The Influence of Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) on Improving Student Well-Being and Academic Achievement among Secondary School Students in Mauritius

Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) improves student well-being and academic success by promoting emotional regulation, resilience, empathy, and interpersonal skills while fostering supportive learning environments. This study examined the impact of SEL programs on students' emotional well-being, academic performance, school climate, teacher-student relationships, and peer interactions.A quasi-experimental, non-equivalent pretest-posttest design was employed with a sample of 64 lower secondary students (24 males, 40 females) from three schools in Mauritius, selected using a multi-stage sampling technique. Instruments included the Academic Achievement Test (AAT), Emotional Well-being Scale (EWS), Teacher-Student Relationships (TSR), and Student-Peer Interactions (SPI), administered during pre- and post-tests. Four hypotheses were tested using Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) at a 0.05 significance level.Findings revealed that students exposed to SEL-based teaching showed significantly greater improvements in academic achievement, emotional well-being, teacher-student relationships, and peer interactions compared to those taught using conventional methods.The study highlights the need to prioritize SEL as a core component of the curriculum, emphasizing its role in fostering balanced, inclusive, and effective education. It provides valuable insights for educators, policymakers, and researchers, encouraging the development of educational frameworks that prepare students for both academic success and real-world challenges.

Key words: Social and emotional learning,Emotional Well-being, Teacher-students relationship, Student Peer-Interaction, Academic Achievement

1 Background to the study

Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) is a transformative educational framework that integrates emotional intelligence, interpersonal skills, and responsible decision-making into academic environments. It aims to develop well-rounded individuals who are academically proficient, socially adept, and emotionally resilient. Over recent decades, SEL has gained global recognition for its holistic approach to education, with research highlighting its role in improving emotional regulation, interpersonal relationships, and academic performance (Durlak et al., 2011; Taylor et al., 2017). This study explores the implementation and impact of SEL in Mauritius Secondary School, a multicultural and diverse educational setting in Mauritius, a small island nation in the Indian Ocean.

SEL, as defined by the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL), involves acquiring and applying skills to manage emotions, set goals, build relationships, and make responsible decisions. These competencies are increasingly vital in helping students navigate complex social and academic environments. Research demonstrates that SEL programs foster self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making, leading to reduced behavioral issues, lower stress levels, and increased academic engagement (Weissberg et al., 2015). For example, Durlak et al. (2011) found that students participating in SEL programs showed an 11 percentile-point gain in academic performance compared to peers, alongside improved mental health and classroom behavior.

Despite these global findings, there is limited research on SEL's implementation in underrepresented regions like Mauritius. While Mauritius has achieved near-universal access to education, its schools face challenges such as academic pressure, bullying, and socio-emotional disparities among students (UNESCO, 2022). The education sector has embraced reforms to improve outcomes, but SEL's potential to address these issues remains underexplored. This study focuses on Mauritius Secondary School, a representative institution grappling with the diverse needs of students from varied socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds. Preliminary observations indicate that while some educators recognize SEL's value, its systematic implementation is still nascent.

The study examines how SEL can foster inclusivity, empathy, and a positive school culture in Mauritius Secondary School. Research from other contexts suggests that SEL initiatives improve school climates by promoting trust, respect, and a sense of belonging (Cohen et al., 2009). They also enhance teacher-student relationships, reduce conflicts, and encourage collaboration, contributing to a supportive learning environment. Beyond academics, SEL equips students with skills to engage meaningfully with their families and communities (Elias et al., 1997).

In Mauritius, integrating SEL aligns with the National Curriculum Framework (2017), which emphasizes holistic education and character development. However, challenges such as limited resources, teacher training, and cultural diversity must be addressed for effective implementation. This research aims to assess how SEL can meet the unique needs of Mauritius Secondary School's stakeholders while contributing to national educational goals.

By focusing on a multicultural, resource-constrained setting, this study addresses a gap in SEL research, which predominantly focuses on high-income countries. It explores SEL's adaptability and effectiveness in improving academic outcomes, school climate, and community dynamics. Ultimately, the research seeks to provide insights into SEL's transformative potential in fostering resilience, collaboration, and inclusivity in diverse educational contexts like Mauritius.

2 Statement of research problem

Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) is gaining recognition as a crucial component of education, extending beyond academics to support students' holistic development. SEL programs cultivate emotional intelligence, interpersonal skills, and responsible decision-making, leading to improved student well-being, academic performance, and a positive school climate. Despite its global prominence, research on SEL in multicultural, resource-constrained settings like Mauritius remains limited.

