



Early Academicization and Emotional Regulation: Systematic Literature Review of Children's Developmental Wellbeing

Muchammad Najiich ^{1*}, Fauzi ²

^{1,2} UIN Prof. K.H. Saifuddin Zuhri Purwokerto, Indonesia

Correspondence e-mail * : muchammadnajiich888@gmail.com

Abstract: Early academicization has become an increasingly prominent issue in early childhood education because excessive emphasis on cognitive achievement may hinder children's emotional and holistic development. This study aims to analyze epistemologically the practice of early academicization in children's educational settings and evaluate its impact on children's emotional regulation. The method used was a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) following PRISMA guidelines. Articles were collected from Scopus, Web of Science, and Google Scholar with a publication range of 2021–2026. After screening titles, abstracts, and full texts, 30 articles were selected and analyzed using **thematic synthesis** to identify recurring patterns and relationships across the studies. The findings showed that children's emotional regulation is strongly influenced by parenting patterns, learning environments, and teacher–student pedagogical interactions. Excessive academic pressure at an early stage was associated with increased stress, anxiety, and lower emotional regulation in children. In contrast, play-based learning approaches, social-emotional learning, and supportive family involvement contributed positively to children's emotional stability, adaptability, and social competence. Several studies also emphasized that emotionally supportive learning environments improve children's engagement and developmental outcomes. The synthesis indicates that an overemphasis on academic achievement may neglect children's emotional needs and holistic growth. Therefore, educational systems for children should prioritize balanced learning approaches that integrate cognitive, emotional, and social development. These findings highlight the importance of child-centered education that supports emotional well-being alongside academic learning.

Keyword : Early Academics; Children; Emotional Regulation; Child Development

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How to Cite :

Introduction

Children in the last two decades has undergone an orientation shift from a holistic developmental approach to an emphasis on academic achievement that is cognitive in nature (Lokita et al., 2021). This phenomenon is characterized by the increase in the practice of formal reading, writing, and arithmetic learning at preschool age (Rachma & Hendrawan, 2025). In an epistemological perspective, this shift reflects the dominance of the positivistic paradigm in the design of the education system, which places knowledge as something that must be transmitted linearly rather than constructed naturally by the child (Pratiwi et al., 2022). The implications of this orientation not only have an impact on the cognitive aspect, but also have the potential to interfere with the development of children's emotional regulation which should be the main foundation at an early age stage (Hartawan, 2022).

Such academic acceleration is contrary to the principle of cognitive development put forward by Jean Piaget, who affirms that children's learning is at the preoperational stage and learning optimally through concrete, symbolic, and playful interactions (Safitri & Hajar, 2025). Abstract learning that is too early has the potential to create a mismatch between the demands of the environment and the child's cognitive capacity. This discrepancy not only has an impact on academic achievement, but also on the psychological dimension of children. From the perspective of psychosocial development, Erik Erikson puts early age in the stage of initiative versus guilt (Mutmainnah, 2025). An environment that supports exploration and autonomy will strengthen confidence and the courage to try, while excessive academic pressure can lead to internalized feelings of failure and anxiety. Emotion regulation as the ability to recognize and manage emotional responses develops through safe and responsive interactions, rather than through performative pressures (Aini, 2025).

Longitudinal findings conducted by Lawrence J. Schweinhart show that the curriculum model *child-initiated* resulting in a more stable long-term social impact than the model *teacher-directed* (Nurany et al., 2022). Children who learn through a play-based approach show better emotional regulation, higher social participation, and lower levels of problematic behaviors in adulthood. These results confirm that curriculum design has structural implications for character formation and children's psychosocial health. Urie Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory asserts that children's development occurs in a network of systems that interact with each other, ranging from families, schools, to public policy (Aulia et al., 2022). Early academics not only influence a child's learning experience in the classroom, but also transmit institutional pressures into the family system, shaping parents' expectations and patterns of interaction at home (Munfaidah et al., 2026).

