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Exploring Teachers' Perception and Practices About the Provision of Social-Emotional Learning at Primary Grades in Karachi, Pakistan

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Abstract: *The current study aimed to explore how teachers perceive the term Social Emotional Learning (SEL) in primary grades. This research also explored the practices of provision of SEL at schools from the lens of school heads and teachers. The research design adopted for the study was qualitative, and a purposive sampling technique was used to identify two school systems where SEL is taught formally as a subject in Karachi, Pakistan. To collect the perceptions, practices, and experiences of SEL teaching, semi-structured in-depth interviews were conducted with the teachers and school heads from these schools. Tools used for the semi-structured in-depth interviews were reviewed by the schools' educational psychologists. The findings indicate that teachers considered SEL as the driving force to ensure academic improvement and behavior management. SEL is also found to improve the physical and mental well-being of the students. The practices adopted by the school for the provision of SEL include innovative teaching methodologies, curriculum designing and monitoring, professional development, assessment, parental involvement, and integration of SEL with different subjects. Overall, the factors found associated with the SEL in primary grades are embedding SEL in school culture, involvement of all stakeholders, encouraging the school environment, and implanting SEL competencies in the SEL curriculum.*

Key Words: Social Emotional Learning, Students' Engagement, Relationship Management, Emotion Regulation, Academic Achievement

Introduction

The quest to integrate SEL into the essential framework of schools is at a crossroads in history. The global pandemic and subsequent school closures have raised awareness of the value of SEL. Countless parents learned firsthand how important social relationships are for their children, how difficult it is to inspire them, what the results are if they fail to self-regulate, and a variety of other hard-learned truths. Parents may question, for example, how to increase social point of view among siblings, what kind of targets support higher motivation, and how to improve their children's capacity to stay on task. On the other hand, the greater respect and importance attached to SEL has resulted in a misunderstanding of what it is and is not.

Seeing SEL in the Light of Literature

Students of all ages can benefit from SEL (Jones et al., 2012), an approach that teaches them to better understand and express their own emotions as well as those of others (Brackett et al., 2016). To put it another way, these learned behaviors are used to help students make healthy, responsible decisions (Karim et al., 2004), establish frameworks to attain their goals, and build strong relationships with others

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(Bandura, [1977](#)). An important part of SEL is the development of prosocial competencies, such as the ability to understand one's emotions (Kickbush, [2012](#)), cultivate compassion for others (Etikan, [2016](#)), build meaningful connections, and make beneficial and responsible decisions (Schonertn- Reichl, et al., [2016](#)). In particular, children's ability to process, comprehend, and think about emotional and social information is linked to their social conduct (Bierman et al., [2015](#); Brackett et al., [2016](#)). Also connected with social competence is self-regulation, notably the ability to focus one's attention and control one's impulses (Bronfenbrenner, [1979](#); Bierman et al., [2015](#)). Additionally, social-emotional learning teaches youngsters the significance of being a responsible citizen and a person of high moral character (Cristóvão et al., [2017](#)). According to Karim et al. ([2004](#)), to ensure that children become socially, emotionally, and academically competent, SEL is essential.

Historical Background of SEL

Since the dawn of organized education in Egypt, India, and Greece around 3,000 years ago, schools have prioritized the socialization of students (Cohen, [1999](#)). Ancient Greek education emphasized the importance of developing one's self-awareness and that of others as a worthwhile educational pursuit. The guiding principle of academic life was "Know thyself," which was engraved on the walls. Regarding the concept of "self," education has changed dramatically throughout time, but one thing that hasn't: schooling has to be a learning experience for both students and teachers.

Schools' pedagogical content was often influenced by the dominant religious teachings and the need to educate children about societal expectations of the period. We've only recently begun to realize the need to educate children and adults about the interpersonal aspects of life in the classroom (Bierman et al., [2015](#)).

It's been the convergence of psychological, pedagogical, and societal influences in recent decades that's laid the groundwork for present social-emotional education theory, practice, and research. The "Stanford-Binet Test of Intelligence," which was based on Dr. Binet's Parisian test, helped to solidify the idea that intelligence was mostly comprised of verbal and mathematical ability in the early twentieth century. This erroneous view of intelligence has had a long-lasting impact on educational policy. It is not uncommon for school administrators in the United States to be graded and compensated depending on their pupils' reading and math performance. Researchers Howard Gardner (1983) and Robert Sternberg (1997) have made substantial contributions to educators' understanding of intellectual ability and functioning over the last two decades. As a basis of studies and writings that show that language and numerical capabilities are not the only factors that lead to success in life, contentment, and the potential to be a lifelong learner, educators and schools now have a wider array of instructional goals and corresponding pedagogy.

