

ABSTRACT

Aaron J. Willette, WHAT'S CULTURE GOT TO DO WITH IT? A SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING PROGRAM IN AN INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL (Under the direction of Dr. Matthew Militello). Department of Educational Leadership, May 2021.

Social emotional skills are a necessary component of student learning in both the cognitive and affective domains of learning. International schools are particularly complex environments for incorporating social emotional learning (SEL) as cultural factors often complicate the school community's perception of the need for SEL and the content of the curriculum. In an international school in Thailand, we fostered an SEL program for secondary students. Using participatory action research methodology, a co-practitioner research team collected data from interviews, observations, and reflective memos to explore how cultural influences shaped the supports and inhibitors to implementing an SEL program. Cultural influences from students' homes, the community, student dynamics in the classroom, and teachers' professional knowledge and skills all influenced the conception and expression of SEL competencies. Most members of the school community—teachers, students, and parents—believed social-emotional skills were necessary for academic success and students' future lives although for different reasons. However, teachers needed additional professional development so they could explicitly include social emotional learning in their lessons. For international schools considering how to integrate SEL and their academic program, attention to all elements of the cultural context is crucial.

WHAT'S CULTURE GOT TO DO WITH IT?
A SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING PROGRAM IN AN INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

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by

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A SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING PROGRAM IN AN INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

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DEDICATION

This PAR study was supported by the most crucial people in my life who have sacrificed their time and rearranged their life to make this happen. I dedicate this to my wife, Petra Willette, and daughter, Guinevere. Thank you for your help, support, and understanding.

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The CMIS administration team who worked with me to foster a SEL program that will support CMIS students for years to come.

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CHAPTER ONE: NAMING AND FRAMING THE FOCUS OF PRACTICE

It was a Wednesday morning in mid-October, I was coming back to my office from morning supervision when I found an 11-grade student named Ella and her father waiting for me outside my office door. Their body language told me something was not right. We entered my office and sat around the table. I knew from my interactions with Ella that she was intelligent and caring and had a supportive group of friends. She was sobbing quietly.

Her father looked frustrated at his inability to do anything to help her. He told me about the struggles she had been having with her course load. She was taking AP Chemistry, AP Psychology, and Pre-calculus. In a quiet voice, she said, "I just want to drop out for this semester... I just want to start over next year." I looked up her records and saw what I expected: a nearly 4.0 student. However, her current grades were all in the D or C range. Something was affecting her academic success.

I asked her what she believed was causing the most anxiety and feelings of failure. "All of it, I guess," she replied. After a few more probing questions, Ella opened up about how the stress before tests made it impossible for her to focus. She struggled to organize and prioritize the demands of her schoolwork. Her anxiety was causing her to lose sleep. The stress was also impacting her relationships with friends and family.

After Ella confided to us about what was troubling her, I talked to our counselors. Together with the counselors, they worked on self-awareness and management skills. She started taking yoga classes and learned strategies to manage her anxiety and stress. Soon after she began her regular meetings, she started to improve her grades; her friendships returned to normal, and we saw her in the office less and less. Ella graduated with her class in June 2019 and is currently attending a university in the United States.

Ella's experience is not uncommon. Many students struggle with a multitude of social-emotional challenges such as self-identity, resilience, confidence, time management, relationships, organization, and the development and interpersonal relationships. All these struggles create stress on students that cause them to sometimes falter in achieving their academic goals. In this participatory action research project at Chiang Mai International School (CMIS) high school in northern Thailand, we set out to better understand how teachers, counselors, and administrators could understand the benefits of social-emotional learning (SEL) and incorporate the SEL strategies in our classrooms and school. When schools create an effective social-emotional learning (SEL) program, students' academic achievement improves, and they enjoy a lifetime of better mental and physical health (U.S. Department of Education, 2007). If our students are to reach their full potential, their affective understanding needs to be fostered in the same way we nurture their cognitive growth (Belfield et al., 2015). With active participation from students, teachers, and counselors, we engaged in iterative cycles of inquiry to understand what factors inhibited or supported becoming a more socially-emotionally healthy school.

For purposes of research, we organized a smaller team, a Co-Practitioner Researcher (CPR) team, who met regularly and examined evidence to make decisions about next steps as we proceeded through three cycles of inquiry. Our ultimate goal was to foster the use of SEL principles and competencies at an international school in both classroom instruction and in student interactions with teachers and counselors. However, first, we needed to engage in a deeper understanding of our context and develop a community-based strategic approach for our SEL program.

In this chapter, I identify and discuss the focus of practice and describe the importance of

SEL and the possible impact on academic achievement. I explain the purpose of this study, outline the research questions it sets out to answer, introduce both the participatory action research (PAR) design and the three-cycle inquiry process. Finally, I discuss the significance of the project with special attention to the international school context. The overarching purpose of this study was to design approaches that fostered students' SEL competencies with a key factor of understanding the connection of SEL to culturally responsive practices in the international context. The chapter concludes with a brief discussion of ethical considerations and study limitations.

Focus of Practice

The focus of practice was to design a social-emotional learning program that better supported students' social-emotional learning. The Collaborative for Academic Social Emotional Learning (CASEL, 2020) defines 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 maintain supportive relationships, and make responsible and caring decisions.

SEL is supported by the CASEL framework for understanding the affective domain of learning with five competencies: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skill, and responsible decision-making (see Figure 1). As is clear from the framework, the five elements are embedded in concentric circles of classroom, school, family and caregivers, and community. We needed in this project to determine how we could work across those audiences in our school to understand SEL and make decisions about how to infuse in the high school program.

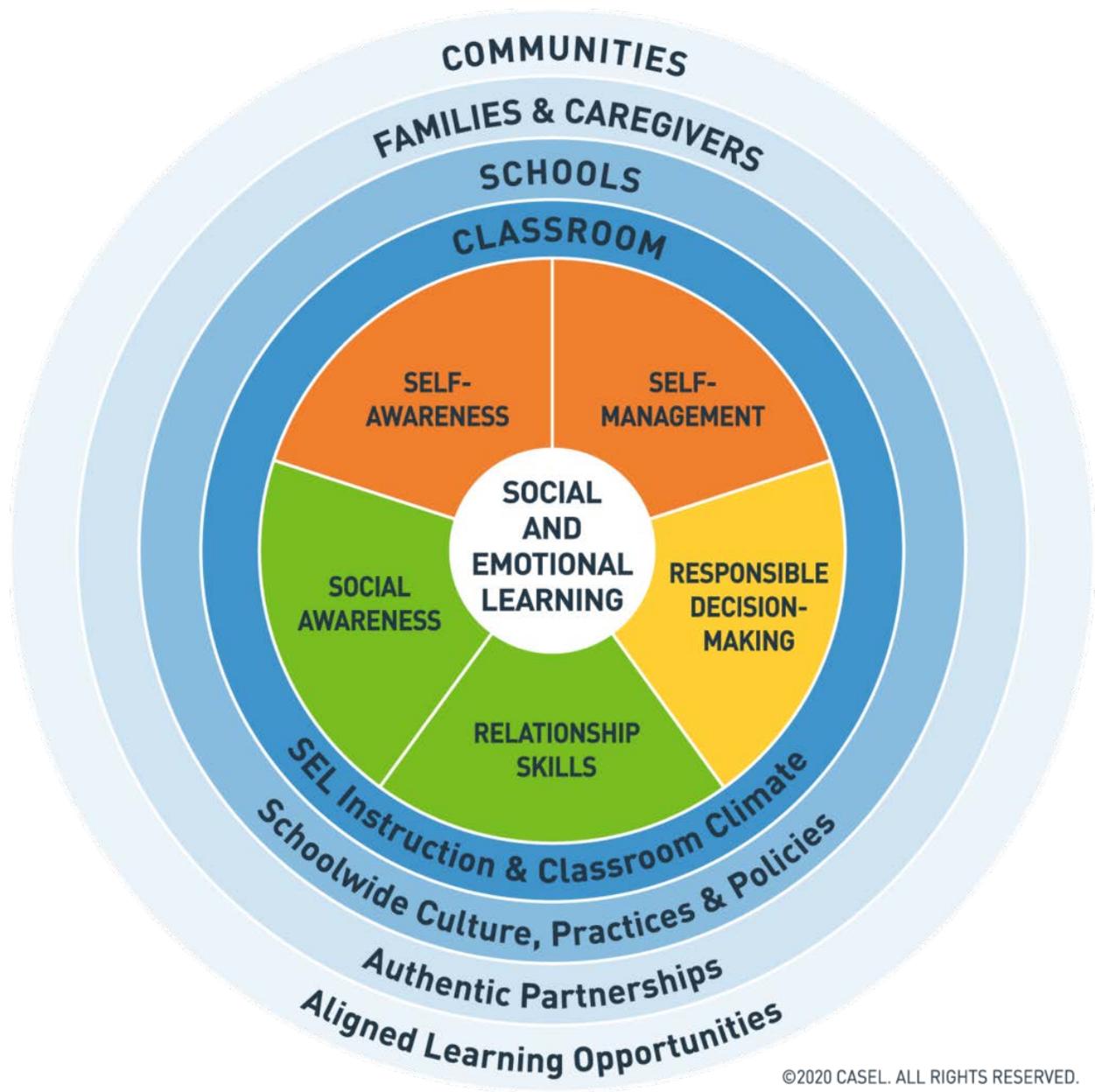


Figure 1. Framework for social and emotional learning.

First, I present the conceptual frameworks in which grounded the study. The theoretical frameworks that guided this study derive from a social-constructionist theory (Vygotsky, 1978) and the idea that our learning is a collaborative and social process. We relied on the Freirean concept of “generativity,” the idea that we learn from each other and knowledge is co-constructed and iterative or a process of generating evidence to inform next steps (Freire, 1970). I outline the conceptual frameworks that make up the socio-cultural, political, philosophical, economic, and psychological foundations of the context and purpose of the study (see Figure 2).

Then, I formed the Co-Practitioner Researcher team (CPR) group and we met to determine the assets and challenges related to the study. In exploring the focus of practice, we discussed the five SEL competencies and the extent to which SEL principles of social-emotional learning could inform our ability to enact those competencies and simultaneously honor diverse cultures. The fishbone diagram (see Figure 3) illustrates the assets and challenges that we faced while carrying out this PAR (Bryk et al., 2015) and implementing changes to current SEL education. I highlight the assets and challenges in a revised fishbone analysis of micro, meso, and macro assets and challenges (Rosenthal, 2019).

Teachers, counselors, and administrators are a key asset and play a crucial role in teaching and modeling SEL competencies. They can model SEL dispositions in both their formal and informal interactions with students and make a positive impact on the school environment. Teacher evaluation systems that include a quadrant that specifies the “classroom environment” or the “student-teacher relationship” support our direction (Danielson, 2013). Teachers can use a variety of techniques to acknowledge and honor their students; some are minimal use of SEL like greeting students at the door and having students work in diverse ability groups, and others are more intentional like using questioning techniques that require students to incorporate the

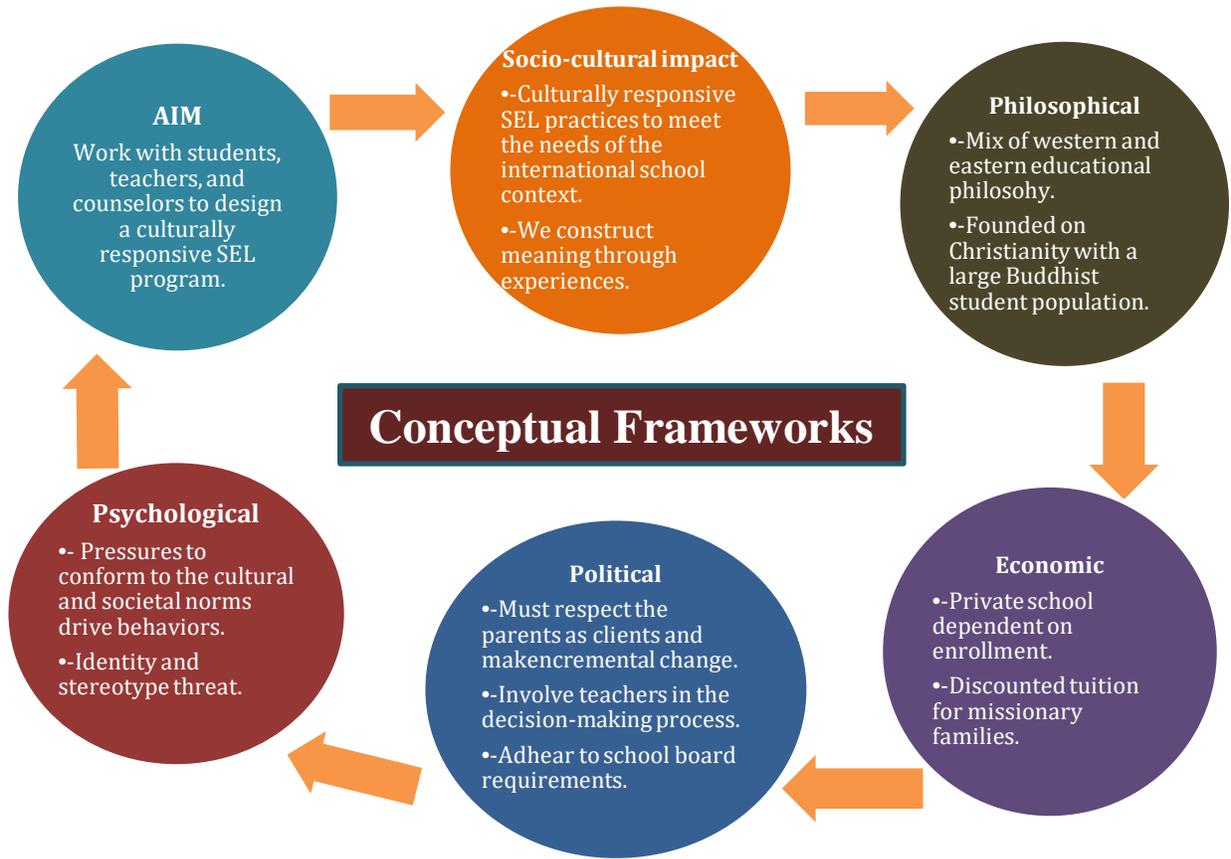


Figure 2. Conceptual frameworks surrounding this study.



Figure 3. Fishbone analysis of assets and challenges.

perspectives of others. While most teachers use some, they are not always intentional about the use of a variety of strategies that build their strengths as teachers in the affective domain, nor that of students. As a result of this project focus, we worked with teachers to incorporate more intentional practices, which, in turn, stimulated students to practice SEL competencies more systematically. Directing ourselves to this focus of practice, in the PAR, we examined how students, teachers, and counselors at CMIS committed to those practices and exhibited SEL principles and dispositions. In addition, we explored how we engaged the power of the school community to teach the SEL curriculum in ways that tailored to that community and culturally responsive to the individual students and their needs.

A key factor that was both an asset and challenge is the unique and diverse cultures of international school communities which have a significant impact on the SEL needs of students. To achieve the goal of fostering SEL on campus and in classroom instruction, we engaged the community in recognizing the economic forces, cultural norms, philosophical differences, and school political environment that is present in the school community. Because the SEL framework was designed for a western and primarily U.S. audience, we needed to determine its viability in our situation.

As stated by Guajardo et al. (2016), the community must first have an awareness of what needs to be changed. Without an awareness of what exactly needs to change there is no community support, without community support there can be no lasting change. We investigated the school's diverse cultures, current beliefs about the purpose of education, teacher professional learning practices, and everyday interactions as a prerequisite to enacting purposeful change. A culturally responsive, school specific SEL program is essential for multi-national school communities to achieve greater academic success. For students, teachers, and counselors at Chiang Mai International School (CMIS), this research had the potential to significantly improve their lives in

and out of school. Next, I detail the research questions that provided direction to the project and study.

The PAR addressed the overarching question: *How can our school foster a social-emotional program that better supports students' social-emotional learning?* To answer this question, a set of more specific sub-questions guided this project:

1. What are the factors that support and inhibit students' social-emotional learning in secondary classrooms?
2. To what extent did the SEL program honor diverse cultures?
3. How did this process make me a more collaborative school leader?

The study lent itself to participatory action research methodology because it relied on community members to facilitate change and a co-practitioner research (CPR) team to provide feedback on evidence to make collaborative decisions about next steps. The CPR team included two counselors, two teachers, two students, and one parent. In the next section, I explain the specific PAR design and detail how I collected and analyze the data necessary to answer these questions.

To collect and analyze evidence, I used protocols for observations, interviews, and artifacts that I analyzed for meaning and shared with the CPR team. I explain data collection and analysis process in more detail in Chapter Four. The CPR team worked to understand how students, teachers, and counselors infused SEL strategies over a three-cycle research plan. We analyzed and made adjustments after each cycle. The end goal was to build a culturally responsive SEL program that fosters social-emotional learning into the academic program.

Participatory Action Research Project Design

Students, educators, and parents at an international school in Northern Thailand were the participants in this study. The study focused on the how we, as a school community, could address the CASEL competencies of self-awareness, self-management, social-awareness, healthy

relationship building, and responsible decision-making and plan to infuse them in classroom instruction. We used the PAR methodology as it leverages knowledge of the community member who can then enact change to the approach the school has on SEL (Herr & Anderson, 2014). We used the community learning exchange (CLE) axioms and pedagogy, paying particular attention to these axioms: (1) learning and leadership are dynamic social processes; (2) conversations are critical and central pedagogical processes; and (3) the people closest to the issues are best situated to discover answers to local concerns (Guajardo et al., 2016). The CLE axioms supported community members in coming together to share their ideas and make collaborative decisions. The data collection process occurred through community learning exchanges, interviews, and classroom observations. Chapter Four details the specific methodology and data collection process in the study.

Aim Statement and Theory of Action

The aim of this study was to explore how teachers and counselors might first understand what supports and inhibits using social emotional learning in our context and then design a program to infuse culturally responsive SEL competencies into classroom instruction. The theory of action for the PAR: If we better understand how social-emotional learning affects learning and understand what factors inhibit and support an SEL program in our school, then we can design and implement a program that responds to the SEL framework and the cultural context of our school.

Cycles of Inquiry

During the PAR project, the CPR team and I conducted three cycles of inquiry and applied the improvement science concept of “plan, do, study, act” to inform the SEL program approach at CMIS (Bryk et al., 2015). We triangulated our findings through multiple methods of

data collection, which including observations, interviews, and the generation of artifacts created by participants during CPR meetings and CLE. Throughout this process, I recorded my personal reflections to document how this PAR has affected my own ability to be a more generative, democratic, and collaborative school leader.

I selected a PAR approach because the design focus is social and community-oriented and aims at “improving and empowering individuals in schools, systems of education, and school communities” (Creswell & Guetterman, 2018, p. 592). Each step of the “plan, do, study, act” process is oriented to the improvement of the CMIS SEL program (Bryk et al., 2015). A PAR methodology allowed us to adhere to the concept of praxis which brought the voices of the people to serve the school community (Freire, 1970). The PAR the methodology was best suited to support the theory of action and aim of the study.

The first cycle began in the fall of 2019. The CPR team collected data through classroom observations, artifacts created during the CLEs, and interviews of students, teachers, and counselors. The team then analyzed the data to learn about SEL competencies and what students needed to gain greater SEL competencies. Through dialoging with representatives from the school community we found influences on the way students learn SEL skills along with areas that required further exploration. Together with the CPR, we then created an action plan to implement for Cycle Two.

During the second cycle of inquiry in the spring of 2020, we collected data on students’ social-emotional learning. The school provided teachers with professional development opportunities and curricula to inform their pedagogical strategies. We collected data on how teachers and counselors were exhibiting SEL dispositions, and the impact of professional learning on teacher’s capacity to increase SEL instruction. The CPR team collected and analyzed

data from classroom observations, artifacts created during the CLEs, and interviews of students, teachers, and counselors. We searched for evidence for the way in which students, teachers, and counselors are demonstrating a commitment to SEL competencies. Based on the data analysis, the CPR planned the next steps for the third cycle of data collection.

In the third cycle in the fall of 2020, the CPR again collected data from classroom observations, artifacts, and interviews. Together, the CPR team reflected on the influence our research and suggestions had on building a culturally responsive SEL program that supports students' social-emotional learning in the academic program. We determined to what extent the school institution and culture have shifted to adopt the philosophy and principles of SEL. We built foundational structure, policies, and curriculum materials to support the SEL program. The team learned the necessary structures needed to support an SEL program and recorded the pressures that influence students' use of social-emotional competencies. The three cycles provided valuable insight into our school's work to foster a social-emotional program that supports students' social-emotional learning. However, we discovered that while there were several factors that supported SEL, there was a lack of structure that inhibited implementation.

Summary

When teachers infuse their instruction with techniques to bolster social-emotional competencies, students' academic achievements improve (U.S. Department of Education, 2007). However, programs need to be flexible enough to adapt to local needs and our situation was a unique one (Bailey et al., 2019). This section addressed the focus of practice for a PAR research study based on a three-cycle inquiry process. This PAR focused on building skills on the competencies defined by CASEL. Through the inclusion of members of the CMIS community, this PAR produced actionable suggestions for the school to consider. In the next section, I

introduce the axioms of community learning exchanges and the concepts of improvement science that was implemented during this study.

Project Setting and Participation

This study took place at Chiang Mai International School (CMIS), a private Christian school in Northern Thailand. The school has a population of 500 students in kindergarten through 12th grade and uses the Common Core American State Standards. I utilized members from the CMIS community to help me as Co-Practitioner Researchers (CPR). The CPR team was comprised of two counselors, two teachers, two students, and one parent. Together, we looked at the focus of practice and identified assets and challenges. The PAR was conducted over 18 months using a three-cycle inquiry process. We shared results with the community in the spring of 2021. Careful attention was paid to protecting the confidentiality, privacy, and anonymity of the participants. In addition, we paid close attention to other ethical considerations for respecting the site and giving equal treatment to participants. We obtained IRB approval from the university to ensure an ethical and confidential study (Creswell & Creswell, 2018, p. 89). In Chapter Three, I explain in detail the unique context of the study site.

Significance

This study was designed to have an impact on how SEL competencies are understood and implemented in a cultural situation quite different than the US, the source of the original competencies. In the vignette at the beginning of this chapter, I talked about a young woman who was to find academic success impart due to a lack of self-management skills. However, once the faculty started to support her social-emotional learning skills, her academic achievement improved. In this section, I discuss the significance of this study on the CMIS community and how it relates to the greater body of knowledge. When a school has an effective SEL program, it

can support and accelerate student academic growth, build equity, and strengthen the overall community.

Significance at Chiang Mai International School

This study is significant to the CMIS community as it aimed to support and address SEL needs that students currently were not fully receiving. The PAR aim was to work with students, teachers, and counselors to foster a culturally responsive SEL program that can support students' academic and social-emotional growth. Having a better organized and supported SEL program had the potential to build a more equitable school community. This PAR study had an impact on the CMIS community as it provided students and teachers with a greater understanding of SEL competencies that could increase their overall physical and mental health. This study could motivate the community to modify the school's philosophy, mission, and vision to include an explicit focus on SEL, and it could lead to a re-allocation of funds to provide professional development opportunities for faculty as well as the adoption of a school-wide curriculum to teach SEL skills to students.

In turn, having healthier social emotional outcomes for individual students is an issue of equity, as they can, through understanding themselves and others, have greater access and success in the academic curriculum. Beyond the CMIS experience, the study also could have an impact on how other international schools address SEL as we learn the effect of a community-specific, culturally responsive SEL program on our school site. The experience of a co-generated, culturally responsive SEL program transformed the way teachers, students, and parents address the SEL competencies.

Significance to Equity

All students can benefit from an SEL program as the competencies inherently support

appreciation for diversity, relationship building, and empathy. As the vignette at the beginning of the chapter indicates, even high achieving students struggle with SEL competencies.

Neurodiverse students can benefit from a focus on SEL, and the skills promote inclusion of all students. The study provided a possible opportunity to increase equity for students because social emotional strong students are more productive in their academic pursuits. Students, teachers, and the larger school community gained skills that foster inclusivity and understanding. Appreciating diversity, being able to take other perspectives, and respect for others are SEL competencies that help bridge gaps between people and build equity within a community.

Significance to Research

The idea of “community” is changing due to the growing use of technology. Online communities have replaced more traditional face-to-face interactions, and children are exposed to a broader community through social media (Madrigan, 2017). This exposure has both positive and negative effects and can lead to children feeling inadequate, intimidated, or depressed (O’Keeffe & Clarke-Pearson, 2011). Students need to be taught valuable skills to self-manage and to build relationships both in real life and virtually. The skills and competencies defined by CASEL can be embedded in regular classroom instruction and can be incorporated into cognitive assessments. Given the much more expansive access to external stimuli through electronic media, children need to learn these skills through a program that explicitly address these interactions. An SEL program that is co-generated by counselors, teachers, and students allows the voices of the community to be acknowledged and honored. This could have a significant impact on CMIS students’ academic achievement, build a more equitable learning community, and contribute knowledge to the greater international school community.

Confidentiality, Ethical Considerations, and Study Limitations

This study is limited to the CMIS and its specific culture, geography, student body, and teaching faculty. The adult participants and the parents of the two students who took part as Co-Practitioner Researchers signed consent forms; any person could decide to stop participation at any time without penalty. I stored the data in a secure place and will destroy the evidence after three years. I addressed issues of credibility, transferability, dependability, and conformability as recommended by Lincoln and Guba (1985).

The limitations of the study included the size, the cultural context, and unexpected issues related to COVID-19. This was a small study in a secondary school in Thailand, and its findings may pertain to specific types of schools. Because of the cultural context of Thailand and the diverse student body, including monitoring some students who were homeschooled, the study may have limited adaptability. However, the processes we used for engaging, including the community learning exchanges, and the protocols and tools we used could be replicated by any school. Because of the caution of adapting the SEL components to the local context (Bailey et al., 2019), the specific findings and decisions we made may not be useful to other contexts.

Conclusion

Ella's story at the beginning of the chapter illustrates the power that explicitly teaching social-emotional strategies so students can flourish in their academic studies, friendships, and all-around well-being. The aim of the study was to foster a culturally responsive SEL program that supports student academic and social-emotional growth. A PAR methodology was chosen as it is focused on the people of the place and can provide a community-based solution. Over a three cycle process a group of community members in a CPR team worked with the larger community to find actionable solutions to foster a SEL program in an international school.

In Chapter Two, I address the current research conducted on social-emotional learning as it pertains to this study is presented. The importance of building from the knowledge of others is vital to the current research being done on SEL. In Chapter Three, I describe the context of this school and micro-culture that exists on the campus. In Chapter Four, I explain the research design, including how the CPR team was utilized and the methodology design fitted to explore the research questions. In Chapters Five through Seven, I detail the three iterative research cycles and the collection process and analysis processes. Finally, in Chapter Eight, I offer the discussion of findings and their implications both locally and the broader educational field.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

During my first year as a middle school administrator in Kuwait, I learned a valuable lesson about taking time to build relationships with students. The school had an good mix of host nationals and expatriate students. I had a group of energetic and fun-loving sixth-grade Kuwaiti boys who were all good friends. Their fun often led to visits to my office. It seemed like every week, sometimes every day, at least one member of the group was in my office for not adhering to the code of conduct in some way. By December, I was out of options for helping these boys, and I was getting frustrated with them.

After one occurrence, I was discussing with the counselor how to guide the group's behavior. My co-worker, a middle school administrator and Kuwaiti national, often talked about what it means to be a part of a specific culture. She gave me a piece of advice that changed the way I approached the boys and their disruptive behavior. "You have to care about them, make them feel that you care about them. It is important that they feel respected." After that conversation, I made a concerted effort to get to know the boys and not react to their behavior until I had analyzed their actions through the lens of culture and their personal motivations. I needed to understand the social dynamics of their family's tribal positions and the expectations for them to protect and defend their family members from insult as well as their need to establish respect from their peers through a projection of masculinity. These pressures often led to conflicts both verbal and physical and distractions during class.

Slowly, the boys and I started to have meaningful conversations about behavior, self-management, and social awareness. They become more aware of their actions and could talk about the impact on the classroom environment. Their weekly visits became less frequent. Although they were still full of energy and joking around, their relationships improved within the

group and with their teachers. By the time the boys entered the seventh grade, they were less disruptive and more self-aware. If I had not taken the time to get to know them and to understand their action through the cultural pressures they experienced, I don't think they would have listened to me. I needed to understand who they were on a personal level and the cultural pressures they were under to support their social-emotional and academic growth.

Writing about my experiences with students comes naturally to me because, as the vignette above illustrates, my teaching and leadership experiences provide a trove of stories. However, writing about the research that surrounds the social-emotional learning (SEL) of students has proved more of a challenge. Two terms originally came to mind when I began thinking about the literature that anchors the research project: *affective* and *social emotional learning*. These are at the core of what I believe to be essential to understanding the research project and the learning process. I use affective and SEL throughout the chapter. The social-emotional learning concepts are interrelated but distinct. SEL is the process through which children and adults acquire and apply the knowledge, and skills necessary to manage emotions, and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions (CASEL, 2021). Anderson et al. (2001) describe affective learning as the manner in which we respond to events emotionally, such as feelings, values, appreciation, enthusiasms, motivations, and attitudes as we develop a sense of our values about interacting with others and eventually internalize those values. Cognitive learning domain refers intellectual skills including knowledge, comprehension, application, analyze, evaluate, and create (Anderson et al., 2001). Affective and cognitive learning are complementary to each other. Bloom et al. (1956) designed the affective domain of learning objectives to use in conjunction with the cognitive domain; in fact, the highest degree of the cognitive domain (evaluate, synthesize, and create) intersects with developing and

internalizing values (Tredway, 2000). Student learning increases when both are implemented with equal importance. A third domain, psycho-motor, refers to the actions that students should take as they learn: first perceiving and then having a guided response and eventually adjusting and adapting, as the boys did, by self-managing.

Bloom's affective and psychomotor domains are directly connected to *social-emotional learning* (SEL). Defined by the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL), SEL is "the process through which children and adults understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions" (CASEL, 2020). The social-emotional skills are applied in classrooms to increase both cognitive, psychomotor, and affective learning and used outside classrooms in all social interactions and emotional situations. Teaching and learning require an understanding of the various influences that have an impact on how we learn. As in the opening vignette, once the boys became aware of their behavior and noticed the impact their behavior had on others, they made changes to adapt to their newly acquired knowledge. Not only did their relationships improve with peers, but their classroom instruction time increased as they were removed from class less frequently. Figure 4 illustrates the relationship among Bloom's affective, cognitive, and psychomotor learning domains. When students are engaged in all three domains, learning potential can increase.

In this chapter, I explore the connections within the research literature surrounding (1) affective learning, (2) SEL infused into classroom instruction, and (3) the influence of cultural context in international schools. I begin by presenting the research conducted on affective learning and the lifelong impact SEL can have on students on supporting student academic achievement, social interactions, and overall physical and mental health. The second section

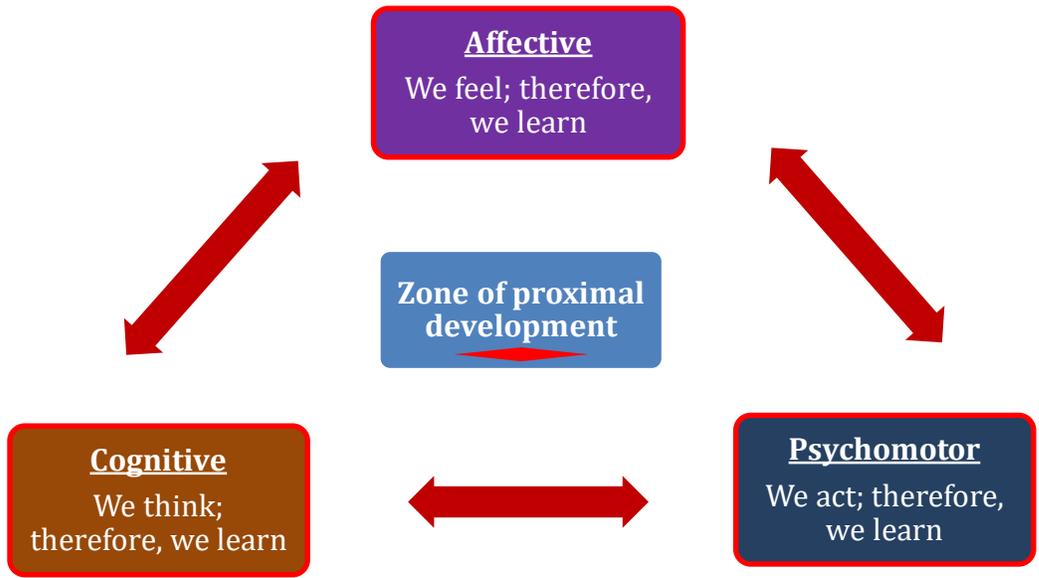


Figure 4. Relationships among Bloom's learning domains.

is a discussion of the curricula that are designed to teach SEL competencies, and the evaluation and assessment tools schools can use to ensure a program's effectiveness. The last topic is a review of research on the social-emotional needs of students attending international schools, including how the multicultural contexts of international schools can shape student identity. The interrelation among the three bins of affective and SEL learning through the context of international schools is foundational to the study. Figure 5 is a visual representation of the nesting relationships among affective learning, SEL curriculum and classroom instruction, and the overarching international context. Curriculum and classroom instruction are the micro-outcomes from the meso frameworks and standards, which is enacted upon by the macro international school context.

The Affective Domain: The Social-Emotional Aspects of Learning

Affective learning has the potential to support students' academic learning, social relationships, emotional wellbeing, and produce lifelong benefits. Learning is a social activity, and students' learning increases when they are emotionally invested in the lesson (Anderson, 2001; Armstrong, 2017; Bransford et al., 2001; Immordino-Yang & Damasio, 2007; Jones & Kahn, 2017). As educators, we need to foster students' abilities to work collaboratively, make decisions, and increase communications skills. Blad (2019) found that:

between 2005 and 2017, the proportion of teens ages 12–17 who reported the symptoms of a major depressive episode within the last year rose from 8.75% to 13.25%, the data showed. Adults ages 18–25 showed similar trends, while rates remained relatively stable for older generations, (p. 3).

According to Blad (2019), resources to address mental illness are lacking. Only three states have recommended ratio of counselors to students (1:250) and of psychologists to students (1:750).

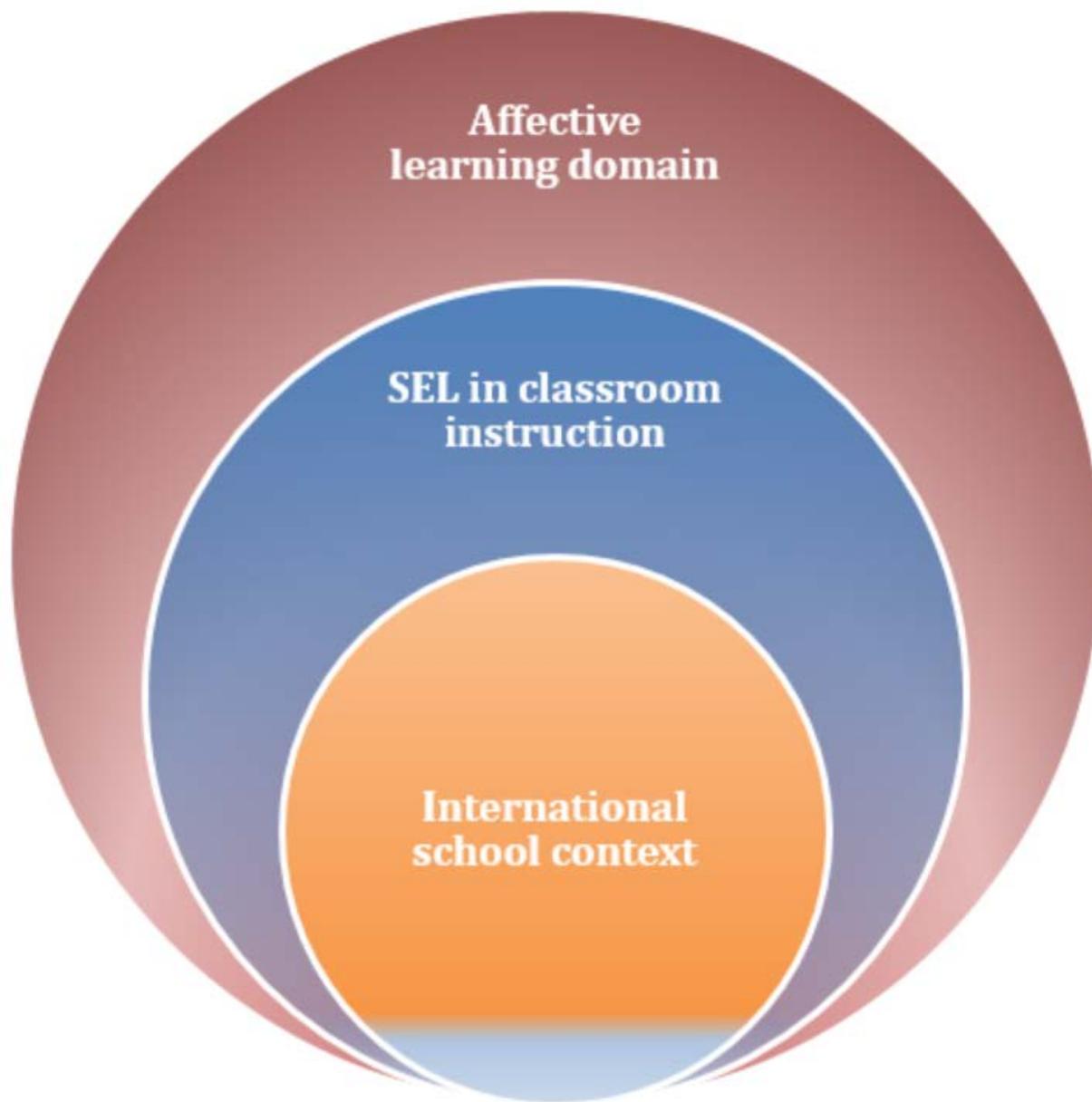


Figure 5. Nesting relationships among the three literature bins.

Statistics like these point to the need for schools to increase their SEL instruction in classrooms to help students recognize and manage their emotions. By infusing SEL competencies in classrooms, students can manage their emotions, which can support their academic and social growth (Dusenbury et al., 2015). The impact of the global pandemic has shown to have made SEL a focus in school districts as they work to support the social-emotional toll the virus has on student, teachers, and parents. In this section, I discuss how social-emotional factors influence learning in schools and how SEL can influence school culture and climate and support adolescent learning. Finally, I discuss how that influences lifelong learning.

Influence of SEL on Learning

Cognitive science research supports the idea that every student comes to the classroom with a variety of factors that affect learning, including their unique perspective and personality, cultural background, and schema (codification of experiences or an organized way of perceiving cognitively and responding) that define how they learn (Bransford et al., 2001; National Academies of Science, Engineering & Medicine, 2018). While the affective learning domain of learning has many components that are particular to the individual, I concentrate on how socio-cultural factors and emotions impact a student's ability to learn. The intersection of social emotional and academic learning is critical

Socio-Cultural Learning

As individuals in a particular socio-cultural setting, we learn to process information based on that experience. According to the National Academy of Sciences, Engineering, & Medicine (2018), "Not surprisingly, the embrace of sociocultural theory led to one of the most important recent theoretical shifts in education research: the proposition that all learning is a social process shaped by and influenced with a system of cultural meaning" (p. 27). First, caregiver practices in

different cultures influence how children learn and what parental expectations are for learning. Secondly, the social and moral development that Bloom et al. (1956) place at the top of the affective domain pyramid of learning varies across culture in terms of what is a moral good, especially in terms of the relationship between self and others. Finally, cultural place (urban or rural) and cultural expectations present us with differing notions of the developmental cycles we have accepted as “normal” based on western culture. Jones and Kahn (2017) suggest, “Social, emotional, and cognitive skills are not predetermined by one’s genetic blueprint. Rather, our genes interact with experience so that these skills emerge, grow, and change over time, beginning in the earliest years and continuing throughout childhood and adolescence” (p. 8).

Transformative SEL can offer a process whereby students and teachers build strong, respectful relationships founded on an appreciation of diversity and a deeper understanding of learner variation in terms of cultural knowledge, perceptual strengths, and societal values. Thus, teachers can learn to analyze causes of inequity and develop collaborative solutions to community problems (Jagers et al., 2018); according to these authors, (2018) teaching transformative SEL to students could provide them with a healthy sense of ethnic-racial identity, which is essential for psychological, academic, and social well-being. They suggest that explicitly teaching the five CASEL competencies can mitigate the interrelated legacies of racial and class oppression. The Aspen Institute and CASEL research provide evidence that students’ background and culture play a significant role in how they learn (National Commission on Social, Emotional, and Academic Development, 2019; CASEL, 2020). According to the National Commission on Social, Emotional, and Academic Development (2019), school communities need to create an inclusive environment that respects student cultural background to support their

feeling of belonging. For an SEL program to have a transformative effect on the school's culture, the student's culture must be recognized and honored.

