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Dr. Sangeeta Rani
Assistant Professor, Guru
Nanak Khalsa College,
Yamuna Nagar, Haryana,
India

Social-emotional learning: Why it matters

Dr. Sangeeta Rani

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Abstract

In the present era, educators encounter plenty of challenges like tests with intense competition, abuse of drugs and alcohol, suicide, academic standards, delinquency, technology, media, interpersonal violence, dropouts, and the variations in families, and it is very scary for a student. However, truly effective schools are those that teach pupils not only how to pass tests but also how to face the challenges of life. Social-emotional learning is an educational method that aims to foster social and emotional skills within the school curricula. A positive relationship between teachers and young students helps those students to have better school achievement and behavioral skills. Social and emotional learning (SEL) aims to assist students - both children and adults - better understand their thoughts and emotions, to become more self-aware, and to develop more empathy for others within their community.

Keywords: Social-Emotional learning, Achievement & behavioral skill

Introduction

Today's schools are becoming more multicultural and multilingual, with students from a variety of socioeconomic backgrounds. Educators and community organizations provide students with various motivations for participating in learning, behaving positively, and performing academically. Social and emotional learning (SEL) lays the groundwork for safe and positive learning, and it improves students' ability to succeed in school, careers, and life. It has been researched by educationists that learning is best when pupils get involved and participate in it. Academic achievement and socio-emotional learning are intertwined, and an integrated and coordinated approach is essential to succeed academically and in life also. Developing these qualities in the classroom can help students become better, more productive, self-aware, and socially-aware citizens outside of the classroom.

What is socio-emotional learning?

Social-emotional learning (SEL) is the process of developing the self-awareness, self-control, and interpersonal skills that are vital for school, work, and life success. School is one of the primary places where pupils learn social and emotional skills. Social and emotional learning (SEL) is an educational concept that assists children in developing skills in areas other than math, reading, and other core school subjects. SEL assists children in identifying their feelings, understanding and communicating with others, developing strong relationships, and making good, empathetic decisions.

According to Durlak (2015) ^[5], in their book *Handbook of social and emotional learning: Research and practice*, social-emotional learning is: "Involves fostering social and emotional competencies through explicit instruction and through student-centred learning approaches that help students engage in the learning process and develop analytical, communication, and collaborative skills".

Students with great social-emotional skills cope better with daily challenges and benefit academically, professionally, and socially. From effective problem-solving to self-discipline, impulse control to emotion management, and more, SEL lays the groundwork for long-term positive effects on children, adults, and communities.

Why is SEL Important?

Today's students frequently meet lots of new students in the classroom who come from a variety of different backgrounds, hold various opinions, and have distinctive abilities. To account for these differences and help all students succeed on an equal footing, social and

Correspondence Author;
Dr. Sangeeta Rani
Assistant Professor, Guru
Nanak Khalsa College,
Yamuna Nagar, Haryana,
India

emotional learning (SEL) aims to help students - both adults and children - better understand their thoughts and emotions, become more self-aware, and develop more empathy for others in their society and the world around them. According to CASEL (2003) ^[4], the concept of social and emotional learning (SEL) in education can be characterized as the ability to understand and control one's emotions, effectively solve problems, and build relationships with others.

Students need social-emotional learning because it gives them valuable life lessons including how to understand themselves, form a positive self-concept, take responsibility for their actions, and build healthy relationships with others. It can also be helpful for Building self-esteem and confidence in students. In the past two decades, studies on educational outcomes have shown the value of encouraging positive social behaviours to promote academic achievement Blake *et al.*, (2015) ^[3].

Students can develop the following skills through social-emotional learning, which are necessary for setting goals for themselves: problem-solving, overcoming obstacles, advocating for social justice, empathy for others, taking responsibility, setting an example, and developing the different kinds of behaviours that most accurately predict long-term success in contemporary life.

Important Areas of Social and Emotional Learning

Studies show that sustained and well-integrated social and emotional learning (SEL) engages students and improves achievement. In this research paper, there are five important areas identified by the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) that all young people (and adults) need to learn to be successful in school and life.

Self-Awareness

Understanding one's emotions, personal goals, and values are required for competence in the self-awareness domain. This includes accurately assessing one's strengths and limitations, maintaining a positive attitude, and having a sense of self-efficacy and optimism. High levels of self-awareness require the ability to recognize the connections between thoughts, feelings, and actions.

Self-management

Competence in the self-management domain usually requires the acquisition of skills and attitudes that facilitate the regulation of emotions and behaviours. This includes skills such as the ability to delay gratification, manage stress, control impulses, and persevere in the face of adversity.

Social awareness

Competence in the social awareness domain usually involves the ability to understand and respect people from different backgrounds or cultures, as well as to empathise and feel compassion for them. It also involves recognizing family, school, and community resources and supports, as well as understanding social norms for behaviour.

Relationship skill

The ability to establish and maintain healthy relationships with people from various backgrounds. Competence in this domain entails communicating clearly, actively listening, cooperating, resisting inappropriate social pressure,

constructively negotiating conflict, and seeking assistance when required.

Responsible Decision Making

Responsible decision-making requires the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to make constructive choices about personal behaviour and social interactions across diverse settings. Competence in this domain requires the ability to consider ethical standards, and safety concerns, make accurate behavioural assessments to make realistic assessments of the consequences of various actions and consider the health and well-being of oneself and others. Responsible decision-making requires the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to make constructive choices about personal behaviour and social interactions across diverse settings.

How does SEL influence personal and behavioural outcomes?

Early childhood development requires social and emotional skills. These social and emotional skills are associated with the ability to communicate with others both inside (e.g., teachers and peers) and outside of the classroom. Social and emotional skills influence how children interact with others, deal with their emotions, and react to events in their surroundings. When teachers make academic lessons more personal and relatable to students, they are more likely to participate and are less likely to mentally absent during their classes. SEL can have a long-term positive impact in the classroom by encouraging empathy, self-awareness, and feelings of safety and inclusion. Lippard *et al.* (2018) ^[2] argued that when children grow in class as a result of teacher support, they are more likely to engage in positive behaviour and less likely to misbehave. On the other hand, According to Breeman *et al.* (2015) ^[1], negative peer communication has an impact on children's emotional, social, and behavioural skills. Although SEL is not a specific subject like history or math, it can be woven into the fabric of a school's curriculum. Several strategies and activities can be used to encourage children's interaction with teachers and peers:

- Greeting each child with a smile in the morning
- Using friendly body language
- Listening to children and asking them to listen to their peers when they speak.
- Inquiring with distressed children about what is bothering them
- Encouraging children to look forward to each new day
- Assigning each child a task and giving them enough time to complete it
- Encouraging children to look forward to each new day
- Referring to the children by their given names
- Using one-on-one techniques to treat each child as an individual
- Making eye contact with children when conversing
- Participating in small-group activities
- Inviting children to engage in collaborative play
- Promoting interaction among children

Conclusion

Children frequently face social and emotional challenges. Social-emotional learning assists children in developing a more positive attitude toward themselves and others. Effective schools are those that prepare students to pass not

only school tests but also life tests. Children and young people who have social and emotional learning skills perform better academically, have better physical health, and have a higher standard of living. The majority of academic institutions and educators are conscious of their responsibility to support students' personal growth while also assisting them in achieving high grades and leaving school with the greatest credentials available. By doing this, they can leave school as successful students who have the skills necessary for future success.

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