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Assistance with School Environment Introduction Period (MPLS) Activities Through Ice Breaking to Support the Adaptation of New Grade I Students at Sdn Sukasari 1

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ABSTRACT

The transition from Kindergarten (TK) to Elementary School (SD) is quite a difficult period for children, especially for those who are just starting in grade 1. This is also seen in new students at SDN Sukasari 1, where many of them still feel awkward, have low self-confidence, and face challenges in interacting with teachers and classmates during the Introduction to the School Environment Period (MPLS). This condition is in line with research showing that new students are in the pre-operational phase according to the cognitive model described by Jean Piaget, who stated that they need support and appropriate introduction to be able to adapt well. This activity was designed to demonstrate the role of student mentoring for the Student Work Lecture (KKM) in supporting the adjustment of new students in grade 1 by creating a pleasant learning atmosphere. One approach used was ice breaking through various interactive games, cheering applause, and singing activities together. The method applied was descriptive qualitative by conducting participatory observations, interviews with class teachers, and documenting activities during the MPLS. The findings from this activity indicate that the application of ice breaking is able to create a more friendly atmosphere, encourage students to be more courageous in interacting well with teachers and friends, and help increase their self-confidence, in line with research showing that ice breaking can help students who tend to be shy or lack confidence to be more open and courageous in communicating. In conclusion, mentoring during MPLS by KKM students with the ice breaking approach has proven effective in facilitating the social and emotional adaptation process for new students in grade I of SDN Sukasari 1.

1. INTRODUCTION

The School Environment Introduction Period (MPLS) is a mandatory activity for new students as they begin their education at a different level. In MPLS, students are introduced to school traditions, teachers, new friends, applicable regulations, and various available facilities, so they can more easily adapt to their new environment (Rini et al., 2026). The implementation of MPLS at the elementary school level focuses more on student needs, from welcoming new students and introducing them to the school environment to various simple play activities. These activities play a role in fostering a friendly atmosphere.

Moving children from kindergarten to elementary school often presents unique adjustment challenges. Many children feel awkward when teachers ask them to state their names. Some even hesitate to play with friends and lack close friends. Some also feel that learning in elementary school is less enjoyable than in kindergarten due to the lack of play activities. This situation aligns with Jean Piaget's cognitive theory, which states that children in early elementary school are in the preoperational phase (Yulia et al., 2025).

This stage is a time when children explore their environment through experiences they see and hear, so engaging and appropriate learning methods are needed (Humaya et al., 2024). A similar situation was seen among first-grade students at SDN



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Sukasari 1, Kaduhejo District, Pandeglang Regency. From initial observations, most first-grade students displayed shyness, lack of self-confidence, and difficulty interacting with teachers and peers on the first day of MPLS. Some students showed a tendency to prefer solitude, lower their heads when feeling sad, and lack enthusiasm for participating in group activities. If ignored without appropriate intervention, this situation could reduce students' learning motivation and make it difficult for them to adapt emotionally and socially when they first start formal education.

One method proven to help students adapt and boost their confidence is icebreaking. Icebreaking is an activity designed to create a more relaxed atmosphere, usually through interactive games, mutual support, or singing together. This activity can encourage shy or low-confidence students to be more open, confident in communicating, and interacting with their peers and teachers. Active classroom management approaches, such as icebreaking, have been shown to increase student confidence and engagement, as well as help overcome fear and boredom among elementary school students. The application of this technique in the learning process at school has been shown to be effective in keeping students engaged and enthusiastic from the moment they enter the educational environment (Noviyanti et al., 2022).

Students participating in Student Work Lectures (KKM) to support the implementation of the MPLS (Student Work Program). The diverse activities undertaken by students in various locations demonstrate that their participation contributes to a more energetic MPLS atmosphere. They employ a friendly and engaging approach for new students, including creating interactive games aimed at increasing self-confidence and a sense of community (Rachman et al., 2025). To ensure the success of the MPLS implementation, strong collaboration is required from all elements of the school community, including those who assist in the activities.

Thus, the MPLS mentoring activity conducted by KKM students at SDN Sukasari 1 was held to help new first-grade students adapt in a more enjoyable manner. Furthermore, the goal of this activity was to gather information and evaluate the effectiveness of various icebreaking techniques in increasing interaction and strengthening students' self-confidence in their early stages of entering the world of education.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

This activity uses a descriptive qualitative approach that focuses on a detailed explanation of the process and impact of MPLS assistance on the adaptation of new students in grade I at SDN Sukasari 1. The qualitative approach was taken because the main objective of this activity is to understand the social and emotional phenomena of children which are situational and cannot be fully measured quantitatively (Jannah et al., 2025).