While the implications of the sociocultural theory led to the development of transformative SEL strategies by the CASEL organization, the strategies are developed along to respond to western cultural norms and may need adjustment when applying to diverse cultural experience. SEP provides developmentally appropriate SEL strategies to address the social and emotional needs of learners (Srinivasan, 2019); however, as the National Academy of Sciences, Engineering, & Medicines (2018) research indicates, those development milestones vary by culture. According to Srinivasan, while SEL is needed at all age levels and into adulthood as it supports learning, college preparedness, and educational equity, the need to examine this from different cultural points of view may be necessary (Li, 2012). For example, the western emphasis on the growth of the individual is not valued the same in eastern societies, as the individual exists in a larger circle of family first, employer, and friends. The virtues of respect, deference, loyalty, and trust are dominate, and the sense of avoiding shame for self and family is critical (Li, 2012). These values are not in opposition to SEL but must be factored into any analysis of how to import SEL to an Asian cultural setting, particularly because the schools in which we work are also set on preparing their students for a western university education.

In their meta-analysis of research, Jones and Kahn (2017) state, "To date, we've learned that, in addition to broad improvements in social, behavioral, and mental health outcomes, programming in social and emotional learning across the school years drives increases in executive functioning, self-efficacy, persistence, prosocial behavior, grades, and scores on standardized tests" (p. 6), all of which are valued by the parents in our school. The link between SEL instruction and improved cognitive achievement is supported by empirical studies. In a

study conducted by Weinberger (2014), data emerged linking 1972 and 1992 adolescent skill endowments to adult outcomes while increasing complementarity between cognitive and social skills. Payton et al. (2008) found that SEL programming yielded an average gain of 11 to 17 percentile points on achievement test scores. The impact of providing students with SEL instructional program has a positive relationship with cognitive learning.

Influence of Emotions on Learning

Emotions are a powerful influence on students' ability to learn, and teaching students how to manage their emotions can improve academic learning (Armstrong, 2016; Bransford et al., 2001; Hattie, 2008; Immordino-Yang et al., 2007). According to Armstrong (2016), by mid-adolescence, students' abilities to reason, make decisions, and engage in other rational modes when not emotionally excited is not as strong as it will be by their mid-20s when their executive functions are fully developed in the brain. When students are emotional overwhelmed, they find it difficult for students learn new information. According to Armstrong (2016), "under 'hot' cognition when emotions or peer influences are factors, they do not perform executive function as well" (p. 12). Similarly, when emotional intelligence is activated, students process learning more deeply. According to a social neuroscience study by Immordino-Yang and Damasio (2007), "Emotional thought encompasses processes of learning, memory, and decision making in both social and nonsocial contexts" (p. 8). They posit that recent advances in neuroscience highlight connections among emotion, social functioning, and decision making that have the potential to revolutionize our understanding of the role of affect in education. Neurobiological evidence suggests that the aspects of cognition that we require most heavily in schools—namely learning, attention, memory, decision making, and social functioning—are both profoundly

affected by and subsumed within the processes of emotion; we call these aspects of emotional thought.

The role that affective learning plays in supporting academic growth is further supported by the work of Hattie (2008), who states, “in classes with person-centered teachers, there is more engagement, more respect of self and others, there are fewer resistant behaviors, there is greater non-directivity (student-initiated and student regulated activities), and there are higher achievement outcomes” (p. 119). Because of this strong link between our social-emotional self and our cognitive understanding, student performance should improve when a school or teacher fosters the affective domain of learning and harnesses the power of emotions.

The PAR study worked with community members to explore how to foster emotional intelligence to support student learning. When SEL competencies are taught, student academic achievement increases. Relationships between students and teachers impact learning. The PAR focus is to capture the ways in which SEL is used to support academic learning, and we can use what we know about culture to craft the SEL program for our context.

Influence of SEL on School Culture

An element of the PAR study is to embed SEL in the school’s culture in ways that respond to the sociocultural learning of students while striving for academic excellence. When implemented and appropriately promoted, SEL programs increase academic achievement (U.S. Department of Education, 2007) and build equity in schools by purposely developing an environment of caring and empathy (Sprenger, 2020). I discuss how teachers have a substantial role in SEL instruction and on a school’s culture because they act as an example for how students should interact in the overall school environment. Then I discuss how SEL programs have an impact on the school climate and children behavior and how SEL can have a long-term

impact. Finally, I discuss how the current situation of the global pandemic is predicted to impact the increased need for SEL competencies.

Teacher Role in SEL

Teachers play a crucial role in modeling SEL competencies like empathy, respect to others, and appreciating diversity they support creating a health learning environment. Wong and Wong (1998) advise teachers to use the first days of school to get to know the students, build relationships, and build a safe and comfortable learning environment for them. Immordino-Yang and Damasio (2007) state, “[a]ny competent teacher recognizes that emotions and feelings affect students’ performance and learning, as does the state of the body, such as how well students have slept and eaten or whether they are feeling sick or well” (p. 3). Wong and Wong (1998) provide specific actions to guide teachers to create an inviting classroom for “attentiveness, expectancy, attitude, enthusiasm, and evaluation,” which they call “the primary forces behind a teacher’s being inviting or disinviting. These are the characteristics that significantly influence a student’s self-concept and increase or decrease the probability of student learning” (Wong & Wong, 1998, p. 65). Wang and Eccles (2012) concur that teacher actions that demonstrate a sense of caring, respect, and appreciation for students can lead to students’ greater engagement in school. In a people-centered classroom, students work to understand and respect each other’s viewpoints and cultures, which increases student engagement. According to Wang and Eccles (2012), teachers should support peer interaction because adolescents need a sense of relatedness and that gives them a sense of satisfaction in school. Equitable care and social-emotional support students receive allow them to access the content more readily. According to Roffey (2017), focusing on SEL can increase equity in the classroom by building a sense of inclusiveness and incorporating

learning styles. SEL can be integrated into subject content lessons that allow students to practice SEL skills within the subject.

Peer and adult relationships play a significant role in engagement with gender and race. Payton et al. (2008), in a large-scale review of the impact of SEL on elementary and middle students, found that SEL provided multiple benefits in their personal, social, and academic lives. A summary of a large-scale review conducted by Payton et al. (2008) found SEL programs were effective across the K-8 grade range and for racially and ethnically diverse students from urban, rural, and suburban settings. SEL programs improved students' social-emotional skills, attitudes about self and others, connection to the school, positive social behavior, and academic performance; they reduced students' conduct problems and emotional distress.

SEL instruction has a positive impact on a school's environment and culture. Teachers' influence on students is well understood as well as the role of a teacher as a key person in the social-emotional development of students. When teachers model SEL competencies, practice compassion, and model respect to their students, there is an impact on student social-emotional health.

Lifelong Impact of SEL Education

An effective SEL program has the potential to improve community relations, strengthen economies, and create a society whose members are generally healthier. A culturally responsive SEL program in which students, teachers, and counselors embrace SEL practices can increase academic achievement and benefit students beyond the classroom. An active SEL program has been shown to decrease juvenile crime, violent behaviors, and disruption in the classroom while increasing wages earned and ensuring overall better mental and physical health (Cain & Carnellor, 2008). With the automation of jobs, more companies are seeking to hire people who

have strong interpersonal skills as more jobs require social interactions and less independent repetitive work (Deming, 2015). SEL has the potential for economic benefits for students with social-emotional competencies. The SEL competencies are critical for they have a lifelong impact on physical and mental health as students transfer these skills to the college and careers. Secondly, the current global pandemic has heightened our awareness of SEL.

Long-Term Impact on Physical and Mental Health

A school with an SEL focus can increase the likelihood that students will enjoy physical and mental health (Belfield et al., 2015; Zins & Elias, 2007). According to Payton et al. (2008), teaching SEL is associated with higher graduation rates and an overall healthier and more productive reported benefits of people who have strong SEL skills. In analyzing the impact of SEL in kindergarten through eighth grade, Payton et al. (2008) found that students in SEL programs demonstrated improvement in their personal, social, and academic lives. SEL programs fostered positive effects on students' social-emotional skills; attitudes towards self, school, and others; social behaviors; conduct problems; emotional distress; and academic performance. SEL interventions were effective in both the school and after-school settings and for students with and without reporting problems (Payton et al., 2008). They were successful across the K-8 grade range; for schools in urban, suburban, and rural areas; and for racially and ethnically diverse student bodies. According to Belfield et al. (2015), students who have received an SEL-focused education, earn more money and are mentally and physically healthier. The complex nature of adolescence and puberty requires that students receive extra support throughout this crucial developmental time so that as they transition to college, careers, and adulthood, they are better equipped to flourish.

SEL Transfer to Workplace and Adulthood

An effective SEL program in schools has a social and economic impact on student success. When people move from school to the workplace, they must work with others, build relationships, and deal with stress. Subsequently, students who can work collaboratively with others are like to be more successful after formal education has concluded. In a large meta-analysis of SEL studies, Durlak et al. (2011) found that students with skills learned in a school that emphasizes social-emotional learning are more likely to succeed in the workplace.

SEL programs in U.S. schools can have a lifelong economic impact on students who receive SEL instruction the graduates of SEL programs move into better careers with higher pay (Duckworth et al., 2012; Durlak et al., 2011; Weinberger, 2014). Belfield et al. (2015) found that SEL programs add economic value by lowering the dropout rate, increasing the likelihood that students will not enter the criminal system, and improving health outcomes. Students who engaged in a school's SEL program were more likely to succeed when they open their own businesses as adults (Lippman et al., 2015).

The Impact of COVID-19

The COVID-19 global pandemic has impacted teaching, learning, and affected our collective mental health and has placed students' social and emotional needs in the spotlight. The pandemic "has become a worldwide source of stress affecting global health and mental health, whether through direct experience with the disease or due to the social and economic changes associated with it" (Falicov et al., 2020, p. 865). According to Falicov et al. (2020), purchases of SEL applications, resources, and materials are projected to increase by 18.6% from previous years. The PAR study took place during the spread and aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, and the evidence collected is a confounding factor to the social-emotional impact on the school

site. During the study, a global pandemic caused major shifts in teaching and how we interacted with each other. The impact that COVID-19 made on the need for SEL standards and curriculum has been greatly expanded due to the emotional stress put on society.

Students who are taught social-emotional competencies are more successful in the workplace and benefit economically with increased salary for people with strong social skills and emotional intelligence. Students who have a sense of who they are during their formative adolescent years are less prone to depression and are physically healthier. Teaching SEL can increase academic performance have a positive impact on the school environment and has a lasting impact past formal education. And, as we have learned in this global pandemic, the SEL competencies are even more important for maintaining our physical and mental health.

Social-Emotional Learning in Classroom Instruction

The aim of the PAR study is support academic learning through embedded SEL instructional practices. “Children with strong SEL skills have been shown to excel in school, both socially and academically. SEL programs are imperative to address the social, emotional, and academic needs of students” (Haggerty, 2011, p. 5). CASEL (2020) has created a researched-based comprehensive framework, including a set of criteria and sub-indicators that schools can adopt for their SEL programs (see Figure 6). SEL curricula have been created and extensively evaluated such as Second Step, Mindfulness, and Responsive Classroom. The SEL curricula support pedagogical methods teachers can use in their classroom instruction. Assessments and evaluations tools are available for school to adopt that will support and provide accountability to SEL programs. Figure 6 represents the elements and relationships within SEL frameworks, curriculum, and school practices. All the elements of SEL are centered around support students’ academic and social-emotional achievement.

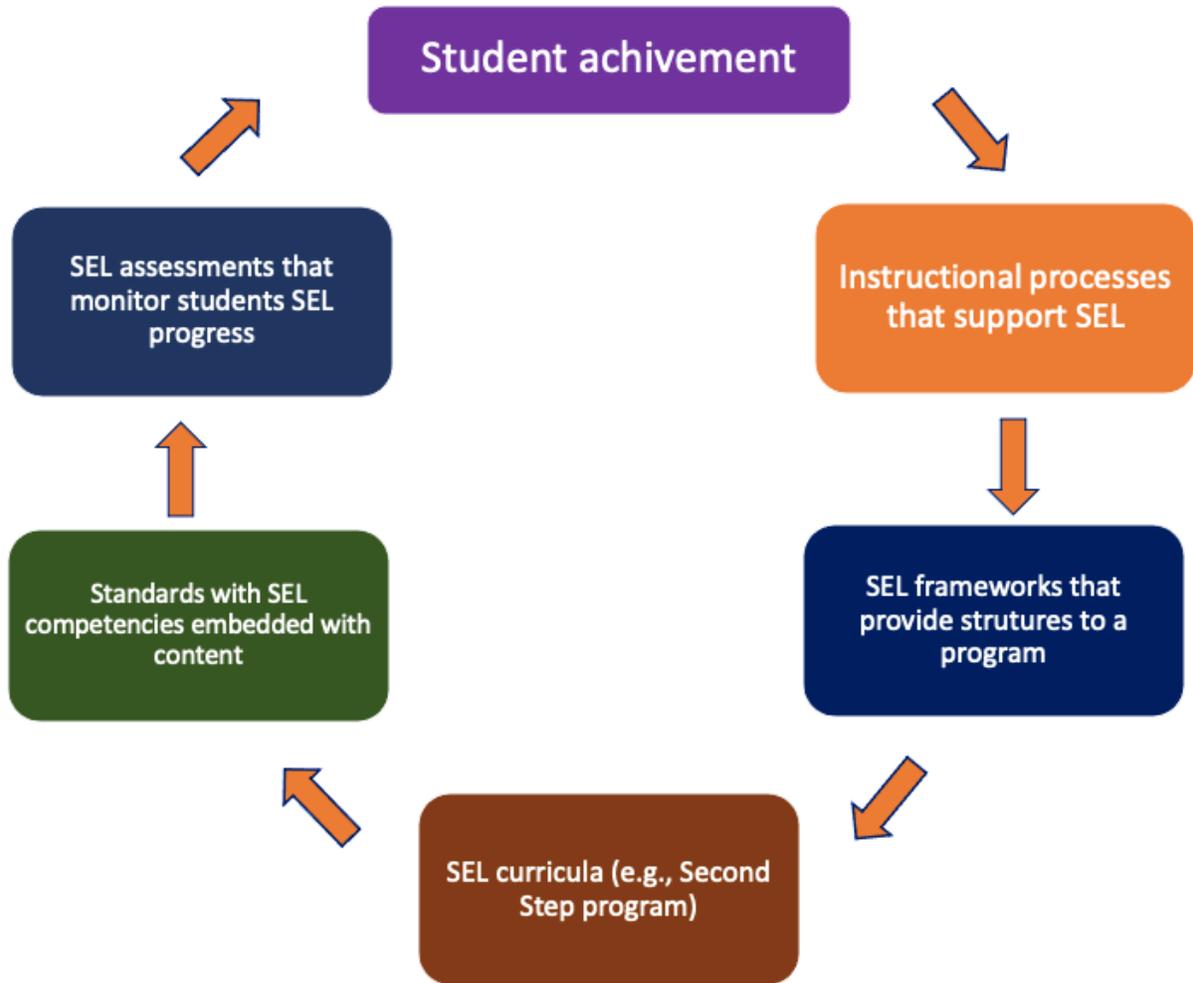


Figure 6. The elements of a successful SEL program.

Social Emotional Learning Framework and Foundations

The foundations of SEL programs are supported through frameworks, standards, curricula, and assessments tools that provide both structure and accountability for schools. The CASEL organization has created a framework that categorizes SEL domains and behavioral indicators for each domain. A set of standards for a school to base an SEL program is necessary; however, there are difficulties with standards with adoption and teacher preparation for teaching SEL. Some ready-made curricula include: (1) Second Step is a fully developed traditional lesson-based curriculum that offers a kindergarten through eighth grade programs (Nenonene et al., 2019); (2) the Responsive Classroom approach is a teaching method that can be adaptable to include explicit SEL instruction but currently exists as classroom management tool; and (3) Dynamic Mindfulness is an approach to help students become more self-aware and better able to manage themselves (Bose et al., 2017). All three curricula can work as a standalone curriculum or be used in conjunction with each other. Schools can use SEL assessments to measure the abilities of their students and the success of the program (LeBuffe et al., 2018). During the PAR study, we first examined SEL competencies and standards and then reviewed successful programmatic approaches.

SEL Competencies

The CASEL organization has categorized SEL into five domains: Self-Awareness, Self-Management, Social Awareness, Relationship Skills, and Responsible Decision-Making (CASEL, 2020). The CASEL competencies are designed to be integrated into the school's curricula, culture, and the broader schoolwide practices and policies (CASEL, 2020). The PAR study was conducted at an international school, which adopted the SEL competencies as the framework for their program (see Figure 7).

SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING (SEL) COMPETENCIES

SELF-AWARENESS

The ability to accurately recognize one’s own emotions, thoughts, and values and how they influence behavior. The ability to accurately assess one’s strengths and limitations, with a well-grounded sense of confidence, optimism, and a “growth mindset.”

- ⇒ IDENTIFYING EMOTIONS
- ⇒ ACCURATE SELF-PERCEPTION
- ⇒ RECOGNIZING STRENGTHS
- ⇒ SELF-CONFIDENCE
- ⇒ SELF-EFFICACY

SELF-MANAGEMENT

The ability to successfully regulate one’s emotions, thoughts, and behaviors in different situations — effectively managing stress, controlling impulses, and motivating oneself. The ability to set and work toward personal and academic goals.

- ⇒ IMPULSE CONTROL
- ⇒ STRESS MANAGEMENT
- ⇒ SELF-DISCIPLINE
- ⇒ SELF-MOTIVATION
- ⇒ GOAL SETTING
- ⇒ ORGANIZATIONAL SKILLS

SOCIAL AWARENESS

The ability to take the perspective of and empathize with others, including those from diverse backgrounds and cultures. The ability to understand social and ethical norms for behavior and to recognize family, school, and community resources and supports.

- ⇒ PERSPECTIVE-TAKING
- ⇒ EMPATHY
- ⇒ APPRECIATING DIVERSITY
- ⇒ RESPECT FOR OTHERS

RELATIONSHIP SKILLS

The ability to establish and maintain healthy and rewarding relationships with diverse individuals and groups. The ability to communicate clearly, listen well, cooperate with others, resist inappropriate social pressure, negotiate conflict constructively, and seek and offer help when needed.

- ⇒ COMMUNICATION
- ⇒ SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT
- ⇒ RELATIONSHIP BUILDING
- ⇒ TEAMWORK

RESPONSIBLE DECISION-MAKING

The ability to make constructive choices about personal behavior and social interactions based on ethical standards, safety concerns, and social norms. The realistic evaluation of consequences of various actions, and a consideration of the well-being of oneself and others.

- ⇒ IDENTIFYING PROBLEMS
- ⇒ ANALYZING SITUATIONS
- ⇒ SOLVING PROBLEMS
- ⇒ EVALUATING
- ⇒ REFLECTING
- ⇒ ETHICAL RESPONSIBILITY



Figure 7. The CASEL SEL wheel and competencies.

1. Self-awareness: Identification and recognition of one's own emotions, recognition of strengths in self and others, sense of self-efficacy, and self-confidence.
2. Social awareness: Empathy, respect for others, and perspective-taking.
3. Responsible decision-making: Evaluation and reflection and personal and ethical responsibility.
4. Self-management: Impulse control, stress management, persistence, goal setting, and motivation.
5. Relationship skills: Cooperation, help-seeking and -providing, and communication.

The majority of SEL curricula rely on these identified competency domains for lessons. Figure 7 illustrates the relationship between SEL competency wheel and the observable learning indicators (CASEL, 2020). Within each CASEL domain, there are specific skills students can be taught. Teacher-training programs need to have SEL elements in the curriculum, and some U.S. states are requiring SEL knowledge for obtaining a teacher license. There is a need for more work to be done by school districts and colleges in building SEL instructional skills. The PAR I am conducting aims to build SEL knowledge and capacity within the teaching faculty.

SEL Standards

The school community should decide on a set of SEL standards, find or develop a curriculum, and implement pedagogical strategies that can be used by teachers. Zins et al. (2007) argue that the most effective SEL efforts are “provided in a more coordinated, sustained, and systematic ways using comprehensive, multiyear, multi-component approaches” (p. 197). According to Dusenbury et al. (2014), the critical elements of SEL standards are “simple, clear, and concise statements and developmental benchmarks for what students should know and be

able to do in terms of self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making” (p. 2). Standards, which provide the base of many curricula, have been developed for teaching SEL competencies. Academic learning is dependent on SEL so it is important for SEL to be included in state standards, although only a few U.S. states have adopted them (Dusenbury et al., 2015; Nenonene et al., 2019). According to Berg et al. (2017), the State of California has worked with the ASPEN Institute to develop a set of explicit affective learning standards that schools should use to ensure that they are incorporating SEL into classroom instruction. Standards are just one component of a comprehensive SEL approach. According to Zins et al. (2007), a school must decide on curricula, infuse SEL instruction into regular classroom curricula, develop a supportive environment, alternate instructional process, and build a partnership between teachers and parents if it is to incorporate SEL successfully.

SEL Curricula

Dusenbury et al. (2014) suggest that schools which have a curriculum that supports the social-emotional needs of their students experience fewer incidents of disruptive or violent behavior, improve academic achievements, and boost self-confidence among students. A variety of SEL curricula have been developed to support school address the affective learning domain. These curricula range from school-community frameworks and models of addressing students to detailed class lesson plans with assessments. CASEL states that for a school to truly become an SEL-focused school, there must be organizational dedication written in the school's policy, mission, vision, and student learner outcomes. School leaders can choose from a variety of SEL programs like Second Step, Responsive Classroom, or Mindfulness, all of which have measurable success in reduced misbehaviors, improved school culture, and decreased bullying and aggression (Brock et al., 2008).

Second Step Curriculum

The Second Step program has lessons plans and assessments that relate to SEL competencies (Belfield et al., 2015; Frey et al., 2000). After the implementation of Second Step, Belfield et al. (2015) found that students reported less aggression and a significant reduction in physical and sexual violence. Others found additional evidence that Second Step is effective at reducing aggression and improving student self-control (Espelage, Low, Van Ryzin, & et al., 2015; Espelage, Low, Polanin, 2015; Frey et al., 2000). In a study of Second Step focusing on students with disabilities, there was a decrease in overt aggression in boys and a decrease in relational aggression with girls (Sullivan et al., 2015). However, as Mantz (2017) explains, Second Step requires time taken from subject instruction, and the program can be costly for schools to purchase. On the other hand, a cost-benefit analysis of SEL programs conducted by Belfield et al. (2015) found that “SEL programs add economic value by lowering the dropout rate, with a greater chance that the students will not enter the criminal system and live an overall healthier life” (p. 34) While Second Step lessons do not address subject content, other programs exist that are designed to teach SEL skills in conjunction with subject material.

Responsive Classroom

Responsive Classroom (RC) is a not a curriculum like Second Step but rather a way of approaching teaching and interacting with students. The RC model is designed to help elementary students with self-regulatory skills. As Belfield et al. (2015) explain, “The approach is designed to provide teachers with strategies, structures, practices, and techniques to improve their self-efficacy, to impact student social and emotional, academic, and other non-academic outcomes, and to build a strong school community” (p. 37). Teachers using RC model relationship skills and build a supportive learning environment (Abry et al., 2013). In a study

conducted by Rimm-Kaufman (2006), RC implementation resulted in children showing more prosocial behavior and achieving higher math and reading scores and improved satisfaction among teachers. In addition, students were more positive about their teachers more willing to try new things in school and placed a higher value on collaboration. In a study on student and teacher interactions, Abry et al. (2013) concluded that SEL interventions had the potential to improve the emotional, managerial, and instructional aspects of teacher work.

However, like Second Step, the success of the Responsive Classroom is reliant on professional learning for teachers and administrators in RC practices and ensuring fidelity to RC principles (Rimm-Kaufman et al., 2014). In a three-year longitudinal study, they found that student gains hinged on actual use of recommended classroom practices; the study showed little growth if RC was only implemented for one year and without fidelity.

Dynamic Mindfulness

Mindfulness is a technique of focusing without judgment. Mindfulness is paying attention to the present without judgment (Schonert-Reichl, 2017). The impact of mindfulness-based interventions (MBI) has indicated mixed but positive results (Johnson et al., 2016; Kuyken et al., 2013). In a meta-analysis of 61 MBI studies, Maynard et al. (2017) found evidence of a positive impact on social-emotional and cognitive outcomes but none for behavioral or academic improvement. Lin and Mai (2018) found a positive, short-term impact on academic achievement when students practiced mindful meditation before classes.

Schools can purchase mindfulness curricula. One example is Transformative Life Skills (TLS), which emphasizes stress resilience, self-awareness, emotion regulation, and healthy relationships for students of any age (Bose et al., 2017). These authors argue that the integration of cognitive, emotional, and kinesthetic processes used by TLS will lead to emotional regulation.

The TLS approach can teach students skills for mood regulation, stress, anxiety, self-esteem, and motivation. All SEL programs implemented need to be evaluated using a researched-based tool to ensure a proper evaluation for effectiveness. This program is supported by a research study that indicates movement mindfulness is the most successful type of mindfulness for adolescents (Cheng et al., 2020).

Schools have a variety of SEL curricula to choose from, each with a specific style of implementation and purpose and all are supported by studies suggesting that they are effective in building students' social-emotional competency. During the PAR study, we examined approaches for an SEL program that reflects both Second Step and the Responsive Classroom approach; however, because these curricula offered are for children at the elementary level, we could not specifically use in the secondary context.

SEL Assessments and Evaluations

Regular evaluations of the effectiveness of an SEL program should be conducted using an evaluation framework that has specific and measurable benchmarks on competencies. CASEL has developed a tool that can help schools evaluate their SEL program, using a two-part rubric that has a set of benchmarks. The CASEL theory of action created the SAFE assessment tool (Payton et al., 2008). Criteria for assessment included needs-assessed resources, alignment with school vision, availability of professional development, and integration of the SEL program with other school initiatives. In a meta-analysis of SEL impact in school's the "SAFE" evaluation method was used to measure the effectiveness (Taylor et al., 2017). SAFE contains four questions about an established SEL program to evaluate whether it is on track to accomplish the schools stated goals (Durlak & DuPre, 2008; Payton et al., 2008).

Sequenced: Does the program apply a planned set of activities to develop skills sequentially in a step-by-step fashion?

Active: Does the program use active forms of learning, such as role-plays and behavioral rehearsal with feedback?

Focused: Does the program devote sufficient time exclusively to developing social and emotional skills?

Explicit: Does the program target specific social and emotional skills?

A well-defined set of criteria can help a school evaluate the foundational success of its SEL program (Payton et al., 2008). The need to assess how effective students have learned SEL is valuable for schools to refine their SEL program. To meet this need SEL assessments have been created.

A school may choose to adopt an SEL assessment that measures the social-emotional aptitude of students. The Devereux Student Strength Assessment (DESSA) is a measurement of emotional and behavior skills and characteristics, developed by Aperture Education (LeBuffe et al., 2018; Nickerson & Fishman, 2009). The DESSA has been used by schools to measure students social-emotional strengths to like “optimistic thinking, self-management, and goal directed behavior” (LeBuffe et al., 2018; Nickerson & Fishman, 2009). A school can may utilize the Social Emotional Assets and Resilience Scale (SEARS). SEARS is a strength-based assessment similar to DESSA and can help schools gather data on student’s student social and emotional strengths (Endrulat et al., 2009). The SEARS test relies on students using the sometimes, always, never options on a range of questions regarding social-emotional competencies (Endrulat et al., 2009).

In the United States, there is a motivation from school leaders for implementing SEL programs that address curriculum, teacher strategies, or student awareness in school districts across the country (Dusenbury et al., 2014), given the demonstrated benefits. Schools can choose to implement an SEL program through curricula like Second Step. A school may implement classroom approaches like Responsive Classroom that focus on teacher strategies in addressing behaviors and emotions, or administrators may prefer student-centered strategies that teach mindfulness practices. The next section contains a review of the research on SEL's impact in international schools.

International School Context: Global Citizens

School context plays a significant role in SEL as community, culture, and identity influence how students learn (National Academy of Science, Engineering, & Medicine, 2018). International schools typically often offer a curriculum different from that of the host country national curriculum for their schools. Historically, private international schools are a product exported from the western world to serve western students living in foreign countries. The culture of that school was meant to reinforce the home culture of the student body that it was established to serve, including the spread western culture or religious beliefs in the process (Hayden & Thompson, 1995). Students who attend an international school not only receive an education rooted in western educational tradition but are immersed in a culture that is not wholly western nor entirely that of the host country; thus, the term originated for third culture kids (TCK). In addition, like language policy that should not tend toward the assimilationist point of view of English only (Carder, 2018), the policy about SEL should not privilege western culture, but should be a blend of information from various sources. Next, I report on the literature addressing the unique SEL needs of international school students.

International School Context

International schools occupy a unique niche. Host culture students blend with expatriate students, which leads to a dynamic and complex multilingual and multicultural learning community that has a strong need for an effective social-emotional learning program (Devens, 2005). Because the PAR study took place in an international school, an understanding of its complex relationships and cultural influences was required.

Hayden and Thompson (2013) have suggested three types of international schools: Type A schools are called traditional, schools designed to serve children of expatriates and predominantly not-for-profit. Type B are ideological or mission-driven schools designed to promote international understanding and peace such as United World Colleges and Aga Khan Academies. Type C schools are non-traditional and market-driven for the local elite, predominantly for-profit (Hill, 2015). Type A international schools are set up to serve the children of corporations and/or embassies. American, British, Canadian, and most recently Chinese international schools are founded to provide a home country curriculum and culture to expatriates. Type B international schools promote an ideological or religious philosophy in that country or region such as Christian, eco-friendly, or United Nations schools. Type C schools are mostly for-profit and designed to appeal to parents trying to get their children into top universities in the country or abroad. Some international schools have a minority of host-country students; others may have mostly or exclusively local students. The only distinguishing feature of an international school is its foreign curriculum. The school in which the study takes place has characteristics of both B and C type schools, as it is a Christian school serving multinational audience with many Thai families whose goal is their children's acceptance at U.S. universities.

Who Attends an International Schools and Why

Most international school students are either local residents planning on going to an educational institution based on the international school curriculum or expatriates' children planning on returning to their home country (Hayden & Thompson, 1995). Many students aspire to attend a university in Europe, Canada, or the United States, which means there is a heavy focus on subject content and skills (Bunnell et al., 2016; Hill, 2015). The added stress for students trying to get into their “dream school” can become overwhelming and negatively affect academic performance. Ernvik (2019) explains that due to the highly competitive nature of internationals, SEL skills are needed to cope with the stress. International students struggle with identity and belonging which is further explored in the following section. According to Devens (2005), students who fail to gain a sense of personal identity can enter a period of confusion, stress, and low self-esteem. Therefore, it is vital to support the healthy creation of personal identity. According to Blad (2019), the Association of Psychology has recorded that the rates of depression and anxiety in students have risen almost 4% in the past ten years. Due to the individualistic nature of learning and the physiological and social changes that occur during adolescence, there is a need to create an SEL program that is aligned with and adaptive to the school communities’ specific needs (Dewaele & Oudenhoven, 2009; Ernvik, 2019; Kwon, 2019). Thus, building SEL skills in students is critical so that they are better equipped to deal with the challenges and struggles they face now and in their future. To understand the social-emotional needs of students in any learning community, we need first to address cultural differences in the fundamental purpose of education (Kwon, 2019). The nature of international school creates a place with a unique culture within the host country, and SEL programs need to be able to adapt to the needs of the community and students.

International Culture

The host country culture and the international context have an impact on the interaction among students, teachers, administrators, and parents (Emenike & Plowright, 2017; Hayden & Thompson, 1995). Students who are not from the host country enter an international school with an acute awareness that they are foreigners (Ernvik, 2019). According to Dewaele and van Oudenhoven (2009), immigrant students do not fully assimilate but instead develop a third culture personality in which they retain their ethnic identity while incorporating understandings and values of their host culture. Socio-cultural structures with opposing values can be a subtle force driving the ability to implement an SEL curriculum. According to the National Academy of Science, Engineering & Medicine (2018), “A person’s brain will develop differently depending on her experiences, interpretations, needs, culture, and thought patterns” (p. 59). Students’ multicultural experiences in international settings have a profound impact on their identity and the development of their personhood. Harris (2009) states, “[M]ulticulturalism is not merely an ideology for living respectfully at a distance from cultural others (tolerance) but is experienced on the ground as a lived practice of embodied and felt encounter, where the difference is both constructed and contested” (p. 191). The environment of multilingual multiculturalism distinguishes internationals from other highly diverse schools. At present, there is little research on the implications of SEL programs for international school students.

Third Culture Kids

Students who attend international schools contend with unique SEL needs. Polluck and Van Recken (2009) define Third Culture Kids (TCK) as students growing up in a culture other than their nationality, but typically in English-speaking schools. According to Tanu (2017), “Identifying as a TCK provides a sense of coherence amid fragmentation by normalizing

experiences of repeated geographic, cultural, and social displacement and ambivalent feelings about belonging” (Tanu, 2017). TCKs shift their identity regularly; sometimes, they assume a “chameleon” identity and blend in or act like a “bull” and assume the stereotyped identity from their home culture (Ernvik, 2019). Identity shifting in this example is when students accentuate or deflate certain parts of their identity or assume parts of the host culture to either blend in or stand out (Ernvik, 2019). Hayden and Thompson (1995) explain, “[t]heir ‘home’ may not be the country of their passport and may not be the country in which they grew up; for them, the “foreign” location becomes home with all that entails in terms of establishing a home-base and establishing links with local support services and with members of the local community” (p. 331). Each person is different in the way they react to a new culture; some blend in quickly while others outwardly reject the host culture and profoundly project their home culture (Ernvik, 2019). According to Devens (2005), depression and anxiety increase with the number of school students attend and the number of countries to which they move; furthermore, “those who fail to attain a healthy sense of identity during this period may develop a sense of role confusion and stress, low self-esteem, and depression” (p. 89). However, these rates decrease when students develop a positive self-identity, especially if their identity is developed in their middle school years. International schools inevitably will have many students fitting this description and therefore should take steps to support the healthy development of TCKs’ sense of identity.

Third Culture Indigenous Kids

Cross-culture kids (CCK) are known as third-culture indigenous kids (TCIK); TCIKs are students from the host country who attend an international school (Ernvik, 2019). TCIK students move constantly from their home culture to the school culture and back again. Students who have to attend a school where the culture is different from their own are considered TCIKs

(Dewaele & Oudenhoven, 2009), international schools need to provide a safe and supportive environment where members understand the needs unique to TCIKs. Dewaele and Oudenhoven (2009) in a study on the impact of multilingual and multicultural environments on TCIK's found that development of the third-culture personality where students retain their basic ethnic identity while at the same time adopting the values of the new culture occurs while attending international schools. In a study of TCIK student identity, Long (2016) found that host country students attending international schools regularly shift and adapt to the two different cultures and that this experience of shifting cultural identities, "Many of the students, when interviewed, responded that they may identify with one culture or another, but as clarifying questions continued to be asked, the identification changed" (p. 71).

Boarding School

International schools accommodate a demographic of students who attend international schools as boarding school away from their home country. Students or parents choose to have their children attend boarding schools due to various "push-pull" factors. According to Mazzarol and Soutar (2002), push factors include a lack of access to educational options and economic and social status. Pull factors include access to educational programs that have a high reputation and offer a range of courses that will help students gain entrance in to top universities. Parents often feel that having a child in a boarding school with prospects for going to top university can raise their social status. Boarding students in international schools have been growing trend for Chinese nationals partially due to a policy of decentralized control of schooling and empowerment of private education (Zhang & Bray, 2017). According to a study conducted by Le (2020), adding to this push-pull factor is a growth of "cram schools," educational academies that train students to take tests for entrance to major universities. Le (2020) argues that cram schools

instill a desire to attend international boarding schools and stimulate a desire for students to go abroad for their education. According to Le (2020), Chinese parents and the Chinese government see overseas study as a way to learn from the West and build a stronger China. Push-pull factors include economic, social, and political reasons as to why boarding school options remain prevalent for international school options.

International schools have a diverse population with a dualistic need for adopting the host culture while supporting the international culture or third culture. The international school context shapes affective learning and SEL classroom instruction. SEL in international schools should address the issues of identity in such a way that it supports a healthy self-image (Dewaele & Oudenhoven, 2009). Every international school community and context is different as it represents the individual cultures that it serves. The international school culture becomes the third culture influencing how students learn. Parents chose to send their children to international schools for economic, social, and political reasons. Affective learning in an international context requires significant attention to the specific social-emotional needs of TCKs, TCIKs, and boarded students.

Conclusion

The boys in the opening vignette provide a practical example of how SEL principles can help with academic success. My effort to establish a positive relationship with them, create a safe environment, and adjust my approach to be more culturally responsive resulted in the boys' academic growth. My experience is supported by cognitive science research that points to SEL as factor in the learning process. Students learn through their emotions and relationships. There is evidence that suggests when children receive SEL teaching in school they benefit for the rest of their lives. With the outbreak of COVID-19, there is a greater need of SEL in schools. The

PAR study built existing research to build a healthier school community that supports academic learning. We had a range of research-based options for curricula, teaching models, and strategies available to support SEL. For educators and school leaders at international schools, however, there are unique needs that should be considered when adopting an SEL focus, including cultural aspects of SEL competencies. In addition, curricula for secondary school use of SEL and/or international school are limited. Thus, we had an opportunity to add to the knowledge and teacher skill regarding SEL. The next chapter brings the PAR location into context with macro, meso, and microstructures representing the forces that influence the study.

CHAPTER THREE: ACTION RESEARCH CONTEXT AND SETTING

Learning is a complicated personal and social process as well as an exciting struggle. Learning can happen anytime and anywhere, but deep learning happens when we purposefully create the necessary conditions. Conditions are not just physical but also mental; building a gracious space where learning can occur is an essential requirement for the learning process. The right learning environment includes teachers and parents to make students feel welcomed and respected. Learning environments also need pedagogies and methods that explicitly teach skills and competencies. The purpose of this participatory action research project is to work with students, teachers, and parents to improve social-emotional learning at CMIS. If we foster an SEL program that supports students' academic, and social-emotional learning, then we can improve students social-emotional resiliency. Creating a social-emotionally healthy school requires an explicit and deliberate process, which depends upon the support of the whole community.

In this chapter, I describe where the research was conducted, including the physical location, the educational structures, and the context of SEL needs in international schools. I introduce the member of the co-practitioner research team (CPR) and what each member perspectives contributes to the study. I then explain how this project sought to foster a more equitable and inclusive learning community through increasing the instruction of SEL competencies. In the last section, I explain my role and history as a leader and educator.

Students are at the heart of any school; without them, it is just another piece of land with buildings. When the school is alive with student activities and engaging in the learning process, it turns the property in to a dynamic work environment. The aim of this study is to work with students, teachers, counselors, and parents to develop their SEL knowledge, skills, and

dispositions that support academic and social-emotional growth. Understanding the context of the school and the students who attend is necessary in understanding the complexities through which study was navigating.

The Place

Chiang Mai International School (CMIS) was the location for the PAR study and the school where all the qualitative data was collected. It is a small private school owned by the Christian Church of Thailand (CCT) and administered by both a western superintendent and Thai national director. The admission process is difficult and is designed to support the Christian ethos and provide a rigorous educational program capable of preparing students to gain acceptance in high-ranking university around the globe. CMIS is accredited by both a national and international school governing accreditation organization. This allows CMIS to award high school diplomas that are recognized in Thailand and globally. The foundation of CMIS is on the Christian values and is held accountable through a board that is made of school community members and representative of the CCT. There are macro, meso, and micro contextual structures that impacted the course of the study.

A Small Private School in Northern Thailand

Chiang Mai International School (CMIS) began over 60 years ago as a small boarding school for the children of missionaries who came to northern Thailand. The first building was built in 1886 by James McKean, a British doctor who came to Thailand to help people suffering from leprosy. From its foundation, the purpose of CMIS was to provide a western education to western missionary children living in the area. For over 40 years the school exclusively served missionary children boarding in the original McKean house. Although in those early years the

school was outside the City of Chiang Mai's borders on the other side of the Ping river, it is now an urban campus surrounded by homes, business, and *wats* (Buddhist temples).

Privatization of education has increased in Thailand, and 11 new international schools have opened in Chiang Mai in the past 10 years. Parents have a variety of curricula to choose from: there are private Thai schools; United Kingdom-curriculum-based schools that offer a general certificate of secondary education (GCSE); International Baccalaureate (IB); or United States-curriculum-based schools to which parents can send their children. Competition for students among private schools is intense, and CMIS has started to work with marketers to strengthen its brand. A benefit of the increase in competition is that CMIS has invested in infrastructure projects and curriculum improvements that have given the school a reputation for producing college-ready students. CMIS has a selective admissions process; only students who are already performing at grade level and are proficient in English are considered for enrollment.

Admission Process

The selective admissions process is designed to create a diverse learning community. CMIS categorizes its student body by nationality, gender, and religion. The admission committee comprised of the administration team, counselors, and student support team together evaluate applicants for acceptance based on an entrance exam and the World Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) score. Each applicant's entrance scores, letters of recommendations, and grade history are reviewed and discussed within the committee before a recommendation for acceptance is decided. Currently, CMIS has the luxury of a competitive selection process; however, competition from other international schools could push CMIS to admit more Thai nationals and shift the demographic makeup of the student body. Table 1 outlines the demographics of the middle and high schools. Because the majority of CMIS students are Thai

Table 1

CMIS Middle and High School Student Demographics

Passport Country	Female	Male	Total
Middle School	63	63	126
Thai	17	25	42
Dual Passport	16	14	30
Korean	13	5	18
United States	7	7	14
China	6	5	11
India	0	0	0
European Union	1	5	6
Other (Australia, New Zealand, Malaysia, Taiwan)	3	2	5
High School	75	71	146
Thai	24	20	44
Dual Passport	12	20	32
Korean	16	18	34
Chinese	7	2	9
United States	8	5	13
India	2	2	4
European Union	3	3	6
Other (Australia, New Zealand, Malaysia, Taiwan)	0	4	4

nationals, the educational program must honor the host culture. Most others also hold a Thai passport. Figure 8 presents a pie graph of the breakdown of nationalities from the total study body.

