

The Impact of Sambhavya-SEL: Strengthening Social and Emotional Competence in Middle School Students

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Abstract

Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) involves developing skills in self-awareness, self-management, empathy, self-management, relationship skills, responsibility, and psychological resilience. The Sambhavya-SEL Program targets enhancing such skills in middle school students. This study aims to evaluate its impact over a one-year period. This study used a repeated-measures design with 735 middle school students (ages 11 - 14) from private schools in Kathmandu. A custom 12-item Likert scale assessed six SEL dimensions. The Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test analyzed changes, while tool reliability and convergent validity were evaluated using Guttman's λ_2 and Spearman's rank correlation coefficient, respectively. Male had significantly higher levels in three SEL component in pretest results while in posttest this increased to five components. Posttest scores showed significant improvements across all SEL dimensions, including self-awareness ($p < 0.001$), empathy ($p = 0.001$), self-management ($p < 0.001$), relationship skills ($p = 0.016$), responsibility ($p = 0.007$), psychological resilience ($p = 0.012$), and overall SEL ($p < 0.001$), with modest to moderate effect sizes. Tool reliability increased from $\lambda_2 = 0.72$ (pretest) to $\lambda_2 = 0.78$ (posttest). Convergent validity, assessed using Spearman's rank correlation coefficient, ranged from $\rho = 0.53$ ($p < 0.001$) to $\rho = 0.66$ ($p < 0.001$) pretest and $\rho = 0.59$ ($p < 0.001$) to $\rho = 0.70$ ($p < 0.001$) posttest, indicating strong validity. This study highlights the SEL program's positive effects on middle school students' social-emotional skills, emphasizing the need for educators and policymakers to integrate SEL into curricula for enhanced mental health support.

Keywords

Empathy, Relationship Skills, Resilience, Responsibilities, Self-Awareness, Self-Management, Social Emotional Learning (SEL)

1. Introduction

Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) offers a research-based framework for evaluating and selecting quality SEL programs, facilitating educators in developing comprehensive initiatives that enhance children's growth and development while emphasizing the need for supportive policies and effective implementation (Payton et al., 2000). Social and emotional learning (SEL) is crucial for education and human development, as it fosters educational equity and excellence through school-family-community partnerships that establish trusting relationships, meaningful curricula, and ongoing evaluation (CASEL, 2024).

Parents identified themselves as the primary facilitators of their child's social-emotional development, leveraging their personal strengths to mitigate the effects of systemic challenges. Furthermore, families highly valued and were significantly impacted by SEL and beneficial experi-

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