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ENHANCING SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL SKILLS OF TEACHERS IN SUPPORTING CHILDREN WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES

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ABSTRACT

This study examines how teachers in normal schools who work with students who have learning difficulties can improve their social and emotional learning (SEL). The researcher evaluates teachers' social and emotional competences using the Self-Assessing Social and Emotional Instruction and competences (SASEIC) tool as part of a Social Interaction Assessment method. Understanding the effects of age, gender, experience, and work satisfaction on teaching practices and SEL competences was the major goal of the study, which involved 147 instructors from mainstream schools. Age has a substantial impact on teaching methods and SEL competencies, gender, experience, and work satisfaction have varying effects, according to the results of a Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA). These results highlight the necessity of focused professional development initiatives to improve teachers' SEL competences and provide them with greater assistance for students with learning difficulties.

Keywords: Teachers' Social and Emotional Competencies, Children with Learning Disabilities, Social and Emotional Learning (SEL), Social Interaction Assessment

INTRODUCTION:

Social and emotional competence of teachers is essential to fostering an inclusive learning environment, especially in classrooms with students who have learning disabilities (LD), as it greatly affects how teachers interact with students with LD [8]. Emotionally supportive and socially engaged teaching methods are beneficial for children with learning disabilities (LD), who frequently need more than simply academic training [1] & [10]. However, the social and emotional demands of assisting students with LD can be overwhelming without the right training or self-awareness, thus instructors may find it difficult to cultivate these components of their professional competence [6].

REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

Improving Teachers' Social and Emotional Skills to Support Children with Learning Disabilities is motivated by the increasing awareness of how important teachers' social and emotional competencies are to creating a welcoming and encouraging learning environment for students with learning disabilities (LD) [2] & [9]. Teachers who possess strong emotional intelligence (EI) and social-emotional skills are better able to manage diverse classrooms, according to recent research [11] & [16]. This is especially true when it comes to helping students with LD, who frequently struggle with emotional regulation and social

interactions. In addition to improving their capacity to build strong relationships with students, studies show that teachers who possess emotional intelligence are better able to adapt their teaching methods to the special needs of students with learning disabilities [4] & [8]. Additionally, it has been demonstrated that teachers' emotional reactions and ability to control classroom dynamics can be greatly impacted by their level of job satisfaction and experience [7]. Targeted interventions that are intended to systematically evaluate and improve these competences are lacking, nevertheless, especially when it comes to LD.

The Social Interaction Assessment (SIA) approach provides a structured framework for assessing and enhancing teachers' social-emotional skills, which are essential for fostering an emotionally supportive environment that supports the learning and development of children with LD [14]. By emphasizing these crucial qualities, this study will help create professional development programs that are more effective and guarantee that teachers are better equipped to address the social and emotional needs of their pupils [13].

In order to assess and enhance teachers' social and emotional competencies, this study intends to investigate the efficacy of a structured Social Interaction Assessment.

This study examines how important criteria including age, gender, experience, and work satisfaction affect teachers' capacity to use effective teaching strategies and respond in ways that are emotionally and socially supportive. For educators who work with students who have learning disabilities, the results have significant ramifications for the creation of professional development and curriculum improvements [5] & [12].

NEED FOR THE STUDY

The importance of teachers' social and emotional competences (SECs) in creating an inclusive learning environment, especially for students with learning disabilities (LD), makes this research indispensable. Due to a lack of formal training in social-emotional learning (SEL), many teachers find it difficult to adequately satisfy the emotional and social needs of students with learning disabilities (LD), who also require academic instruction. Strong SECs enable teachers to better manage diverse classes, cultivate positive relationships with students, and modify their teaching methods to fit the special needs of kids with learning disabilities, according to existing research. Targeted interventions to evaluate and improve teachers' SECs are lacking, nevertheless, especially when it comes to variables like age, experience, and job happiness. This study attempts to mitigate this gap by methodically assessing how these

characteristics affect instructors' emotional intelligence and instructional strategies using the Social Interaction Assessment (SIA) methodology. The results of this study will help create training programs that improve instructors' capacity to serve children with learning disabilities, which will eventually improve educational outcomes and create a more inclusive learning environment by highlighting important areas for professional growth.