National and International Accreditation

CMIS is accredited by two educational governing bodies, the Thai Ministry of Education and the Western Association of School and Colleges (WASC), a U.S.-based accreditation organization. As a private Christian school, CMIS is relatively autonomous and operates independently from Thailand's public-school policy. However, CMIS must comply with accreditation requirements set by the Ministry of Education. The school issues regular reports that contain test score data, observations, and other evidence of compliance with Thai educational standards. The Thai accreditation allows CMIS to award students a Thai high school diploma.

CMIS is also accredited by WASC, which requires CMIS to conduct a self-evaluation of its educational programs. The WASC sends a team of educators to observe the school and meet with parents, teachers, and students to audit the evidence provided by the evaluation. Based on the visiting team's observations, CMIS receives an accreditation for 2, 3, or 5 years. WASC accreditation allows CMIS to give international students a U.S. high school diploma.

Religious Affiliation

CMIS is owned by the Christian Church of Thailand (CCT). There is little involvement from the Church in the daily functions of educational matters; however, four members of the church sit on the board and hold influence on the strategic plan and future of the school. The board hires the western superintendent and the Thai national director to oversee the daily administration of CMIS.

สัญชาตินักเรียน (507 คน)

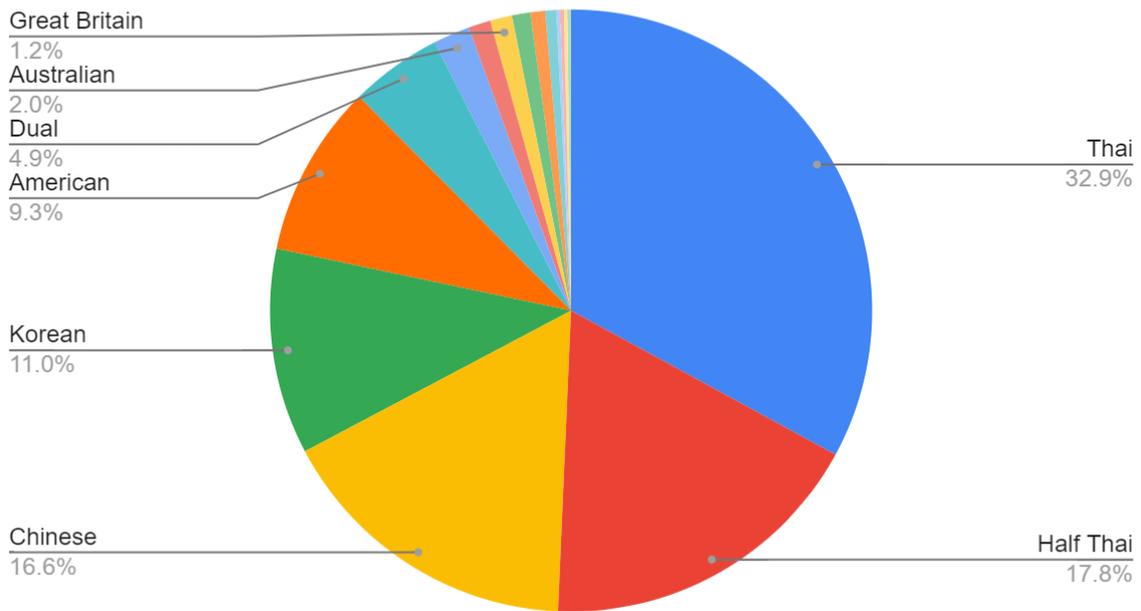


Figure 8. Percentages of nationalities within the total student body, CMIS.

The CCT also requires CMIS to use CCT accounting practices and limits the monthly expenditures. All expenses over a certain number of Thai *baht* must be approved by the board. Large capitol expense project such as new buildings or land purchase are required to be approved by the CCT.

Aside from the CCT ownership, a Thai school Director is responsible for coordinating the Thai academic curriculum and maintaining our Thai accreditation. He was hired by the CCT to work closely with the CMIS superintendent, a westerner who coordinates the whole academic curriculum and works with the school board for strategic planning and school accountability.

A nine-member school board comprising Church officials, one parent, and one faculty member has the most influence on the school's culture and academic programs. It meets monthly. Four members are CCT pastors or directors from other CCT-owned schools. The Thai Director, finance manager, and superintendent make up the administrative members. To round out the Board is a parent leader from the Parent Teacher Group (PTG) and a teacher representative. The parent representatives change every 2 years and are voted in by PTG. The teacher representative serves for 2 years and is voted in by the teachers. The school board is charged with holding the school accountable to its mission and strategic plan. The daily management and educational leadership are managed by the executive committee, which includes the superintendent, finance manager, Thai director, assistant director, and the two divisional principals. Figure 9 shows the governance structure of CMIS.

Contextual Macro Level Structures

Macro level factors that influenced the context of the research included the philosophy of the school. CMIS was originally founded to provide a Western education to Western missionaries, which creates a mix of religion and democratic ideals. However, that



CHIANG MAI INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL
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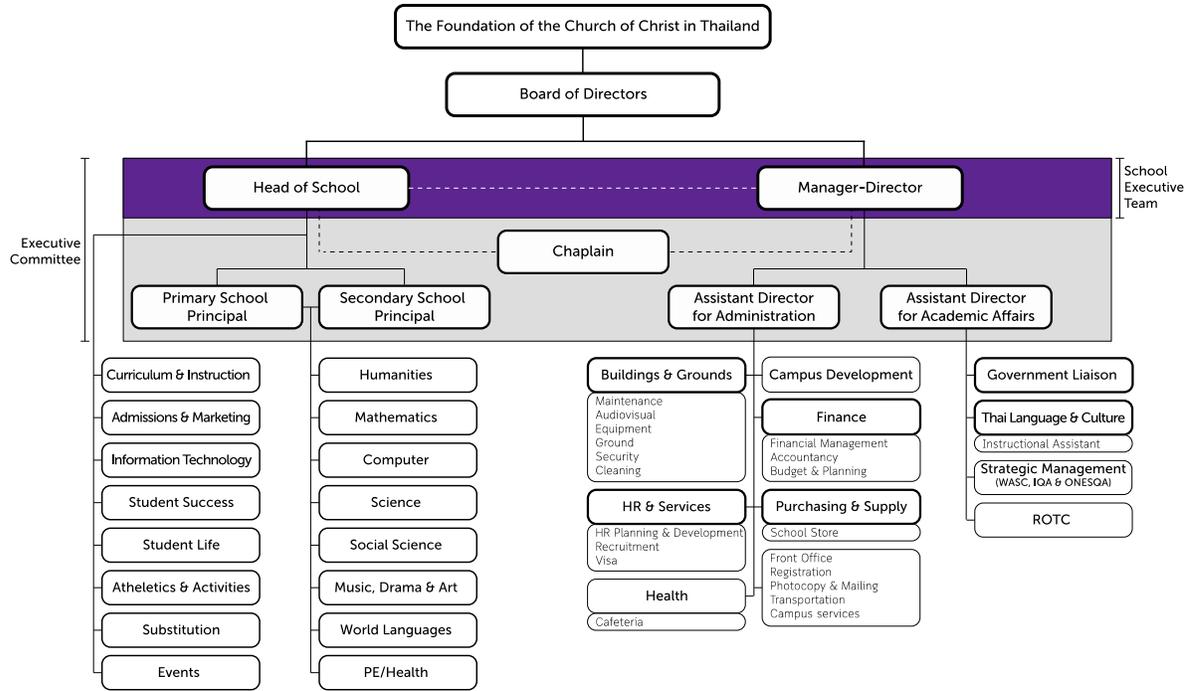


Figure 9. CMIS organizational chart.

purpose has changed in the past 20 years to be more inclusive of the local population and of a diverse population of international students. As a private school, it serves a community that can afford to pay tuition, which obviously excludes many students who are unable to afford the fees. The host country students are mostly from the middle and upper classes of Chiang Mai. Another group of students are children of missionaries and receive a tuition discount. Finally, other students come from families working in nongovernmental organizations or consulates or families in Thailand for business reasons. The diversity of students at CMIS creates a culture that is neither entirely Thai nor completely western. They come with their own cultural identity, stereotypes, and learning needs, each of which affects their social-emotional learning.

Christianity has been responsible for creating a unique social structure within the faculty. There are the Christian missionary teachers who have been in Chiang Mai since they were children because their parents were missionaries. They are entrenched in the school and have strong family ties to Chiang Mai; some have Thai spouses. They have connections and ties to the community, and it is essential to have their support on any change made to the school. These teachers can be suspicious of new teachers or administrators and in general are resistant to new initiatives.

On the other hand, there are the international teachers who are new to Chiang Mai and have no ties to the community. They come with a two-year contract although some stay longer and sometimes even find a partner and stay indefinitely. They are eager to fit in and help with the programs and normally go along with whatever the school is doing. It takes a few years for new teachers to become socially active with the entrenched teachers. However, if the new teacher is Christian and attends church, socialization happens more quickly due to increased opportunities

to meet outside of work and a shared value system. To properly build a sustainable SEL program, I need to have the support of the full community of teachers, parents, and students.

Cultural beliefs and the stigma around mental health are factors in building a sustainable SEL program. There are different levels of comfort surrounding SEL topics. Full Thai students are highly competitive and feel the need to prove that they are just as intelligent as the non-Thai students. These students show signs of “over efforting” as described by Steele (2010): “Over-efforting had now popped up in several achievement contexts, enough to suggest that under some circumstances it might cause academic underperformance” (p. 105). This over-efforting causes anxiety, stress, and burnout not just among Thai students but others who also feel the need to prove themselves in the community. Third culture kids (TCK) are expatriate students attending a school in a country different from their passport. While I do not like the term TCK, it is the one that is being used at the time being for students who attend school outside their home culture but do not immigrate to the country they are educated in. TCKs struggle with their identity as they have one foot in each culture.

However, because Thai culture is generally not comfortable addressing mental health issues, getting proper treatment can be difficult. Our Christian students who suffer from anxiety or depression also are not comfortable with mental health care and when referred to therapists choose to go to Church instead. Changing a culture such as this to be more open to SEL is a very difficult task, but if I work with the community, and respect their needs, I may have chance to make progress towards a socially-emotionally healthy school.

Contextual Meso Level Structures

At the meso level, there are structures in place to support SEL at CMIS. In Maslow’s hierarchy of needs, the physiological structures to make sure students have access to food, water,

shelter, and any other physical need. To accommodate these basic human needs, CMIS has implemented safety standards and practices routine safety drills. Administrators, teachers, and students can now focus on belonging, self-esteem, and self-actualization. In the middle school the Wellness course could be strengthened by the adoption of the CASEL framework and SEL standards. In both middle and high schools, the advisory structure could be strengthened with an SEL curriculum despite time limits. However, if we build a more comprehensive and inclusive program, these structures would be supported in the classroom, at home, and in the community at large.

The CMIS Mission is to “Develop learners who can pursue personal and academic goals, based on educational excellence and strong moral foundations. To equip international students for lives of learning and positive contributions locally and globally” (CMIS, 2019, p. 4). The PAR helped CMIS to fulfill its mission of equipping students providing them with an SEL program. While there is no explicit reference to SEL in the mission, there are student learner outcomes that suggest a need for an SEL approach if we are to fulfill our promise.

One student learner outcome that has a specific SEL need is “Develop cultural awareness and an appreciation for diversity” (CMIS, 2019, p. 2). While there is no explicit mention of SEL competencies in the mission statement or the student learner outcomes, the need for SEL is inherent. An SEL program is needed to fulfill the promises CMIS has made to the community.

For CMIS to remain a competitive international school in Chiang Mai, it must be accredited by both WASC and the Thai government. Criteria B2 of the WASC handbook asks, “To what extent does the professional staff design and implement a variety of learning experiences that actively engage students at a high level of learning consistent with the school’s purpose and student learner outcomes?” (WASC, 2020, p 20). Using these criteria, the school

must prove that its program is following its stated mission and student learner outcomes.

Although WASC criteria for accreditation do not have an explicit strand for SEL curriculum in a school, elements of the benchmarks must include the school's mission and student learner outcomes for the school to fully meet the criteria.

Contextual Micro Level Structures

There are many factors at play at the micro level. Many of our students are Christian children of missionaries working in the region. While most of the missionary students do not take issue with mindfulness meditation or Yoga, there is a group of Christians who are not comfortable with those types of relaxation techniques. On the other hand, our Buddhist students embrace mindfulness and meditative practices.

Another issue is the tuition discount for missionary children, which has caused some resentment from the non-Christian population. On the other hand, some in the missionary community are unhappy that there are not more structured Christian programs at the school.

The curricula upon which the lessons are built upon have a deep impact at the classroom level. CMIS uses the United States standards of Common Core Math and English Language, Next Generations Science, and Georgia Social Studies. The fine arts classes use the National Standards for the Arts, and Oregon standards have been adopted for World Languages. CMIS does not currently have standards for their SEL program. However, there are standards that can lend themselves to embedding an explicit SEL instruction. While the middle school has a *Wellness*, course taught using the *Second Step* curriculum with CASEL competencies, the school has not officially adopted nor explicitly teaches any SEL standards. This study aims to address this issue in more depth.

CMIS is a complex community with a deep history. There are philosophical,

psychological, political, economic, and socio-cultural differences that must be considered to properly address the SEL needs of the community. The Christian foundation provides a philosophical base for some of the students at the school, but a broader view is needed given the many Buddhist and Muslims students enrolled. The many TCKs and CCK students have specific psychological identity needs that a tailored SEL program can provide. Students come from various economic backgrounds and have various political viewpoints. The unique socio-cultural community of CMIS provides both support and challenges that can be addressed through formal and informal structures.

Language diversity at CMIS is an important consideration when communicating with the community. There are 16 different languages spoken at CMIS with English, Thai, Korean, and Chinese being the most prevalent. When addressing the community, I must be clear and use language that can be understood by all stakeholders. Terms must be defined, and strategies explained so that parents understand the value of what an SEL program can provide. The issue of language is addressed by providing translators during parent conferences and during one-on-one parent meetings. Nonetheless, I needed to consider my choice of words and to be conscious of my voice tone and pace of speaking to ensure the non-native English speakers can follow the conversation and understand the content.

The history of CMIS begins over 100 years ago with the building of the McKean house. The school itself is over 60 years old, and while its original purpose was for serving western Christian missionaries, the role of the school has shifted. The privatization of the school has allowed CMIS to have a selective admissions process that currently functions to build a strong, diverse learning community. There are many macro, meso, and micro influencers that help to shape the special place that CMIS occupies. The governance of the school, diverse culture,

multiple languages, religions, U.S. based curriculum, and the international context all have a significant impact on how SEL is addressed at CMIS.

The People

While working at an international school in Kuwait, I met a teacher named Dan who introduced me to this concept of the TCK. He had grown up in international schools all around the world and had graduated from the school at which we were working. Like many TCKs, Dan found it hard to say where he is “from” and struggled with his personal identity. He always told people that Canada was his home, but when he went back there for university, he realized that he was not Canadian. So he transferred to a school in California where he thought he would fit in with the more diverse city of Long Beach. He struggled in Long Beach as well. It was not until he went back overseas did his understanding of his identity and where he is “from” become clear. Dan learned of an online community of TCKs living around the world sharing their experiences with each other. After hearing their stories and learning about their shared struggles, Dan was able to put himself into context.

Dan’s journey and social-emotional struggles are similar to the adults and students at CMIS. Every student in an international school is a third culture student, and their social-emotional needs are similar to the ones Dan shared with me. In this section I introduce the people on whom the PAR has had the most impact. First, I introduce the co-practitioner research team (CPR), who they are, and why they have been invited to participate in the action research project. I discuss the unique community needs that the international context provides. I then address the possible impact the international context has on the students attending CMIS.

Co-Practitioner Researcher Team

To help engage the community the PAR study, I invited members of the CMIS school

community who can bring their perspectives, ontology, and representative voice to the project. I also wanted to create a CPR team that represented the diversity of the community. The CPR team has six members: two counselors, two teachers, a student, and a parent. The counselors work one-on-one with social-emotional issues and needs and are the specialists who help the students who have difficulty with CASEL competencies. The teachers bring their experiences with SEL instruction and the practical use of the strategies that support student learning. The students and parents contribute their experiences and perspectives to the educational program. The CPR group has the largest role in helping me collect data, provide their voice, and contributed the most usable information. Their contributions have made an impact on their peers.

Ms. Eula Lee, the high school counselor mainly works with students with identified needs and as a college and career counseling. Students with identified need may have been to a psychologist, work with an outside therapist, or receive regular check in by Ms. Lee. Ms. Lee does not teach a course but does go into the Grade 9 health class and co-teaches a *senior seminar* course. Senior seminar is a mandatory one semester course designed to support students through the university application process, possible career choices, and teach life skills like home economics, personal finance, and personal health. Ms. Lee was born in Korea, grew up in Canada where she also went to university. She has lived in Thailand for over 6 years.

Ms. Beth Awar, the middle school counselor has similar responsibilities to that of the high school counselor and teaches a wellness class to all middle school students. The wellness course teaches CASEL competencies using the Second Step curriculum, but the time dedicated to the class is limited to one hour a week. Ms. Awar was born in Myanmar and received her counseling degrees though a university in Thailand.

Teachers are the first responders and can identify students who are struggling with stress

or depression. The teachers have more contact with students than any other person at the school; they see the students regularly, know their personalities, and monitor their academic performance. They know which students struggle or excel with self-management, self-awareness, and relationship building. For the CPR group, I have chosen two teachers who come from a range of backgrounds and years of experience. Mr. Jason Kiepher is a high school teacher started his career in the Peace Corps and has lived in Thailand with his Thai national wife for 16 years. Mr. Mikel Terry works with middle school students teaching humanities. Mr. Terry is a Canadian who served in the Canadian Navy and has been aboard for over 30 years. He is married to a Thai national and his son recently graduated from CMIS.

For the CPR group, I selected one student who represents a cross-section of the student population both nationally and psychologically. I asked Mr. Jordan Suk, a Thai national TCK student who was partially educated in the United States to join the team. I asked him to join as he is full Thai and crosses from the Thai culture to the CMIS school community culture daily and understand the feeling of being Thai but not fully Thai. Jordan has a long history of learning at CMIS. He served on the student government, has been active in the Advanced Placement program and will attend a university in the United States to earn a degree in history.

The last vital component in the CPR group is the parent representation. For this FOP to have an impact on the community and culture of the school, it needed the support and advocacy of the parents. The parents provided the study with cultural insight, a perspective of what they view as important in relation to SEL, and what they wanted from the school for their children. I asked Ms. Ivane Nam, a Thai parent to join, she was able to guide the team through the nuances of the host country's culture. Ms. Nam was educated in public Thai schools but chose to send her children to CMIS as she has the means as a business owner and wants her kids to attend

university in the UK, US, or Canada. She had three children attend CMIS, two of whom have graduated and are attending university in the UK. Table 2 presents the CPR team members, their role on the team, and the expertise they bring to the PAR.

International Context

Children who grow up in the international community have a unique and complex understanding of the world, society, and culture. Research has revealed similarities in the needs of children who grow up in an ex-patriate family or as temporary immigrants (Melles & Schwartz, 2013). Every TCIS student is either a third culture kid (TCK) or a cross-cultural kid (CCK), students who leave home and attend school in a new country. They go back and forth between their home culture and goes the new culture of the school. These students bring to the classroom unique social-emotional needs (Fail, 2004).

Chiang Mai International School's community is truly international. The student population has missionaries from Korea, Sweden, and the United States, cannabis experts from Canada, local business owners, bankers, and school employees—all are stakeholders in the community and express what they need from the school. The families at CMIS have children who identify as TCKs or CCKs, and this distinction needs to be addressed in the educational programs the school offers. The students who attend CMIS are a loving, caring, intelligent group of learners. They want a school that is safe, fun, and challenging. The teachers at CMIS also come from all walks of life; some are new to the profession while others have been teaching for a long time. All are dedicated, caring professionals who truly want the best for their students.

Chiang Mai International School is trying to build a social-emotional program to address the various needs of our community. Currently, the school has one counselor for every school division. There is a dedicated counselor each for the elementary, middle, and high schools.

Table 2

CPR Team Roles and Expertise

Name	Role	Expertise
Eula Lee	High school counselor	Sees students regularly and works with many students on their social-emotional needs
Beth Awar	Middle school counselor	Teaches the MS Wellness class. Works with MS students on social-emotional needs
Jason Kiehper	High school teacher	Works with HS students every day, can best implement SEL instruction in his classroom.
Mikel Terry	Middle school teacher	Works with MS students every day, can best implement SEL instruction in his classroom.
Jordan Suk	High School Student	Thai student planning to attend Thai university
Ivene Nam	Parent	Thai national who has four children at CMIS.

CMIS just recently added a third counselor to meet the needs of students attending the middle school division. While we have the personal resources to work with all students, we still lack a structure to identify students with SEL needs and do not have curriculum, materials, or structures for high school students to receive SEL instruction. However, like other schools CMIS struggles to be consistent with this program.

The SEL structures that support the SEL program and in the middle school where students are all enrolled in a *Wellness* course which teaches portions of the *Second Step* curriculum using the Collaborative for Academic for Social-Emotional Learning (CASEL) framework. CASEL has five core competencies: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision making (CASEL, 2020). However, students only get the class once a week. Students in high school get a health and nutrition unit embedded into their physical education classes, but it only occupies 9 weeks of instruction during a yearlong course. This PAR is designed to address the issue of formalized instruction for SEL.

Students

I sat in on group of students in a psychology class one morning. The teacher had asked the students to think of an object that reminds them of a memory— a song, teddy bear, or any other object. A male student from Seattle, Washington, began to talk about his disdain for bananas. He said when he was in elementary school in a village outside Kathmandu, Nepal, the only fruit they could get was bananas. They were his only snack for the entire three years he lived there. He said he had not eaten a banana in 10 years and was now a senior in high school. Every time he smelled a banana, he thought of time living in Nepal.

When listening to his story, I found a connection with this student as I also have a food, I

can't stand but which triggers a fond memory. I could not help but think about the complexity of their daily interactions and the transitions they have made in their lives. Every student brings into the classroom their lives, their experiences, their intelligence, and their emotions. Like my students, I too bring my experiences, emotions, and intelligence to my work.

The diversity of students and their needs are at the heart of this PAR. When a student enters an international school, they leave behind their host country's culture and enter the international culture. They make this transition from host country to international school and back to host country. In an international school the students come into a culture unique to the host country, a blend of all the collective cultures of the students. However, the dominant culture is the one in which the school was originally founded to serve, be it for citizens of the United Kingdom, Canada, the United States, or China. Because of this unique culture, students from the host country find themselves in a setting that does not reflect their identity. When host country students who attend an international school are mixed in with students from the host country's public or bilingual schools, they realize that there is something different between them and the other national students. These students are known as "cross-cultural" or CCK students, and they have similar social-emotional support needs as TCKs.

The students at CMIS aspire to attend universities around the world. There is a drive for students to take rigorous Advanced Placement (AP) courses. Parents push their children to take several AP classes a year. Due to the demand for AP classes, CMIS has started the AP Capstone program in which students can take six AP courses and a research and seminar course and receive an amendment to their CMIS diploma that highlights their AP achievements. The rigorous course schedule of many students makes stress and anxiety a noticeable issue. This study aims to address self-management and stress control.

People make a place, and the people at CMIS represent a diverse community of different cultures, socioeconomic backgrounds, guiding philosophies, and psychological needs. As a school we serve the people we support, and we teach their children. We need to be sure that our programs are specific to our community's needs, which include social-emotional needs as well. We may come from different places, but we all have the same wants for our children: safety, academic rigor, and the capacity to handle the challenges that life will bring.

Circle of Equity

Chiang Mai International School is working to live its motto, "Caring Christian community that respects diversity." An SEL program can build equity through the teaching of SEL competencies. In this section I explain how SEL can address the equity issues that CMIS students struggle with. I first review the how self-awareness, self-management, and responsible decision-making can support academic growth for all students. I then examine how social awareness and relationship building can create a stronger more inclusive and equitable community. Finally, I explain the assets that are available to help accomplish the goals of this PAR study.

SEL Competencies and Equity

Self-awareness, self-management, and responsible decision-making skills can help students who suffer from anxiety, depression, and attention-deficient/hyperactivity disorder. Students with these difficulties can struggle with course work, friendships, self-confidence, and self-efficacy. Some students who have been identified and diagnosed are working from an individual learning plan. However, not every student who has anxiety or depression or struggles with ADHD has been identified or is receiving support. When teachers explicitly teach SEL in

their classrooms, it can create equity as all students benefit from learning the competencies of self-awareness, self-management, and responsible decision making.

Social Awareness and Building Relationships

SEL competencies can create a more inclusive and equitable community. When all students are taught to respect each other, take other perspectives, and practice empathy, their appreciation for diversity increases. By teaching students, the skills of relationship building and social awareness, we can bring together the diverse community at CMIS. Because the school already has wonderful students who are caring and thoughtful, SEL only strengthens equity and inclusion in the community. Social awareness and relationship building skills can support equity and inclusion.

Religious beliefs are a sensitive issue as the school's foundation is Christian, and there is an influential community at the school that wants the school to move towards a more conservative Christian community. Currently, Christian students receive more opportunities to practice their faith than other religions. CMIS offers lunch and afterschool clubs that allow students to strengthen their faith. For example, there are three Bible study clubs offered at various times that cater to Christian students while there are no clubs for students of other faiths. Giving students instruction in social awareness and relationship building competencies could help students be more inclusive.

University Acceptance

SEL competencies teach students to manage their time, organize themselves, and be self-motivated. These are vital skills for students as they prepare for the university application process. Course requirements are different for Thai students, which creates an equity issue. Students who are Thai nationals or dual passport holders must study the Thai language every

year at CMIS. This constraint means that they miss out on course opportunities that the non-Thai students have access to. The CMIS curriculum caters to students who will continue schooling in Canada or the United States, which causes application and enrollment issues for Thai students who plan to go to a Thai University.

At the same time Thai universities require testing that CMIS does not offer, and the Thai school calendar is different from the Western calendar, which means students either leave school a semester early and miss their senior year, or they must wait a year to begin their university studies. When students learn the process of responsible decision-making, they analyze the situation and organize themselves so that they get the classes and the courses they want.

Assets Available

Whole child education is a model that brings equality to all students; therefore, an infused SEL program is essential. The administration is eager to strengthen the SEL program, and most teachers see the need for social-emotional support in the halls and in the classroom (see Figure 10). However, there are barriers to building a school environment that address social-emotional equity. The largest is the unseen, undiscussed, and hardest to remove: the stigma surrounding mental health. This stigma limits a child's willingness to seek help. The idea that if you suffer from depression, anxiety, or any other identified disorder, you are weak or "crazy." This stigma is partially responsible for CMIS only being able to support the students with identified social-emotional issues. Identified students get the full benefit of the on-staff counselors, including support and academic accommodations if needed while unidentified students suffer in silence. Because CMIS struggles to find a way to identify students who struggle with social-emotional issues, an inequity exists between the identified and the non-identified.

Formal structures are in place to help unidentified students. However, there are some

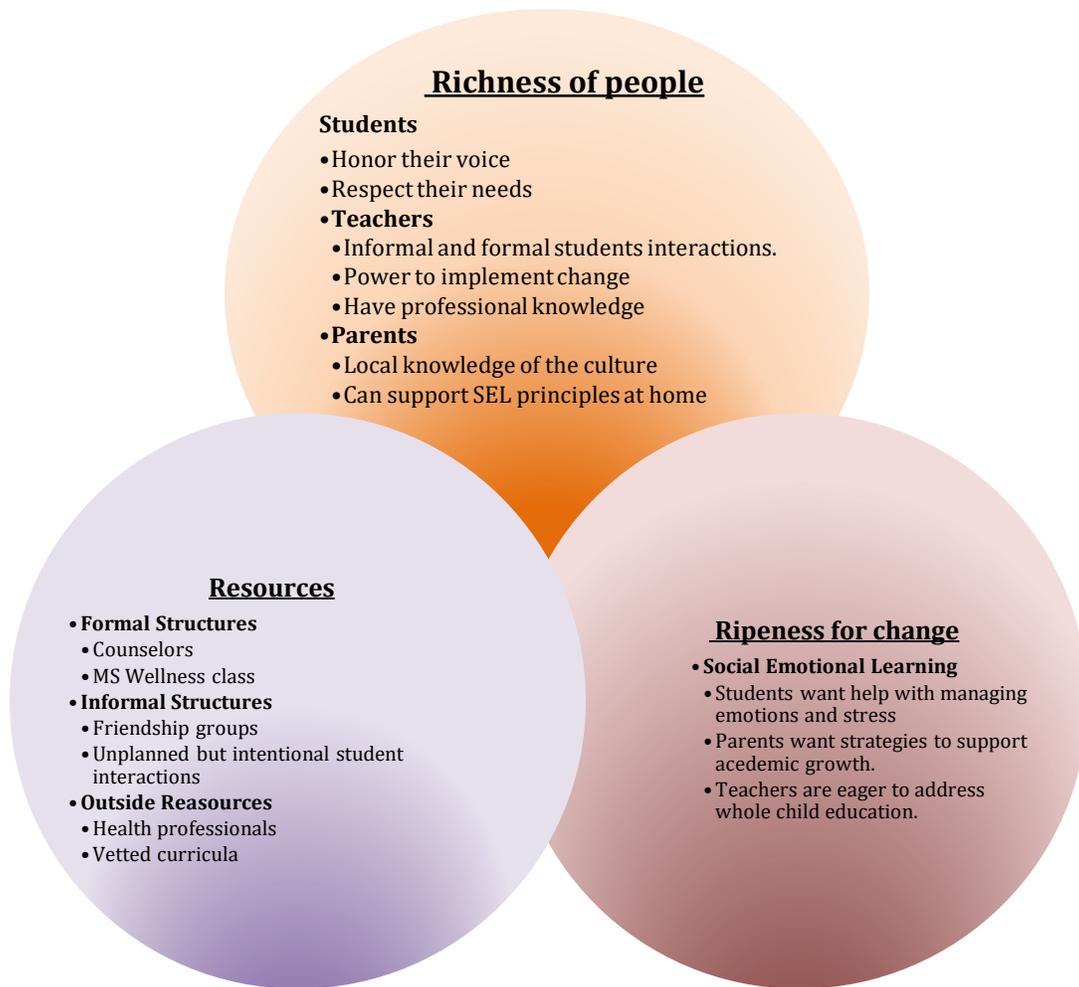


Figure 10. Circles of assets.

issues with the advisory group model. They can be inconsistent as they rely on the mentor teacher to facilitate meaningful discussions and community-building activities. They are organized by the administrator who does not consider friendship, groups, social group friction, or a student's feelings towards the mentor teacher they are placed with. Both the informal and formal students need to be evaluated and strengthened to better serve the students to truly teach the whole child. Figure 4 shows the interrelated aspects of resources of the community that can help make this study a success and create a more equitable school.

As CMIS works towards a more equitable learning community, improved SEL competencies could help support students, teachers, and parents in creating a more equitable and inclusive school community. The community has many assets and resources at their disposal to meet these challenges. This PAR engaged the community in creating an SEL program that supports academic, and social-emotional learning.

My Role

For this project I am the lead researcher, data collector, and data analyzer. I am shaped by my past experiences, people in my life, and the responsibilities I have assumed. As a long-time international teacher, I am passionate about the success of my students and understand the specific needs they have as international students. I explain the assets I bring to my CPR team and my experience working as a collaborative leader in international schools. My role is to engage the community in a participatory action research project to support students' SEL competencies and academic achievement. Then I explain how I worked to honor the voice of the people and the place in which I conducted this research.

History of Leadership

My first leadership experience occurred when I worked in the kitchen of a Chuck E.

Cheese in Beaverton, Oregon, at age 17. I was made a supervisor by the general manager and was responsible for training and supervising the kitchen employees. On the weekends, I had to come in at 6:00 a.m. to prep for the Saturday night rush. I had a group of three staff members who had a long list of vegetables that needed to be cut to certain specifications; pounds of dough that had to be made, rolled, and cut into various pizza sizes; cheese to be grated; sauces to make; and a long list of various other food that had to be premade. This experience taught me one great lesson: no large task can be completed without the help of people. I needed the team of three I had to complete the daily tasks; without them, I would have failed.

International Experiences

My international teaching has been a truly life-changing experience and platform for which I conduct my research. My first international job was teaching U.S. history and philosophy in San Pedro Sula, Honduras. I learned a lot about being an educator, living as an expat foreigner, and about the benefits of a supportive community. The superintendent of the school in Honduras gave me the best educational advice I have received: “Never refuse a free education.” He offered to pay for my master’s degree if I agreed to stay at the school for 2 additional years. I did so and earned a degree in Educational Leadership. At the time I did not consider becoming an administrator. However, that changed when I moved to Kuwait.

My wife and I moved to Kuwait. This was a completely new experience for us as I was taught seventh and eighth grade. Middle school invigorated my love for teaching. The energy, goofiness, and compassion the students had was inspiring and made me want to do whatever I could to help them succeed. My various roles in Kuwait served to develop me as a school leader. I took on the role of “New Hire Coordinator” responsible for organizing and inducting the new faculty into the school. This leadership role brought me to the attention of the superintendent,

who asked me to chair a committee for their accreditation from the Middle States Association of Schools. I learned that I needed to honor people's needs, work together as a team, and respect the host country. I was offered a job as an administrator and worked to build a collaborative learning community. As an administrator I have used the past lessons of team building, honoring the community, and working with people.

My role as a CPR facilitator, supervisor, member will be to continue to build a collaborative team. To do this, I needed to respect and honor the people who have graciously volunteered to help me. I plan to use the learning exchange axioms to guide my practices and the protocols to facilitate the meetings. My main goal is to create trust within the group. I used my past experiences to provide structure to the group and a spirit of respect and collaboration. I bring in the democratic values of giving everyone an equal voice and respecting their opinions.

I asked a lot of the CPR team, I asked them to be open, to share their honest perspectives, and to take on extra work as parents, teachers, and students who were already overworked. By engaging the people in the community, honoring their voice, culture, and experiences, I believe a true reflection of the community needs were addressed during the PAR study. The CPR team kept journals, spent time with me in private interviews, joined group discussions, and helped me learn about their experiences so I could accurately capture their story. It was vital that I make this PAR specific to the CMIS community. Norms of collaboration were useful in our meetings. It aided my goal in capturing their voice and story.

My role as the lead researcher in this PAR study is to bring together the multiple perspectives of the CMIS school community and engage them in address the issues surrounding SEL education. My history of leadership was utilized to create a collaborative CPR team. My knowledge of international schools and teaching enabled me to understand the nuances of the

international context. Together with the CPR team, we aimed to co-construct a an SEL program that supports students' academic, and social-emotional learning.

Conclusion

The people and the place make for a unique context in which this study was conducted. CMIS is a private school in Northern Thailand that serves both Thai and international students. With its long history and religious foundations, there is a culture that is wholly unique to the CMIS community. The people that make up the CMIS community come from various socio-economic, religious, and cultural backgrounds. To properly address the SEL program, I engaged the community in the PAR process. Together with the CPR team, we worked to foster an SEL program that will support students' academic, and social-emotional learning. During the process of this study, I worked with the community to create a more inclusive and equitable school community. My experience in leadership in international schools helped me bring together the people to address SEL at CMIS. In the next chapter I explain in more depth each research questions this PAR aims to address. I also explain the plan to study each question, who participated, and what methods we used to collect data.

CHAPTER FOUR: METHODOLOGY

Bloom et al.'s (1956) taxonomy identifies three learning domains: cognitive, affective, and psychomotor. That taxonomy plays out in schools and classrooms each day. However, attention to the cognitive often supersedes attention to the affective. Social emotional learning (SEL) programs that attend to the affective domain have the potential to benefit students not just in the classroom but on the playground, in hallways, and throughout their lives. In this participatory action research study, I aimed to foster an SEL program in an international secondary school that supported students' academic and social-emotional learning. I conducted a study to understand how SEL competencies were currently in use and what supports and inhibitors in the school we could use to direct the design and implementation of an SEL program. We operated from Spillane's (2013) premise of diagnose and design. As we uncovered the supports and inhibitors, we were concurrently working with teachers to be more explicit about including SEL in their lessons and work toward a design for the entire secondary school.

In PAR Cycle One, we focused on the current SEL program, including parent and teacher responses to SEL and how SEL competencies were currently a part of our classroom practices. In PAR Cycle Two, we addressed the identified needs and built additional teachers' capacity to embed SEL instruction in their content lessons, and we continued to document SEL use and attitudes toward SEL. In the last cycle of inquiry, we observed SEL practices in and out of the classroom to determine the key supports and inhibitors to full implementation of SEL at the school.

During this study, I remained cognizant of my positionality. As Herr and Anderson (2014) say, I was an *insider* working with other *insiders* in an international school. As an administrator, I was aware that my position could bias my responses to situations or change the

way people behave when I am present. By focusing the school on SEL, I was demonstrating to some degree that I thought we needed to be more explicit about SEL instructional practices. In addition, I am an American with western cultural biases working at an international school. Coming from a culture different than the one I was working in, I recognized that I needed a greater awareness of the cultural differences, particularly as we learned about responses to SEL competencies.

With the CPR team, we gathered and analyzed data and made recommendations to strengthen the SEL program at this international school. We collected qualitative data through interviews, observations, meetings, and community learning exchanges. I used reflective memos from myself and the CPR team to triangulate the findings. As we proceeded, we learned that paying attention to cultural expectations was critical and that fusing SEL concepts with parent, student, and teacher expectations was necessary. This chapter presents the research design, data collection methods, data analysis process, measures to ensure ethical and confidential research practices, and the limitations of this study.

Research Design

The project considered the unique context of CMIS and its larger community. The research design of participatory action research relied on the concepts and methodologies of action research. Herr and Anderson (2014) describe action research as an inquiry that is done *by* or *with* insiders to an organization or community, but never *to* or *on* them: “Action research is a reflective process but is different than isolated spontaneous reflection in that it is deliberately and systematically undertaken... and oriented to some action or cycle of actions...to address a particular problematic situation” (pp. 3–4). Our particular problematic situations was in the way

we teach SEL competencies in preparing our students to be 21st century global citizens as most of our students were aiming for university education abroad (OECD, 2018).

The Co-Practitioner Researcher (CPR) team included members of our learning community: one parent, two counselors, two teachers, one student, and me engaged in a three-cycle research process. However, action research entails responding to the evidence from iterative cycles of inquiry and proceeding according to the results. The researchers “must interrogate received notions of improvement” (Herr & Anderson, 2014, p. 4). The ultimate criterion of validity of this type of research is its usefulness to the participants. In this case, the CPR team was a group of “close-in” co-practitioners working within the school community as teachers, students, and parents. Therefore, while we had ideas about how SEL might become a part of the curriculum and instruction, as action researchers we had to pay attention to the pace and ideas of all participants. That meant that the goals I might have had for SEL implementation when I started the project were subject to the results of the cycles of inquiry.

Secondly, we utilized the methodology of community learning exchanges (Guajardo et al., 2016) and the improvement sciences to drive improvement (Bryk et al., 2015) in the SEL program at CMIS. The research design incorporated the axioms and the methodologies of the community learning exchange. To accomplish our goals, we used the pedagogies from Community Learning Exchanges (CLE). The CLEs provided space for open conversations about practice and specifically allowed for diverse voices. That meant we relied on these CLE axioms:

1. Leadership and learning are dynamic social processes.
2. Conversations are critical and central pedagogical processes.
3. The people closest to the issues are best situated to discover answers to local
4. Concerns.

5. Crossing boundaries enriches development and the educational processes.
6. Hopes and change are built on assets and dreams of locals and their communities.

During the study, the learning exchanges were guided by these axioms (Guajardo et al., 2016, pp. 24–27). We were careful throughout the study to pay particular attention to the host country culture and the responses of the parents and students in our school to examine how SEL could be best matched with the cultural expectations and hope and dreams of those in our school.

Finally, the improvement sciences guided our study through our use of the PDSA cycles of inquiry (Bryk et al., 2015). Each cycle was an iterative PDSA process; we planned the events and action for each cycle, reflected on the data, and took actions to advance our work towards a more supportive SEL program. The final goal of embedded SEL instruction in content lessons was not fully accomplished. However, the PDSA process was helpful in our incremental change process.

During our first CPR meeting, I presented SEL, the focus of practice, and the theory of action. I asked the CPR team to create a fishbone diagram of our assets and challenges, and we planned how we might address the challenges identified by using our assets. In the analysis of the first cycle data, the CPR team investigated the influence of the school community and home cultures on our students' use of SEL competencies as well as the way teachers were delivering SEL instruction. Our analysis from Cycle Two informed our next actionable steps. The third cycle was planned to provide targeted professional learning aimed at increasing teachers' capacity to deliver culturally responsive SEL instruction.