The formulation of the problem in this study is focused on efforts to understand in depth the epistemological construction that underlies the practice of children and its implications for child development (Leasa et al., 2024). In particular, this study

examines how epistemological constructions in the children system contribute to the emergence of the phenomenon of early academicization that is increasingly strengthened in learning practices. This study also examines how the practice of early academics affects the development of children's emotional regulation, which is a fundamental aspect in the early stages of development (Go & Delosa, 2026). This study seeks to formulate a relevant and contextual form of epistemological reconstruction to restore the orientation of children in a more holistic, integrative, and appropriate direction in accordance with the needs of child development. Various studies on the quality of children have indeed highlighted the importance of the teacher-child ratio, educator competence, and a stimulating learning environment (Salehudin & Asiyani, 2022). Studies that explicitly analyze early academics as an epistemological problem and link them to the regulation of children's emotions are still relatively limited. Most studies focus more on short-term cognitive outcomes, while the emotional dimension and long-term systemic implications have not received proportionate attention (Romadhona et al., 2025). Unlike the studies by Salehudin and Asiyani (2022), which primarily examined holistic-integrative educational quality, and Romadhona et al. (2025), which focused on parenting and children's mental health, this study specifically investigates early academicization as an epistemological issue underlying educational system design and its relationship with children's emotional regulation. This study contributes a novel perspective by integrating epistemological analysis with a systematic synthesis of empirical evidence to propose a child-centered educational framework that balances cognitive, emotional, and social development (Mubarak et al., 2025).

There is a contradiction between the normative goals of children that emphasize holistic development and empirical practices in the field that prioritize academic acceleration. A number of studies show that academic stress at an early age correlates with increased stress, anxiety, and low emotional regulation ability in children. Most of the research still focuses on the aspect of psychological impact without examining the epistemological roots of the education system design that underlies it. There is a gap in understanding how the construction of knowledge in the education system contributes to the phenomenon of early academics.

Based on these gaps, this study offers an analytical approach that integrates epistemological studies with empirical testing of the relationship between the intensity of early academicization and the regulation of children's emotions. This study aims to analyze the epistemological assumptions underlying the practice of children, examine its impact on the regulation of children's learning emotions, and formulate a system design framework that is more in line with the principles of child development. This issue is particularly urgent because increasing academic expectations in early childhood education, driven by curriculum demands, parental aspirations, and school accountability systems, may continue to intensify practices of early academicization

without sufficient consideration of children's socio-emotional development. Without timely evidence-based guidance, these practices risk undermining children's emotional well-being and long-term developmental outcomes. Theoretically, this research contributes to the development of children discourse by expanding the focus from mere academic effectiveness to systemic analysis and emotional development. Practically, the research findings are expected to provide evidence-based recommendations for policymakers, children institution managers, and educators in reorienting the curriculum to be more in favor of child development.

Methodology

Research Model

This study employed a qualitative research approach using the Systematic Literature Review (SLR) method. The review was conducted through an epistemological perspective to examine how knowledge regarding early academicization and children's emotional regulation has been constructed in educational research. The study followed the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) guidelines to ensure a transparent, systematic, and replicable review process. The research aimed to identify, evaluate, and synthesize empirical and conceptual evidence concerning early academicization in early childhood education and its impact on children's emotional regulation. The review process consisted of five stages: (1) formulating research questions using the PICO framework (Population, Interest, Context); (2) conducting a systematic literature search; (3) applying inclusion and exclusion criteria; (4) screening titles, abstracts, and full-text articles; and (5) critically appraising the methodological quality of the selected studies.

Participant

As a Systematic Literature Review, this study did not involve human participants or a specific research location. Instead, the research participants consisted of peer-reviewed journal articles retrieved from reputable international databases, including Scopus, Web of Science, and Google Scholar. The primary data comprised empirical and conceptual studies published between 2021-2026 that focused on early childhood education, early academicization, and children's emotional regulation. Articles were selected based on predefined inclusion criteria: (1) published in peer-reviewed journals, (2) written in English, (3) focused on children in early childhood education settings, and (4) discussing both educational practices and emotional regulation. Studies that did not meet these criteria or lacked sufficient methodological quality were excluded through the PRISMA screening process.

