Cultural Experience and Perception of Social Emotional Learning

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CASEL Definition

The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) defines Social Emotional Learning (SEL) as "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 achieve personal and collective goals, establish and maintain supportive relationships, and make responsible and caring decisions" (CASEL.org).

Need Statement

- Families vary in terms of teaching Skills at home.
- Schools are beginning to recognize the need to provide SEL to help students prepare for their careers and life and to address mental health challenges.
- Cultural responsiveness of SEL
- The gaps in culturally responsive practices in school districts leads to students being misrepresented and identified.

- Transformative SEL
  - Dusenbury et al. (2020), define it as "a process whereby students and teachers build strong, respectful relationships founded on an appreciation of similarities and differences, learn to critically examine root causes of inequity, and develop collaborative solutions to community and societal problems" (p. 9).
- Revision to five CASEL competencies to expand application across all students

Introduction

SEL is viewed as the process where individuals are able to learn and then apply knowledge, skills, and attitudes that assists them in a successful life. Overall, SEL is a framework that focuses on the five competencies of self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, responsible decision making, and relationship skills in order to ensure students are successful in navigating day to day life. SEL helps advance educational equity through building school, family, and community relationships, intentional curricula and instruction, and continuous evaluations. One of the main priorities of SEL is student skill development.

Benefits of SEL:
A substantial body of evidence has demonstrated that SEL helps students prepare for their careers and life. Having social and emotional skills allows individuals to address their mental health challenges appropriately. When working through mental health issues an individual needs to assess and identify their emotions, be aware of how the emotions make them feel, and then based on this brief analysis make a decision that will help improve their mental health. Social emotional learning targets the skills needed to make the analysis using the following competencies of self-awareness, self-efficacy (Washington state) and responsible decision making.

Challenges within SEL:
Despite social emotional learning curricula and standards being constructed not to be culturally biased, revisions are continued to be needed. A cultural mismatch continues to occur as construct bias, discrimination, microaggressions, and implicit bias are overlooked. Gaps like these cause students to feel alone and negatively impacts their relationship and school climate which inevitably widens those gaps that are systemically placed. Opportunity and education gaps as well as evaluation methods continue to be present within schools. A one size fits all mentality is often present which causes positive SEL outcomes to diminish.

Research Questions

- Does experience with SEL and cultural identity predict students' SEL skills?
- How does culture impact conflict resolution?

Method

Participants
Participants were recruited from a regional comprehensive psychology undergraduate Psychology canvas page and through professors emailing their students. Participants were 18 years or older and consented to be part of the study.

Survey
The survey was made up of a demographic questionnaire, self-assessment, SEL experiences, perspectives surrounding diversity, and application of conflict resolution. 20 questions and takes 12 minutes to complete.

Demographic information: All participants were required to take a demographic questionnaire.

Self-assessment: Assessed participants' perceptions of their current skills regarding SEL

SEL Experiences: Gathers information about experiences with SEL in K-12 and home environments..

Perspectives regarding diversity: Asked participants rate how comfortable they would be regarding issues of diversity.

Application of conflict resolution: Scenarios assessed participants' logic of conflict resolution.

Hypotheses

- Individuals with different cultural identities will vary in self assessment of specific SEL skills.
- Participants will report minimal experience with SEL at school and at home
- Those reporting less experience will choose extreme options to resolve conflict.

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