Research Article

THE PERCEPTION OF IMPLEMENTING SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LEARNING IN SOFT SKILLS AMONG VIETNAMESE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

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Abstract

Although the need for social and emotional development has existed for decades, implementing Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) in schools continues to get considerable attention as newer generations enter the educational system. The demand for development is presently increasing daily. No one challenges the significance of social-emotional learning and the influence of organizations on adolescent development today. Social-emotional learning matches accurately with the priorities in modern schools. In Vietnam, quantitative research was conducted on 350 high school students. This research aimed to determine how students evaluate the implementation of the Social-emotional learning model in soft skills education. The results revealed students' interest in implementing the social-emotional learning model into soft skills education. In addition, the results indicated the obstacles to implementing the social-emotional learning model in soft skills education. This study's findings suggested that school leaders and background educators should implement the social-emotional learning model and support, monitor, and evaluate program efficacy to ensure program objectives are reached and students acquire social and emotional abilities. In addition, the study suggested that specific strategies are necessary to limit the factors that prevent the implementation of the social-emotional learning model in high schools. *ASEAN Journal of Psychiatry, Vol. 24 (9) September, 2023; 1-12.*

Keywords: Social-Emotional Learning; Soft Skills; Perception; High School Student

Introduction

Educational psychologists and Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) programs in Vietnam work together to encourage the development of soft skills among pupils in high schools. Educational psychologists are professionals in identifying student needs, developing solutions, and cooperating with teachers, whereas SEL programs offer specific instruction and chances for children to improve social and emotional skills. Schools can develop an intellectually and socially healthy environment for kids by integrating these activities. Nowadays, individuals are concentrating on developing themselves to become perfect in all aspects. Administrators and education systems are concerned with the comprehensive development of student's academic knowledge and social abilities. In the current social context, the rapid expansion of technological devices leads adolescents and children to spend more time on these devices, resulting in an incremental loss of fundamental social skills. Adolescence is crucial for brain development and social-emotional and learning-related soft skills [1]. Social-emotional learning as a safeguard and skill-building framework can promote healthy development and behavior [2]. Therefore, Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) education is crucial for students. SEL programs help students develop cognitive, social-emotional, positive behaviors, and interpersonal connections [3]. In addition, well-designed and implemented SEL programs would assist students and adults in overcoming working, studying, and life challenges

to achieve success [4]. According to Zinsser et al., social-emotional learning is the process by which individuals acquire and effectively apply the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to understand and control emotion, establish and achieve positive goals, express empathy to others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and assume responsibility for their own decisions [5]. Social-emotional learning includes methods and techniques that promote mental health and resilience of emotional problems, preventing life negative affect through extracurricular programs, enhancing student strength, and preventing and detecting regular problems, including violence, substance abuse, and withdrawal [6].

Rutledge et al., emphasized the connection between social-emotional factors and academic activities, and the researcher showed the significance of SEL organization in high school [7]. In the study conducted by Newman and Dusenbury, it was found that students should do what they can to better themselves in the rapidly shifting and complex modern trends and that social-emotional skill are essential to achieving that. SEL provides schools with a framework for preparing students for the future [8]. SEL effectively fosters social competencies, decreases antisocial behavior, and positively affects adolescents' attitudes, behaviors, and abilities. SEL programs help students develop their skills and attitudes, fostering a positive and respectful environment, and SEL positively impacts adolescents' lives. Due to demand from educators, parents, students, and business leaders, have demonstrated that social and emotional competency education is an essential problem in education [9]. Promoting social and emotional competencies, such as understanding and managing emotions, achieving positive goals, demonstrating care and concern for others, developing and maintaining positive relationships, and making responsible decisions, is crucial for academic and life success. According to Weissberg and O'Brien, nearly all organizations address students' social and emotional requirements, promote positive emotions and physical health development, and achieve the best academic performance [10]. SEL provided a conceptual framework for effectively addressing the requirements of students. Merrell et al., found that students exhibited positive changes after participating in SEL programs [11]. SEL is currently regarded as crucial and necessary for addressing school mental health problems. The findings indicated that enhancing students' understanding of social behavior and positive emotions would aid them in making better decisions in the future when confronted with emotional and social challenges. Furthermore, Castro-Olivo and Merrell demonstrated that immigrant students experience numerous obstacles when adapting to new cultures and societies [12]. Social-emotional resiliency was investigated as a protective factor for students at risk for engaging in undesirable behaviors. The stress of culture can be reduced by SEL programs designed to help individuals adapt to their environments. The Jóvenes Fuertes program is an effective SEL program for secondary and high school students in modifying social and cultural standards and enhancing social-emotional and SEL knowledge [13]. Similarly, Cramer and Castro-Olivo found that engagement with SEL programs significantly increased mental problem resilience [14]. Adolescents require social-emotional support as they learn to manage positive and negative emotions in school and in their social lives [15].