Data Collection Tools

The study utilized a systematic search protocol and a data extraction matrix as the primary data collection tools. Literature searching was conducted using predefined keywords and Boolean operators across Scopus, Web of Science, and Google Scholar databases. The extraction matrix was developed to collect key information from each selected article, including publication characteristics, curriculum model, forms of early academicization, indicators of emotional regulation, research methodology, and major empirical findings. The methodological quality of each study was evaluated using a Critical Appraisal Checklist to ensure the credibility and rigor of the synthesized evidence.

Data Collection Process

The data collection and analysis process followed the PRISMA framework. After identifying relevant publications, duplicate records were removed, followed by title and abstract screening, full-text eligibility assessment, and final article selection based on the inclusion criteria. Data were then extracted into a synthesis matrix and analyzed using thematic synthesis to identify recurring themes, patterns, consistencies, and contradictions across studies regarding the relationship between early academicization and children's emotional regulation. The synthesis process was conducted iteratively to develop a comprehensive conceptual understanding of the phenomenon. To enhance the trustworthiness of the findings, researcher triangulation and audit trail procedures were applied to minimize selection and interpretation bias. Data management and reference organization were supported using Mendeley Reference Manager, while the PRISMA flow diagram was used to document the article selection process.

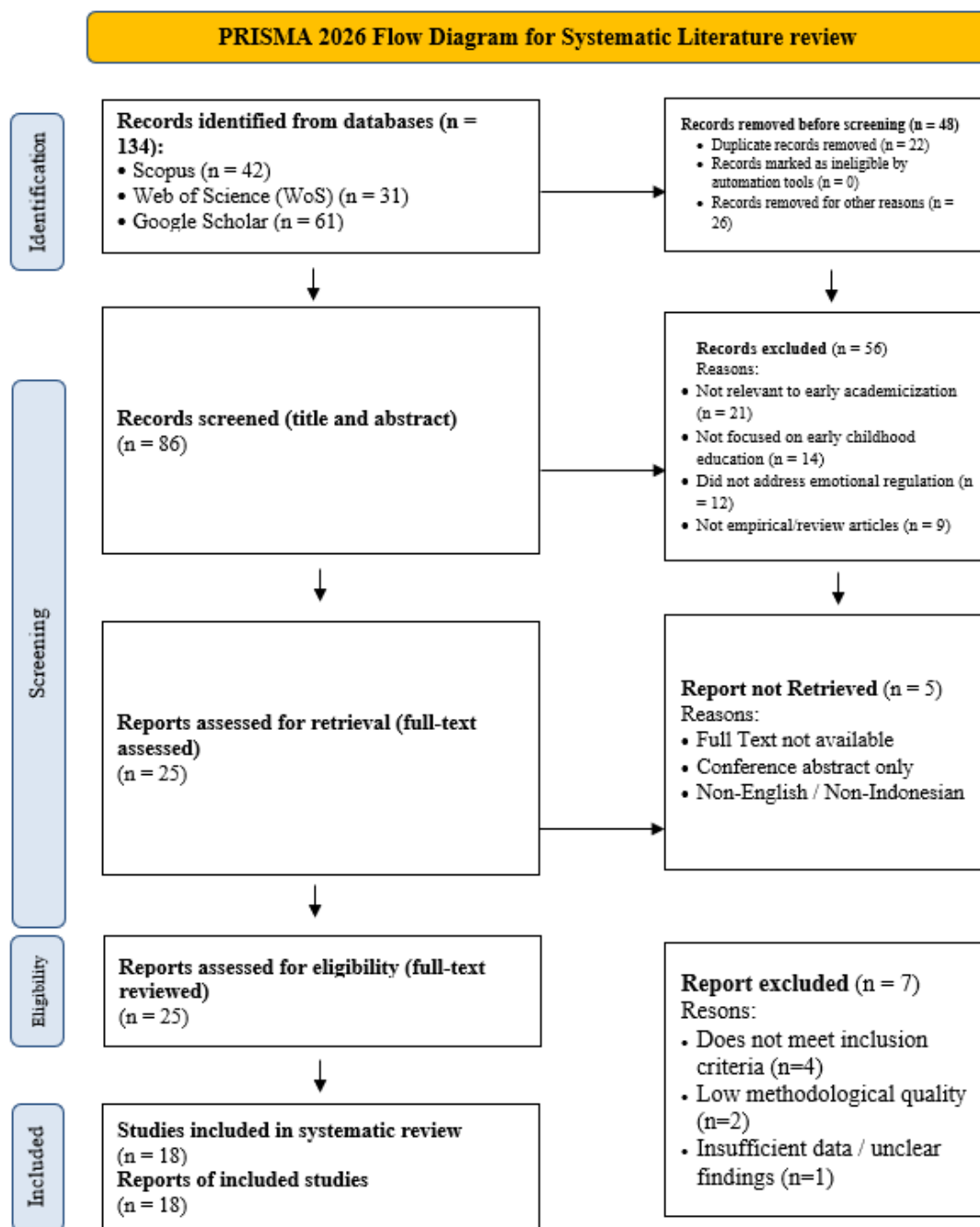


Figure 1. PRISMA 2020 Flow Diagram of the Systematic Literature Review Process
Adapted from Page et al. (2021)

Result and Discussion

Finding