Mauritius has made significant progress in education but continues to face challenges in its secondary schools, including bullying, academic stress, mental health concerns, and disengaged learners. These issues negatively affect both student performance and overall school climate. While national education policies emphasize holistic development, SEL's integration into the curriculum has not been systematically explored. This gap presents an opportunity to investigate how SEL can address these challenges and enhance educational outcomes.

Mauritius Secondary School serves as an ideal case study due to its diverse student population and the challenges it faces in balancing academic expectations with students' socio-emotional needs. Teachers report difficulties in classroom management, while parents express concerns about their children's emotional well-being. Issues such as behavioral problems, peer conflicts, and a lack of emotional regulation highlight the need for a more supportive school environment.

International studies have demonstrated SEL's effectiveness in fostering emotional regulation, improving academic performance, reducing behavioral issues, and strengthening school relationships. However, Mauritius' unique cultural and socio-economic context requires a localized examination of SEL's impact. Understanding how SEL can be adapted and implemented in Mauritian schools is essential to determine its effectiveness in this setting.

This research aims to explore the role of SEL in enhancing student well-being and academic success at Mauritius Secondary School while also assessing its broader impact on school climate and community cohesion. The findings will provide valuable insights for policymakers, educators, and stakeholders, offering a framework for integrating SEL into the Mauritian education system. Ultimately, the study contributes to the global discourse on SEL while addressing the specific needs of Mauritius' diverse educational landscape.

3. Aim and Objectives of the study

The research also investigates the impact of SEL programs on school climate and broader community dynamics, offering insights into their potential as tools for educational and societal improvement. The objectives of the study are to

a. Assess the impact of SEL programs on students' emotional well-being and academic performance.
b. Evaluate the influence of SEL programs on school climate, (teacher-student relationships, & peer interactions)

4. Research questions

The study will provide answer to the following questions

1. What is the impact of SEL program on student's academic performance?
2. What is the impact of SEL programs on students' emotional well-being?
3. What is the impact of SEL programs on teacher-student relationships?
4. What is the impact of SEL programs on student peer interactions?
5. **Hypotheses**

Ho_1: There is no significant impact of SEL program on the student's academic performance
Ho_2: There is no significant impact of SEL program on the emotional well-being of students
Ho_3: There is no significant impact of SEL program on the teacher-student relationship
Ho_4: There is no significant impact of SEL program on the student peer interaction

5 Theoretical perspective

The study is on the premises of the following theories

5.1 Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory

Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory (1979) offers a framework for understanding how Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) operates within interconnected systems influencing student development. It identifies five nested systems: microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, macrosystem, and chronosystem. At the microsystem level, SEL programs directly impact students through classroom activities promoting emotional regulation, communication, and collaboration, with teachers and peers playing key roles. The mesosysteminvolves collaboration between teachers, parents, and administrators to reinforce SEL at school and home. The **exosystem** includes indirect influences like educational policies and community resources, which support SEL's effectiveness. The macrosystem reflects the broader cultural context, emphasizing the adaptation of SEL to local values. Lastly, the chronosystem looks at how SEL evolves over time. Bronfenbrenner's theory emphasizes a holistic approach, addressing both individual competencies and broader ecological factors for successful SEL implementation.

5.2 Bandura's Social Learning Theory

Bandura's Social Learning Theory (1977) emphasizes that learning occurs through observation, imitation, and modeling, highlighting the role of social interactions in shaping behavior and attitudes. In SEL, teachers, peers, and school leaders act as models for emotional and social competencies. SEL programs use interactive activities where students observe and practice behaviors like empathy, conflict resolution, and communication. Bandura's vicarious learning concept suggests that students internalize these behaviors by watching others. For example, a teacher modeling calm problem-solving demonstrates self-regulation and decision-making. Bandura's focus on self-efficacy aligns with SEL by building students' confidence in managing emotions and social interactions, fostering resilience. This empowerment enhances well-being and contributes to a positive school climate. In Mauritius Secondary School, effective SEL requires role models who embody these competencies, fostering a culture of respect and collaboration that benefits both students and the broader community.