Instructors and experimental psychologists in the United States formed their first formal alliance under the leadership of psychologist Witmer in 1909. As a mental health professional and educator, Witmer founded a long-standing culture of learning from one another to support students' healthy development and learning.

Simultaneously, Sigmund Freud (Freud, [1964](#)) in Europe began to consider the function of emotions in children's learning and education. Sigmund Freud and his colleagues worried about how they could apply psychoanalytic theories to the education of students on their own! —from the very beginning of psychoanalysis. These gatherings sparked a discussion on how to incorporate psychoanalytic principles into early childhood education (Cohen, [1999](#)). Modern neuroscience research has confirmed many of Sigmund Freud's theories on the influence of conscious and unconscious emotions on cognition, learning, and behavior (Sylwester, [2000](#); Shonkoff et al., [2000](#))

Starting with the constructivist John Dewey (1896), there has been an emerging tradition of educational thought that emphasizes the importance of educating all children (not just the wealthy and privileged male minority) so that they can acquire skills, knowledge, i-e wisdom, and belief systems necessary to be effective citizens. In the wake of Dewey and subsequent generations of progressive educators, the necessity to educate the "whole child" was emphasized.

Teaching and learning take on emotional elements. SEL philosophy and practice have been formed in part by educational discoveries and research, which emphasized the significance of educating and developing children as a whole.

Theory of Action by Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL)

SEL is considered an important component of education and intellectual progress. When Roger P. Weissberg took over as director of CASEL, the organization relocated from Yale to the University of Illinois at Chicago. For this reason, in 2001, the board changed the name of the organization to CASEL to include academics in the discussion. Weissberg rose through the ranks at CASEL to become its president and CEO, a position he holds to this day. According to the framework of the fundamentals of SEL shared (CASEL, 2013), five aspects are considered the core interrelated competencies of the SEL. These include self-awareness, social awareness, self-management, responsible decision-making, and relationship skills. It is the process by which individuals of any age gain and apply the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to develop positive identity and relationships, learn how to manage emotions, attain goals, empathize with others, develop and sustain supportive relationships, and make responsible and caring decisions (CASEL, 2013).

SEL in Schools in Pakistan

Schools are social places in which students learn. Students learn through working together with their teachers and classmates, as well as with the help of their caregivers. Students' learning and academic progress can be aided or hindered by their emotions. Sadly, SELs are still not formally taught in Pakistani institutions or at home by parents (Rashid, 2010). As a result of this educational gap, students are unable to recognize and manage their emotions, which leads them to difficulty in setting their goals, establishing and managing their relationships with self and others, and eventually affect their personal and professional growth (CASEL, 2013; Rashid, 2010). In Pakistani culture, these skills are considered vital to success (Rashid, 2010). These critical qualities are expected to be developed by children in order for them to succeed in school and in the community. Children, on the other hand, are not formally taught these skills despite the fact that they are expected to exhibit them. Parents want their children to learn these competencies in school, but schools lack the tools to do so and thus expect this to be taught at home.

Due to a lack of expertise in the field, low levels of competence in program execution, limited financial input, and incompetent governance monitoring and supervision, SEL programs have been extensively disregarded in Pakistan's educational system (Memon, 2007). There are considerable distinctions between private and public schools in Pakistan's educational system. In Pakistan, public schools are striving to provide children with basic educational opportunities. They do not have the same resources as private schools when it comes to implementing SEL programs. ("Education in Pakistan," Government of Pakistan, 2002), elementary (Kindergarten to 5th grade) and middle (6th to 9th grade) school environments are considered preparatory schools for four years of secondary education (10th to 12th grade). Secondary schooling is often sought as a means of developing the requisite profile for admission to their selected college. The secondary school external exams are the International Cambridge Ordinary (O Level) and Advanced level exams, which are based on the British education system (A-Level). In fact, Pakistani education has been geared at preparing students for the next stage (Memon, 2007).

