What Do I Know About Social-Emotional Learning: A Comparative Analysis Between Public and Private Preschool Teachers in Punjab

Jasleen Kaur1 and Anupam Sharma1

Abstract
The primary objective is to compare the difference in preschool teachers’ understanding of the five competencies of social-emotional learning (SEL) in India. The purpose is to assist teachers in reflecting on their emotions and knowledge about SEL, which is important for their personal and professional development. However, the research on preschool teachers’ own SEL is very limited in the state of Punjab in India. Therefore, this study examined 90 teachers’ understanding of SEL via a survey and a self-reported questionnaire. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation) and parametric t-test in SPSS. The results revealed that private preschool teachers of the Ludhiana and Patiala districts of Punjab have better knowledge about the competencies of SEL than public preschool teachers. The findings highlight the need to improve the SEL of both public and private preschool teachers, focusing on public preschool teachers through continuous and effective training interventions.

Keywords
preschools, preschool teachers, self-reported questionnaire, social-emotional learning, SPSS, teachers’ understanding

Introduction
Childhood is a crucial stage of development that forms the foundation of holistic development and psychological well-being (UNICEF, 2018). A growing body of research has shown that it is essential to develop students’ social-emotional learning (SEL) competencies (Oberle et al., 2016). The studies have concluded that preschool years are the crucial developmental period wherein the development of social-emotional learning is a crucial milestone in the lives of preschool children (Denham et al., 2014; Odom et al., 2008). Social-emotional learning is associated with a child’s academic-social-emotional-motor skills development and school readiness (Bierman et al., 2008; Oberle et al., 2014; Trentacosta & Izard, 2007). Social-emotional Learning (SEL) is defined as “the process through which children and adults learn and apply a set of social, emotional, behavioral, and character skills required to succeed in schooling, workplace, relationships, and citizenship” (Jones et al., 2017). Schools are the platforms that support children in developing eloquent social connections, cultivating self-potential, and enhancing their social and emotional learning competencies under the supervision of teachers (Galindo & Sheldon, 2012; Jones & Bouffard, 2012; López-Pérez & Fernández-Castilla, 2018). Thus, teachers play a requisite role in a child’s social-emotional learning and development (Taylor et al., 2017).

Preschool teachers are the engine that powers SEL interventions and practices in preschools and classrooms (Schonert-Reichl, 2017). Since early childhood teachers play an essential role in developing students’ social-emotional learning competencies, it is necessary to explore their understanding of social-emotional learning competencies to teach more effectively (Jones & Bouffard, 2012; Lópe-Pérez & Fernández-Castilla, 2018). Teachers’ social-emotional learning and knowledge about SEL competencies are essential, especially in the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) profession. This knowledge is essential in order to master the social and emotional obstacles inherent in their profession (including online teaching, low salaries, and limited opportunities for self and professional development) that

1Thapar Institute of Engineering & Technology, Patiala, India

Corresponding Author:
Jasleen Kaur, School of Humanities & Social Sciences, Thapar Institute of Engineering & Technology, Patiala, Punjab 147004, India.
Email: jaasleen@yahoo.com

Creative Commons CC BY: This article is distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 License (https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/) which permits any use, reproduction and distribution of the work without further permission provided the original work is attributed as specified on the SAGE and Open Access pages (https://us.sagepub.com/en-us/nam/open-access-at-sage).
result in high work-related pressures, poor mental health, and emotional enervation among them (Jones et al., 2017; McMullen et al., 2020; Thorpe et al., 2020). The role of preschool teachers is intricate and multifaceted, demanding an obligation to continuous development, resilience, and emotional competence to take on numerous challenges (Beltman et al., 2020; Irvine et al., 2016; Liu et al., 2018).

Recent advances in research have suggested that socially and emotionally competent teachers play a fundamental role in building solid and positive teacher-student relationships in preschools (Jennings et al., 2017; Zinsser & Curby, 2014). Moreover, teachers who can recognize their social-emotional wellbeing can successfully implement SEL interventions in their classrooms (Hen & Goroshit, 2016). To develop and to promote students’ social and emotional learning, which is the fulcrum of their holistic development, “teachers themselves need the social and emotional skills required to communicate with students and to handle stressful situations that can occur in the classroom” (Brackett et al., 2012). Thus, SEL is key to teachers’ occupational well-being and positive student development (Aldrup et al., 2020; Cumming, 2017). Ample research has been done on promoting the understanding and knowledge of SEL among teachers in developed nations, including the United States, Australia, the United Kingdom, and Hong Kong (Yoder, 2014). Until recently, however, in India’s context, limited studies have been conducted on preschool teachers to gauge their understanding and knowledge about SEL and its competencies.

The present study is about preschool teachers’ current knowledge of SEL and its five competencies in the state of Punjab in India. The study is critical because of two significant reasons. Firstly, the SEL understanding in teachers will help them recognize and manage emotions impacting their personal growth. Secondly, the understanding of SEL in preschool teachers will motivate them to improve their teaching to face the social and emotional challenges inherent in their teaching profession and build positive teacher-student relationships (Aldrup et al., 2020; Jennings & Greenberg, 2009). Furthermore, it is necessary to compare teachers’ understanding in different settings. For this reason, the purpose of this study is to compare the difference in preschool teachers’ understanding of the competencies of SEL in regards to the private and public preschools in India. Comparing the two different school types is important because it aims to provide the public and private preschool teachers with an opportunity to reflect on their SEL and teaching philosophy. The comparison will help to know whether or not there is any basic understanding of SEL among preschool teachers. Also, the findings will allow the educationalists, school administrations, and policy-makers to know which school type has more socially and emotionally knowledgeable teachers and which school type requires immediate attention through training interventions.

Moreover, the motive behind this study is to know where the education and training system is lacking in the personal and professional development of preschool teachers in India. The present study aims to address the areas that require immediate improvements in areas of SEL development. Further, the purpose of the current study is to assist preschool teachers in explicitly monitoring themselves and their knowledge about SEL competencies so that they can manifest SEL into themselves and teach these skills to students. The teachers’ understanding of SEL competencies will reflect on their emotions, feelings, thoughts, and social skills. The results will direct preschool teachers’ attention to the importance of SEL and work on SEL areas and competencies that require improvement and professional development. Therefore, this study aims to conceptualize social-emotional learning and its competencies in the literature review. Additionally, the study discusses the relevance of basic understanding of social-emotional learning and its competencies among preschool teachers.

Therefore, this study focused on the following objectives:

1. To measure preschool teachers’ basic understanding of social-emotional learning and its competencies.
2. To compare teachers’ understanding of social-emotional learning between the private and public preschools located in two districts, namely Ludhiana and Patiala of the state of Punjab in India.

The present study attempts to answer the following two questions:

(1) Is there any basic understanding about social-emotional learning and its five competencies among preschool teachers?

(2) Is there any difference between public and private preschool teachers’ understanding of social-emotional learning and its five competencies?

Literature Review

Conceptualizing Social-Emotional Learning and Its Competencies

Early childhood teaching is customarily indicated to require a high degree of emotional work and social interaction (Jeon et al., 2016). Nevertheless, limited studies explore the teachers’ understanding and knowledge of their own social and emotional wellbeing. The consideration of teachers’ SEL is an essential domain for teachers’ personal social-emotional growth, professional development, and for promoting a safe and supportive classroom environment, positive social involvements, and their social-emotional wellbeing (Collie et al., 2012; Jennings & Frank, 2015; Jennings & Greenberg, 2009; Klusmann et al., 2008). The field of SEL developed some 25 years ago with the publication of Goleman’s Emotional Intelligence (1995) and Gardner’s Multiple Intelligences (1993), creating an extensive body of philosophy, research, and
practice that encouraged practitioners to implement SEL curriculums for pre-K-12 students in and out of schools. In 1994, Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) was established as an international non-profit society to form evidence-based SEL as an indispensable part of school education. CASEL (2018) described SEL as “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.” Social-emotional learning (SEL) and Social-emotional competence (SEC) are interrelated and multivariate construct which includes one’s ability to identify emotions in themselves and others, being able to manage their emotions appropriately, having positive interactions with teachers and students, and solving problems effectively (Zins & Elias, 2007). Five core teachable social and emotional competencies essential to SEL are self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision making (CASEL, 2003). Together, this suite of competencies forms the personal skills necessary for individuals to connect with others and meet the challenges of life, as explained in Table 1 below.

