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Article:	**The Importance of Social and Emotional Learning in Student Success: (A Mixed Method Approach)**
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ABSTRACT

The importance of social and emotional learning (SEL) in promoting student performance is examined in this mixed-methods study. SEL and academic accomplishment are the subjects of this project, which will employ both quantitative and qualitative methods to investigate this link. The study investigates the relationship between SEL abilities and academic achievement as a whole, using surveys and interviews for responses. Parents, teachers and students from grade 6 to grade 10 participated in this mix method study, which was carried out at Govt. High School, Kangan Pur, and a diverse urban school in the district Kasur, Punjab, Pakistan. The results underline the importance of integrating SEL into educational curricula and offer insights into the most efficient methods for doing so. They also highlight the multifaceted impact of SEL on student success and offer insights for teachers, policymakers and stakeholders seeking to improve educational practices for the wellbeing and long term life outcomes of the learners.

Keywords: Student Success, Mixed Method, Social and Emotional Learning, Educational Practices

Introduction:

The concept of a successful student has broadened to include holistic development, including social and emotional abilities, in the quickly changing world of today. The process by which people learn and use abilities linked to decision-making, interpersonal connections, self-awareness, and self-regulation is known as social and emotional learning (SEL). The potential benefits of social and emotional learning (SEL) to improve academic performance, interpersonal skills, and general well-being have drawn a lot of attention in recent years. The term "self-awareness, self-regulation, social awareness, relationship management, and responsible decision-making" (SEL) describes the process of learning and using these abilities. This study recognizes that academic accomplishment is linked to emotional and social competence and aims to explore the role that SEL plays in fostering student success. This research aims to elucidate the multifaceted significance of SEL in fostering student success (Abbas et al. 2024; Sial et al. 2022).

Education professionals have paid close attention to the role that social and emotional learning (SEL) plays in students' achievement in recent years. For a considerable amount of time, schools have prioritized conventional academic courses; nevertheless, educators and researchers have come to realize that a student's emotional and social well-being is as important to their overall growth and achievement. SEL is a thorough framework that gives kids the abilities, perspectives, and information needed to control their emotions, form wholesome bonds with others, and make moral judgments. This paradigm shift in education recognizes that developing social and emotional abilities is just as important as academic performance in preparing children for the difficulties of the modern world (Wang et al. 2022).

The tremendous effects of SEL on student success, like critical skills, better academic achievement, increased general well-being and long-term life outcomes will be thoroughly discussed.

Programs for social and emotional learning aim to develop a variety of critical abilities that are vital for both academic and personal development. These abilities include empathy, communication, self-control, self-awareness, and problem-solving. Students that participate in SEL programs have the ability to recognize and comprehend their feelings, successfully handle stress and anxiety, and negotiate interpersonal interactions. Students are better prepared to face obstacles in both school and life as they acquire these abilities. Their performance in the classroom and beyond is facilitated by their increased resilience, adaptability, and capacity for constructive problem-solving (Asghar et al. 2023, 2022a, b,c).

Academic performance and SEL are strongly correlated with each other. Students are able to concentrate on their academics, establish objectives, and persevere in the face of failures when they have strong social and emotional abilities. In the classroom, they are more focused, motivated, and attentive, which improves learning results. Additionally, SEL may enhance classroom conditions and lessen behavioral issues, freeing up instructors to devote more time to education and less time to punishment. Research has indicated that kids who get SEL interventions typically have greater graduation rates, better test scores and higher grades.

SEL programs support mental health and emotional stability of the students which creates general wellbeing for them. They provide people the skills necessary to identify and control their emotions, which is crucial for avoiding mental health problems like sadness and anxiety. Students who have a solid SEL foundation are better able to develop the resilience and

self-worth that are necessary for overcoming obstacles in life. Additionally, students who cultivate healthy connections and interpersonal skills report higher levels of social pleasure and a sense of belonging, all of which are critical to their mental health. (Amjad, 2023).

SEL has an influence on student's future achievement in addition to the classroom. The abilities gained by SEL are crucial for succeeding academically as well as for negotiating the challenges of adulthood. Strong social and emotional capabilities are typically correlated with improved decision-making, communication, and conflict-resolution abilities. They will be more capable of managing the pressures of the job, sustaining wholesome relationships, and making wise decisions. In the end, SEL is essential in developing resilient, successful, and well-rounded people.