Parents and students select schools primarily on the school's exam scores, and as a result, excellence at the elementary level is sometimes overlooked. When it comes to choosing instructors or developing a curriculum, social-emotional competencies are not taken into account (Ministry of Education, 2014; Rashid, 2010). As a result, the goal of education has shifted from learning and personal growth to maintaining a continuous record of secondary school grades (Saeed et al., 2002). The pressure of increased academic standards has amplified the amount of stress, despair, and anxiety children face at a young age because a student's progress is only assessed by academics (Yousoff et al., 2013). This paradigm of success



Also, it ignores the fact that not every student learns and performs in the same way. As a result, pupils in the average and below average range suffer from peer pressure and instructor expectations, leading to disappointment and mental health problems (Shaikh et al., 2004). Schools place little focus on teaching children techniques and resources to deal with the stress that this competitive climate brings. Several mental health disorders (e.g., anxiety and depression) often go untreated since there is no established support for children to manage these feelings. This leads to bigger mental health-related issues later in life (Karim et al., 2004).

As a result, Pakistan's curriculum recognizes the need for an SEL program. Due to a lack of resources committed to education, education planners have stated that the country's educational system fails to meet the requirements of disseminating education for the development and enhancement of social skills among children in schools (Rashid, 2010). As a result, student bodies are still at a disadvantage when it comes to developing social and emotional skills.

Methodology

The research design used for the study was qualitative, as the research questions aimed to explore the phenomenon and its association with the particular context. The research strategy used in the study was phenomenology. The research philosophy used for the study was interpretivism, as interpretivism is considered the conclusive way of understanding social reality. It also integrates human interest into the study. Social constructivism was the research paradigm that understood the truth that is socially constructed and ever-changing. The ontology or the reality is the importance of SEL in schools in primary grades, whereas the epistemology is how SEL is incorporated in the lessons in the schools in primary grades, how the school teachers perceive it, and what benefits students think they get due to the provision of SEL. The inductive research approach is used because the purpose of the research was to explore and construct new knowledge.

The two private school systems in Karachi, Pakistan, were chosen as the sites for data collecting. School AKA (pseudonym) was a Karachi-based O and A Level school system that was founded 41 years ago and currently has 11 campuses. SEL is an integral aspect of the school's pedagogy and is taught to students from grade one to grade eight. As an O Level school system, School BKA (Pseudo name) was founded thirty years ago, and SEL is part of their school mission. Students' SEL is supported by a comprehensive life skills curriculum taught once a week for about 40 minutes. The availability of data was the major factor in the selection of these locations. Teachers at both of these schools were already implementing SEL with their pupils, so it's safe to anticipate that their experiences will yield a wealth of information for future research.