According to research by Kurniawan and Farozin, social and emotional learning abilities are reflected in self-perception, self-management, social awareness, social-relationship skills, and responsible decision-making [16]. Successful SEL programs are beneficial in improving students' cognitive abilities; making students more engaged in school; reducing inappropriate behavior and increasing positive development; enhancing academic performance; and improving students' life and school success. Moreover, the teachers' perceptions of social and emotional skills education impact the efficacy of implementing the social-emotional competency education program with students. Regardless of disparities in educational attainment and years of experience, teachers are aware of the need and challenges of implementing SEL in primary school classrooms [17]. From there, implement teaching methods compatible with students' ability to develop their SEL capacity [18]. The research of Datu and Restubog demonstrated that perseverance and adaptability are positively associated with social-emotional learning and indirectly associated with positive emotions *via* social-emotional learning [19]. Chen et al., demonstrated that fostering SEL competencies substantially impacts preventing problematic Internet use among adolescents [20]. In the study of Panayiotou et al., social and emotional interventions directly and indirectly, affect adolescents' mental health and academic performance [21]. The objective of school-based social and emotional literacy programs is to equip

students with the skills they need to overcome the challenges of life, thereby enhancing their emotional and social well-being and outcomes academic performance and decreasing the risk of mental health issues. Dowling et al., concluded that the Mind Out program is an SEL-related program that has been effective in creating positive outcomes for students, improving mental health, and developing social and emotional skills, including reducing emotional inhibitions, increasing positive coping strategies, reducing avoidant coping, and increasing supportive social coping [22]. However, differences in implementation quality negatively impact these program effects, as Dowling and Barry found that the quantity of Mind Out programming varies among schools [23]. When implemented, participants, teachers, the school environment, and the organizational ability impact the program's quality. Additionally, research conducted by Hoang and Vu suggested that both students and educators recognize the significance of social and emotional learning [24]. However, Dowling and Barry showed that SEL programs effectively produce positive student outcomes [25]. When the quality of implementation is inadequate, these programs frequently lose their efficacy and fail to produce the desired outcomes.

Social and emotional competency education programs have a further impact on the soft skill development of students. Educators implement a variety of SEL programs to train students in soft skills so that students can develop the skills necessary for career preparation. Hanley reported a shortage of information regarding strategies that promote empathy to reduce aggression and increase initiative in adolescents [26]. Employers in the United States are having difficulty hiring entry-level positions due to a widening skills disparity between those required of beginners and those acquired by high school students. Bosch demonstrated that online job readiness training enhanced scores in all eight soft skill categories: attitude, communication, collaboration, social skills, communication rules, planning and organization, critical thinking, and professionalism [27]. The study also revealed that students who participated in online training for job readiness improved their soft skills. According to research by Finch Brown, high school students face challenges; therefore, high schools are responsible for preparing students with sufficient skills for a rapidly changing economy [28]. The results also indicated that all students showed

proficiency in applying soft skills, as determined by the faculty. Additionally, research by Pfeiffer and Prado demonstrated that SEL programs in schools positively benefit students, involve parents and teachers, and strengthen the school-home relationship [29]. In addition, Felton discovered that students who had the opportunity to develop SEL-related soft skills were more successful after graduation than the national norm [30].