Even the previous research on SEL has shown that among preschool teachers, self-awareness may be evident from their understanding of the knowledge, abilities, and capabilities they have or need to cultivate, their sagacity of self-efficacy in their teaching, and their optimistic mindset about their students and their existing skills and future progress. Beyond the classroom, this can be seen in teachers’ buoyancy and affirmative state of mind while interacting with colleagues and parents of students (Ryan et al., 2015; Wang et al., 2015). Similarly, the competency of self-management can be apparent from the teachers’ ability to regulate their emotions while engaging with students and colleagues in preschool, their coping skills, motivation, and engagement in the classroom, and their capability to set clear and compelling goals (Collie & Martin, 2016; Martin et al., 2012; Mattern & Bauer, 2014). Social awareness in the preschool teachers’ can be visible from their efforts exerted while recognizing and empathizing with the perceptions of students, student’s families, and colleagues; from their sense of care toward them; and from their awareness of social norms of proper conduct in their dealings with the school community (Domitrovich et al., 2016; Perry et al., 2015; Weissberg et al., 2015). In the preschool, relationship management may manifest as the teachers’ skills to interact with students and colleagues in compassionate ways, develop and model suitable conflict-solving ways, and seek or offer assistance to students and colleagues as needed (Collie et al., 2016; Zinsser et al., 2014). Finally, the last competency of SEL, that is, responsible decision making, can be seen through teachers’ actions while making decisions in the classroom, making judgments about students’ behavior and from their problem-solving skills (CASEL, 2018; Weissberg et al., 2015). The evidence in literature is mounting on the need and importance of Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) for teachers’ well-being and students’ positive academic-social-emotional-mental outcomes in preschool (Banerjee et al., 2014; Humphrey et al., 2020). Therefore, the policymakers are beginning to realize the prominence of SEL for early educators as they are the engines for driving successful SEL interventions in preschools and classrooms.

Relevance of Basic Understanding About Social-Emotional Learning and Its Five Competencies Among Teachers

It is deep-rooted that teachers’ social-emotional learning is crucial to their effective working in the school—including their use of effective classroom management techniques, provision of student learning support, and creation of supportive learning settings for students (Kunter et al., 2013; McLean & Connor, 2015; Shen et al., 2015). More recently, educationists have begun to acknowledge the importance of teachers’ social-emotional wellbeing (Jennings & Frank, 2015). Studies have reported the importance of developing teachers’ understanding of SEL. Understanding SEL can help preschool teachers recognize and manage their emotions and create and practice positive emotions (such as joy and enthusiasm) to stimulate SEL in themselves and their students (Jennings, 2011). It can enhance their self-awareness by developing a realistic understanding of their proficiencies and identifying their emotional strengths and weaknesses (Elias, 2009). Furthermore, social-emotional understanding can impact teachers’ social awareness and relationship management. SEL knowledge can help teachers, both in their personal and professional development.

Even previous research has concluded that teachers with strong understanding of SEL can develop healthy relations with students, which positively impacts students’ academic performance, achievements, social functioning, emotional competence, and school engagement (Murray & Zvoch, 2011; Spilt et al., 2011). Socially and emotionally competent preschool teachers can help students build positive interactions with their peers, display positive behaviors, learn with happiness, and manage conflicting behaviors starting from the early years (Gest & Rodkin, 2011; Kaur & Sharma, 2021b). This strong teacher-student relationship can result in the child’s successful school adjustment and positive school outcomes (Baker et al., 2008).

Therefore, to develop students’ social-emotional competence, it is essential to develop an understanding of SEL amongst teachers first to teach more effectively. This understanding is needed because SEL can improve teachers’ emotional expressiveness while interacting with preschool children and colleagues, and build supportive relationships through mutual understanding and cooperation (Jennings & Greenberg, 2009). SEL in teachers can support them in making responsible decisions, exhibit
prosocial behavior, and manage their responses even when emotionally provoked by challenging circumstances (Goddard et al., 2004). Thus, SEL in preschool teachers is essential for promoting self-development, portraying positive attitudes toward teaching, improving relationships within and outside preschool, and promoting a supportive and caring classroom environment for preschool students (Domitrovich et al., 2016; Weissberg et al., 2015). However, limited studies have been conducted on preschool teachers and their understanding of SEL in India. Also, it is necessary to compare teachers’ understanding in different settings and demographic variables. For this reason, this study has specifically tried to compare the current understanding of SEL based on public and private preschools. A study done in the Faridabad district of Haryana in India found a significant difference in emotional competence between private and public school teachers. The results showed that teachers in private schools were more emotionally intelligent than their public school counterparts (Garg & Kapri, 2016). Further, studies have concluded that the quality of “teaching and learning” was the main reason for choosing private schools over public schools in India (Von Stumm & Plomin, 2021; Young Lives, 2017).

Therefore, the present study attempts to study the level of preschool teachers’ understanding of SEL in the Punjab state of India. Though India is considered the hub of the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) services, the current picture of the early education system in the state of Punjab in India, specifically in the rural and economically disadvantaged areas, seems to be nerve-wracking (Kaur & Sharma, 2021a). The concerns in the school system in Punjab (India) have reached beyond poor quality of ECCE frameworks, social-emotional complications, and poor academic grades (State Council of Educational Research and Training [SCERT] Report by Sisodia et al., 2019). The efforts to improve the quality of teaching has increased pressure on teachers, including demands for higher qualifications (Cumming et al., 2015), long working hours and low pay-scale (Thorpe et al., 2020), increased teachers’ feelings of anger, insensitivity, frustration, and anxiety (Aldrup et al., 2020; Dicke et al., 2015), and depleted emotional and mental health (Eadie et al., 2021; Irvine et al., 2016; Jones et al., 2017). Therefore, understanding social and emotional learning in preschool teachers is inextricably linked to their social-emotional wellbeing, mental health, student learning, and developmental outcomes (King et al., 2016; Smith &

### Table 1. Teacher Social-emotional Learning (SEL) Competencies.

| S. No. | Competency               | Meaning                                                                 | SEL skills related to each competency                                      |
|--------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1.     | Self-awareness           | The ability to recognize and understand one’s own emotions, feelings, interests, thoughts, and values and how they influence behavior. | Identifying emotions, Accurate self-perception, Recognizing strengths, Self-confidence, Self-efficacy, Impulse Control, Stress management, Self-discipline, Self-motivation, Goal-setting, Organizational skills, Perspective-taking, Empathy, Appreciating diversity, Respect for others. |
| 2.     | Self-management          | The ability to regulate one’s emotions, thoughts, and behavior and to handle stress, control impulses, and motivate oneself in overcoming obstacles by setting and achieving goals. |                                                                 |
| 3.     | Social-awareness         | The ability to identify and understand the perspective of others and empathize with them; recognize and appreciate individual and group similarities and differences; identify and use family, school, and community resources. | Perspective-taking, Empathy, Appreciating diversity, Respect for others. |
| 4.     | Relationship management  | The ability to establish and maintain healthy and rewarding cooperative relationships; resist unsuitable social pressure; check, manage, and resolve interpersonal engagement; seek assistance when needed. | Communication, Social engagement, Leadership, Relationship-building, Teamwork, Identifying problems, Analyzing situations, Solving problems, Evaluating, Reflecting, Ethical responsibility. |
| 5.     | Responsible decision making | The ability to make decisions based on consideration of ethical standards, safety concerns, appropriate social norms, respect for others, and probable consequences of various actions; apply decision-making skills to the wellbeing of oneself and others | Identifying problems, Analyzing situations, Solving problems, Evaluating, Reflecting, Ethical responsibility. |

Source: [https://casel.org/core-competencies/](https://casel.org/core-competencies/) and Brackett & Rivers, 2014.
Lawrence, 2019). In the current study, the authors have conveniently opted to survey the teachers in the two districts, Patiala and Ludhiana, in Punjab. Though Punjab has both public and private preschools with modern teaching equipment (Singh, 2015; Singh & Mukherjee, 2017), the study’s primary aim was to check if there exists any difference in the SEL understanding among preschool teachers.

**Methodology**

**Study Context**

The study aims to reflect on the preschool teachers’ current understanding of their SEL and its five competencies. Secondly, this study aims to assess whether or not there is any significant difference in the understanding level about SEL between private and public preschool teachers teaching in Punjab state of India. The comparison is to access the gap in social-emotional learning competencies between private and public preschool teachers in Punjab (India). The analyses will allow preschool teachers to reflect on their social-emotional learning competencies. Furthermore, the findings will direct policymakers and educationalists to rethink teachers’ professional and personal development in our current education system (UNESCO, 2016).