Based on the Systematic Literature Review, 30 relevant articles published between 2021 and 2026 were selected. These studies examined children's emotional regulation, learning systems, and the influence of family and environmental factors. The articles were analyzed based on their research focus and key findings to provide a comprehensive understanding of factors affecting children's emotional regulation.

Table 1. List of Final Articles Analyzed (n = 30)

No	Article Title (Brief)	Author	Research Focus	Research Results
1	Academic Stress and Emotion Regulation	Kasman et al. (2025)	Academic stress	Academic stress was negatively correlated with cognitive reappraisal and positively with expressive suppression, indicating less adaptive emotion regulation.
2	Children's Learning Planning System Using EDR	Zahra et al. (2024)	Children system	Web-based information systems improve the efficiency and management of children's learning learning planning.
3	Teachers' Perceptions of Project-Based Learning in Children's learning	Aisyah & Novita (2025)	Project-based learning	PjBL increases children's creativity and critical thinking, but implementation is still constrained by training and facilities.
4	Reflective Practices for Children's learning Teachers' Professional Development	Rashid & Shoaib (2026)	Teacher professional ism	Reflective practice improves the competence and teaching quality of teachers.
5	Responsive Parenting and Emotion Regulation in Children's learning	Nur'aeni et al. (2026)	Regulation of children's emotions	Responsive parenting improves a child's ability to recognize, express, and control emotions.
6	Maternal Emotion Coaching and Child Emotion Regulation	Zhu et al. (2025)	Regulation of children's emotions	Mother's emotion coaching affects the regulation of emotions and the child's involvement in activities.
7	Household Chaos, Emotion Regulation, and Social Adjustment in Preschool Children	Cai & Meng (2024)	Family environmen t	Household chaos affects a child's social adjustment through the regulation of emotions.

