arts and Humanities at 4.6%, Health Professions at 3.5%, Engineering at 2.8%, Physics and Astronomy at 2.0%, Mathematics at 1.6%, Business, Management, and Accounting at 1.4%, and others at 8.5%.
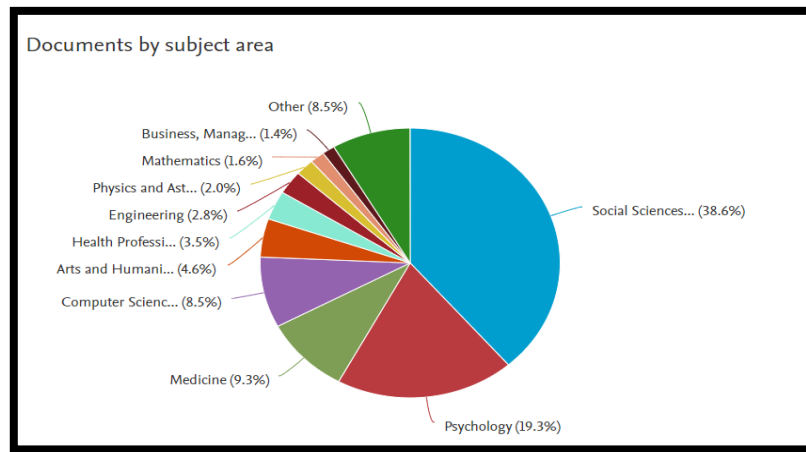
**Figure 4** The most researched subjects in the publications

3.1.5   Types of Documents Published in Research on Social Skills Learning in Elementary Schools

The types of documents that are often published in research on social skills learning in elementary schools are articles (74.0%) and conference papers (12.3%).
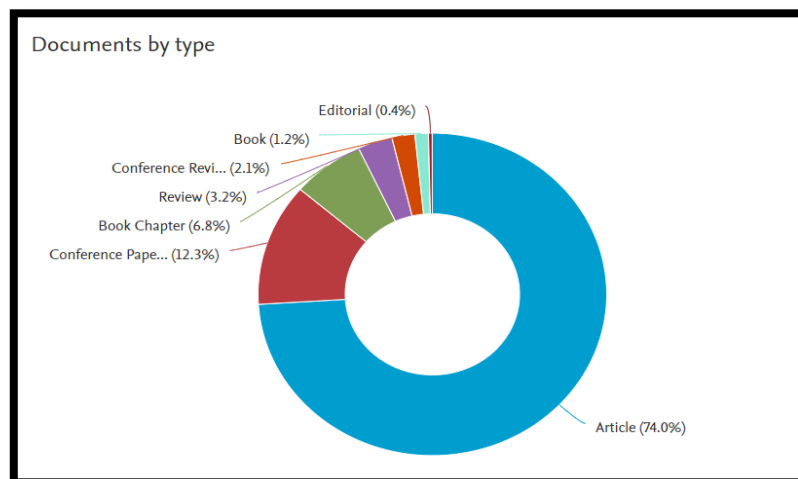
Figure 5 Types of Documents Published

3.1.6   Yearly Number of Documents on Publications in Social Skills Learning in Elementary Schools
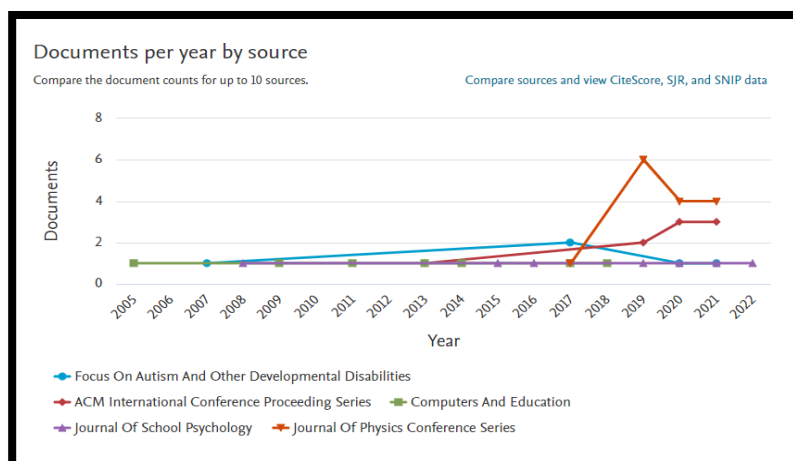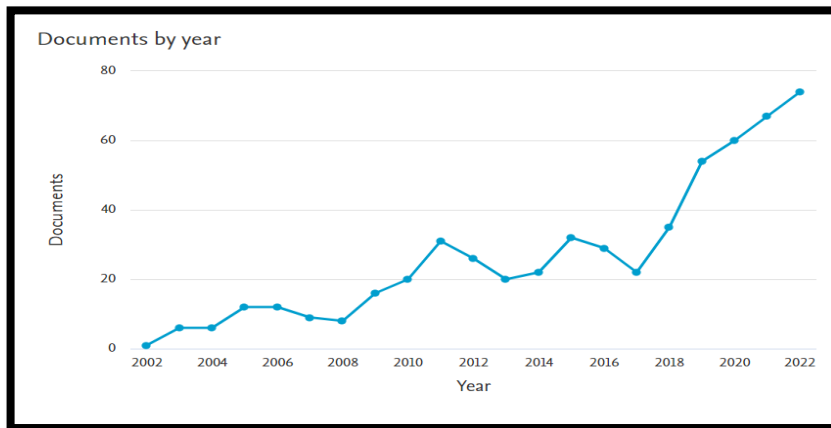