Literature Review

Education as a field has focused on Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) because of its critical role in supporting students' overall growth and well-being. Many studies and research papers highlight how crucial it is to include SEL into school curricula in an easy-to-understand manner. This review of the literature aims to provide a comprehensive overview of the main findings and understandings drawn from existing research clarifying the vital role of SEL in the complex fabric of educational environments.

Studies repeatedly assert that Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) programs make a significant contribution to improved academic performance. Students that participate in SEL projects typically exhibit improved focus, skilled self-control, and sophisticated problem-solving abilities, which significantly improves their ability to understand and remember academic material.

SEL serves as a testing ground for the development of interpersonal grace, sympathetic resonance, and skillful communication. Students that participate in SEL activities are better able to build positive relationships with their teachers and fellow students, which helps to create a more inclusive and supportive learning environment.

The driving principle is replaced with social and emotional learning (SEL), which gives children the ability to understand and control their emotions. Consequently, there are fewer episodes of behavioral difficulties, tension, and worry. SEL programs are essential for improving mental health and general well-being because they teach coping mechanisms and self-awareness.

Adoption of SEL methods is associated with a decrease in negative behaviors including bullying, hostility, and drug usage. Pupils that participate in SEL training tend to exhibit prosocial behaviors and make responsible judgments.

SEL cultivates abilities that go beyond the walls of the classroom, producing long-term benefits. People who receive SEL education are more likely to succeed in their careers, have enduring relationships, and have a good impact on society dynamics.

Lessons on diversity, inclusivity, and cultural sensitivity are all skillfully included into SEL programs. This prepares pupils for an interconnected global world by giving them the ability to understand and appreciate diversity.

Teachers that use SEL tactics in their lesson plans report having better interactions with their pupils. This infusion enhances the learning environment in the classroom and makes learning more enjoyable overall.

SEL programs aggressively involve parents in the process by acting as a bridge between the home and the school. Parental engagement with SEL principles fosters consistency in skill development by having parents repeat these concepts at home.

By providing children with strategies to manage stress, anxiety, and depression, SEL functions as a preventative measure. Through the development of emotional resilience, SEL reduces the probability of encountering significant mental health challenges.

Studies highlight how important it is for educators to include SEL in curriculum and standards. The advantages to kids and society at large from investments in teacher training and resources for successful SEL implementation are enormous.

Studies reveal that integrating Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) into education raises academic attainment by an average of 11 percentile points while also encouraging prosocial conduct, exemplified by acts of empathy, collaboration, and compassion. Additionally, SEL lowers student stress and depression rates while also improving children's views of school (Durlak et al., 2011). A well-balanced blend of classroom, school-wide, family-, and community-based activities that promote five important competences is necessary to develop a successful SEL framework.

As platforms for assessing the acquisition of social and emotional skills, schools are crucial. The acronym SAFE should contain the following four crucial elements of a robust SEL program (Durlak et al., 2010, 2011):

Sequential: Carefully thought-out tasks that foster skill development.

Active: Interesting ways to pick up new abilities.

Focused: The growth of interpersonal and social skills is prioritized.

Explicit: Emphasizing specific social and emotional skills for comprehensive growth.

Children need to be able to do the following in order to achieve in school and in life: • Identify and manage oneself well; • Acknowledge the opinions of others and form meaningful connections; • Use good judgment when making decisions about social and personal matters. These social and emotional skills are among the several instant benefits that Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) programs advocate (Durlak et al., 2011; Farrington et al., 2012; Sklad et al., 2012). A positive outlook on oneself, other people, and projects may lead to enhanced self-efficacy, self-assurance, persistence, empathy, connection, passion to learning, and a sense of purpose, among other advantages.

Enhancing behavioral concerns and irresponsible behavior; lowering psychological discomfort; improving test scores, attendance, and grades; and fostering relationships with peers and adults

All things considered, the probability of finishing high school, being prepared for college, having a successful career, having positive relationships at work and at home, having better mental health, being less likely to commit crimes, and being an involved citizen increases with increased social and emotional intelligence (e.g., Hawkins, Kosterman, Catalano, Hill, & Abbott, 2008; Jones, Greenberg, & Crowley, 2015).

