

2020

Perceptions of Administrators and Teachers as Facilitators of Students' Socioemotional Learning

Crystal January
Walden University

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Crystal J. January

has been found to be complete and satisfactory in all respects,
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the review committee have been made.

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Walden University

2020

Abstract

Perceptions of Administrators and Teachers as Facilitators of Students' Socioemotional

Learning

by

Crystal J. January

MS, Auburn University Montgomery, 2005

BS, Auburn University Montgomery 2002

Project Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

Walden University

June 2020

Abstract

Current conditions in the United States have resulted in an increasing number of middle and high school students experiencing trauma. To improve positive learning environments and graduation rates, a Southern school district transitioned from punitive, exclusionary consequences to restorative practices such as socioemotional learning (SEL). A bounded qualitative case study was used to explore the perceptions of administrators and teachers regarding teachers' facilitation of SEL, the most effective strategies to facilitate SEL, and teacher preparedness to facilitate SEL. The study was guided by the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning framework. Data were collected from 5 teachers and 3 administrators through semistructured interviews. The data analysis process included sorting interview responses, member checking, peer debriefing, and identification of codes and common. Thematic findings indicated the need for ongoing professional learning; support and relevant resources; SEL, restorative practices, and trauma-informed curricula, behavioral plans, and service learning; support staff; and support from educational leaders. The project deliverable was a professional development training that provided SEL, restorative practices, and trauma-informed curricula. Results may be used by administrators and teachers to promote the components of SEL (self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, responsible decision-making, and relationship skills) to cultivate more positive learning environments in schools.

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Dedication

In a world where so many believe they can't, I dedicate this doctorate to you as a reminder that you can. As I stand on the shoulders of my grandparents and parents, may the sacrifices of my hardworking husband, Jerald, and two God-sent daughters, Bailee and Eva, be a catalyst into a God-given purpose that we couldn't imagine. May my husband and I pass the torch to our two amazing daughters in a way that honors our God and propels them into His purpose for their lives. In addition to my immediate family that I am blessed to live daily life with, I am also honored to be an advocate for consistent valuable learning opportunities, and I am extremely grateful to serve many students who need leaders who encourage them to be powerful student learners and remind them of their resilience and greatness. You matter; make your place in this world.

Acknowledgments

God has consistently allowed others to speak into my life in ways that inspired me to set new goals and explore new challenging possibilities. However, a pivotal point in my collegiate educational experiences emerged through the support of two passionate Auburn University Montgomery professors, Dr. Eric Sterling and Dr. Jeff Melton. They took the time to speak life into me by penning specific, descriptive feedback. Unbeknownst to them, their feedback encouraged me to change my major and become an educator.

I continuously experience the world as a life learner, so I have been taught by many, but I would be remiss if I didn't thank my doctoral committee and the scores of phenomenal students, teachers, counselors, administrators, and staff with whom I have had the pleasure of working throughout my career. There is not a person whom I have worked with or for who has not taught me something, and I am still learning. I would like to take this time to thank my doctoral chair, Dr. Mary Hallums. You encouraged me to persevere. I also thank Dr. Elizabeth Warren and Dr. Mary Givens.

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Section 1: The Problem

Socioemotional learning (SEL) has emerged as a universal and cost-effective change agent for behaviors, academics, and important life skills (Domitrovich, Durlak, Staley, & Weissberg, 2017). During the summer of 2011, Education Secretary Duncan and Attorney General Holder (as cited in Steinberg & Lacoë, 2017) introduced the Supportive School Discipline Initiative, a partnership between the U.S. Department of Education and the Department of Justice to improve the learning environment. This collaborative effort was directed toward schools to ensure that students were nurtured, safe, regularly in attendance, and learning. Positive student discipline is one of many factors that successful schools are expected to cultivate and celebrate because those skills help to develop educated, productive citizens (Takanishi, 2015). The departmental partnership offered options that would encourage building consensus for national action, investing in research and data collection, issuing policy and legal guidance, enhancing awareness, increasing the capacity of teachers and leaders, and adding data collection of student discipline to some federal grant requirements (Wilson, 2014). Prior to this collaborative project, states were using exclusionary discipline practices at high rates (Steinberg & Lacoë, 2017).

The Supportive School Discipline Initiative was initiated after a Texas study indicated high expulsion rates, high suspension rates, and greater numbers of exclusionary consequences for African American students as well as students in special education (Bottiani, Bradshaw, & Mendelson, 2017). Parents and students also collaborated as a part of the team during this process. Another aspect of the initiative

involved reviewing multiple data points, including tracking discipline data from at least 85% of U.S. students relevant to exclusionary discipline practices (Skiba & Losen, 2016). These practices included arrests, suspensions, expulsions, and in-school suspensions.

Funding was also provided for field research and program evaluations that would expose interventions and alternatives to exclusionary discipline practices. Legal support was provided through a resource guide and reminders of Title IV and VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Sharkey & Fenning, 2012). In the area of enhancing awareness, capacity, and leadership, the project leaders hosted summits, created a web-based community, provided judge training, and developed webinars and subcommittees to distribute relevant knowledge (Lustick, 2017).

The importance of discipline alternatives to exclusionary practices has been stressed through the requirements in grant funding, forums, and budgets (Stonemeier, Trader, & Wisnauskas, 2014). For example, applications for certain grants have required the disclosure of trend data relevant to discipline infractions and suspensions (Losen, Sun, & Keith, 2017). Grant maintenance has sometimes required the tracking of discipline data as well as disclosures of intervention plans to maintain grant funding (Anyon, et al., 2017).

The federal discipline initiative has empowered states to become part of the transition process. There has been an attempt to build consensus for national action, make investments into research and data collection, provide policy and legal guidance, and increase awareness (Skiba & Losen, 2016). There has also been an attempt to build

capacity, improve school leadership requirements, and integrate discipline expectations into federal grant funding (Scott, Moses, Finnigan, Trujillo, & Jackson, 2017).

A part of building capacity is the ability of leadership to hire and retain effective teachers (Torres, 2016). Although many factors contribute to discipline infractions, schools with less experienced teachers have tended to report more infractions that were not handled by the teachers; instead, many schools have used suspensions to address discipline issues (Gregory, Clawson, Davis, & Gerewitz, 2016). Ladd and Sorensen (2017) indicated that schools with experienced teachers provided large returns for students, as evidenced by higher test scores, reduced absenteeism rates, and reduced numbers of behavioral infractions.

The Local Problem

In a Southern school district in the United States, the problem is that even though administrators and teachers are confident that teachers were trained to manage instructional content and delivery, they remain concerned about their influence as facilitators of students' SEL behaviors. Some teachers in the local district are not confident in their ability to align SEL standards with the curriculum. This concern grew out of the charge from administrators for teachers to reduce exclusionary disciplinary consequences. Administrators in the school district have asked teachers to facilitate the incorporation of the restorative approaches associated with SEL competencies to improve student discipline, attendance, and academic achievement (Ragozzino, Resnik, Utne-O'Brien, & Weissberg, 2003).

Administrators routinely review suspension data to monitor teachers' discipline practices that affect learning and the school climate. SEL is one of the practices that administrators review, and this review is based on the competencies defined by the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) framework that have been incorporated into the curriculum (Herrenkohl & Favia, 2016). In an administrative effort to reduce the number of out-of-class suspensions, more responsibility has been placed on teachers in this district and throughout the country to handle behavioral infractions in the classroom (Mazzer & Rickwood, 2015). Teachers in the district are expected to teach content as well as model and teach students SEL. As leaders in this urban district continue to make budget decisions and plan for future school years, they must determine the impact of inclusionary SEL and restorative practices on students' academic achievement and discipline issues.

The need for SEL is becoming a national priority in the educational field (Storey, 2017). States such as Alaska, Idaho, California, Illinois, Washington, Pennsylvania, and Missouri have partnered with CASEL to facilitate students' SEL (Dusenbury, Calin, Domitrovich, & Weissberg, 2015). Teachers throughout the district have expressed their desire for positive learning environments that will allow students to demonstrate their SEL skills.

Rationale

Student attendance is essential to improving academic achievement, and punitive discipline measures cause students to miss more school days and classroom instruction (Gershenson, 2016; Morris & Perry, 2016). District climate survey and discipline data

available in the public domain have been published on district dashboards, and each month district leaders and building-based educators discuss a variety of dashboard data that include, but are not limited to, standardized testing, attendance, suspensions, and student class grades. The local news, state education department website, and school district website have also publicized students' test results, school climate ratings, graduation rates, and school and district accountability status.

Evidence of the Problem at the Local Level

The problem might influence stakeholders who have an interest in exclusionary discipline practices that keep students out of the classroom. Such stakeholders may include students, teachers, administrators, parents, community leaders, and neighborhood associations. A special concern has been raised about unsupervised students roaming the streets and loitering in businesses, neighborhoods, and noneducational environments (*District Office Director*, personal communication, January 21, 2016). Teachers have expressed the frustration of being held accountable for students' nonmastery of standards, when the students have not been present or when students have struggled to learn the required concepts in core content subject areas. Teachers also have shared the struggles of teaching classes when students were misbehaving and were earning discipline infractions that impeded their learning and the learning of others.

Upon the arrival of the superintendent in April 2014, the local school system was not explicitly implementing SEL (*Principal*, personal communication, January 21, 2016). Student suspensions, alternative school placements, and expulsion data indicated that punitive measures were being taken to address behavioral infractions (*Student Discipline*

Office Personnel, personal communication, January 22, 2016). SEL was introduced to the district in 2014, and punitive suspension rates have declined each year since. District suspension and expulsion trend data from the most current 5 years are listed in Table 1.

Table 1

District Suspension and Expulsion Data

School year	District suspensions (%)	District expulsions (%)
2014-2015	26.5%	0.1%
2015-2016	23.5%	0.2%
2016-2017	21.1%	0.1%
2017-2018	18.3%	0.1%
2018-2019	Embargo not lifted yet	Embargo not lifted yet

Note. Suspensions decreased each year and expulsions remain consistent. Adapted from the Governor's Office of Student Achievement K-12 Discipline Dashboard.

During the years of the new administration, the district implemented a strategic plan that required the support of the whole child and fundamental components (Superintendent, personal communication, July 28, 2014). Administrator and teacher facilitation of SEL included restorative and trauma-sensitive practices for inclusive student development.

Evidence of the Problem Beyond the District

In a Southern school district in the United States, the problem is that even though administrators and teachers are confident that teachers have been trained to manage instructional content and delivery, teachers remain concerned about their influence as facilitators of SEL behaviors. After the district implemented CASEL's SEL, graduation rates increased consistently over 4 years. However, although the state graduation rate was higher than the district's graduation rate, approximately 20% of its students were not graduating in the expected consecutive 4 years (see Table 2).

Table 2

District and State Graduation Rates

School year	District graduation rate (%)	State graduation rate (%)
2014-2015	59.1%	72.6%
2015-2016	71.5%	78.8%
2016-2017	71.1%	79.4%
2017-2018	77.0%	80.6%

Note. Adapted from the state department website.