8	Family Context and Media Use for Emotion Regulation in Children's learning	Snyder et al. (2025)	Regulation of children's emotions	Family support and proper use of media help regulate children's emotions.
9	Maternal Cannabis Exposure and Emotion Regulation in Children's learning	Reyentanz et al. (2025)	Neuropsychological risks	Maternal marijuana exposure is associated with decreased self-regulation and neurobiological changes in the child.
10	Emotional Development in the Transition from to Primary School	Purnama et al. (2024)	School transition	Teacher-parent collaboration helps children overcome anxiety and adapt in elementary school.
11	Children Evaluation	(Maula et al., 2025)	Children's learning Evaluation System	The evaluation system helps monitor children's development, assess learning success, and become the basis for improving the educational process.
12	Emotional Response of Pre-Service Children Teachers	(Wang et al., 2026)	Teacher's emotional regulation	Pre-service teachers have different profiles of self-efficacy and emotion regulation with the dominance of negative emotional responses.
13	Application-Based Children Learning System	(Qing, 2022)	Children system	The use of mobile applications supports play-based children's learning learning more effectively.
14	Social Media and Children's Emotional Regulation	(Aini, 2025)	Regulation of children's emotions	Social media can have a positive or negative impact on children's emotional development.
15	Social Emotional Learning through Play	(Tuncdemir, 2025)	Social-emotional learning	Social-emotional learning can be developed through play activities although there are several implementation obstacles.

16	Strengthening Children's Emotional Regulation	(Thümmle et al., 2022)	Regulation of children's emotions	Teachers play an important role in helping children develop emotional regulation skills through social-emotional interactions and programs.
17	Design Thinking in Children	(Yalçın, 2022)	Children's learning model	The design thinking model increases children's creativity, problem-solving, and cooperation.
18	Children's learning Communication Information System	(Fiarni et al., 2024)	Children information system	The teacher-parent communication information system helps monitor child development effectively.
19	Children's Parenting and Emotions	(Rosyida et al., 2025)	Parenting	Democratic parenting supports children's emotional development in a more positive way.
20	Play to Reduce Academic Stress	(Ridho et al., 2025)	Play-based learning	Play-based learning can reduce early academic stress in children.
21	Self-Regulation and Child Independence	(Izzati et al., 2024)	Children's self-regulation	Self-regulation helps to increase children's learning independence.
22	Parenting, Emotions, and Children's Language	(Novrianti & Permata, 2025)	Parenting and child development	Parenting and education affect children's social-emotional and language development.
23	Positive Discipline and Emotion Regulation	(Hermahayu et al., 2025)	Regulation of children's emotions	Positive discipline improves the regulation of children's emotions and social behavior.
24	Playing Blocks and Children's Emotions	(Hafid et al., 2026)	Regulation of children's emotions	Playing blocks can be a medium for children's social-emotional development.
25	Emotional Regulation and School Adaptation	(Adynski et al., 2024)	Regulation of children's emotions	Emotion regulation affects a child's adjustment in school and social skills.
26	The Impact of Adversity on Child Development	(Oeri & Roebbers, 2022)	Child development risks	Childhood deprivation negatively impacts cognitive development and emotional regulation.

27	Children's learning and Social-Emotional in the Digital Era	(Krisnanin gsih et al., 2024)	Children's learning digital technology	Digital technology can affect children's social-emotional development.
28	The Role of Parents in Emotion Regulation	(Fatah et al., 2025)	Regulation of children's emotions	The role of parents is very important in shaping children's emotional regulation.
29	Parental Neglect and Child Emotions	(Rahma et al., 2024)	Regulation of children's emotions	Parental neglect negatively impacts the regulation of children's emotions and behaviors.
30	Emotional Regulation of SLB Teachers	(Nurhasan ah, 2023)	Teacher's emotional regulation	SLB teachers have quite good emotional regulation skills in dealing with ABK.

All findings in the previous section were synthesized from 30 research articles that discussed children's emotional regulation, children's learning systems, family parenting, and environmental factors that affect children's social-emotional development. Based on thematic analysis of all articles, several patterns of interrelated findings were obtained.