5.3 Empirical perspective

Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) is an educational framework aimed at equipping students with skills to manage emotions, set goals, build positive relationships, and make responsible decisions. Extensive research highlights its effectiveness in enhancing emotional well-being, academic performance, and interpersonal relationships in educational settings.

Studies consistently show that SEL programs improve emotional resilience and reduce symptoms of depression and anxiety. Durlak et al. (2011) found significant emotional benefits in a meta-analysis of 213 studies involving over 270,000 students. Taylor et al. (2017) further demonstrated that SEL's positive mental health outcomes persist long-term. CASEL emphasizes that SEL helps students recognize and manage emotions, reducing distress and fostering psychological well-being.SEL positively impacts academic achievement. Durlak et al. (2011) reported an 11%

academic gain among SEL participants, attributed to improved self-regulation, goal-setting, and decision-making. Mahoney et al. (2018) linked SEL to enhanced cognitive skills like attention control and problem-solving, while Schonert-Reichl et al. (2015) found SEL improves executive functions critical for learning.

SEL enhances teacher-student relationships by improving classroom dynamics and teacher well-being. Jennings and Greenberg (2009) found SEL-trained teachers experienced lower stress and greater job satisfaction, fostering supportive student interactions. The "Responsive Classroom" approach, and SEL-based program, improved cooperation and reduced disruptive behavior (Rimm-Kaufman et al., 2014).SEL fosters positive peer relationships by teaching empathy, communication, and conflict resolution. Eisenberg et al. (2006) linked emotional regulation skills to better peer relationships, while Caprara et al. (2000) found SEL programs promoting prosocial behavior increased peer acceptance and reduced bullying. Wentzel (2015) highlighted SEL's role in developing empathy and perspective-taking, contributing to a harmonious school environment.

Effective SEL implementation requires evidence-based programs like Second Step, PATHS, and RULER. PATHS improved emotional understanding and reduced behavioral issues (Greenberg et al., 1995), while RULER enhanced emotional intelligence and classroom climate (Brackett et al., 2012). Weissberg et al. (2015) stress the importance of integrating SEL into school curricula.

Despite its benefits, SEL implementation faces challenges such as insufficient teacher training, limited resources, and varying parental support. Bridgeland et al. (2013) found only 44% of teachers felt adequately trained to teach SEL. Additionally, culturally responsive approaches are essential to address diverse student needs (Jagers et al., 2019).

Methodology

6.1 Research Design

The study employed a non-equivalent pretest-posttest, non-randomized control group quasi-experimental design, assigning intact classes to treatment conditions. A 1 x 4 factorial matrix was used, with one group receiving Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) intervention and another using conventional methods as the control. Dependent variables included academic achievement, emotional well-being, teacher-student relationships, and peer interactions. The population comprised all lower secondary students (Form 1 to Form 3) in Mauritius, with an estimated 90,455 students enrolled in 2021. A multi-stage sampling technique selected three government-owned schools, ensuring uniform standards. One intact class per school was randomly chosen, totaling 64 participants: 30 in the experimental group and 34 in the control group. Teachers assisted in data collection, and schools met criteria such as offering diverse subjects and teacher willingness to implement the treatment.

The sample size in each school and each treatment groups are shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Sample size in each school

Schools	Experimental	Control	Total
School 1	10	10	20
School 2	10	10	20
School 3	10	14	24
Total	30	34	64

6.4 Instrumentation

A Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) instructional guide provides teachers with strategies to nurture students' emotional intelligence, self-awareness, and interpersonal skills. It integrates SEL into daily lessons through activities like role-playing, storytelling, and discussions, fostering empathy, self-regulation, and decision-making. The guide promotes a positive classroom culture, collaborative problem-solving, and teacher modeling, using assessments like observational checklists and student self-evaluations to reinforce SEL principles effectively.

Dependent variable

- Academic Achievement Test (AAT): Measures student performance in Mathematics and English through multiple-choice and essay questions, scored on a 100% scale.

- Emotional Well-being Scale (EWS): A 15-item, 5-point Likert scale evaluating students' emotional health.
- Teacher-Student Relationships (TSR): A 10-item, 5-point Likert scale assessing the quality of interactions between teachers and students.
- Student-Peer Interactions (SPI): A 10-item, 5-point Likert scale measuring peer relationships, inclusion, and sense of belonging.