In a southeastern area of the United States, Finnan (2015) conducted a 4- year ethnographic study with elementary classes and found that nonacademic learning (i.e., focus, perseverance, and positive relationships) carried over into the classroom to improve academic performance. Hanson-Peterson, Schonert-Reichl, and Smith (2016) conducted a randomized control study and a quasi-experimental study with 58 urban public school teachers in Canada. As stakeholders attempted to resolve reductions in academic motivation, poor achievement, and increased bullying, Hanson-Peterson et al. found that instructional designs were changing worldwide by adopting SEL competencies. Rural and urban students with exceptionalities such as gifted and autism benefit from schools that include the collective teaching and modeling of SEL by teachers, psychologists, family members, administrators, coaches, mentors, community members, and other stakeholders (Baldwin, Omdal, & Pereles, 2015).

In addition to the district that was the focus of this study, other places have explored SEL needs. Schools outside of the United States have become more diverse. A Canadian study indicated the need for teachers to facilitate the SEL competencies and prosocial behaviors of students from various socioeconomic, social, and ethnic backgrounds because interpersonal skills affect academic achievement (Binfet & Passmore, 2017).

The results of the current study may be used to determine the support that teachers throughout the Southeastern state need to improve the quality of student learning environments. I explored the perceptions of administrators and teachers regarding the role of teachers as facilitators of SEL in relation to improving student discipline and cultivating positive learning environments. I also explored the perceptions of administrators and teachers of the strategies that should be used to facilitate SEL in the classroom setting. The purpose of this qualitative case study was to obtain the perceptions of administrators and teachers regarding the role of teachers as facilitators of students' SEL behaviors.

Definitions of Terms

The following definitions were relevant to this qualitative study addressing the perceptions of administrators and teachers of their role as facilitators of SEL:

Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA): ESSA of 2015 was built on the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965 and the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) of 2002 (Plans, 2015). ESSA is inclusive of, but not limited to, the following components of education: equity, academic rigor connected to college and career readiness, local innovations, preschool success, accountability, and action for lowest performing schools to include assessments of students' academic progress and graduation rates (Herman et al., 2016).

Exclusionary practices: These practices may include the use of alternative school placement, suspension, expulsion, or any other consequence that removes students from their normal learning environment (Payne & Welch, 2017).

Positive learning environment: This environment supports students' academic achievement in a safe, well-managed, structured, and respectful climate that is conducive to learning for all students (Warnock, 2015).

Restorative practices: In conjunction with restorative justice, restorative practices are inclusive attempts to improve relationships, reduce antisocial behavior, and connect victims and offenders to repair harm through dialogue and critical reflective thinking (Gregory et al., 2016).

Socioemotional learning (SEL): SEL is based on five competencies: self-awareness, self-management, relationship skills, social awareness, and responsible decision-making. These competencies encourage development in emotions, awareness of self and others, and responsible decision-making (Bridgeland, Bruce, & Hariharan, 2013).

Trauma-sensitive schools: These schools are sensitive to supporting the whole child by cultivating a nurturing environment that acknowledges the effects of students' experiences that threaten their safety, academic success, and mental and physical health by providing socioemotional support that can bridge gaps in communication and assist with self-regulation skills and support (Vacek, Hine, & Moore, 2016).

Significance of the Study

The findings may help to close gaps in the research on managing SEL. The results may support the improvement of student achievement as well as the impact of student special education labeling; improve attendance and graduation rates; maximize instructional time; reduce delinquency, school violence, and grade failures; identify

strategies for at-risk students; and decrease the school-to-prison pipeline. This study may impact administrators and teachers by increasing their preparation to facilitate some SEL, restorative practice, and trauma-informed nontraditional approaches to discipline.

Effective strategies may be used to reduce some of the stress that teachers face in the classroom and improve teachers' management of instruction and students' academic achievement. Such improvements make schools more successful, and successful schools graduate students who are career and college ready (Kendziora & Yoder, 2016).

Research Questions

Although educators, politicians, employers, and collegiate staff have expressed diverse viewpoints regarding the route that students need to take to become college and career ready, all stakeholders have agreed that the achievement gap should be closed and that graduates need better 21st-century soft skills relevant to creativity, communication, collaboration, and critical thinking (Soulé & Warrick, 2015). I sought to determine the influence of administrators and teachers as facilitators of students' SEL behaviors. The study was guided by three research questions (RQs):

RQ1: How do administrators and teachers perceive their facilitation of students' SEL, as defined by CASEL?

RQ2: What are the perceptions of administrators and teachers of the strategies that should be used to facilitate SEL within the classroom, as espoused by CASEL?

RQ3: What are administrators' and teachers' perceptions of teachers' preparedness to facilitate students' SEL within the classroom, as defined by CASEL?

Review of the Literature

This literature review includes a synthesis of the literature regarding educators and the evolving expectation for their implementation of students' SEL development. Subtopics in the review include restorative practices, trauma-informed practices, trauma-informed schools, and growth mindsets. In this literature review, I discuss the conceptual framework based on CASEL, Goleman, and Bandura. I also include connections to SEL and the following concepts that emerged during the research process: trauma, self-efficacy, behavior, academics, cognitive learning theory, duties and responsibilities, growth mindset, and implementation and obstacles.

I used various databases in Walden University's library and Google Scholar to find primary and peer-reviewed sources. The databases were EBSCO, Academic Search Premier, ERIC, ProQuest, SAGE, and PsycINFO. Most of the peer-reviewed articles had been published within the last 3 years (2015-2019). I retrieved additional data from the state department of education website and other primary sources. I used the following search terms to find literature relevant to my study: *social emotional learning, trauma-sensitive schools, socioemotional learning and behavior, school transformation, prosocial behavior, urban schools, social emotional learning and school culture, social emotional learning and academics, social emotional learning and adolescence, social emotional learning growth mindset, and social emotional learning and perceptions*. During the search, I found that very little research had been directed toward identifying the perceptions of the teachers and administrators responsible for the implementation of SEL standards in schools.

Conceptual Framework

The call for transformational leadership that improves student achievement has been ongoing throughout different presidencies, and it continues today. The framework and theories that were foundational to the study were CASEL's SEL framework, Goleman's (1996) emotional intelligence theory, and Bandura's (1978) social learning theory. The CASEL framework was primary in this case study because the foundation of the administrator and teacher work within the district is based on CASEL competencies of self-awareness, self-management, responsible decision-making, relationship skills, and social awareness defined in the meta-analysis of 213 school-based universal SEL programs of kindergarten through high school students (see Durlak, Weissberg, Dymnicki, Taylor, & Schellinger, 2011). Goleman (2001), codeveloper of the CASEL framework, conducted research on EI prior to the formation of CASEL; the work included some of each of the competencies, with the exception of responsible decision-making. Bandura's (1969) work came before Goleman and CASEL, but it was critical to this case study because of the emphasis on the social aspects that are best learned in environments where individuals can model behaviors incorrectly and correctly so that they can become healthy social and productive beings.

The current study was based on the perceptions of teachers and administrators regarding teachers' preparedness to implement SEL in the learning environment, their effectiveness as facilitators of SEL in the classroom, and the strategies they should use to facilitate SEL. The target audience comprised administrators and teachers who had attended district-mandated SEL professional development sessions. The standards taught

in professional learning sessions were critical to the weekly practices of the educators related to their perspectives and implementation of SEL and facilitation of academic instruction.

CASEL and SEL

The fundamental needs for education have expanded. Oberle, Domitrovich, Meyers, and Weissberg (2016) provided an overview of the United States indicating that the systematic CASEL approach may empower students to become scholars who benefit the community as productive citizens who are self-aware, effective in self-management, socially aware, and responsible in the areas of decision-making skills and relationship skills. Elias et al. (2015), after reviewing prevention strategies in schools that used SEL practices, identified four imperatives to the implementation of SEL: independent instruction, positive and consistent teaching practices, unified merging of the practices and academic instruction, and leadership support directly tied to prioritizing support and resources to implement SEL effectively with current curricula and instruction.

One component of SEL is self-awareness, namely identification of emotions, self-confidence, and self-efficacy (Dusenbury, Zadrazil, Mart, & Weissberg, 2011). Another component is self-management, including impulse control, stress management, self-discipline, motivation, goal setting, and organizational skills (Dusenbury et al., 2015). Empathy, diversity, communication, conflict resolution, and problem-solving are addressed through social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making (Dusenbury et al., 2011). When SEL competencies are implemented properly, the

possibility arises for safe, positive learning environments for students who are resilient, active, and accountable members of their learning community (Ragozzino, et al., 2003).

SEL, trauma, and self-efficacy. The stress resulting from childhood trauma is a prevalent factor that has the potential to affect the socioemotional health of students and their academic and career outcomes (Crosby, 2015). Creating a sense of community; implementing SEL strategies; building educator, staff, and parent capacity; and implementing aspects of social justice are some of the cost-effective strategies that can improve students' health trajectories to cultivate a trauma-informed school that can find the root causes of trauma and improve outcomes for the whole child by reducing self-harming, impulsive behavior (McConnico, Boynton-Jarrett, Bailey, & Nandi, 2016).

Current professional development needs of districts and schools that intend to serve the whole child have expanded (Devaney, O'Brien, Resnik, Keister, & Weissberg, 2006). For example, Zins and Elias (2007) used the findings from 28 categories of influence on learning, 179 handbook chapters, 91 research syntheses, and 61 surveys from national experts to conclude that ongoing training is needed to help educators to implement SEL. McInerney and McKlindon (2014) looked at what educators can do to support SEL, and concluded that training could help to cultivate trauma-sensitive school environments that require staff to shift their discipline responses from punitive solutions to inclusive discipline solutions and help educators to become aware of childhood trauma; the obstacles that trauma poses for students affected by it; and changes to school culture, practices, and policies. McInerney and McKlindon further explained that an increased level of sensitivity is needed because traumatic experiences can contribute to

the toxic stress that makes it more difficult for some students to focus, change the way that some students conduct themselves with others, and contribute to student behavior and academic outcomes.

Self-efficacy also can impact SEL. In a multivariate meta-analysis, Aloe, Amo, and Shanahan (2014) found that self-efficacy helps teachers to be effective by protecting them against burnout. Aloe et al. also suggested that self-efficacy is a critical factor in helping students to behave in ways that result in more positive social interactions. Collie, Shapka, and Perry (2015) substantiated this with research about teacher perceptions of SEL in comparison to climate and its relation to teachers' sense of stress, teaching efficacy, job satisfaction, and teaching efficacy.

SEL, behavior, and academics. In a longitudinal study of 318 mothers and adolescents, Hardaway, Larkby, and Cornelius (2014) conducted interviews to obtain information about adolescent violence, delinquent behaviors, and academic performance. Hardaway et al. also expounded on the need for schools to respond to the connection among exposure to trauma, delinquent behavior, and poor academic performance. Anyon et al. (2014) explored 87,997 K-12 youth in Denver public schools with a cross-sectional data set and the use of a multilevel logic regression model employed through STATA-13 software. Anyon et al. found disparities in responses to negative student behavior with minority students, including punitive, exclusionary consequences, while also examining multilevel risk and protective factors. However, Long, Abbey, and Bryson (2015) stressed the importance of restorative practices, noting that punitive, zero-tolerance punishments are temporary fixes because they fail to offer the replacement skills

provided by restorative practices. Without these replacement skills, exclusionary consequences coupled with socioeconomic status inequalities can lead to students feeling rejected (Bryant, 2019). Academic readiness includes the need for social skills (Blair & Raver, 2015).