Teaching and modeling these skills, giving students opportunities to practice them, and creating opportunities for them to be applied in a variety of situations are all necessary to support SEL capabilities in the classroom. One popular approach to teaching social and emotional learning (SEL) is to prepare instructors to teach specific social and emotional skills to the kids and then provide them with opportunity to practice those abilities throughout the

day. However, math, social studies, and English language arts classes can incorporate SEL instruction (Jones & Bouffard, 2012; Merrell & Gueldner, 2010; Yoder, 2013; Zins et al., 2004).

Numerous SEL programs, supported by research, can assist children in developing greater competence and appropriate behavior for their developmental stage from preschool through high school (Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Ocular Learning, 2013, 2015).Throughout the course of the school day, instructors may naturally transfer these sorts of skills through their interpersonal and student-centered educational interactions. Adult-student interactions in the context of SEL are facilitated by a number of elements, including positive student-teacher relationships, the chance for teachers to model social-emotional skills, and an encouragement of student engagement (Williford & Sanger Wolcott, 2015). Students' motivation in learning is increased by instructional practices that provide emotional support, opportunities for students' autonomy and voice, and mastery experiences (Rafique et al., 2023). Institutional SEL strategies often take the shape of policies, directives, or frameworks pertaining to the school environment and student support services (Meyers et al., in press). Students' behavioral, mental, and academic performance is positively impacted by positive school cultures and climates (Thapa, Cohen, Guffey, & Higgins-D'Alessandro, 2013). School leaders play a critical role in advocating policies and initiatives such as creating teams to address climate building, setting clear goals for staff and students, and modeling social and emotional competency in people.

Fair and equitable policies for discipline as well as activities to prevent bullying are more effective than approaches that only use rewards or punishments (Bear et al., 2015). Through programs like regularly planned morning meetings or advisories, which provide students a platform to engage with one another, school administrators may plan events that promote strong connections and a sense of community among students (Abid et al., 2023).

For SEL to be implemented throughout the school, it must be integrated into multi-tiered support systems. Professional assistance from psychologists, counselors, and social workers should supplement continuing educational and school-based activities. Student support specialists augment and supplement classroom-based education for children in need of early intervention or more intensive therapy, often through small-group work.

Family and community ties must be built for school-based solutions to work as effectively as possible. Community members and organizations may complement school and classroom activities by giving children additional opportunities to acquire and utilize a range of SEL skills (Catalano et al., 2004). Students may engage with peers and supportive adults in after-school activities, which also give them a platform to develop new skills and identify their own talents (Gullotta, 2015). Research indicates that after-school initiatives that prioritize social and emotional development enhance students' self-perceptions, school's sense of connectedness, positive social behaviors, grades, and achievement test scores while decreasing negative behaviors (Durlak et al., 2010).

SEL is applied outside of educational settings as well. As it starts to take root in early infancy, family and early childcare surroundings are critical (Bierman & Motamedi, 2015). Moreover, SEL may be supported in higher education contexts (Conley, 2015).

Methodology

The study investigates the relationship between SEL and student success using both quantitative and qualitative methods. Parents, teachers and students from grade 6 to grade 10 participated in the study, which was carried out at Govt. High School, Kangan Pur, a diverse urban school of District Kasur, Punjab, Pakistan. In order to offer readers a thorough grasp of the subject, the research strategy triangulates quantitative data with qualitative insights through the use of surveys and interviews.

Quantitative Phase

Validated measures of academic success and known SEL frameworks served as the foundation for the development of a survey instrument. A sample of N=800 kids completed the survey, which collected data on academic success, SEL skill self-assessments, and demographics. The association between self-reported SEL abilities and academic achievement was investigated using descriptive statistics and correlation analyses (Amjad et al., 2023a,b).

Qualitative Phase

N = 40 kids, N = 20 teachers, and N = 10 parents made up the purposive sample for which semi-structured interviews were done. The purpose of the interviews was to obtain detailed information on the perceived influence of SEL on academic achievement. The interview questions centered on the ways in which SEL abilities support student involvement, academic success, and general well-being. To find recurrent themes and patterns in the qualitative data, thematic analysis was used.

Results

Quantitative Findings

Academic achievement and self-reported SEL abilities showed a statistically significant positive link (r=0.58, p<0.01), according to the quantitative study. Grade point averages and test scores were often higher for students who reported better degrees of self-awareness, self-regulation, and relationship management abilities. The quantitative analysis offers quantifiable understanding of the connection between student achievement and SEL:

Higher SEL ratings are positively correlated with better academic achievement, according to the survey results, highlighting the importance of SEL in boosting cognitive capacities and learning engagement.