6.5 Validity and Reliability of the instrument

To ensure the reliability of the questionnaire, a pilot test was conducted with 10 lower secondary students (5 male and 5 female). The pilot study helped refine the survey design by identifying unclear or biased questions, enhancing validity and reliability. Reliability coefficients were calculated using Cronbach's Alpha: EWS (15 items, $\alpha = 0.86$), TSR (10 items, $\alpha = 0.81$), SPI (10 items, $\alpha = 0.80$), and overall $\alpha = 0.84$. A test-retest for academic achievement yielded $r = 0.75$, indicating good internal consistency.

6.6 Training of Participating Teachers

The three teachers involved in the study, particularly those in charge of the experimental groups, were trained on the use of the learning guides to ensure adherence to the prescribed strategies and procedures. The researcher briefed the teachers on the study's objectives, sought their cooperation, and conducted demonstration lessons to teach the principles of each learning strategy. Following this, the teachers were randomly assigned to the experimental and control groups and given the opportunity to teach a lesson based on their assigned strategies. Additionally, they were trained on how to administer the data collection instruments.

6.7 Method of data analysis

The study analyzed data using descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation, mean gain) and inferential statistics, including ANCOVA with pre-test scores as covariates. Multiple Classification Analysis assessed post-test means, and the Scheffé test identified significant effects in post-hoc analysis.

7. Findings

Table 1: Demographic characteristics of the respondents

		Frequency	Percent
Sex	Male	24	37.5
	Female	40	62.5
	Total	64	100.0
Age	12-14	13	20.3
	15-17	33	51.6
	18+	18	28.1
	Total	64	100.0
Group	Experimental	30	46.9
	Control	34	53.1
	Total	64	100.0

As presented in the Table, a total of 40 representing 63% of the respondents are female while 24 or 37% are male. Also, more than half of the respondents, 33 or 52% are between 15 years and 17 years old, 18 or 28% are 18 years old and above while the remaining 13 or 205 are between 12 years and 14 years old. More also, 34 or 53% of the respondents are in control group while 30 or 47% are in experimental group.

Hypotheses

Ho_1: There is no significant impact of SEL program on the student's academic performance
The hypothesis was tested using one way analysis of covariance (ANCOVA). The results of the analysis are presented in Tables 2, 3, and 4.

TABLE2: Descriptive data on pre and post-test scores of academic performance of student's between the control and experimental groups
Table 2 reveals that the control group showed the smallest mean difference (1.11) in post-test academic achievement. In contrast, students exposed to SEL demonstrated the highest gain (23.18) compared to those in

Group	Pre-test		Post-Test		Mean
	N	Mean	S.D	Mean	S.D	Differences
Control	34	29.42	3.09	30.53	5.07	1.11
Experimental	30	28.99	2.97	52.17	6.86	23.18
Total	64	29.22	3.01	40.67	12.39	11.45

conventional learning (mean difference: 1.11). To assess whether the intervention significantly impacted post-test achievement scores, an ANCOVA analysis was conducted, with results shown in Table 3.
TABLE 3: Analysis of covariance on the difference in academic achievement of the student in due to the intervention

Dependent Variable: AAT

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	7545.679[a]	2	3772.840	107.990	.000
Intercept	606.986	1	606.986	17.374	.000
Pre_AAT	81.696	1	81.696	2.338	.131
Group	7537.837	1	7537.837	215.755	.000
Error	2131.159	61	34.937		
Total	115554.612	64			
Corrected Total	9676.838	63			

a. R Squared = .780 (Adjusted R Squared = .773)

Table 3 shows a calculated F value of 7537.84, which exceeds the critical F value of 2.61 ($p < 0.05$, $df = 1, 64$). Therefore, Hypothesis 1 is rejected, indicating a significant difference in post-test academic achievement between the experimental and control groups. To identify which groups showed significant differences, a Least Significant Difference (LSD) multiple comparison was conducted, with results presented in Table 4.

TABLE 4: Multiple comparison on academic achievement between experimental and control group

(I) Group	(J)	Mean Difference (I-J)	Sig.[b]
Experimental	CONTROL	21.804*	0.000

Based on estimated marginal means

*. The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

The LSD post hoc test revealed a significant mean difference of 21.804 ($p < 0.05$) between the control group and the SEL learning group. This indicates that the control group had lower post-test academic achievement compared to students exposed to SEL techniques. Therefore, c
Hypothesis 2

Ho_2: There is no significant impact of SEL program on the emotional well-being of students

TABLE5 : Descriptive data on pre and post-test scores of Emotional Well-Being of student's between the control and experimental groups

Table 5 reveals that the control group showed the smallest mean difference (0.29) in post-test when compare with the experimental group with a mean difference of 15.47 in the post score emotional well-being.. To assess whether the intervention significantly impacted emotional well-being, an ANCOVA analysis was conducted, with results shown in Table 6.