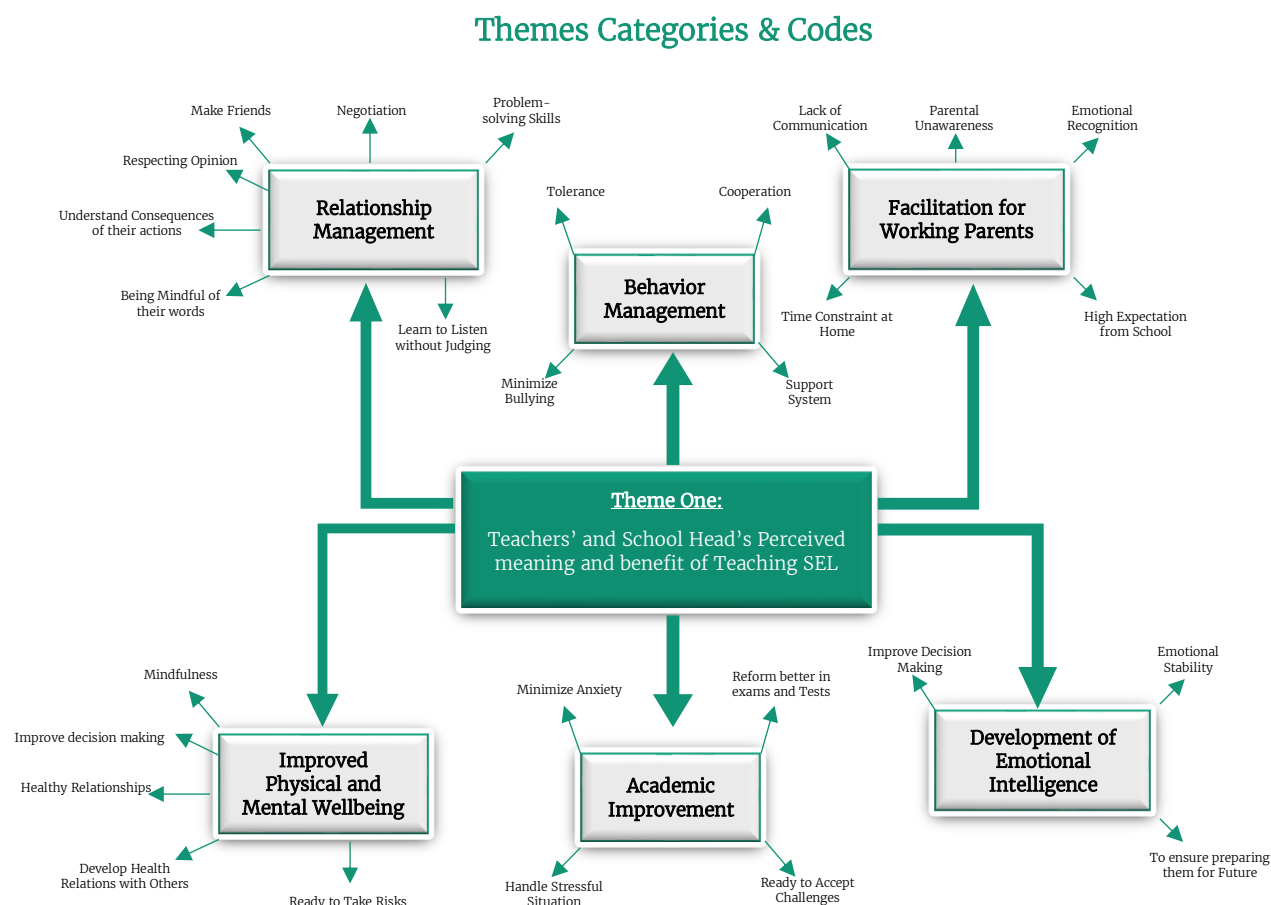
Purposive sampling is the identification and selection of individuals or groups of individuals who are proficient and well-informed in the area of research, along with their availability and willingness to participate (Etikan, 2016). Considering this, it was decided to carry out the research work based on this sampling technique. A total of twenty-five participants (including twenty primary school teachers and five primary school principals) participated in this study. Initially, the list of teachers from both school systems was 350 teachers were received. It was narrowed down to the teachers who are teaching primary grades only. The list was narrowed down to teachers who have a minimum of 3-5 years of teaching experience. Semi-structured, in-depth interviews were conducted with twenty teachers to investigate teachers' perceptions of the provision of social-emotional learning to students in primary grades in school. The practices followed by the teachers were also explored through the interview guide. Five principals from both school systems with a minimum of 5 years of experience at the same school were taken as the research participants. Two focus groups, each with five students, were also conducted with students of Grade V. Both the focus groups were conducted from different schools. The curriculum used to teach SEL to the students, in-house published books used by the students, and lesson plans made by the teachers to teach SEL were the documents used to analyze and collect the data.

Findings and Discussion

Theme One: Teachers' and School Heads' Perceived Benefits of SEL

Figure 1

Theme 1 (Theme, Categories & Codes)



The perceived meaning of SEL

The findings of the data analysis show that the school heads and teachers think social-emotional learning is all about an individual's understanding of their emotions, becoming socially aware, and recognizing what triggers some of the emotions inside them. So it basically develops the soft skills, which is very important. They think nowadays, it's really important to be emotionally intelligent. So, it makes the student aware of themselves and their emotions. It also makes them empathetic and improves their decision-making. According to the analysis, the SEL facilitates students in building positive relationships with others, supports them in learning the strategies to cope with their feelings, and helps them make the right choices for themselves.

To Facilitate Working Parents

According to the analysis of the data, the parental community schools cater to working parents, and it is difficult for them to give time to their children for SEL. Schools now consider it as the primary responsibility to ensure SEL in school. Happiness is achieved through SEL in school. One of the teachers shared, "I think that it (SEL) has been given a fancy name to the things that are the values that we all were brought up with." But keeping in mind the past life and keeping in mind that everybody's so busy, the parents, it's considered very important for the teachers to integrate social and emotional learning with the curriculum. Working mothers have very little time to bring everything together. Unawareness of some of the young parents, a neutral family system where experienced grandparents are not available, kids spending a long time with screen, and kids brought up by uneducated un, trained maids and servants are some of the measure reasons considered very important for SEL provision. Parents' personal mental health and



sometimes unsuccessful stress management and work-life balance also forced schools to be competent enough to incorporate SEL every day in the classrooms.