The relationship between emotional intelligence and mental health is shown by the fact that students with higher SEL abilities report feeling more emotionally well-being and having lower levels of anxiety and sadness.

Self-reported social competence and SEL scores have a positive correlation, indicating that SEL aids in the development of critical social skills.

A longitudinal research involving a subset of participants allows the effects of SEL to be examined over several academic years. Finding out if SEL gains are sustainable is the goal of this investigation.

The association between possible gender and age disparities in SEL scores and student success indicators is investigated using exploratory analysis.

Additional studies look at the possible moderating and mediating effects on the link between SEL and student achievement of variables such parental engagement, school environment, and socioeconomic status.

Qualitative Findings

The qualitative analysis produced a number of important topics. The good impact of SEL skills on their academic career was constantly highlighted by the participants. Effective time and stress management has been found to require the possession of self-regulation abilities. Students also emphasized how cooperation, communication, and dispute resolution with classmates and professors were enhanced by social awareness and relationship management abilities. Teachers and parents agreed, pointing out that pupils who had good SEL abilities exhibited superior classroom motivation, conduct, and flexibility. Several themes on the significance of SEL for student success are shown by the qualitative analysis of the interviews:

Participants repeatedly underscore how SEL gives students the skills they need to properly control their emotions, which enhances attention, lowers stress levels, and improves decision-making.

Teachers see that kids who participate in SEL programs have improved interpersonal skills, which improves communication, cooperation, and conflict resolution.

As a result of SEL, students report feeling more resilient and confident, which helps them deal with obstacles better.

Teachers emphasize that kids who possess strong SEL skills are better able to adjust to a variety of learning situations, have superior problem-solving skills, and are eager to work together with their classmates.

Parents described that SEL program has positive impact on their children's self-esteem and leading them to a more positive attitude towards learning and personal growth.

The analysis shows that SEL made a holistic development approach that encompasses cognitive, emotional and social aspects of the live of students.

Discussions

The results of this mixed-methods study highlight how important social and emotional learning is for fostering student achievement. The quantitative findings support the favorable relationship between academic accomplishment and self-reported SEL abilities, pointing to a possible route for enhancing educational outcomes. The qualitative findings offer a sophisticated perspective on the ways in which SEL abilities support student involvement, interpersonal connections, and general wellbeing. The confluence of the qualitative and quantitative data emphasizes how important SEL is for fostering all-around student achievement. The qualitative findings demonstrate how SEL profoundly alters emotional control, social skills, and self-assurance. These qualitative statements are supported by the quantitative study which shows a favorable correlation between SEL scores and social competence, academic achievement, and emotional well-being (Amjad et al. 2021a,b,c)

The findings, both qualitative and quantitative, are consistent, which supports the inclusion of SEL in educational systems.

The correlations of qualitative and quantitative account highlights the comprehensive aspect of student accomplishment as SEL nurtures psychological health, social skills, and scholastic success.

Researchers, legislators and teachers may implement and analyze SEL in a more coordinated manner with the help of the combination of qualitative ideas and quantitative evidence.

Conclusion

This mixed-methods study demonstrates the complex relationship between social and emotional development and academic achievement. A thorough viewpoint is offered by the combination of quantitative and qualitative methods, highlighting the necessity for teachers and legislators to give SEL top priority in curriculum development. Schools may create a climate that supports students' entire growth and academic success by encouraging SEL skills. This study, which used a mixed methods approach, demonstrates the significance of social and emotional learning for student performance. The amalgamation of qualitative discernments and quantitative data furnishes an all-encompassing comprehension of the diverse advantages of SEL. By adopting SEL, teachers and legislators may support the development of well-rounded people who flourish intellectually, emotionally and socially in a world that is always changing.

There are certain restrictions with this study. Because surveys are self-reporting, respondent bias may be introduced and the sample may not accurately reflect all demographic groups. Future studies should look at the long-term impacts of SEL outside of the academic setting and any cultural differences in how SEL is perceived to have an influence.

The limitations of the study provide opportunities for more research: Future research might examine how cultural variables affect, how SEL's effect on student achievement is perceived. One possible direction for future research is to examine how well various teacher training techniques work when adopting SEL.

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