

An Inquiry on the Effects of the Social Emotional Learning in the Health and Social Care Classroom

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Abstract: Social Emotional Learning focuses on nurturing lateral thinking skills that help the individual gain a deeper understanding of their emotions and its impact on others. This study introduced a Social Emotional Learning programme to a group of ten students, aged fourteen to fifteen years, studying Health and Social Care as a Vocational Education and Training subject. The programme utilised is targeted to help students: recognise emotions in self or others; understand the causes and consequences of emotions; label emotions accurately; express emotions appropriately; and regulate emotions effectively. This is done by teaching specific tools within a programme: the “Charter” that helps establish class rules; the “Mood Metre” that teaches understanding of emotions; and the “Meta Moment” that helps with identifying the emotional triggers and the “Blueprint” that helps in conflict resolution. These social and emotional learning skills were covered over three months. The effectiveness of these sessions was investigated. Data were collected from three sources using an action research framework, an ongoing reflective journal by the researcher, observations by a critical friend and the pre- and post-implementation of a strengths and difficulties questionnaire administered to the students. Thematic analysis revealed positive outcomes. The implications of social emotional learning within the vocational classroom are discussed.

Keywords: Social Emotional Learning, Action Research, Social Emotional Behavioural Difficulties, Health and Social Care

Introduction

Evidence indicates that Social Emotional Learning (SEL) does benefit students. SEL not only influences students' social and emotional development but also positively affects academic achievement and teacher student relationships, while reducing significant behavioural problems (Bracket and Rivers, 2014).

This study focuses on the significance of addressing students' Emotional Intelligence in conjunction with academic content, through the implementation of SEL. The study introduces the notion of SEL and its potential benefits within the realm of education, specifically among thirteen students who have chosen Health and Social Care as their VET (Vocational Education and Training) optional subject. Furthermore, the research design employs an action research framework, using a mixed methods approach that incorporated questionnaires, reflective journals, and observations to collect data in pre-implementation, implementation, and post-implementation stages.

The findings of this current study sought to provide insights into achieving a more balanced approach between academic knowledge and emotional development through SEL implementation. Since implementation was deemed the best way to measure the effectiveness of SEL, an action research framework was employed as a research design. Such design enables teachers to identify limitations and to facilitate the implementation of corrective measures through planning, execution, and evaluation of outcomes, ultimately leading to the development of improved teaching strategies (Goh, 2012).

Literature Review

Emotional Intelligence (EI), with its roots in ancient philosophy, highlights the connection between emotions and social interactions. EI is a type of social intelligence that promotes emotion regulation and management within prevailing triggers. EI is the ability to understand emotions of self and others and to appropriately respond to them.

Goleman's (1995) work led to the recognition of emotional intelligence as a critical skill for success, paving the way for the concept of SEL. SEL evolved from a measure to prevent mental health problems into an approach that

promotes social competence, making it essential in schools to equip students with skills, attitudes, and values for making responsible decisions.

Bar-On, Maree & Elias, (2007) conducted research aimed at rendering skills, attitudes, and values teachable within the classroom context, leading to the introduction of SEL. Recognising that schools bear the responsibility of transmitting values, the Collaborative for Academic Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL) acknowledged the significance of SEL implementation and subsequently developed a dedicated programme for its implementation in 2005.

While SEL is recognised and implemented in numerous curricula globally, its implementation faces various challenges. One primary challenge is the pressure from policymakers to prioritise measurable outcomes related to academic performance. This emphasis on academic syllabi can lead teachers to overlook the importance of SEL implementation (Watkins, 2003).

Teacher readiness is another crucial factor for the effective SEL implementation (Bracket et al., 2011). Research underscores the conflict between pursuing academic excellence and nurturing students' overall development, emphasising the urgency for educators to acknowledge and integrate SEL, encompassing social and emotional competencies such as self-awareness, self-regulation, empathy, and relationship skills (Cefai and Cooper, 2009). Neglecting SEL in education may have potential adverse effects, as outlined in the mentioned research.