Development of Emotional Intelligence

Emotional intelligence, or EQ, is considered a ladder toward success and is also seen in the school's mission statement. Data analysis reveals that to achieve this goal, SEL is taught formally in school from Grade I. One of the teachers shared that *nowadays, employers look for emotional intelligence.* SEL really helps students to be emotionally intelligent and empathetic. EQ is also considered important for success in one's personal life. Through data analysis, it can be said that SEL is used as a tool to develop emotion recognition and emotional stability in students. Unanimously, teachers and school heads mentioned in the interview that students learn how to understand their emotions and the emotions of others, cope up to deal with these emotions and learn to accept others the way they are without forcing them to change. In other words, SEL develops tolerance and empathy, which are key fundamentals of emotional quotient.

To Ensure Behaviour Management

School playgrounds are considered vulnerable to bullying. As per the data analysis, the school is addressing this issue through SEL teaching. One of the school heads mentioned, *"Sometimes when a new student comes in, he's facing some adjustment problems. We have to provide that support through SEL."* Schools have to see that he's not being bullied. He's not targeted. It is being observed by the school that there are children who are short-sighted or who have a darker complexion, face some sort of bullying in the playground, or maybe a fat child as body shaming. So, being proactive, they constantly provide support and develop empathy by being role models and teaching them the right behavior through SEL. Unanimously, the school heads and teachers think that at primary grades, it is necessary to focus on SEL as the students are in the process of developing their habits, which they will follow for the rest of their lives. It was also highlighted that some preconceived notions that students carry from home or the environment can easily be corrected through SEL at an early age. One of the teachers mentioned that, *Through SEL, they (students) develop the habit of seeking and giving support.* They learn how to make friends. They are not socially grown up; they need to learn how to mingle up and make friends through SEL."

To Ensure Academic Improvement

Analysis of the findings unveils that the SEL facilitates students in performing better in school. It increases their focus and improves their academic performance. It is highlighted that when students are not able to control their emotions and are entangled in negative thoughts, they cannot focus on their academics. Once they know how to deal with their own emotions and thoughts, they can focus on their assigned tasks properly.

Improved Mental and Physical Wellbeing:

For any type of new learning, the mental and physical capacity to understand and experience learning is considered very important. The mental and physical well-being of the students helps the teachers and adults develop healthy relationships with the students that promote confidence, resilience, and a positive learning environment required in any classroom. According to the teachers' responses, they ensure that students get multiple opportunities to express their feelings and emotions during SEL teaching. Mindfulness is a regular feature of the school. Students are engaged in mindful activities like mindful yoga, meditation, nature walking, breathing, mindful listening, muscle relaxation, and mindful walking. Teachers acknowledged the importance of providing mindful exposure to the students through these activities, which help students improve their mental and physical health. According to one of the teachers, *students carry these activities with them in society, which helps them deal with difficult situations in life.*

To Facilitate Relationship Management

The findings of the analysis show that SEL teaching helps students develop better relationships with their friends and teachers. It is taught to the students formally from the beginning to be mindful of their words and their body language. Unanimously, the school heads and teachers think self-awareness is the key to better relationship management. Students who are aware of their own self and emotions can have a better understanding of social awareness. Students are also taught the skill of negotiation and disagreeing in an