Balfanz and Fox (2015) conducted a longitudinal analysis of 181,897 students who were attending Grade 9, and found that Black students who were economically disadvantaged and special education students were groups of students who were suspended at high rates. Balfanz and Fox further asserted that the use of suspensions to address disciplinary infractions widened the achievement gap. Arens, Morin, and Watermann (2015) identified a direct and negative impact of disciplinary problems on academic achievement and motivation. Barnes and Fives (2016) found a connection among supportive instructional assessment practices, beliefs in students' growth mindsets, clear expectations for students to reach their potential, and consistent opportunities for relationship skill building and academic achievement.

When high school students lower their aspirations for academic study, achievement, employment, and health the potential for negative outcomes can increase because of their negative self-talk and beliefs (Elias, White, & Stepney, 2014). Surveys were collected from a sample of 99,462 students from 25 states who were attending Grades 6 to 12 (Benson, Scales, Leffert, & Roehlkepartain, 2003). Analysis of the responses indicated that administrators, teachers, and students benefited from serving the whole child and merging SEL with the students' academic, standards-based curriculum (Benson et al., 2003).

Instead of short-term strategies, there is a need for school- and classroom-based interventions to reduce the racial and ethnic disparities associated with punitive discipline consequences (Skiba et al., 2014). Childs, Kincaid, George, and Gage (2016) concluded that office discipline referrals resolved with out-of-school suspensions and in-school suspensions had a negative impact when compared to the use of positive behavioral intervention systems, which were more likely to reduce future occurrences and increase students' academic readiness. Although the research revealed greater needs in lower SES, minority areas, it is essential that it not be limited to minority races and impoverished students (Blitz, Anderson, & Saastamoinen, 2016).

Goleman and SEL

Goleman (1996) identified five elements of EI: knowing one's emotions, managing one's emotions, motivating one's self, recognizing and understanding other people's emotions, and managing relationships. Evans, Scourfield, and Murphy (2015) stated that Goleman emphasized that self-awareness, self-management, motivation, empathy, and social skills could support academic and emotional health while helping to cultivate more inclusive and less traumatic learning environments.

Bandura's SCT

Bandura's (as cited in Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001) SCT facilitated the exploration of teachers' perceptions of their role as managers of students' SEL behaviors in the classroom. SCT, which emerged from operant conditioning, shows how modeling and rewards can shape adolescent learning (Bandura, 1978). The modeling is not limited to the in-person encounters that students experience in the home, community, classroom,

and school settings; rather, it is applicable to the social media that students interact with daily (Bandura, Ross, & Ross, 1963).

SCT (Bandura, 1978) also includes insight about self-efficacy and the processes of attention, retention, motivation, and reproduction. SCT expounds on self-regulatory efficacy in relation to the transitional stress of adolescence as well as the need for supportive relationships that improve the capacity of students to reduce delinquent activities and manage stress in ways that decrease the chances of depression while increasing academic self-efficacy (Bandura, Caprara, Barbaranelli, Gerbino, & Pastorelli, 2003). SCT provides a basis for the study of adolescents' behavior needs, teacher and additional model influences on adolescent behavior, and solutions for reducing student behavior infractions that disrupt instruction (Bandura, 1993).

Teacher Duty and Responsibility Perceptions

As accountability has increased through legislation, and as public displays of standardized testing results and constant media coverage and stakeholder access have become more common, teachers have begun to feel overwhelmed (Ryan et al., 2017). Questions have arisen about the pressure on teachers to get students to pass tests and prevent schools from being labeled as failing (Travers, 2017). Many teachers have felt pressured by administrators to add facilitation of SEL to their duties (Schonert-Reichl, 2017). Such perceptions have resulted in leaders examining the readiness of teachers to implement evidence-based practices such as SEL (Wanless & Domitrovich, 2015).

The acquisition of funding; protection of time; and provision of the necessary administrative support, relevant professional learning, and curriculum materials are

beneficial during the merging of SEL with instructional planning (Jones & Kahn, 2017; Schonert-Reichl, 2017). To merge SEL with academic instruction, rather than teach SEL in isolation, teachers must have confidence in the benefit of shifting from punitive to restorative practices and their ability to impact academic and whole child outcomes effectively as the facilitators of SEL (Schonert-Reichl & Zakrzewski, 2014). However, Petrina, Carter, and Stephenson (2017) found traditional teachers to be less sensitive than parents and special education teachers to students' socioemotional needs.

Growth Mind-Sets

Schmidt, Shumow, and Kackar-Cam (2015) explained the positive correlation between teacher growth mind-set perceptions and student growth mind-set perceptions. Educational resilience means that students can meet life challenges using a combination of academic and socioemotional development; in addition, this type of resilience can promote social justice and equity among the most disadvantaged students (Cefai et al., 2015). Students need support from their peers and teachers to learn how to form and maintain supportive relationships. Such relationships can improve the school culture, give students additional support through a sense of belonging, and increase student motivation in overall achievement (Ulmanen, Soini, Pietarinen, & Pyhältö, 2016). This motivation is obtained through a learning environment that is enriched by student engagement and motivation through the type of teacher support and student equity that yields student cohesiveness (Tas, 2016).

In addition to supporting students, teachers can enhance student engagement by helping students benefit from support from their parents and peers (Wang & Neihart,

2015). Trust emerges and alienation decreases in these learning environments, and relationship building among parents, teachers, students, and peers helps to improve the student-adult relationships that are essential in school and life (Pham & Murray, 2016). Therefore, for significant transformation, it is critical that students have an opportunity to develop a growth mind-set by learning from their behavior and academic encounters within the contexts that they encounter daily in their home, community, and school, but it has been consistently noted that the teacher is the most significant component of culture setting within the classroom (Nicoll, 2014). Beyond the classroom, it is essential for teachers to give and receive feedback aligned to a growth mind-set that is committed to continuous learning, team and individual success, supportive relationships, necessary change, critical conversations, and student buy-in (Belmont, 2014).

Teachers have a role in maintaining the growth mind-set in the classroom setting as they apply high expectations to their personal practices, instructional practices, and behavioral interventions (Schmidt et al., 2015). For example, student learning enriched, and the growth mind-set can have an enduring impact if teachers use rich, process-oriented language, different levels of probing type of questioning, and diverse problem-solving strategies (Rau, 2016). Barnes and Fives (2016) used a case study inclusive of in-depth interviews, analysis of students' work, and observations to explore growth-focused teacher assessment practices and clarify the need for teachers to consider verbal and nonverbal expressions expectations while they emphasize the knowledge that student can and will meet the high expectations.

Implementation and Obstacles

The transition from exclusive to inclusive practices requires shifts in perceptions and practices (Ohito & Oyler, 2017). Sullivan, Johnson, Owens, and Conway (2014) used a questionnaire to collect data that resulted in clarifying the need for educators to shift their focus from behavioral modification to positive student engagement in the classroom environment because students cannot be engaged in learning when they are suspended. Anyon, Nicotera, and Veeh (2016) conducted a mixed methods convergent analysis of focus group, observation, and survey data that reviewed staff mind-sets regarding student behavior, organizational structures and implementation, and professional development. They conducted their study with staff from one public school with grades Kindergarten to 8. Teacher facilitation of SEL can be an asset to reduce poor behavioral choices and improve academic achievement, but effective teacher facilitation requires careful selection of the curriculum or program, selective organizational structure, and a relevant support system (Anyon et al., 2016). When developing an implementation plan, teachers and leaders should anticipate struggles with time management and funding, but also work to implement an effective enough version of teacher facilitation of SEL that they gain improvements in student impulse control, emotion regulation, and social initiation (Anyon et al., 2016).

(Collie et al, 2015) explained that teachers need effective and ongoing preparation for research-based restorative discipline infraction management, stress management that will improve their self-efficacy and perception of their management skills. For example, it is imperative for leadership to provide teachers with outlets that support their

psychological development and improve their coping skills (Buettner, Jeon, Hur, & Garcia, 2016). Although the duties and responsibilities of teachers depend on the ages of their students, Denham (2015) shared the following needs of middle and high school students: multigender relationship building, increases in academic rigor independent from adults, connections to adult responsibilities, and explorations of ethics and values.

The ongoing practices must prepare teachers to model appropriate interactions and behaviors, and they must also equip teachers to provide explicit SEL support that is weaved into the entire academic and cultural experience (Zinsser & Dusenbury, 2015). Formal training helps teachers to model socioemotional competencies properly for their students (Harvey, Evans, Hill, Henricksen, & Bimler, 2016). Aside from teacher modeling, technology also can be used to support growth in developing empathy and responsibility in females; however, technology should not be used in isolation (Iaosanurak, Chanchalor, & Murphy, 2016). The importance of empathetic learning environments was further substantiated by (Gregory, Clawson, & Davis, 2016), who found that students perceived teachers who used more restorative practices as having fewer discipline infractions to refer to the office. On the other hand, the use of consistent negative, isolating behavior management interventions lead to emotional exhaustion and higher rates of disruptions (Reinke, Herman, & Stormont, 2013).

Implications

In the midst of budget adjustments, accountability reports, school mergers, and school closings, it was important to gage the perceptions of teachers and administrators of the implementation of SEL to provide a positive learning environment. Because this

urban Georgia school district mandated that all schools implement SEL, building-based leadership and teachers were expected to deliver this transformational framework in conjunction with the academic components. However, this change meant having to adjust from the previous option of using suspensions prior to engaging in socioemotional practices. I wanted to determine the perceptions of teachers and administrators regarding the level of preparation, variety of effective strategies, and the impact of teachers as facilitators of SEL (McLeod et al., 2016).

Oberle et al. (2016) expounded upon the need for the systematic implementation of SEL and the societal benefits of adult citizens who benefit from an effective implementation of SEL in school. Jagers (2016) stressed that despite successes in business and entertainment, many minority citizens need SEL skills to help them flourish.

In the results of the study, possible barriers may be in school climate, the quality of the professional development, teacher or administrator motivation, administrator support, or any other obstacles that lessen the impact of teachers facilitating student SEL. This study could lead to the creation of a professional development plan to prepare teachers to be facilitators of SEL and provide a high-quality positive learning environment. This plan might be inclusive of research-based strategies, resources, and school-wide implementation steps. For example, the plan could include ongoing assessment, communication, observation opportunities, time line goals, teams, curriculum support materials, professional development, and monitoring tools are also potential products of this study.

Summary

This review of the literature shares the conceptual framework and a review of the broader problem by exposing studies, research, and concepts that have impacted the development and implementation of SEL. Researchers clearly indicated an urgency to address student and high school graduate needs by having schools address student trauma and soft skill needs through merging SEL into the academic practices needed for a achievement based positive learning environment. However, such research exposes the expanded role of teachers and need for self-efficacy in teachers, leaders, and students as SEL is implemented. When teachers fail to believe that they can facilitate students' SEL effectively, the fidelity of the implementation will be hindered, and there is chance that the impact will be less effective for the students and other stakeholders. In Section 2, I discuss the design of the study, participant selection, research site, data collection and analysis, and limitations of the study.

Section 2: The Methodology

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to explore the perceptions of administrators and teachers regarding the role of teachers as facilitators of students' SEL behaviors. A Southeastern school district has included SEL as a part of the evidence-based practices that educators use to serve the whole child. The study was guided by three RQs:

1. How do administrators and teachers perceive their facilitation of students' SEL, as defined by CASEL?
2. What are the perceptions of administrators and teachers of the strategies that should be used to facilitate SEL within the classroom, as espoused by CASEL?
3. What are administrators' and teachers' perceptions of teachers' preparedness to facilitate students' SEL within the classroom, as defined by CASEL?