Research Questions

A set of research questions informed and guide the study. The overarching question was: *How can our school foster a program that better supports students' social-emotional learning?*

To answer this question, a set of more specific sub-questions provided direction on instrumentation and data collection and analysis (see Table 3):

1. What are the factors that support and inhibit students' social-emotional learning in secondary classrooms?
2. To what extent did the SEL program honor diverse cultures?
3. How did this process make me a more collaborative school leader?

Cycles of Research in PAR

In the PAR study, we used the CLE axioms and processes to design the activities for the inquiry and the improvement science process of Plan, Do, Study, and Act (PDSA) from Bryk et al. (2015). For most of the inquiry, we continue to repeat plan, do, and study before designing a full schoolwide action. That is the purpose—to experiment in small ways before launching major efforts, to collect and analyze evidence to make decisions. We did not implement fully until the initial group, termed a “networked improvement community” in Bryk et al. (2015) and a Co-Practitioner Researcher group (CPR) in the PAR methodology, had enough evidence to share with the school community. As we planned iterative cycles, we did hold school community learning exchanges to engage all stakeholders in thinking about SEL. We used a three-cycle inquiry process; in each cycle, we planned goals and data collection activities to address the research questions and chose those activities based on prior evidence.

In PAR Cycle One (Fall 2019), the CPR team acquired a general understanding of the current use of SEL in the middle and high schools. We established the CPR goals, examined the I used the CLE pedagogy of a journey line with the CPR team to establish our common values and beliefs. I recorded this process with pictures, reflective memos, and co-created artifacts. I conducted interviews with the CPR team members about their SEL needs to better understand

Table 3

Data for PAR Cycles of Inquiry

Research Question	Cycle One	Cycle Two	Cycle Three
What are the factors that support and inhibit students' social-emotional learning in secondary classrooms?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CLE with faculty members • Interview with CPR member • Classroom Observations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CLE with faculty members • Interview with CPR member 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CLE students wellbeing • CLE with CMIS faculty • Interview of teachers and counselors
To what extent did the SEL program honor diverse cultures?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CPR journey line • Interviews of CPR team members • Classroom observations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CLE with CMIS faculty • CPR team photovoice • Interview with CPR members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews of CPR team members • CPR team data reflection • CLE with CMIS faculty
How did this process make me a more collaborative school leader?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflective memos • Interviews with teachers and counselors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflective memos • Interviews with teachers and counselors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflective memos • Interviews with teachers and counselors

what culturally responsive pedagogies are needed for the community of learners. I held CLE events with the CMIS faculty; the educators shared the way they approached SEL competencies and which competencies they used in their teaching, and they learned strategies to include SEL in their assessments. In this largely diagnostic cycle, we discovered the degree to which the school community was providing SEL instruction and how students were using social-emotional skills. We became cognizant of not rushing the process because shifting to SEL competencies embedded in academic content was new to teachers and students.

In PAR Cycle Two (Spring 2020), we offered targeted professional learning to teachers and continued to explore the influence of culture on SEL. The CPR team analyzed the data collected during CLEs and other documents and evaluated the team's next steps: to study the effectiveness of the culturally responsive pedagogies; gather data to understand the adherence to SEL practices among teachers and counselors; work with students, teachers, and parents to build SEL awareness through CLEs; and collect data on the ways in which students exhibit SEL knowledge, skills, and dispositions. We learned that we need to meet each sector of the school community (teachers, students, parents, other administrators) where they were in their understanding of SEL and support of the program. The second cycle was planned to explore the influence of culture on the way students learn and practice social-emotional competencies, and we recognized that the integration of SEL would need to be culturally responsive and strongly connected in design to supporting academic outcomes that were central to student, parent, and teacher concerns.

In PAR Cycle Three (Fall 2020), we based our plans on the emerging evidence from the second cycle of inquiry. The data collection process built on the need for culturally responsive SEL instructional strategies, supporting curricula, and school accountability. We facilitated CLE

events for the secondary school faculty to provide support for adding SEL instruction to their courses. We examined how we could incorporate our knowledge to develop a schoolwide SEL curriculum and create policy for a sustainable SEL program. Table 4 presents the goals, activities, key people, and timeline of the PAR study.

As with any action research project, ensuring that the stakeholders are a part of the process is a critical, time-consuming endeavor. While this study comprised only 18 months, the school and the CPR team are continuing to strengthen the SEL program and CMIS.

Co-Practitioner Researchers (CPR) and Study Participants

Throughout the study, I relied on the key members of the community to join me as co-practitioner Researchers. The study stayed true to the CLE axiom that people closest to the issues are best situated to discover answers to local problems as this study included members of the community (Guajardo et al., 2016). When I was creating this group, I wanted people who represented the diverse population of the school and would help us understand the various social and cultural needs of the school community. Thus, I needed a member who could represent the host country's culture, teachers who would be willing to integrate SEL instruction in their classrooms, a student representative who could speak about how SEL is being taught and how they use the SEL competencies, and counselors who would be SEL advocates. Two CPR team members were counselors, one from middle and the other from high school. Their daily interactions and insights into the social-emotional needs of the students were vital to the aims of the study and determined student needs.

The counselors helped collect data on the social-emotional needs of the students and which competencies the students needed more support. Two classroom teachers understood how the SEL curriculum could work in the classroom and could monitor students' mood through their

Table 4

Goals, Activities, Key People, and Timeline

Goals	Activities	Key Personnel
<p>PAR Cycle One (August-November 2019)</p>		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Establish PAR goals with CPR 2. Determine what students need in an SEL program 3. Understand the SEL practices of teachers and counselors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CPR team activity: Journey line with groups • Observe SEL use in classroom lessons • Interview CPR members 	<p>Aaron Willette and CPR Team</p>
<p>PAR Cycle Two (January-May 2020)</p>		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide teachers with culturally responsive SEL pedagogies 2. Understand the influence of culture on students as pertaining to SEL 3. Work to build community awareness around SEL 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interview CPR members. • Observe classroom SEL instruction • Facilitate CLE to determine common values • Conduct member checks on data 	<p>Aaron Willette and CPR Team</p>
<p>PAR Cycle Three (August-November 2020)</p>		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Build on our new understanding by implementing SEL policy and curriculum 2. Develop a strategic plan for the school to follow that will foster an SEL program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate CLE with CMIS faculty • Reflect on experiences (CPR) 	<p>Aaron Willette and CPR Team</p>

daily interactions. One student brought the voice of his peers and helped us gauge the impact of the SEL model on students. He provided data by participating in CPR activities and being interviewed in each cycle. One parent of three students not only added the voice of the parent community but provided insight into how Thai culture impacted SEL.

The six-member CPR team helped me to develop a fishbone diagram of SEL assets and challenges that influenced the study. We co-developed a driver diagram (see Chapter One) to focus the study and outline data collection. The CPR team met twice during each cycle of inquiry to discuss our progress and write reflective memos based on their experiences and observations. We co-planned and co-facilitated the CLE activities for the entire staff. During these events, we collected feedback. After I coded and analyzed the data, the CPR team engaged in member checks to determine what they observed and what questions the data raised (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

Data Collection

The participatory action research project is a qualitative study about the SEL program at CMIS. Due to the nature of qualitative research, I followed the suggestions from Creswell and Creswell (2018) to use multiple sources of data, collect data in a natural setting, and use inductive and deductive analysis. I used classroom observations, interviews, reflective memos, and CLE activities. I prepared personal weekly reflective memos to document my interactions with the community and triangulate any findings. Throughout the data collection process, I maintained an adherence to confidentiality and ethical research collection methods.

Observations

We conducted regular classroom observations to document how teachers and counselors exhibited a commitment to SEL practices and to learn how students exhibited SEL knowledge,

skills, and dispositions. I collected data on how the teachers and students demonstrated their use of SEL strategies and pedagogies. I used the selective verbatim method (Acheson & Gall, 2003) which entailed recording the exact words and phrases students used while working with each other, or who the teacher presents information to the class. I also took anecdotal notes of interactions or events that might be useful in providing context. I recorded observations in notes and memos, which I coded using category and open coding (Saldaña, 2016). I used photographic evidence of student work when appropriate.

Interviews

I conducted interviews with teachers, students, and parents regularly throughout the three cycles of inquiry to gain a deeper understanding of SEL responses and needs. The purpose of the interviews was to hear from the participants and collect evidence on ideas, beliefs, or feelings that could not be observed. I used a prepared set of questions aimed at facilitating a discussion about affective learning. I posed questions to elicit information on inter- and intrapersonal experiences and actions. I used a combination of narrative and verbal exchange coding to analyze communication and cultural practices (Saldaña, 2016) (see Appendix F). I remained cognizant of my positionality in these interviews and was sure to be open and honest with the CPR team members. I recorded the interviews and transcribed the contents using transcription software and then edited them for any inaccurate transcriptions. I retained notes from the interviews and will store data in a secure location for the mandated duration.

Reflective Memos

During the data collection process, I relied on two sets of reflective memos—my weekly memos and the CPR team reflections. I maintained personal reflective memos to triangulate the data collected and track my journey as an educational leader. I kept weekly memos to summarize

my interactions with students and colleagues, observations, and leadership growth. The CPR team recorded their observations, perspectives, and experiences during team meetings or during CLE events. After CPR meetings, we reflected on questions developed before or after the meeting to capture our perspectives and experiences. I coded and analyzed both types of memos.

Community Learning Exchange

We used CLE pedagogy both during our CPR meetings and at schoolwide events aimed at documenting the authentic voice of our community. I employed CLE pedagogy to help the CPR team and I find a common understanding of our shared values regarding affective learning. Through sharing our experiences and practices, we gained a better sense of how teachers, counselors, and administrators can co-generate a culturally responsive SEL curriculum. The CPR team members reflected on their past experiences and shared their perspective with the team. We collected pictures and artifacts from the activities to code for meaning in the analysis process (see Appendix M protocol procedures). For example, at one CPR team meeting, I distributed graphic organizers so that participants could record their SEL story (Guajardo et al., 2016). I collected the documents, coded them, and together with the CPR team analyzed the documents for insight into the focus of practice.

At the CLEs we organized for faculty, we developed collaborative learning experiences to engage participants in sharing their experiences and perspectives on SEL. The artifacts from the CLEs from students, teachers, and parents provided valuable data and the authentic voice of the larger school community. The CLE activities helped the CPR group develop a shared understanding of our beliefs and what actions we need to take. All the data collection strategies were tied together with regular reflective memos from CPR members and my memos.

To ensure that the data has transferability and dependability, we used similar activities for both groups: the CPR team and the faculty CLE participants (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Through the collection of various types of qualitative data, we sought to achieve credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. For example, by using journey lines for both groups, I was able to collect stories of everyone's SEL experience.

Data Analysis

In the data analysis process, I used specific and reliable methods to ensure credibility and transferability. As with the cycles of inquiry, the data analysis process was iterative. I used data from the classroom observations, interviews, reflective memos from the CPR team, my own personal reflections, and artifacts generated from the CLEs by the faculty. I methodically organized and coded the data to determine first categories and then themes; as I proceeded through the cycles of inquiry, I looked for emergent themes across the three sets of evidence in three cycles of inquiry to determine study findings (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). In the first round of coding of PAR Cycle One data, I used codes from CASEL framework and other literature in addition to open coding (Saldaña, 2016). For example, I derived codes from the five SEL domains: responsible decision-making, self-awareness, self-management, social-awareness, and relationship building. I also used behavioral descriptors within the SEL domains as codes. Then, based on the evidence from the classroom observations and meeting notes, I developed open codes that I clustered in categories. Throughout the three cycles, I added or collapsed codes as needed (see code book in Appendix H). For example, in PAR Cycle Two, I clustered the codes into emerging themes; some codes were expanded or collapsed into similar codes. In PAR Cycle Three, I used the clustered category and open codes to support the study findings. I used a procedural coding process to ensure the validity of the data collection methods (Saldaña, 2016).

Once the data were coded, I created tables to see the relationships among the various data collection methods and figures to provide a visual representation of categories and themes that emerged. Table 5 outlines the research questions, data collection methods, and analysis used in this study.

Confidentiality and Ethical Considerations

All adult participants agreed to this study and signed consent forms. The student (a minor) gave assent, and his parents provided an informed consent. I informed study participants that they could terminate participation or stop an interview at any time. Audio files were collected and transcribed for coding and analysis along with the interviewer notes. Any multi-media documents, transcripts, and memos are held in a secure area for the required 3 years. I secured electronic documents on an encrypted external hard drive; all hard copies are held in a locked file cabinet. No materials will be replicated or disseminated in any way. All consent forms and data collection protocols have been approved by the East Carolina University and Medical Center Institutional Review Board (see Appendix A).

Limitations

The context in which this study occurred and the cultural parameters at the school site represented potential limitations. The school, given the unique cultural make-up of the student body and niche market in which the school operates, may limit the replicability. However, because this international school has a blend of Eastern and Western educational philosophies that create a context-specific learning environment, our results may be useful for other international schools thinking about implementing social-emotional learning. Eastern and Western cultures share the belief that the purpose of schooling is to improve cognitive abilities and subject knowledge and that affective learning is secondary to the process.

Table 5

Research Questions and Data Sources

Research Question (sub-questions)	Data Source	Triangulated With...
What are the factors that support and inhibit students' social-emotional learning in secondary classrooms?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews CPR members • Classroom observations • CLE activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CPR meeting notes • Reflective memo
To what extent did the SEL program honor diverse cultures?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classroom observations • Interviews • Reflective memos 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CPR meeting notes • Reflective memo
How did this process make me a more collaborative school leader?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CPR interviews • Personal reflective memo 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CPR meeting notes • Reflective memo

As an administrator and lead researcher, my position at the school and the purpose of my observations may have shaped the way students and teachers responded. Although I was consistent and deliberate in maintaining an awareness of my positionality and bias to minimize corruption of the data, this may have been a factor.

The data collection methods may have presented limitations as the participants who engaged in CLEs, the CPR, and observations did so from their own perception in a unique school context. Nonetheless, the participants' stories lend credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability of the study as described by Lincoln and Guba (1985). The study collected the varied perspectives and contributed to the study based on their unique perspectives and background experiences. Thus, the processes of the study could be replicated at similar schools to determine how to engage in fusing SEL with their current academic programs.

Conclusion

To conduct this study, I used participatory action research methodology to develop a deeper understanding of the supports and inhibitors to SEL implementation at an international school. I developed the research questions to guide the study. We used the community learning axioms and processes to collect the voices of the community and ensure that our actions were contributing to a community-based solution. Finally, we relied on the improvement sciences process of inquiry to inform our planning and to develop actionable steps to achieve the aims of the study. Together with the CPR group, we provided recommendations that could improve the implementation of social-emotional learning at the school. In the next three chapters, I present the categories, themes, and findings of the participatory action research over the three iterative cycles of inquiry.

CHAPTER FIVE: PAR CYCLE ONE: MEETING THE COMMUNITY NEEDS

The drive for conducting a PAR study started with my concerns about students who had slipped through the educational cracks with little to no idea of how to manage themselves and limited social awareness, relationship-building skills, or decision-making abilities. I would ask myself: How could this happen? What can schools do support social-emotional learning (SEL), and what would be the effect of a strong SEL program at the school? It seemed to me that you could trace the origins of conflicts between students, classroom disruptions, and students struggling academically to a misuse or lack of social-emotional skills. PAR Cycle One represented our first attempt to collect evidence on how SEL was being implemented in classrooms.

The purpose of the PAR study was to determine the factors that supported and inhibited SEL implementation in secondary classrooms in an international school. Using a participatory action research approach aided by a Co-Practitioner Researcher (CPR) team including members from the school community, we endeavored to discover how CMIS addressed SEL in an international school context. The initial cycle was conducted over a 4-month period in the fall of 2019. During the cycle, I engaged the CPR team in data collection methods that included classroom observations, interviews, and reflective memos. I conducted multiple classroom observations looking for teachers' explicit use of SEL instruction and observable SEL behaviors from students as identified by the Collaborative for Academic Social-Emotional Learning (CASEL). Together the CPR team and I brainstormed assets and challenges the school currently has and developed an understanding of the approach the school is taking to support SEL. The CPR team wrote regular reflective memos about their experience of SEL and the PAR process. Our initial discoveries suggested that multiple components are critical for supporting SEL in

the classroom; supporting teachers in classroom instruction; providing professional development; and creating a SEL-aware school community. Community support was needed to provide a foundation for an SEL program sensitive to cultural perspectives and values.

In this chapter, I present the process of data collection and the categories that emerged through qualitative research coding which will be explored in the further cycles. I explain the implications of these categories for the following research cycles and analyze the impact of the macro and micro level assets and challenges impacting the PAR outlined in the fishbone diagram found in Chapter 1 (see Figure 3). Finally, I present implications for the PAR Cycle Two and the plan to address the questions that arose during the first cycle.

PAR Cycle One

During PAR Cycle One, we planned to collect data on how CMIS can better address the SEL needs of students. A process of “plan, do, study, and act” is embedded in the underlying theory of action for the PAR study (Bryk et al., 2015). We were at the planning stage of thinking about initial actions and collecting enough data to have a preliminary idea of what was happening in classrooms and in the school. The CPR members collected data through interviews and observations and recorded their reflections in memos.

The data were collected by three methods. Interviews gave us individual perspectives from our stakeholders. Classroom observations produced data pertaining to how teachers and students learn and use SEL competencies. Reflective memos provided observations from the CPR team and my experience in the process. Table 6 shows the timeline of when each collection method was conducted.

Collection Methods and Analysis Process

Through the data collected during Cycle One, the CPR team, including myself, obtained

Table 6

Weekly Data Collection Activities for PAR Cycle One

Data Collection	CPR	Observation	Interview	CLE
Week 1	Review fishbone, consent form, and reflect on our current SEL knowledge: September 24, 2019			
Week 2		J. Kiepher October 4, 2019	Beth Anwar October 4, 2019	Secondary Divisional Meeting October 2, 2019
Week 3		M. Terry October 10, 2019	J. Kiepher October 9, 2019	
Week 4			E. Lee October 22, 2019	
Week 5		J. Kiepher October 29, 2019		
Week 6	Journey line of our experience with SEL: November 7, 2019		J. Suk November 5, 2019	SEL Assessment sharing PD. November 6, 2019
Week 7			M. Terry November 12, 2019	Secondary divisional: SEL. November 13, 2019
Week 8		M. Terry November 27, 2019	Nam November 28, 2019	
Week 9	Only counselors and teachers. Sharing codes. December 5, 2019			

three forms of qualitative evidence: interviews, classroom observations, and reflective memos. The duration of the inquiry processes was from September 23 to December 6, 2019. CPR members included: Mikel, who teaches middle school humanities; Jason, a high school computer science teacher; Jordan, a student in his senior year; Ivone, the parent member, and two counselors, Beth from the middle school and Eula at the high school. Interviews took place throughout the inquiry cycle with each CPR team member voicing their experiences with SEL and giving their perspectives on the research questions. Classroom observations were conducted in a middle humanities and high school computer course. The CPR team provided reflective memos after each team meeting and community learning exchange. I kept weekly reflective memos from my experiences throughout Cycle One.

As a novice qualitative researcher, I was new to coding and analysis. Thus, I was as specific as possible using Saldaña's (2016) method of open coding. In addition, I used codes from the CASEL framework and description of the five SEL competencies to support the code names. After three iterations of coding, comparing codes, and collapsing some of the evidence into one code when the codes I had chosen were too similar to distinguish them from the other. Figure 8 highlights the frequency of codes generated from the three collection methods: interviews garnered the most data. Table 7 displays the 44 codes that emerged through PAR Cycle One organized by the collection method and displays the frequency in which the codes occurred. Figure 11 demonstrates the frequency of codes that emerged from the data collection processes.

Interviews

I used the same set of codes to analyze the semi-structured interviews I conducted with each member of the CPR team (see Appendix H). I conducted systematically with each CPR

Table 7

Code Frequency PAR Cycle One

Code	Interview	Observations	Memos	Total
Identify emotions = IE	5	0	4	9
Self-efficacy = SEF	1	2	0	3
Accurate self-perceptions = ASP	0	0	2	2
Impulse control = IC	5	0	0	5
Stress management = SM	2	0	4	6
Self-discipline = SD	4	0	0	4
Self-motivation = SMOV	10	0	1	11
Goal setting = GS	5	0	0	5
Organizational skills = OS	1	8	1	10
Perspective-taking = PT	2	1	0	3
Empathy = EMP	4	0	6	10
Appreciating diversity = AD	4	0	6	10
Respect for others = RFO	15	6	2	23
Communication = COMM	10	1	4	15
Social engagement = SE	1	5	4	10
Relationship building = RB	0	2	3	5
Teamwork = TW	4	4	5	13
Identify problems = IP	1	11	3	15
Analyzing solutions = ASOL	0	2	0	2
Solving problems = SPRB	1	5	1	7

Table 7 (continued)

Code	Interview	Observations	Memos	Total
Evaluating = EVAL	0	10	4	14
Reflecting = RFT	1	2	3	6
Teacher expectations = TX	11	5	0	16
Student expectations = SX	1	1	0	2
Class activity = CA	4	1	0	5
Explicit teaching SEL = ETSEL	23	1	5	29
No explicit SEL instruction = NESEL	12	3	1	16
Student choice = STCH	1	0	0	1
Assessment w/SELF = ASSEL	1	3	1	5
Meeting students SEL needs = MSN	1	0	5	6
Cultural perspective = CP	6	0	5	11
Cultural values = CV	5	0	4	9
Social acceptance = SOA	0	0	4	4
Racial awareness = RA	6	0	0	6
Awareness of cultural values = CAW	10	0	6	16
Environmental awareness = ENVI	8	0	5	13
Need for SEL PD = PDN	7	0	1	8
Feeling of SEL importance = FI	29	0	5	34
Building SEL awareness = SA	55	0	5	60
Addressing the stigma of SEL = AST	7	0	1	8
Teacher modeling SEL = TMS	7	0	12	19

Table 7 (continued)

Code	Interview	Observations	Memos	Total
Students modeling SEL = SMS	2	0	5	7
SEL reluctance = SER	14	0	0	14
Community need for SEL = CNSE	12	0	10	22

Cycle One: Code Frequency by each Data Collection Method

Percentage of codes per collection method

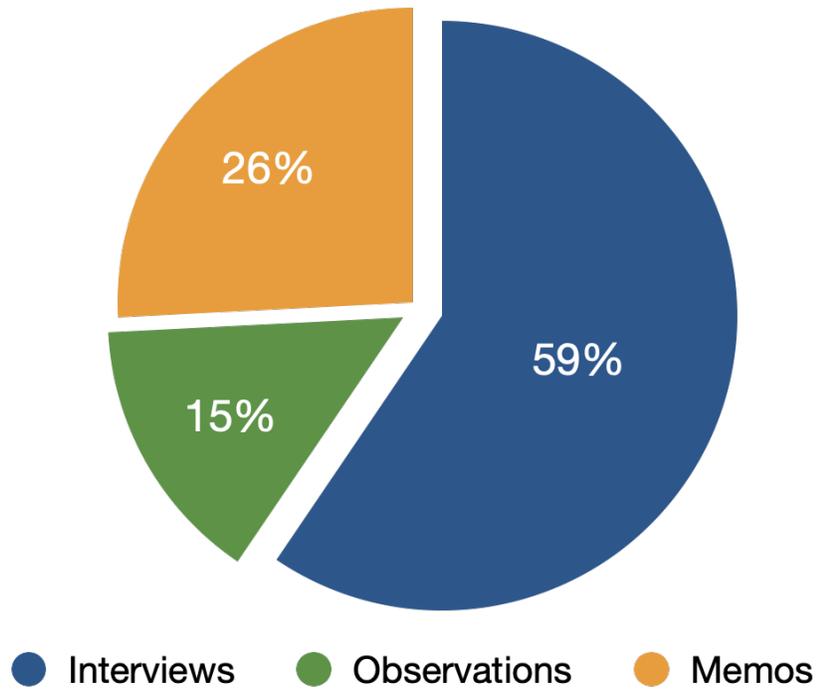


Figure 11. Frequency of code by data collection method.

member by asking the same questions and prompting the interviewee to expand on their experiences at CMIS and their interactions and understanding of SEL. These were the interview questions for the CPR team:

1. How useful is professional learning to teachers as they infuse SEL in the academic program?
2. How do the principles of SEL inform our ability to honor diverse cultures?
3. What do you observe about the commitment of teachers and counselor to and practice SEL?
4. How do students exhibit SEL knowledge, skills, and dispositions?

Interviews took place over several weeks (see Table 8). Interview times varied from 30 to 40 minutes and took place in my office. In recognition of my positionality, I offered several alternative locations, but each member preferred my office for convenience and privacy. All precautions were taken to protect the participants' identity and confidentiality. Once the interview concluded, an audio recording was transcribed using an online, web-hosted service. I then personally reviewed the transcript with audio to ensure accurate transcription and coded using the category and open codes. As I completed these interviews and reviewed the data, I started to group the codes into categories; some of these included: stigma of social-emotional needs, cultural influence, community needs, and the personal perceptions of the CPR members. Table 8 presents the codes and frequency for each interview. Note that codes collected were less from our parent member as her English fluency is lower than the other members.

Classroom Observations

Classroom observations provided an opportunity to document how teachers were embedding SEL instruction as well as how students are using SEL skills to learn. Classroom

Table 8

Code Frequency and Patterns During PAR Cycle One: Interviews

Code	Student	Parent	Counselor	Teacher	Total
Identify emotions = IE	3	1	0	1	5
Self-efficacy = SEF	0	0	0	1	1
Impulse control = IC	0	0	2	3	5
Stress management = SM	2	0	0	0	2
Self-discipline = SD	0	0	1	3	4
Self-motivation = SMOV	2	0	2	6	10
Goal setting = GS	0	0	1	4	5
Organizational skills = OS	0	0	0	1	1
Perspective-taking = PT	0	0	2	0	2
Empathy = EMP	2	0	2	0	4
Appreciating diversity = AD	4	0	0	0	4
Respect for others = RFO	3	0	9	3	15
Communication = COMM	1	0	2	2	5
Social engagement = SE	1	0	0	2	3
Relationship building = RB	2	0	7	1	10
Teamwork = TW	0	0	0	1	1
Identify problems = IP	0	3	0	1	4
Solving problems = SPRB	0	1	0	0	1
Reflecting = RFT	1	0	0	0	1
Teacher expectations = TX	5	0	0	6	11

Table 8 (continued)

Code	Student	Parent	Counselor	Teacher	Total
Self-expectations = SX	0	0	0	1	1
Class activity = CA	4	0	0	0	4
Explicit teaching SEL = ETSEL	0	0	17	6	23
Non-explicit SEL instruction = NESEL	3	0	0	9	12
Assessment w/SEL = ASSEL	0	0	1	0	1
Student choice = STCH	1	0	0	0	1
Meeting students SEL needs = MSN	0	0	1	0	1
Cultural perspective = CP	4	2	0	0	6
Cultural values = CV	4	1	0	0	5
Awareness of cultural values = CAW	6	3	0	1	10
Environmental awareness = ENVI	1	0	3	4	8
The need for SEL PD = PDN	0	1	4	2	7
Feeling of SEL importance = FI	3	1	20	5	29
Building SEL awareness = SA	4	0	27	24	55
Addressing the stigma of SEL = AST	6	0	1	0	7
Teacher modeling SEL = TMS	0	0	3	4	7
Student modeling SEL = SMS	0	0	0	2	2
SEL reluctance = SER	4	0	5	5	14
Community need for SEL = CNSE	0	0	12	0	12
Racial awareness = RA	6	0	0	0	6

observations occurred in middle and high school classes, including Jason’s computer science course. The students were mainly ninth graders with a few older students. The middle school classroom observation was a sixth-grade humanities course taught by Mikel. Both Jason and Mikel are on the CPR team. Before recording verbatim notes from students’ conversations, I asked and was given verbal consent. All names or genders are blinded to ensure confidentiality.

Each observation lasted 55 minutes. I arrived a minute before class to observe the teacher welcoming students and stayed after the class ended to watch the students depart. I wrote selective verbatim quotes and recorded observations including the learning objective and associated learning activity. I sat near students working in pairs or groups and listened to how they interacted with each other, noting the various SEL skills needed for the learning activity. I took notes of the teachers' behaviors and their instructional use of SEL competencies. After the observations, I coded for meaning using category codes based on the CASEL competencies and open codes. Nineteen different codes emerged during the coding process. Table 9 presents the frequency of codes recorded in classroom observations.

Reflective Memos

Throughout PAR Cycle One, I collected reflective memos from the CPR team and from my personal weekly reflections. Reflective memos provided more data to code and triangulate with the other data. After each CPR meeting, the team would write a reflective memo using a prompt about a specific research sub-question and their experience of the meeting, such as, “What emotional experiences have influenced your life choices or helped to shape your life’s path?” (A. Willette, reflective memo, September 27, 2019). Questions was designed to learn more about the importance emotions have in retaining information. CLE activities provided a wealth of data as the CPR team collected the voice of the community and co-constructed artifacts

Table 9

Code Frequency and Patterns during PAR Cycle One: Observations

Code	Middle School	High School	Total
Self-efficacy = SEF	2	0	2
Organizational skills = OS	8	0	8
Perspective-taking = PT	1	0	1
Respect for others = RFO	6	0	6
Communication = COMM	1	0	1
Social engagement = SE	3	2	5
Relationship building = RB	1	1	2
Teamwork = TW	0	4	4
Identify problems = IP	7	4	11
Analyzing solutions = ASOL	2	0	2
Solving problems = SPRB	0	5	5
Evaluating = EVAL	7	3	10
Reflecting = RFT	1	1	2
Teacher expectations = TX	0	4	4
Self-expectations = SX	0	1	1
Class activity = CA	0	1	1
Explicit teaching SEL = ETSEL	0	1	1
Non-explicit SEL instruction = NESEL	3	0	3
Assessment w/SEL = ASSEL	0	3	3

that were photographed and used to provide insight into the school's approach to SEL.

In addition to CPR meeting reflections and CLE events, I kept regular weekly memos. These memos included reflections from daily interactions with students and staff, decisions taken, divisional faculty meetings, and a professional development conference I attended. I reflected on my leadership and the lessons I learned, the mistakes made, or the way I worked to build a more collaborative faculty and learning community. I had conversations with students and teachers that were summarized in the memos. The weekly reflection routine codes reflect my perspective as a leader of a school, a parent of a student, and a researcher. Table 10 presents of the frequency of codes that emerged from the memo collection methods.

Coding and Analysis

Coding and analyzing the various data sets was an iterative process that required reworking the CASEL category codes and open codes that I developed. The category codes came from the CASEL research and from the SEL competencies and behavioral indicator of skills. Although the CPR team was not involved in the coding process, I shared the codes and data with the team during our regular meetings. Open codes pertained to the site-specific environment. These codes included classroom instruction, Thai and the international school culture, and the expressed need for SEL professional development. Forty separate codes were extracted from interview data. The most frequent code in the interviews was the feeling of SEL impertinence. To analyze the data, I used Saldana's (2016) focusing strategy by creating a list of the most insightful quotes transcribed from the interviews, which helped identify relationships of ideas or themes. I created tables and graphs (see Table 8 and/or Figure 1) to illustrate the relationship of the codes to the categories.

As PAR Cycle One concluded, we were beginning to understand the SEL program at

Table 10

Code Frequency and Patterns during PAR Cycle One: Reflective Memos

Code	Reflective Memos	CLE Memo	Total
Identify emotions = IE	0	4	4
Accurate self-perceptions =ASP	0	2	2
Stress management = SM	3	4	7
Self-motivation = SMOV	2	1	3
Organizational skills = OS	1	0	1
Empathy = EMP	6	0	6
Respect for others = RFO	2	0	2
Appreciating diversity = AD	0	6	6
Communication = COMM	3	1	4
Social engagement = SE	4	0	4
Relationship building = RB	3	3	6
Teamwork = TW	3	2	5
Identify problems = IP	3	0	3
Evaluating = EVAL	4	0	4
Solving problems = SPRB	0	1	1
Reflecting = RFT	3	0	3
Explicit teaching SEL = ETSEL	0	5	5
Non-explicit SEL instruction = NESEL	1	0	1
Assessment w/SEL = ASSEL	1	0	1
Environmental awareness = ENVI	0	5	5

Table 10 (continued)

Code	Reflective Memos	CLE Memo	Total
Meeting students SEL needs = MSN	1	4	5
Cultural perspective = CP	1	4	5
Cultural values = CV	1	3	4
Awareness of culture = CAW	0	6	6
Social acceptance = SOA	0	4	4
The need for SEL PD = PDN	1	0	1
Feeling of SEL importance = FI	1	4	5
Building SEL awareness = SA	5	0	5
Teachers modeling SEL = TMS	4	8	12
Student modeling SEL = SMS	1	4	5
Addressing the stigma of SEL = AST	0	1	1
Community need for SEL = CNSE	4	6	10

CMIS. I created a total of 44 codes that captured the behavior, observations, and feelings of the school community. From the collected data, I identified codes based on the CASEL competencies and generated open codes. The data collection process utilized the CPR team which included one-on-one interviews, classroom observations, and reflective memos collected after CPR meetings, CLE activities, and my personal weekly memos. Each CPR team member was interviewed using open ending questions to draw out their understand and experience with SEL. Classroom observations of both middle and high school courses focused on the use of social-emotional skills in academic learning and how SEL instruction was being delivered. Observations provided the CPR team with practical examples of how SEL is implemented, which became the platform for discussions on the shifts made for Cycle Two. The reflective memos from the CPR team members and my weekly reflections helped to triangulate the data. When collectively analyzed we found patterns that elucidated the way students learn and use SEL competencies.

Categories Emerge

In PAR Cycle One, we gathered information and built an understanding of the ways in which SEL instruction is delivered to students and the degree to which teachers, counselors, and students exhibit SEL competencies. The data yielded a clearer perception into how CMIS was addressing SEL in the classroom and community. Four categories emerged from the patterns I found in the data that are presented in this section: (1) general use of SEL skills by teachers and students both in classrooms and on campus; (2) SEL classroom instruction: explicit and implicit SEL instructions; (3) culture influences on students' and parents' understanding of SEL and how it supports learning; and (4) impact of community support for SEL instruction. Figure 12 illustrates the patterns of these categories and the frequency of the mentions.

Students and teachers exhibited the practice of SEL competencies implicitly and explicitly. Culture had an influence in the way students acquired and used SEL, which required the attention of teachers and administrators. Figure 9 illustrates the patterns of these categories and the frequency of the mentions.

Exhibited Use of SEL Skills

Teachers and students were observed, and behavior recorded to examine their SEL competencies in everyday interactions with peers and colleagues. The use of relationship skills, social and self-awareness, responsible decision-making, and self-management were all documented over the course of Cycle One. Table 12 lists the frequency of each exhibited use of SEL competencies. These competencies are divided into five core skills with descriptors of each skill (CASEL, 2020). When coding the data, I used the CASEL competencies to identify behaviors exhibited by students and teachers and open codes for specific behaviors that did not match any of the CASEL competency language. A pattern emerged from the coded data methods that resulted in 207 documented occurrences of use of SEL skills and yielded two dominant patterns: (1) student use of SEL skills to accomplish learning activities; and (2) teacher use of SEL competencies with students and colleagues. Students and teachers exhibited these skills when working in the classroom or when speaking about how these skills were used in classroom learning or in their friend groups. Table 11 presents the codes relating to exhibited use of SEL competencies.

Student Use of SEL

Students use of SEL occurred in classroom activities and in their interactions with the peers. We documented 181 occurrences of students needing SEL skills/strategies to accomplish learning activities. Forty-four of those codes fall in the CASEL category labeled responsible

Relative Frequency of Codes per Category

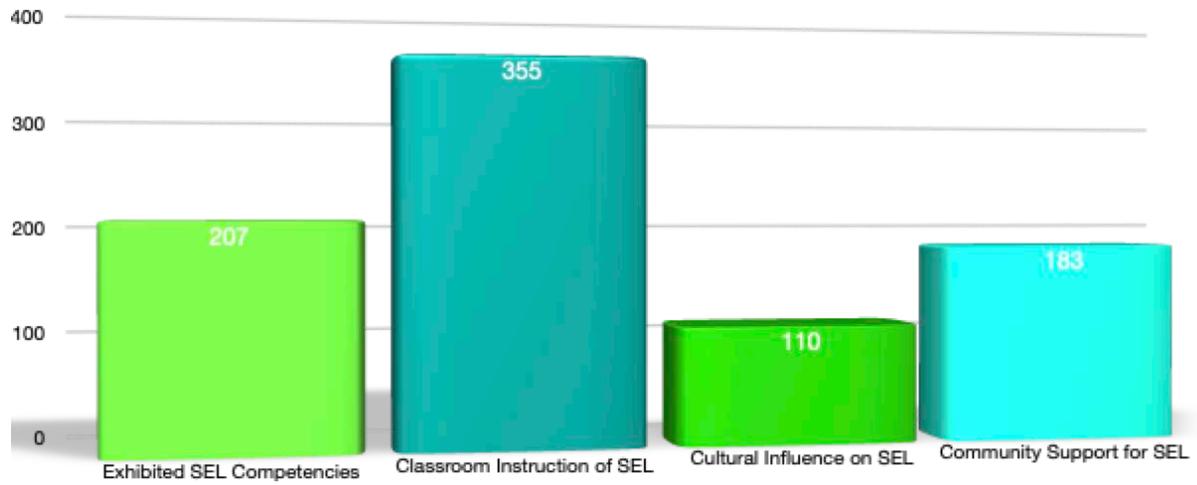


Figure 12. Frequency of each category and percentage of the total codes collected.

Table 11

Exhibited SEL Competencies: Students and Teachers

Code	Interview	Observation	Memos	Total
Identify emotions	5	0	4	9
Self-efficacy	1	2	0	3
Accurate self-perceptions	0	0	2	2
Impulse control	5	0	0	5
Stress management	2	0	4	6
Self-discipline	4	0	0	4
Self-motivation	10	0	1	11
Goal setting	5	0	0	5
Organizational skills	1	8	1	10
Perspective-taking	2	1	0	3
Empathy	4	0	6	10
Appreciating diversity	4	0	6	10
Respect for others	15	6	2	23
Communication	10	1	4	15
Social engagement	1	5	4	10
Relationship building	0	2	3	5
Teamwork	4	4	5	13
Identify problems	1	11	3	15
Analyzing solutions	0	2	0	2
Solving problems	1	5	1	7

Table 11 (continued)

Code	Interview	Observation	Memos	Total
Evaluating	0	10	4	14
Teacher modeling SEL	7	0	12	19
Students modeling SEL	2	0	5	7
Total				208

decision-making (see Figure 7, Chapter 2). In one example documented during an observation of Jason's classroom, students worked in small teams to identify problems with their website design, decide on a solution, and then apply that solution to the problem.

During my observation, I heard this conversation between two students:

Student 1: So, I got the green and the border, but there is this? So that is why I got the coding wrong.

Student 2: I think it's the margins. That's what needs to be changed.

Student 1: Okay, so 1,1,1, but did he use blurps? So, I got this wrong?

Student 2: Yeah, you messed the padding and background wrong. You only got 0.75, and it should be bigger like 0.5. (J. Kiepher, observation, October 4, 2019).

In the exchange, two students worked together to identify the problem and find a solution to it.

Within the exchange there were other necessary SEL competencies that were not as explicit.

While the students had a specific SEL competency to practice, i.e., identify the problem and find a solution, they needed other skills to socially engage with their peers. By default, the lesson taught implicit SEL competencies.

Relationship skills are the foundations of our ability to work together and support each other. Over the course of Cycle One, I documented 42 occurrences of the school community using relationship skills. Students needed the skills to communicate, socially engage, work as a team, and build relationships with peers and teachers. Mikel, a middle school teacher, spoke Regularly about how he his students worked in groups and learning together. He explained that students who work well together naturally in the "National History Day" projects in which they competed regionally and then globally were more likely to advance to the next stage of

competition (A. Willette, reflective memo, November 8, 2019). Students who did not have proficient relationship skills are less likely to have peers willing to work with them.

Teacher Use of SEL Skills

Teachers used SEL skills in their daily interactions with students and colleagues. Nineteen occasions of teachers modeling SEL skills were recorded during the Cycle One data collection process. In classroom observations and discussions with teachers, I documented their expressed feeling of importance for modeling SEL skills and to build relationships with their students. Teachers worked to build relationships with their students, greeted them at the door of the classroom, welcomed them to class, and modeled respect for each other. I stood outside a teacher's door as he welcomed students to class. The teacher would say hello and ask them a personal question such as, "How was your weekend? Did you get something to eat? or Did you listen to that song I told you about?" (A. Willette, reflective memo, November 15, 2019). Relationship building is a gateway to learning and this teacher was using a simple technique to reach out to his students.

During professional development sessions and CLE events, teachers are required to access their social-emotional skills to engage in the process and with their colleagues. In Cycle One, the CPR team used divisional meetings as data collection opportunities using CLE pedagogies to capture the voice of the teachers. In one CLE, teachers were asked to make a journey line of their professional growth and explain the moments when they came to a deeper understanding of how to teach, events that inspired a change in their approach to teaching, and/or people who have impacted the way they teach (A. Willette, reflective memo, October 4, 2019). In the process of the journey line, teachers engaged in a reflective practice; once they had decided on their stories, they had to share them with their colleagues. Through sharing their

stories, they socially engaged, took perspectives, showed respect for others, and used their communications skills. Teachers practiced SEL competencies to become more reflective educator.

