Social Emotional Learning and Inequalities in Academic Achievement

Based on a National Survey in Kenya and Young Lives Data

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Background

• SEL programs can improve academic outcomes (Cipriano et al., 2023) but little evidence from LMICs outside crisis and conflict settings

• More evidence needed on which SEL competencies are important for academic outcomes and why.

• Can SEL programs reduce educational inequalities?
Confidence and Curiosity – Associations with Education in Tanzania

1. In rural areas, teachers value confidence and curiosity as important for children to develop more than parents

2. Children of educated parents are rated as having more confidence and curiosity


### Domains Assessed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domain</th>
<th>Overview</th>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Factors and Reliability</th>
<th>Associated with EGRA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Confidence during assessment</strong></td>
<td>Assessor scores behavior of child</td>
<td>Pre-school self-regulation assessment</td>
<td>Single factor $\alpha = 0.85$ to $0.92$</td>
<td>✅</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Confidence (self-reported)</strong></td>
<td>Children were read descriptions of two children (one confident; one not)</td>
<td>RTI</td>
<td>Single factor $\alpha = 0.45$ to $0.73$</td>
<td>✅</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Relationships</strong></td>
<td>Children asked questions about friends in different scenarios</td>
<td>IDELA</td>
<td>Single factor $\alpha = 0.60$ to $0.74$</td>
<td>✅</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Interpersonal negotiation</strong></td>
<td>Children respond to scenario involving conflict; responses in 8 types (3 levels).</td>
<td>SERAIS</td>
<td>3 factors $\alpha = 0.61$ to $0.68$</td>
<td>✅</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Creativity</strong></td>
<td>Children asked to name as many alternative uses as possible for two items</td>
<td>Alternative uses test</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>✗</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Learning environment</strong></td>
<td>Questions for rating learning environment (positive and negative)</td>
<td>RTI/multiple</td>
<td>2 factors $\alpha = 0.59$ to $0.73$</td>
<td>✅</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Inequalities in Reading Achievement: Grades 1-3 National Survey in Kenya

![Bar chart showing English Oral Reading Fluency](chart.png)

- Urban vs Rural
- Wealth - Middle 1/3 vs Bottom 1/3
- Wealth - Top 1/3 vs Bottom 1/3
Inequalities in Reading Achievement: Grades 1-3 National Survey in Kenya

[Bar chart showing English Oral Reading Fluency for different categories: Urban vs Rural, Wealth - Middle 1/3 vs Bottom 1/3, Wealth - Top 1/3 vs Bottom 1/3 with and without SEL covariates.]
Inequalities in Reading Achievement: Grades 1-3 National Survey in Kenya

**English Oral Reading Fluency**

- Urban vs Rural
- Wealth - Middle 1/3 vs Bottom 1/3
- Wealth - Top 1/3 vs Bottom 1/3

**Kiswahili Oral Reading Fluency**

- Urban vs Rural
- Wealth - Middle 1/3 vs Bottom 1/3
- Wealth - Top 1/3 vs Bottom 1/3
Learning Environment, Academic Achievement and Gender

![Graph showing the relationship between Learning Environment Score and English Oral Reading Fluency (cwpm) for Boys and Girls. The graph illustrates a positive correlation between the learning environment score and oral reading fluency, with both boys and girls showing an increase in fluency as the score increases.]
• Ethiopia, India, Peru, Vietnam

• 2002-2016

• 8 years – 22 years
I can improve my situation in life

People in my family make all the decisions about how I spend my time

I like to make plans for my future studies and work

If I study hard I will be rewarded with a better job in the future

I have no choice about the work I do
Promoting Social and Emotional Learning in the Classroom

A GUIDE TO EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICES IN LOW- AND MIDDLE-INCOME COUNTRIES
Mechanisms for the Impact of SEL programs on Learning Outcomes

Types of SEL Programs
- Skills Interventions
- Climate Interventions

Constructs measured in studies reported in this paper
- Self concept
- Relationships
- Classroom Climate

Illustrative pathways
- Expectations (expectancy-value theory)
- Relatedness (self-determination theory)
- Participation in Learning
- Motivation
- Learning Outcomes
Conclusions

• A range of SEL competencies associated with academic skills – let’s get more specific about which skills are important and why

• Developing SEL could address inequalities of wealth and urbanicity in educational achievement

• Positive learning environment benefits girls’s achievement more than boys
Building an assessment of community-defined social-emotional competencies from the ground up in Tanzania

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