**Design of the Study**

The current study utilized a descriptive survey method to study the level of understanding of five competencies of SEL among preschool teachers in Punjab (India). To solve the need, a self-reported survey instrument was designed, and the responses of preschool teachers were analyzed using SPSS.

**Tools**

Several self-report questionnaires are available to gauge emotion regulation, social awareness, and relationship management skills in teachers and adults. The below-given survey instruments were adapted, and a questionnaire for examining teachers’ understanding of SEL via its five competencies was prepared.

1. **Self-Awareness Outcome Questionnaire (SAOQ)** by Sutton (2016).
2. **Measurement of Teachers’ Social-Emotional Competence-Development of the Social-Emotional Competence Teacher Rating Scale** by Tom (2012).
3. **Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) Knowledge Scale for Preservice Teachers** by Buchanan et al. (2009).
4. **Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) Beliefs Scale for Preservice Teachers** by Brackett et al. (2012).
5. **The CASEL Guide to Schoolwide SEL** (2019) by CASEL (2018).

The researcher constructed Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) Scale for teachers (refer to Appendix) to examine their understanding of SEL based on their prior and current knowledge. This scale consisted of 113 items with 5-point Likert scale covering five subscales: (a) self-awareness with the reliability of .816, (b) self-management with the reliability of .767, (c) social awareness with the reliability of .741, (d) relationship management with the reliability of .805, and (e) responsible decision making with the reliability of .846. The total reliability of the test is .991, which indicated greater internal consistency of the items in the SEL scale.

**Participants and Procedures of the Study**

This study is based on a stratified random sampling of 90 preschool teachers selected from two districts, namely, Patiala and Ludhiana of Punjab in India. This sampling method was chosen because of its intention to focus on the defined strata of preschool teachers from two specific districts of Punjab in India. The sample was free from the researcher’s bias but may have missed the complete representation of the sample. The permission of the District Education Officer (DEO) was taken to select the schools for conducting the survey. Ninety preschool teachers teaching the age-group 3 to 6 years were recruited for the study. The preschools selected belonged to both rural and urban areas of Punjab. Out of 90 teachers selected for this study, 45 teachers belonged to two private preschools (one from Ludhiana and one from Patiala) and 45 belonged to three public preschools (one from Ludhiana and two from Patiala) located in Punjab (India). A cross-sectional survey design was employed to investigate the research questions. Before conducting the survey, an awareness session was conducted where participants were provided with information about the study and an online consent form. Participation was voluntary, and participants were informed that their information would be confidential and securely stored. All participants provided informed consent. The survey took teachers approximately 20 minutes to complete the questionnaire for measuring the level of understanding about SEL in them.

**Socio-Demographic Profile of the Respondents**

In the SEL scale for teachers, the first part of the scale included five questions relating to the demographic profile of the respondents as given in Table 2 below. In this section, the frequency and percent of the responses were calculated for each of these sections.

The above Table 2 shows that respondents included 90 preschool teachers from private and public preschool, teaching children within the age group of 3 to 6 years. Out of 90 respondents, 45 teachers belonged to two preschools (one private and one public) located in urban areas of Punjab, and 45 teachers belonged to three preschools (one private and two public) located in rural areas of Punjab. Total respondents were 90, 75 were female, and 15 were males. Talking about the years of...
professional teaching experience, 37 preschool teachers have been teaching for 0 to 10 years, 47 teachers have been teaching for 11 to 20 years, and 6 have been teaching for over 20 years in preschools. In the profile of education qualification, 38 out of 90 preschool teachers have done masters, 43 teachers have done masters with specialization degree, and 6 teachers were doctorates. Teachers reported that the total student population size of the five preschools was approximately 650. This indicates that the number of children per classroom, headed by two teachers, ranged from 10 to 15. All the participants belonged to the districts of Ludhiana and Patiala in the state of Punjab in India.

**Statistical Techniques Used**

Descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation) is used in this study. Furthermore, Cohen’s $D$ is measured to report effect size, representing how large an effect is, and the parametric $t$-test is applied in SPSS to determine whether the difference exists in the level of understanding of five competencies of SEL between private and public preschool teachers, teaching in preschools of Ludhiana and Patiala districts of the Punjab state in India. Then, the results are reported and discussed.

**Results**

**Findings of the Teachers’ Understanding About Social-Emotional Learning and Its Five Competencies**

This section answers the research question on the basic understanding of social-emotional learning and its five competencies among preschool teachers. According to Table 3, the mean results reveal that the value of preschool teachers’ understanding of SEL is $426.60$, and the median is $433.00$. The Skewness is $-0.292$ (within the range of $-1$ and $+1$), and Kurtosis is $-0.352$ (between $-3$ and $+3$). According to the results, it can be concluded that the data is normally distributed, and the positive mean value signifies that most of the preschool teachers in this study have a good understanding of social-emotional learning (Singh, 2015). The findings revealed that yes, the preschool teachers in Ludhiana and Patiala districts of Punjab state in India have good basic understanding about social-emotional learning.

Further, the teachers’ understanding of the five competencies of SEL, namely self-awareness, self-management, social-awareness, relationship management, and responsible decision-making, was examined and reported in Table 4. The mean value of understanding relationship management competency was highest in preschool teachers, followed by social awareness, self-awareness, responsible decision making, and self-management. Also, the Skewness and Kurtosis lie within their acceptable range. The findings signify that most preschool teachers in this study have a good understanding of the five competencies of social-emotional learning. The results show that knowledge of the SEL and its five competencies is essential for preschool teachers, regardless of the difference in the type of schools they are working in (Zinsser et al., 2014).

To answer the second question, if there is any difference in the preschool teachers’ understanding of social-emotional learning and its five competencies between public and private preschool teachers. It is evident from the above Table 5...
that the mean value and standard deviation of teachers in private preschools are higher than the mean value and standard deviation of teachers in public preschools located in the Ludhiana and Patiala districts of Punjab (India). The results reveal that yes, there exists a significant difference between public and private preschool teachers’ understanding about social-emotional learning in Ludhiana and Patiala districts of Punjab state in India. The findings highlight that the preschool teachers’ understanding of SEL in private schools is better than teachers’ understanding in public preschools. Also, to accompany reporting the results, effect sizes are calculated using Cohen’s $D$ to measure how large is the difference in preschool teachers’ understanding of SEL in Punjab (India) in below-given Table 6.

The effect size value of Cohen $D$ is 0.998, which is more than 0.8 (large effect size limit). The result represents a large effect, indicating that the two means are likely different. This concludes that there is a large effect and a major difference in the understanding level of SEL between public and private preschool teachers in Punjab. The teachers in private preschools in Punjab (India) have a better understanding of SEL than teachers in public preschools. The findings highlight the dire need to improve the SEL of teachers teaching in public preschools in Punjab (India). To investigate the details, the mean and standard deviation of all five competencies of SEL was measured separately. The data is in the ordinal scale (Likert scale), normally distributed and within the acceptable ranges of Skewness and Kurtosis. Further, to answer the research question and test the difference in the level of understanding of each competency of social-emotional learning between private and public preschool teachers in-depth, an independent $t$-test was applied in SPSS, as shown in Table 7.

There are five competencies of social-emotional learning. As an answer to the research question, all five competencies of SEL were analyzed separately to compare the difference in private and public preschool teachers’ reflections about SEL. It is clear from Table 7 that for self-awareness competency, the mean score of private preschool teachers (4.06) is higher than public preschool teachers (3.52). The value of “$t$” for the mean scores of the two groups is 4.24, which is more than the table value at 0.05 level (1.98) and 0.01 level (2.63). It indicates that there is a significant difference that exists in the understanding level of self-awareness between the private and public school teachers. The primary skills of this competency are identifying the feelings and thoughts in the form of words in self, seeing one’s strengths and weaknesses, having accurate self-perception, and differentiating between real and unreal emotional expression (CASEL, 2013). The knowledge of self-awareness among private preschool teachers in Punjab is comparatively more than public preschool teachers. The findings indicate a need for public preschool teachers in Punjab in India to recognize and reflect on their own emotions, feelings, thoughts, and behaviors. The second competency of SEL is self-management, which is the ability to regulate one’s emotions, control impulses and stress, and motivate oneself in setting and achieving goals. The results reveal that the mean scores of private preschool teachers (3.91) are higher than public preschool teachers (3.36). The value of “$t$” is 3.94, which is slightly more than the table value at 0.05 level (1.98) and 0.01 level (2.63). It shows that there is little difference between private and public preschool teachers in the level of understanding of self-management competency in the study. The results reflect that both private and public preschool teachers can manage their emotions, thoughts, stress, impulses, and behavior.

