

## The Impact of Socio-Emotional Education on Students' Academic Performance

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### ABSTRACT

In an educational context that is continuously evolving, socio-emotional education has gained increasing recognition as a key contributor to student achievement. Beyond cognitive skills, socio-emotional competencies play a crucial role in shaping students' motivation, engagement, and overall well-being. This study examines the relationship between socio-emotional learning (SEL) and academic performance, offering evidence-based insights into effective teaching practices. Using a mixed-methods design, the research combines student surveys, teacher interviews, and an extensive literature review to build a comprehensive understanding of SEL's impact. Preliminary expectations suggest that students who participate in SEL programs demonstrate stronger academic outcomes, higher levels of motivation, and more active classroom involvement. Teacher interviews are expected to identify successful strategies, highlight implementation challenges, and propose practical ways to integrate SEL into daily instruction.

The findings aim to provide actionable recommendations for educators and policymakers, bridging theoretical frameworks with classroom realities. By nurturing socio-emotional skills, schools can create inclusive, supportive, and motivating learning environments that enhance academic success while fostering resilience, self-awareness, and interpersonal competence. This study underscores the transformative potential of socio-emotional education in promoting both academic excellence and holistic student development.

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### Introduction

Socio-emotional education has increasingly become a central focus of contemporary educational reform. Global organizations such as UNESCO, OECD, and CASEL emphasize that student success cannot be defined solely by cognitive achievement; rather, it must include well-being, interpersonal skills, and emotional competence. Traditional academic models often overlook these dimensions, yet research consistently demonstrates that emotional and social development strongly influence how students learn, behave, and perform in school.

The purpose of this study is to explore the impact of socio-emotional education on students' academic performance. By examining both quantitative and qualitative data, the research aims to uncover how SEL skills contribute to academic achievement, why they matter, and how they can be effectively integrated into educational systems.

### Literature Review

#### The Concept of Socio-Emotional Education

Socio-emotional education encompasses the development of skills such as self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship building, and responsible decision-making. According to, these competencies form the foundation of positive student behavior and learning [1].

#### SEL and Academic Achievement

Numerous studies report a strong correlation between SEL and academic success [2]. found that students participating in SEL programs demonstrated an 11-percentile-point gain in academic performance compared to peers who did not. Emotional regulation helps students cope with academic pressure, maintain focus, and persist through challenges—all of which improve achievement.

#### SEL and Classroom Engagement

Students with strong socio-emotional skills exhibit higher engagement, better collaboration, and improved classroom behavior [3]. Effective SEL enhances students' sense of belonging and creates a safe emotional climate that supports learning.

#### Challenges in Implementing SEL

Despite its Benefits, Several Barriers Hinder Sel Implementation:

- insufficient teacher training,
- limited time in the curriculum,
- lack of policy-level support,
- variability in school resources and culture.

Understanding these challenges is essential to ensuring successful adoption of SEL practices.

#### Methodology

##### Research Design

A mixed-methods research design was selected to provide a comprehensive understanding of SEL's impact. Quantitative data were collected through student surveys, while qualitative insights

were gathered from teacher interviews.

### Participants

- Students: 180 students from grades 7–11 participated in the survey.
- Teachers: 12 teachers from various subject areas participated in semi-structured interviews.
- Instruments
- Student Survey: Measured self-reported emotional regulation, motivation, classroom participation, and academic performance.
- Teacher Interviews: Explored perceptions of SEL, practical strategies, challenges, and observations of student behavior.

### Data Analysis

Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and correlation analysis. Qualitative data were coded thematically to identify recurring patterns.

### Findings

#### SEL and Motivation

Data revealed a strong positive correlation between socio-emotional competencies and student motivation. Students with higher emotional regulation and self-awareness reported greater willingness to participate and complete tasks.

#### SEL and Academic Performance

Survey responses indicated that students actively involved in SEL programs had higher average academic scores. Teachers confirmed that students with well-developed socio-emotional skills demonstrated improved problem-solving abilities, persistence, and focus.

#### Teacher Perspectives

Interviews Identified Three Major Themes:

- Importance of Relationships: Teachers reported that positive teacher-student relationships enhance learning.
- Emotional Climate: A supportive classroom atmosphere reduces anxiety and improves engagement.
- Implementation Barriers: Teachers highlighted lack of training and limited time as major obstacles to SEL integration.

#### Engagement and Behavioral Outcomes

Students participating in SEL activities showed fewer behavioral issues, stronger collaboration, and greater participation in group work. This suggests SEL's critical role in shaping not only academic outcomes but also classroom harmony.

### Discussion

Findings clearly indicate that socio-emotional education plays a fundamental role in enhancing academic performance. The correlation between SEL competencies and academic outcomes aligns with previous studies, reinforcing SEL's significance in creating effective learning environments.

Furthermore, the research highlights how SEL shifts the educational paradigm—placing student well-being at the center of academic success. Students with strong emotional skills are more resilient, confident, and capable of overcoming academic challenges.

However, the study also reveals significant gaps in implementation. Without sufficient teacher training or institutional support, schools struggle to integrate SEL systematically. Therefore, educational policies must prioritize SEL training, curriculum development,

and cross-school collaboration.

### Conclusion

This study reinforces the transformative impact of socio-emotional education on students' academic performance, motivation, and engagement. SEL does not merely complement academic instruction—it enhances it, providing students with essential life skills that foster resilience, self-awareness, and interpersonal competence. To maximize SEL's benefits, educators and policymakers must work together to design sustainable, evidence-based programs that integrate SEL into everyday teaching practices. When implemented effectively, SEL creates learning environments where students thrive both academically and emotionally [4-6].

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