This section includes information regarding the qualitative research design, participants, data collection, data analysis, limitations, and the results of the study. A synthesis of studies revealed the gap in the literature concerning the perceptions of administrators and teachers regarding teachers facilitating SEL, the strategies they should use, and their level of preparation to facilitate SEL.

Qualitative Research Design

As stated by Creswell and Creswell (2017), "Qualitative research is an approach for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem" (p. 4). Many factors helped me justify the choice of a bounded,

instrumental, qualitative case study. The case study was an appropriate tool because it allowed me to obtain a rich understanding of the perceptions of administrators and teachers regarding teachers' roles as the facilitator of students' SEL, as espoused by CASEL. Qualitative studies provide an opportunity to avoid the use of closed ended questions and the strong focus on numbers while replacing those methods with an inductive, open-ended process that has a stronger individual focus (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). I used the qualitative case study because I did not need to derive meaning from a phenomenon, as in phenomenology, or develop a theory from existing data, as in grounded theory; rather, my objective was to understand a preexisting case. This approach yielded opportunities to gain rich descriptions of the setting and individuals' perceptions regarding a human problem, and the data collection was followed by an analysis of the data for themes or issues (Creswell, 2014). This qualitative approach provided for a small sample and a purposeful selection of the site. Through the qualitative case study design, I conducted an in-depth study of the activities involved in the cases, and this in-depth understanding provided a rich knowledge that can assist with reducing the gap in the literature (see Creswell, 2014). The case study design allowed me to be the primary instrument of data collection, and it allowed me to share the complexity of the SEL situation (see Creswell & Creswell, 2017).

According to Yin (2017), the first portion of a case study is "an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real-life context" (p. 16). For this study, I used a bounded system to collect evidence in the authentic school context, that is the school system, where the teachers were attempting to facilitate SEL. It

was important to investigate the boundaries between teacher facilitation of SEL and the perceptions of administrators and teachers regarding its impact, effective strategies, and teacher preparedness.

When considering narrative research, phenomenology, grounded theory, and ethnography, I determined that a case study was the best choice to investigate the perceptions of administrators and teachers regarding teachers as the facilitators of student SEL (see Yin, 2017). Although findings from this single instrumental case study cannot be generalized to a broader population, they can indicate important information about student achievement, attendance, teachers' job satisfaction and job preparation, and student discipline in this particular system.

The focus, type of problem, discipline, background, and unit of analysis vary with each type of qualitative approach. The focus of this qualitative study was a case involving a small number of participants. This narrow focus allowed me to develop an in-depth description and analysis of the group of administrators and teachers (see Yin, 2017).

Participants

The setting for this study was a large school district in the Southern United States. The district has 98 learning sites that include 17 charter schools and two single-gender schools that service approximately 50,000 students. The district is divided into eight traditional clusters of elementary, middle, and high schools, and one nontraditional cluster of four alternative schools. There are five K-2 schools, 47 K-5 schools, two schools of Grades 3 to 5, 10 middle schools, 14 high schools, two adult education schools, and 17 charter schools. The student population is 75.5% African American,

14.7% European American, 6.8% Hispanic, 1.2% Asian/American Indian/Alaskan/Other, and 1.6% Multiracial. The district employs approximately 6,300 staff members, and all of its students and staff are expected to utilize and implement SEL practices.

The target sample for this study was administrators and teachers from this Southern urban school district that has a population of approximately 54,000 students. The district offers a free and reduced-price lunch program based on students' SES. The district also had a high transient population of students, a high poverty rate, a high percentage of students from single-parent homes, and a majority student population of at-risk students. To find participants with relevant knowledge, I used a purposeful sample of administrators and teachers to obtain my data (see Merriam & Grenier, 2019).

Participant Selection and Access

My study sample comprised three administrators and five teachers. The small number of participants allowed me to conduct an in-depth study of their perceptions (see Creswell, 2012). The participants were selected purposefully from facilitators of SEL in the school district. The three administrators supported teachers and students in SEL development. The primary criteria to join the study were as follows: (a) The teachers and administrators had to be working in this Southern urban school district, (b) they had to be knowledgeable of and have experience in the SEL process (professional development), (c) the teachers had to have at least 3 years of experience in the district, and (d) the administrators had to have at least 3 years of experience in this district. This qualitative, homogeneous, purposeful sampling method was based on specialized knowledge of the

subject (SEL) coupled with the capacity and willingness to participate in the study (see Creswell, 2012).

Gaining Access to Participants

Prior to contacting teachers or administrators to volunteer to join the study, I completed a formal application process to acquire conditional approval from Walden University's Institutional Review Board (IRB). I then applied to become a research partner with the school district. Once I received permission from the school district, I submitted the approval to Walden and received official approval from Walden University's IRB. Before starting the study in the schools, I requested and received permission from the selected school principals, obtained explicit consent from the participating administrators and teachers, and ensured that all participants understood the ethical guidelines and protections associated with this study.

Once I received permission from Walden University's IRB (approval #01-08-19-0513602) and from the school district to conduct the study, I obtained signed consent from the participants employed at the six approved schools. Participation in the study was voluntary, and participants had the option of withdrawing from the study at any time. During their individual interviews, the selected educators provided useful information about facilitating SEL, shared information about SEL strategies, and revealed relevant information about teacher preparedness to facilitate student SEL practices (see Creswell, 2014).

Researcher-Participant Relationship

I took additional steps to establish a trustworthy and professional role with the study participants. Prior to beginning the study, I met with all participants to provide them with the following information: the purpose of the study, how the information would be used and shared, participants' expectations, that participation was voluntary and that they had the right to withdraw from the study at any time without consequences, and any potential risks and researcher bias (see Corbin & Strauss, 2015). All of this information was provided in written form through the use of the IRB consent form.

I also addressed ethical issues with the participants. Although the participants work in the same school district as I do, I do not evaluate them, supervise them, or have any authority over them. They do not work in the same school that I lead, and I had no conflicts of interest or ethical issues as the researcher. Although ethics were considered in the preparation of the participants, I also completed a course from the National Institutes of Health Office of Extramural Research and earned a certificate to educate myself on the protection of study participants.

Protection of Participant's Rights

Participating in the study presented a low risk to the selected participants. I took several steps to protect the participants' privacy and maintain confidentiality of their interview responses. I secured and monitored all demographic and personal data and did not disclose identifying information. Alternates were not needed because no one withdrew. Maintaining the confidentiality and safety of all participants was critical, so I used pseudonyms (Administrator 1, A1, Teacher 1, T1) to protect the participants'

identities. Furthermore, all electronic data were stored on a password-protected computer, and all hard copies were kept in a locked file that only I had access to. All data relevant to the study will be stored for 5 years, per Walden University's protocol, before being destroyed. Details about protecting the participants' identities were included in the application given to the school district, principal, and participants (see Latunde, 2017).

This study aligned with the RQs, but it also addressed concerns about privacy, safety from danger, and ethical issues expressed by the school district. The IRB application included, but was not limited to, protection of the participants, data collection, and data analysis. Protecting the participants meant deidentifying them, and all matters were handled in ways that did not impeded their daily work responsibilities or student instructional time (see Latunde, 2017).

During my prestudy meeting with the participants, I discussed the following issues with them: time restraints or conflicts, comfort levels during the interviews, appropriate interview and observation times and locations, handling of possible interruptions, advance review of interview questions, and confidentiality. I also answered participants' questions to ease any discomfort and help them relax enough to provide accurate and honest responses to the interview questions. I gathered basic contact information (i.e., e-mail addresses and phone numbers) from the participants and discussed opportunities for qualitative validity strategies (member checking, thick description).

Data Collection

Interview Data Collection

After receiving IRB approval, I conducted semistructured interviews with three administrators and five teachers. The interview protocol form that I developed aligned with the RQs. I used the interview questions to obtain information regarding participants' perceptions of teacher facilitation of SEL, as defined by CASEL; perceptions of effective SEL strategies, as defined by CASEL; and perceptions of teacher preparedness to facilitate student SEL.

Semistructured Interview Process

Interviewing is often used in studies focusing on educational topics (Merriam & Grenier, 2019). Interviews require that researchers establish safe and comfortable environments to put the participants at ease. I used a small, private space in the media center at the schools to interview the participants. The semistructured interviews that I conducted for this case study provided personal data that were expounded upon through the use of open-ended questions and additional probing when needed (see Merriam & Grenier, 2019). I used interviews to obtain the perceptions of administrators and teachers regarding teachers' influence on positive learning environments as facilitators of SEL. I am a novice researcher, and I conducted the face-to-face, 30-minute, semistructured interviews with novice interview skills (see Mann, 2016). I recorded notes on a computer, and when interviewees agreed, I also voice recorded the interviews on an iPhone. The credibility and reliability of the data collected can be questioned because of the small number of participants, and it was not a random sample (see Creswell, 2014).

Participants reviewed all information. In spite of the disadvantages, the likelihood of reproducing the implementation of the SEL would be difficult, so the interview was the best method for capturing data from the initial implementation (Merriam & Grenier, 2019). The following elements of a protocol were included: headings, questions, space for questions and responses, and a statement that expressed appreciation to the participants (Merriam & Grenier, 2019).

I conducted interviews with three administrators because they were responsible for supporting teachers as they all facilitate student SEL during their daily interactions with students. I also conducted interviews with five teachers who were expected to merge SEL into their regular classroom learning environment and lead SEL advisory periods. The comparison data from both positions helped with determining the status of calibration.

Role of the Researcher

I identified my personal values, assumptions, and historical and cultural connections to the people and location (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). Over the last 9 years, I have worked in two schools in this district. I did not know either of the participants, but as Yin (2017) suggested, I am well versed in the topic (p. 69). At the time of the study, I did not have any supervisory connection to any of the participants. Although I was knowledgeable of district SEL support when I undertook the study, I was unaware of the perceptions of administrators or teachers about SEL outside of my current school.

According to Yin (2017), interviewers have two major roles: having an unbiased perspective and presenting the RQs in an unbiased way. It was my responsibility to be adaptable and accommodate the interviewees' schedules. I worked to support their needs in terms of finding quiet and nonintrusive locations for the interviews that would maintain their confidentiality and reduce distractions. The participants' comfort was important, so I had all necessary materials on hand, followed the preestablished interview plan, and respected the interviewees' time while providing fluid opportunities for guided conversations within the boundaries of the interviews (Yin, 2017).

Data Analysis

An ongoing process required repeated reflection throughout the study. During this process, I made decisions about merging information, reducing information, and extracting meanings from the interview data. Both inductive and deductive reasoning occurred throughout the concrete and abstract processes of reasoning (Ary, Jacobs, Irvine, & Walker, 2018; Creswell, 2014; Lodico, Spaulding, & Voegtler, 2010; Merriam & Grenier, 2019). In this study, I provided detailed descriptions of the setting, teachers, and administrators. The data analysis included ongoing checks of questions and answers, sorting of responses to the interview questions, member checking, peer debriefing, and color coding of themes and issues that arise from the interviews.

Evidence of Quality

I had to consider the trustworthiness, transferability, dependability, and conformability of this study to represent the participants' perceptions properly (Creswell, 2014). I gave the participants the opportunity to offer feedback on the accuracy or the

need for corrections of their transcriptions within 3 days of completing the interviews (Merriam & Grenier, 2019; Yin, 2017). No inaccuracies were reported, so I moved forward and used specific colors to denote similarities in the responses.