SEL programmes offer a tool for managing emotions in the classroom, with positive effects observed on teacher-student relationships and overall teacher wellbeing. The implementation of SEL resulted in progress reported by teachers in their relationships with students, parents, and colleagues, leading to a better work environment (Bracket & Rivers, 2014). One specific programme, based on the Genos model, focused on measuring the impact of SEL on teachers, aiming to reduce teacher stress and potential burnout while enhancing overall teacher wellbeing and fostering a positive classroom environment (Keefer, Parker & Saklofske, 2018).

While SEL programmes may not significantly impact students' academic achievement in reading math and science, they do have a positive effect on student behaviour and emotional regulation, reducing stress and anxiety

levels. These programmes also benefit students with SEBD (Social, Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties) by developing social emotional competencies and promoting a sense of belonging and self-actualisation in inclusive and democratic classrooms in students (Bracket & Rivers, 2014). The benefit of SEL extends beyond the educational environment and can positively affect students in various settings, including home and community interactions, as highlighted in Cefai and Cooper's (2009) study.

Context of the study

This research focuses on a class of young students taking a vocational subject, necessitating contextual understanding. Vocational subjects originally aspired to promote lifelong opportunities for individuals to benefit society at large. Eventually, they evolved into equipping students with the necessary skills for the competitive economy (Jones, 2018). European Union countries adopted lifelong-learning strategies to enhance employment prospects by aligning the needs and attitudes required in a work force with school teachings. Transversal skills were identified as essential components of vocational subjects, and European countries sought to enhance these skills in schools. The European Commission's initiative "*Developing Key Competencies at school in Europe Challenges and Opportunities for policy*" (2012, p.3) highlighted the acquisition of high-level technical skills, critical problem-solving ability, collaborative ideas, and more.

In Malta, the '*My Journey - achieving through different paths*' programme (2016) was launched by the Ministry for the Education and Employment (MEDE) in 2016. It was meant to address early school leaving by providing an alternative vocational education path catering to diverse learning abilities and intelligences. This vocational programme attracts students with a mix of characteristics, including those excelling academically and others facing challenges with self-esteem, motivation, and behaviour. This research targets secondary students opting for VET in Health and Social Care. The *Framework for the Education Strategy for Malta (2014 -2024)* does not currently encompass SEL as a strategic implementation for the entire school population in the secondary schools.

This research aims to analyse whether students aged between 13- and 14-years benefit from implementing SEL in the health and social care classroom. The programme chosen is the RULER approach to SEL, outlined in Brackett et al. (2019). RULER stands for: **R**ecognising emotions, referring to both self and

others; Understanding what the causes and the effects of emotions are; Labelling emotions and experiences with a thorough vocabulary; Expressing and Regulating one's own emotions so that they promote growth within self and others.

Methodology

This study explored the effectiveness of implementing SEL to improve students' social and emotional behaviour. It responded to two research questions: What impact would SEL integrated in the syllabus have on the student's social and emotional difficulties? To what extent is SEL effective in the classroom?

The research in question employed an action-research methodology. Action researchers consider reality as socially constructed rather than peripheral and autonomous (Koshy, 2010). The researcher acknowledges the subjectivity of events, as influenced by the context of the study, which includes both the researcher and the students in the researcher's classroom. The researcher's active participation contributes to the ongoing construction of reality within this study.

Participants

Participants were recruited from a state school where the lead researcher teaches. Vocational classes have a maximum of fourteen students. Participation was subject to parental consent for students pursuing the vocational track of health and social care during their second year of the three-year-options-cycle in secondary education. Out of thirteen students, ten students aged 14 years voluntarily participated in this study with parental consent. Additionally, a critical friend, a colleague with expertise in social-emotional behavioural issues, participated in this study.

Procedure

This study gained ethical approval from EDUC-2022-00163 Faculty Ethics Research Committee and the Malta Directorate for Research, Lifelong Learning and Employability (Reference: R07-2022 1197). Permission for this research was granted from the head of school. Parental consent forms were distributed through the students, in the second week of the scholastic year. Once parents consented, students were asked to complete a consent form. Confidentiality

was ensured by keeping the raw data secured and by coding the participants' names.