In the PAR Cycle One collection process, I captured ways in which students and teachers were using SEL competencies in the classroom and around campus. I documented 207 occurrences of SEL competencies being utilized in classroom activities and by students and teachers. Classroom activities necessitated the use of SEL skills for students to access the learning experience. Teachers leaned on SEL skills to help develop relationships with their students. Professional learning and collegiality required teachers to practice social-emotional skills – mostly implicitly, but, on occasion, naming the skills explicitly.

Classroom Instruction of SEL

SEL instruction was documented (n=355 instances) in two variations: implicit or explicit. The documented occurrences were noted in all five CASEL SEL domains (Self-Awareness, Self-Management, Social Awareness, Relationship-Building, and Responsible Decision-Making). I found the wide reach of competencies as a sign that teachers were offering lessons that allowed students to practice SEL skills in all the CASEL domains. Teachers implicitly provided SEL instruction through lesson activities that required SEL skills for students to engage in the learning. Modeling SEL competencies was another implicit practice that give students an opportunity to see how SEL skills are used. Table 12 contains the codes used and the frequency in which they occurred that support classroom instruction of SEL. Teachers explicitly addressed an SEL competency by explaining how to use an SEL skill and then students practiced that skill. Explicit instruction was documented in the domains of self-awareness and responsible decision-making.

Table 12

Classroom Instruction of SEL Skills

Code	Interview	Observations	Memos	Total
Identify Emotions	5	0	4	9
Self-Efficacy	1	2	0	3
Accurate Self-Perceptions	0	0	2	2
Impulse Control	5	0	0	5
Stress Management	2	0	4	6
Self-Discipline	4	0	0	4
Self-Motivation	10	0	1	11
Goal Setting	5	0	0	5
Organizational Skills	1	8	1	10
Perspective-Taking	2	1	0	3
Empathy	4	0	6	10
Appreciating diversity	4	0	6	10
Respect for others	15	6	2	23
Communication	10	1	4	15
Social engagement	1	5	4	10
Relationship building	0	2	3	5
Teamwork	4	4	8	13
Identify problems	1	11	3	15
Analyzing solutions	0	2	0	2
Solving problems	1	5	1	7

Table 12 (continued)

Code	Interview	Observations	Memos	Total
Evaluating	0	10	4	14
Reflecting	1	2	3	6
Teacher expectations	11	5	0	16
Student expectations	1	1	0	2
Class activity	4	1	0	5
Explicit teaching SEL	23	1	5	29
Non-explicit SEL instruction	12	3	1	16
Student choice	1	0	0	1
Assessment w/SEL	1	3	1	5
Meeting students SEL needs	1	0	5	6
The need for SEL PD	7	0	1	8
Building SEL awareness	55	0	5	60
Teacher modeling SEL	7	0	12	19
Students modeling SEL	2	0	5	7
Total				362

Implicit Teaching of SEL

In general, teachers used more implicit teaching of SEL skills in modeling competencies or planning lessons; in these cases, the SEL skills were not referenced explicitly, nor did they appear in the learning goals. For example, Jason, a high school computer science teacher, gave a short direction explaining a lesson objective. Jason told his students, “This is our goal today, to get to this understanding” (A. Willette, observation notes, November 27, 2019). Goal-setting is an SEL competency, but the teacher did not explain to students how to set goals; he established the goal himself and informed the students what it was. We documented 45 occurrences of implicit instruction of SEL competencies demonstrated in a variety of ways. The evidence collected supports implicit instruction is a significant influence in students’ acquisition of social-emotional competencies.

The way adults interacted with students served as a guide for how students should interact with each other. Learning from modeling is rudimentary for providing students an understanding of what SEL looks like in practice. In casual conversation, Mikel gave me an example of how he believed his behaviors have influenced his students: “One of the biggest changes I have seen with the behavior in my class is just by greeting students at the door before class” (A. Willette, reflective memo, November 29, 2019). This teacher believed that by modeling the showing of respect and building relationships with his students, he has helped to create a better learning environment that has increased productivity in the classroom.

Explicit SEL Instruction

Teachers sometimes used class time to specifically address an SEL competency explicitly. During Cycle One, I recorded 29 occurrences of explicit instruction of SEL. Mikel explained how he addressed impulse control when he needs to speak to his students. “I was

teaching a lesson, and two students were playing some games when they were found out by another student. We talked about impulse control, and they knew right away what they have done wrong” (M. Terry, interview, November 12, 2019). Any middle school teacher has most likely experienced a similar interaction. While Mikel was addressing a small group of students, the outcome may promote his students to become more aware of their behaviors and the social and academic implications it has on the class. In another example of how teachers are addressing SEL skills is the use of daily lesson objectives. Mikel gave a quick explanation of goal setting and time management to his students. During a classroom observation while presenting a project and the lesson objective. He explained to his students, who were working on a large history project, that “Each lesson is broken down into goals for you to work towards and keep you on track for the due date” (M. Terry, observation, November 27, 2019). He broke down the project into smaller parts and gave a time frame for when each part was to be completed.

The explicit instruction of CASEL competency, responsible decision-making, was a prevalent code and serves as an example of how teachers are addressing SEL skills. There were 44 recorded occurrences of responsible decision-making being taught or used during Cycle One. In a classroom observation I recorded an example of how identifying problems, which an indicator in is the responsible decision-making domain. Jason, a computer science teacher, gave explicit instruction on how to identify problems with the students’ computer coding.

“Recognizing the problem is crucial to completing the task” and followed that with, “When you're looking at my [webpage] and looking at your page, if they look the same, then you did it correctly” (J. Kiepher, observation, October 4, 2019). His webpage example that students were to follow helped them in identifying problems with their own computer codes. I coded Identifying the Problem 15 times during the observations and interviews.

In some rare instances, the Common Core State Standards require students to practice SEL to demonstrate proficiency in a certain subject competency. For example, one literacy standard requires students to use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to manage the complexity of a topic. Jordan, a high school student, told me about a writing lesson using literary devices on the topic the American civil rights movement presented in his English class. The teacher needed students to empathize with African Americans, who were being brutalized under a racist society. She played a recording of “Strange Fruit” by Billie Holiday and provided the lyrics as the song uses a metaphor of fruit hanging from the poplar tree to represent the horror of lynching African Americans in the United States. His teacher asked the students to identify their emotional state while listening to the song (J. Suk, interview, November 5, 2019). International school students in Thailand were asked to identify their emotions for them to better understand how powerful metaphors can be when used by masters of the English language. The imaginary and topic which was accessed through emotional thought was a powerful learning experience for Jordan. In this example, SEL competencies of *identifying emotions*, and *empathy* were necessary to access the lesson content and highlights how SEL can be embedded support learning of the subject standards.

Counselors have expressed the importance of giving explicit organizational instructions to students for taking notes or in their educational course plan and university applications. Eula, a high school counselor, spoke about how she teaches organizational skills and planning to seniors who are putting together their university applications and the need for parental support; both goal setting and organizational skills are CASEL indicators. She prepares a yearly parent meeting for Grades 9 through 12 on the university application process and how parents can help their children set goals and organize themselves (A. Willette, reflective memo, October 25,

2019). Eula expressed the importance of teaching SEL competencies and a need to build awareness of these skills not just within the student body but community at large.

The focus of practice was to foster an SEL program that supports academic and social-emotional learning. The data uncovered patterns that support the objective and produced new questions that need further exploration in the next cycle of inquiry. The category of classroom instruction of SEL was supported by classroom observations, reflective memos, and interviews. Within the category, two subcategories became evident: the ways in which teachers implicitly teach SEL through modeling competencies or having students' practice SEL skills embedded in learning activities; and how some teachers explicitly address SEL competencies in their instruction. The need to teach the community about the importance of SEL was a small but interesting pattern, which will require more data. In PAR Cycle Two, we conducted more observations to collect specific ways in which students receive SEL instruction.

Cultural Influence on SEL

Culture has a notable impact on how students use and learn SEL competencies. Cultural backgrounds influence the way students express respect for others, the perspectives they take, and which social-emotional competencies are important to them. Religion, language, and family structures act upon student's self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship skills. Students, teachers, and parents at CMIS alluded to cultural influences on SEL in 110 documented instances. Students, teachers, and parents felt that cultural perspectives have an impact on the way SEL competencies should be taught and the way students exhibit SEL skills. While the category was mentioned less frequently than others, data indicated that appreciation for diversity was essential for the school community and that teachers needed to be aware of Thai cultural values. Table 13 shows the cultural influence codes and frequency in

Table 13

Cultural Influence on SEL

Code	Interview	Observations	Memos	Total
Appreciating diversity	4	0	6	10
Respect for others	15	6	2	23
Social engagement	1	5	4	10
Relationship building	0	2	3	5
Cultural perspective	6	0	5	11
Cultural values	5	0	4	9
Social acceptance	0	0	4	4
Racial awareness	6	0	0	6
Awareness of cultural values	10	0	6	16
Community need for SEL	12	0	10	22
Total				116

which they occurred during Cycle One. The last six codes in the table were the most valuable when interpreting the data as it pertains directly to diverse cultural values and perspectives.

The international school context was a factor in how students learn and used SEL skills as teachers come from various cultural backgrounds and mainly entered the classroom with only basic cultural understandings of their students. It takes new teachers time to get to know the nuances of how the host countries culture impacts the ways students learn. In data analysis, we collected 46 codes pertaining to culture and race, which was nearly half of the total codes in the cultural influence on SEL category. The international school context was explained in an interview with Jordan, the student representative on the CPR team. He shared that new teachers to the school have little understanding of the host country's culture. One of his teachers asked, "How would a Thai person address this in a discussion?" (J. Suk, interview, November 5, 2019). Jordan explained that while non-Thai teachers understand they are teaching in another culture, those who have been in Thailand longer get the subtle nuances of the culture better than the newer teachers. New teachers do not always understand that the non-combative nature and less straightforward approach to people is how Thai culture impacts social interactions (J. Suk, interview, November 5, 2019). Understanding how Thai culture influences the way Thai people express social-emotional skills is important for teachers so they understand a culturally responsive approach to their students and their parents.

There was evidence that culture impacted the way teachers address SEL in their classroom and how students practiced social-emotional skills. During a community learning exchange with the middle and high school faculty, the CPR team asked teachers to think about the following questions: "What does SEL look like, sound like, feel like, and what is it not?" The faculty then co-constructed a poster with examples to share with each other. The CPR team then

asked the teachers, “How does SEL look through the different cultural lenses of our students?” and discussed it in small groups. After that activity, an art teacher told me that while teaching students to draw eyes, she realized she was teaching them with a western eye point of view. She would tell them to “start by drawing a big circle” (A. Willette, reflective memo, November 6, 2019). Through her conversations at the CLE, she realized that she was teaching her students to draw “her eyes” not “their eyes” and that she needed to be more aware of their cultural background. There remain lingering questions regarding the influence of culture on an SEL program that need to be explored in the coming cycles of inquiry.

The influence culture had on the learning and practice of social-emotional competencies was complex as this evidence suggested. Teachers who were new to Thailand realized that the students’ culture impacted the ways they expressed themselves or addressed conflicts. Cultural influence impacted the ways teachers approached learning as their backgrounds shaped their perspectives, which, in turn, transferred to their instructional practices. Culture is closely tied with the community and how a community perceived SEL is the next category.

Community Support for SEL

Fostering an SEL program that supports academic and social-emotional learning relies on the school community to have a shared understanding of the value SEL adds to students learning. Through the analysis of the PAR Cycle One data, I identified tensions related to the importance of SEL in learning. We recorded 14 accounts where teachers expressed reluctance to incorporate SEL in their lesson planning and eight expressions by students and parents towards the stigma of social-emotional well-being. Both teachers and students expressed a reluctance to pursue SEL competencies through explicit instruction. One counselor said that during an explicit SEL lesson in a middle school class using the curriculum developed by “Second Step,” a student

said, “You can’t push this information down our throats” (B. Awar, interview, October 4, 2019). However, she told me that other students expressed appreciation for the same lesson. The student-teacher exchange highlights the difficulties of lessons solely based on teaching SEL competencies and reinforces the idea that SEL should be infused within the content curriculum. Table 11 shows the frequency of the codes referring to community support in an SEL program.

Despite a reluctance from parents, teachers, and students for SEL in the evidence, there was a glimmer of hope as we recorded more support within the school community from teachers, counselors, and students regarding the benefits that SEL could have on learning and relationships. We recorded a total of 183 occurrences of community support, 36 of those were explicitly negative towards SEL, while the remaining 147 were positive or neutral in its connotation. For example, the feeling that SEL is important appeared 34 times, and the need to build SEL awareness 60 times. In an interview, Eula, a high school counselor said, “By teaching these SEL skills to students, they can then help their friends out better. So, through this—it’s almost like we have an army of like many listeners and counselors that kind of help each other out through whatever issues are going on” (E. Lee, interview, October 22, 2019). The awareness that SEL is important because it could have a domino effect because the discussion could cause more conversation among different groups of people. Counselors reported that teachers noticed when students needed some emotional support by referring students to counseling more often. Counselors reported that students that since we were being more explicit about SEL language, more students scheduled office visits to discuss strategies that address stress, motivation, and other competencies (E. Lee, interview, October 22, 2019). The awareness and feeling that SEL could help students become more effective learners when given the proper support was an encouraging category. Building SEL awareness within the community through explicit means

promoted a larger community involvement with supporting the development of SEL competencies. Building SEL awareness in the school community was documented 60 times in the data collected (see Table 14).

During PAR Cycle One, I gathered and analyzed data through interviews, observations, and reflective memos written by the CPR team and me. I grouped the codes into four categories supported by the data collected based on the SEL competencies outlined by CASEL and the open codes I developed. The recorded data captured the frequency and variety of teachers, students, parents, and counselors demonstrating use of SEL competencies. There was observable use of SEL by students during classroom learning activities as well as teachers explaining ways in which they see students using SEL skills with their peers. A category of how SEL was being taught through classroom instruction was identified. The data collected and analyzed uncovered how SEL competencies are being explicitly addressed through classroom instruction. Explicit instruction was not the only way students are learning SEL skills. Teachers were providing implicit instruction through modeling SEL behaviors and designing learning activities that required students to use competencies with their peers to complete or participate in the learning process.

Analysis of the data identified a category regarding the impact that culture has on SEL. The data supported that when teachers have knowledge or awareness of their students' culture, they could better address SEL needs. Culture affected how students learn and demonstrated SEL competencies. However, more data was required to understand the complexity of how this influenced SEL students demonstrated use and skill attainment. The fourth category identified was the community support for SEL instruction. While some community members expressed a

Table 14

Community Support for SEL

Code	Interview	Observations	Memos	Total
Communication	10	1	4	15
Social engagement	1	5	4	10
Relationship building	0	2	3	5
Awareness of cultural values	10	0	6	16
Feeling of SEL importance	29	0	5	34
Building SEL awareness	55	0	5	60
Addressing the stigma of SEL	7	0	1	8
SEL reluctance	14	0	0	14
Community need for SEL	12	0	10	22
Total				184

reluctance to add more focus on SEL, they acknowledged the importance and need for a more explicit SEL program. The inconsistency of their perception required future data collection and analysis in Cycle Two. The data suggested that our school needed to build awareness surrounding the use and need for SEL. The categories identified in Cycle One required us to continue analyzing data from subsequent cycles to fully understand the supports and inhibitors to SEL implementation in the secondary school.

Implications of PAR Cycle One on PAR Cycle Two

The data collection analysis highlighted how the school is currently addressing SEL, which guides the CPR team to find a space to focus our efforts for the next research cycle. The data I analyzed suggested that students use SEL competencies in class and with their peer groups to achieve the learning goals. Teachers exhibited SEL skills with interactions between students and colleagues implicitly and explicitly. We learned the cultural and community influences influenced the SEL program and how students learn and practice social-emotional competencies. In PAR Cycle One, we partially uncovered how professional development regarding SEL was useful to teachers as they infused SEL in the academic program. Conversations and data analysis informed the CPR team and me with a deeper understanding of the ways which the school is addressing SEL needs. During PAR Cycle Two, I wanted to conduct more classroom observations on the extent to which students and teachers are exhibiting SEL competencies as some of the skills are nuanced. CMIS teachers are generally committed to SEL but have expressed a need for more professional development to build their capacity of pedagogical methods.

We needed to pay more attention to the differences in cultural behaviors that demonstrate listening, respect, and perspective. The pattern that emerged during the data analysis provided

information that could increase teachers' ability to teach students SEL competencies more effectively. We needed more evidence to develop a deeper understanding of the SEL principles that inform our ability to honor diverse cultures. It was difficult to collect data about the influence of culture on learning; interviews and individual experiences could help bring to focus the cultural aspects of SEL. The final implication for PAR Cycle One was the support we needed to garner in the community for developing a SEL focus. The analysis showed majority support for SEL; however, there seemed to be a reluctance that we needed to explore.

A lingering issue concerned the professional learning that teachers must have if the study was going to accomplish the aim of building a stronger social emotional learning program. We needed to explore options that could provide better quality professional development. It was suggesting that school brings in an expert from outside the school community to facilitate culturally responsive SEL instructional methods training. Another new question was how to capture evidence of students using social-emotional skills that are not easily observable. These skills include self-confidence, self-efficacy, and self-motivation.

Finally, a paramount question was how to build SEL support from the school community. We had learned the importance of informing and including the community in learning about how the use of social-emotional competencies can support academic and social-emotional learning. We discovered a reluctance for using class time to address SEL. How to build support and address the reluctance of SEL within the community was a question that could not go unanswered. In the second cycle, we planned to host "Coffee Mornings" so that the parent community could engage in the learning programs at CMIS and include information regarding the SEL program. The CPT team thought that by educating the community about the potential

impact that social-emotional skills had on improving academics, we could garner parental support.

Collaborative Leadership

Entwined in the PAR study is a reflective process which documented my evolution as a collaborative educational leader. Throughout the process, I relied on the CPR team for input and recorded their experiences with learning, teaching, and using SEL competencies. As a leader, I know that it takes a team of people trusting each other for a school to address all the learners in a community. I documented 11 occurrences during PAR Cycle One in which I relied on teachers and support staff to help with decision making (see Table 15). The PAR process forced me to trust the people around me more than in the past. I came to a deeper understanding of how important it is to listen to all the voices of the community. I have a greater appreciation the benefits of reaching out to community stakeholders and embracing the CLE axiom, “Crossing boundaries enriches the ways we learn and develop” (Guajardo et al., 2016, p. 4). In reviewing our data, I noted four occasions in which I actively worked to build a stronger professional learning community and 10 other times that involved working with staff and department to build a stronger learning community. My goal of becoming an equity-focused leader needed to be strengthened. My priority in the next cycle was to make a conscious effort to bring an equity focus to my practice.

Conclusion

During the PAR Cycle One of the inquiry process, the CPR team engaged with the school

Table 15

Leadership Codes

Code	PAR Cycle One
Working with staff = WWS	2
Working with faculty leadership = WWFL	3
Building professional learning communities = BPLC	4
Staff appreciation = SAP	1
Transparency and communication = TAC	3
Recognizing leadership mistakes = RLM	1
Leadership lessons = LL	2
Student guidance = STUG	2
Listening to student voice = LSV	3
Professional obligations = PFO	1
Doctorate work = ECU	3

community to being fostering a an SEL program that supports academic and social-emotional growth. Four categories emerged pertaining the way the school community address SEL emerged, (1) the way SEL competencies are exhibited within the community, (2) the way classroom activities provide SEL instruction to students, (3) the influence of student's cultures in the way they use SEL competencies, and (4) the influence of the community on the way we approach SEL. During classroom observations, I recorded how students are required to use SEL competencies through lesson activities. I documented the how teachers delivered SEL intrusion to students in both implicit and explicit means. The influences of culture on how the school approaches an SEL program and how student exhibit social-emotional skill was documented in interviews with the CPR team and during CLE events with teachers. Targeted professional learning was an essential activity in our approach to strengthening our SEL program. The CPR team continued to raise awareness of SEL within the school community and helped build capacity in students and teachers to address the SEL competencies. During Cycle Two we needed to dive deeper into the influences that pressure students to learn SEL and make a conclusion of how we can foster and SEL program in an international school.

CHAPTER SIX: PAR CYCLE TWO: FOSTERING SEL AWARENESS

The PAR purpose was to understand the degree to which students, teachers, and counselors incorporated and exhibited social-emotional learning (SEL) knowledge, skills, and dispositions in formal and informal school contexts. Through the data collection process in PAR Cycle One, we defined the categories and, as a result, had a better understanding of how Chiang Mai International School's (CMIS) SEL program was developing staff responsiveness to SEL. In this chapter, I present the data analysis process and the themes that emerged from PAR Cycle Two. Then, I report the implications of the emerging themes. In PAR Cycle One, we saw a strong uptick in the use of SEL competencies in classrooms and a general increase in our collective consciousness of what constituted social-emotional learning in our context and how we should use it in classrooms and throughout the school community. However, we recognized from the evidence that we still had work to do to build understanding and coherent use of the SEL strategies.

Building a More SEL-Aware Community

We learned from our analysis of PAR Cycle One that teachers, students, and counselors used SEL formally and informally and implicitly and explicitly. During PAR Cycle Two, we shifted to collecting more data from classroom observations to gain a deeper understanding of how teachers and students were using SEL competencies and how teachers approached SEL instruction. In addition, I interviewed the CPR team, and they collected data through interviews with teachers and counselors. We all wrote reflective memos after our meetings and CLE events.

In this cycle of inquiry, the data aligned to the categories that emerged in the first cycle. We organized them into four emerging themes related to the current SEL program: (1) community support for SEL; (2) cultural influences on how students use and learn social-

emotional skills; (3) classroom instruction of SEL; and (4) exhibited use of SEL skills. Cycle One evidence provided us with a baseline of what students, parents, teachers, and counselors understood about SEL and SEL competencies through the diverse cultural lenses of the CPR team. In this second cycle of inquiry, I was able to observe in classrooms how both teachers and students used SEL skills to support academic learning and how teachers approached SEL instruction. CPR memos revealed our collective perspective and understanding of how community members felt about the importance of SEL, the influence of culture on SEL, and to what degree its use was exhibited on campus, in the classroom, and at home. Table 16 illustrates the timing of data collection activities during the second cycle of inquiry. Due to school closings during the COVID-19 pandemic, the last two activities were conducted remotely.

PAR Cycle Two Data Collection Methods

In Spring 2020, the CPR team reviewed the first set of data and provided feedback. We scheduled data collection activities over the course of 10 weeks, which included four classroom observations, two community learning exchanges, five individual interviews, and reflections from our CPR meetings. I kept weekly reflective memos that documented my thoughts, observations, and experiences as a leader and researcher. Predictably, the pandemic spread of Covid had a significant impact on data collection methods during the last 2 weeks of the cycle. CMIS leadership closed the campus to all students and teachers on March 18, 2020, forcing teachers to shift to online learning. As a result, the CPR team switched from in-person to electronic collaboration to collect data. The CPR team and I then triangulated the data to monitor the applicability of the emerging themes.

Pandemic Impact on Data Collection

In early January, the spread of Covid was causing serious consequences in countries

Table 16

Weekly Data Collection Activities during PAR Cycle Two

Data Collection	CPR	Observation	Interview	CLE
Week 1	Present 1 st cycle findings and Cycle 2 plan: January 9, 2020			PD: What does culturally responsive SEL look like, sound like, feel like? January 7, 2020
Week 2			Mikel Terry January 14, 2020	
Week 3	CPR meeting photo voice of SEL in action January 28, 2020			
Week 4		MS M. Terry February 5, 2020		
Week 5			Beth Awar February 14, 2020	
Week 6		HS K. Calvert February 18, 2020		
Week 7		MS T. Fenski February 27, 2020	Jorden Suk March 5, 2020	
Week 8		HS J. Melby March 6, 2020		
Week 9		McCarthy March 10, 2020		
Week 10			Ivene Nam March 17, 2020	What does SEL instruction look like in your classroom? March 18, 2020

surrounding Thailand, and we realized that the epidemic would impact our community as well though the timing was unclear. In the weeks following the initial changes, the administrative team prepared to switch to remote teaching and learning. At the beginning of March, I modified my data collection calendar with the goal of finishing by March 27, which was the start of our spring break. Unfortunately, our school closed for the rest of the school year on March 18, 2020, almost 2 weeks before my expected data collection end date. Next, I detail the data collection tools: observations, interviews, and reflective memos, and describe the community learning exchange processes and the CPR meetings.

Observations

The four classroom observations provided insights into how teachers and counselors implemented SEL practices and how students exhibited SEL competencies. Collecting observational data from both middle and high school classes in three different subjects allowed the CPR team to see how SEL was being used and taught in various environments. I observed math, social studies, and English classes and recorded student interactions, teacher instructions, and assessment activities. During classroom observations, I collected selective verbatim conversations between teachers and students and between peers. I looked for explicit instruction of SEL skills and how teachers and students modeled SEL competencies.

Interviews and Reflective Memos

I conducted interviews with the parent and student representatives, a middle school counselor, and a middle school teacher about the community's perception and the influence of culture on SEL. I conducted 20- to 30-minute interviews in my office, which was the preferred location expressed by the interviewees. I reviewed and corrected any errors the transcripts. All

members of the CPR team prepared regular reflective memos after team meetings, and CLE activities. Their reflective memos captured their observations and perspectives.

Community Learning Exchanges

Over the course of PAR Cycle Two, teachers engaged in professional learning activities to increase their professional understanding of SEL instruction. We used community learning exchange processes and protocols for the professional learning sessions, which were conducted with the teaching faculty of the secondary school. A member of the CPR team was embedded in various table groups to record ideas, understandings, and perceptions. One CLE focused on the influence of culture and teacher modeling of SEL skills. In the second online CLE, teachers shared their SEL approaches and strategies using a discussion tool, Flipgrid.

Finally, we captured important insights at community activities aimed to address the general stigma around social and emotional health. The CPR team and I wrote reflective memos about our observations and the conversations we had during that week. The CPR team participated in a photovoice activity about what SEL looks like in our community and how culture impacts the ways people exhibit and respond to social emotional learning.

CPR Team Meetings

We held two CPR meetings, and our discussions yielded insights into the way SEL instruction was currently implemented and the nature of SEL within the community. At our first meeting, we used a photovoice activity in which members of the team shared photo representations of how SEL is exhibited by students, teachers, and counselors. During their presentations, I recorded verbatim statements in a Word document and summarized their presentations (see Figure 13). Each picture reflects a CPR team member's perception of how SEL is exhibited by students, counselors, or teachers. I solicited feedback on which data



Figure 13. Examples of data collected during the photovoice activity, which depict the way the CPR members views on the study's sub questions.

collection methods were most efficient in providing insight. We discussed what students needed to perform well academically. We concluded the meeting with team members expressing a greater need for data regarding how SEL is exhibited by students, teachers, and parents.

Data Analysis

I transcribed and coded the data (observations, interviews, or memos) using category codes from the first cycle of inquiry. Coding was an iterative process, which started with connections and similarities we combined and or separated into more specific codes. For example, we changed the “modeling SEL” code to differentiate between teachers’ and students’ modeling of competencies. I added a code to address the impact of Covid on the community. Once all the data were collected and coded, I used a method suggested by Saldaña (2016) and identified a top 10 list of the compelling quotes, made tables and graphs of the frequency of codes, and grouped similar codes that corresponded to the emerging themes.

We found that SEL awareness and understanding increased in comparison to our baseline data from the first cycle; SEL competencies were exhibited more frequently (see Figure 14). We collected supporting data on the influence of culture, how teachers could provide more culturally responsive SEL instruction (total occurrences = 290) which reflected the general increasing SEL awareness. The second category, cultural influence on SEL (n = 207), identified instances of community members raising awareness of the importance of respecting individual needs and celebrating the diversity. The most frequently occurring code was classroom instruction of SEL skills (n = 345). I noted that codes for explicit instruction appeared in teacher and counselor interviews and memos but were rare in classroom observations.

The second most prevalent codes pertained to exhibited use of SEL (n = 317).

Emerging Themes from Cycle Two

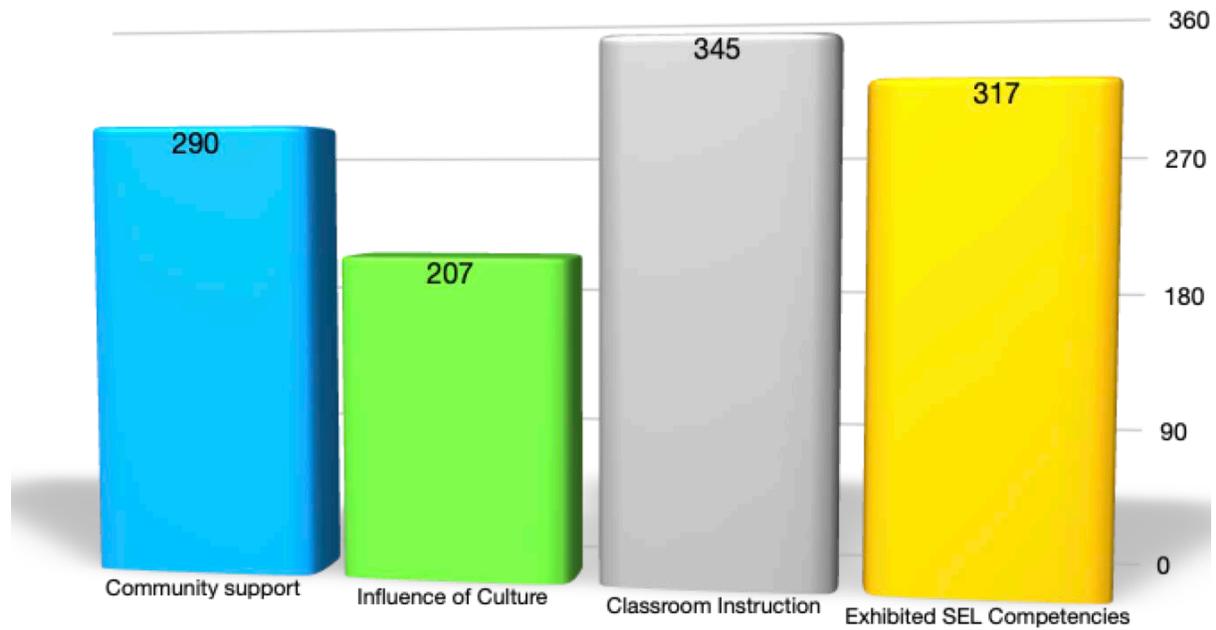


Figure 14. Frequency of codes related to the emerging themes in Cycle Two.

While classroom instruction focused on teaching subject-specific content, students had to demonstrate SEL skills to accomplish the learning task through exhibited social-emotional skills.

Emerging Themes

Based on the PAR Cycle Two data, we confirmed the importance of community support for SEL, learned more about the influence of culture on SEL behaviors, determined how classroom instruction fostered an understanding of SEL, and noted how teachers and students exhibited SEL competencies. We confirmed four emerging themes (see Figure 15). The first theme is the community support for SEL in students' educational experiences. We examined collective feelings about how SEL and social-emotional wellbeing are essential not only for healthier relationships but also for academic achievement. Building community support for SEL in the academic program required addressing the stigma of social-emotional needs. Community support resulted with increased awareness for the necessity of SEL instruction.

The second emerging theme is the influence of culture on students' learning and practicing SEL competencies. People learn through the lenses of their culture, which provides their background knowledge and understandings (National Academy of Sciences, Engineering, & Medicine, 2018). Evidence suggests that cultural norms shaped the ways in which students exhibited SEL competencies; they showed respect for other, built relationships, and collaborated in teams, but we needed a deeper understanding of how that happened in cross-cultural environments and within the majority Thai culture. In addition, we examined how stronger culturally responsive practices might support students.

The last two themes are SEL classroom instruction and the exhibited use of SEL skills by both teachers and students. Evidence supports the need for content instruction to use SEL as a conduit in supporting academic instruction. Secondly, we used the terms explicit and implicit use

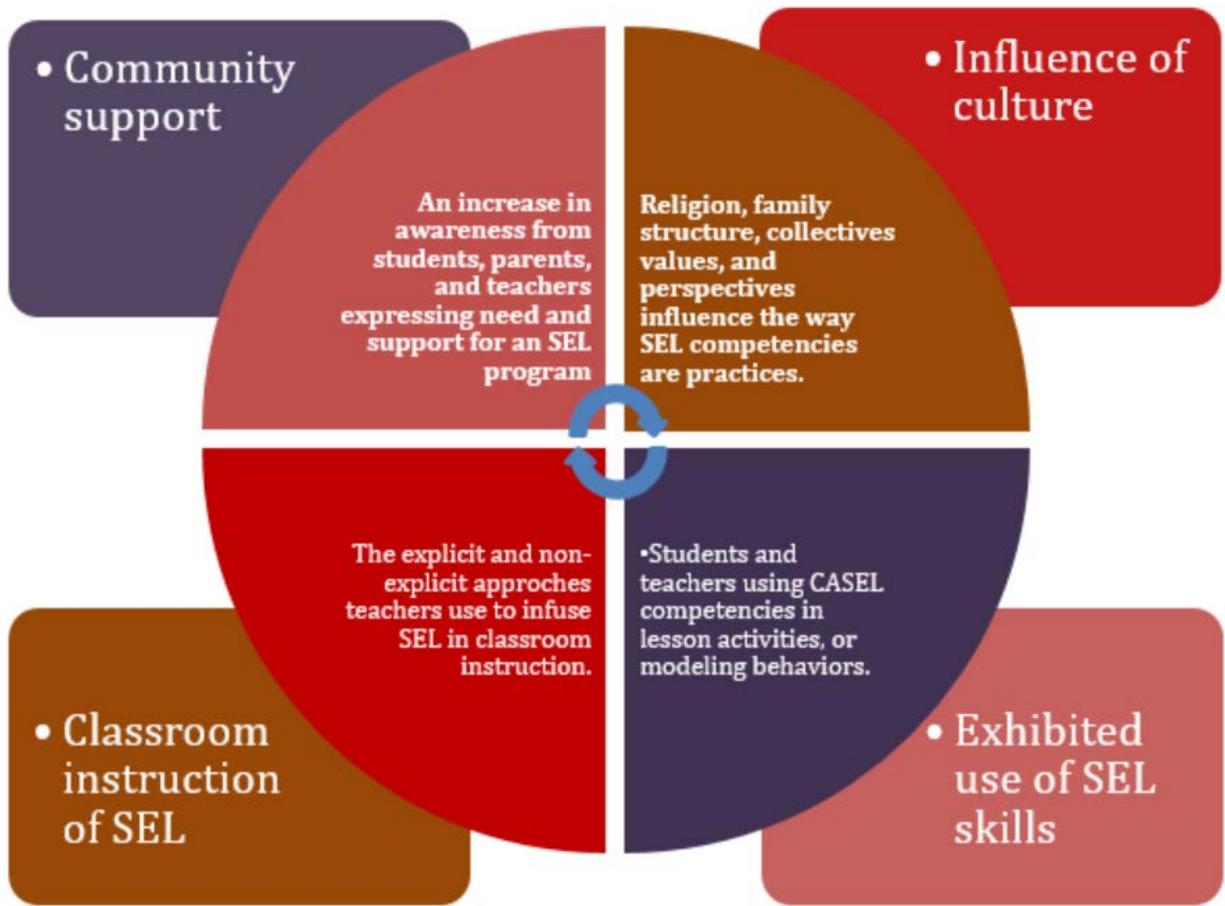


Figure 15. Four emerging themes with brief descriptions.

of SEL in classroom activities as we observed instances where explicit instruction occurred while in other observations were observed implicit instruction for students' social-emotional skills. Next, I describe each of the themes in detail and support the coded evidence with specific examples from the data.

Community Support of SEL

The CMIS community is a blend of Eastern and Western ideals and values, and parents have differing views on the importance of SEL. The CASEL framework offers the community a critical support for SEL implementation; thus, we thought it vital for school coherence and student success that the community—teachers, students, parents, and counselors—adopt and use the language of SEL. However, students and parents had a range of perceptions regarding the importance a school should have on SEL, but we observed an overall increase in parental awareness of the importance of SEL competencies (see Table 17) for the frequency of recorded data occurrences.

Students, teachers, and parents showed evidence of using SEL language in 290 instances. In PAR Cycle Two, the staff and students had discussions about SEL's importance. Teachers modeled the competencies, and the student government used SEL when designing campus programs. Teachers and students modeled respect for each other and worked to build stronger relationships.

Teachers Support for SEL Instruction

We planned targeted professional learning events in Cycle Two with the aim of increasing teachers' capacity in embedding SEL instruction into their subject content. As a result, teachers were more aware of their interactions with students and in their modeling of SEL competencies with students. For example, before one high school classroom observation, the

Table 17

Frequency of Codes for Community Support of SEL

Code	Observations	Interviews	Memos	Total
Respect for others = RFO	14	3	8	25
Communication = COMM	9	5	0	14
Using common language = UCL	0	7	2	9
Demonstrating SEL = DSEL	0	10	0	10
Meeting students SEL Needs = MSN	1	8	1	10
Teacher modeling SEL = MS	2	20	10	32
Teacher support for SEL = TS	0	9	7	16
Student modeling SEL = SMS	0	4	1	5
Social acceptance = SOA	2	3	4	9
Cultural perspective = CP	0	8	9	17
Cultural expectations = CUE	0	3	6	9
Cultural values = CV	0	11	7	18
Awareness of culture = CAW	0	15	10	25
Racial awareness = RA	0	10	9	19
Religious Awareness = REL	0	2	0	2
Environmental awareness = ENVI	0	1	10	11
Teacher need for SEL PD = PDN	0	2	1	3
The feeling of SEL importance = FI	0	15	11	26
Building SEL awareness = SA	0	0	10	10
Addressing the stigma of SEL = AST	0	18	4	22

Table 17 (continued)

Code	Observations	Interviews	Memos	Total
SEL reluctance = SER	0	6	1	7
Community need for SEL = CNSE	0	3	4	7
Total				306

teacher stood outside the classroom, welcoming his students to class with a high-five, fist bump, or *wai* (Thai style greeting) (M. Terry, observation, February 5, 2020). This was one of 32 recorded instances of teachers modeling SEL practices on campus and the highest total for a single code.

Secondly, the teaching faculty engaged in regular discussions about SEL and discussed how they could implement a robust program in their classrooms; a common language based on the CASEL competencies began to emerge from the professional learning workshops. Teachers noticed the student use of the SEL language. We observed nine occasions in which teachers referenced students' usage of common SEL-specific vocabulary. As the wellness teacher stated, "I can hear [students] mirroring what I say, so it shows me that they are getting the information. And when they interact, you can see it in their behavior" (B. Awar, interview, February 14, 2020). Teachers using common language and modeling healthy social-emotional behaviors provided an example for students to follow.

Students Building Support

The student council planned activities to increase SEL awareness and support within the student body and the larger community. The goal was to build awareness of SEL use and an appreciation for diversity and authentic mutual respect. Students and teachers exhibiting "respect for others" was documented 25 times in PAR Cycle Two data and 48 times in PAR Cycles One and Two combined. Students demonstrated support for SEL by bringing elements of dance, music, language, and food from their respective cultures to share with their peers. An on-campus event called "International Week" helped to build respect for other people and their cultures within the community (A. Willette, reflective memo, February 21, 2020). Students and the counseling department organized "Mental Illness" week to destigmatize social-emotional issues

and bring awareness to depression and anxiety. The week-long event included exhibitions set up by students around the school highlighting famous people who have a mental illness. Students also facilitated the construction of a mural for the elementary hall. Teachers perceived these expressions of support among students as benefiting their overall academic growth. As expressed by a CPR member, “[Students] notice how [SEL] has been helping them emotionally, socially, which in turn helps them with academic success, too” (B. Awar, interview, February 14, 2020). While mental health is different from SEL, the overall awareness of emotional health was promoted.

Through modeling social-emotional interactions, teachers provided examples of SEL behavior that students could mirror. The use of a common language to describe SEL competencies gave students a way to talk about social and emotional needs and skills. Students were essential in building community awareness around SEL by organizing events that strengthen respect for each other's cultures.

Parent Support for SEL

I collected parental perception of SEL in secondary classes through interviews with Ivone, the parent representative member of our CPR team. She explained that she was sending her children to CMIS so they could attend universities in the UK or US and supported a rigorous academic curriculum (I. Nam, interview, March 2020). Ivone explained her reasons for SEL support in school: “It is important for [her children] to manage their emotions and stress, or they will not be successful [in university].” While this rationale is common among parents, this framing of SEL is narrow and does not account for the issues some students face when under this level of pressure to succeed academically.

Ivone further expressed her role as a parent to help build SEL skills with her children at

home with a focus on respecting people and their race, religion, and culture. Many parents expressed their appreciation of the mental health event and participated by adding to a “hand of support” mural the community created during that week (A. Willette, reflective memo, March 5, 2020). Support from the school’s parent community was noted as increasing and beneficial for our overall efforts in foster an SEL program.

Parents eager for their children to be accepted into university understood that without SEL, their ability will be limited. However, questions regarding the longevity and sustainability of community support remained, and perhaps we needed to better attend to how parents were framing the importance of SEL. In addition, there was no explicit mention of SEL competencies in the school’s mission, vision statement, or existing policies. If we were going to have an impact, we needed to address those policies.