The key to promoting success is to develop in students the soft skills necessary for achievement in the workplace and life. Soft skills are also known as non-cognitive abilities, employ ability, and 21st-century skills [31]. It is not easy to define soft skills because the definition can vary depending on the context and because some skills can be classified as soft skills in specific fields [32]. The growing number of soft skills has contributed to this complexity. Soft skills have always been elusive [33]. Because of the nature of soft skills, they are difficult to observe and quantify. Therefore, there is no uniform definition of soft skills; each discipline, education sector, and nation define soft skills based on its requirements [34]. Soft skills are defined by Snell et al., as "skills, abilities, and characteristics related to personality, attitudes, and behaviors rather than formal or technical knowledge" [35]. Another definition of soft skills is internal and interpersonal skills, essential for personal development, social participation, and success in the workplace, distinguishing soft skills from hard skills [34]. Soft skills are referred to as necessary human abilities and include but are not limited to the following: soft skills for communication, critical thinking and problem solving, teamwork skills, conflict resolution, professional soft-skills in the workplace, adaptability, social intelligence soft skills, self-management skills, planning and organization skills, and workplace ethics [36]. Soft skills may differ, but according to Gibb, they all aim to enhance personal development, academic engagement, and career success [37]. Robles argued that if hard skills are technical expertise and knowledge necessary for a profession, soft skills are interpersonal qualities, also known as people skills [38]. Azim et al., concurred that hard skills are procedures, instruments, and techniques, while soft skills are problem-solving abilities humans possess [39]. Hard skills will affect students' professional knowledge, while soft skills will help students develop their emotional stability and personal growth. Soft skills education programs provide students with skills

concerning personality traits, nonverbal actions, and social communication that can be understood clearly through nonverbal behavior. Contrary to hard skills linked to specialized knowledge, soft skills are tied to an individual's personal emotional experiences throughout their lifetime. The combination of soft-skills education and hard-skills education will impact human development in the cultural environment of schools [40]. Okrah et al., concluded that school-based training programs teach students technical knowledge and some soft skills; however, this knowledge does not apply to the practical use employers frequently require in the workplace [41].

In Vietnam, parents and educators pay special attention to social skills. Currently, students are supported in developing soft skills from elementary through high school. Trung and Swierczek demonstrated that skills can be effectively developed through group exercises and learning approaches such as case studies, group discussions, and practice software implementation, particularly communication skills [42]. Developing skills is necessary for students to continue their education and be successful in work and life; however, traditional teaching methods, student passivity, and cultural factors have limited skill development among university students [43]. Currently, soft skills play an essential function in fostering economic growth, particularly in developing nations. Therefore, Truong and Laura argued that the emphasis on physical skills, while important, is insufficient to do justice to the variety of human resource skills currently regarded as crucial for effective global competition [44]. In the era of technology, students require a high level of competency training and training in developing soft skills. Vo et al., stated that soft skills are vital in the contemporary workplace, particularly Information Technology (IT), communication, and technical skills [45]. Teamwork and presentation skills are essential, but in the bachelor's training program, students' ability to develop these skills is generally limited. Yao and Tuliao found that lecturers provided practice opportunities for students to develop interpersonal skills [46]. Schools of higher education must consider curricula that foster the development of students' soft skills, create conditions for students to engage in group work, and deliver presentations to enhance their skills.

However, SEL implementation programs are limited despite the significance of the SEL model for implementing soft skills in secondary school students. This study examined the perceptions of high school students regarding implementing the SEL model in soft skills education. In addition, we investigate the obstacles to implementing the SEL model in education for soft skills.

Methodology

Participants

A quantitative research methodology was conducted. A total of 350 high school students (from grade 10 to grade 12) were randomly collected in Vietnam. The sample includes 124 students in grade 10 (35.4%), 86 in grade 11, and 140 in grade 12 (40%). There are 159 boys (45.4%) and 191 girls (54.6%). The time to learn soft skills of students were collected, with 221 students (63.1%) having studied soft skills for less than one year, 94 students (26.9%) having learned soft skills from 1-3 years, 20 students (5.7%) have studied soft skills for 4-6 years and 15 students (4.3%) have studied soft skills for more than six years (Table 1).

Table 1. Socio-demographic according to the Grade, Gender and Soft skills.