Action research is an approach that prioritises participation and collaboration within communities to improve understanding of the social content. The action research cycle includes observing, selecting, and acting; a process which is flexible and overlapping, allowing for continuous learning and revisiting occurrences throughout the proceedings.

This action research study involved four phases: the pre-implementation phase, the reflection phase, the planning phase, and the implementation phase. It followed O'Leary's cycle of Research seen in Koshy (2010).



Figure 1: O'Leary's Cycle of Research

These phases were followed by the post-implementation phase, which typically restarts the cycle through observation of outcomes. Implementation of the SEL programme through the RULER approach took place at school during the VET lessons, from October 2022 till January 2023, as follows:

<p>Pre- Implementation - beginning of October 2022</p> <p>SQD given to Students. First Observation by the critical friend Introduction to SEL, the programme and the tools Ongoing journal keeping</p>
<p>Reflection and identification of needs - end of October 2022</p> <p>Interactive Booklet for students prepared and distributed. Ongoing journal Observation of SDQ results Observation of feedback from critical friend</p>
<p>Planning SEL programme activities and resources end of November 2022</p> <p>Second Visit of the critical friend Two of the tools explained and implemented. Ongoing journal</p>
<p>Implementation of SEL following reflection December 2023 - February 2023</p> <p>Revised SEL implementation Finalising of SEL program / covered and implementation all tools. Last visit by the critical friend SDQ given to students. Feedback on SEL by students Ongoing journaling Assessment of SDQ Thematic analysis</p>

Table 1: Implementation of the SEL Programme

Materials and measures

The journal: The teacher/researcher was involved in maintaining twelve entries, documenting various incidents and significant matters throughout the study. The journal aimed to capture responses and behaviours related to the implementation of SEL. Each entry, of an average of four hundred words, consisted of a sequential happening of events, highlighting behaviour, attitudes, and significant interventions by the students.

The SEL programme: The RULER approach to SEL by Brackett et al. (2019) was implemented on a classroom scale and introduced to students in late October, allowing time for the class to adjust to the new academic year. The SEL implementation began with a forty-minute presentation, introducing SEL, emotional intelligence and the tools “charter”, “mood metre”, “meta moment” and “blueprint”. Over a period of twelve weeks, excluding Christmas holidays, each tool was introduced individually for ten minutes at the start of each lesson, before transitioning into academic content. This time was used to

ensure that students understood and could utilise each tool effectively. An interactive booklet was provided to students. The booklet included specific questions, explanations of tools, and interactive exercises. Once SEL went into implementation mode, the process included in-class discussion, encouraging personal reflection and tool implementation by the students.

Social and emotional measure. This is a student self-report questionnaire seen in “Youth in Mind” (2020) assessing students’ emotional conduct, hyperactivity, and peer problems subscales along with their pro social scale which took fifteen minutes to fill in during class time. It consisted of 25 items scored on a three-point scale, ranging from not true (0 points) somewhat true (1 point) to certainly true (2 points), the higher scores pointing at the more pressing issues. The post-implementation questionnaire was modified to align with the study purposes ensuring sensitivity in the detecting behavioural and emotional issues e.g., “Clinic” was adapted to “SEL programme”.

The critical friend: The critical friend taught PSCD in the same school and was involved in three observations throughout the process: one at the pre-implementation; another midway through; and the final one at the end (the post-implementation). Her role was to observe behaviour, interventions of students and change in attitudes, and to give her opinion on whether SEL implementation was effective amongst Health and Social Care students.