METHODOLOGY:

A total of 147 teachers from regular schools participated in the research. Teachers with children with different levels of learning difficulties were included in the sample. Teachers took part in a self-assessment using the Self-Assessing Social and Emotional Instruction and Competencies (SASEIC) instrument, which was created to examine their social interaction teaching practices and teachers' own social and emotional competencies. There are two divisions in the tool's first section:

- **Section 1 – Social Interaction Assessment - Part A:** Self-assessment implementation of teaching practices in a classroom setting aiming on student-centered discipline, teacher language, responsibility and choice, warmth and support.

- Section 1 – Social Interaction Assessment - Part B:** Self-assessment teachers’ own SEL competencies, focusing on self-awareness, self-management and Emotion regulation, Social awareness, Relationship/Social Skills and Responsible decision making

Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) was used to analyze the data in order to ascertain how the teachers' social interaction teaching practices and SEL competencies were impacted by age, gender, experience, and work satisfaction.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION:

Table 1: MANOVA among Age, Gender and Dimensions of Social Interaction Teaching Practices and Social Interaction Teacher Social & Emotional Competencies

Source	Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Age	Teaching Practices	183.070	3	61.023	1.992	.118
	Teacher Social and Emotional Competencies	508.127	3	169.376	3.065	.030*
Gender	Teaching Practices	13.322	1	13.322	.435	.511
	Teacher Social and Emotional Competencies	12.182	1	12.182	.220	.639
Age * Gender	Teaching Practices	44.188	3	14.729	.481	.696
	Teacher Social and Emotional Competencies	131.658	3	43.886	.794	.499
Error	Teaching Practices	4259.137	139	30.641		
	Teacher Social and Emotional Competencies	7681.230	139	55.261		
Total	Teaching Practices	322970.000	147			
	Teacher Social and Emotional Competencies	371778.000	147			

The findings of the MANOVA study showed that teachers' social and emotional abilities were significantly impacted by their age, with a statistically significant difference (F = 3.065, p = 0.030) indicating that teachers' capacity to handle the social and emotional components of teaching is influenced by their age. Nevertheless, neither gender nor age had any discernible effects on social and emotional competences (F = 0.220, p = 0.639) or teaching methods (F = 1.992, p =

0.118 (F = 0.435, p = 0.511). Furthermore, neither dependent variable showed any significant interactions between gender and age. According to these results, gender and the relationship between age and gender do not significantly affect teaching strategies or emotional competences linked to helping children with learning difficulties, even though age may have an impact on social and emotional competencies.

Table 2: MANOVA among Age, Experience and Dimensions of Social Interaction Teaching Practices and Social Interaction Teacher Social & Emotional Competencies

Source	Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
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Age	Teaching Practices	506.217	3	168.739	5.926	.001*
	Teacher Social and Emotional Competencies	559.129	3	186.376	3.629	.015*
Experience	Teaching Practices	244.722	4	61.181	2.149	.079
	Teacher Social and Emotional Competencies	429.180	4	107.295	2.089	.086
Age * Experience	Teaching Practices	473.614	11	43.056	1.512	.135
	Teacher Social and Emotional Competencies	639.773	11	58.161	1.133	.341
Error	Teaching Practices	3644.799	128	28.475		
	Teacher Social and Emotional Competencies	6572.998	128	51.352		
Total	Teaching Practices	322970.000	147			
	Teacher Social and Emotional Competencies	371778.000	147			

The results of the MANOVA showed that age had a significant impact on teaching practices ($F = 5.926, p = 0.001$) as well as teacher social and emotional competencies ($F = 3.629, p = 0.015$). This suggests that teachers' age has a significant impact on how they support children with learning disabilities in terms of their practices and emotional competencies. On the other hand, experience did not significantly affect social and emotional competences ($F = 2.089, p = 0.086$) or teaching methods ($F = 2.149, p =$

0.079), although the p -values indicate a marginal tendency. Additionally, for both dependent variables, there was no significant interaction between age and experience, suggesting that the combined effects of age and experience do not statistically significantly affect teaching practices or emotional abilities. Certain findings show that while experience may not be as important in certain areas, age is crucial for improving teachers' skills.