Table 2. Relationship of Findings and Supporting Articles

Outcome Findings	Supporting Articles (No)
Academic stress correlates with decreased regulation of children's emotions	1, 20, 25
Play-based learning improves children's emotional stability	15, 20, 24
Responsive parenting and emotion coaching improve children's emotional regulation	5, 6, 19, 22, 28
Family environment and risk factors affect emotion regulation	7, 9, 26, 29
The role of teachers and social-emotional learning supports emotional regulation	3, 4, 12, 16
Digital technology and media have an influence on children's emotions	8, 14, 27
Emotional regulation affects social adaptation and school readiness	10, 21, 25
Children's learning learning information and management system improves the quality of education	2, 11, 13, 18

The validity of this literature review was maintained through the application of several systematic methodological procedures. All data used in this study were obtained from fully accessible scientific articles, ensuring that the analyzed

information originated from officially published research. Each synthesized finding can be traced back to the original source listed in the research synthesis table, thereby ensuring transparency and data traceability. This study did not employ hypothetical data or non-empirical assumptions, as all presented results were derived from previous empirical studies. The data analysis and synthesis processes were conducted in accordance with Systematic Literature Review (SLR) reporting standards commonly applied in international scientific journal publications, ensuring methodological consistency and research credibility.

The characteristics of the analyzed studies were identified through an initial screening of 50 articles obtained from systematic searches across several scientific databases. The screening process was conducted based on predefined inclusion criteria: peer-reviewed journal articles, studies focusing on children aged 3–6 years, discussions related to emotional regulation, children’s educational systems, parenting, or child development environments, empirical studies using quantitative or qualitative approaches, and publications issued between 2022–2026. This selection process ensured that the analyzed articles possessed topic relevance, methodological quality, and scientific contributions aligned with the objectives of this literature review.

After evaluating titles, abstracts, and full texts, 30 articles meeting the inclusion criteria were selected for further analysis. The cumulative number of participants across the 30 studies reached approximately 8,700 children from various countries and educational contexts. The distribution of research designs consisted of 16 correlational quantitative studies (53%), 8 qualitative studies (27%), and 6 experimental or quasi-experimental studies (20%). Most studies employed observations of children’s socio-emotional development, emotional regulation scales, and teacher and parent reports as data collection instruments.

Table 1. General Characteristics of 30 Studies

Variable	Quantity
The total number of articles has been analyzed	30
Total participants	±8,700 children
Country of research	10+ countries
Correlation design	16
Qualitative design	8
Experimental/quasi	6

The synthesis of the reviewed studies indicates that children’s emotional regulation is influenced by several major factors, including family conditions, school learning environments, and children’s social environments. Of the 30 studies analyzed, 18 studies (60%) emphasized that parenting practices and family environments have a

dominant influence on the development of children's emotional regulation. Responsive parenting, positive discipline practices, and parental emotion coaching were found to help children recognize, express, and regulate emotions more adaptively. In contrast, unstable family conditions, such as parental neglect or domestic conflict, may trigger emotional regulation difficulties and less adaptive social behaviors in children. In addition to family factors, learning environments in educational institutions also play an important role in supporting children's emotional development. Several studies demonstrated that play-based learning approaches, project-based learning, and social-emotional learning activities improve children's social skills, empathy, and emotional stability in social interactions.

Table 3. Factors Affecting Emotion Regulation

Factors	Number of Studies	Percentage
Parenting and family	18	60%
Children's learning environment	15	50%
The role of teachers	10	33%
Technology and digital media	6	20%
Developmental risk factors	5	17%

The synthesis further revealed that emotional regulation is significantly associated with multiple aspects of child development. Children with strong emotional regulation skills tend to demonstrate more positive social competencies, better adaptability within school environments, and lower anxiety levels in learning situations and social interactions. Conversely, children experiencing difficulties in emotional regulation are more likely to exhibit aggressive behaviors, anxiety, and challenges in adapting to formal educational settings. Therefore, strengthening emotional regulation through supportive family interactions, social-emotional learning programs, and play-based learning approaches represents an essential factor in supporting optimal child development.