Group	Pre-test		Post-Test		Mean
	N	Mean	S.D	Mean	S.D	Differences
Control	34	23.50	2.35	23.79	1.53	0.29
Experimental	30	22.43	2.54	37.90	4.81	15.47
Total	64	23.00	2.48	30.41	7.89	7.41

TABLE 6: Analysis of covariance on the difference in emotional well-being of the student in due to the intervention

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	3172.156[a]	2	1586.078	129.470	.000
Intercept	99.987	1	99.987	8.162	.006
Pre_EWS	.977	1	.977	.080	.779
Group	2784.201	1	2784.201	227.272	.000
Error	747.281	61	12.251		
Total	63090.000	64			
Corrected Total	3919.438	63			

a. R Squared = .809 (Adjusted R Squared = .803)

Table 6 shows a calculated F value of 2784.20, which exceeds the critical F value of 2.61 ($p < 0.05$, df = 1, 64). Therefore, Hypothesis 2 is rejected, indicating a significant difference in post-emotional well-being between the experimental and control groups. To identify which groups showed significant differences, a Least Significant Difference (LSD) multiple comparison was conducted, with results presented in Table 7.

TABLE 7: Multiple comparison on emotional well-being between experimental and control group

(I) Group	J	Mean Difference (I-J)	Sig.[b]
Experimental	Control	14.018*	.000

Based on estimated marginal means

*. The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

b. Adjustment for multiple comparisons: Least Significant Difference (equivalent to no adjustments).

As reported in Table 7, participated exposed to SEL treatment reported a significant difference in the post scores in emotional well-being than those exposed to the traditional method of teaching (Mean difference = 14.018, p=0.00). This implies that SEL proved more effective in improving student emotional well-being than traditional teaching methods.

Hypothesis 3

Ho_3: There is no significant impact of SEL program on the teacher-student relationship

TABLE 8: Descriptive data on pre and post-test scores of Teacher-Student Relationship of student's between the control and experimental groups

Group	Pre-test			Post-Test		Mean Differences
	N	Mean	S.D	Mean	S.D	
Control	34	23.24	2.53	31.4	2.06	8.16
Experimental	30	23.1	2.56	23.56	2.74	0.46
Total	64	23.17	2.52	27.23	4.63	4.06

Table 8 reveals that the control group showed the smallest mean difference (0.46) when compare with experimental group with a mean difference of 8.16 in post-test teacher-student relationship.. To assess whether the intervention significantly impacted emotional well-being, an ANCOVA analysis was conducted, with results shown in Table 9.

TABLE 9: Analysis of covariance on the difference in the teacher-students relationship due to the intervention

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	1083.566[a]	2	541.783	123.354	.000
Intercept	180.300	1	180.300	41.051	.000
Pre_TSR	103.664	1	103.664	23.602	.000
Group	996.489	1	996.489	226.882	.000
Error	267.919	61	4.392		
Total	48821.000	64			
Corrected Total	1351.484	63			

a. R Squared = .802 (Adjusted R Squared = .795)

Table 9 shows a calculated F value of 996.49, which exceeds the critical F value of 2.61 ($p < 0.05$, df = 1, 64). Therefore, Hypothesis 3 is rejected, indicating a significant difference in post-teacher-students relationship between the experimental and control groups. To identify which groups showed significant differences, a Least Significant Difference (LSD) multiple comparison was conducted, with results presented in Table 10.

TABLE 10: Multiple comparison on Teacher-student Relationship between experimental and control group

(I) Group	J	Mean Difference (I-J)	Sig.[b]
Experimental	Control	7.910*	.000

Based on estimated marginal means

*. The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

b. Adjustment for multiple comparisons: Least Significant Difference (equivalent

to no adjustments).

As reported in Table 7, participated exposed to SEL treatment reported a significant difference in the post scores in teacher-student relationship than those exposed to the traditional method of teaching (Mean difference = 7.910, p=0.00). This implies that SEL proved more effective in improving student teacher-relationship than traditional teaching methods.