The third competency of social awareness refers to the ability to understand the perspective of others and empathize with them. The results highlight that the understanding of

### Table 4. Frequency Distribution of Teachers’ Understanding about Five Competencies of SEL.

| Competencies of SEL                      | N   | M     | Median | SD    | Minimum | Maximum | Skewness | Kurtosis |
|-----------------------------------------|-----|-------|--------|-------|---------|---------|----------|----------|
| Self-awareness                          | 90  | 3.79  | 3.86   | 0.660 | 1       | 5       | -0.725   | 1.330    |
| Self-management                         | 90  | 3.64  | 3.74   | 0.710 | 1       | 5       | -0.494   | 0.695    |
| Social-awareness                        | 90  | 3.82  | 3.88   | 0.600 | 2       | 5       | -0.449   | 0.539    |
| Relationship management                 | 90  | 3.86  | 3.88   | 0.698 | 1       | 5       | -0.760   | 1.975    |
| Responsible decision making             | 90  | 3.76  | 3.83   | 0.681 | 1       | 5       | -0.608   | 1.004    |

### Table 5. Mean Comparison of Teachers’ Understanding About SEL by School Type.

| School type   | N   | M     | Median | SD    |
|---------------|-----|-------|--------|-------|
| Private       | 45  | 457.22| 471.00 | 72.85 |
| Public        | 45  | 395.98| 410.00 | 47.03 |
| Total         | 90  | 426.60| 433.00 | 68.30 |

### Table 6. Calculation of Cohen’s $D$.

Cohen’s $D = \frac{(\text{Mean}_2 - \text{Mean}_1)}{\text{SD}_{\text{pooled}}}$

Where $\text{SD}_{\text{pooled}} = \sqrt{(\text{SD}_1^2 + \text{SD}_2^2)/2}$

Cohen’s $D = 395.98 - 457.22/61.31 = 0.998$

Note. Cohen’s $D$ is one of the most common ways to measure effect size, representing how large an effect is. Cohen’s $D$ is used to indicate the standardized difference between the two means used to compare. This can be used to accompany reporting of $t$-test. The result of Cohen’s $D$ means use the general “rule of thumb” guidelines where: Small effect $= 0.2$; Medium effect $= 0.5$; and Large effect $= 0.8$. 
Sage Open

social awareness among private preschool teachers (mean scores = 4.06) is higher than those in public preschools (mean scores = 3.58). The value of “t” for the mean scores of the two groups is 4.14, which is more than the table value at 0.05 level (1.98) and 0.01 level (2.63). It shows that there is a significant difference that exists between private and public preschool teachers. The findings highlight the need to address perspective-taking skills, appreciating diversity, and empathizing with others among public preschool teachers in Punjab (India). The fourth competency of SEL is relationship management. It refers to creating and sustaining healthy, cooperative, and communicative relationships with people around. The results indicate that the mean score of private preschool teachers (4.17) is much higher than public preschool teachers (3.55). Also, the “t” value is 4.69, which is more than the table value at 0.05 level (1.98) and 0.01 level (2.63). It indicates a significant difference in the understanding level of relationship management between the private and public preschool teachers in the present study. Lastly, it is clear from the table for responsible decision-making competency that the mean score of private school teachers (4.00) is higher than public preschool teachers (3.52). The value of “t” for the mean scores of the two groups is 3.57, which is more than the table value at 0.05 level (1.98) and 0.01 level (2.63). It indicates a significant difference in the knowledge about the responsible decision-making competency between the private and public preschool teachers in the state of Punjab in India.

Furthermore, to accompany reporting of the t-test results, effect sizes of all five competencies are calculated using Cohen D in Table 8.

The results from above Table 8 indicate a large effect, indicating that the two means are likely different in all the five competencies of SEL, calculated separately. This concludes that there is a large effect and a major difference in the understanding level of all five competencies of SEL between public and private preschool teachers. The findings emphasize on the need to improve the SEL of both public and private preschool teachers, focusing on public preschool teachers through continuous and effective training interventions in Punjab (India).

Therefore, based on the results, the study answers the research questions. It can be reported that:

1. Yes, the preschool teachers teaching in the Ludhiana and Patiala districts of Punjab in India have basic knowledge and understanding of social-emotional learning and its five competencies.
2. Yes, there is difference between public and private preschool teachers’ understanding of social-emotional learning and its five competencies. The level of understanding and knowledge of all five social-emotional learning competencies in private preschool teachers is higher than public preschool teachers in the Ludhiana and Patiala districts of Punjab in India. Thus, the findings highlight the need to improve the

Table 7. Independent Sample t-test to Compare Means of Five Competencies of SEL by School Type.

| Competencies of SEL | School type | N  | M    | SD  | t-test | Decision |
|---------------------|-------------|----|------|-----|--------|----------|
| Self-awareness      | Private     | 45 | 4.06 | 0.736 | 4.24** | Supported|
|                     | Public      | 45 | 3.52 | 0.435 |        |          |
| Self-management     | Private     | 45 | 3.91 | 0.766 | 3.94** | Supported|
|                     | Public      | 45 | 3.36 | 0.529 |        |          |
| Social-awareness    | Private     | 45 | 4.06 | 0.682 | 4.14** | Supported|
|                     | Public      | 45 | 3.58 | 0.380 |        |          |
| Relationship management | Private  | 45 | 4.17 | 0.789 | 4.69** | Supported|
|                     | Public      | 45 | 3.55 | 0.406 |        |          |
| Responsible decision making | Private | 45 | 4.00 | 0.789 | 3.57** | Supported|
|                     | Public      | 45 | 3.52 | 0.444 |        |          |

*p < .05. **p < .01. ***p < .001.

Table 8. Calculation of Cohen’s D for Five Competencies of SEL.

| S. No. | Competency of SEL        | Cohen’s $D$ | Effect size |
|--------|--------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| 1.     | Self-awareness           | 0.89        | Large effect|
| 2.     | Self-management          | 0.84        | Large effect|
| 3.     | Social awareness         | 0.87        | Large effect|
| 4.     | Relationship management  | 0.99        | Large effect|
| 5.     | Responsible decision making | 0.80    | Large effect|
Discussion

The importance of Early Childhood (EC) teachers’ wellbeing has brought into the light the need to focus on social-emotional learning (SEL) among them (Ashraf et al., 2017; Eadie et al., 2021). The core subject of this study was the significance of SEL among preschool teachers. This article has discussed the concept and meaning of social-emotional learning and the five competencies, as defined by CASEL. Furthermore, this article has shown the rationale behind the focus on social-emotional learning of preschool teachers. The article has discussed the importance of teachers’ understanding of SEL teaching in preschools. Ample research has been done on promoting the understanding and knowledge of SEL among teachers in developed nations. Recently, Indian educationalists have also acknowledged the significance of social and emotional learning in the holistic development of preschool teachers and students in the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 of India. NEP of India states that the education system needs to focus on “developing good human beings capable of rational thought and action, possessing compassion and empathy” (Jha & Parvati, 2020).