Figure 6 Yearly Number of Documents on Publications

The yearly number of documents based on international publications on social skills learning in elementary schools is in the Journal of Physics Conference Series as many as 15 documents, ACM International Conference Proceeding Series as many as 9 documents, Computers and Education as many as 7 documents, Journal of School Psychology as many as 7 documents, and Focus on Autism and Other Developmental Disabilities as many as 5 documents.
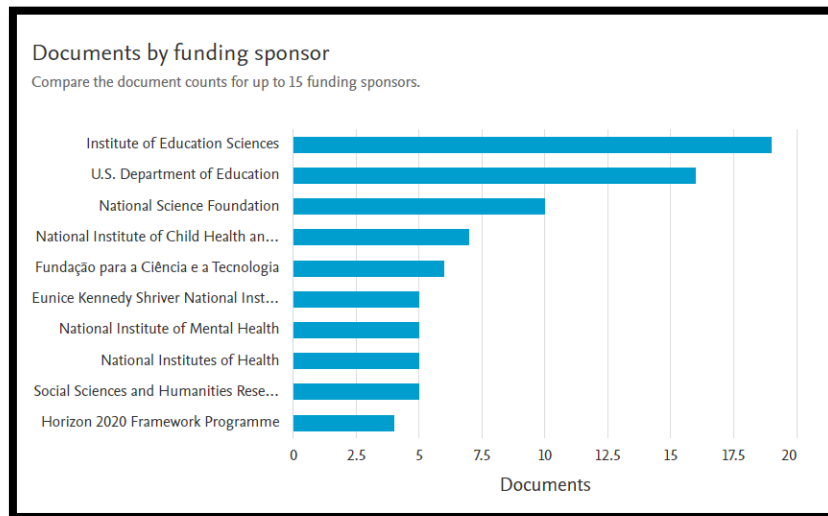
3.1.7 Number of Publications on Social Skills Learning in Elementary Schools

International publications on social skills learning in elementary schools have started since 2002 and continue to increase every year, as shown in Figure 6. The highest peak in the number of publications occurred in 2022 with 74 documents.

Figure 7 Number of Publications on Social Skills Learning in Elementary Schools

3.1.8 Sponsorship Funding for Publications on Social Skills Learning in Elementary Schools


Figure 8 Acquisition of Sponsorship Funds for Publications

The largest number of documents by sponsorship funding for international publications on social skills learning in elementary schools came from the Institute of Education Sciences and followed by the U.S. Department of Education, National Science Foundation, National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia, Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, National Institute of Mental Health, National Institutes of Health, Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, and Horizon 2020 Framework Program.

