

Role of Socio-Emotional Learning in Developing the Personality of Students

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ABSTRACT

Socio-emotional learning (SEL) is the process through which all young people and adults acquire and apply the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to develop healthy identities, manage emotions and achieve personal and collective goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain supportive relationships, and make responsible and caring decisions. These are the skills and are also known as non-cognitive/ soft skills or life skills. It is an integral part of education and personality development. Besides cognitive abilities, emotions are critical to learning. This paper attempts to highlight the role of SEL in developing the personality of students. CASEL identified 5 core competencies of SEL: Self Awareness, Social Awareness, Self Management, Relationship Skills, Responsible Decision Making. Person with SEL understands and respects the perspective of others and analyses the situation before taking any action. Many researches have indicated that well planned and well implemented SEL programming can positively affect a broad range of student's social health, behaviour and academic outcomes. These kinds of skills must be developed in the students and the schools should provide an equitable learning environment which helps them to learn through teaching and practising social, emotional and cognitive skills.

Keywords : Emotional Skills, Competencies, Personality, Decision Making, Awareness

Introduction:

Holistic development of the personality of an individual is the aim of education. In order to achieve this aim, teaching and learning process plays a significant role by which mental, physical, spiritual, moral, emotional and social development can be carried out in a very effective manner. Learning is the modification of behaviour. According to Mahatma Gandhi; for overall development of a personality, there should be balance and coordination among Head, Heart and Hand (3H) of that person. Cognitive processes such as decision making are affected by emotions (Barrett and others 2007). Together emotion and cognition contribute to attentional processes, decision making and learning (Cacioppo & Berntson 1999). Children who are socially competent are better adjusted and able to accept diversity, change and new forms of learning. Young children who exhibit healthy social emotional and behavioral adjustment are more likely to have good

academic performance in elementary school (Cohen and others 2005; Zero to Three 2004). Therefore Socio-Emotional Learning plays an important role in student's personality development.

Socio-Emotional Learning(SEL):

It is the person's ability to be aware of themselves and the feelings of others as well. SEL is the process of developing and using social and emotional skills. It is a set of social, emotional, behavioral and character skills that support success in school, the workplace relationships and the community. According to CASEL(Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning)- "SEL is the process through which children and adults identify and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships and make responsible decisions." SEL makes students competent enough

to be adaptive, responsive to the situation in an appropriate manner and helps them to seek opportunity in their community or environment. Therefore Socio- Emotional skill is crucial for student's development. These skills affect academic learning, they are often considered as soft skills or personal attributes. Elias & Colleagues suggested that SEL comprises a set of competencies. Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL) 2005 identified five core competencies of SEL-

Self Awareness:

The ability to understand one's own emotions, thoughts and values. Recognition of our own emotions and how they impact our behaviour; acknowledging our strength and weaknesses to better gain confidence in our abilities. It includes identifying emotions, accurate self perception, self efficacy, integration of personal and social identities.

Social Awareness:

The ability to view situations from another perspective, respect the social and cultural norms of others and appreciate the diversity. To act with empathy and in an ethical manner within your home, school and community.

Self Management:

It is the set of skills that includes self motivation, goal setting, personal organization, self discipline, impulse control and use of strategies for coping with stress. It helps us to take control and ownership of our thoughts, emotions and actions in various situations as well as setting and working towards a goal.

Relationship Skills:

It is the ability to build and maintain healthy relationships with people from a diverse range of backgrounds. This competency focuses on collaborating with others, teamwork, listening to and being able to communicate with others peacefully, resolving conflict if arises.

Responsible Decision Making :

The ability to make choices that consider the well-being of oneself and others. Choosing how to act or respond to a situation based on learned

behaviours. It includes self reflection , analysing situations, being responsible and problem solving.

Durlak, Weissberg, Dymnicki, Taylor & Schellinger (2011) described SEL as the ability to-

- Recognize and manage emotions.
- Set and achieve positive goals.
- Appreciate the perspective of others.
- Establish and maintain positive relationships.
- Make responsible decisions.
- Handle interpersonal situations

Jones, Bailey, Brush & Kahn (2018) identified three domains of SEL -

- **Cognitive Regulation** : Attention control, inhibitory control, working memory & planning and cognitive flexibility.
- **Emotional Processes** : Emotion knowledge and expression, emotion and behaviour regulation and empathy or perspective taking
- **Social or Interpersonal Skills** : Understanding social cues, conflict resolution and Social behaviour.