However, there is no empirical research done to examine the preschool teachers’ understanding of SEL in private and public preschools located in the state of Punjab in India. The present study has examined the level of preschool teachers’ understanding of social-emotional learning concerning the private and public preschools located in two districts, namely Ludhiana and Patiala in the state of Punjab in India. The aim behind comparing the two different school types was to facilitate the private and public preschool teachers to reflect on their own social and emotional learning and development. Moreover, if any difference in understanding of SEL arises in findings, policymakers and educational authorities can think to develop and implement interventions for teachers’ SEL development. The results revealed that the preschool teachers in Ludhiana have a good understanding of SEL and its five competencies. However, in the awareness session, the authors found out that both private and public preschool teachers are lacking in the knowledge and understanding of SEL and its competencies. But, while comparing, there exists a significant difference in the level of teachers’ understanding of SEL and its five competencies, namely, self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship management, and responsible decision-making between private and public preschool teachers. The findings revealed that private preschool teachers have better knowledge about SEL and its competencies than public preschool teachers. This difference in the level of understanding can be because of the lack of Early Childhood teachers’ training interventions for public preschool teachers that focuses on promoting their social-emotional learning and holistic well-being in India. The need of the hour is to design and implement continuous and effective SEL training programs for private and public preschool teachers to improve their understanding of SEL in the preschool of Punjab (India). The study’s findings direct that the Ministry of Education and preschools in Punjab should develop teaching philosophies, strategies, curriculums, training programs, and interventions that focus on developing a positive, safe, and inclusive learning environment, especially for the public preschool teachers. These initiatives will promote teachers’ social-emotional learning and competence. Teachers’ professional and personal development will support inclusive teaching of SEL skills to preschool students and promote trust-building with students at school (Humphries et al., 2018; Schonert-Reichl, 2017). This is because a socially and emotionally competent teacher will help preschool students’ happiness, academic, social, and emotional wellbeing by creating a supportive classroom environment (Kaur & Sharma 2021b; Schonert-Reichl, 2017).

Moreover, SEL knowledge will help preschool teachers to manage their emotions, understand the emotions of preschoolers and colleagues, develop positive relationships, make ethical decisions, overcome occupational stress, and face challenging situations in and out of preschools (Hen & Goroskit, 2016; Jennings et al., 2017). School-based interventions, awareness sessions, and training workshops to foster SEL in preschool teachers, in general, can influence their emotional wellbeing, self-perception, teaching quality, commitment to professional ethics, and social competence (Ashraf et al., 2017; Zinsser & Curby, 2014). This study does not attempt to generalize results for all. However, this study has focused on examining the level of social-emotional learning among preschool teachers teaching in private and public preschools located in Punjab in India.

Conclusion

The present study is important for readers, policymakers, and educational authorities. It attempts to compare the differences in understanding social-emotional learning and its five competencies between private and public preschool teachers teaching in preschools of Punjab (India). This article is a piece of original empirical research in social-emotional learning in the context of Indian preschools, especially for private and public preschools located in the Ludhiana and Patiala districts of Punjab (India). The article is an initiative to accentuate the importance of social-emotional learning among preschool teachers. Finally, this article highlights the need to focus on preschool teachers’ social and emotional competence as a foundation for the holistic development of teachers themselves and preschool children’s holistic well-being.
Nevertheless, there are constraints to this study that warrant consideration. First, the data collection and testing have been done specifically with the Indian preschool teachers, teaching in Ludhiana and Patiala districts of Punjab state in India only. Second, the article has focussed only on examining the teachers’ understanding of social-emotional learning. Third, the limitations of this study concern mostly the sample and the self-reported dimensions. The sample was primarily composed of female preschool teachers who teach in preschools. This recommends limiting the generalization of results across male preschool teachers and all school levels. In addition, this article employed only self-report questionnaires, which may bias the results. Therefore, future studies should address the above limitations and examine the understanding of teachers’ social-emotional learning at all school levels in India. Additional research should focus on designing a training module and implementing a training intervention in preschools to enhance the social-emotional competence of preschool teachers. Finally, future research should emphasize ways to enhance teachers’ SEL and how they contribute to enhancing the social-emotional competence of preschool children.

Appendix

Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) Scale for Teachers

Dear Participant

Thanks in advance for your participation in completing this academic survey that aims to examine your understanding of Social Emotional Learning pre-training. Kindly take few minutes to fill up this questionnaire.

Please read the following definition:

Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) refers to the process by which individuals acquire knowledge and skills to help navigate through life’s challenges. It refers to the development of skills related to recognizing and managing emotions, developing care and concern for others, establishing positive relationships, making responsible decisions, and handling challenging situations constructively.

Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) identifies five competencies essential in cultivating cognitive, affective, and behavioral skills in students. These competencies include self-awareness (ability to identify emotions, thoughts, and behaviors), self-management (ability to build upon identification and regulate emotions, thoughts, and behaviors), social awareness (ability to take the perspectives of others), relationship skills (ability to establish and maintain positive relationships), and responsible decision-making (ability to make ethical personal choices)

With this definition in mind, please read the following statements and think about how true each is for YOU. Rate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each statement.

stand for strongly disagree
stand for disagree
stand for neutral
stand for agree and
stand for strongly agree

YOUR RESPONSES TO THIS SURVEY ARE CONFIDENTIAL
Tick in the box that corresponds with your response.

Basic Demographic Information of Respondent

Consent for Participation [ ] I agree to consent

1. Name of the respondent ___________________________
2. Email of the respondent ___________________________
3. Name of the institution where you are employed ___________________________
4. Please indicate your gender: Male [ ] Female [ ] Others [ ]
5. Years of professional school experience
   0 to 10 years [ ] 10 to 20 years [ ] 20 years and above [ ]
6. Indicate your education qualification
   Haven’t graduated from high school [ ] Graduated [ ]
   Masters [ ]
   Masters with Specialist Degree [ ] Doctorate [ ]
7. Please indicate your city
   Ludhiana [ ] Patiala [ ]
8. Mark only one that applies to your school
   Urban [ ] Rural [ ]

Below are some questions relating to “Prior Knowledge of SEL in teachers” in school. Using the multiple choices below, identify the answer that best represents your on-the-spot belief about each statement or question. Please answer the following questions by placing a tick mark in the relevant column where (1) stands for strongly unknowledgeable (or strongly disagree) and (5) stands for strongly knowledgeable (or strongly agree). Place each statement within your school context. Please respond to all questions.

Below are some questions relating to “Knowledge about 5 competencies of Social-Emotional Learning in teachers” within your school context while teaching. Using the multiple choices below, identify the answer that best represents your on-the-spot belief about each statement or question. Please answer the following questions by placing a checkmark in the relevant column where (1) stands for strongly disagree and (5) stands for strongly agree. Place each statement within your school context. Please respond to all questions.
Self-awareness. Self-awareness refers to the ability of an individual to recognize and understand one’s own emotions, feelings, interests, thoughts, and values and how they influence behavior.

Self-management. Self-Management refers to the ability to regulate one’s emotions, thoughts, and behavior to handle stress, control impulses, and motivate oneself in overcoming obstacles by setting and achieving goals.

| S. No. | Statement                                                                 |
|--------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1      | You have knowledge of the term “Social-Emotional Learning (SEL)”          |
| 2      | You know the meaning of SEL.                                             |
| 3      | You have knowledge of SEL competencies.                                  |
| 4      | You have attended SEL training in the last 12 months.                    |
| 5      | You have used/using SEL competencies in your teaching career.            |
| 6      | You would like to attend a workshop/training to develop your understanding of SEL. |
| 7      | You have a school culture that supports the development of teachers’ SEL. |
| 8      | Your principal supports the teacher’s training for enhancing their SEL.  |

| S. No. | Statements                                                                 |
|--------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1      | You have a good sense of why you have certain feelings most of the time.  |
| 2      | You feel a sense of pride in doing your job.                             |
| 3      | You enjoy teaching.                                                      |
| 4      | You “observe” yourself while teaching in the classroom.                  |
| 5      | You are committed to your self-development.                              |
| 6      | It’s easy for you to describe your feelings.                             |
| 7      | You are a fairly cheerful person.                                        |
| 8      | You can identify, recognize, and name your emotions at the moment most of the time. |
| 9      | You recognize the relationship between your feelings and your reactions toward students in the classroom. |
| 10     | You recognize the relationship between your feelings and your reactions toward colleagues in the school. |
| 11     | You know and are realistic about your strengths and weaknesses.          |
| 12     | You accept others’ feedback about your work in school.                  |
| 13     | You know how your own needs, biases, and values affect the decisions you make in the classroom while teaching. |
| 14     | You believe you have the ability to influence and lead your students effectively. |
| 15     | You feel confident that you can handle situations with self-assurance and a calm mind. |
| 16     | You believe that your teaching experiences help you to learn and grow.   |
| 17     | You feel positive even in negative situations.                           |
| 18     | You feel satisfied with your teaching in the classroom.                  |
| 19     | You analyze how your personality fits with your teaching profession.     |
| 20     | You feel easy to make changes and adapt to new practices while teaching. |
| 21     | You feel guilty for criticizing students.                                |
| 22     | You find it easy to try innovative teaching practices in the classroom.  |
| 23     | You can recognize the situations that trigger your emotions.            |
| 24     | You have a good understanding of what are your values and your goals.    |
| 25     | You have a good sense of humor.                                          |
| 26     | You have a positive perspective about your personality.                 |
| 27     | You are not defensive in receiving criticism about yourself.             |
| 28     | You speak out for a course of action you believe in, even when others disagree. |
| 29     | You consider yourself an effective person, capable of taking on challenges and master new tasks. |
Social awareness. Social Awareness refers to the ability to identify and understand the perspective of others and empathize with them; recognize and appreciate individual and group similarities and differences; identify and use family, school, and community resources.