3.1.9 Map of Publication's Theme

After the data from Scopus were processed using VOS viewer software, the bibliometric analysis results consisted of 170 terms. From these results, 96 closest terms were selected which are then displayed in Figure 9.
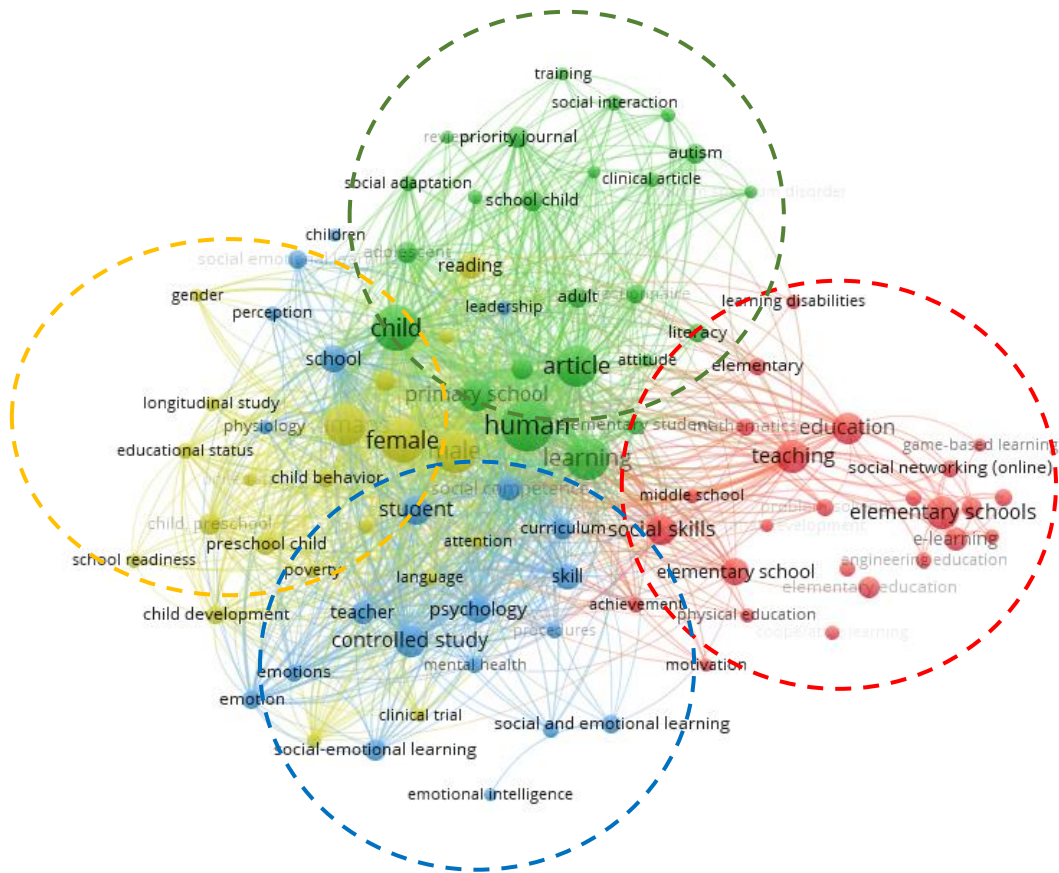
Figure 9 Map of Publication's Theme

The results of Circles Network Visualization using VOS viewer software show that there are four groups of publication themes based on the research keywords related to social skills learning in elementary schools. The themes consist of the following:

1. The theme "Learning Components" (red) consists of 25 themes including e-learning, elementary education, motivation, problem-based learning, and curriculum.
2. The theme "Research Object" (green) consists of 24 themes including adult, autism, child, human, and school child.
3. The theme "Social Skill" (blue) consists of 21 themes including social and emotional learning, social competence, psychology, emotions, and mental health.
4. The theme "Child development" (yellow) consists of 21 themes including:
5. Child behavior, child development, child preschool, child trial, and preschool child.
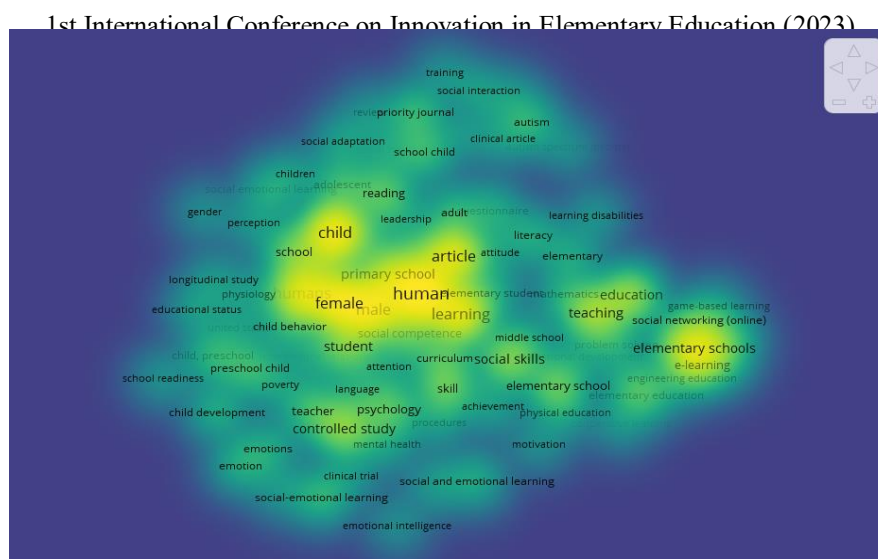
Figure 10 Vos Viewer Visualization Based on Dim Light Map