Influence of Culture on SEL

The analysis of the data revealed a community belief that culture played a role in the ways SEL was enacted (n = 207 occurrences). Table 18 presents the codes relating to the influence of culture on SEL. Students, teachers, and parents all reported an understanding of the influence culture has in learning, including how SEL practices vary among cultures. For example, Ivone explained to me that Buddhist values impact the ways Thai people interact and build relationships (I. Nam, interview, March 17, 2020). Each CPR member expressed their beliefs that we needed to be more aware of cultural influences (25 occurrences), but we did not clarify a collective description. While we agreed we needed to be aware and have a cultural perspective, we needed more specifics about what that meant to members in the community. We were able to use the data to understand how to address cultural awareness, culturally responsive classrooms, and the need for cultural understanding.

Table 18

Frequency of Codes for the Influence of Culture on SEL

Code	Observations	Interviews	Memos	Total
Accurate self-perceptions = ASP	0	1	2	3
Recognizing strengths = RS	0	0	0	0
Perspective-taking = PT	5	0	1	6
Empathy = EMP	4	0	1	5
Respect for others = RFO	14	3	8	25
Communication = COMM	9	5	0	14
Social engagement = SE	11	5	5	21
Relationship building = RB	6	2	15	23
Social acceptance = SOA	2	3	4	9
Cultural perspective = CP	0	8	9	17
Cultural expectations = CUE	0	3	6	9
Cultural values = CV	0	11	7	18
Cultural awareness = CAW	0	15	10	25
Racial awareness = RA	0	10	9	19
Religious awareness = REL	0	2	0	2
Environmental awareness = ENVI	0	10	9	19
Total				215

Awareness and Values

The codes that address culture and education totaled 103 documented occurrences. The most frequent codes were cultural awareness, cultural values, and racial awareness. A cultural awareness code pertains to the participant being aware of their culture or the cultural norms of their peers. Racial awareness is recognized when a student or teacher understands the privilege of race or prejudices associated with another race. Cultural values refer to the personality traits, religious beliefs, and community obligations of different cultures. Jordan, a high school senior preparing for college in the US, highlighted the importance of cultural awareness. He identifies as American and Thai but considers himself a Third Culture Kid (TCK). I asked him how his cultural background influences his use of SEL competencies. His first reaction was, "I assume I am Thai but do not feel fully Thai" (J. Suk, interview, March 5, 2020). The TCK part of his personality was his first thought. He spoke of the duality of being at an international school where western values are projected. In our conversation he said, "We learned in school that you have to project; you have to be confident. But sometimes you don't want to make eye contact, or sometimes you can come off as being aggressive, which is not what you want to do in some cultures, especially here [in Thailand]" (J. Suk, interview, March 5, 2020).

Teamwork and respect for others are important SEL skills in Thai culture. Jordan explained that aggressiveness is discouraged when working with others. The desire from parents for school to reinforce their cultural values and traditions needed to be considered. Ivone expressed her wish that all new teachers would be prepared to better understand Thai culture: "Do some activities on main Thai events [holidays], teaching or informing the new teachers about how different it is to western cultures" (I. Nam, interview, March 17, 2020). The school does have cultural preparation during the orientation process, but both Jordan and Ivone said that

the teachers who have been in Thailand longer understand the culture better. Their outsider/insider knowledge could be utilized to help prepare new teachers to Thai culture.

Culturally Responsive Classrooms

When teachers model culturally responsive strategies, students feel welcomed in the classroom, validated for who they are, and more comfortable engaging with in the lesson and with peers. During classroom observations and interviews, I recorded a combined 50 occurrences of respecting others. When students and teachers visibly show respect, it heightens the feeling of inclusivity.

Social engagement was observed frequently in classroom instruction. During an observation in a high school biology class, students were randomly assigned table teams to argue about scientific issues like cloning and genetic augmentation (J. Melby, observation, March 6, 2020). The lesson required the students to engage with their peers by taking on differing perspectives, religious beliefs, social circumstances, and ethical responsibilities. Conversations like these allowed students to share their views and opinions while providing a safe environment to explore their cultural and religious perspectives.

Students were frequently engaging in class conversations and activities that required them to practice competencies that foster cultural inclusion. We recorded 59 occurrences of students and teachers exhibiting the CASEL competencies of perspective-taking, empathy, respect for others, and relationship-building skills. In a middle school classroom, the teacher asked students to think about what it would be like to live in other countries with different political systems. The teacher asked the students to choose a political system and explain its impact on the economy and people's choice in leaders and its benefits and disadvantages. This forced the students to consider the government system they lived in. While they were struggling

to think of answers, I heard a Thai student say to his group, “Well, Thailand has a President, Monarch, and Junta” (T. Fenski, observation, February 27, 2020) The quick exchange highlights that students rely on their background knowledge and culture to formulate their understandings. A culturally responsive classroom welcomes students as individuals and respects their perspectives.

Cultural Inclusion

The memos collected from the CPR team provide a common theme: building a culturally inclusive environment through cultivating relationships, building cultural awareness, and understanding cultural values. One teacher expressed that when students feel safe both physically and emotionally, they ask more questions, which helps the whole class learn (A. Willette, CPR memo, January 28, 2020). As teachers build a culturally inclusive environment to create positive relationships with students, students then have a model for working together to build relationships among themselves.

The code of relationship-building was documented 15 times in the collective memos. Cultural awareness was documented 10 times as a critical aspect of student learning and feeling included in the classroom. The nuances of culture can sometimes be complicated for teachers to understand, especially new teachers to the culture. In an interaction at a table group, a western teacher who had been in Thailand for many years said, “There are different types of smiles: when people are uncomfortable, nervous, or have done something wrong” (J. Suk, interview, March 5, 2020). Understanding of the different meanings of Thai people's smiles exemplifies how SEL skills look different in different cultures.

Classroom Instruction of SEL

The professional development and critical conversations that focused on classroom

instruction of SEL have increased teachers' and counselors' use of SEL principles. We found in our data collection that teachers are demonstrating SEL skills and planning lessons that require students to practice SEL competencies. There were 345 documented occurrences of SEL used in classroom instruction. Table 19 presents the frequency of codes that support the emerging theme of classroom instruction of SEL competencies. Modeling or demonstrations of SEL skills have been a thread throughout the data collection process and have been documented in all the emerging themes. Teachers and counselors are modeling respect, relationship building, and positive communication with students and colleagues. Teachers are planning lessons that require the use of SEL skills. The instruction of SEL can be explicit or implicit in the pedagogy teachers employ to engage the students in the learning process. The data presented suggest that professional discussion has contributed to teachers demonstrating SEL skills and lesson activities that require students to practice SEL competencies.

Professional Learning for SEL

The data suggested that professional learning opportunities have strengthened teachers' knowledge of how to implement SEL instruction in their classrooms. Faculty engaged in two learning exchanges focused on culturally responsive SEL practices and sharing strategies that explicitly teach SEL competencies. Building on professional learning from the first cycle, the faculty moved from awareness within the community to demonstrating and incorporating SEL into their lessons. In the first CLE, teachers worked in groups of five to co-construct a poster to explain what SEL instruction looks, feels, and sounds like. Groups shared modeling mutual respect, welcoming students to class, creating an environment of respect, and working as a team with their peers (J. Kiepher, CPR memo, January 9, 2020).

Table 19

Frequency of Codes for Classroom Instruction of SEL Skills

Code	Observations	Interviews	Memos	Total
Goal setting = GS	0	3	3	6
Organizational skills = OS	11	0	4	15
Perspective-taking = PT	5	0	1	6
Respect for others = RFO	14	3	8	25
Communication = COMM	9	5	0	14
Social engagement = SE	11	5	5	21
Relationship building = RB	6	2	15	23
Teamwork = TW	17	8	3	28
Identify problems = IP	12	0	0	12
Analyzing solutions = ASOL	2	0	0	2
Solving problems – SPRB	3	1	0	4
Evaluating = EVAL	14	0	0	14
Reflecting = RFT	5	0	0	5
Teacher expectations = TX	1	5	7	13
Self-expectations = SX	0	1	1	2
Class activity = CA	3	0	0	3
Explicit teaching of SEL = ETSEL	1	19	6	26
Non-explicit SEL Instruction = NESEL	15	0	19	34
Class discussion = CD	0	4	0	4
Student choice = STCH	2	0	1	3

Table 19 (continued)

Code	Observations	Interviews	Memos	Total
Using common language = UCL	0	7	2	9
Demonstrating SEL = DSEL	0	10	0	10
Assessment w/SEL = ASSEL	8	1	3	12
Meeting students SEL needs = MSN	1	8	1	10
Student modeling SEL = SMS	0	4	1	5
Total				306

The teacher groups were then asked, “What does SEL look like in other cultures?” An art teacher explained how she would change the way she teaches students how to draw eyes (A. Willette, CLE memo, January 24, 2020).

In the second learning exchange, teachers explained what explicit SEL instruction looked like in their classroom. One teacher said, “When I think of this kind of thing [SEL], what sticks out for me is the idea of self-management, and in my classroom that would manifest as things like goal setting, helping students with organization, and helping with self-discipline, particularly for students who are preparing for external exams” (M. Terry, CLE memo, March 18, 2020). The professional development has helped teachers to reflect on their SEL instruction and how they can support their students’ academic growth through SEL competencies.

Implicit SEL Instruction

Teachers plan assessments or learning activities that are intended for students to learn subject content. The SEL skills are implicit in the plan and usually are visible to the observer. While the teachers include SEL skills, they may not explicitly use SEL language with the students to remind them what SEL skill or disposition they are practicing or exhibiting. There were 109 recorded instances when students used or needed to use SEL competencies to work with other students or as individuals to complete assessments or learning tasks.

For example, in a high school English class, the students were analyzing the “Queen Mab” speech from Shakespeare’s *Romeo and Juliet*. The learning task was to choose a line from the speech and make an illustration of its meaning. Students were grouped and worked on the same document. To be successful, students needed to utilize communication, social engagement, teamwork, and respect for each other’s ideas (K. Calvert, observation, February 18, 2020). In one table group, they were all working on the same illustration where one student was drawing the

outline of the figure, another student coloring the illustration, and another writing the quote. The recorded conversation in that group captured an exchange: “What should I do here?” Another team member responded, “Draw a hand.” After the hand was drawn, the student asked the team, “Does this hand look okay?” (K. Calvert, observation, February 18, 2020). By having the students work in groups and co-construct meaning as cognitive science suggests, the teacher facilitated students practicing SEL while learning the subject content (National Academy of Sciences, Engineering, & Medicine, 2018). The teacher could have given a brief description of the SEL skill needed to be successful or had the students debrief using SEL language. Teachers designed lessons where SEL was implicit, and students practiced or utilized SEL competencies that were not explicitly taught.

Explicit SEL Instruction

The data on explicitness from teacher report versus teacher observation did not match; we found 26 occurrences of teachers saying they explicitly taught SEL competencies, but we documented only one instance of such explicitness during classroom observations. In a CLE, one teacher explained how they taught SEL: “Before a class conversation, I will ask the class to reflect on what norms we will follow in our conversation. Or something like during a project pausing, reflecting on our effort level, and how much effort we’re giving to one another” (M. Terry, CPR memo, January 28, 2020). The example shows the interconnectedness of SEL and content learning. The teacher expressed how they could have a deeper conversation if they talked about norms of listening, respecting their peers’ opinions, and other norms of conversations.

In total, there were 345 documented occurrences of teachers using both implicit and explicit instruction of SEL competencies in their classroom to support academic learning. These included assessments that required students to utilize an SEL competency, use of a common

language, and modeling SEL skills. Professional learning experiences engaged teachers in thought experiments that explored ways for students to use SEL skills. These exchanges strengthened the faculty's understanding of how to model and use SEL competencies in their classroom. A question remains regarding how effective professional development has been in influencing teachers to strategically incorporate SEL into lesson planning. Classroom instruction of SEL was mostly seen in the form of implicit practice of SEL competencies to complete subject content learning tasks. Explicit teaching of SEL was discussed during CLEs but rarely observed during instruction.

Exhibited Use of SEL Competencies in Practice

Students' and teachers' ability to exhibit social-emotional skills is important for their interactions and sets up the conditions for students to be more effective in completing academic tasks. Of the data collected, the most frequently used competencies from the CASEL domain are relationship skills, self-management, and responsible decision-making. Self-awareness and social awareness were less frequently documented. Table 20 shows the data collected and the frequency of codes surrounding the exhibited use of SEL skills in the classroom. I discuss relationship building, self-management, and decision-making.

Relationship Building Skills

Students' use of the CASEL indicator of relationship skills was the most observed and recorded SEL competency with a total of 86 recorded occurrences. The domain includes communication, social engagement, relationship building, and teamwork. All four competencies in the domain were recorded with teamwork occurring most frequently. The use of active learning strategies by teachers accounted for 17 instances. The collaborative professional learning accounted for 11 documented uses by teachers of the teamwork competency. In a high

Table 20

Frequency of Codes for Exhibited SEL Competencies in Practice

Code	Observations	Interviews	Memos	Total
Accurate self-perceptions = ASP	0	1	2	3
Self-confidence = SC	2	1	5	8
Self-efficacy = SEF	3	0	0	3
Impulse control = IC	2	4	1	7
Stress management = SM	0	8	1	9
Self-discipline = SD	0	2	1	3
Self-motivation = SMOV	4	0	2	6
Goal setting = GS	0	3	3	6
Organizational skills = OS	11	0	4	15
Perspective-taking = PT	5	0	1	6
Empathy = EMP	4	0	1	5
Respect for others = RFO	14	3	8	25
Communication = COMM	9	5	0	14
Social engagement = SE	11	5	5	21
Relationship building = RB	6	2	15	23
Teamwork = TW	17	8	3	28
Identify problems = IP	12	0	0	12
Analyzing solutions = ASOL	2	0	0	2
Solving problems = SPRB	3	1	0	4
Evaluating = EVAL	14	0	0	14

Table 20 (continued)

Code	Observations	Interviews	Memos	Total
Reflecting = RFT	5	0	0	5
Ethical considerations = ECON	2	0	0	2
Using common language = UCL	0	7	2	9
Demonstrating SEL = DSEL	0	10	0	10
Assessment w/SEL = ASSEL	8	1	3	12
SEL assessment = SELAS	0	0	0	0
Meeting students SEL Needs = MSAN	1	8	1	10
Teacher modeling SEL = MS	2	20	10	32
Student modeling SEL = SMS	0	4	1	5
Social acceptance = SOA	2	3	4	9
Environmental awareness = ENVI	0	1	10	11
Total				319

school observation, the teacher had teams of students' co-construct meaning through teamwork, which required students to socially engage with each other to accomplish the task (M. McCarthy, observation, March 10, 2020). Relationship building accounted for 23 occurrences, and social engagement for 21. The competency of "communication" was only coded if communication was an essential component to the interaction explicitly mentioned in interviews or memos, which was recorded 14 times. The relationship building competency was recorded nearly twice as often as any other SEL skill. A community is based on relationships, and the data collected clearly points to the relationship domain of SEL competencies that are necessary for relational interactions.

Self-Management

The second most frequently documented uses of SEL were those in the self-management domain, which includes the skills of impulse control, stress management, self-discipline, self-motivation, goal setting, and organizational skills. All six skills in the domain were observed or recorded; organizational skills, was the most prevalent with 15 recorded occurrences.

Teachers explicitly explained to students how to organize their notes or other materials (n=11), and we observed student impulse control (n=7). In one classroom observation, a middle school student showed impulse control when he wanted to blurt out the answer without being called upon. The student physically put his hand over his mouth as not to disrupt the class (M. Terry, observation, February 5, 2020).

Decision-Making Skills

The CASEL competency of responsible decision-making includes identifying problems, analyzing situations, solving problems, evaluating, reflecting, and ethical responsibility. We recorded a total of 37 occurrences of teachers and students using this competency. Identifying

problems and evaluation skills were the most prevalent in the data. In a middle school classroom, I listened to students analyze the questions they needed to present. One student said, “I don’t understand. What does hierarchal mean?” His partner responded with “I don’t know” and then googled the word (T. Fenski, observation, February 27, 2020). This example illustrates a moment when students identified a problem with their understanding, then worked to solve the problem.

Each CASEL competency was documented in PAR Cycle Two. There were only two coded occurrences of ethical responsibility, one of which happened in an Advanced Placement (AP) psychology class and the other in a biology class. During a review activity before a summative assessment in AP Psychology, the students were grouped in teams of three or four. The teacher asked the question, “Can you make a psychological diagnosis without speaking to the patient?” A student in his group responded, “No, a diagnosis without consent is unethical.” He then turned to his partners and said, “What do you think? Is that correct?” (M. McCarthy, observation, March 10, 2020). The two SEL skills exhibited were ethical responsibility and teamwork and highlights the symbiotic relationship between academic and social-emotional learning. Students' opportunities to apply SEL skills in accomplishing classroom assignments is a key benchmark in building an SEL program that supports academic, and social-emotional learning.

In a high school biology class, the students were preparing for a debate addressing the science standard on ethical issues related to scientific advancements. Students were debating the ethical considerations around cloning animals and humans (J. Melby, observation, March 6, 2020). In both examples of ethical responsibility being addressed, SEL skills needed to be practiced and explicitly taught.

The emerging themes of the influence of culture, community support, classroom

instruction, and exhibition of SEL skills are supported by the evidence we collected and analyzed. The collection methods of classroom observations provided rich data surrounding the exhibition and classroom instruction of SEL skills. CPR memos helped to uncover the influence of professional learning on the teaching staff and insight into their individual interactions with SEL competencies. Interviewing selective representatives from the school community helped to provide further evidence on community support and the influence of culture on SEL learning and instruction. Next, I outline the implications and then the plan for the third and final cycle of inquiry.

Implications

The implications from PAR Cycle Two provided new insights, and in PAR Cycle Three we wanted to gain a deeper understanding of the ways in which professional learning might support explicit SEL instruction and how SEL can support and honor the diverse cultures of the school. In addition, we were interested in the discrepancies of observing some SEL codes frequently and others less frequently. Of course, the actions of SEL are more visible than the intent or the internal reflection of a student or teacher. We were interested in the difference between teacher reports of explicit instruction and the lack of observation of such occurrences. From the outset of the PAR, we were concerned about the equitability factors that are implicit in the SEL competencies.

The PAR was founded on the idea that building a well-supported SEL program would help create a more equitable school community. However, through the data collection process, questions remain regarding how SEL has made learning more accessible to our culturally diverse student population. The possible positive value of SEL impacting equity in learning and within the community will require further exploration.

An additional implication has to do with my growth and development as a leader. As of PAR cycle three, there was a change in the school leadership as a new Superintendent and Thai Director were hired. I expected this to be a test of my leadership as I needed to build working relationships with two new school leaders. I planned to support their leadership effectiveness by sharing my institutional knowledge and explaining the logic behind current CMIS policies. For PAR cycle three, I needed to collect data on how this process has impacted the way I manage the faculty and support their professional growth. The desire to become a more effective school leader continued to require a strong sense of praxis—reflecting in order to act. However, acting on evidence through the coding process is a skill I am developing and appreciating that evidence can guide decision-making in a new way for me and my colleagues.

Conclusion

The purpose of the PAR was to work with students, teachers, and counselors to increase SEL knowledge and skills and build positive dispositions toward the competencies. The influence of culture on the use of SEL emerged as a theme that all members from the community felt was an essential aspect of the way the community addresses SEL and exhibits SEL competencies. Community support for an SEL program emerged as a theme. The students have begun to explicitly address mental health and the importance that emotions have on their success. The professional development improved our teachers' ability to plan for teaching SEL in their subject areas.

Both teachers and students exhibited increasing use of SEL in and out of classrooms. SEL language is heard in the school conversations, and we documented multiple occurrences of use in classrooms, on campus, and in relationships among students, teachers, parents, and administrators. The question of how to make it sustainable and the creation of a school policy

remains. In the last cycle we concluded that the SEL program is fostering students' academic and social-emotional growth, including the influence of our approach to SEL.

CHAPTER SEVEN: PAR CYCLE THREE: INFLUENCES ON SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LEARNING

The journey from the first cycle to third cycle was developmental for the school and for me as a researcher. In this last cycle of inquiry, I continued to examine how we could develop an effective SEL program that responded to the specific context of our school. Over the course of three inquiry cycles, I facilitated a learning process with a team of Co-Practitioner Researchers (CPR). Together, we built our capacity to learn from and work with each other; we learned about what SEL could mean for an international school focused on academic and social-emotional outcomes for students. As with most journeys, we had to be flexible and adapt to ever-changing situations. The demands on me as an administrator and the challenges of a pandemic shaped the course of the study, particularly in this third cycle. Through the PAR process, the CPR team and I realized that certain factors influenced how students learned and practiced social-emotional skills and how the school did and should approach SEL implementation. In addition, as the lead researcher, I developed facility with the PAR process, including coding and analysis. As a result of the study, we gained an increased understanding of the key factors that supported and inhibited our ability to fully integrate SEL into teaching and learning and the school community.

The adage “our eyes were bigger than our stomachs” is probably an apt one for our experience; we wanted to do more than was possible. That is often the nature of school change—planning too much and too soon for what can truly be accomplished. The importance of slowing down to learn and carefully and slowly enacting change was a learning process for me and our school (Grubb & Tredway, 2010). However, we have much to contribute to understanding the complexities of SEL implementation in international schools. We continued after the study was

officially completed to engage in implementation, and we hope that other schools can use this information as a starting point to investigate how to address SEL—particularly in international settings. The project and study established the need for SEL instruction as well as carefully documenting the supports and challenges for implementing an SEL program in an international school context.

In the PAR Cycle One analysis, we generated four categories to define the way in which students acquire SEL skills from examining the cultural influences and classroom practices of SEL skills. In PAR Cycle Two, we confirmed and clarified emerging themes regarding the SEL program and practices of students and teachers. In PAR Cycle Three, we had a new school leadership team and were concurrently responding to the global pandemic. The unusual conditions provided a clear need for our school, like all educational institutions, to focus on the social and emotional well-being of students and staff. The purpose of PAR Cycle Three was to synthesize data from the previous cycles and provide evidence for continued actions to implement SEL in our school.

First, I outline the final data collection and analysis processes. These processes provided deeper insight into the factors that enhance or inhibit SEL implementation in international schools and those that require an alternate approach because of the cultural context. Since most of the research on SEL and the plans for implementation have been conducted in the US, we uncovered considerations in the international context that directed us to a different approach. Then, I present three key findings from three cycles of inquiry.

PAR Cycle Three: Data Collection and Analysis Process

After PAR Cycle Two, we needed to understand several factors that impacted SEL implementation. We collected data on (a) how teachers viewed the professional learning

that supported SEL instruction; (b) how teachers planned to embed SEL in instruction; (c) the exhibited use of SEL competencies by teachers and students in the school at large; and (d) the complexities of SEL implementation with regard to culture and the needs of an international school audience. We used the methods for data collection that we had used in previous cycles: interviews, professional development reflections, community learning exchanges, and CPR team reflections, including my reflective memos. I concentrate on the aggregate data from three cycles of inquiry to substantiate the findings.

Other factors affected the third and final cycle, which lasted for 11 weeks from August to October 2020. I managed the onboarding of the new leadership team, including a new head of school and new principal, and we met daily to discuss school organizational structures, policies, and procedures, which limited my time for the project and study. There were additional complications from the COVID pandemic. Finally, we had an accreditation visit from the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC). The WASC visitors emphasized that we should focus on SEL competencies. While that was leverage for what we were proposing, we had developed a deeper understanding of why and how that should occur, which required a longer timeline. Table 21 shows the weekly data collection process, interruptions from the school accreditation process, and time constraints due to COVID policies.

Using the same methods as in previous cycles with slight variations of frequency and focus, we collected and analyzed data from interviews, CPR meetings, and CLE activities. I interviewed CPR team members to provide insight into the everyday use and teaching of SEL competencies. The CPR team and I wrote weekly reflective memos about our regular meetings and CLE activities. We used the community learning exchange (CLE) format during faculty

Table 21

Weekly Data Collection for PAR Cycle Three

Date	CPR	Interview	CLE
Week 1			Whole Faculty: Self-care CLE. July 28, 2020
Week 2			Divisional: Student mental health and SEL needs. August 4, 2020
Week 3		N. Kiepher August 11, 2020	
Week 4	Present current data collection charts. Reflection of where we are now. What are our next steps?		
Week 5	WASC mid-cycle virtual visit (CMIS) No collection planned		
Week 6		M. Terry September 2, 2020	
Week 7	CPR Meeting – Reflection on what has influenced the SEL program		
Week 8	WASC Virtual Visit Professional Obligation		
Week 9			
Week 10	CPR Meeting – Final reflection who we answer sub-questions	B. Awar October 1, 2020	
Week 11		E. Lee October 6, 2020	Whole faculty: Workshop on SEL strategies that every teacher can use. October 9, 2020

meetings, which harnessed the power of the people and the place to support our endeavor to increase SEL instruction (Guajardo et al., 2016). The first focused on student and teacher self-care, which the CPR team planned and facilitated. The counselors from the CPR team hosted a second CLE with the aim of supporting teachers' use of strategies to address the students' social-emotional needs and mental health. I facilitated the last CLE aimed at building teachers' capacity to provide embedded SEL instruction. Figure 16 presents teachers engaging in a CLE, facilitated by the CPR team on the topic of SEL in our school community.

The CPR team for this cycle included the two counselors and two teachers: Beth, Eula, Mikel, and Jason. Ivene, the parent member, and Jordan, the student member, did not participate in the last cycle. Jordan graduated and is attending a university in the United States; since we focused on teacher learning, we consulted Ivene, but she did not attend our meetings.

I analyzed the PAR Cycle One data using the coding process I had established in two previous cycles of inquiry. Once I coded and tallied the data, I looked for patterns in the data (Saldaña, 2016). I revisited data from earlier cycles to address outliers or confirm the analysis. Based on a re-analysis of the categories and emergent findings, I regrouped the data in three themes or findings with categories that demonstrate the key factors that influenced SEL implementation. The data support three topics that clarify the major influences on SEL implementation: home culture, school learning environment, and student dynamics. For each topic, I re-analyzed the data to include categories. This process helped me determine the factors that supported and inhibited SEL implementation. In the next section, I discuss the study findings and the data to support them.

What does stress management look like at CMIS?

- Advisory Groups: videos, meditation
- After school sports
- Friends

- there's always an 'open door' to enter for help for everyone

- counselors all have ready & there

- teachers supporting students whenever they need help

- Good communication between parents and teachers

- Support from teachers and the health office for students especially early on.



Community Learning Exchange



How do your emotions affect your work?

- When feeling mad or afraid, do your emotions get in the way of your work?
- When feeling excited about the work, do you work better?
- How do you feel about your work?
- Keeping emotions in check by staying calm & focused
- Sometimes you have emotions that are so strong you can't think straight!
- It can affect the class or the teacher's quality & ~~work~~ want to do the work.



Figure 16. Community Learning Exchange, July 28, 2020.

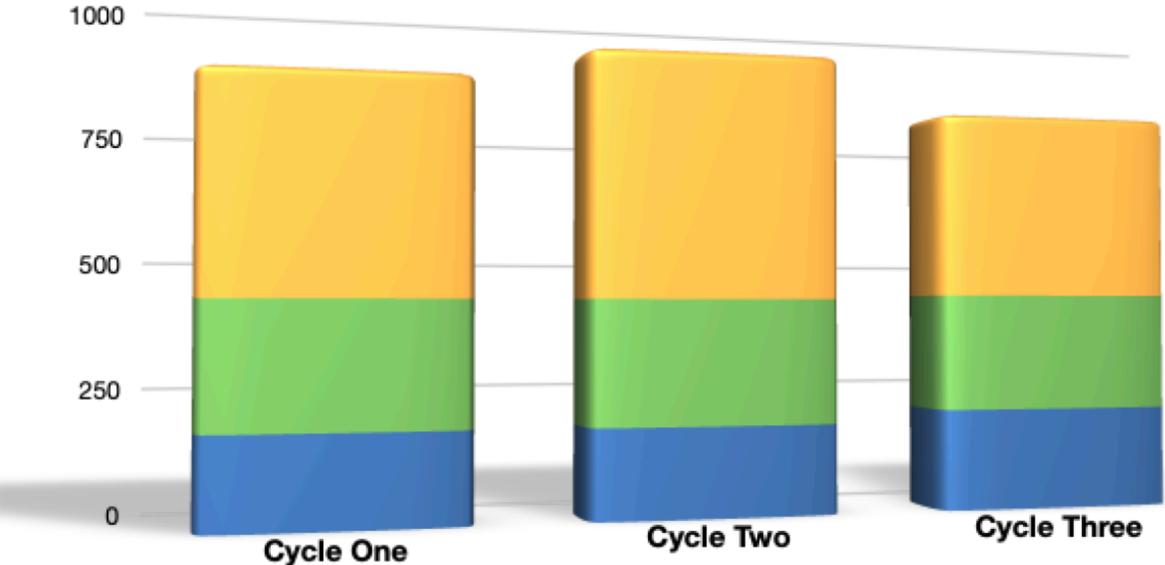
Findings

The purpose of this study was to investigate the factors that supported and inhibited SEL implementation. The evidence indicates that a complex and nuanced set of supports and inhibitors influence SEL implementation. Based on the iterative evidence from three cycles of inquiry, we determined that nuanced supports and inhibitors from home culture, the school classroom environment, and student dynamics impacted SEL implementation in our international school. Figure 17 is a comparative graph of code frequency per cycle for each finding topic.

We define home culture as parental home, the host country culture, the larger school culture, and the ways these three intersect. The school needed to honor the home culture of the students in constructing the SEL plan and be more explicit about how the SEL competencies intersected with the socio-cultural experiences and expectations of the students. Students in an international school have several cultural forces acting upon their learning experiences: their parents' culture, the host country's culture, and the international school campus culture. Each one influences the values and perspectives with which the students approach social groups, emotional processes, and learning. Thus, the U.S.-based SEL competencies may be only partially helpful to an international audience and likely need to be adapted.

Second, the school learning environment can offer a supportive environment for SEL as evidenced in the observations in PAR Cycles One and Two. We found that SEL use in the learning environment was uneven, resulting in students learning SEL competencies implicitly rather than explicitly. Indirect instruction occurred in the form of teachers modeling respect and communication and in building relationships with their students; however, rarely did that translate to more explicit instructional time for SEL competencies. Because there were no

Data from PAR Cycles of Inquiry



Influences on SEL	Cycle One	Cycle Two	Cycle Three
Home Culture	181	180	204
School Learning Environment	248	249	233
Student Dynamics	426	485	369

■ Home Culture
 ■ School Learning Environment
 ■ Student Dynamics

Figure 17. Comparative code frequency from three cycles of inquiry.

schoolwide curricular standards or expectations, some teachers “took” to SEL and engaged in supporting SEL integration in their classrooms, and others did not.

Third, the student dynamics in classrooms and on campus sometimes reflected academic competitiveness, but we could not directly observe other factors, like intrinsic motivation. In the end, the student responses appeared as two sides of the same coin. For example, students conformed to the academic and social pressures from peer and parental influences; simultaneously, they benefited from teacher organization of classroom activities that reflected SEL. They tended to internalize all those demands and demonstrate use of SEL skills, but they and their parents reported that they did not want time taken away from their academic learning to concentrate on SEL. However, we knew that SEL skills would be not only useful but necessary to fully prepare them for their future goals such as university matriculation abroad. Student dynamics had the largest number of coded entries; thus, we needed to better understand the complexity of how to talk about SEL and to integrate the SEL competencies so that we could achieve both goals—academics and social emotional learning. I present the findings and categories with evidence from the three cycles of inquiry (see Figure 18).

Influences from Home Culture

The international school in this study is a micro representation of similar schools with students and families from many cultures represented in the student body. Parents from those different cultures have different expectations of the schooling experience. They share, however, the expectation that their children will succeed academically. The pressures from parents, which represented to a large degree the host country culture, influenced how students learned and exhibited SEL skills more than the factors from the school learning environment.

Influences on Social Emotional Learning

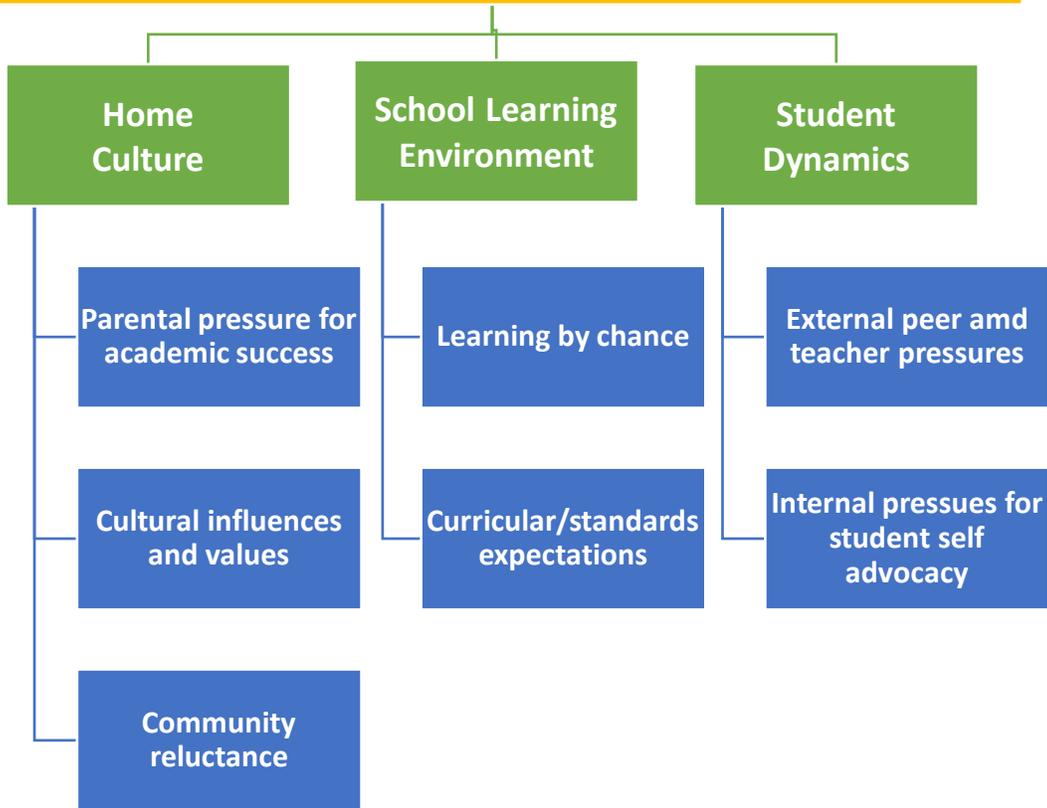


Figure 18. Influences on the way students learn SEL competencies.

Parents reported and students knew on some level that to be academically successful in school, they needed to have skills to manage themselves: social awareness, self-awareness, relationship-building. Thus, teachers used SEL skills in classroom learning activities; without them, students would not be successful in school and would disappoint themselves and their families.

Three factors from the home cultures—parental, home country, and school culture—most influenced students, but not quite in the way we had originally thought (see Figure 19). Students felt pressure from their homes to be academically successful; because of that pressure, they learned to adapt to the school environment by exhibiting social-emotional competence. However, the goal of SEL competence was not social-emotional health but academic success. The parents and students largely saw SEL as a means to an end, not an end in itself. Concurrently, students felt the responsibility for upholding cultural values and perspectives. Finally, there was a reluctance on the part of some parents to acknowledge that their children had social-emotional needs; in fact, there was a stigma attached to admitting that they might have certain mental health needs.

Parental Pressure for Academic Success

The parent community generally understood the importance of SEL skills and the importance the competencies could have for a successful life. Parents typically want what is best for their children, and a healthy social-emotional life was essential. In PAR Cycle Three, evidence included 34 occurrences of a need for SEL, 44 occurrences reinforcing the community feeling that SEL is an important factor in learning, and 29 codes pertaining to students being socially accepted. When combined with the previous cycles, there were 157 documented occurrences which totaled 11% of the total codes collected. Parents wanted their children to

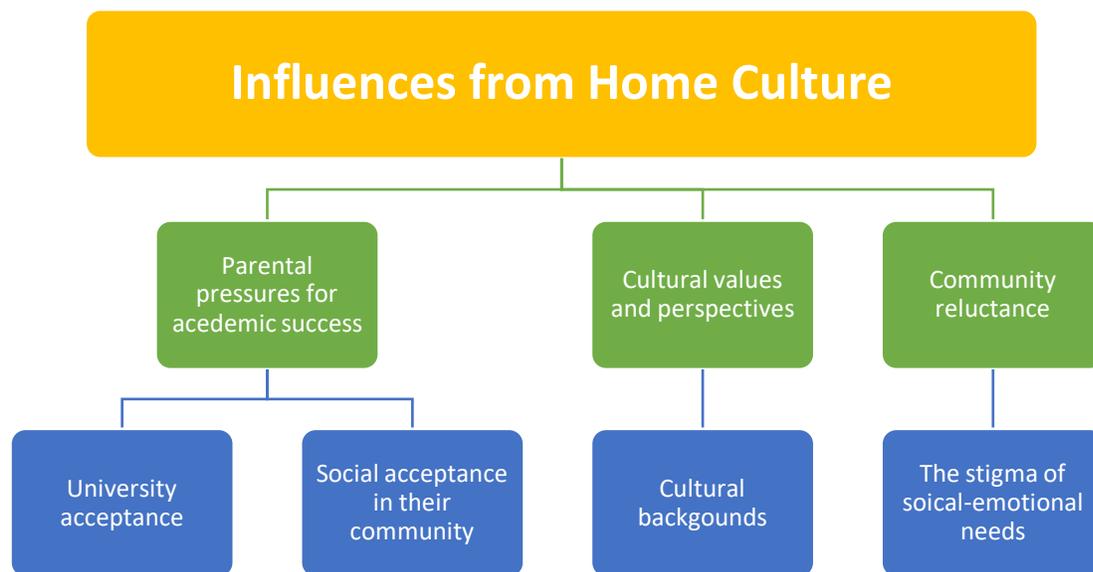


Figure 19. Pressures placed on students by their home culture.

have healthy social relationships and be emotionally healthy; however, that emotional health was directly tied to the end goal of academic success. Ivene, the parent CPR member, explained in an interview why she felt SEL is an important skill: “It is important for them to be able to manage their emotions and stress, or they will not be successful in school” (I. Nam, interview, March 17, 2020). The academic goal was university acceptance, and the social goal was acceptance in the social community outside the school, which, in part, occurred because of the student’s academic success.

International schools are private, tuition-based learning institutions reliant on families from the local or global community for funding. Parents expect their children to receive a highly rigorous education that ensures their acceptance in top universities around the world. Ivene, the parent representative on the CPR team, summarized why parents send their children to a private school. She explained that education is the key to success, and most parents send their kids to CMIS because they want them to get into the best university they can (A. Willette, reflective memo, March 20, 2020). Yet, pressure from parents to get into highly competitive universities made it imperative for students to have a solid grasp of SEL competencies to compete with other international students. The reasons to experience learning in an international school are to gain social skills to succeed academically; social emotional goals are in service of academics, not ends unto themselves. The academic success of children counts for social acceptance in parents’ communities. As a result of the interplay between the two, we had to approach SEL implementation with these parent and student goals in mind.

Cultural Values

The cultural background of students influenced the value placed on certain SEL competencies. Parents placed emphasis on learning certain skills over others due to their

cultural backgrounds. These preferences exerted pressure on students to learn and practice one SEL skill rather than others. Cultural values and perspectives were documented 23 times during the third cycle and 78 times from all three cycles of inquiry combined. Ivone explained: “Thai culture values social awareness more than other competencies. Buddhism’s teaching influences this view” (I. Nam, interview, March 17, 2020). In this instance, she claimed that Thai culture values social awareness over the other competencies, meaning emphasis on perspective-taking, empathy, and respect for others. Another value she emphasized was self-management, but the self-management expected of students in school was important insofar as it facilitated academic success.

The parents’ culture influenced how the school approached a SEL program. I documented this factor 53 times over the three cycles of inquiry. During a Parent Teacher Group (PTG) meeting, I sat with a group of Chinese parents who discussed what they understood about the whole child learning approach. One parent voiced her desire for her child to learn Chinese cultural norms; this cultural knowledge was so important that she enrolled her children in a Chinese school on weekends for them to learn how to “be Chinese” (A. Willette, reflective memo, September 20, 2019). In this example, the parent expressed her desire to ensure that her home and community culture was preserved as a definition of the whole child, which is quite different than the western concept of the whole child as individual developmental and personal needs. Cultural values and perspectives affect the ways students learn and should influence how schools approach SEL instruction. However, the focus on specific SEL competencies that are more important to the home and community culture may impede the development of the values necessary in the western education the parents desire for their children, but not emphasized in their cultural norms—self-awareness and communication.

Thus, parents emphasized certain SEL competencies that matched their cultural experiences and demonstrated some degree of reluctance to embrace SEL in the ways we thought might be useful. I continue to note the nuances and subtleties of the differences in cultural expectations related to SEL. If we are to respond to parents of students in an international school context, we needed to honor the cultural norms and still prepare students for the western university experience they highly desire.