The data analysis approach

The qualitative data were analysed adopting a thematic analysis approach for the reflective journal and the observation of the critical friend (Braun and Clarke (2006). Data analysis commenced after the completion of data collection. Initially, a comprehensive examination of the journal entries and the observations by the critical friend facilitated the identification of recurrent themes leading to the successive generation of initial codes. To ensure accuracy in code definition, data were carefully compared with the generated codes, preventing any potential drift. Given the small-scale nature of the study, the initial codes and themes showed considerable similarity. Upon reviewing the themes, a process of reassessment was initiated to verify their meaningfulness. Ultimately, coherent, and distinct themes were selected, ensuring they could be readily identifiable with the data set. Analysis of the descriptive statistics of the SDQ was carried out using excel comparing the pre-implementation to post-implementation scores.

The qualitative data collection was coded for the use of words from the three different stake holders, the students, the teacher, and the critical friend. The analytical process consisted of three phases, primarily at word level whereby action verbs, emotions and feelings and answers directly related to the research questions were highlighted in three colours respectively. In the second part of the process the various words from the three different wording groups were further divided by going back to the full context to outline the meaning and link similarities between words. This was done by extracting the significant words that were highlighted and outlining the observations and quotes throughout the process.

Findings and analysis

The analysis of the qualitative data involved the examination of significant themes arising from the reflective journal and the observations of the critical friend. The emergence of these themes is illustrated in the table below.

	Highlighting significant words
Action Verbs	Reflecting the process
	Observing, Writing, Collecting, Handing, Enriching, Experiencing, Learning, Engaging, Deteriorating, Seeing, Capturing Getting In Touch, Answering, Participating (Students Not), Including, Students Not Participating, Struggling, Delivering Containing, Coming, Finding, Learning, Letting - At Ease, Reacting, Stopping, Thinking, Being, Shouting Empathising, Saving relationships, Managing, Targeting, Seeing, Repeating, Acknowledging Highlighting, Sharing Learning, Talking, Expecting, Knowing.
Value base	Reflecting attitudes, emotions, and behaviours
Attitudes	Loss Of Momentum, Interested, Scepticism, Patience, Aware, Meaningful, Cautious, Helpful, Motivated, Defensive, Regret.
Feelings	Offended, Cheerful, Happy, Enjoyed, Scared, Apprehensive, Uncomfortable, Hurt, Helpless, Comfortable Relaxed, Restless, Nervous Annoyed.
Behaviours	Inappropriate expression of feelings. In control of emotions.
Structural coding	Directly answering the research question Who? When? What? Why?
Who?	Relevance in health and social care because of the clients that they will encounter.

	<p>It gave space to students with SEBD to feel that they belong. Attention given to all and included all. Should be included in all curricula – whole school approach.</p>
When?	<p>I cannot afford more time (syllabus constraints). Fill in the booklet – what is optional is rarely done. Time consuming describing the tools. Some students might not feel up to grow. Booklet as personal work is not as effective taking time discussing implementing the exercises. Repetition of new concepts – Teachers are still connected with delivering academic content. School Activities and holidays weaken the consistency of the process. The inability to make change will be interpreted as a waste of time... in that change is not imminent it takes time and cannot be measured and proved for statistical purposes.</p>
What?	<p>Requires change that they might not be up for. Evidence of change in attitude is not easy to determine. Implementation might take longer than one thinks. There are students that are EI and although this might help it does not necessarily change their attitude.</p>
Why?	<p>Opinion matters Working related to assessments. Looked quite interested. Appealed to the students. Very good response Brought personal experience. Ability to think critically about their life events. Ability to foster trust. Acknowledge significant issues that are happening in their lives do not include only those who are displaying oppositional behaviour. More approachable students Cooperation increases. Attentive and interested. Maturity and self confidence Acknowledged what they can do to help them with difficult issues in their lives when there is a trigger. Awareness of conflicts within the class highlighting that the class is more community based. Identifying patters through generations Beneficial with issues that are becoming more repetitive daily. The idea of a classroom community</p>