Discrepant Cases

Rich descriptions include discrepant data. Therefore, the analysis included searching for data that exposed inconsistencies and opposing perceptions (Thompson, 2014). The goal of the data analysis was to share an in-depth presentation of the data analysis directly related to the perceptions of administrators and school teachers in relation to teachers serving as facilitators of SEL. Such information is vital to this population's effort to cultivate a positive learning environment in classrooms.

Data Analysis

This section shared the process, findings, themes, and data. I obtained the data for this study from five teachers and three administrators who were working in schools at the time of the study that required teachers to facilitate student SEL. Four male participants (two administrators and two teachers) and four female participants (one administrator and three teachers) were interviewed and provided the data for analysis.

Prior to conducting the individual interviews, I spoke to each participant individually, clearly explained my role as a researcher working to complete my terminal degree as well as my role as an assistant principal within the district. I also reminded participants of their right to withdraw from the interview at any time and allotted time for the participants to review the consent form again. I reiterated my commitment to protect

their identities and strongly encouraged their honesty in providing responses to the interview questions.

I interviewed administrators and teachers using an interview protocol (Appendix B) that I developed based on previous research (Kendziora & Yoder, 2016). All data were analyzed to find emergent themes. Within three days of collecting the interview data, I gave the participants the opportunity to member check their own transcriptions to ensure that I had captured their responses accurately.

I also reviewed my bias, coded, and identified themes. This process required multiple reviews of the data and the handwritten notes that I had made in the margins that were closest to the information being analyzed. The highlighted color-coding process and member checks helped me to determine that the categories and themes were consistent with the literature review in Section 2. Many commonalities were found in the answers to the interview questions.

The participants were from middle and high school, and all of them had responsibilities associated with teachers facilitating SEL. Half of the participants had served as educators in this district for at least 12 years. At least one third of the educators were familiar with the district's SEL standard of excellence definition.

Interview Findings and Themes

The interview questions were selected to answer the guiding questions. The following six categories house the data administrator perceptions of teachers as facilitators of SEL, teacher perceptions of teachers as facilitators of SEL, administrator perceptions of effective strategies for facilitating SEL, teacher perceptions of strategies

that should be used to facilitate SEL, administrator's perception of teacher preparedness to facilitate SEL, and teacher perception of teacher preparedness to facilitate SEL. Five themes emerged from the data analysis: (a) team approach among all stakeholders, (b) professional learning, (c) consistent opportunities for adult exposure and implementation, (d) adequate resources, and (e) relevant curriculum and continuous opportunities for practice with students.

Table 3

Code and Theme Categories to Research Question 1

Codes	Theme	RQ
Shared leadership Not dumping on teachers Accountability for all	Team approach among all stakeholders	RQ1: What are the perceptions of administrators and teachers of teachers as facilitators of student SEL as defined by CASEL?
Schoolwide All stakeholders District clusters (feeder schools) Need for depth of knowledge in trauma and SEL beyond undergraduate studies Timing: before school, planning period, after school, summer Delivery method: consultant vs. local or school-based staff		RQ1: What are the perceptions of administrators and teachers of teachers as facilitators of student SEL as defined by CASEL?
Stipends Administrative support: Coaching vs. Evaluator Administrator modeling Consistency of Practice Time to learn the process Culturally relevant curriculum Evidence based, quality curriculum Full components of the curriculum	Professional Learning	
Not requiring teacher creation	Consistent opportunities, adequate resources, and relevant curriculum	RQ1: What are the perceptions of administrators and teachers of teachers as facilitators of student SEL as defined by CASEL?
Budget for physical transformations (paint, peace corners, soothing items) Not reducing instructional planning time		

Findings for RQ1

Research question 1 asked the following: What are the perceptions of administrators and teachers of teachers as facilitators of student SEL as defined by CASEL? One of the themes that emerged from this question was the importance of having a team approach. Seven of the eight participants expressed that a team approach was integral for teachers facilitating SEL successfully. A1 and A3 agreed that having a team approach afforded opportunities for shared leadership and widening of the capacity of those within the building which ultimately gave greater buy-in and increased the quality of the SEL implementation. A1 reported,

Teachers are very strong leaders in our building, and what they do behind closed doors matters. They work with students everyday. In order for us to establish a consistency of practice, we must have everyone in the building including all of our teachers teach, model, and reinforce SEL practices. Similarly, A3 reported,

If the vast majority of our teachers believe in SEL, we will be successful. This initiative is not something that leaders can successfully do alone. Instead, our teachers, custodians, bus drivers, and support staff all play a significant part in successful supporting teachers' delivery of SEL to our students. We have to find ways to help teachers have a paradigm shift if they still only focus on consequences and punitive measures. Otherwise, it negatively impacts staff morale, and it takes much longer for students to learn the skills.

A1, A2, T3, T4, and T5 indicated that incorporating a team approach yields an opportunity for teachers to function in their strengths. For example, T5 teacher was

interested in becoming a school counselor and T3 and T4 took an alternative route to teaching and had community counseling experience. I also interviewed two A2 and A3 who had previously served as school counselors. A1 shared,

Our district participates in Gallup Strength finder trainings. This is yet another way that we can work out of our strengths. People who have themes that are closely related to the SEL competencies can serve on the school based SEL team, and the team can help train the rest of the staff. The plan for implementation can also include this team approach so that those who have different strengths can slowly learn how to leverage those in this implementation process. If we force people who don't completely understand or believe in SEL to try to quickly implement the process, it doesn't happen in excellence, and becomes short lived.

Many of the participants knew colleagues and community partners who would be qualified and passionate about helping staff merge SEL with the current academic learning standards and expectations.

All participants, with the exception of A2, stressed the importance of this team approach. The overall rationale that appeared to be emphasized the most was the effective use of human resources and effective use of educator's time. T2 shared,

In our district, we have several positions that would yield more results if they reduced the work that is done in silos, and used more of a team approach... We should have student representation from each grade level, teacher representation from each subject area, administrator representation from each grade level, parent representation from each grade level, community business partners, and school

support staff support. We have school counselors, social workers, psychologists, behavior specialists, parent liaisons, paraprofessionals, and non-instructional aides. We also need middle school partnerships with elementary programs, high school partnerships with middle school programs, and collegiate partnerships with high school programs.

Another theme that surfaced from interviews about RQ1 was professional learning opportunities. When asked about the perceptions of administrators and teachers of teachers facilitating student SEL, professional learning was a unanimous finding with all interview participants. Although each participant noted that professional development was needed, expressions differed as it related to the implementation. For example, A1 and A3 felt that the professional learning should occur before school, during teacher planning time, and during the summer. A1 shared,

It is really difficult to scheduled effective trainings. Teachers usually don't want to come to trainings that start before the work day, and many are late when you have them in the mornings. However, they also find frustration in using their instructional planning time for SEL, and they are usually exhausted afterschool. Therefore, I would also consider the summer because you could do a number of days and hopefully have a less tired teacher and staff member in front of you, but many teachers want to enjoy their summer break, so this would not be mandatory, that could lessen the turnout and possibly not make the summer the most beneficial time. Finding the best time for professional learning opportunities

poses a few challenges, so whenever we decide to have it, it needs to be welcoming and definitely worth the time of the teachers and other participants.

A2 shared the need for training to occur after school and during the teacher planning times. A2 was in agreement with T1, T2, and T3 who felt summers should be avoided. T2 shared, “You won’t get the teamwork and full participation if you train in the summer, and that will reduce the effectiveness.” A2 shared,

If we hold the trainings in the summer, attendance may be low because people travel, teach summer school, and rest during this time. Teachers often want a stipend for summer work, and every school does have enough budgeted funds to support stipends for SEL training.

However, T4 and T5 were open to using any time that was not instructional for professional learning in this area.

In addition to the time in which it would be offered, the method of delivery was also addressed. For example, A1, A3, and T4 and T5 thought teachers would benefit from the expertise of an urban consulting firm that incorporating research-based models that have been successful in similar settings. It was their understanding that this would insure that the quality of that professional learning would be more accurate. They also stressed the difficulties associated with motivating adult learners to have a paradigm shift. A3 shared,

Teachers want to hear from experts to go beyond the superficial surface definitions of SEL. They want evidence-based practices with students who are similar to their students. Sometimes receiving it from administrations makes it

seem like just one other task they have to complete. It is can be more motivating for them to see that administration is providing quality training and resources.

Yet, A2, T1, T2, and T3 expected the local administrative staff, teachers, support staff, parents, community partners, and feeder schools to become experts and use their expertise to deliver it to the district throughout the upcoming years. It was their understanding that the benefit of this approach would be more cost effective, a higher learning opportunity for staff who they expressed should be continuous learners, and more applicable and provide practical examples and solutions for their daily work. T3 shared,

We have enough people in our building who know our students and know SEL, that we could save money and time and really make the training and information work for our building. Other people rarely get it right. They just don't know our kids, our district and what we go through.

Also, T1 shared,

We have some many programs and initiatives. The standards, programs and initiatives change too much. Administrators change too much. No matter who delivers the training, it is important that we keep SEL long enough for the staff to learn it well and see if it really helps our students.

All participants agreed that the professional learning should not be something that is started and stopped, instead, they all stressed the importance of ongoing professional development that would need to be aligned with the mission and vision of the school making it a natural part of the daily work and purpose of the school.

Throughout all of the participants' interviews the theme of consistency was conveyed as an integral part of administrators and teachers facilitating SEL. All of the teacher participants referenced their years in education when programs started and stopped without having sufficient time to determine their impact. Participants T1, T2, and T5 stressed the importance of teachers having enough time and opportunities to learn to teach the curriculum and model it proficiently. T1 shared,

We did not learn this kind of counseling stuff in college, and sometimes our big kids don't want to do this stuff in front of other kids. We don't need administrators dinging us for kid behavior, and we haven't had time to really learn this stuff. We need time to learn and try this.

This was further substantiated by T5 who shared,

I know some of this, but I really want to know how this will be evaluated. It would be good to have someone come in and try this with us because we don't need to get written up or get twos on our evaluation because of not our students and us not be used to doing SEL together. All of this depends upon how much time we get to learn it, and what the administrative support looks like for us.

Having a safety net to learn through the implementation process became a critical part of teachers' confidence in their ability to facilitate student SEL. A1 and A2 stressed the need for administrators to support teachers from the perspective of coach rather than an evaluator. In some instances, it is necessary for the administrator or consultant to model the expectation with staff and students. A3 stated,

Many educators are more aware of the definition of SEL, but they still believe in punitive consequences such as suspension instead of support and trauma informed work that supports the SEL competencies. Ultimately, consistency of practice expresses the culture shift and provides the growth opportunity to improve the quality of the work while also demonstrating the benefits of implementing SEL.

Another theme that arose from the interviews was consistent opportunities, adequate resources, & relevant curriculum. In order to consistently implement SEL, adequate resources must be available. For example, age appropriate curriculum is an essential part of a successful implementation, but T1, T3, T4, and T5 echoed each other about different schools having access to different programming. T1 shared,

When the curriculum is too young-minded or not culturally relevant for our kids, we lose them. It needs to discuss topics that the kids can relate to and are interested in learning about or speaking about. We shouldn't all be made to use the same curriculum throughout the district because interest varies within a building, and they definitely vary throughout an entire district. This type of autonomy benefits the students when the leadership is knowledgeable and makes SEL implementation a top priority.