Community Reluctance

Throughout the study, parents, teachers and students, expressed a reluctance to teaching SEL if it diminished the focus on instructional time. While the CPR team was initially hopeful that this would subside by the end of the study, it remained an ambient theme. The reluctance manifested from a fear that SEL would “take away” from academic teaching, thus subtracting from learning time. While the occurrences decreased in PAR Cycle Three (24 occurrences), reluctance was regularly documented across all three cycles with a total of 85 documented occurrences or 6% of the total codes collected. However, support from the community for SEL remained high (104 occurrences) regarding the feeling that SEL was important for overall learning. During the study the CPR team worked with students, teachers, and community members to inform and promote the purpose of SEL. Through community reach events and learning exchanges the CPR team was able to engage in meaningful discussions that addressed the foundations of SEL. As a result, we saw evidence of a decrease in the reluctance and recognized that as a school we need to be aware of the social and cultural values of our community. The decrease in the reluctance expressed by community members is evidence that supported the need for a culturally responsive SEL program as it promotes our collective values.

In an interview with the Wellness teacher and middle school counselor, she explained how we might need to combine SEL and academic goals: “Shining a light on mental well-being and how it affects academic performance and not just a *touchy-feely* thing, but it does impact academic performance” (B. Awar, interview, October 1, 2020). She said that she sometimes felt the need to explain the emphasis on SEL instruction in her class and to her students for them to buy in to the lesson. In a member check-in with the high school counselor, she expressed the changing views of the community and students: “Before, [students] were more reserved and rightly so, but now they are more confident to share who they are and talk about it” (B. Awar, interview, October 1, 2019). The reluctance or stigma lessened with an increase in discussions surrounding SEL and emotional health. However, the hesitancy in the community was a subtle pressure that influenced our approach to fostering an SEL program and required further dialog and mutual understanding of our shared values.

In addition, teachers expressed hesitancy in implementing SEL strategies in their instruction. Their reluctance did not equate to teachers not supporting or seeing value in SEL, but rather from the difficulty in understanding how to infuse SEL instruction in their subject content. The middle school teacher and CPR team member said: “I think the teachers nod their heads and say they are doing that, but no one really wants to take the time to include it in their curriculum” (M. Terry, interview, September 2, 2020). This sentiment revealed a reluctance from teachers to use class time to teach SEL competencies within the lesson for similar reason that parents expressed: SEL took time away from academics. In an interview with the CPR team high school teacher, a teacher associated this reluctance with parent concerns that teaching SEL was taking away from their students’ academic growth. “Contending with the cultural expectation is hard because we don’t have the parents in the classroom seeing what we

are doing” (J. Kiepher, interview, August 11, 2020). He struggled with the perception from the parent community that SEL is taking time away from teaching cognitive or subject-specific skills. While support for SEL is strong, a hesitancy from teachers to embed SEL in lesson planning was a recurring thread throughout the study.

In the third cycle, we recorded 36 occurrences of the community building its awareness of SEL competencies and value, and there was a total of 96 such occurrences across all three cycles. The frequency of this code and the continuation from previous cycles in conjunction with support statements from the CPR team suggested the communal understanding of SEL had increased. The need to understand cultural values and perspectives was recorded 23 times, suggesting that culture has a significant impact when structuring an SEL program.

The pressures placed on students from parents are connected to cultural values and perspectives, expectations for university education, and social acceptance by family and peers. These pressures provide a certain type of motivation for students to learn SEL skills. However, the reason to learn is not specifically tied to SEL but to academic success. We need to link these two goals to address the reluctance or lack of awareness we have documented.

School Learning Environment

We know what we wanted our students to accomplish: be socially competent, make responsible decisions, and manage themselves in a healthy manner. Despite the values we placed on social-emotional skills, we did not teach these skills explicitly. We wanted social-emotional skills integrated into activities in both passive and active learning (see Appendix I for PAR Cycle Three data). Part of urgency was related to an outside force, WASC accreditation; that provided a leverage point that we thought would be helpful to the focus of

practice. However, as we proceeded, we realized that outside pressure would not make much difference.

The external accreditation agency (WASC) recommended that the school attend to SEL competencies, and we had a research-based understanding that students need social-emotional skills. These two factors pushed the school to explore strategies to address SEL. However, our approaches were inconsistent and spotty. We experimented with a high school advisory program and dropped it; we did include SEL in a senior advisory seminar that prepares students for the transition to university. We implemented an SEL curriculum in Grades K through 8, but it was not entirely successful as it was based on an adapted program rather than an integrated approach. We discussed social-emotional competencies facilitation, and teachers who valued wellness in themselves and the students tended to nurture whole-child development instead of only emphasizing academic rigor. There was some feeling that if we modeled and nurtured whole-child learning, then students would automatically learn the SEL skills they need to be successful.

However, the lack of a structured schoolwide approach to SEL left students to learn SEL by chance, when we needed to explicitly teach competencies that matched the lesson or classroom management goals. We could use what we learned to: (1) create curricular SEL standards and fuse the standards with the current academic curriculum; and (2) continue to work with teachers to incorporate SEL competencies in their lessons (see Figure 20). We realized that learning by chance was not quite working and that we needed to have a stronger structure based on what we were learning about what worked, what did not, and what our community expressed as important.

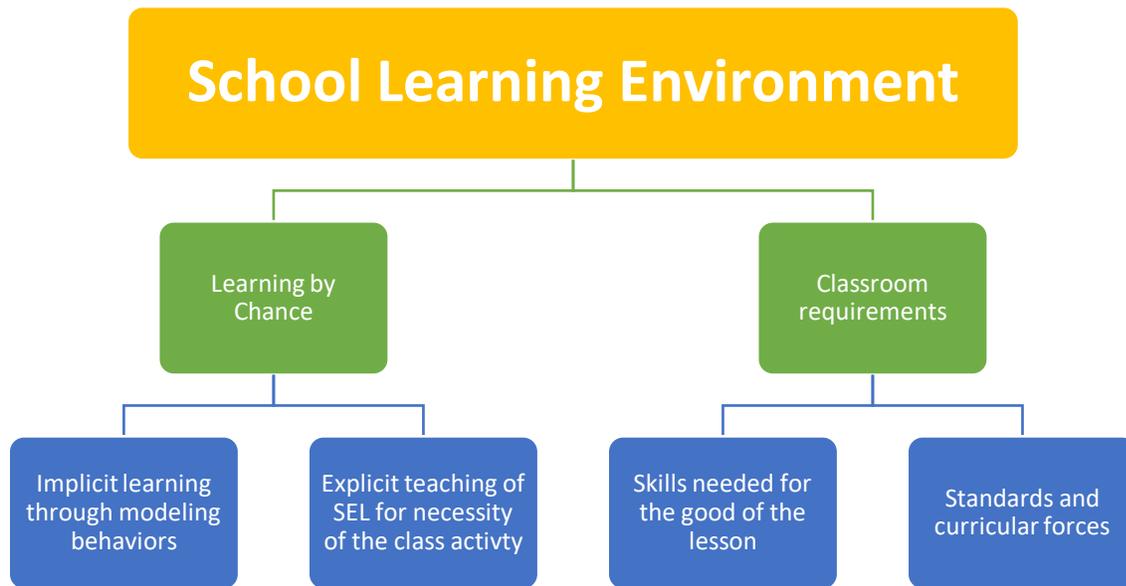


Figure 20. Pressures from the school community.

Learning by Chance

In our setting, SEL was most often taught implicitly rather than explicitly, what students learned was by chance and not by design. Teachers exhibited SEL behaviors to students and expected students to adopt the same approaches to social interactions. Teachers implicitly taught SEL skills through their interactions with students and colleagues (34 occurrences). Students then sometimes mimicked what they observed. Sometimes, teachers modeled but did not explicitly explain. Mikel explained: “I model respect towards the students, and that rubs off on the students, and they respect each other in return. I model how to respond to questions” (M. Terry, interview, September 2, 2020). Students were expected to observe the interaction behaviors and then practice interactions using the model from the teacher. Modeling SEL is a first step. A second step is explicitly talking about the SEL, and a final step is observing and documenting student actions. If these are not present, the students either recognize it and practice it, or it is a missed learning opportunity. For example, during the third cycle, we documented 37 occurrences of teachers modeling SEL competencies. The study documented a total of 56 separate instances of teacher modeling of SEL behaviors. Beth, a Wellness teacher, explains: “When it comes to classroom instructions and facilitation, teachers who value personal wellness of themselves and the students tend to nurture whole-child development instead of only emphasizing academic rigor” (B. Lee, CLE notes, July 28, 2020).

Explicit instruction in SEL, when it occurred, was required for the students to access the lesson content or activity. An example was a teacher dividing a large assignment into smaller deadlines and having students set goals to reach each deadline (A. Willette, reflective memo, October 9, 2020). The students needed the SEL to successfully complete the learning activity. The study documented 144 occurrences of SEL competencies needed for the academic goals.

Mikel explained a learning activity founded on the common core state standards with embedded SEL skill-building: “I did teach some SEL. We made a poster identifying the emotions of the characters of the story and how they [students] identify with the characters. They then put their thoughts on a classroom created poster” (M. Terry, interview, September 2, 2020). Although students’ ability to identify their emotions is helpful for their self-awareness, being able to identify emotions in others is crucial in building empathy and social awareness. In this example, the SEL skill was explicitly addressed to facilitate the lesson. There was no formal evaluation to know the extent to which students learned how to take perspectives; that was left to chance. However, the preponderance of data in this category might provide a stronger starting point on which to build SEL. Based on parent input and teacher evidence of use, if we link to the academic goals and embed SEL, we could have success in being more explicit.

Classroom Requirements

Classroom requirements means linking the SEL goals to lesson design and lesson content that are a part of the standards and curricular outcomes. However, teachers view this as implicit or embedded without the need to be explicit. For example, Mikel explained how he embedded the practice of “perspective taking” in humanities lessons without explicitly teaching that SEL skill. He shared, “When we [the class] look at historical events, we look at many sides of the event, so students see that one side is not always true. I think that SEL is ingrained in what I teach; I just do not set them apart” (M. Terry, interview, September 2, 2020). In this lesson, students needed to practice the skill of taking the perspective of others, but it was not explicitly named. Naming this as an SEL skill would have two benefits: students would hear the SEL language and use that in conjunction with academics, which might break down the

false barrier between SEL and academics. The staggering number of documented uses of social-emotional competencies reflects the fact that subject content and cognitive functions do not happen in vacuum void of affective knowledge (A. Willette, reflective memo, October 2, 2020).

Teachers did respond to naming specific social-emotional competencies in lesson development and writing objectives. For example, Jason shared an example of inserting the SEL decision-making competency in his lesson plan. He explains, “I focus on the problem-solving process and give students a general strategy of how to analyze a problem and identify a problem” (J. Kiepher, interview, August 11, 2020). The ability to identify problems and find a solution built on the students’ ability to make responsible decisions. Identifying and solving problems are inherent in learning and support academic growth. While SEL was being addressed in the teaching, we still did not have a coordinated effort. In the last CLE of the third cycle, we focused on supporting teachers to see the relationships between content and SEL and the ability to include the language in their lesson objectives.

Student Dynamics

Student dynamics are both external and internal; the student responds to peers and teachers at school and to parents at home, and the students are always responding to internal pressures (see Figure 21). External pressures included peer rivalries and teachers’ course demands. Peer pressure sometimes led to competitiveness, especially among the stronger students, which, in turn, affected the whole school environment as our high school classes are relatively small (J. Suk, interview, March 5, 2020). In this context, students used SEL competencies and were self- and socially aware, establish and build relationships, and manage

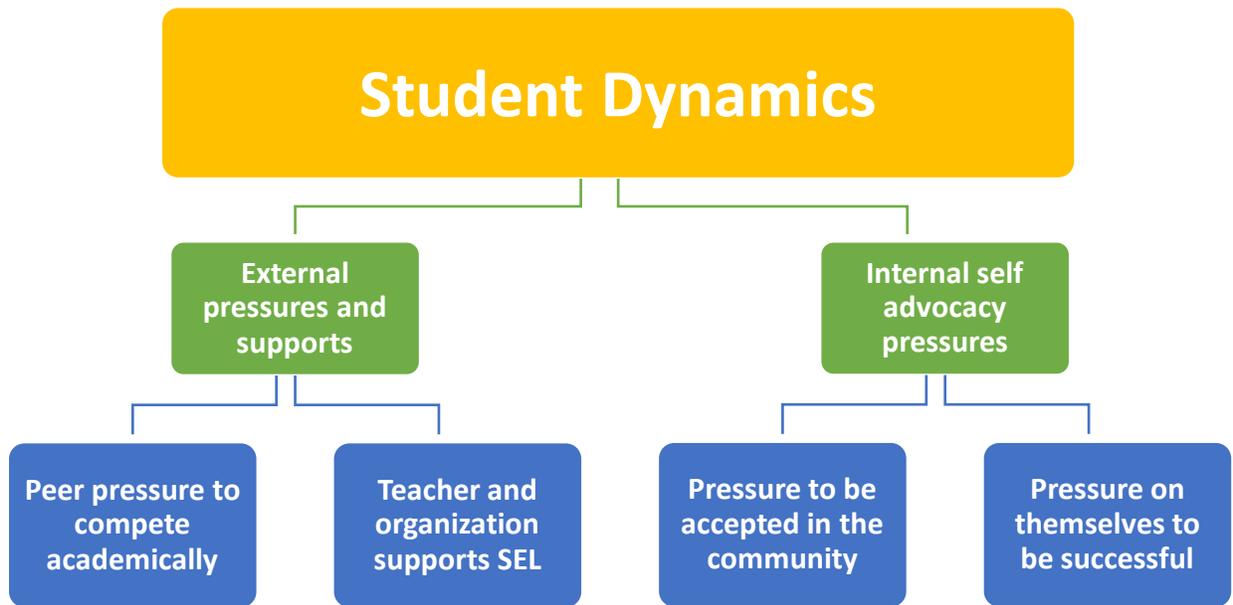


Figure 21. Pressures that influence students' learning social-emotional skills.

themselves. Through competitiveness, students acquired self-awareness and self-management, but perhaps that was not the best way to learn the skill.

Internal pressures also came from the students' desire to have friends and feel a sense of belonging as well as their internal motivations to be academically successful (J. Suk, interview, March, 5, 2020). Students did not just want to compete with their peers; they seemed to develop an intrinsic motivation to be successful (E, Lee, interview, October 6, 2020). However, the latter was not observable, and we only could document it from what they say about their motivations (see Appendix I) for the data from PAR Cycle Three).

External Pressures

Peer rivalries or competition and academic rigor pressure students to learn SEL competencies in a kind of “do or die” mode. At the international school where this study took place, students are in competition to take many advanced placement (AP) courses and get the highest grade-point average and the highest SAT scores. The pressure that students put on themselves in turn requires social-emotional skills to manage themselves and build relationships that support their ambitions. There were 27 occurrences of students' personal learning expectations that required demonstrating or modeling SEL skills. Expectation's students placed on themselves and the pressure to compete with their peers seemed to drive students to learn SEL skills. Jordan, a high school student and CPR member, explained his experience with personal expectations: “I've been frustrated that I can't finish the task. You look like a loser when you can't finish a school thing” (J. Suk, interview, March 5, 2019).

Teacher organization of learning was, at times, an influential support for students acquiring SEL competencies. Teachers organized the lesson structures to include SEL skills (49 occurrences). For example, in using project-based learning, teachers insert SEL skills of self-

management, relationship building, and responsible decision-making skills (J. Kiepher, observation, October 4, 2019). This need to learn SEL skills directly was a positive force because teachers could incorporate SEL in instruction even if they did not explicitly name it. We could extend these types of lessons to be more explicit about SEL and our expectations for academic and SEL learning. More explicit and measurable SEL expectations on how students manage themselves, relate to others, make decisions, and understand social awareness would support them as they work in teams, a key requirement for 21st century learning and the workforce. Teachers and parents both expect students to have acquired SEL competencies and be able to use them, but we need more systemic organizational structures, standards, and expectations for teaching students what SEL is or how to use the skills.

Internal Pressures

Intrinsic motivation is a force for students to learn social-emotional skills; it is also the most difficult to document. During interviews and in memos, the CPR team shared the internal forces that they felt compelled students to practice social-emotional skills. We documented the need to belong to a community through the codes that pertain to social awareness and relationship building. A basic human need is to be socially accepted and have friends. This requires students to learn how to build social groups and socially engage with their peers. The school culture and community created pressure on students to learn social-emotional skills. The code for social acceptance was recorded 29 times. Jordan summed up this need concisely when he said, “Basically, in all communities and societies, you want to fit in. I think most students learn to not be too ‘out there’ and to be accepted” (J. Suk, interview, March 5, 2019). Students had to learn how to socially interact to be successful in the school community. Working with other students was a regular requirement in classroom activities, and students were encouraged

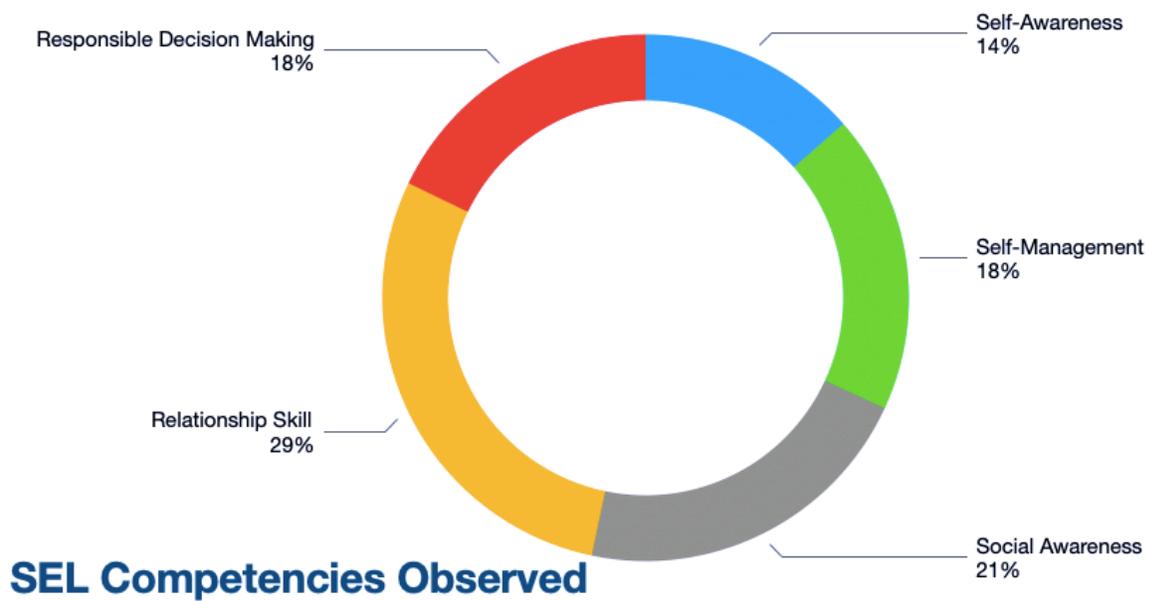
to create study groups outside of class (A. Willette, reflective memo, March 20, 2020). The need for students to develop their relationship skills is vital for their success.

Another internal pressure was the students' motivation to be successful. Students expressed a desire to be successful; they equated that academic success with university acceptance. They recognized how they use social-emotional skills to be successful in class. Over the course of the three cycles, there were 553 occurrences of students using SEL competencies in class and on campus. During a conversation with a student about their university application process, I asked her what they need to do complete the process for early acceptance. They expressed their need to get organized and find time to finish their personal essay (A. Willette, reflective memo, October 9, 2020). Time management and organizational skills are SEL competencies students need to be successful.

Students at this international school want to be medical doctors, engineers, and business owners. I was working with a senior early in the semester trying to adjust his schedule so he could apply for the right university program, and I asked him where he wanted to go to university and what major he saw for himself. He said somewhere in the UK or the Netherlands (A. Willette, reflective memo, August 28, 2020). All the 36 students in the graduating class of 2020 are attending a university. Getting accepted to the university they want requires students to learn cognitive and affective competencies, which is happening in part through self-motivation. We are encountering similar responsibilities from all three findings—the SEL program we eventually design, and implement must respond to current student, family, and teacher perspectives, motivations, and goals.

Conclusion

Figure 22 presents percentages of the observed use for each CASEL competency. I



SEL Competencies Observed

Skill Domain	Frequency of Use
Self-Awareness	72
Self-Management	98
Social Awareness	114
Relationship Skill	154
Responsible Decision Making	95

Figure 22. Percentages of documented use for each CASEL SEL domain.

reorganized the aggregate evidence from the data to reflect the five specific competencies, which indicate that we addressed all SEL competencies in some way. That is a positive result. We have a toehold; now, we need to determine how to move forward effectively, considering the various supports and inhibitors we have identified. Learning is a complex and personal process influenced by family, peers, counselors, and teachers. PAR Cycle Three was the conclusion of a process of inquiry for the PAR study that focused on the degree to which an SEL program can support student social-emotional and academic learning.

In the data collection process, I utilized tools designed to gain a deeper understanding of the ways in which parents, teachers, counselors, and students use SEL competencies. External and internal pressures, particularly for academic success, account for many reasons why the students acquire social-emotional skills. The need to be socially accepted and compete in a rigorous academic environment requires students to use SEL competencies. Despite the lack of a formal program or structure, students used SEL skills every day in class. However, they should not learn them by chance; developing the social-emotional language of naming and knowing their competencies is necessary so that they can be successful academically and have a strong grounding in explicit social-emotional learning.

From the data collected and analyzed throughout the study, the cultural context had a strong influence on how the school integrated SEL. As we documented, students were expected to learn SEL implicitly rather than explicitly. Thus, we need to do a better job of offering a structured and systematic approach to teaching SEL. Finally, students' intrinsic motivation to learn, belong, and succeed influenced their use of SEL expectations and competencies. As a result of our inquiry, we have clearly documented the supports and inhibitors that we need to effectively design and implement an SEL program for an international school in our context.

Now our task is to use these data to design the school learning environment that is culturally consonant with the home culture (parents, community, and school) and the complexities of student dynamics.

CHAPTER EIGHT: NECESSARY SCHOOL STRUCTURES TO SUPPORT SEL PROGRAMS IN INTERNATIONAL SCHOOLS

I started this journey ready to learn and expand my professional knowledge. I wanted to better understand how people, including students, learn and how social-emotional factors influence that learning. Throughout my career, I have seen students who struggle to “fit in,” to get themselves organized, to not be the person in the group with whom no one wants to work. I have seen students fall through the cracks of the educational system; they are strong enough academically to survive, but they do not realize their full potential. The study aimed to work with students, teachers, parents, and counselors to increase SEL knowledge, skills, and dispositions. We imagined a school-based program in an international school setting that embedded SEL skills and reinforced SEL competencies so that we could better support students’ social-emotional learning in the service of academic goals. In using participatory action research (PAR), I worked with a Co-Practitioner Researcher team (CPR) of the middle school and high school counselors and teachers, a high school student, and a parent representative. Throughout three iterative cycles of inquiry, the CPR team and I collected data through interviews, observations, and reflective memos. Table 22 highlight the timelines and data collection activities.

The study took place in a small private Christian school in Northern Thailand with a student body of mostly Thai or mixed Thai nationality. We found that their practices of SEL competencies result from a mix of influences from teachers, parents, and peers as well as their personal motivations. Teachers planned learning activities that supported students practicing social-emotional skills; however, most of their learning was implicit rather than explicit. Parents see the benefit of social-emotional skills to their children’s success in school and society. Pressure from peer rivalries or individual aspirations influence students to learn SEL because

Table 22

Timeline of All Data Collection Activities

Week	Cycle One									Cycle Two									Cycle Three									
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Interviews		•	•	•		•	•	•			•			•		•	•	•				•		•			•	•
Classroom Observations		•	•		•			•				•		•	•	•	•											
CPR Memo	•					•			•	•		•											•		•		•	
CLE Memo		•				•	•			•								•		•								•
Personal Memo	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•

most students view academic success as a primary focus of their secondary school experiences. SEL is dependent on the context of the culture and community. However, more research is required to understand the extent that culture influences SEL and how the CASEL competencies might be adapted in cultural contexts.

In this chapter, I discuss PAR findings and how the findings relate to the extant literature. Most community members reported that SEL competency is essential; however, because teachers, students, and parents largely view SEL as an important adjunct to academic learning rather than an end in itself, we learned that we needed to better connect student and parent goals with the implementation. In addition, we learned that SEL implementation needs to more aware of the cultural context and be better aligned to be culturally responsive. The study has implications for how we address SEL in practice, policy, and research.

Discussion

We should have anticipated what the PAR study might tell us about the assets and challenges that we faced in the SEL program at an international school; specifically, we were aware of how culture might be a critical factor, and, in the end, that was a linchpin of the findings. At the start of the project, our analysis of the assets and challenges was based on a theoretical understanding of SEL competencies as they related to our program, and we did not sufficiently attend to our cultural context, including the home culture, country culture, and the school culture. We had a fuzzy idea of how we had implemented some SEL competences in practice, and we did not have a fully developed program. We had been tasked by the WASC accreditation team to more fully implement SEL, which provided some leverage, and I was aware from the outset that we needed to pay some attention to the specific international context of our school and host country. However, those factors became more important as we engaged in

three cycles of inquiry, which I briefly summarize. Then, I analyze the study findings in relation to research and the research questions. Finally, I discuss implications for practice, policy, and research in the international context and end with an analysis of my growth as a leader.

Building an SEL Program: Three Cycles of Inquiry

The PAR was as an empirical investigation of how social-emotional learning supports academic and social-emotional growth. Throughout the course of the 18-month PAR project and three cycles of inquiry, we built some structures and teacher capacity that supported an SEL program; however, our major result was that we now more deeply understand the supports and inhibitors to implementing an SEL program. The CASEL framework served as a starting point because it is a guide to specific behaviors involving social-emotional competencies. The framework supported teachers to develop SEL language and implement strategies at the classroom or school level, and I used the SEL terminology for coding data. However, when we started the study, teachers had an incomplete understanding of social-emotional learning, the concept of behavioral indicators of social-emotional intelligence, and the pedagogical methods to support instruction.

Findings

As a result of our collective inquiry over 18 months, we were successful in identifying the factors that supported and inhibited SEL implementation in the school. As a result, we needed to draw on the collective assets of the school community to design how best to implement SEL at our schools and foster the competencies in ways that spoke to the main concern of the parents and students—academic success. We need to attend to these findings to successfully implement SEL:

1. The school needed to honor the home culture of the students in constructing the SEL

plan and be more culturally consonant with how the SEL competencies intersected with the socio-cultural competencies of our students and families.

2. The use of SEL in the learning environment was uneven, resulting in students learning SEL competencies implicitly rather than explicitly.
3. Students conformed to academic and social pressures from peer and parental influences regarding SEL; simultaneously, they benefited from teacher organization of classroom activities that addressed SEL competencies.

In discussing each finding, I refer to the extant literature and how the findings and evidence address the research questions.

Honoring Home Culture

We defined home culture broadly as cultural learning from family, country, and school. The three are not synonymous, but if SEL implementation was to be successful, we needed to be clearer about how current SEL competencies, designed primarily in a US and western context, intersect with Thai culture as well as the school culture as a private, Christian school. All three contexts imply values, and the affective domain of Bloom et al. (1956) places internalizing values at the pinnacle of achieving success in the affective domain (see Table 23). However, values, while not relative, are culturally specific. They relate to SEL competencies and the affective domain of learning, but we needed to listen to the values of the multiple home contexts of students and make certain we attended to their key values. The parent examples indicated that they are interested in SEL as an avenue to academic success, but they are also interested in their children retaining cultural assets like Buddhism and Chinese language. The students face conflicting values of honoring home culture while focused on the goal of a western university education abroad. Their needs to be socially and emotionally savvy, to cultivate their emotional

Table 23

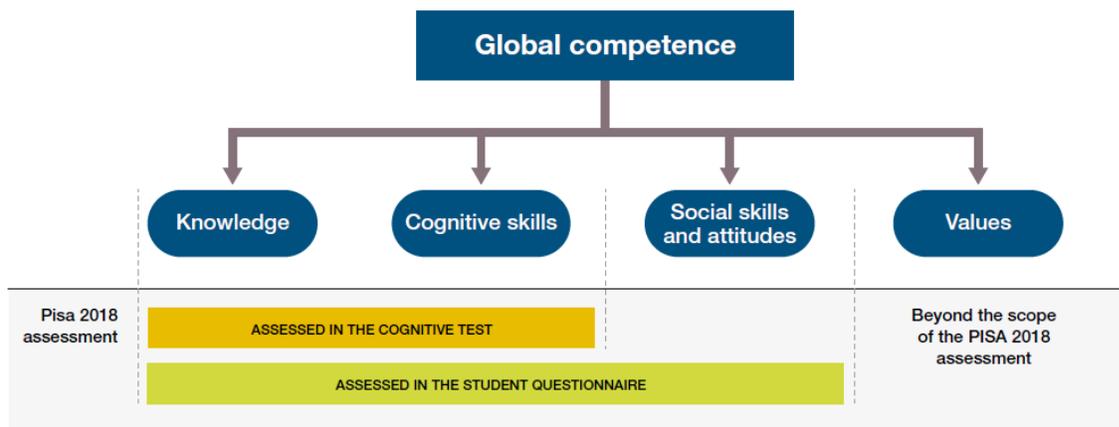
Affective Domain of Learning

Category	Example
<i>Receive Phenomena:</i> Awareness, willingness to hear, selected attention.	Listens to others with respect. Listen for and remembers the names of newly introduced people.
<i>Respond to Phenomena:</i> Active participation on the part of the learners. Learning outcomes emphasize compliance in responding, willingness to respond, or satisfaction in responding.	Participates in class discussions. Gives a presentation. Questions new ideals, concepts, models, etc. in order to fully understand them. Knows the safety rules and practices them.
<i>Value:</i> The worth or value a person attaches to a particular object, phenomenon, or behavior. Ranges from simple acceptance to the more complex state of commitment. Valuing is based on the internalization of a set of specified values.	Demonstrates belief in the democratic process, sensitivity toward individual and cultural differences (value diversity), the ability to solve problems. Proposes a plan to social improvement and follows through with commitment.
<i>Prioritizes:</i> Organizes values into priorities by contrasting different values, resolving conflicts among them, and creating a unique value system. The emphasis is on comparing, relating, and synthesizing values.	<i>Examples:</i> Recognizes the need for balance between freedom and responsible behavior. Explains the role of systematic planning in solving problems. Creates a life plan in harmony with abilities, interests, and beliefs. Prioritizes time effectively.
<i>Internalizes Values:</i> Has a value system that encourages pervasive, consistent, and predictable behavior. Instructional objectives are concerned with the student's general patterns of adjustment (personal, social, emotional).	Shows self-reliance when working independently. Cooperates in group activities (displays teamwork). Uses an objective approach in problem solving. Displays a consistent professional commitment to ethical practice. Revises judgments and changes behavior in light of new evidence. Values people for what they are, not how they look.

intelligence, including the key skills of self-regulation, self-awareness, motivation, empathy, and social skills (Goleman, 1995). While not in contrast to their home cultures, the students were aware they needed to learn how to be socially adept in western cultures. That speaks to how the students, not their parents, are a part of the global citizen generation in which the OECD (2018) global competencies integrate values with academics (see Figure 23). Gutiérrez (2016) states that to engage in social design experiments, particularly in cross-cultural settings like those we were attempting to implement in SEL, we need to integrate the individual and the social. In general, the social-emotional competencies arise from our understanding of western human psychology, which is largely based on supporting the understanding of the individual self. Eastern philosophy and values more fully integrate the knowledge of self within a more collective value system (Li, 2012). Failure to fully integrate our understandings of the broader home culture with SEL competencies in ways that were culturally consonant is a consideration for continued implementation. However, as international educators, we are morally bound to prepare students for a global world that we have yet to see (OECD, 2018). Thus, our responsibility is both to honor the home culture and to bring new ideas about how students can be successful. Combining the responsibility to the home culture, what we know about global efforts, and readiness of our audiences for SEL is a complex but important task for international educators.

A Framework for International School Context

Students attending international schools have competing pressures from their home culture and the school community. A community-based framework adaptive to the specific international school and cultural contexts is needed to provide structure and support for an SEL program. We collected the voices from the school community and applied that knowledge to alter the CASEL framework. An adjusted framework based on the priorities illustrates



Note: OECD (2018).

Figure 23. PISA 2018 Global Competence Framework.

how we can address the culture and community of this international school (see Figure 24). Each competency domain reflects the emphases I analyzed from the evidence in this study; the domains reflect the school community members' expressed importance and prioritizes how important relationships and social awareness are in this cultural context (50% of the evidence). The research-based contextual factors supporting student learning SEL skills are on top of the circle. Under the circle are actionable steps that enable a coordinated community response to address SEL. In our cultural context, we see that attending to key factors of relationships and social awareness of culture are critical for SEL implementation. This revised framework encourages school leaders to engage with the whole school community to capture their hopes and wishes while using their voice to implement a community-based SEL program, and the framework shift encourages international schools to fully understand and account for their cultural context in implementing SEL. Attending to local context in SEL implementation is key.

Explicit and Integrated SEL Teaching

As we documented in classroom observations and interviews with teachers, the use of SEL in the learning environment was uneven; teachers typically taught the competencies implicitly rather than explicitly. Teachers felt—and the parents and students reported—that taking time to explicitly teach SEL “took away” time from the academic learning. Because the cognitive domain in learning is emphasized and because the content standards are not yet fully integrated with SEL, teachers found integrating SEL in academic subjects difficult. Secondly, the students found the middle school program version of Second Step to be tedious and contrived, students and teachers would prefer an embedded approach. Fortunately, teachers and students wanted SEL instruction to be a more contextualized learning experience for the students, and our

Researched-Based SEL Framework for International Schools

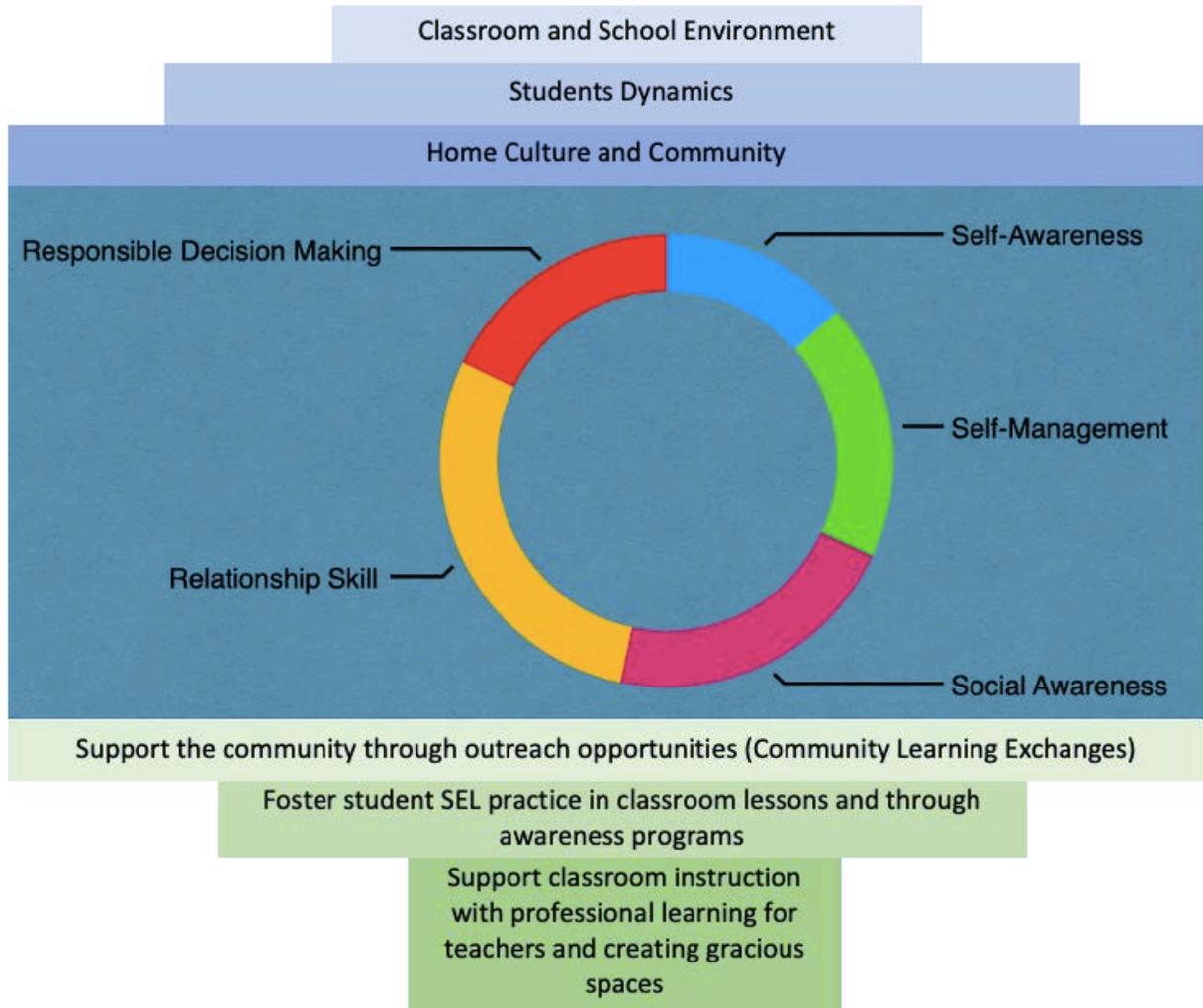


Figure 24. SEL framework based on evidence from the PAR study that may be useful in informing international school contexts.

research demonstrated that it was possible. However, the learning and planning needed to do this required time and commitment—two resources that were sometimes in short supply.

Weissberg and Cascarino (2013) discuss the intersection and integration of SEL by urging policymakers “to understand what researchers and educators already know: social-emotional learning helps create more engaging schools and prepares students for the challenges of the world” (p. 3). However, our study indicated that while educators may know and believe this, they did not quite know how to do it. Although research evidence supports how SEL results in stronger academic learning and better preparation for college and career readiness (Durlak et al., 2011; Farrington, 2013), teachers may not actually know how to integrate the skills explicitly. We observed implicit use of SEL as part of active teaching in problem-based learning and discussions, but they needed time and professional learning opportunities to be more explicit in their planning and teaching.

However, we observed that teachers had multiple assets that supported SEL; they could recognize the competencies when they taught them, even if implicitly. They started to make connections between the content standards and SEL competencies. The professional learning sessions and the community learning exchanges raised awareness and provided some knowledge and skills. The next steps should include more professional learning on how to integrate. In addition, we should engage in a broader examination of OECD global competencies that would provide a stronger rationale for teachers to explicitly plan for and teach social emotional learning. Changes in school policy would augment professional learning.

Student Dynamics

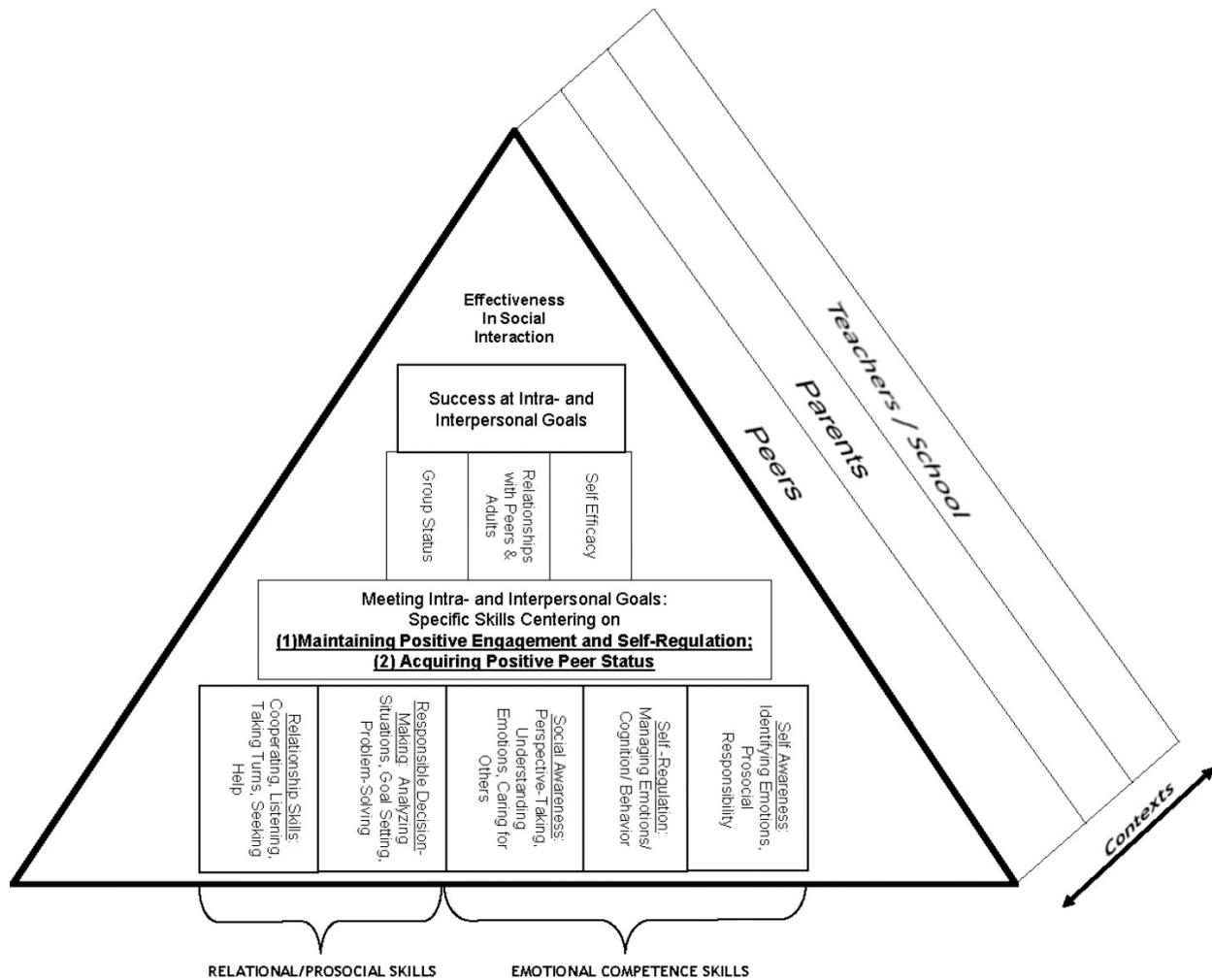
From a study of how the cultural background of students had an impact on SEL acquisition and exhibition (Castro-Olivo & Merrell, 2012), we can extrapolate that other cultural

groups might benefit in the same way. Understanding the influence of culture on learning social-emotional skills is critical to fostering an SEL program in middle and high schools. Our results found that while students engaged in social-emotional learning in classrooms and benefited from teacher organization of classroom activities, they also conformed to the academic and social pressures from peer and parental influences. The pressure to conform to the social norms of the school and feel a sense of belonging has an impact on academic achievement (Hernandez, 2011) and tended to impact their response to SEL. Our study results showed that social pressures influenced students' need to acquire SEL skills to maintain social relationships and gain a sense of belonging with their peers.