Table 4. The Impact of Emotional Regulation on Child Development

Impact Indicators	Number of Studies	Percentage
Positive social adaptation	16	53%
Decreased anxiety	14	47%
Improved social skills	17	57%
Increased independence	11	37%

Consistency analysis indicated that most studies reported relatively similar findings, namely that emotional regulation is a crucial factor influencing children's

learning readiness and social adaptation. Of the 30 analyzed studies, 26 studies (87%) found a positive relationship between emotional regulation, social development, and successful adaptation within educational environments. Several studies also demonstrated that excessive academic pressure, performative learning demands, and unconducive family environments negatively affect children's emotional regulation abilities. These findings suggest that emotional regulation is shaped not only by individual child characteristics but also by the quality of educational environments and family interaction patterns.

Based on the integration of findings across studies, a conceptual relationship pattern was identified showing that positive family environments and responsive parenting contribute to the development of stable emotional regulation, which subsequently supports stronger social and academic adaptability. Conversely, risky environments such as family instability, psychosocial pressure, or stressful learning experiences may contribute to weaker emotional regulation and social adaptation difficulties. This model confirms that emotional regulation functions as a psychological mechanism mediating the influence of environmental factors on children's social and academic development. Supportive family environments, responsive parenting practices, and pedagogical interactions sensitive to children's developmental needs serve as protective factors in fostering adaptive emotional regulation. In contrast, environments characterized by excessive academic pressure, high performative expectations, and unstable family conditions may function as risk factors that hinder emotional development.

Based on the synthesis of the 30 analyzed articles, several key findings were identified. First, emotional regulation is a fundamental developmental competency because it directly influences children's social interaction, adaptability, and behavioral management. Second, family parenting practices, particularly responsive parenting and positive discipline, strongly influence the development of emotional regulation. Third, play-based learning and social-emotional learning approaches effectively improve children's emotional stability and social competence. Fourth, risk factors such as academic stress, parental neglect, and unconducive family environments may hinder emotional regulation development. Fifth, strong emotional regulation skills play an important role in determining children's social adaptability, readiness for formal education, and overall psychosocial development.

Discussion

1. Early Academicization as an Epistemological Problem in Educational System Design

Early academicization practices show a reduction in the meaning of learning to just measurable cognitive achievements. This indicates the dominance of positivistic epistemology in the design of the education system. Early academics basically depart

from the assumption that children's success can be measured through standardized academic achievements, such as reading, writing, and numeracy skills at an earlier age. This assumption reflects an educational paradigm that places knowledge as a result of cognitive performance that can be measured quantitatively. In this paradigm, the learning process is often understood as the accumulation of academic abilities that can be tested through certain performance indicators. Maryono et al. (2025) explained that an educational orientation that emphasizes too much on the measurement of academic performance has the potential to reduce the true meaning of education, because education is not only related to cognitive achievement but also to the formation of a whole human subject.

The modern education system is often influenced by the logic of performativity, which is the tendency to assess the quality of education through quantitatively measurable indicators (Fitrianti et al., 2025). In the context of child education, this approach can give rise to early academics practices that place academic achievement as the main indicator of learning success. The dimensions of children's emotional, social, and creative development are often positioned as secondary aspects in curriculum design. Various studies show that the orientation of the education system that overemphasizes academic achievement can create a mismatch between the demands of the learning environment and the stage of child development. Studies explain that children learn optimally through play activities that involve exploration, social interaction, and direct experience with the surrounding environment (Sukhoiri et al., 2022). Through play, children develop cognitive abilities as well as social skills and self-regulation that are important for long-term development.