| S. No. | Statements                                                                 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|-------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1     | You find ways to manage your emotions and channel them in useful ways without harming anyone. |   |   |   |   |   |
| 2     | You stay calm, composed, and clear-headed under high stress and during a school crisis. |   |   |   |   |   |
| 3     | You have high personal standards that motivate you to seek performance improvements for yourself and those you lead. |   |   |   |   |   |
| 4     | You are practical, setting measurable, challenging, and attainable goals. |   |   |   |   |   |
| 5     | You accept new challenges in your teaching profession and adjust to changes. |   |   |   |   |   |
| 6     | When you encounter a challenging problem, you try to solve it by yourself. |   |   |   |   |   |
| 7     | You modify your thinking in the face of new information and realities. |   |   |   |   |   |
| 8     | You can manage multiple demands of students without losing focus or energy in the classroom. |   |   |   |   |   |
| 9     | You keep a balance between your work life and personal renewal time. |   |   |   |   |   |
| 10    | You always set a goal for yourself and then try your best to achieve them. |   |   |   |   |   |
| 11    | You are a self-motivated person. |   |   |   |   |   |
| 12    | It’s generally easy for you to make changes in your daily life. |   |   |   |   |   |
| 13    | It’s easy for you to face unpleasant situations. |   |   |   |   |   |
| 14    | You are optimistic about most things you do. |   |   |   |   |   |
| 15    | You generally expect things will turn out all right, despite setbacks from time to time. |   |   |   |   |   |
| 16    | Your impulsiveness creates problems in school. |   |   |   |   |   |
| 17    | You keep patience while teaching in class. |   |   |   |   |   |
| 18    | You have strong impulses that are hard to control. |   |   |   |   |   |
| 19    | You tend to control your anger easily. |   |   |   |   |   |
| 20    | You know how to deal with upsetting problems. |   |   |   |   |   |
| 21    | You manage stress caused within the school. |   |   |   |   |   |
| 22    | You know how to keep calm in difficult situations. |   |   |   |   |   |
| 23    | You are open to candid feedback, new perspectives, continuous learning, and self-development. |   |   |   |   |   |

| S. No. | Statements                                                                 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|-------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1     | You listen actively to another person’s perspective. |   |   |   |   |   |
| 2     | You can grasp another person’s feelings from both verbal and nonverbal cues. |   |   |   |   |   |
| 3     | You believe that, in general, people are doing their best, and you expect the best of them. |   |   |   |   |   |
| 4     | You appreciate and get along with people of diverse backgrounds and cultures in your school. |   |   |   |   |   |
| 5     | You utilize involving practices to ensure all student’s voices are represented in the classroom. |   |   |   |   |   |
| 6     | You are insightful in organizational situations and can identify crucial social networks. |   |   |   |   |   |
| 7     | You understand the organizational forces at work, guiding values, and unspoken rules that operate among people. |   |   |   |   |   |
| 8     | You can understand your student’s emotions from their behavior. |   |   |   |   |   |
| 9     | You are a good observer of colleagues’ emotions. |   |   |   |   |   |
| 10    | You are sensitive to the feelings and emotions of others. |   |   |   |   |   |
| 11    | You feel like “part of the family” at your school. |   |   |   |   |   |
| 12    | You feel “emotionally attached” to this school. |   |   |   |   |   |
| 13    | You feel a strong sense of belonging with your students. |   |   |   |   |   |
| 14    | You look at why students act the way they do. |   |   |   |   |   |
| 15    | You have compassion and acceptance for others. |   |   |   |   |   |
| 16    | You think about how colleagues or students interact with each other. |   |   |   |   |   |
| 17    | You are good at understanding the way other people behave. |   |   |   |   |   |
**Relationship skills.** Relationship skills refer to the ability to establish and maintain healthy and rewarding cooperative relationships; resist inappropriate social pressure; prevent, manage, and resolve interpersonal conflict; seek help when needed.

**Responsible decision making.** Responsible decision making refers to the ability to make decisions based on consideration of ethical standards, safety concerns, appropriate social norms, respect for others, and probable consequences of various actions; apply decision-making skills to the well-being of oneself and others.

| S. No. | Statements                                                                 |
|-------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1     | You foster an emotionally nurturing and safe environment for students.       |
| 2     | You are open and authentic with others about your values and beliefs, goals, and guiding principles. |
| 3     | You communicate with and encourage interaction with students.               |
| 4     | You can articulate ideas that are important to you in ways that motivate students to become involved. |
| 5     | You have a genuine interest in cultivating students' growth and developing their SEL skills. |
| 6     | You can openly admit your mistakes and shortcomings to yourself and others. |
| 7     | You try to understand the perspective and experiences of others before you offer suggestions. |
| 8     | You give timely and constructive feedback as a guide and mentor.           |
| 9     | You are comfortable dealing with conflict, listening to feelings from all parties, and helping them understand different perspectives. |
| 10    | You guide students to resolve their conflicts.                             |
| 11    | You like helping students.                                                 |
| 12    | You like helping colleagues.                                               |
| 13    | You are good at teamwork and generate a shared atmosphere that inspires students. |
| 14    | You build relationships with students of diverse groups.                   |
| 15    | You involve students in important decision-making tasks to ensure to make a wise choice. |
| 16    | You express teamwork in your leadership style and personal behaviors as a role model to students. |
| 17    | You recognize individual and group similarities and differences.           |
| 18    | You use communication and social skills to interact effectively with others. |
| 19    | You demonstrate an ability to prevent, manage, and resolve interpersonal conflicts in constructive ways. |
| 20    | It's easy for you to share your deep feelings with others.                  |
| 21    | It's easy for you to make friends.                                          |
| 22    | You care what happens to other people.                                     |
| 23    | You have good relations with students.                                     |
| 24    | You have good relations with colleagues.                                   |
| 25    | You regularly interact with students.                                      |
| 26    | You keep in touch with colleagues.                                         |

| S. No. | Statements                                                                 |
|-------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1     | You can define the core of the problem and identify the solution options.   |
| 2     | You recognize the need for change, challenge the status quo, and encourage new thinking in your classroom. |
| 3     | You conduct a need analysis and involve your colleagues to identify problems before starting a new initiative. |
| 4     | You involve your colleagues while decision-making.                         |
| 5     | You find ethical ways to overcome barriers when it comes to making decisions while teaching. |
| 6     | You use more than one measure to assess progress toward social, emotional, and academic goals. |
| 7     | You usually set personal goals and monitor progress toward these goals.    |
| 8     | You provide opportunities for self-reflection and group reflection on progress toward goals used while teaching. |
| 9     | You treat your colleagues in the same way you want to be treated.          |
| 10    | You are sensitive to the feelings of others while making decisions.         |
| 11    | You contribute to the well-being of your school.                           |
| 12    | It's easy for you to decide on the best solution when it comes to solving problems. |
| 13    | Your approach in overcoming difficulties is to move step by step.          |
| 14    | When faced with a difficult situation, you like to collect all information about it that you can. |
| 15    | You try to get an overview of a problem before trying to solve it.          |
| 16    | You would stop and help a crying child, find his or her parents, even if you are required to be somewhere else at the same time. |
| 17    | You encourage community service activities for students and staff.         |
| 18    | You consider ethical, safety, and societal factors in making decisions.    |
Acknowledgments
We thank the administrators and teachers of the Private and Public preschools in Ludhiana and Patiala districts of state of Punjab in India for their invaluable contributions.

Declaration of Conflicting Interests
The author(s) declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

Funding
The author(s) received no financial support for the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

Ethical Approval
The manuscript complies with publication ethics of Sage Open. Informed consent was obtained from all individual participants included in the study.