	Enhances student teacher relationship.			
Phase 2	Linking the Words from the different sets of highlighted words and outlining what was said and observed throughout the process.			
	Readiness for SEL	Challenges for SEL	Stakeholders effected by SEL	Consequences and Benefits of SEL
Students	<p>"I do not feel up to process my thoughts".</p> <p>"I feel Sceptic that the tools help you to change your attitude."</p>	<p>"It is impossible to learn how to control the way I respond to the emotions as I might come across as an easy person"</p>	<p><i>"My mother might be strict, and she expects too much out of me because her grandparents did the same with her"</i>.</p> <p>"As a helping professional I need to enhance skills such as empathy".</p>	<p>"I hate it when I am interrupted whilst I am talking";</p> <p>"Shouting at her makes her feel belittled and saddened".</p>
Critical friend	<p>"This might be seen as a repetition of what is already discussed in PSCD "</p>	<p>"Discussion of tool was cut short".</p> <p>"There was a sense of urgency"</p>	<p>"Acknowledging that future clients can benefit if students are taught how to process feelings is beneficial"</p>	<p>"Sharing of ideas and experiences".</p>
Journal	<p>"Students and parents gave their consent to participate but SEL was new to them, thus they learnt along the way and they might not have been aware of what SEL entails.</p>	<p>I cannot afford more time".</p> <p>"Time consuming describing the tools"</p>	<p>Students Sharing their feelings.</p> <p>Teacher aware of class conflicts</p> <p>Awareness of improvement of attitude.</p>	<p>Creating a community-based classroom environment</p>

Phase 3	Emerging themes
Theme 1	Challenges to SEL implementation
Theme 2	Readiness for SEL and Emotional Intelligence
Theme 3	Benefits of SEL implementation

Table 2: Data Analysis and emergence of themes

Theme 1: Challenges to SEL implementation

Time was a significant challenge for SEL implementation. The time allocated to teach SEL tools was ten minutes at the beginning of the lesson. This led the researcher to rush explanations to manage time with the competing syllabus pressure. Balancing SEL within the syllabus time was challenging, limiting student engagement. This sense of syllabus-driven urgency is reflected in comments in the journal such as “cannot afford more time”.

The precedence of academic content over emotional wellbeing poses concerns, seen in student emphasis on graded work. This was also shown in a study by Grima et al. (2002) whereby students were asked if classroom learning worsened in the previous three months due to additional stress related to assessments, where half reported worsening, hinting at increased pressure during assessments since it labels them as failures. This study also reflects this, in that stress of the students increased during assessments. This was reflected in the abnormal rise in hyperactivity scale scores in the SDQ. This shows that the suggested SEL implementation incurred timing issues. In the school environment, programme flexibility is essential due to school events. The table below shows the latter.

Date	R E F L E C T I V E J O U R N A L I N G	Session no and Time planned		Activity	Record/ Additional notes / Postponed	
Thursday 27 th October		1	30 mins	Introduction: Introductory session / explanation of SEL / aims and objectives and brief introduction to tools. Hand out questionnaire for them to fill it up and collect on the day.	Done but it took a 40 Minute Lesson.	
Thursday 3 rd November		2	10 mins	CHARTER explanation tool 1	Done as planned	
Week 1				CHARTER REFLECTIVE WEEK		
Thursday 10 th November		3	10 mins	CHARTER pitstop implementation tool.	Postponed to 17 th November	Cope Session
Thursday 24 th November		4	10 mins	MOOD METER explanation tool 2	Done as planned	
Week 2				MOOD METER REFLECTIVE WEEK		
Thursday 1 st December		5	10 mins	MOOD METER pitstop implementation tool	Done as planned	
Thursday 15 th December		6	10 mins	META MOMENT explanation tool	Postponed to 20 th December	Bereavement leave
Week 3			META MOMENT REFLECTIVE WEEK			
Tuesday 20 th December (before Christmas Recess)	7	10 mins	META MOMENT implementation tool	Explanation meta moment	Implementation after holidays	
Thursday 12 th January	8	10 mins	BLUEPRINT explanation tool	Implement meta moment	Blueprint exp. 19 th Jan	
Week 4			BLUEPRINT Reflective week			
Thursday 19 th January	9	10 mins	BLUEPRINT pitstop implementation tool	Blueprint explanation	Blueprint imp. 26 th January	

Thursday 26 th January		10	30 mins	Conclusion of SEL tools/ Hand out second questionnaire for them to fill up and collect on the day	Implement Blueprint	Conc postponed to 2 nd Feb
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Table 3. Original plan of SEL implementation and how it happened.