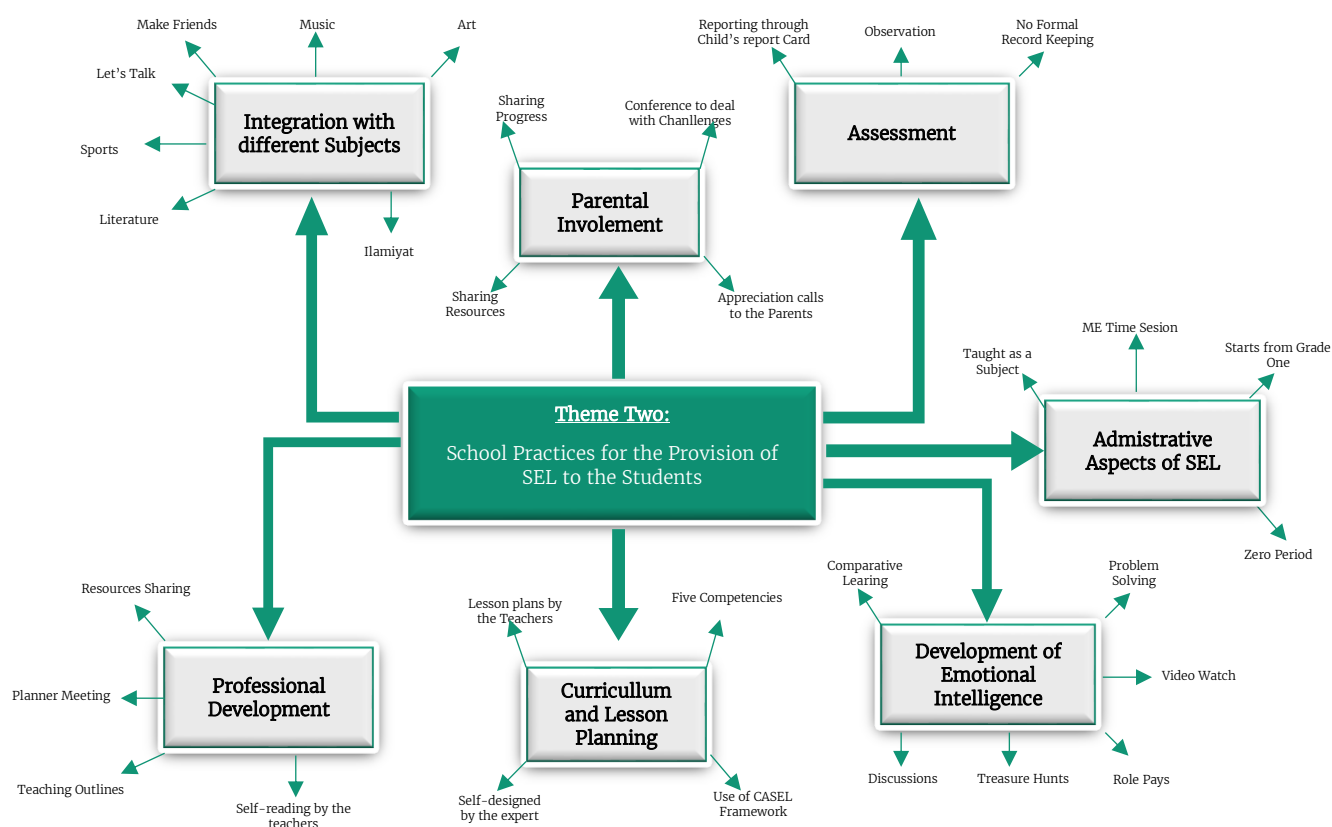
agreeable manner. These important skills are taught through age-appropriate problem-solving tasks, situation-based classroom-related scenarios, and by making them accountable for their own actions. The habit of listening and listening without judging is demonstrated by the teachers and school heads. Listening skills are developed through simple storytelling sessions and telephone games at early grades and enhanced through involving students in different discussions, debates, and treasure hunts.

Theme Two: School Practices for the Provision of SEL to the students

Figure 2

Theme 2 (Theme, Categories & Codes)

Themes Categories & Codes



Administrative Aspects

Through the semi-structured in-depth interviews with teachers and school heads, data reports that formal teaching of SEL at both schools begins from Grade I. In School AKA, it is taught as a subject till Grade III, and after that, it is integrated with different subjects till Grade VIII. However, at school BKA, SEL teaching begins as a subject in Grade I and continues till Grade VIII. Here, SEL is integrated too with different subjects along with subject teaching till Grade VII. The frequency of the teaching is 40 minutes per week, which is one period per week.

The terminology of ME time sessions and zero period sessions was also heard a lot during the interviews. These sessions are conducted by the school heads and other admins for the students of different grade levels. One of the school heads shared that *whenever any teacher is absent, I go as a substitute teacher and conduct ME time sessions.* These sessions are focused sessions where the different SEL competencies are taught to the students. It is also considered very helpful in developing good relations with the students. These are also called let's talk time, where students are given an opportunity, and adults are active listeners. Analysis of the data indicates that focused teaching for SEL is done at both schools, and the topics done during the zero period, ME time, SEL classes, and let's talk are all that enhance SEL competencies.



Integration of SEL with Other Subjects

SEL in the school also integrates with other subjects and is taught as a core subject. Major integration of SEL is done in Arts and Music. Different mindful activities are conducted as a transition between two periods. MOVE is a regular segment that each teacher conducts before starting a lesson by allowing students to leave their seats and move their bodies for 2 – 3 minutes. MOVE sessions are considered helpful in increasing concentration span, reducing anxiety, and developing fun and engaging for the students. In art, all five fundamentals of the CASEL framework are divided monthly by SEL Competency. A discussion is held at the beginning, and students express their thoughts through sketching, drawing, or painting. Mindful yoga is incorporated into sports classes to develop calmness and increase self-awareness.