Participants			Total
Grade	Grade 10	124 (35.4%)	
	Grade 11	86 (24.6%)	
	Grade 12	140 (40%)	
Gender	Boys	159 (45.4%)	
	Girls	191 (54.6%)	350 (100%)
Soft skills	Below 1 year	221 (63.1%)	
	1-3 years	94 (26.9%)	
	4-6 years	20 (5.7%)	
	Above 6 years	15 (4.3%)	

Measurements

The social-emotional learning scale Vietnam version is adapted from Huynh et al. The 26-item eraser scale is based on the original scale of Buchanan et al., developed with 35 items [47]. The Likert 5 scale is used (1=Not at all, 2=Slightly, 3=Moderately, 4=Very, and 5=Extremely) to examine the students' perception of implementing the SEL model in soft skills education. The scale includes 4 sub-scales, including:

1. The level of students' perception of the

necessity of applying SEL to soft skills education;

2. The importance of SEL application in soft skills education;

3. The level of interest in applying the SEL model to soft skills education;

4. The influencing factors for the application of SEL model in soft skills education.

Procedure

The study aimed to investigate students' perception of implementing the SEL model on soft-skills education in high school. The survey was sent to students online. Before taking the survey, students will be asked about their voluntary consent to participate in the study. The purpose and significance of the study will be made available to the participants. Participants will be assured of anonymity and confidentiality when taking the survey, and they can stop taking it at any time if they feel uncomfortable or unsafe. The study then provided participants with guidance on how to conduct the survey. Finally, the participant conducts a survey, and the research team will explain if the participant has any questions about the topic. The information demographics were required in this research, including age, gender, grade, and time to be taught soft skills. Participants took 5-10 minutes to complete the survey. This is a supplement to the primary research findings of our project.

Results

The level of students' awareness of the importance of applying the SEL model to building soft skills education documents is shown in Table 2.

In which, with an average score of 2.70 (SD=1.15), the content is on "Responsible Decision Making (RDM)" was the highest rated. Followed by "Self-mastery" (Mean=2.67, SD=1.12), "Self-awareness" (Mean=2.62, SD=1.16), "Social awareness" (Mean=2.57, SD=1.16). And the content rated by students at the lowest level is "Mastering relationships" (Mean=2.55, SD=1.13) (Table 3).

Table 2. The importance of implementing the SEL model to develop soft skills.

Skills	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. deviation
Self-awareness	350	0	4	2.62	1.16
Social awareness	350	0	4	2.57	1.16
Self-mastery	350	0	4	2.67	1.12
Mastering relationships	350	0	4	2.55	1.13
Responsible decision making	350	0	4	2.7	1.15
Valid N (list wise)	350	-	-	-	-

Table 3. The students' level of interest in the implementation of the SEL model in soft skills education.

Skills	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. deviation
Self-awareness	350	0	4	2.51	1.14
Social awareness	350	0	4	2.47	1.08
Self-mastery	350	0	4	2.57	1.11
Mastering relationships	350	0	4	2.5	1.11
Responsible Decision Making	350	0	4	2.59	1.16
Valid N (list wise)	350	-	-	-	-

Table 3 showed students' interest in the application of the SEL model in soft skills education. Students rated the content "Responsible decision making" the highest with an average score of 2.59 (SD=1.16). Following that is "Self-mastery" (Mean=2.57, SD=1.11); "Self-awareness" (Mean=2.51, SD=1.14); and "Mastering relationships" (Mean=2.50, SD=1.11). Finally, the content about "Social awareness" (Mean=2.47, SD=1.08) is rated as the lowest level by students in applying the SEL model to soft skills education (Table 4).

Table 4 showed the factors affecting the application of the SEL model in building soft skills educational materials for students. Students evaluated highly the contents of "Pressure on academic performance" (Mean=2.37, SD=1.15) and "Students are unaware of the SEL model" (Mean=2.37, SD=1.19) in the factors affecting implementing the SEL model in soft skills education. Other contents are also considered, such as: "Teachers lack knowledge of implementing the SEL model for developing soft skills education for students" (Mean=2.34, SD=1.17); "Schools lacking strategies for implementing the SEL model in soft skills education" (Mean=2.33, SD=1.12); "Teachers lack the capacity to implement the SEL model to teach students soft skills" (Mean=2.29, SD=1.20); "Schools have not considered implementing the SEL model to develop students' soft skills as essential and necessary" (Mean=2.26, SD=1.18); "The implementation of the SEL model to develop soft skills education for students does not concern teachers" (Mean=2.26, SD=1.16); In contrast, students assessed the factors "Parents do not expect students to learn soft skills based on SEL model implementation" (Mean=1.91, SD=1.27) and "Students have no expectation of SEL model implementation in social skills education" (Mean=2.12, SD=1.23) is at the lowest level among the factors affecting the application of SEL model in soft skills education (Table 5).

