

Implementation Factors of the Social Emotional Learning Language Arts (SELLA) Curriculum: Impact on Teachers'



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Social-Emotional Competence

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ABSTRACT

Evidence supporting a whole-child approach to education is mounting, and recognition of the value of supporting teachers' social-emotional competence (SEC) has surfaced, too. Research indicates many positive classroom implications of high teacher SEC, including more effective classroom management and higher quality implementation of evidence-based practices. Schools can support and promote teachers' SEC directly through professional development, but it is unclear if teachers' delivery of student-centered social-emotional learning (SEL) programming indirectly improves teacher SEC. Results of a survey of K-6 teachers revealed no significant relationship between integrated SEL implementation and self-reported SEC level, and neither perceptions of the curriculum nor implementation quality significantly predicted teacher SEC in the present study.

METHOD & MEASURE

Sample: $n = 64$ (K-6 teachers across two public school districts)
Research design: Program evaluation with comparison group
Methodology: All participants completed an SEC survey by CASEL (2017). Teachers in the program implementer group also responded to novel items about their perceptions and implementation of SELLA. Data were analyzed using SPSS.



Research Question 1:

What is the impact of classroom delivery of SELLA on teachers' self-reported levels of SEC?

Research Question 2:

How do teacher perceptions of SELLA and program implementation quality affect teachers' self-reported levels of SEC?

Supplementary Questions for SELLA Group

Perception Items (Agree/Disagree)

1. Connect notes provide a useful outlet for students to communicate with me as their teacher.
2. The optional picture/literature books help provide meaningful demonstrations of SEL concepts.
3. The mindfulness activity at the start of a lesson benefits me and my students.
4. SELLA easily fits into my classroom schedule/routines.
5. I enjoy implementing SELLA instruction.

Implementation Quality Items*

1. What percentage of the SELLA material would you estimate you are completing overall?
2. When I deliver a SELLA lesson, I always use...
3. During what percentage of lessons do you use the optional reading activities?
4. How often do you refer to classroom SEL posters?
5. What percentage of pages of your teacher journal would you estimate you have added written notes?
6. How often do you and your students use connect notes?

*Question-specific scales available on the back.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Teaching is inherently an emotional profession that requires emotional resilience, which can be supported through social-emotional skill development (Day & Hong, 2016).

Teachers who participated in a well-being promoting intervention aimed at improving their social-emotional capacity were better implementers of evidence-based classroom management practices in the classroom (Larson et al., 2018).

Teachers who implemented PATHS-to-PAX, an integrated SEL-behavior management intervention, reported increased SEC (Domitrovich et al., 2016).

SELLA (Genslinger & Deeter, 2017), an integrated SEL-ELA curriculum, meets several of CASEL's (2018) key integration indicators.

RESULTS

Reliability of SEC Survey Tool

- Chronbach's alpha (α) = 0.88 (satisfactory reliability)
- Social Awareness and Relationship Skills were combined into one construct ("Interpersonal Functioning") to maximize competency area-specific α values

Differences in Self-Reported SEC Levels (RQ #1)

RQ1 Results: SEC Levels across Groups

Group	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Median	Range
SELLA	36	115.58	8.58	116	99-133
Comparison	28	118.17	9.48	118	92-135

Independent samples *t*-test:

$$t(58) = -1.10, p = > .05$$

No significant difference in mean SEC level between SELLA teachers and non-SELLA teachers.

Implementation Quality and Perceptions of SELLA (RQ #2)

Bivariate linear regression analyses:

Implementation quality:

$$(R^2 = .03, F(1, 31) = .95, p > .05)$$

Perceptions:

$$(R^2 = .06, F(1, 30) = 2.03, p > .05)$$

Neither implementation quality nor perceptions of SELLA explained a significant amount of variance in self-reported SEC level.

IMPLICATIONS

Teachers may benefit from more ongoing implementation support and fidelity monitoring for implementation of integrated SEL instruction.

Providing teachers with effective and adequate opportunities to develop knowledge and skills related to SEL prior to implementing integrated SEL curricula may help increase not only their implementation quality but also the indirect benefits they gain related to their own SEC by creating a more applicable context for teaching and learning its content.

Additional research is needed before administrators may rely on integrated student SEL programming to also support teachers' social-emotional needs.

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References available on the back.