Student feedback on SEL effectiveness was mixed, identifying both benefits and challenges. Evidence of this was collected during the last SEL session where some of the students admitted that they felt challenged by SEL, suggesting the importance of openness to change. Students within the normal SDQ range benefited more from SEL, while those with difficulties showed less improvement. Ultimately this study highlighted that the effectiveness of SEL requires time to show, and difficult to put into statistical data.

Theme 2: Readiness for SEL and Emotional intelligence

The results of the quantitative data analysis whereby an SDQ was used prior and post implementation of SEL indicated that scores did not vary significantly in the pre- and post- results. The quantitative results showed that implementing SEL did not lead to significant improvements in the emotional and conduct scale of students who were already struggling on the abnormal scale. Figure 2 displays the results of pre and post implementation SDQ assessment showing emotional, conduct, hyperactivity, and peer problems scores. Improvements were observed in the emotional regulation of students who had low scores on the SDQ and demonstrated generally emotional stability. Some students who were initially low on the emotional scale of the SDQ reported finding the SEL tools useful and were actively trying to apply them, while others still struggled to control their reactions to emotional triggers. These results suggest that the implementation of SEL does not necessarily enhance the emotional intelligence of the students who needed it most, but rather further developed the emotional intelligence of those who are already inherently emotionally intelligent. This raises questions about the overall effectiveness of SEL in improving emotional intelligence and whether it can be effectively taught or learnt.

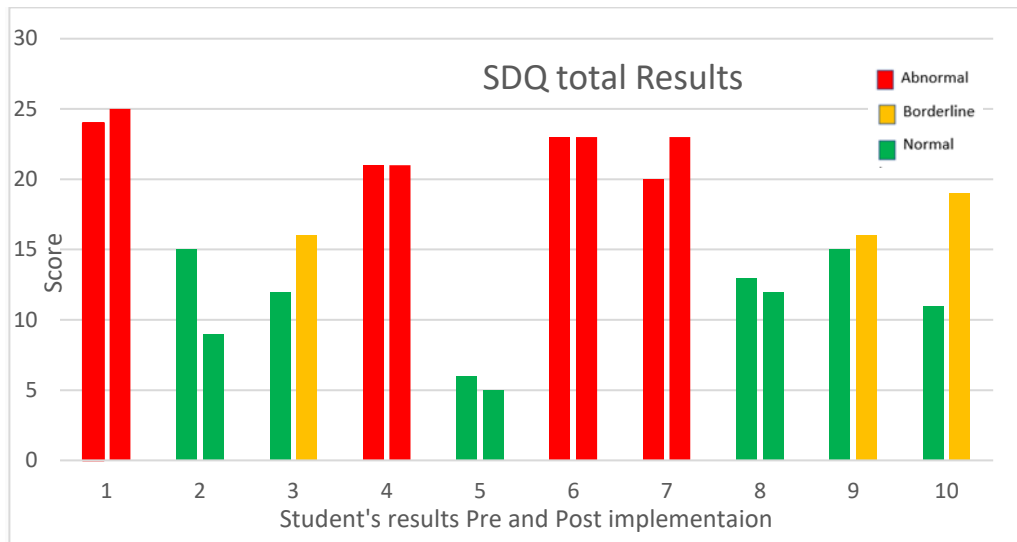


Figure 2: Results of the Pre and Post SDQ of the total four scores emotional, conduct, hyperactivity, and peer problems.