Teaching Methodology for SEL

The findings of the data analysis reveal that both the research sites and the participant schools follow the same method of teaching SEL. Student-centered teaching is adopted for SEL and includes role plays, discussions, debates, treasure hunts, video watching, cooperative learning games, and problem-solving scenarios. Findings of the data received also indicate the active involvement of the school heads in providing SEL to the students. Their involvement is witnessed in two ways, and the first one is their facilitation in assuring meaningful SEL teaching in the classroom by conducting planner meetings and reviewing lesson plans. Before conducting any lesson as a regular practice, heads conduct the planner meetings. Schools do provide support if they find any particular topic that is difficult to handle. The second way of involvement is the school heads' teaching of SEL to the students. While discussing the role of the school head, one of the school heads shared, *“As a leader of the school. I'm not being confined to the office, and I do all the official and admin work. I'm 100% involved in all the SEL learning that is taking place.”*

SEL Curriculum and Lesson Planning

There are many known SEL curricula available in the market that are designed by professionals who have studied the subject, the needs of the students, and the context in which the curriculum has to be followed. Both the schools did not find the need to purchase available international SEL curricula. One of the school's heads mentioned that *the school has designed its own curriculum while keeping in mind the needs of the students.* The curriculum department of the school is responsible for sharing the broad outline, and teachers make their own planners. Educators in the curriculum department know the students, their needs, and the context of their work. While answering the question of why the school did not prefer to adopt any SEL available curriculum and preferred to make their own, the curriculum head mentioned that *“our self-designed curriculum is more relatable and applicable in real life for our students. It is revised as needed.”* This need-based modification is done by the curriculum heads modifying the curriculum itself and by providing ownership of the curriculum to the teachers

Professional Development for SEL

Professional development is the process of setting goals and acquiring new abilities that assist teachers in growing and succeeding at work. It enables instructors to become more effective educators by helping them design lessons that are relevant and appropriate to today's pupils. To sum up, in the analysis of the professional development for SEL teaching, the teachers and school heads unanimously acknowledged the need for professional development and accepted that there is a lot of room for improvement in this area. All of them agreed that for teaching SEL to students, the teachers need to be emotionally strong and competent enough to ensure that their emotions are not divulged while teaching. Findings also revealed that there is no training provided to teachers and no criteria for teaching this subject. This subject is preferably given to the homeroom teachers to teach but is also given to any teacher to balance her workload.

Assessment of SEL Teaching

Overall, the analysis reveals that no method is used for SEL evaluation except for observation. There is no checklist available with the teachers to document their observations, and there is no training given to the teachers to prepare observation checklists or guidelines on what to observe and how to observe. However,

at the end of the term, there are a few indicators mentioned, and students are only given feedback on them. Analysis of findings also unveils that due to this missing piece, some of the SEL teaching is impacted, and students and parents do not give due importance to this subject.

Parental Involvement for SEL

The schools have a culture of parental involvement, an environment in which the parents are warmly welcomed and they are not considered intruders. They are invited to different school events and are made fully aware of the school curriculum. Students' work is also displayed and shared with the parents. A very meaningful activity that is part of the SEL is "Call a parent." Every day during the school rounds, the heads catch the students being good, like helping others, being kind to school resources or people, greeting, and being problem solvers. These students' parents are called by the school principal and appreciate them and their children, which motivates them to do more good things. In terms of challenging behavior or changes in behavior observed, parents are called for a conference to take on board to solve the problems.

Conclusion

Based on the findings, the following conclusions were drawn. SEL develops students' mental and physical well-being and facilitates their enhancing their relationships with others at school and at home. It develops empathy and helps them manage behavior in and outside the classroom, decreases bullying, and enhances the emotional intelligence of students. The outcome of SEL teaching is witnessed through the improvement in students' academic performances, too. This is similar to what Karim et al. (2004), Bierman & Motamedi (2015), and Brackett, Elbertson, & Rivers (2016) reported in their assessment of the benefits of teaching SEL to the students.