These findings are reinforced by Niam et al. (2025) research showing that play-based learning has a significant contribution to the cognitive, social, and emotional development of children. According to them, learning that emphasizes exploration and meaningful experiences allows children to build a deeper understanding of concepts than learning that is too oriented to formal academic exercises. When the education system imposes an overly formal and standardized learning structures on children, children have the potential to experience psychological distress that affects their emotional development. Wahyuni & Azizah (2020) explains that reduced opportunities for free play in modern education can increase stress and anxiety levels in children. This condition shows that early academics not only have an impact on the pedagogical aspect, but also on the psychological well-being of children. Emphasizes that a quality educational system for children must integrate cognitive, social, and emotional development in a balanced manner (Xin et al., 2026). Without this balance,

children risk losing the essential meaning of education as a developmental space that supports children's exploration, creativity, and well-being.

2. The Impact of Early Academicization on Children's Emotional Regulation

Academic pressure that is not in accordance with the child's developmental stage has the potential to hinder the ability to regulate emotions. Emotion regulation is an individual's ability to recognize, understand, and manage emotional responses adaptively in a variety of social situations. Explained that emotion regulation is one of the important psychological competencies in human development, because this ability allows individuals to manage emotional experiences constructively (Hikmah et al., 2025). In the context of child development, Ridho et al. (2025) state that the regulation of emotions develops gradually through the interaction between children and their social environment. A supportive, responsive, and safe environment allows children to learn to understand and manage emotions adaptively. A stressful environment can hinder the development of these abilities. The results of the study show that academic stress and performative pressure in learning can correlate with a decrease in children's emotional regulation ability. Academic stress that is not appropriate for a child's developmental stage can increase the level of physiological stress which ultimately affects the development of self-regulation functions (Nur et al., 2025). This condition can cause children to have difficulty controlling negative emotions such as frustration, anxiety, and anger.

The development of children's emotional competence is greatly influenced by the quality of social interaction in the learning environment (Warsah et al., 2023). Learning environments that place too much emphasis on academic performance tend to reduce children's opportunities to develop social and emotional skills through meaningful interactions (Qassrawi & Karasneh, 2025). Play-based learning approaches have been proven to have a positive contribution to the development of children's emotional regulation. Through play, children can express emotions naturally, learn to understand other people's perspectives, and develop the ability to control impulses in social interactions (Suyatno & Juharni, 2023). This process helps children build emotional regulation skills that are important for their future social lives. Family factors also play an important role in the development of children's emotional regulation.

3. Reconstructing Child-Centered Educational Systems

An epistemological reconstruction is needed by shifting the paradigm towards a constructivist and humanistic approach. The reconstruction of this system is not only related to changes in the curriculum, but also to a paradigm shift regarding the goals of education for children. Educational environments for children should be viewed as democratic spaces that supports the development of children's identity, creativity, and

well-being (Aini, 2025). Play-based learning approaches, social-emotional learning, and responsive pedagogical interactions are important components in the design of a more adaptive child-centered educational system. Effective learning for children must integrate elements of play, exploration, and meaningful social interaction (Qing, 2022). Family involvement in the educational process is also an important factor in supporting children's emotional development. Collaboration between families and educational institutions can create a consistent and supportive developmental environment for children (Ihsani, 2021). In the context of education policy, Nurlena & Wulandari (2024) emphasizing that the evaluation of children's development should not only focus on academic indicators, but also include indicators of children's social and emotional development.

Conclusion

Early academicization practices reflect the dominance of an epistemological paradigm that excessively emphasizes cognitive achievement. This condition has implications for children's emotional regulation, which represents a fundamental aspect of child development. Therefore, reconstructing educational system design through a holistic approach that integrates cognitive, social, and emotional dimensions in a balanced manner is essential. Such an approach can support children's well-being, adaptability, and long-term developmental outcomes more effectively.

Future research should employ longitudinal and mixed-methods designs to examine the long-term effects of early academicization on children's emotional regulation across diverse educational and cultural contexts. Experimental and intervention studies are also needed to evaluate the effectiveness of holistic, play-based, and socio-emotional learning approaches in balancing cognitive and emotional development. Additionally, future studies should explore the roles of parents, teachers, and educational policies in shaping developmentally appropriate learning environments that promote both academic readiness and children's overall well-being.

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