Hypothesis 4
Ho_4: There is no significant impact of SEL program on the student peer interaction

TABLE 11: Descriptive data on pre and post-test scores of student peer interaction of between the control and experimental groups

Group	Pre-test			Post-Test		Mean Differences
	N	Mean	S.D	Mean	S.D	
Control	34	24.03	0.76	24.00	2.40	0.03
Experimental	30	24.8	1.4	32.77	2.52	7.97
Total	64	24.39	1.16	28.11	5.04	3.72

Table 11 reveals that the control group showed the smallest mean difference (0.03) when compare with experimental group with a mean difference of 7.97 in post-test score of student peer interaction. To assess whether the intervention significantly impacted student peer interaction, an ANCOVA analysis was conducted, with results shown in Table 12.

TABLE 12: Analysis of covariance on the difference in the student peer interaction due to the intervention

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	1230.360[a]	2	615.180	101.456	.000
Intercept	155.021	1	155.021	25.566	.000
Pre_ SPI	5.492	1	5.492	.906	.345
Group	1141.015	1	1141.015	188.177	.000
Error	369.874	61	6.064		
Total	52169.000	64			
Corrected Total	1600.234	63			

a. R Squared = .769 (Adjusted R Squared = .761)

Table 12 shows a calculated F value of 188.18, which exceeds the critical F value of 2.61 ($p < 0.05$, df = 1, 64). Therefore, Hypothesis 4 is rejected, indicating a significant difference in post-student peer interaction between the experimental and control groups. To identify which groups showed significant differences, a Least Significant Difference (LSD) multiple comparison was conducted, with results presented in Table 13.

Table 13:**TABLE 10: Multiple comparison on student peer interaction between experimental and control group**

(I) Group	J	Mean Difference (I-J)	Sig.[b]
Experimental	Control	8.974*	.000

Based on estimated marginal means

*. The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

b. Adjustment for multiple comparisons: Least Significant Difference (equivalent to no adjustments).

As reported in Table 13, participated exposed to SEL treatment reported a significant difference in the post scores in student peer interaction than those exposed to the traditional method of teaching (Mean difference = 8.974, p=0.00). This implies that SEL proved more effective in improving student peer interaction than traditional teaching methods.

8. Discussion

The findings demonstrating the effectiveness of Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) in enhancing academic achievement, emotional well-being, peer interactions, and student-teacher relationships have profound practical and theoretical implications.

Practically, these results highlight the need to integrate SEL as a core component of the curriculum. SEL fosters emotional support and social connection, which are crucial for student engagement and academic success (Durlak et al., 2011). Schools can leverage these insights by investing in teacher training and SEL-based interventions, ensuring that emotional literacy and interpersonal skills are prioritized alongside academic subjects. Additionally, policymakers should incorporate SEL into national education frameworks to ensure equitable access across diverse learning environments (Weissberg et al., 2015). Strengthened student-teacher relationships may also lead to reduced classroom conflicts and disciplinary issues, fostering a more harmonious and productive learning atmosphere.

Theoretically, these findings reinforce holistic educational approaches that integrate cognitive, social, and emotional development. This aligns with Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural theory, which emphasizes learning through social interaction, and Bandura's (1977) social learning theory, which highlights the role of modeling and reinforcement in behavior formation. SEL's emphasis on peer interaction and teacher relationships underscores the significance of interpersonal dynamics in student development. Furthermore, SEL promotes educational equity by providing all students, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds, with essential emotional and social skills to navigate academic and life challenges effectively.

In conclusion, SEL's positive impact across multiple dimensions of student success calls for its broader implementation. By bridging research and practice, these findings offer valuable insights for educators, policymakers, and researchers, paving the way for a more inclusive and effective educational framework.

9. Area of Further studies

The following are suggested for further studies

1. Long-term Impact of SEL: Future research could explore the sustained effects of SEL on students' academic performance, emotional well-being, and interpersonal skills beyond secondary education, examining its influence in higher education and the workplace.

2. Teacher Training and Implementation: Research could focus on the role of teacher preparedness and professional development in the successful implementation of SEL programs, including the challenges and strategies for integrating SEL into traditional curricula.

3. Future research could address the limited sample size and specific population used in experimental studies by conducting larger-scale studies across diverse educational settings. This would enhance the generalizability of findings and provide insights into how SEL impacts varied student groups.

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