Regarding consistent opportunities, adequate resources, & relevant curriculum, T4 shared, "The DVDs were outdated because of the content which was sometimes older in dates and also because most of their classrooms were outfitted with technology that no longer utilized DVD drives." Resource concerns were revealed again by T5 by sharing,

Even when the files were moved from dvd to a digital file, there were over a hundred folders that you need to go through to get the material. It was not teacher friendly, and at least 60% of the time, the students were not captivated by the content. I don't have time to go exploring separate content because I need to use that time for the instructional planning for my content. My area is a tested area, and that is part of my evaluation.

A2, T2, and T3 further stressed the need to consider sensory items and peace corners. A2 shared,

the sterile feel found in many of the schools because of paint choices and other physical elements could be an easier resource fix. There are even sensory items that the students can make, and murals that the art class could paint. The students would need to be able to contribute and participate in order to make the curriculum more relevant.

There are multiple ways to build on-going practices that are meaningful and curriculum based. T3 shared,

We can add mood lamps, peace corners in every classroom and other things that are easy to create. If they are easy to create or obtain, we are more likely to consistently facilitate SEL and the curriculum would naturally become more relevant because the students and teachers could build their sense of community while they create these spaces together and discuss topics that they encountered in school.

Overall, all participants expressed the belief that adequate resources were necessary and that special care should be taken to insure that they were of good quality, easily accessible to teachers, and relevant to students. Consistent opportunities for teachers and students to incorporate relevant SEL curriculum was stressed as an essential key to successful administrator and teacher facilitation of SEL. All of the teacher participants explained that leader autonomy could lead to the purchase of a subpar curriculum that fails to engage students with culturally relevant learning opportunities. A1 stated, “Teachers constantly complain about the lack of urban video clips or scenarios pictures in the curriculum.”

Availability also speaks to the ease of use for teachers. All participants expressed that adding more work to teachers would not prove effective. They expressed the importance of administrators scheduling time for the team and teachers to preplan and distribute easily accessible SEL lessons and activities to all teachers. Such time helps avoid the lack of implementation due to the lack of time dedicated to plan it and it improves the quality of that which is planned because it offers time for administrators and teachers to internalize the lessons so that they are applicable to more than classroom instruction.

Table 4

Code and Theme Categories to Research Question 2

Codes	Themes	RQ
Talking Explicit teaching Before school		RQ2: What are the perceptions of administrators and teachers of the strategies that should be used to facilitate SEL within the classroom as espoused by CASEL?
During school Administrators Teachers Parents Peers Peer pressure Time to think Repair harm	Conferences	RQ2: What are the perceptions of administrators and teachers of the strategies that should be used to facilitate SEL within the classroom as espoused by CASEL?
Accountability Strategies Contracts Goal setting Support Multiple	Behavior plans Service learning	RQ2: What are the perceptions of administrators and teachers of the strategies that should be used to facilitate SEL within the classroom as espoused by CASEL?
Project-based learning Culturally relevant Community service Internships Roles	Leadership	RQ2: What are the perceptions of administrators and teachers of the strategies that should be used to facilitate SEL within the classroom as espoused by CASEL?
Opportunities Training Ambassadors Classroom Community Administrators		RQ2: What are the perceptions of administrators and teachers of the strategies that should be used to facilitate SEL within the classroom as espoused by CASEL?
Teachers SEL coaches Custodians Bus drivers Support staff Wraparound services Behavior specialist		RQ2: What are the perceptions of administrators and teachers of the strategies that should be used to facilitate SEL within the classroom as espoused by CASEL?

Findings for RQ2

What are the perceptions of administrators and teachers of the strategies that should be used to facilitate SEL within the classroom as espoused by CASEL?

Conferences are a valuable tool for assisting with teacher facilitation of SEL. When asked about effective strategies, conferences emerged. A1 and A3 referenced teacher student conferences and student, teacher, parent conferences. For example, A1 shared,

Relationship skills are best built through relating to others, and in addition to classroom experiences, our students need time with teachers away from the classroom to discuss sensitive issues and re-establish the expectations and their needs.

A3 further substantiated the need for conferences by sharing,

Many of our students operate by different rules in their homes and neighborhood. So, the main way for us to learn to be inclusive is to encourage conversations between administrators, teachers, parents, and students, and we do this by having conferences, restorative circles, and peer mediation sessions.

Differences emerged through the responses of A1, A3, and T2, T3, and T4, but all expressed the need for continuity through the inclusion of administrator student conferences and administrator staff student conferences. For example, T3 explained,

There is a great need for accountability. Parents are not coming to the school, and administrators are not suspending the students, but we have to get them to do what they are supposed to do. Talking to them helps, and they see that the

administrators and teachers both expect them to make responsible decisions and behave well in class. Many of us feel parents should have to come to the school for conferences, and with major infractions, the teachers should be able to meet with the teacher and student before students are sent back to class.

A2, T1, and T5 referenced the benefits of peer conferences and peace circles.

Overall, all participants echoed the sentiment that conferences were a good source to secure the root causes for behavior and ultimately provide administrators and teachers with information that would help them select the most informed and relevant methods for the facilitation of student SEL. For instance, T1 noted,

Students have a voice, and they act out when they perceive that they are not heard. Therefore, we should provide regular opportunities for students to speak and be heard. It won't always be pretty, but the practice grants them opportunities to learn and improve their communication and socioemotional skills. They need chances to fix their own problems in peace circles and peer conferences. We want students to learn to become their own advocate and this also grants them the chance learn how to practice all of the SEL competencies.

When asked about effective strategies, all eight participants named behavior plans as a vital tool for teacher facilitation of SEL. A2, T1, and T5 stressed the value found in mediation sessions and the incorporation of problem solving exercises. A1, A2, A3, T2, T4, and T5 spoke to the importance of self-management documents and behavior contracts. A1, A3, and T1, T2, T3, T4, and T5 suggested the use of check in check out forms and placed significant emphasis on both individual and group therapy as well as

school incorporation of therapeutic, trauma informed practices. Lastly, all participants noted the importance of modeling the expectations and explicitly teaching of the SEL and restorative practice competences and expectations. All participants agreed that students need behavior plans to set obtainable goals and clearly communicate the layers of support that will be provided to help students reach their goals. For instance, A1 provided shared,

One of the most important things is planning for the expected behavior. Students don't know what is expected of them in formal settings, so they typically incorporate the behaviors that are acceptable in their home or neighborhood environment. In many urban cases, those behaviors are not always socially conducive to school settings. Therefore, we have to teach them the behaviors that will help them navigate school and also comfort them by acknowledging what we will do to help them become successful with their new skill set.

One of the themes from the interviews illustrated that service learning would be advantageous for teacher facilitation of SEL. A2 referenced service learning by saying, "Our students need more opportunities to see the competences modeled and practice the competences."

A3 also expressed the importance of students seeing service learning by noting, "This should be done through multiple service learning opportunities. Our graduation requirements include this expectation."

The need for service learning was further supported by A1 who passionately spoke about the need for skill building through service learning projects. A1 further explained that project-based learning would lend itself to these service learning

opportunities that would not only be academically rigorous, but also culturally relevant and provide the SEL opportunities along with a connection to college and career readiness. All participants completely agreed with the need for relevance through community service.

T2 stated,

Schools have become very college focused, but all kids still need career preparation as well. Most students would benefit from SEL opportunities that include service learning through internships. Not only would they see the competencies modeled, but they would have the opportunities to apply the competencies to situations that extend beyond the school and provide real world application opportunities that would give SEL a higher purpose and value.

However, seven participants (A1, A2, A3, T2, T3, T4, T5) noted that they believed students needed more leadership training. T5 commented,

Leadership opportunities are a must. Students can serve as ambassadors who are cornerstones to a student-centered school. This group could represent the student body through service opportunities and provide communication on behalf of the student body as needed. Another leadership opportunity is student government which could also give a voice to the student body while providing relevant opportunities for student to practice the SEL competencies with teacher facilitation/support. Beyond that, teachers can provide leadership opportunities that facilitate SEL growth by also varying the students' role in the traditional classroom setting. Ultimately, the classroom should be flipped to include

classroom managers, material managers, and other student leadership roles that makes the classroom student centered. There are many programs that would support this including Leed2Feed, Leader in Me, and Boys Town.

All participants referenced the need to have a collective approach to teachers facilitating student SEL growth which includes support staff. A1, A2, A3, T3, T4, and T5 all referenced the importance of incorporating SEL practices to provide academic support, and they all mentioned tutoring and school counseling services. The school counselor was mentioned as a natural connection between academic and socioemotional expectations. A2 explained,

The counselor doesn't punish students and maintains confidentiality unless there is a threat to harm oneself or others. For that reason, students can be vulnerable and establish a different level of trust that helps administrators and teachers facilitate SEL growth.

A1, A2, A3, and T1, T3 stressed the need for mentors, wrap around services, community partnerships, social workers, and psychologists. This group explained the variation of mental health needs that arise in their daily experiences with students. T1 remarked,

A wealth of knowledge is needed from a variety of professional and clinical personnel. Though a teacher is a content expert and learning to teach and support the needs of the whole child, it is beneficial to have relevant specialist actively involved to help with the therapeutic trauma informed practices. Mentors, counseling services, businesses, social workers, and psychologists can support the

collective message that SEL is vital to student success, but they can also help remove barriers, provide credible resources, and reduce obstacles. Ultimately, they help move the work from something that could be superficial to that which has the potential to be the catalyst in student empowerment over their achievement of self-actualization.

A1, A2, T2, T4, and T5 clearly articulated a growing addition to the budget for behavior specialists and SEL coaches. T5 said,

Just like we have instructional coaches to support teacher instructional success to the point that students become the benefactor of proficient instruction, many are also favorable of having SEL coaches to help teaches learn more about the SEL competencies and the appropriate integration of them to the academic curriculum.

A1 and A2 went a step further to express the importance of obtaining the support of behavior specialists to collect data, analyze data, and help administrators and teachers find possible interventions to support student growth in behavior and the SEL competencies. They expressed that this position yields the opportunity to increase effectiveness because it would have the singular focus of behavior improvement through restorative, SEL approaches.

Table 5

Code and Theme Categories to Research Question 3

Codes	Theme	RQ
Undergraduate training Trauma	Foundational Knowledge	RQ3: What are administrators' and teachers' perceptions of teachers' preparedness to facilitate students' SEL within the classroom, as defined by CASEL?
Special education SEL competencies Staff Emotional IQ Modeling Resources Professional development Budget	Support	RQ3: What are administrators' and teachers' perceptions of teachers' preparedness to facilitate students' SEL within the classroom, as defined by CASEL?
Rationale Time Pride Celebration	Sustainability	RQ3: What are administrators' and teachers' perceptions of teachers' preparedness to facilitate students' SEL within the classroom, as defined by CASEL?

RQ3: What are administrators' and teachers' perceptions of teachers' preparedness to facilitate students' SEL within the classroom, as defined by CASEL?

All of the administrators and teachers emphasized the need for more foundational knowledge. T5 noted,

As a college student, you are trained to teach. However, you are not trained to support students through traumatic situations such as homelessness, teen pregnancy, abortions, miscarriages, incarcerated family members, and the lack of basic needs such as water, food, shelter, and safety. Many are also not trained on conflict resolution or other things at prevent violence. Furthermore, one may not know how to safely break up a fight. Although many take a special education class, most are not confident in their ability to counsel students who are in great need or thoroughly support disorders such as emotional behavior disorder (EBD) or oppositional defiance disorder (ODD).