ORCID ID
Jasleen Kaur
https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7807-3803

References
Aldrup, K., Carstensen, B., Köller, M. M., & Klusmann, U. (2020). Measuring teachers’ social-emotional competence: Development and validation of a situational judgment test. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 11, 892.
Ashraf, H., Hosseinnia, M., & GH. Domsky, J. (2017). EFL teachers’ commitment to professional ethics and their emotional intelligence: A relationship study. *Cogent Education*, 4(1), 1298188.
Baker, J. A., Grant, S., & Morlock, L. (2008). The teacher-student relationship as a developmental context for children with internalizing or externalizing behavior problems. *School Psychology Quarterly*, 23(1), 3.
Banerjee, R., Weare, K., & Farr, W. (2014). Working with ‘Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning’ (SEAL): Associations with school ethos, pupil social experiences, attendance, and attainment. *British Educational Research Journal*, 40(4), 718–742.
Beltman, S., Dobson, M. R., Mansfield, C. F., & Jay, J. (2020). ‘The thing that keeps me going’: Educator resilience in early learning settings. *International Journal of Early Years Education*, 28(4), 303–318.
Bierman, K. L., Domitrovich, C. E., Nix, R. L., Gest, S. D., Welsh, J. A., Greenberg, M. T., Blair, C., Nelson, K. E., & Gill, S. (2008). Promoting academic and social-emotional school readiness: The head start REDI program. *Child Development*, 79(6), 1802–1817.
Brackett, M. A., & Rivers, S. E. (2014). Transforming students’ lives with social and emotional learning. In R. Pekrun & L. Linnenbrink-Garcia (Eds.), *International handbook of emotions in education* (pp. 368–388). Routledge/Taylor & Francis Group.
Brackett, M. A., Reyes, M. R., Rivers, S. E., Elbertson, N. A., & Salovey, P. (2012). Assessing teachers’ beliefs about social and emotional learning. *Journal of Psychoeducational Assessment*, 30(3), 219–236.
Buchanan, R., Guldner, B. A., Tran, O. K., & Merrell, K. W. (2009). Social and emotional learning in classrooms: A survey of teachers’ knowledge, perceptions, and practices. *Journal of Applied School Psychology*, 25(2), 187–203.
Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL). (2003). Safe and sound: An educational leader’s guide to evidence-based social and emotional learning (SEL) programs. Author.
Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL). (2013). 2013 CASEL guide: Effective social and emotional learning programs—Preschool and elementary school edition. Author.
Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL). (2018). Core social and emotional learning competencies. Author. http://www.casel.org/social-and-emotional-learning/corecompetencies/
Collie, R. J. (2017). Teachers’ social and emotional competence: Links with social and emotional learning and positive workplace outcomes. In E. Frydenberg, A. J. Martin & R. J. Collie (Eds.), *Social and emotional learning in Australia and the Asia-Pacific* (pp. 167–184). Springer.
Collie, R. J., & Martin, A. J. (2016). Adaptability: An important capacity for effective teachers. *Educational Practice and Theory*, 38(1), 27–39.
Collie, R. J., Martin, A. J., Papworth, B., & Ginns, P. (2016). Students’ interpersonal relationships, personal best (PB) goals, and academic engagement. *Learning and Individual Differences*, 45, 65–76.
Collie, R. J., Shapka, J. D., & Perry, N. E. (2012). School climate and social-emotional learning: Predicting teacher stress, job satisfaction, and teaching efficacy. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 104(4), 1189.
Cumming, T. (2017). Early childhood educators’ well-being: An updated review of the literature. *Early Childhood Education Journal*, 45(5), 583–593.
Cumming, T., Sumison, J., & Wong, S. (2015). Rethinking early childhood workforce sustainability in the context of Australia’s early childhood education and care reforms. *International Journal of Child Care and Education Policy*, 9(1), 2.
Denham, S. A., Bassett, H. H., Zinsser, K., & Wyatt, T. M. (2014). How preschoolers’ social–emotional learning predicts their early school success: Developing theory-promoting, competency-based assessments. *Infant and Child Development*, 23(4), 426–454.
Dicke, T., Elling, J., Schneck, A., & Leutner, D. (2015). Reducing reality shock: The effects of classroom management skills training on beginning teachers. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 48, 1–12.
Domitrovich, C. E., Bradshaw, C. P., Berg, J. K., Pas, E. T., Becker, K. D., Musci, R., Embry, D. D., & Ialongo, N. (2016). How do school-based prevention programs impact teachers? Findings from a randomized trial of an integrated classroom management and social-emotional program. *Prevention Science*, 17(3), 325–337.
Eadie, P., Levickis, P., Murray, L., Page, J., Elek, C., & Church, A. (2021). Early childhood educators’ wellbeing during the
COVID-19 pandemic. Early Childhood Education Journal, 49(5), 903–913.

Elias, M. J. (2009). Social-emotional and character development and academics as a dual focus of educational policy. Educational Policy, 23(6), 831–846.

Galindo, C., & Sheldon, S. (2012). School efforts to improve parental involvement and effects on students’ achievement in kindergarten. Early Childhood Research Quarterly, 27, 90–103.

Garg, P., & Kapri, U. C. (2016). A comparative study of emotional intelligence of secondary school teachers. EPRA International Journal of Economic and Business Review, 4(5), 67–71.

Gest, S. D., & Rodkin, P. C. (2011). Teaching practices and elementary classroom peer ecologies. Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology, 32(5), 288–296.

Goddard, R. D., Hoy, W. K., & Hoy, A. W. (2004). Collective efficacy beliefs: Theoretical developments, empirical evidence, and future directions. Educational Researcher, 33(3), 3–13.

Hen, M., & Goroshit, M. (2016). Social–emotional competencies among teachers: An examination of interrelationships. Cogent Education, 3(1), 1151996.

Humphrey, N., Lendrum, A., Wigelsworth, M., & Greenberg, M. T. (Eds.). (2020). Social and emotional learning. Routledge.

Humphries, M. L., Williams, B. V., & May, T. (2018). Early childhood teachers’ perspectives on social-emotional competence and learning in urban classrooms. Journal of Applied School Psychology, 34(2), 157–179.

Irvine, S., Thorpe, K., McDonald, P., Lunn, J., & Sumson, J. (2016). Money, love and identity: Initial findings from the National ECCE Workforce Study. The Forum, QUT.

Jennings, P. A. (2011). Promoting teachers’ social and emotional competencies to support performance and reduce burnout. In A. Cohan & A. Honigsfeld (Eds.), Breaking the mold of preservice and inservice teacher education: Innovative and successful practices for the 21st century (pp. 133–143). Rowman & Littlefield.

Jennings, P. A., Brown, J. L., Frank, J. L., Doyle, S., Oh, Y., Davis, R., Rasheed, D., DeWeese, A., DeMauro, A. A., Cham, H., & Greenberg, M. T. (2017). Impacts of the CARE for teachers program on teachers’ social and emotional competence and classroom interactions. Journal of Educational Psychology, 109(7), 1010–1028.

Jennings, P. A., & Frank, J. L. (2015). Inservice preparation for educators. In J. A. Dulak, C. E. Domitrovich, R. P. Weissberg & T. P. Gullotta (Eds.), Handbook of social and emotional learning: Research and practice (pp. 422–437). The Guildford Press.

Jennings, P. A., & Greenberg, M. T. (2009). The prosocial classroom: Teacher social and emotional competence in relation to student and classroom outcomes. Review of Educational Research, 79, 491–525.

Jean, L., Buettner, C. K., & Hur, E. (2016). Preschool teachers’ professional background, process quality, and job attitudes: A person-centered approach. Early Education and Development, 27(4), 551–571.

Jha, P., & Parvati, P. (2020). National education policy, 2020. Governance at Banks, 55(34), 14.

Jones, C., Hadley, F., & Johnstone, M. (2017). Retaining early childhood teachers: What factors contribute to high job satisfaction in early childhood settings in Australia? New Zealand International Research in Early Childhood Education, 20(2), 1–18.

Jones, S. M., & Bouffard, S. M. (2012). Social and emotional learning in schools: From programs to strategies and commentaries. Social Policy Report, 26(4), 1–33.

Kaur, J., & Sharma, A. (2021a). Conceptual ECCE happiness framework for preschools: To introduce importance of happiness to promote social and emotional competence in preschool children. SAGE Open, 11(3), 21582440211031873.

Kaur, J., & Sharma, A. (2021b). Establishing early foundations to promote emotional competence in preschool children. Journal of Applied Social Science, 00(0), 1–20. 19367244211054381.