Table 3: MANOVA among Age, Job Satisfaction and Dimensions of Social Interaction Teaching Practices and Social Interaction Teacher Social & Emotional Competencies

Source	Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Age	Teaching Practices	143.280	3	47.760	1.634	.185
	Teacher Social and Emotional Competencies	607.535	3	202.512	4.198	.007*
Job Satisfaction	Teaching Practices	65.540	2	32.770	1.121	.329
	Teacher Social and Emotional Competencies	62.043	2	31.022	.643	.527
Age * Job Satisfaction	Teaching Practices	345.764	6	57.627	1.971	.074
	Teacher Social and Emotional Competencies	982.576	6	163.763	3.395	.004*
Error	Teaching Practices	3946.971	135	29.237		
	Teacher Social and Emotional Competencies	6512.097	135	48.238		
Total	Teaching Practices	322970.000	147			
	Teacher Social and Emotional Competencies	371778.000	147			

According to the MANOVA results, age has a significant impact on teachers' social and emotional abilities ($F = 4.198, p = 0.007$), suggesting that teachers' capacity to handle the social and emotional components of teaching is influenced by their age. Age, however, had no discernible impact on instructional strategies ($F = 1.634, p = 0.185$). Neither social and emotional competences ($F = 0.643, p = 0.527$) nor teaching methods ($F = 1.121, p = 0.329$) were significantly impacted by job satisfaction. Age and job satisfaction were found to significantly interact with teacher social and emotional competencies ($F = 3.395, p = 0.004$), indicating that teachers'

emotional abilities are influenced by both factors. Recent studies on social and emotional learning (SEL) programs reveal that schools that report higher academic success, better teacher-student relationships, and a decrease in problem behavior share a systematic process for fostering students' social and emotional development [3]. No significant interaction was observed for teaching practices ($F = 1.971, p = 0.074$). While job happiness by itself does not seem to have a substantial impact on either element of teaching, these findings clearly highlight the significance of age and how it interacts with job satisfaction in shaping emotional abilities.

Table 4: MANOVA between Experience, Job Satisfaction and Dimensions of Social Interaction Teaching Practices and Social Interaction Teacher Social & Emotional Competencies

Source	Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Experience	Teaching Practices	185.118	4	46.280	1.554	.190
	Teacher Social and Emotional Competencies	703.103	4	175.776	3.346	.012*
Job Satisfaction	Teaching Practices	35.776	2	17.888	.601	.550
	Teacher Social and Emotional Competencies	71.030	2	35.515	.676	.510
Experience * Job Satisfaction	Teaching Practices	442.745	8	55.343	1.859	.072
	Teacher Social and Emotional Competencies	745.543	8	93.193	1.774	.088
Error	Teaching Practices	3929.955	132	29.772		
	Teacher Social and Emotional Competencies	6934.827	132	52.537		
Total	Teaching Practices	322970.000	147			
	Teacher Social and Emotional Competencies	371778.000	147			

The results of the MANOVA showed that experience had a significant impact on teachers' social and emotional abilities ($F = 3.346, p = 0.012$), indicating that teachers'

experience affects how well they handle the social and emotional components of teaching. The finding highlights how crucial it is to provide teachers with strong soft

skills, irrespective of their workplace and professional background, in order to effectively help children with learning difficulties [15]. Experience, however, had no discernible impact on instructional strategies ($F = 1.554$, $p = 0.190$). Neither teaching techniques ($F = 0.601$, $p = 0.550$) nor teachers' social and emotional competences ($F = 0.676$, $p = 0.510$) were significantly impacted by job satisfaction. Additionally, although both approaches neared statistical significance, the interaction between experience and job satisfaction had no significant impact on teaching practices ($F = 1.859$, $p = 0.072$) or teacher social and emotional competences ($F = 1.774$, $p = 0.088$). These findings imply that although emotional abilities are influenced by experience, the dimensions of social interaction evaluated are not significantly impacted by either work satisfaction or the relationship between experience and job satisfaction.

CONCLUSION:

This study emphasizes how teachers' social and emotional competences (SECs), which are essential for helping kids with learning difficulties, are shaped by their age and experience. The results highlight the need for focused interventions to support educators across age groups by showing that age has a substantial impact on instructors' capacity to manage the social and emotional aspects of

teaching. Experience affects SECs as well, but it seems to have less of an impact on instructional strategies. It's interesting to note that while the interaction between age and job satisfaction was identified as a significant factor, gender and job satisfaction were not found to have significant independent effects on teaching practices or SECs. This suggests that these variables may collectively influence teachers' emotional competencies.

The need of creating professional development programs specifically aimed at improving SECs is underscored by these findings, especially for educators who interact with students who have learning difficulties. While taking into account the various demands of instructors according to their age, experience, and degree of personal fulfilment, such programs ought to concentrate on developing emotional intelligence, self-awareness, and relationship management. Schools can improve educational achievements and teacher well-being by incorporating these insights into training frameworks and establishing more inclusive and supportive environments that cater to the special needs of students with learning difficulties.

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