Participants in this activity included all new first-grade students at SDN Sukasari 1 and their homeroom teachers who provided guidance. Data collection was conducted using three methods. First, participatory observation, in which KKM students actively participated in the MPLS activities, observing students' reactions and levels of engagement before and after the icebreaker implementation. Second, interviews were conducted with the first-grade homeroom teachers to explore information regarding students' initial conditions and changes in attitudes that occurred during the MPLS. Third, documentation included photographs of daily activities during the MPLS implementation.

The icebreaking program was designed with various variations, such as interactive group games, clapping as a symbol of transition between activities, and singing cheerful children's songs. These activities were inserted between the agenda of introducing the school environment, introducing teachers and classmates, and introducing school rules. The collected data were then analyzed descriptively by grouping the findings based on the students' initial conditions, the type of icebreaking intervention implemented, and changes in students' attitudes and interactions during the mentoring.

2.1 Program Approach

This supervision program employs a participatory approach accompanied by guidance, where KKM students play a direct role and interact with students during the MPLS. This approach was chosen because the goal of this activity is not only to support students passively, but also to actively create a fun learning environment through various icebreaker activities, as well as observing and recording changes in students' social-emotional behavior throughout this process.

2.2 Location, Time, and Partners

This activity was held at SDN Sukasari 1, located in Kaduhejo District, Pandeglang Regency, during the School Environment Introduction (MPLS) period for the current academic year. Collaborators in this activity were the SDN Sukasari 1 school, especially the first-grade homeroom teacher who actively participated in assisting the implementation of the event. Participants in this activity were all new students in grade I of SDN Sukasari 1. This school was chosen because based on initial observations, many new students showed shyness, lack of confidence, and difficulty in interacting with teachers and classmates on the first day of MPLS. Therefore, this activity aims to provide targeted and enjoyable support for them.

2.3 Program Stages

The implementation of this activity is divided into several stages in accordance with the characteristics of MPLS at the elementary school level, including problem identification, planning, implementation, supervision and evaluation, as well as the next steps.

a. Problem Identification

This stage was carried out by conducting observations on the first day of MPLS. The results of the observations showed that several new students appeared to lack confidence, were unwilling to respond when spoken to, preferred to remain seated, and some of them did not yet have close friends and were hesitant to participate in group games.

b. Program Planning

Based on the evaluation results, the KKM students developed several activities to address communication limitations, including interactive games, motivational applause, and group singing. These activities will be added to the program's introduction to the school environment, introduction to teachers and peers, and explanation of school rules during the School Environment Introduction Period.

c. Program Implementation

The activities consisted of three main types of icebreakers. First, an engaging interactive game of guessing the names of disasters, both natural and non-natural, aimed to encourage students to be more confident in providing answers and increase their focus. Second, an encouraging round of applause served as a signal to move on to the next MPLS agenda and help redirect students' attention. Third, singing cheerful songs together created

a more relaxed atmosphere and trained students' courage to perform in front of their peers.

d. Monitoring and Evaluation

Supervision was carried out by directly observing the reactions and level of student involvement before and after the implementation of ice breaking, as well as by conducting interviews with class I teachers to obtain data regarding the initial condition of students and changes in attitudes that occurred during MPLS.

e. Follow-up

As a follow-up, KKM participants conveyed their observation findings to the class teacher and recommended that the ice breaking variations continue to be used consistently by the teachers as part of a sustainable learning strategy after the MPLS period ends.

2.4 Program Implementation Techniques

Icebreaker activities were conducted using interactive group games, clapping to symbolize transitions between activities, and singing together. These three techniques were inserted between the school environment introductions, teacher and classmate introductions, and school rules, ensuring students continued to enjoy a fun learning experience throughout the MPLS program.

2.5 Data Collection Instruments

Information collection was carried out using three instruments. First, an observation sheet completed by KKM students to document student responses and participation. Second, an interview guide used when discussing the students' initial conditions and behavioral changes with the first-grade homeroom teacher. Third, documentation in the form of images of student activities during the MPLS implementation.

2.6 Data Analysis

The data obtained were analyzed using a qualitative descriptive method by categorizing the results based on the students' initial conditions, the type of ice breaking intervention carried out, and changes in students' behavior and interactions during the mentoring process.