King, E. K., Johnson, A. V., Cassidy, D. J., Wang, Y. C., Lower, J. K., & Kintner-Duffy, V. L. (2016). Preschool teachers’ financial well-being and work time supports: Associations with children’s emotional expressions and behaviors in classrooms. Early Childhood Education Journal, 44(6), 545–553.

Klusmann, U., Kunter, M., Trautwein, U., Lüdtke, O., & Baumert, J. (2008). Engagement and emotional exhaustion in teachers: Does the school context make a difference? Applied Psychology, 57, 127–151.

Kunter, M., Klusmann, U., Baumert, J., Richter, D., Voss, T., & Hachfeld, A. (2013). Professional competence of teachers: Effects on instructional quality and student development. Journal of Educational Psychology, 105(3), 805.

Liu, L. B., Song, H., & Miao, P. (2018). Navigating individual and collective notions of teacher wellbeing as a complex phenomenon shaped by national context. Compare: A Journal of Comparative and International Education, 48(1), 128–146.

López-Pérez, B., & Fernández-Castilla, B. (2018). Children’s and adolescents’ conceptions of happiness at school and its relation with their own happiness and their academic performance. Journal of Happiness Studies, 19(6), 1811–1830.

Martin, A. J., Nejad, H., Colmar, S., & Liem, G. A. D. (2012). Adaptability: Conceptual and empirical perspectives on responses to change, novelty and uncertainty. Journal of Psychologists and Counsellors in Schools, 22(1), 58–81.

Mattern, J., & Bauer, J. (2014). Does teachers’ cognitive self-regulation increase their occupational well-being? The structure and role of self-regulation in the teaching context. Teaching and Teacher Education, 43, 58-68.

McLean, L., & Connor, C. M. (2015). Depressive symptoms in third-grade teachers: Relations to classroom quality and student achievement. Child Development, 86(3), 945–954.

McMullen, M. B., Lee, M. S., McCormick, K. L., & Choi, J. (2020). Preschool teachers’ financial well-being and work time supports: Associations with their own happiness and their academic performance. Journal of Happiness Studies, 19(6), 1811–1830.

McMullen, M. B., Lee, M. S., McCormick, K. L., & Choi, J. (2020). Preschool teachers’ financial well-being and work time supports: Associations with their own happiness and their academic performance. Journal of Happiness Studies, 19(6), 1811–1830.

Murray, C., & Zvoch, K. (2011). Teacher—student relationships among behaviorally at-risk African American youth from low-income backgrounds: Student perceptions, teacher perceptions, and socioemotional adjustment correlates. Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders, 19(1), 41–54.

Oberle, E., Domitrovich, C. E., Meyers, D. C., & Weissberg, R. P. (2016). Establishing systemic social and emotional learning approaches in schools: A framework for schoolwide implementation. Cambridge Journal of Education, 46(3), 277–297.
Oberle, E., Schonert-Reichl, K. A., Hertzman, C., & Zumbo, B. D. (2014). Social-emotional competencies make the grade: Predicting academic success in early adolescence. *Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology, 35*(3), 138–147.

Odom, S. L., McConnell, S. R., & Brown, W. H. (2008). Social competence of young children: Conceptualization, assessment, and influences. In W. Brown, S. Odom, & S. McConnell (Eds.), *Social competence of young children: Risk, disability, and intervention* (pp. 3–30). Brooks.

Perry, N. E., Brenner, C., Collie, R. J., & Hofer, G. (2015). Thriving on challenge: Examining one teacher’s view on sources of support for motivation and well-being. *Exceptionality Education International, 25*(1), 6–34.

Ryan, A. M., Kuusinen, C. M., & Bedoya-Skoog, A. (2015). Managing peer relations: A dimension of teacher self-efficacy that varies between elementary and middle school teachers and is associated with observed classroom quality. *Contemporary Educational Psychology, 41*, 147–156.

Schonert-Reichl, K. A. (2017). Social and emotional learning and teachers. *The Future of Children, 27*(1), 137–155.

Shen, B., McCaughtry, N., Martin, J., Garn, A., Kulik, N., & Fahlman, M. (2015). The relationship between teacher burnout and student motivation. *British Journal of Educational Psychology, 85*(4), 519–532.

Singh, B. P. (2015). A study of emotional intelligence among private and government school teachers in relation to their teaching aptitude. *SRJIS, 3*(17), 3249–3255.

Singh, R., & Mukherjee, P. (2017). *Comparison of the effects of government and private preschool education on the developmental outcomes of children: Evidence from young lives India*. Young Lives.

Smith, S., & Lawrence, S. M. (2019). Early care and education teacher well-being: Associations with children’s experience, outcomes, and workplace conditions: A research-to-policy brief. *Child Care & Early Education Research Connections*.

Split, J. L., Koomen, H. M., & Thijs, J. T. (2011). Teacher well-being: The importance of teacher–student relationships. *Educational Psychology Review, 23*(4), 457–477.

State Council of Educational Research and Training & Directorate of Education. (2019, January). *Happiness curriculum*. http://edudel.nic.in/welcome_folder/happiness/HappinessCurriculum_Framework_2019.pdf

Sutton, A. (2016). Measuring the effects of self-awareness: Construction of the self-awareness outcomes questionnaire. *Europe’s Journal of Psychology, 12*(4), 645.

Taylor, R. D., Oberle, E., Durlak, J. A., & Weissberg, R. P. (2017). Promoting positive youth development through school-based social and emotional learning interventions: A meta-analysis of follow-up effects. *Child Development, 88*(4), 1156–1171.

Thorpe, K., Jansen, E., Sullivan, V., Irvine, S., & McDonald, P. (2014). Early Years Workforce Study team. Karen Thorpe Sue Irvine Paula McDonald Joanne Lunn Jennifer Sunsmion Angela Ferguson Mary Lincoln Kate Liley Pam Spall. (2020). Identifying predictors of retention and professional wellbeing of the early childhood education workforce in a time of change. *Journal of Educational Change, 21*, 623–647.

Tom, K. (2012). *Measurement of teachers’ social-emotional competence: Development of the social-emotional competence teacher rating scale*. University of Oregon.

Trentacosta, C. J., & Izard, C. E. (2007). Feeling, thinking, and playing: Social and emotional learning in early childhood. In O. N. Saracho & B. Spodek (Eds.), *Contemporary perspectives on socialization and social development in early childhood education* (pp. 59–77). IAP Information Age Publishing.

UNICEF. (2016). *Happy schools! A framework for learner well-being in the Asia-Pacific*. Author.

UNICEF. (2018). *Early childhood development: The key to a full and productive life*. 2015. Acessos, 3. Author. https://docplayer.net/15966001-early-childhood-development-the-key-to-a-full-and-productive-life.html

Von Stumm, S., & Plomin, R. (2021). Does private education make nicer people? The influence of school type on social–emotional development. *British Journal of Psychology, 112*(2), 373–388.

Wang, H., Hall, N. C., & Rahimi, S. (2015). Self-efficacy and causal attributions in teachers: Effects on burnout, job satisfaction, illness, and quitting intentions. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 47*, 120–130.

Weissberg, R. P., Durlak, J. A., Domitrovich, C. E., & Gullotta, T. P. (2015). Social and emotional learning: Past, present, and future. In J. A. Durlak, C. E. Domitrovich, R. P. Weissberg, & T. P. Gullotta (Eds.), *Handbook of social and emotional learning: Research and practice* (pp. 3–19). The Guilford Press.

Yoder, N. (2014). *Teaching the whole child: Instructional practices that support social-emotional learning in three teacher evaluation frameworks*. Research-to-practice brief. Center on Great Teachers and Leaders.

Young Lives. (2017). *Young lives methods guide*. www.younglives.org.uk/what-we-do/research-methods/methods-guide

Zins, J. E., & Elias, M. J. (2007). Social and emotional learning: Promoting the development of all students. *Journal of Educational and Psychological Consultation, 17*(2–3), 233–255.

Zinsser, K. M., & Curby, T. W. (2014). Understanding preschool teachers’ emotional support as a function of center climate. *SAGE Open, 4*(4), 2158244014560728.

Zinsser, K. M., Shewark, E. A., Denham, S. A., & Curby, T. W. (2014). A mixed-method examination of preschool teacher beliefs about social–emotional learning and relations to observed emotional support. *Infant and Child Development, 23*(5), 471–493.