Arguments against teaching emotional intelligence were presented by Locke (2005) who suggests that combining emotion and intelligence is challenging due to their differing cognitive functions. This study also highlighted the concept of resilience, revealing that some students inherently possess the ability to be resilient even before SEL implementation. Resilience shows one’s emotional intelligence as it refers to the capability to cope with adversity and is considered as a personality characteristic (Turk, 2018). While some students seem naturally inclined towards resilience, external support and resources can further nurture resilience within the students.

The study also noted minor progress in emotional and conduct scores of the SDQ with improvements in some participants and stability or worsening in others. This is still reported in pre- and post- implementation pro-social scale results, indicating that while some students improved, others remained the same or experienced a decrease in pro-social scores.

A student’s observation highlighted the importance of a positive pro-social attitude particularly in vocational education and training subjects. SEL implementation through the RULER approach was deemed effective as it teaches empathy, teamwork and emotional awareness which are vital in the helping professions.

Theme 3: Benefits of SEL in the classroom environment

It is widely acknowledged that the efficacy of SEL would be greatly improved if there were noticeable changes in the behaviour of students with social and emotional behavioural issues Cefai and Cooper (2009). However, although not so evident in terms of scores, this study showed changes in the classroom environment because of SEL implementation. Both the critical friend and one of the journal entries towards the end documented two significant improvements. These are improved student engagement and collaborative relationships between students and teachers. This was shown by students' openness to cooperate and help each other with notes and further explanation of the academic material when they have missed the lessons.

The RULER approach to SEL prioritises the identification of feelings as one of its primary objectives, that is, creating awareness of one's own emotions as well as those of others. In this study two RULER tools - the "mood metre" and the "meta moment" - were particularly effective in enhancing students' ability to identify their emotions. While introducing the "mood metre" some students reported that they were unaccustomed to this practise, since they typically navigate their daily routines without considering their emotional state. In fact, when asked about their emotions the typical answer was, "I have no clue miss". However, when they saw the chart, they were able to focus on their emotions. Both the critical friend and the researcher observed a positive outcome related to the aspect of SEL, where students were able to identify their emotions and the emotions of others.

When implementing the "meta moment", students shared what triggered them. Some examples were "I hate it when I am interrupted whilst I'm talking". Another response was that shouting makes them feel intimidated. Others mentioned "hating" when family members are mentioned and when they feel excluded from groups. This increased attention to students' feelings, improved the relationship between the teacher and the students. This lead to better engagement because the teacher became aware of what students did not like. While some students were sceptical about the usefulness of the tools, they appreciated the fact that the teacher cares about their feelings. Additionally, the "Meta moment" identified students' generational patterns of behaviour and they were able to see common reactions from their parents in their grandparents.

The impact of SEL on the classroom environment included improvements in student engagement and the community-based approach. While the effectiveness of SEL intervention on the SDQ scores was limited, changes were observed in the classroom dynamics. The RULER approach to SEL on emotion identification improved students-teacher atonement.

Conclusion

This study aimed to assess the effectiveness of integrating SEL into the Health and Social Care syllabus, focusing on its impact on students Social and Emotional Behaviour. While SEL's primary focus was on students with difficulties, its effectiveness was more apparent in those who required it least. Qualitative analysis revealed key themes: Challenges to SEL implementation, Readiness for SEL and Emotional Intelligence and Benefits of SEL implementation.

Challenges included implementing SEL through the syllabus, helping students understand the value of SEL and integrating it with assessment. While the benefits of SEL were evident, quantification was challenging.

Despite limitations, like social desirability bias (Chung & Monroe, G. S., 2003), sleeper effect Kumake and Albarracin (2004), and timing constraints, the study suggests that while immediate benefits of SEL may be hard to measure, its positive impact on well-being and relationships is evident.

This study advocates for SEL's essential inclusion in the education policies. Academic focus alone neglects students' emotional well-being thus implementing SEL across the whole school should be on the agenda of main stakeholders. Collaboration with leaders, tailored programmes, and comprehensive evaluation can refine SEL. Incorporating SEL into Health and Social Care curricula is crucial to fostering emotional intelligence and its relevance to the present and future professions.

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