Table 5 showed the differences between the grade level in the perception of the importance and interest of students and the factors affecting the application of the SEL model in soft skills education. Kruskal Wallis is considered a rank-based a non-parametric alternative to the one-way analysis of variance to allow for comparison of more than two independent groups [48,49]. The results indicated that there are significantly different statistics in PISM (X2=12.607, p<0.05), IISM (X2=15.127, p<0.05), FO (X2=6.395, p<0.05) among grade level in high school. That mean, grade 11 students have higher scores (Mean Rank=201.75) in PISM than grade 10 students (Mean Rank=181.14) and grade 12 students (Mean Rank=154.38), as well as grade 11 have higher scores (Mean Rank=207.26) in IISM than grade 10 (Mean Rank=177.35) and grade 12 (Mean Rank=154.35). Additionally, in Factors Obstacle (FO) the grade 11 students have higher score (Mean Rank=199.26) than grade 10 students (Mean Rank=166.77) and grade 12 students (Mean Rank=168.64). Therefore, there are significant differences among grade levels in Importance of Implementing the SEL Model (PISM), Interest in the Implementation of the SEL Model (IISM), and Factors Obstacle (FO).

Table 4. Factors influencing the implementation of the SEL model in students' soft skills education.

Items	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. deviation
Insufficient time to implement the SEL model in soft skills education for students	350	0	4	2.2	1.13
Pressure on academic performance	350	0	4	2.37	1.15
Schools lacking strategies for implementing the SEL model in soft skills education	350	0	4	2.33	1.12
Lack of facilities	350	0	4	2.25	1.21
Students have no expectation of SEL model implementation in social skills education	350	0	4	2.12	1.23
Parents do not expect students to learn soft skills based on SEL model implementation	350	0	4	1.91	1.27
Students are unaware of the SEL model	350	0	4	2.37	1.19
Teachers lack knowledge of implementing the SEL model for developing soft skills education for students	350	0	4	2.34	1.17

Teachers lack the capacity to implement the SEL model to teach students soft skills	350	0	4	2.29	1.2
Schools have not considered implementing the SEL model to develop students' soft skills as essential and necessary	350	0	4	2.26	1.18
The implementation of the SEL model to develop soft skills education for students does not concern teachers	350	0	4	2.26	1.16
Valid N (list wise)	350	-	-	-	-

Table 5. Kruskal-Wallis test for the differences between grade levels in implementing the SEL model for soft skills.

Grade		N	Mean rank	Chi-square/X^2	Df	Asymp. sig
PISM	10	124	181.14	12.607	2	0.002
	11	86	201.75			
	12	140	154.38			
	10	124	177.35			
IISM	11	86	207.26	15.127	2	0.001
	12	140	154.35			
	10	124	166.77			
FO	11	86	199.26	6.395	2	0.041
	12	140	168.64			

Note: p<0.05, PISM=The importance of Implementing the SEL Model, IISM=The level of Interest in the Implementation of the SEL Model, FO=Factors Obstacle.

Discussion

This study aims to investigate how high school students perceive the implementation of the SEL model in soft skills education. Students were aware of the necessity and significance of implementing the SEL model into education for soft skills. In addition, the results revealed the students' interest in implementing the SEL model in soft skills education as well as the obstacles to implementing the SEL model. Students' perceptions of the importance, necessity, and interest in implementing the SEL model in soft skills education vary significantly according to grade level.

The findings indicated that students are aware of the importance and necessity of implementing the SEL model in soft skills education and are also interested in implementing the SEL model in soft skills education. Similar to this finding, Morgan et al., reported that social and emotional learning skills are required for college and career readiness, as lacking these skills is frequently associated with negative behavior and academic deficits

[50]. The implementation of SEL in classrooms is effective in enhancing students' soft skills, thereby enhancing their ability to grow in life and realize their complete potential. According to research by Felton, students who were given opportunities to develop SEL-related soft skills were better prepared for following graduation success. Employers and educational institutions are emphasizing soft skills or non-cognitive skills that are essential for education and work in the twenty-first century and predict success in these fields [51]. Employers seek candidates with soft skills strengthened through SEL programs to optimize collaboration and work coordination [52]. Prior research by Kyllonen highlighted the significance of soft skills for success in the workplace and the role of SEL skills in post-secondary success [53]. It also emphasizes that concentrating on these skills will positively affect a person's emotional and social skills. Social and emotional competency education programs also influence the development of students' soft skills. Educators implement a variety of SEL programs to educate students in soft skills to acquire the skills necessary to prepare for future careers. Bosch

demonstrated that those who participated in online job readiness training scored higher in all eight soft skill categories: attitude, communication, collaboration, social skills, communication norms, planning and organization, critical thinking, and professionalism. After participating in online job readiness training, students were able to overcome soft skill problems, according to the study. Research by Pfeiffer and Prado suggested that school SEL programs positively benefit students, involve parents and teachers, and foster a stronger relationship between school and home.