Importance of Socio-Emotional Learning:

It is just as important as learning, reading or math. This learning process is most effective when it begins early and continues through High school. Socio-Emotional skills are important for success in school, work and life. With SEL students learn to manage their own emotions and behaviours, have empathy for others and solve problems effectively, make responsible decisions and maintain healthy relationships. Students learn to recognise what's happening inside them and to be aware of their emotions which helps them deal with strong emotions and impulsive behaviours. It helps them think and analyse the situation before acting. Students learn to identify other's emotions and perspectives which helps them to empathies and show compassion no matter who they are or what their background is. Students learn to solve their problems in peaceful ways and communicate assertively about what they need or want. This helps them get along with other students.

When students learn to make responsible decisions about their life and their future things can turn out better. Research shows that SEL makes a difference. Students who participate in SEL do better academically, have improved attitude and behaviour and act in delinquent or disruptive ways less often. In the United States, students with strong Socio-Emotional competence are twice as likely to earn a College degree and nearly 50% more likely to graduate from high school and have a full time job by age 25. Students who are socially and emotionally competent have more friends; this means they are more likely to feel connected with school and do well and less likely to be left out or bullied. By participating in SEL students learn the skills to succeed in every face of school and the rest of their lives. Portela-Pino, I., Alvarinas-Villaverde, M. & Pino-Juste, M. (2021) studied Socio-Emotional Skills as Predictors of Performance of Students : Differences by Gender and found that it has an important influence on the academic performance of students. Decision-making appeared to be the most important variable in student's academic performance. These findings indicate the importance of SEL which can be developed by implementing effective and research based SEL Programs.

Implementation of SEL Programs:

The National Commission on Social, Emotional, and Academic Development (2019) identifies the following “three essential elements” for supporting SEL:

1. Establishing safe, relationship based, and equitable learning environments.
2. Teaching and practicing social, emotional, and cognitive skills.
3. Embedding social, emotional, and cognitive skills into academic learning.

Research shows that well-implemented, evidence-based socio-emotional learning programs are the most effective way to promote student's healthy socio-emotional development, increase academic performance, and support young people's success and well-being in school. Durlak et.al (2011) found that the social and emotional learning programs

also reduced aggression and emotional distress among students, increased helping behaviour in school and improved positive attitude towards self and others. Meta-analysis (more than 700 studies) of SEL Programs (2008) included school, family, and community interventions designed to promote social and emotional skills in children and adolescents between the ages of 5 and 18, which was divided into three main areas: (a) school-based interventions, (b) after-school programs, and (c) programs for families. The results of the school-based research, which included 207 studies of programs involving 288,000 students showed that -

- 9% decrease in conduct problems, such as classroom misbehaviour and aggression.
- 10% decrease in emotional distress, such as anxiety and depression.
- 9% improvement in attitudes about self, others and school.
- 23% improvement in social and emotional skills.
- 9% improvement in school and classroom behaviour.
- 11% improvement in achievement test scores.

Programs and interventions characterized as “S.A.F.E.” achieved significant gains across all six outcome areas. S.A.F.E. programs and interventions:

- Use a **Sequenced** set of activities to develop SE skills in a step-by-step fashion.
- Use **Active** forms of learning, such as role-plays and behavioural rehearsal that provide students with opportunities to practice SE skills.
- **Focus** attention on SEL, with at least eight sessions devoted to SE skill development.
- **Explicitly** target particular SE skills for development, with skills identified in the lesson's learning objectives.

Schools that want to develop socio-emotional skills in their students should focus on not only what skills they are teaching but also how they are teaching them. Several well-designed studies have documented the positive effects of SEL programming on students

of diverse backgrounds, from preschool to high school, in urban, suburban, and rural settings. This research indicates that well-planned and well-implemented SEL programming can positively affect a broad range of student social, health, behavioral, and academic outcomes.

Specific curriculum on socio-emotional learning can be used or teachers can integrate socio-emotional learning into the learning environment side by side with academic curriculum. There are some strategies that can help the teachers to develop socio-emotional skills in their students during the teaching learning process.

- Help students identify their self-concept.
- Introduce positive actions for body and mind.
- Teach students to manage their feelings and their resources.
- Teach students to face the truth
- Teach empathy
- Help students practice self-improvement strategies.
- Review all aspects of Socio-Emotional competency whether developed or not.

Conclusion:

People with strong socio-emotional skills are better equipped to manage their emotions in a social setting, build positive relationships, make informed decisions, able to cope with everyday challenges and benefits academically, professionally and socially. Socio-emotional learning is ongoing and foundational which aims to support the students to learn these skills, to practice them in a safe environment and then to be able to apply them in different contexts across their life. SEL plays a fundamental role in developing the personality of students. This learning process is most effective when it begins early and continues through high school. These kinds of skills should be developed in the students by adopting different strategies or through SEL Programs in the school.



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