This expression was echoed by administrators. A2 stated,

As administrators and teachers are faced with more behavioral concerns and attempt to facilitate SEL development in youth, it sometimes triggers adults. Yet, administrators could benefit from additional trainings on how to best support teachers through the process of working through their triggers, avoiding the sensationalism of student traumatic experiences and behaviors, and serving out of their best SEL levels.

Therefore, it became clear that all participants agreed that all stakeholders needed support on understanding and applying the five SEL competencies, how they identify

with each of them, where to get credible resources and acquire professional learning and how to merge it into the curriculum. A2 and A3 stressed that the foundational support is necessary to help teachers make the paradigm shift from punitive consequences to restorative, inclusive consequences. Without the support for foundational continuous learning, the adult learning, might comply, but such can be done without the highest level of quality and application.

The participants explained what support should include. All of the teachers expressed the need for modeling from various people to include administrators, consultants, other teachers, and therapists. A1, A2, A3, T2, T3, and T5 stressed the importance of educational opportunities. A2 noted,

Educators are life learners, and although the delivery and content may change, all educators are charged to continue to learn. Administrators should build budgets that equip them to lead by example by continuing their own professional learning so that they are comfortable enough to redeliver it in a manner that is applicable to their school population. It is also imperative that they know it well enough to model it for students, staff, and all other stakeholders. Leaders are also responsible for protecting enough of the budget to allot enough to grant significant opportunities for teachers to continue their professional development, and student need funding to have relevant curriculum. A leader supports educational opportunities by allocating funding, participating in training, engaging in relevant activities and redeliveries, and making training available to others. He or she is also responsible for protecting time needed for critical support

and the alignment of the facilitation of SEL to the collective school values, mission, and vision.

Critical support through the living daily work surfaced again from all participants. A1 explained,

Leaders are responsible for knowing the common values, goals, and purpose. They must emphatically know their “why,” and they must be able to clearly delineate to the staff and other stakeholders why they do what they do in their building. This can be shown through regular assessments of the educators’ alignment to the group’s definition of competence, accountability, and value added to students.

Ultimately, the participants reminded me that educators face many demands. They want to make sure the work they do to facilitate student SEL is meaningful and helps them reach the overall purpose of student achievement in the most efficient way that best serves all of their stakeholders.

All five teachers also spoke to critical support that was sustainable and celebrated. They explained their frustration with the many changes in education throughout the years. T2, T3, T4 referenced changes within academic standards, programs, building leadership, and expectations. A1 stated,

Leaders need time to remain the same building and help establish a culture that is conducive to critical support. Each community has a different parent and political base that defines support in different ways. Therefore, partnerships and funding can be secured, but it is helpful to remain the building leader long enough to guide

the most effective use of data analysis, funding, partnerships, and all other resources.

All participants explained that what is sustained is celebrated, and what is sustained and celebrated is noticed by all stakeholders. Sustainability gives all involved parties enough time to safely learn and evolve through a deep and effective implementation that becomes the way things are done in that school and community. The celebration is something that demonstrates pride and appreciation to all stakeholders. It is yet another way to model the SEL competencies to parents, partners, students, administrators, district office personnel, and teachers.

Recap of Evidence of Quality

Multiple measures were taken to increase the quality of the study. Lodico et al. (2010) clearly explained that the participants perception and the researcher's ability to accurately record information impacts credibility. For that reason, I purposefully selected participants whose perception was directly connected to the purpose of the study. Each participant was responsible for facilitating the implementation of SEL, and all selected individuals had a minimum of three years of experience, but most had least seven years of experience. This allowed individuals to speak from a wealth of experience that allowed for comparison of the more punitive measures before the SEL training as well as the inclusive SEL model. After listening to the recordings and reviewing my notes multiple times, I incorporated an annotative notetaking process where I took notes in the margin, captured codes, identified common themes, and highlighted those supporting details with corresponding colors. I also incorporated member checking as a means of increasing the

level of accuracy. The participants reviewed the transcribed interviews and were able to make sure they represented the deep, rich, accurate accounts of their perceptions (Yin, 2017).

Outcomes

Within this data collection process, I applied CASEL's SEL framework, and it is centered upon five SEL competencies. This study addressed the problem that administrators and teachers are confident that teachers are trained to manage instructional content and delivery, but they are concerned about their influence as facilitators of student SEL behaviors. The purpose of this study was to obtain a rich understanding of administrator and teacher perceptions of the teacher's role as the facilitator of SEL behaviors. Findings indicate that the participants have clear expectations about facilitating SEL, utilizing strategies, and educator preparation. Teachers desire a stronger connection between parents, students, and the school. Teachers accept the responsibility of facilitating SEL with administrators supporting teachers through this process.

The results of this study confirmed the research problem. The findings indicate a need for more in-depth preparation. The participants revealed a gap in foundational knowledge in the following areas: SEL, restorative practices, therapeutic, and trauma informed practices. The majority of the teachers could only speak strongly about three of the five SEL competencies. It also became apparent that as educators work to increase their foundational knowledge and implement their training, they will need critical support from administrators and other stakeholders to participate in ongoing professional development to gain strategies and become better prepared to be highly effective teacher

facilitators of student SEL. However, much is needed to effectively implement this process. Themes that arose from the perceptions of administrators and teachers were team approaches, professional learning, consistent exposure and implementation opportunities, adequate resources, and relevant curriculum with application opportunities for staff and students.

The study findings also revealed strategies that can be used as teachers facilitate SEL. A variety of types of conferences, an extensive behavior plan that details goals and support, a variety of service opportunities, and the partnership of a wide variety of relevant support staff. The strategies should be implemented by all stakeholders, and they must be maintained long enough for staff to learn, model, assess and make any necessary adjustments or determine the genuine effect on the lives of students, staff, and all other stakeholders.

Project Deliverable

Though the study is based on participants who have experience in education, one of the strongest commonalities found in the study is the need for professional learning. The professional learning is needed because educators are confident in their ability to teach the content, but they are not confident in their ability to effectively incorporate the inclusive instructional practices of all five CASEL SEL competencies: self-awareness, self-management, responsible decision making, relationship skills, social and awareness. The professional development project, Collective SRT, is designed to provide administrators, teachers, and other stakeholders support to improve the current inclusive, student-centered SEL implementation.

Section 3: The Project

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to obtain a rich understanding of the perceptions of administrators and teachers regarding the teacher's role as the facilitator of SEL. Study findings revealed a need for professional development/training curriculum and materials. Educators have expressed that they receive an inadequate amount of training (McClelland, Tominey, Schmitt, & Duncan, 2017). They have also spoken about the quality of the professional development leaving them with implicit understanding rather than their desired explicit understanding (Kendziora & Yoder, 2016). The needs for professional development extend beyond this study and are substantiated by a collaborative effort among states to establish what would best support the work of the districts related to the implementation of SEL (Schwartz & Dusenbury, 2018). The current study revealed that while attempting to facilitate student SEL, educators often realize that they need assistance expanding their knowledge so they can better facilitate their own understanding and application of the SEL competencies (Talvio, Hietajärvi, Matischeck-Jauk, & Lonka, 2019). This is extremely important because many preservice educator programs omit any requirement for teachers to receive extensive training on SEL (Almerico, 2018). Analysis of data collected from three administrators and four teachers through face-to-face interviews exposed the following themes: (a) team approach among all stakeholders, (b) professional learning, (c) consistent opportunities for adult exposure and implementation, (d) adequate resources, and (e) relevant curriculum and continuous opportunities for practice with students. The development of the professional development/training curriculum and materials address

all of the themes that were exposed through the study, but it would primarily help reduce the barriers associated with the educators' lack of expertise in SEL (see Cressey, Bettencourt, Donahue-Keegan, Villegas-Reimers, & Wong, 2017).

Rationale

In a Southern school district in the United States, the problem is that even though administrators and teachers are confident that teachers were trained to manage instructional content and delivery, they remain concerned about their influence as facilitators of students' SEL behaviors. The findings from this study indicated that a professional learning opportunity would be most suitable as the project for this project study. The district has monthly administrator trainings and a minimum of two district-level professional learning opportunities per semester for teachers. Individual schools have the autonomy to have professional learning opportunities as needed, and most of the schools host weekly professional learning opportunities. This professional development/training curriculum and materials will serve as an extension to the district community of practice that administrators attend monthly. As a result of this project study, school leaders will extend the preexisting district communities of practice to include the formation of school-level communities of practice that meet a minimum of four times during the school year. The project curriculum and materials including the PowerPoint in Appendix A will be used for the four meetings.

Review of Literature

This section includes current literature. Many database searches revealed that professional learning communities are effective ways to help administrators and teachers

facilitate SEL. I used the following databases to find literature: ProQuest, Academic Journal, Ebscohost, Child and Adolescent Psychology, Journal of Educational Psychology, and Google Scholar. My search terms were *professional development*, *professional learning communities*, *SEL*, *restorative practices*, and *trauma informed practices*. The study findings reveal the need for administrator and teacher support including resources that can assist administrators and teachers with problems concerning their influence as facilitators of students' SEL behaviors. The district has different clusters, and each cluster has a different demographic that comes with unique needs. For that reason, students benefit from schools possessing the autonomy to make ongoing school-based changes that support the district expectations of SEL. A fragmented approach to professional learning would not be as effective (Ping, Schellings, & Beijaard, 2018). This makes their social emotional learning restorative practices trauma informed practices plan and implementation process most relevant and effective for their particular student base.

Professional Learning Community

Professional learning communities provide various opportunities. For example, teachers gain opportunities to grow through collaboration, shared values, and the overall unity of the common organization (Turner, Christensen, Kackar-Cam, Fulmer, & Trucano, 2018). Teachers benefit from opportunities to grow in personal and professional student interventions (Poulou, Bassett, & Denham, 2018). Students benefit as teachers demonstrate intrinsic, instructional practices developed through collaborative, supportive and motivational discourse (Kierner, Gröschner, Kunter, & Seidel, 2018). According to

Hamilton, Forde, and McMahon (2018), the ongoing leadership team professional development method provides an opportunity to increase participants' level of expertise. However, leadership team members must be purposefully selected and properly coached so that participants receive enough collaborative professional learning community experiences to encourage collective responsibility (Vanblaere & Devos, 2018). Collaboration has been stressed to remove the privatization associated with many decisions and professional learning models, and privatization was replaced with group activities that require dialogue and increase teacher efficacy (Zheng, Yin, & Li, 2018). This type of collaboration can lead to shared leadership, increase ownership and trust, and empower those who are closest to students to make better decisions (French & Lebeaux, 2016). In the current study, the participants in the training may increase the quality of the implementation by serving as SEL coaches (see Meyers, Domitrovich, Dissi, Trejo, & Greenberg, 2019). The dialogue should be ongoing and reflective (Schaap & de Bruijn, 2018). This should allow the participants to measure the impact on teacher facilitation of SEL to support students' academic and life skill growth (see Foster, 2017).