The results highlighted the factors that influence the implementation of the SEL model in soft skills education. Similar to this study's findings, Elliott and Mihalic reported that although teachers regard SEL programs, lacking a national curriculum guideline on social and emotional development makes this approach challenging [54]. Each school's SEL program is different and primarily dependent on their interests and motivations, which will impact the efficacy of instruction. In addition to teaching, the teacher is responsible for developing effective learning situations [55]. Schonert-Reichl et al., further showed that while most teachers believe that SEL is a component of instruction, most teacher preparation programs in the United States do not adequately educate teachers to be SEL educators [56]. The support of school administrators for the SEL program in instruction will positively influence teachers' perceptions of such programs' value [57]. Teachers mentioned a lack of time to implement social-emotional learning measures and content as a significant barrier to implementing the SEL model in high schools. However, other influential factors regarding humans (such as parents, administrators, and policymakers) and factors (such as risk factors, socioeconomic status, race, and culture) have the potential to influence the adoption of the SEL model [58]. The results also showed that students' perceptions of the importance, necessity, and interest in implementing the SEL model to soft skills education vary significantly in grade level. Previous research supported the need for educational programs and methods to develop SEL skills in secondary schools [59,60]. Program-focused SEL initiatives typically do not prioritize SEL skills in elementary and high schools. However, high school students should prioritize SEL. In addition, Wetzel analyzed the difference between the SEL results of students in the Fall of 2019, Fall of 2020, and Fall of 2021 [61]. High school students reported the lowest levels of social awareness among the three grade levels in each of the three years. High school students consistently reported having difficulties with social awareness and anxiety compared to students in the other two grade levels. There are differences in SEL performance across grade levels because each classroom has its own set of standards based on the task at hand and the student's stage of development.

In this study, several limitations were analyzed. As this is a self-reported study that reflects the level of opinion, biases may affect the study's objectivity. In addition, since research is conducted using self-reported questionnaires, participants' sincerity should be considered. Future research should conduct additional empirical studies or in-depth interviews to investigate further the application of the SEL model to the education of soft skills. Because this was a cross-sectional study, the results were not evaluated for causality; experimental studies must clarify. This study examines only students' awareness of the significance of the SEL model and the barriers to implementing the SEL model in soft-skills education. The level of effectiveness and the soft skills students acquire through the SEL program should be examined. However, the study's results do contribute to theory and practice. The study added evidence to the global scientific database regarding the admission of high school students to the SEL model. Although there have been numerous studies on the efficacy of SEL implementation, minimal is known about the obstacles to SEL implementation in soft-skills instruction. It also implies that school administrators should implement the SEL model and support, monitor, and evaluate program effectiveness to ensure that program objectives are met and that students acquire social and emotional skills. There is a need for national policies that elevate the significance of SEL and place the SEL model at the center of education to integrate it with existing educational priorities. In addition, the study suggested that the SEL model should be implemented with students as early as possible to promote long-term improvements in adolescent development. This study sheds light on the obstacles impeding the successful adoption of the SEL model. The study's findings revealed the significance of instituting effective, research based SEL programs in high schools.

Conclusion

The majority of studies indicated that social and

emotional learning programs aid high school students in reducing tension, adapting to new social environments, and coping with life's challenges. Simultaneously, SEL programs help students develop soft skills essential in the modern economic environment, increasing job opportunities and preparing students for success in the workplace and life. This research aims to investigate the perceived need, significance, and barriers to implementing the social-emotional learning model in soft skills education.

The results indicated that students are aware of and interested in implementing the SEL model in soft skills education and that several factors impede its effective application. Research indicated that educators and school administrators must effectively implement the SEL model in teaching social skills. The study is also concerned with implementing interventions and supports to eliminate the barriers to SEL model implementation in soft skills education. From there, assist students in acquiring new-age skills and achieving success.

Acknowledgement

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