The academic success of students who are adept at SEL competencies is well-established (Denham & Brown, 2010) (see Figure 25). Students who develop self-awareness are more willing to participate and take on challenging classwork; in the same way, students with social awareness understand how emotions play a role in their overall academic success. Our results indicated that internal motivations to perform well in school and be socially accepted drove student motivations to learn social-emotional competencies. Combining their drive for social acceptance, desires to be academically strong, and introducing global competencies that they will need to be successful in their studies abroad and in their future work may better support their willingness to engage in learning social-emotional competencies.

Implications

As a result of our study, we have identified the key supports and inhibitors of starting SEL programs in international schools. First, the context of the SEL implementation is a critical consideration. The school needs to consider the school's demographics and the motives of community members from different backgrounds for choosing an international school. Secondly,



Note. Denham and Brown (2010).

Figure 25. Delineation of social and emotional competencies.

having teachers and counselors as well as parents and students on the planning team for implementation is informative and helpful. The CPR team supported the study by lending their voices, experiences, and perspectives to the data collection and analysis process. Their engagement in the process afforded us more perspectives, which resulted in deeper understanding. Finally, the findings should be useful to other international schools that embark on a similar journey to integrate SEL practices in the academic program. As schools write or revisit their SEL policy, as is now required for accreditation, the school personnel could use our findings to inform their processes. The research supports existing research on the importance of SEL and adds the critical factor of culture.

Practice

The study's findings inform how schools might frame teacher practices by providing greater insight into the pressures and motivations on students to learn SEL competencies as well as the importance of professional learning so that teachers can be more explicit about SEL competencies in their plans and classrooms. By understanding the pressures that influence students' SEL needs, teachers can target their instruction to address the pressures students are experiencing. Counselors can better support their students by recognizing their family pressures. If counselors know these influences, they can give better advice for course selections and provide greater individual support.

The study substantiated the importance of SEL in the school context, including the need for professional learning to implement SEL and how SEL can be effective in addressing cognitive and affective learning simultaneously. When teachers began to recognize the ways they presently taught SEL, they could be more explicit with students in naming competencies. For example, in a divisional meeting, we used a design thinking strategy to build a teacher “Swiss

army knife” that had all the tools teachers need to be effective. The goal was to encourage and support active learning strategies with embedded SEL practice. In the sharing, they identified almost every SEL competency (A. Willette, reflective memo, October 9, 2020). The faculty was able to see how they could identify SEL competencies in their learning strategies, which they could accentuate with explicit instructions during their lessons. The more professional learning we did, the more teachers understood the intersection and could recognize how SEL is and could be a part of their lesson structure.

Finally, using community learning exchange pedagogical practices is a powerful change agent that brings the community together to share their voices and build collective knowledge. In CLEs with the faculty, parents, and students, we collaboratively addressed the need for an SEL program, which resulted in learning, collective support, and new ideas.

Policy

The findings have implications for our school policy as we have used our research findings to create an SEL policy, build curricular structures, and inform teaching practices that support SEL. The school is better informed and can revisit the current policy and schoolwide learner outcomes to better support the SEL program. The current SEL policy is based on the finding from this study and is a product of the CPR team’s collective understanding of what is best for our students. The policy takes into consideration the needed for a curriculum for the lower grade levels and embedded SEL competencies in the upper grades. This process would be useful to other international schools as they revisit their SEL policy as required by their accreditation agencies.

However, there is still policy work to do at our school, and I expect the same is true for other schools. Based on the existing research and the finding from the PAR study, the school has

taken steps to build structures to embed social-emotional competencies in the subject content. The CPR team contributed to understanding how to build SEL into the curriculum and how to structure professional learning for teachers. Since the current schoolwide learning outcomes (SLO) for the school do not yet include SEL competencies, we want to revise the SLOs to include SEL competencies. As we embed SEL not only in classroom instruction, but in the policy and curricular planning elements of the school, we demonstrate a commitment to SEL and provide support for continued growth including teacher decisions about curriculum and instruction.

Research

The study found the pressures from home culture had an influence on how students respond to learning SEL competencies (National Academy of Sciences, Engineering, & Medicine, 2018). According to Immordino-Yang and Damasio (2007), thoughts and emotions are evaluated through the cultural lens. The study findings provided evidence that the learning and practice of SEL depends on the culture of the student. Thus, we need more research on how social-emotional learning and culture intersect and how that translates to policy and implementation in international schools that serve large local populations. The process we used to be inclusive in multiple ways could be replicated and adapted to other schools open to conducting participatory action research. In addition, more researchers and practitioners are interested in how international schools are responding to the OECD global citizen framework, and this would provide an entry point for research studies on how the international community is incorporating social-emotional learning. As the global pandemic affected every citizen on the planet, the awareness for social-emotional competence is heightened, and this is a propitious moment for increasing both implementation and research of social emotional learning.

Summary of Implications

I began the study in part to support the students who struggled not with subject content but with social skills that limited their success. The findings highlighted the ways students received or did not receive SEL instruction at this international school; the pressures from parents, peers, and teachers that influence students to learn and practice social-emotional competencies; and the bright spots we uncovered that could lead to stronger SEL implementation. The findings support the current body of research regarding the impact culture has on learning and the need for frameworks to structure SEL programs.

The implications for the study on teacher practices, the school context and policy, the educational research field, and the PAR process have broader potential for similar schools to utilize. Educators that understand what pressures influence students motivations and practice of SEL, can design an SEL program that compliments those forces of motivation. There is a need for further study on how culture intersects, not only with SEL but also with other proposed changes in international school curriculum, instruction, and policy. The PAR process was in and of itself a tool for gaining support from the community to engage in change.

Limitations

The context of the school was a strength and a limitation. The study took place in a particular international school, which provided a context for examining SEL in an international setting. Because this was a small study, the limitations include the type of school, the cultural context, and the school policy and practices. The international context of the school has its limitations as the resources are limited and language barriers among the participants sometimes hindered communication. The setting may hinder the ability to replicate the study due to the unique qualities of an international school. However, the CLE and research processes provide a

roadmap for any international school undertaking implementation of SEL or similar programmatic efforts.

The school organization presented limitations as there were no policies in place and little funding to implement an SEL program. The policy was slowly developed with the administration team and CPR members. Funds were made available to purchase an SEL curriculum, but no money was used for professional learning for staff or to invite a professional seminar facilitator. Thus, funding is a limitation for our school as it may be for other international schools.

However, as research supports the importance of social-emotional learning and other schools in their work to implement an SEL program, I expect that our findings provide a leading edge for other international schools to consider how to promote SEL. The findings support teachers' ability to better address students' SEL learning by understanding their motivations fueled by cultural, school, and internal pressures. The school site and context provided a promising context for revealing the supports and inhibitors which may influence another school's implementation. Inhibitors include structures, policy, or frameworks that form the foundations of an SEL program.

Leadership Development

My leadership growth and development focused on understanding the value of incorporating the community in the decision-making process. I led by listening to students, parents, teachers, and counselors (Safir, 2017), meaning that I more intentionally modeled the CASEL competencies as I undertook the study. Leading through listening means gathering the voices from the school to understand what action should be taken. As I learned over the course of the study, learning and leadership are dynamic social processes that tap the power of the people of the community (Guajardo et al., 2016). Over the course of the study, I learned to depend on

the community for support and insight. Building a relationship with our community of parents and inviting them into the CLE events to socialize and share their voices was useful to gain a deeper understanding of what the parents want for their children and how they frame SEL. The CLE axiom of the people closest to the problem are best situated to provide the answers proved to be helpful and became the basis for my leadership approach. Collaboration with teachers on key issues informed my decision-making ability, a key factor in the SEL competencies.

Inclusion of Student Voice

Throughout the study, I actively looked for ways to include students in the decision-making process and bring them into conversations with the administrative team. In addition to the student representative, we relied on student government leaders at CLEs to bring their ideas to us. For example, due to the pandemic, we had to revamp senior graduation for the class of 2020. My first step was to meet with the CPR team and brainstorm all the challenges and assets that we faced. I then took that information and presented it to the graduating class. Together, we organized a virtual graduation that was complementary to their accomplishments and the rites of passage.

I actively worked with the student government to build their presence on campus. As a result, the student government members have become community leaders in organizing community events. During the pandemic when we shifted to virtual learning, they helped to find ways to bring the community together despite the distance. Their participation in regular administrative meetings helped all of us view student-level insight as necessary when we make decisions that affect their learning experiences.

Collaboration with Teachers

Creating structures for collaboration between teacher teams and administration was a

growth area for me during this process. I began this process with an established commitment to professional learning communities; however, my understanding of the reasoning and promise of professional collaboration strengthened. Our staff may not share subject courses, but because they share students, we can resolve problems together. As we shared teaching strategies, including SEL pedagogies and how we can support a student with specific needs, we developed a stronger sense of belonging. In using the CLE model for faculty meetings, I maximized teacher input and sharing. The strength we draw from each other supports our students, instruction, and self-care.

Value of the Community

Community involvement in providing their voices in the decision-making process was vital in this project and in the overall success at the schools. Listening to the communal voice does not mean that I could do everything parents were asking, but we incorporated their ideas when decisions were made. For example, when the school was updating the technology policy on campus, we collected the viewpoints of students, parents, and teachers before making changes. During a parent-teacher group meeting, we collected notes when parents joined in table groups to share what kind of support they needed from the school when addressing use of technology on campus and at home (A. Willette, reflective memo, September 4, 2021). I recognized the need to meet the community where they are and what they need. While there was no single voice that shaped policy, there was a choir of the community. These experiences amplified my leadership growth as I felt a part of a larger group of people and felt the support and the responsibility of representing their decisions and voices.

My Leadership Journey

In my personal journey as researcher and an educational leader, I had revelations about

my relationships with students, teachers, and parents. My original approach to the PAR was immense in scope and my internal frustration with the imitations of what was possible opened a path to a deeper understand of what it means to be a school leader. While my leadership philosophy always rested on the belief in the community as the heart of a school, the PAR process has given me new insights on the value of a community and the ways leaders need to rely on their communities to effect change. The power of listening to what the students needed academically, socially, and culturally became evident as I worked with them to understand their experience with social emotional learning in the middle and high school. I had to meet the faculty where they were in their capacity to deliver SEL instruction. My relationship to teachers evolved to be more of a guide and coach rather than manager. The most powerful realization in my leadership journey was when I came to understand the importance of learning from each other engaging in dialogue about the issues in our community to find dynamic solutions. School leaders must listen and work to understand the community not base decisions on test score alone but hear stories and learn the hopes of the community.

Conclusion

The affective domain of learning is an often overlooked or underrepresented aspect of the learning process. There exists great potential for schools to support student's academic achievement while supporting social-emotional wellbeing through embedded instructional practices. In the Tyack and Cuban (1998) book, *Tinkering Toward Utopia*, the educational profession was presented as a continual process of initiatives aimed to solve society's problems through schools. The authors explain the process of reform in schools needs to be designed by teachers working together with their local "knowledge of their own diverse students and communities" to support each other in the approach to learning (p. 135). Their words resonated

in the study as the context of the school and the culture of the community had a large impact on SEL as a concept and a practice. The power of working with the community to develop a new way of approaching SEL was vital. The improvement science process of PDAS combined with the CLE axioms gave us the theory and protocols to facilitate change (Bryk et al., 2015; Guajardo et al., 2016). The implications of the study have the potential in supporting other international schools as they work to implement their own community based SEL program.

I developed the ability of improvising and adapting to the changes in the school community and the various teacher and student needs. Nachmanovitch (1990) describes the importance of improvisation in life and work. He argues that improvisation is not an absence of structure but a harnessing of the structures and motivations in the creativity process. My leadership journey included a need for me to improvise solutions when working with members from the school community. The power of a structure – the CASEL framework -- was a catalyst to spark creative growth (Nachmanovitch, 1990), but it required local adaptation. Our CPR team was committing to creating an SEL program; to do so, we explored the motivations, use, and instruction of social-emotional skills in their natural state – our school. Our work led us to discover a new perception of how our students need learn social-emotional skill that support their academic success. A quote from poet Jallaludin Rumi summarizes my journey as leader, the experiences of the CPR team, and the process of the PAR study: *New organs of perception come into being as a result of necessity. Therefore, O man, increase your necessity, so that you may increase your perception.*

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APPENDIX A: INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD LETTER OF APPROVAL



EAST CAROLINA UNIVERSITY
University & Medical Center Institutional Review Board

4N-64 ΒροδψΜεδιγολΣχιενγεςΒυιδινγ•ΜαλΣτοπ 682
600 Μοψε Βουλεπαρδ •Γρενταλε, NX 27834
Οφφχ 252-744-2914 •Φωξ 252-744-2284 •
rede.ecu.edu/umcirb/

□

Notification of Initial Approval: Expedited

From: Social/Behavioral IRB
To: [Aaron Willette](#)
CC: [Matthew Militello](#)
Date: 10/7/2019
Re: [UMCIRB 19-001610](#)
Cultivating an Inclusive Culturally Responsive SEL Program in International Schools

I am pleased to inform you that your Expedited Application was approved. Approval of the study and any consent form(s) occurred on 10/7/2019. The research study is eligible for review under expedited category # 6, 7. The Chairperson (or designee) deemed this study no more than minimal risk.

Changes to this approved research may not be initiated without UMCIRB review except when necessary to eliminate an apparent immediate hazard to the participant. All unanticipated problems involving risks to participants and others must be promptly reported to the UMCIRB. The investigator must submit a Final Report application to the UMCIRB prior to the Expected End Date provided in the IRB application. If the study is not completed by this date, an Amendment will need to be submitted to extend the Expected End Date. The Investigator must adhere to all reporting requirements for this study.

Approved consent documents with the IRB approval date stamped on the document should be used to consent participants (consent documents with the IRB approval date stamp are found under the Documents tab in the study workspace).

The approval includes the following items:

Name	Description
Adult Consent Form	Consent Forms
Child Assent Form	Consent Forms
IRB Proposal	Additional Items
IRB Proposal	Study Protocol or Grant Application
Observation Protocol	Interview/Focus Group Scripts/Questions
Parent Permission Consent form	Consent Forms
Semi-Structured Interview Protocol	Interview/Focus Group Scripts/Questions

The Chairperson (or designee) does not have a potential for conflict of interest on this study.

APPENDIX B: SCHOOL LETTER OF SUPPORT



June 17, 2019

To Whom It May Concern:

Chiang Mai International School recognizes the benefits of participating in relevant, well designed research studies proposed by qualified individuals. Approval for conducting such studies is based primarily on the extent to which substantial benefits can be shown for Chiang Mai International School and its mission of educating students. The purpose of this letter is to notify you of the **approval** to use the dissertation study titled, "Building an Inclusive Culturally Responsive SEL Program in International Schools" with participants in our schools. We also give permission to utilize the following spaces at Chiang Mai International school to collect data and conduct interviews for his dissertation project: Conference room, classrooms, and office spaces. Other spaces may be permitted upon school approval.

The project meets all of our school procedures, and safeguards for conducting research on our campus. Moreover, there is ample space for Aaron Willette to conduct his study and his project will not interfere with any functions of Chiang Mai International school. Finally, the following conditions must be met, as agreed upon by the researchers and Chiang Mai International school:

- Participant data only includes information captured from the state data collection strategies.
- Participation is voluntary.
- Participants can choose to leave the study without penalty at any time.
- Any issues with participation of study are reported to school administration in a timely manner.
- An executive summary of the findings is shared with the school administration once the study is complete.

In addition to these conditions, the study must follow all of the East Carolina University IRB guidelines. We are excited to support this important work.

Respectfully,

Nel Capadona

Mrs. Nel Capadona
Superintendent
Chiang Mai International School
Thailand

APPENDIX C: CITI CERTIFICATION



4ed4-967c-2aa2ff7da306-29916663

APPENDIX D: PARENT CONSENT FORM

East Carolina



University

Parental/Legal Guardian Permission to Allow Your Child to Take Part in Research

Information to consider before allowing your child to take part in research that has no more than minimal risk.

Title of Research Study: **Creating an Inclusive Culturally Responsive SEL Program in International School**

Principal Investigator: Aaron Willette

Institution: Chiang Mai International School

Address: 13 Chetupon Road

Chiang Mai, Thailand 50000

Telephone #: +66-063671-2672

Study Coordinator: Matthew Militello

Telephone #: 909-518-4008

Participant Full Name: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Researchers at East Carolina University (ECU) study issues related to society, health problems, environmental problems, behavior problems and the human condition. To do this, we need the help of volunteers who are willing to take part in research.

Why is my child being invited to take part in this research?

The purpose of this study is to work with students, teachers, and counselors to increase adherence to SEL knowledge, skills, and dispositions.

Your child is being invited to participate because he or she is a middle or high school student at the participating middle school. The decision for your child to take part in this research will also depend on whether your child wants to participate. By doing this research, we hope to provide new opportunities to support student social emotional wellbeing. If you and your child agree for him/her to volunteer for this research, your child will be one of about 10 students to do so.

Are there reasons my child should not take part in this research?

There are no known reasons for why you should not participate in this research study.

What other choices do I have if my child does not take part in this research?

Your child can choose not to participate.

Where is the research going to take place and how long will it last?

The research will be conducted at your child's school after school or during a free period.

Students will also be asked interview questions in a one on one setting in the counseling office.

These interviews will take approximately 30 minutes.

What will my child be asked to do?

If you agree to participate in this study, your child may be asked to participate in one or more interviews and focus groups. Interviews and focus groups will be audio recorded, and students will be assigned an ID number in order to maintain confidentiality. If you want your child to participate in an interview but do not want to be audio recorded, the interviewer will turn off the audio recorder. Interview and focus group questions will focus on your reflections and experiences with social emotional education in their classes.

Data collected in hard copy form will be stored in locked filing cabinets. All data will be accessible to the research team exclusively.

What might I experience if I take part in the research?

We do not know of any risks (the chance of harm) associated with this research. Any risks that may occur with this research are no more than what you would experience in everyday life. We do not know if you will benefit from taking part in this study. There may not be any personal benefit to you but the information gained by doing this research may help others in the future.

Will my child be paid for taking part in this research?

We will not be able to pay you or your child for the time you volunteer while being in this study.

Will it cost me anything for my child to take part in this research?

It will not cost you any money to be part of the research.

Who will know that I took part in this research and learn personal information about me?

ECU and the people and organizations listed below may know that your child took part in this research and may see information about your child that is typically kept private. With your permission, these people may use your child's private information to do this research:

- The University & Medical Center Institutional Review Board (UMCIRB) and its staff have responsibility for overseeing your child's welfare during this research and may need to see research records that identify your child.

How will you keep the information you collect about my child secure? How long will you keep it?

The information in the study will be kept confidential to the full extent allowed by law. Confidentiality will be maintained throughout the data collection and data analysis process. Information gathered from the interview will be maintained in a secure, locked location and will be destroyed upon successful completion of the study. No reference will be made in oral or written reports that could link you to the study.

What if my child decides he/she doesn't want to continue in this research?

Your child can stop at any time after it has already started. There will be no consequences if he/she stops and he/she will not be criticized. Your child will not lose any benefits that he/she would typically receive.

Who should I contact if I have questions?

The people conducting this study will be able to answer any questions concerning this research, now or in the future. You may contact the Principal Investigator at phone number 2876-9900 x234 (days, 8:00 am – 4:00 pm) or email richardsongarcial@tas.tw.

If you have questions about your child’s rights as someone taking part in research, you may call the Office of Research Integrity & Compliance (ORIC) at phone number 252-744-2914 (days, 8:00 am-5:00 pm). If you would like to report a complaint or concern about this research study, you may call the Director of the ORIC, at 252-744-1971.

I have decided my child can take part in this research. What should I do now?

The person obtaining informed consent will ask you to read the following and if you agree, you should sign this form:

- I have read (or had read to me) all of the above information.
- I have had an opportunity to ask questions about things in this research I did not understand and have received satisfactory answers.
- I know that my child can stop taking part in this study at any time.
- By signing this informed consent form, my child is not giving up any of his/her rights.
- I have been given a copy of this consent document, and it is mine to keep.

Parent's Name (PRINT)	Signature	Date
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Person Obtaining Informed Consent: I have conducted the initial informed consent process. I have orally reviewed the contents of the consent document with the person who has signed above, and answered all of the person’s questions about the research.

Person Obtaining Consent (PRINT)	Signature	Date
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APPENDIX E: ASSENT CONSENT FORM



Informed ASSENT Consent to Participate in Research
Information to consider before taking part in research that has no more than minimal risk.

IRB Study # _____

Title of Study: Creating an Inclusive Culturally Responsive SEL Program in International Schools

Person in charge of study: Aaron Willette
Where they work: Chiang Mai International School

Study contact phone number: +66-03671-2672
Study contact E-mail Address: willettea18@studnets.ecu.edu

People at ECU and Chiang Mai International School study ways to make people's lives better. These studies are called research. This research is trying to find out how your mode effects how you learn.

Your parent(s) needs to give permission for you to be in this research. You do not have to be in this research if you don't want to, even if your parent(s) has already given permission.

You may stop being in the study at any time. If you decide to stop, no one will be angry or upset with you.

Why are you doing this research study?

The reason for doing this research is to work to increase student academic achievement by supporting their social-emotional learning.

Why am I being asked to be in this research study?

We are asking you to take part in this research because we need to hear from the students of which this study aims on supporting.

How many people will take part in this study?

If you decide to be in this research, you will be one of about 46 people taking part in it.

What will happen during this study?

If you agree to participate in this study, you may be asked to participate in one or more interviews and focus groups. Interviews and focus groups will be audio/video recorded. If you

want to participate in an interview but do not want to be audio recorded, the interviewer will turn off the audio recorder. If you want to participate in a focus group but do not want to be video recorded, you will be able to sit out of field of view of the video camera and still be audio recorded. Interview and focus group questions will focus on your reflections and experiences social emotional learning.

Check the line that best matches your choice:

_____ OK to record me during the study

_____ Not OK to record me during the study

This study will take place at Chiang Mai International School and will last 2 years.

Who will be told the things we learn about you in this study?

Only a small group and I will have access to this information. The information in this study will be shared in a paper which will the Chiang Mai International School community will

What are the good things that might happen?

Sometimes good things happen to people who take part in research. These are called “benefits.” The benefits to you of being in this study may be increased ability to self-mange, build relationships, and empathies with others.

What are the bad things that might happen?

Sometimes things we may not like happen to people in research studies. These things may even make them feel bad. These are called “risks.” These are the risks of this study are no known ricks. You may or may not have these things happen to you. Things may also happen that the researchers do not know about right now. You should report any problems to your parents and to the researcher

Will you get any money or gifts for being in this research study?

You will not receive any money or gifts for being in this research study.

Who should you ask if you have any questions?

If you have questions about the research, you should ask the people listed on the first page of this form. If you have other questions about your rights while you are in this research study you may call the Institutional Review Board at 252-744-2914.

If you decide to take part in this research, you should sign your name below. It means that you agree to take part in this research study.

Sign your name here if you want to be in the study

Date

Print your name here if you want to be in the study

Signature of Person Obtaining Assent

Date

Printed Name of Person Obtaining Assent

APPENDIX F: ADULT CONSENT FORM



Informed Consent to Participate in Research

Information to consider before taking part in research that has no more than minimal risk.

Title of Research Study: Creating an Inclusive Culturally Responsive SEL Program in International Schools

Principal Investigator: Aaron Willette
Institution: Chiang Mai International School
Address: 13 Chetupon Road
Chiang Mai, Thailand 50000
Telephone #: +66-063671-2672
Study Coordinator: Matthew Militello
Telephone #: 909-518-4008

Researchers at East Carolina University (ECU) and Chiang Mai International School study issues related to society, health problems, environmental problems, behavior problems and the human condition. To do this, we need the help of volunteers who are willing to take part in research.

Why am I being invited to take part in this research?

The purpose of this research is to help understand the ways in which teachers, and counselors infuse social-emotional learning in to classroom instruction. You are being invited to take part in this research because you are students, teacher, or parent. Your voice and participation could help benefit the community. The decision to take part in this research is yours to make. By doing this research, we hope to learn How can our school reimagine a social-emotional program that supports students' academic, civic, and social-emotional learning?

If you volunteer to take part in this research, you will be one of about 25 people to do so.

Are there reasons I should not take part in this research?

There are no known reasons for why you should not participate in this research study.

What other choices do I have if I do not take part in this research?

You can choose not to participate.

Where is the research going to take place and how long will it last?

The research will be conducted at your school. The total amount of time you will be asked to volunteer for this study is approximately two hours.

What will I be asked to do?

If you agree to participate in this study, you may be asked to participate in one or more interviews and focus groups. Interviews and focus groups will be audio/video recorded. If you want to participate in an interview but do not want to be audio recorded, the interviewer will turn off the audio recorder. If you want to participate in a focus group but do not want to be video recorded, you will be able to sit out of field of view of the video camera and still be audio recorded. Interview and focus group questions will focus on your reflections and experiences with social-emotional learning.

What might I experience if I take part in the research?

We do not know of any risks (the chance of harm) associated with this research. Any risks that may occur with this research are no more than what you would experience in everyday life. We do not know if you will benefit from taking part in this study. There may not be any personal benefit to you, but the information gained by doing this research may help others in the future.

Will I be paid for taking part in this research?

We will not be able to pay you for the time you volunteer while being in this study.

Will it cost me to take part in this research?

It will not cost you any money to be part of the research.

Who will know that I took part in this research and learn personal information about me?

ECU and the people and organizations listed below may know that you took part in this research and may see information about you that is normally kept private. With your permission, these people may use your private information to do this research:

- Any agency of the federal, state, or local government that regulates human research. This includes the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), the North Carolina Department of Health, and the Office for Human Research Protections.
- The University & Medical Center Institutional Review Board (UMCIRB) and its staff have responsibility for overseeing your welfare during this research and may need to see research records that identify you.

How will you keep the information you collect about me secure? How long will you keep it?

The information in the study will be kept confidential to the full extent allowed by law.

Confidentiality will be maintained throughout the data collection and data analysis process.

Consent forms and data from interviews will be maintained in a secure, locked location and will be stored for a minimum of three years after completion of the study. No reference will be made in oral or written reports that could link you to the study.

What if I decide I don't want to continue in this research?

You can stop at any time after it has already started. There will be no consequences if you stop and you will not be criticized. You will not lose any benefits that you normally receive.

Who should I contact if I have questions?

The people conducting this study will be able to answer any questions concerning this research, now or in the future. You may contact the Principal Investigator at **063671-2672** (Monday-Friday: between 8a-4p)

If you have questions about your rights as someone taking part in research, you may call the Office of Research Integrity & Compliance (ORIC) at phone number 252-744-2914 (days, 8:00 am-5:00 pm). If you would like to report a complaint or concern about this research study, you may call the Director for Human Research Protections, at 252-744-2914

Is there anything else I should know?

Identifiers might be removed from the identifiable private information or identifiable biospecimens and, after such removal, the information or biospecimens could be used for future research studies or distributed to another investigator for future research studies without

additional informed consent from you or your Legally Authorized Representative (LAR). However, there still may be a chance that someone could figure out the information is about you.

I have decided I want to take part in this research. What should I do now?

The person obtaining informed consent will ask you to read the following and if you agree, you should sign this form:

- I have read (or had read to me) all of the above information.
- I have had an opportunity to ask questions about things in this research I did not understand and have received satisfactory answers.
- I know that I can stop taking part in this study at any time.
- By signing this informed consent form, I am not giving up any of my rights.
- I have been given a copy of this consent document, and it is mine to keep.

Participant's Name (PRINT)	Signature	Date
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Person Obtaining Informed Consent: I have conducted the initial informed consent process. I have orally reviewed the contents of the consent document with the person who has signed above, and answered all of the person's questions about the research.

Person Obtaining Consent (PRINT)	Signature	Date
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[Optional; unless required by the protocol]

Principal Investigator (PRINT) <i>(If other than person obtaining informed consent)</i>	Signature	Date
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APPENDIX G: SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Semi-structured Interview Protocol (Creswell, 2013): Understanding how the faculty experience is shaped by performance funding initiatives: A comparative case study.

Time of Interview:

Date:

Place:

Interviewer:

Interviewee:

Position of Interviewee:

Description of the Project: This study is designed to work with students, teachers, and counselors to increase adherence to SEL knowledge, skills, and dispositions.

Questions:

1. How comfortable are you with the SEL competencies? Are there any you are not familiar with?
2. In what ways has professional learning about SEL been useful/or not in infusing SEL into your classroom?
3. How are you explicitly teaching SEL competencies in your lessons?
4. What observations have you made noting the students understanding of SEL competencies?
5. What do you feel you need in order to be successful in infusing SEL into your lessons?
6. Is there anything you wish the share regarding your experience with teaching?

Thank you for your time and participation. Your participation will remain confidential. If necessary, I hope you will be willing to participate in a future interview.

APPENDIX I: TOTAL CODE FREQUENCY

*= codes that have been collapsed into other similar codes.

Code	Cycle 1	Cycle 2	Cycle 3	Total
Identify emotions= IE	9	0	8	17
Accurate self-perceptions =ASP	2	3	9	14
Recognizing strengths = RS			21	21
Self-confidence = SC		8	3	11
Self-efficacy = SEF	3	3	3	9
Impulse control = IC	5	7	2	14
Stress management = SM	6	10	6	22
Self-discipline = SD	4	3	1	8
Self-motivation = SMOV	11	5	2	18
Goal setting = GS	5	6		11
Organizational skills = OS	10	10	5	25
Perspective-taking = PT	3	6	6	15
Empathy = EMP	10	5	14	29
Appreciating diversity = AD	4		4	8
Respect for others = RFO	23	25	14	62
Communication = COMM	14	14	6	34
Social engagement = SE	10	21	2	33

Relationship building = RB	5	23	13	41
Teamwork = TW	13	28	5	46
Identify problems = IP	15	12	3	30
Analyzing solutions = ASOL	2	2	3	7
Solving problems = SPRB	7	4	1	12
Evaluating = EVAL	14	14	3	31
Reflecting = RFT	6	5	2	13
Ethical considerations = ECON		2		2
Teacher expectations = TX	16	13	2	31
Teacher support for SEL=TS	2	16		18
Self-Expectations = SX		2	3	5
Class activity = CA	5	3		8
Explicit teaching SEL = ETSEL	29	26	15	70
None explicit SEL Instruction = NESEL	16	25	2	43
Class discussion = CD		4	2	6
Student choice = STCH	1	3		4
Assessment w/SEL= ASSEL	5	12		17
Meeting students SEL needs=MSN	6	10	6	22
Student modeling SEL = SMS	7	5		12
Teacher modeling SEL = TMS	19	32	22	73

#Demonstrating SEL=DSEL		10		10	
cultural perspective= CP	11	17	13	41	
Cultural values= CV	9	18	10	37	
Awareness of culture = CAW	16	25	11	52	
#Cultural expectations=CUE		9		9	
Racial awareness =RA	6	19		25	
Religious awareness = REL		2		2	
Social Acceptance = SOA	4	9	16	29	
Environmental awareness = ENVI	13	11	3	27	
Teachers need for SEL PD = PDN	8	3	23	24	
Use of an SEL common language = UCL		9	10	19	
The feeling of SEL importance = FI	34	26	44	104	
Building SEL awareness = SA	60	10	36	106	
Addressing the stigma of SEL= AST	8	22	20	50	
SEL reluctance = SER	14	7	14	35	
Community need for SEL=CNSE	12	7	34	53	
	Total	483	573	425	1465

Leadership Codes:

Code	Cycle One	Cycle Two	Cycle Three	Total
Working with staff=WWS	2	7	8	17

Working with faculty leadership=WWFL	3	12	5	20
Building professional learning communities=BPLC	4	5	4	13
Staff appreciation=SAPP	1	5	5	11
*Community outreach=COR		7	4	11
*Calming community fears=CCF		2	6	8
*Building school culture = BSC		2	8	10
Transparency and communication=TAC	3	2	9	14
*Forward-thinking leadership=FTL		6	10	16
Recognizing leadership mistakes=RLM	1	1	3	5
*Pressing for my idea=PMI		2	7	9
*Equity focus = EF		5	3	8
Leadership lessons=LL	2	2	12	16
*Teacher guidance = TEAG	0	3	8	11
Student guidance = STUG	2		5	7
Listening to the student's voice = LSV	3	4	3	10
Professional obligations -PFO	1	2	9	12
Doctorate Stuff=ECU	3	3	7	14
*COIVD19 = CV19	0	-	11	11
	25	70	127	223

APPENDIX J: MASTER CODE BOOK

Master code book with category codes from CASEL and open coding from observations and existing research

<u>Category Code (CASEL)</u>		
Code	Meaning	Category
Identify emotions= IE	When emotional identification strategies are used or needed either in lessons or social situations.	Self-awareness
Accurate self-perceptions =ASP	Teachers, students, or parents' express thoughts of self-perceptions.	
Recognizing strengths = RS	Teachers, students, or parents consciously recognize strengths in themselves or in others.	
Self-confidence = SC	Teachers, students, or parents' express confidence with themselves or others.	
Self-efficacy = SEF	Teachers, students, or parents verbalize or demonstrate the will or ability to produce intended desires or intended results.	
Impulse control = IC	Teachers, students, or parents discuss impulse control either positively or negatively.	Self-management
Stress management = SM	Teachers, students, or parents discuss stress.	
Self-discipline = SD	Teachers, students, or parents' express issues of self-discipline	
Self-motivation = SMOV	Teachers, students, or parents' express issues of self-motivation	
Goal setting = GS	Teachers, students, or parents express goal setting	
Organizational skills = OS	Teachers, students, or parents' express topics of organizational skills	
Perspective-taking = PT	Teachers, students, or parents' express topics perspective-taking	Social Awareness

Empathy = EMP	Teachers, students, or parents' express times of empathy.	
Appreciating diversity = AD	Teachers, students, or parents' express topics of appreciating diversity.	
Respect for others = RFO	Teachers, students, or parents' express topics of respecting other including teacher, parents and siblings.	
Communication = COMM	Teachers, students, or parents' express topics of communication.	
Social engagement = SE	Teachers, students, or parents' express topics of engaging socially.	
Relationship building = RB	Teachers, students, or parents' express topics of building relationships with peers, teachers, or others.	
Teamwork = TW	Teachers, students, or parents' express topics of teamwork and working together.	
Identify problems = IP	Teachers, students, or parents' express topics of identifying problems.	Responsible Decision Making
Analyzing solutions = ASOL	Teachers, students, or parents' express topics of analyzing solutions to a problem or problems.	
Solving problems = SPRB	Teachers, students, or parents' express topics of solving a problem or problems.	
Evaluating = EVAL	Teachers, students, or parents' express topics of evaluating problems, solutions, or events.	
Reflecting = RFT	Teachers, students, or parents' express topics of reflection.	
Ethical considerations = ECON	Teachers, students, or parents' express topics of ethical considerations.	
Code	Open Codes	Meaning
Teacher expectations = TX	The expectations teachers have for their students. This includes behaviors, classroom rules, and assessments.	Classroom Instruction
Self-expectations = SX	These are the expectations students, and teachers have on themselves, these could	

	include the level of work they produce, how they should behave, or what they expect for others.	
Class activity = CA	Students engaged in an activity this may require SEL competencies or not	
Explicit teaching SEL = ETSEL	This code refers to the explicit teaching of SEL competencies. This includes when teachers directly teach SEL skills, or when students talk about SEL skill explicitly with their peers, parents, or teachers.	
None explicit SEL instruction = NESEL	This code refers to assessment or lesson activities that rely on SEL competencies but are not explicitly taught. This includes group work, perspective taking, problem analysis, etc.	
Class discussion = CD	When the class discusses	
Student choice = STCH	Opportunities when students have assessment choices	
Assessment w/SEL= ASSEL	This is for when students have assessments that have SE competencies but no without explicit teaching.	
SEL assessment =SELAS	This is for when there is an explicit SEL assessment	
Meeting students SEL needs=MSN	For when teachers, counselors or parents recognize the SEL needs and either address them or plan to address them.	
Student modeling SEL = SMS	Students modeling CASEL SEL competencies	
Teacher modeling SEL = TMS	Teachers or students modeling CASEL SEL competencies.	
cultural perspective= CP	Expressed understanding of the way their culture perceives something.	Cultural
Cultural values= CV	Expressed belief in their cultural values.	
Awareness of culture = CAW	Demonstration of the awareness of culture in regard to either the different or shared aspects.	

Racial awareness =RA	When feelings about race are discussed or identifying a racial issue.	
Social acceptance = SOA	Helping students feel accepted regardless of race, gender, sexuality or economic status.	
Environmental awareness = ENVI	This code is for environmental factors like classroom noise, location of events, or any environmental factor.	
Teacher need for SEL PD = PDN	Teachers expressed a need for professional development surrounding SEL.	Community Support
Use of an SEL common language = UCL	Teachers and students using the language of CASEL and SEL.	
The feeling of SEL importance = FI	When a teacher, student or parent expresses the feeling that SEL competencies are important.	
Building SEL awareness = SA	Expressed desire to build SEL awareness in the community of culture.	
Addressing the stigma of SEL= AST	Code for when the stigma of SEL is brought up.	
SEL reluctance = SER	A reluctance to teach or learn SEL skills.	
Community need for SEL=CNSE	Demonstration of the awareness of community need for an SEL program at school.	

APPENDIX K: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS CYCLE ONE

Interview Question: Cycle one

1. How comfortable are you with the SEL competencies? Are there any that you are not familiar with?
2. Is there one that you think that you deal with more at your position than others?
3. In what ways has professional learning about S.E.L. useful or not and infusing SEL in your classroom.
4. Is there any specific professional learning that you think we need to do?
5. How are you explicitly teaching SEL competencies to your students?
6. What observations have you made regarding the students' understanding of SEL competencies?
7. What do you feel you need in order to be successful infusing SEL into your lessons or your practice?

APPENDIX L: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS CYCLE TWO

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Semi-structured Interview Protocol (Creswell, 2013): Understanding how the faculty experience is shaped by performance funding initiatives: A comparative case study.

Time of Interview:

Date:

Place:

Interviewer:

Interviewee:

Position of Interviewee:

Description of the Project: This study is designed to work with students, teachers, and counselors to increase adherence to SEL knowledge, skills, and dispositions.

Questions:

1. How has your understanding of SEL changed over the past 6 months?
2. In what ways has professional learning about SEL been useful/or not in infusing SEL in your classroom?
3. How are you explicitly teaching SEL competencies in your lessons?
4. What observations have you made noting the students' understanding of SEL competencies?
5. In what ways does culture change the way we should approach teaching SEL?
6. Is there anything you wish to share regarding your experience with teaching?

Thank you for your time and participation. Your participation will remain confidential. If necessary, I hope you will be willing to participate in a future interview.

APPENDIX M: SAMPLE CPR REFLECTION QUESTIONS

CPR Team Reflection Questions:

Please take a moment to reflect on the CPR meeting and write your thoughts.

- 1. 3 things that have moved the needle towards a more SEL inclusive school?**
- 2. What stands out to you as the greatest benefit for students learning when SEL is taught along with course content?**
- 3. What stands out to you as the greatest problem for students learning when SEL is taught along with course content?**
- 4. What has been the positive impact of covid on your practice? How did it make you rethink how you address learning and SEL?**
- 5. What do you think our next steps should be in building an SEL program that supports students' academic achievement?**
- 6. Anything else I should be thinking of, or questions that need consideration?**
(optional)

APPENDIX N: SAMPLE CLE REFLECTION QUESTIONS

CLE - July 28th, 2020

(Teacher wellbeing and self-assessment)

CLE Reflective memo:

1. Record your thoughts on why this was an important topic to devote the whole school to thinking about personal wellness and how it relates to the SEL instruction to the students.
2. What do you think was the goal or intended outcome and how do you see this presentation impacting student academic achievement or teacher's professional growth?
3. What is something you wish you could have included had you been given more time and why do you feel that was an important topic to share?
4. What was it like to facilitate a PreK-G12 activity, what considerations did have to take into account, and were there any conflicts between the divisions?