Figure 10 shows the density visualization of the bibliometric analysis results using VOS viewer software. In this visualization, the density of the research theme is shown in bright yellow. The brighter color indicates that the research theme has been widely researched, while the fainter color indicates that the theme is still rarely researched. The dimly colored themes, such as autism, child preschool, game-based learning, and mental health can be used as references for further research and become novelty themes in terms of research and references for further research development.

3.2 Discussion

Education is not only concerned with mastering academic knowledge but also includes the development of social skills that are important for everyday life (Gjestvang et al., 2021; Anggraini et al, 2017). Learning social skills in elementary school is important because childhood is the right time to build the foundation of social skills for students (Merrell & Gimpel, 2014; Hasanah et al, 2021). Therefore, research on social skills learning in elementary schools needs to be conducted to improve the quality of education and provide benefits to students in the future.

This research used bibliometric analysis with data taken from the Scopus database, which is considered a reliable and trusted source of scientific publication databases by academicians. Bibliometric analysis is conducted using descriptive bibliometric methods that describe the characteristics or features of literature. The results of this bibliometric analysis can be used to reveal emerging trends in articles and journals. This research also uses the VOS viewer ver. 1.6.16 to perform co-occurrence analysis, which aims to produce a network of keyword maps for the research theme.

Previous research shows that social skills learning can provide benefits to students, such as improving speaking skills (Brownell, Price & Steinman, 2013), building healthy relationships with others (Domitroyich et al, 2017), and resolving conflicts effectively (Jones et al., 2015). However, there are still some obstacles in the implementation of social skills learning in elementary schools, such as lack of support from the school, lack of training for teachers, and lack of parents' understanding of the importance of social skills learning.

Based on the bibliometric analysis conducted in this study, it was found that the number of publications on social skills learning in elementary schools has increased from 2002 to 2022. Most of the studies were conducted in the United States, Indonesia, and Taiwan. In this study, the keywords that appeared most frequently were social skills, elementary school, teaching, and education. Some of the research conducted on social skills learning in elementary schools are the implementation of social skills learning, evaluation of social skills learning, and factors that influence social skills learning. There is also an increase in the use of interactive and collaborative teaching methods to improve students' social skills. In addition, four main themes were found in the publications related to social skills learning in elementary schools, namely the components of social skills learning, the object of social skills research, the social abilities of students in elementary schools, and the social development of elementary school students.

The results of this bibliometric analysis can provide a better understanding of trends and issues related to social skills learning in elementary schools over the past 20 years. This information can be used by education policymakers to design curriculum and teaching methods that are more effective in developing students' social

skills in elementary schools. In addition, the results of this analysis can also be a reference for researchers or educational practitioners who want to explore this topic further.

However, this study also has limitations in the data and the methods used. This study only used data from the Scopus database, so it does not cover all publications related to social skills learning in elementary schools that may be found in other sources. In addition, the bibliometric analysis method can only provide a descriptive picture of the characteristics of publications, without providing information about the quality or impact of these publications.

In this regard, future researchers can use a more complete database and more sophisticated methods to gain a more comprehensive understanding of social skills learning in elementary schools. In future research, more detailed and in-depth bibliometric analysis can be conducted, for example by analyzing the relationship between publications and their influence on social skills learning practices in elementary schools.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the bibliometric analysis of the Scopus database from 2002 to 2022 related to social skills learning in elementary schools, it was found that the number of publications on this topic increased significantly in the 2010s and continues to increase today. Researches on this topic involve various fields of science, such as education, psychology, and sociology.

Four main themes were found in the publications related to social skills learning in elementary schools, namely the components of social skills learning, the object of social skills research, the social abilities of students in elementary schools, and the social development of elementary school students. The faintly colored themes, such as autism, child preschool, game-based learning, and mental health can be used as references for further research and become novelty themes in terms of research and references for further research development.

This study shows that there is a great need to incorporate social skills learning into the curriculum in elementary schools. In addition to acquiring academic knowledge, students should also be equipped with social skills that are essential for daily life. Therefore, further research and development in social skills learning in elementary schools are needed so that students can acquire good social skills and help them to face the challenges of life in the future.

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