The need for SEL assessment is also considered the key component in exploring whether or not students learned the taught skills. These findings are similar to Carmel Cefai et al. (2014), Ng Ching Yee & Yeo Kee Jiar (2019), Natasha Sohail Barlas, Jeevita Sidhu & Chieh Li (2021). It is also emphasized by the teachers and heads that SEL has to be integrated with different subjects along with individual SEL teaching. The best-recommended subjects for integrating SEL are literature, art, music, and movement, as well as Islamiyat (studying religion). It is also highlighted that a positive school environment is conducive to SEL teaching. It is considered mandatory for the students to see adults doing what they are preaching. These findings are similar to Jones & Bouffard (2012) and Mahoney, Weissberg, & Greenberg (2020)

The important factors that have emerged from the study are embedding SEL in school culture, involving all stakeholders, encouraging the school environment, and implanting SEL competencies in the SEL curriculum. The most important factor that has emerged through the findings is the involvement of all the stakeholders in teaching SEL. SEL teaching cannot depend only on the teachers. It is analyzed that school heads, coordinators, teachers, and parents are equally involved in the SEL of the students. It is also emphasized that human social-emotional support (SES) is needed by school heads, coordinators, teachers, and parents for SEL teaching. As the driving force behind SEL in schools and classrooms, teachers' personal social-emotional competence has a substantial impact on their student's well-being and success in the classroom, and this finding was also backed by Kimberly in 2017. It is the school's responsibility to ensure the emotional stability of all the teachers by providing SES to them, engaging them in fun-filled, meaningful activities, appreciating them, and developing the habit of being grateful to them. These findings are also supported by Karen Aldrup, Bastian Carstensen, Michaela M. Köller, and Uta Klusmann (2020).

Research Limitation

The study is limited to two private school systems where SEL has been taught as a subject for more than fifteen years. Three junior school campuses were selected from each school system to collect the data. The sample size was small, so the research could not be generalized.



Recommendations

Recommendations for the School Heads

- SEL teaching should be made mandatory in all schools for primary grades for the holistic development of the children to ensure positive and successful citizens in the future.
- Professional Development for the teachers is to be ensured before teaching SEL to the students. This pre-service program should include theory, research, and practical application of SEL in the classroom.
- Funding and resources to be ensured for teachers' training and other resource material.
- A school-based curriculum is to be designed with the context kept in mind. The curriculum must address all the five fundamentals of SEL recommended by the CASEL Framework.
- Support for teachers' social and emotional stability is to be ensured by developing a happy and conducive learning environment for SEL teaching.
- The role of the school head as an instructional leader is to be ensured. It is recommended that school heads should involve themselves in SEL teaching to give this subject its essential priority.

Recommendations for the Teachers

- Teachers should ensure creativity while planning and executing SEL lessons. Collaborative approach and opportunities for cooperative learning to be ensured. Students should be exposed to experiential learning during SEL.
- Integration of SEL with different subjects is to be ensured. It should be part of the classroom culture rather than a period affair. Students follow what they see, not what they are told to do.
- When implementing SEL in the classrooms, teachers must take into account the country's actual conditions and limitations. Certain components of the SEL would need to be modified to meet the specific needs of the students.
- Teachers should regularly reflect on their SEL lessons to ensure students' motivation throughout the lesson.
- Teachers should also ensure the proper assessment for SEL teaching, which could be in the form of checklists with proper rubrics for all the skills taught.
- Teachers should involve parents by keeping them abreast about the SEL teaching. Parents are to be facilitated in dealing with challenging behaviors and to be updated if any red flags are found.

Recommendations for the Policy Makers

- SEL curriculum to be developed on the state level, keeping in mind the need and context of the society to ensure students are fully prepared for a productive and meaningful career
- SEL teaching is to be ensured in all public and private schools to empower students and prepare them for real-life challenges.
- In teacher education, a separate module to teach SEL needs to be introduced and made mandatory. Teachers should be prepared to teach this subject, which they were never taught formally.
- Assessment policy for the SEL to be looked into.

Recommendations for the Future Research

- This study explored the factors that are associated with SEL at the primary level. Further studies can be conducted to explore the factors associated with SEL at the secondary level.
- This study focused on the provision of SEL and its perceived benefits, and further study can be conducted to check the impact of SEL teaching on students' academic performance and mental health.
- This study may have extended to other schools and students and teachers from public and private schools to be involved during data collection to get the holistic picture of SEL teaching in Pakistan.
- Action research can be conducted on different SEL curricula like PATHS, Lions Quest, and Strong Kids to check the adaptability of this curriculum in the Pakistani context.
- Consider conducting research on policy regarding including SEL in public school curricula.

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