Table 1. Student Conditions Before and After Ice Breaking Activities

Indicator	Before the Program (First Day of MPLS)	After the Program (Ice Breaking)
Confidence in answering	Hesitates to answer when greeted, looks down, avoids eye contact	Dare to raise your hand and answer questions
Participation in groups	Prefer to sit alone, reluctant to join the game	Actively involved in group games with enthusiasm
Social interaction	Don't have any close friends yet, tend to be quiet	Laughing and interacting with classmates
Emotional condition	Anxious, occasionally looking for parents	Looks more calm and comfortable
Classroom atmosphere	Stiff, less responsive students	More lively and intimate

2.7 Program Success Indicators

The success of this activity is measured based on a number of factors, namely increasing students' confidence in answering and raising their hands, increasing the number of students participating in game groups, and increasing interaction between students and teachers and classmates.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Initial Conditions of New Students in Class I

Observations on the first day of the MPLS (Learning and Learning) showed that many new students in grade I at SDN Sukasari 1 still appeared uncomfortable, hesitant to respond when greeted, and preferred to remain in their seats. Some children looked down and avoided eye contact when being talked to by a student or teacher. Several other students appeared to have no close friends and chose not to join the play group at the beginning of the session. This situation reflects the general nature of new students who are in the preoperational stage, where they still have difficulty adapting to new environments (Hidayat et al., 2025).

This difficulty interacting was also evident in the students' minimal verbal responses to simple questions from teachers or student mentors, such as stating their names. Some students even appeared anxious and occasionally looked for their parents who had escorted them, indicating that the transition from home to a formal school environment had not been fully implemented on the first day.

3.2 Application of Ice Breaking Variations

In response to this situation, the KKM student group designed and implemented various types of ice breaking in the middle of MPLS activities, including:

1. **Interactive Game.** The students were invited to participate in an activity to guess the names of disasters, both natural and non-natural. In this session, the students were given several clues, and they were asked to guess the type of disaster being discussed. The goal of this activity was to provide a fun learning experience, encourage students to be more confident in answering questions, improve their focus, and broaden their knowledge of various types of disasters. This interactive game also aimed to increase student participation, encouraging them to be more actively involved and communicate during the MPLS (Amelia et al., 2023).
2. **Encouraging Applause.** Encouraging applause serves as a signal to move on to the next MPLS activity and helps redirect students' attention and energy when they start to feel bored. This short, engaging activity has been proven effective in maintaining student engagement and motivation during the introductory phase of the school environment.
3. **Singing Together.** Students invited students to sing cheerful and memorable children's songs as a method to create a more relaxed atmosphere while also training students' courage to perform and speak in front of their friends. The implementation of icebreakers involving singing and games successfully made students more comfortable in the lesson, strengthened positive relationships among friends, and demonstrated greater initiative.

3.3 The Impact of Mentoring on Student Adaptation

After a few opening sessions, there was a clear change in the behavior of most students. Those who had previously tended to be quiet and keep their heads down began to show courage by raising their hands, answering questions, and laughing with their peers. Some students who usually chose to sit alone also began to engage in group games and showed enthusiasm during the fun-filled sessions and sing-alongs. These changes suggest that opening sessions can help shy or less confident students become more active in interacting, and support research findings that classroom management through opening sessions can improve student confidence and participation (Rohani and Ritonga, 2023).

The first-grade homeroom teacher also revealed that the MPLS atmosphere became more lively and students appeared calmer compared to the first day, in line with research findings that show that the presence of student mentors can create a more cheerful MPLS atmosphere with a friendly and fun approach, while also building self-confidence and togetherness among new students. In addition to having an impact on the social-emotional aspect, icebreaking activities also serve to strengthen students' self-confidence when interacting with new people and train their social skills with their surroundings.

However, not all students experience an immediate transformation. Some students who tend to be introverted require more personalized support and a longer adaptation period. Another obstacle that emerged during implementation was the limited duration of the MPLS program, which limited the variety of initial training available. Therefore, the success of the MPLS program requires optimal collaboration from student mentors, teachers, and the entire school community to ensure the student adjustment process can continue consistently after the MPLS period ends (Sarmini et al., 2023).



Figure 1. Interactive Game: Guess the Name of Natural and Non-Natural Disasters



Figure 2. Applause



Figure 3. Singing Together

4. CONCLUSION

The mentoring of MPLS activities carried out by KKM students at SDN Sukasari 1 showed that a variety of icebreakers such as interactive games, enthusiastic applause, and singing together, can contribute to creating a more friendly atmosphere and increasing the confidence and courage of new students in grade I when interacting with teachers and classmates. Students who previously appeared shy and tended to be withdrawn showed a significant increase in participation after participating in a series of activities aimed at creating a smoother atmosphere.

Schools are strongly encouraged to sustainably maintain and develop the use of ice breaking in the implementation of MPLS in the future, not only as an opening activity for the school year, but also as part of a sustainable learning strategy at the beginning of grade I. In addition, class teachers are advised to pay more attention to students who need additional time to adapt, so that all students can feel safe and confident during the learning process in the new school environment

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