SEL Practices

The SEL curriculum is beneficial to closing gaps in lower-income schools by improving students' executive functioning abilities and school readiness (Wenz-Gross, Yoo, Upshur, & Gambino, 2018). From kindergarten through 12th grade, students and staff have increased chances of experiencing a wide range of emotions and difficult experiences (McLeod et al., 2016). SEL is a tool that can support student and staff achievement because of the growth in their ability to cope with and work through

difficulties by using emotional skills (Brackett, 2018). The focus on SEL should start early, but in any grade level effective implementation can reduce conduct problems and hyperactivity and improve learning and regulation of emotions (Low, Smolkowski, Cook, & Desfosses, 2019). Climate changes propelled by SEL can increase racial equity in academia (Gregory & Fergus, 2017). Such curricula can be funded through ESSA if intervention evidence demonstrates that it is impacting climate and positive learning environments (Wrabel, Hamilton, Whitaker, & Grant, 2018). This type of learning environment has the ability to reduce dropout rates, increase attendance rates, and improve student achievement (Rubens, Schoenfeld, Schaffer, & Leah, 2018). One factor that influences effective implementation is the foundation for an effective start for teachers to facilitate the process with fidelity (Shapiro, Kim, Robitaille, LeBuffe, & Ziemer, 2018). Consistent ongoing professional learning is needed to support teachers' systematic facilitation of students' SEL (Weissberg, 2019). This professional development should reflect regularly occurring assessments of the implementation process and its impact (Stalker, Wu, Evans, & Smokowski, 2018).

This foundation should also include a community approach to universal SEL practices that are merged into academic curricula and practiced consistently (Nickerson, 2018). The community should include not only local districts but also the entire state because the emotional intelligence impact of the effective implementation of SEL relates to bullying prevention, violence reduction, and academic improvements (Divecha & Brackett, 2019). This is consistent with the findings of Hoffmann, Ivcevic, and Brackett (2018) who realized that students and educators bring their feelings to schools, and using

SEL as one of the tools to improve the climate improves adult and student interactions, engagement, and growth opportunities in academics and other aspects of learning.

Restorative Practices

The professional learning will include the five SEL competencies (self-awareness, self-management, relationship skills, social awareness, and responsible decision-making) to help students learn to repair harm through the use of inclusive, restorative practices. Such practices will support in-depth student growth as opposed to surface level growth (Acosta et al., 2019). The combination of SEL and restorative practices can support positive mental health (Hymel, Low, Starosta, Gill, & Schonert-Reichl, 2018).

Restorative practices are a method that can be used schoolwide to improve student SEL, and this relational behavior management approach can provide greater harmony; increase empathy toward others; and increase awareness, accountability, respect, and thinking (Kehoe, Bourke-Taylor, & Broderick, 2018).

Providing professional development as a continuous learning opportunity involves many advantages. Mackay (2017) stated that “practitioners need to invest in professional development to enhance credibility, job security and employment prospects...link[ed] to the notion of career capital” (p. 3). Teachers are leaders who impact students daily, and their facilitation of SEL is impacted by their ability to develop their own self-awareness through continuous learning and self-reflection (Rubens et al., 2018). However, having a dual role to teach and facilitate SEL can elicit revelations about one’s self, and professional development can help the person navigate that process in a professional, healthy manner (Kramarski & Kohen, 2017). It has been common for teachers to attempt

to utilize instructional resources that are culturally relevant, but teachers in the current study have also become responsible for modeling the behaviors of a culturally responsible educator, and this skill can be collectively developed through professional development (see Smolcic & Katunich, 2017). Although educators often return to school to earn advanced degrees and certifications, those options require additional finances, and this school-based professional development option provides the opportunity for educators to continue their education for free. This option can also provide a platform that launches individual studies regarding educators' self-awareness and the process for facilitating self-awareness in students (Sulisworo, Nasir, & Maryani, 2017). Although teachers attend many professional development sessions, they are often centered around content and instructional practices; however, this project provides opportunities to propel the growth mindset and improve communication and achievement based upon understanding one's emotions and the impact those emotions have on the decisions that are made within the classroom and in the individual's life (Dusenbury & Weissberg, 2017).

Professional development should be intentional and specific to the needs of the teachers. Targeted professional development increases the frequency and quality of the implementation of the teacher implementation of the acquired skills (Simonsen et al., 2017). Tailoring professional development can improve the quality of the instruction by helping teachers adapt to the expanding role of an educator in a supportive, optimistic manner (McLennan, McIlveen, & Perera, 2017). Educators often complain of not having enough time to complete everything that is required, but tailoring the professional development project provides the opportunity for this project to address the evidence-

based SEL practices that the participants need (Gage, MacSuga-Gage, & Crews, 2017). Teachers are not forced to be strong in SEL, but in this professional development project they can learn to improve their emotional intelligence and become better facilitators of student SEL (see Doley & Leshem, 2017). However, SEL development is not a quick process. Instead, it becomes a way of life, and although it is not commonly embedded in undergraduate programs, the professional development project may help close gaps in that area while also promoting opportunities for advanced teacher and administrator leadership (see Markowitz, Thowdis, & Gallagher, 2018). This professional development project also has the potential to help educators help themselves as it relates to their socioemotional health, which sometimes gets neglected (see Greenberg, Mahfouz, Davis, & Turksma, 2019).

The literature stresses the importance of engaging the adults, helping adults see the relevance, having a collective vision, providing equity of voice, and repairing harm (Gregory, Soffer, Gaines, Hurley, & Karikehalli, 2016). Such adult engaged should be multi-tiered instead of targeted teacher consultation (Mayworm, Sharkey, Hunnicutt, & Schiedel, 2016). Stowe (2016) explained that PLCs are effective implementation processes for restorative practices because they provide ongoing opportunities for continuous, organized, reflective idea sharing.

Trauma-Informed Practices

The second component for teacher facilitation of SEL is trauma informed practices which are also best supported by teacher administrator and teachers learning through professional learning community which can build capacity for long-term

collaboration and student and adult growth (Hanson et al., 2019). The importance of professional learning and the utilization of an expert and providing high quality content to facilitate the ongoing systemic professional learning opportunity is also supported is a key insight highlighted in the literature (Dusenbury & Weissberg, 2018). The ongoing professional learning opportunities would offer multitiered systems of support that should work to reduce and barriers that teachers have when attempting to facilitate trauma informed practices to improve student mastery of SEL competencies (Reinbergs & Fefer, 2018). Using trauma informed practices to support teacher facilitation of SEL is best accomplished in an ongoing process that provides opportunities for teachers to have continuous learning opportunities, model the trauma informed SEL practices, and receive feedback (Brackett, Elbertson, Simmons, & Stern, 2019).

Project Description

The collected data and review of literature supported the need for professional development/training (McClelland et al., 2017). The professional development project will occur at district locations that are already preselected for monthly leadership training, and the leaders will redeliver it monthly in their own schools. This training will yield the following: curriculum and materials, an ongoing capacity building in effective SEL implementation, data analysis, collaboration about next steps. The project includes a Power Point Presentation that will be used for the three sessions. The sessions will be a part of the preexisting monthly leadership communities of practice.

Resources, Existing Supports, Barriers, Solutions

The district possesses a plethora of resources that would support the implementation of this project through the SEL professional development. For instance, the district level communities of practice can include expert support from CASEL, the superintendent (who publishes on SEL), district SEL coaches who have already been extensively trained in SEL, school-based restorative and trauma informed practices. The experts will use laptops, Promethean Boards, data projectors, and handouts, books, online and hard copy text curriculum resources. It is also imperative to consider the participants as resources because they can share practical experiences, and they will be able to share their resources and practical experiences with each other for reflective and informative purposes.

The largest barrier is the paradigm shift that must occur from adult learners to achieve collective buy-in from all participants. The shift from punitive to inclusive practices requires educators to learn a new way of doing things and it causes adults and students to work with emotions while without the option of excluding each other. This inclusive process not only requires time to implement in the actual facilitation of SEL, but it also takes a time commitment of ongoing training, planning, implementation, assessment, and reflection. This time is also necessary to determine the effectiveness of the implementation. Therefore, it takes a unified approach to commit to staying the course long enough to determine the benefits and needs, but this unified approach requires systemic practices that are also consistently implemented in a proficient manner

building wide. Building cultures where the entire team buys in enough to implement SEL with fidelity can be a barrier if the paradigm shift is not made by all staff.

Proposal for Implementation

The project will be ongoing and at a minimum span a course of one year. Initially, leadership teams will meet, and the leadership teams will redeliver the information to their local schools and also work within their schools in a school PLC to build capacity and apply it in the school setting. The leaders will meet for one day during the following months: July, October, and March. After each of the leader meetings, the staff will meet twice a month to receive a redelivery of the district content and reflect on current data, create next steps, and update their plan.

Roles and Responsibilities of Participants

My role in this project is one who creates a professional development for administrators and teachers in a specific district as identified by this study. I will serve as the presenter for the monthly district professional development community of practice sessions. At the school level, principals, assistant principals, SEL coaches, and teacher leaders will redeliver the information they receive from the project to their school-based PLCs. By the last session, the students will also be able to add their input to the feedback provided by the principals, assistant principals, socioemotional coaches, and teachers. Although the participants will remain the same, and I will be present, the goal is to give a variety of participants the opportunity to expand their capacity and widen their engagement. Therefore, various members of the team will gain the opportunity to

facilitate the PLC, and all participants will gain an opportunity to provide input and engage in the implementation process.

Project Evaluation Plan

Evaluation is a critical factor in determining effectiveness of the professional development. The initial step in the professional development will include a pre-assessment. At the end of the professional development, participants will complete a self-developed outcome-based post observation questionnaire form on SEL. Two months later, the same professional development participants will also complete a self-developed outcome-based SEL teacher and student excellence form. The responses from both documents will be reviewed in their totality to assess the quality of this professional development project. It will also serve as a formative opportunity for administrators and teachers to assess the quality of the facilitation process and determine what changes should be made for the upcoming semester. At the end of the school year, the same participants will complete both assessments to once again gauge the success of the facilitation of SEL, assess the need for additional professional development / support, and determine what role this professional development has played in improving administrator and teacher perceptions regarding teacher facilitation student SEL growth.

Project Implications

This study yields useful data relating to the perceptions of administrators and teachers of teachers facilitating SEL with students through the use of SEL, restorative practices and trauma informed practices through the CASEL framework. The key findings from teachers were used to development the professional learning project. The

findings may encourage a variety of district and school level budget allotments and stakeholder growth opportunities that would support the following findings: team approach, professional learning, consistent opportunities for adult exposure and implementation, adequate resources, and relevant curriculum, continuous opportunities for practice with students, and support.

Social Change and Benefit to the Community

Examples include but are not limited to the following: conferences with teachers, students, parents, administrators, support staff, and peers; behavior contracts, problem solving exercises, check-ins/checkouts, self-management documents, mentorships, mediation, meditation, explicit teaching, therapy; community service, internships, leadership training, staff training, skills building; wrap around services, community partnerships, social worker growth, school counselor growth, behavior specialist growth, SEL coach growth, academic support, and student growth. Additional examples include increases in quantity and the quality of professional knowledge and critical support. This entails stakeholder knowledge of the five competencies, understandings of how to obtain resources, access to professional learning, a critical understanding of how to merge SRT in to the academic space; modeling from leadership; a clear understanding of the “why;” competence, accountability, and value added; sustainability; and celebration.

The project may bring forth the critical role administrators can play in communicating and supporting a vision that protects the students and staff by protecting the culture, time, and funds necessary to help teachers facilitate SEL and positively impact student achievement. This collaborative effort can widen engagement and

improve the capacity of the students and educators within the building, district, and community.

Section 4: Reflections and Conclusions

The concluding section of this study includes my reflections on this study. I expose the strengths and limitations of the project related to addressing the perceptions of administrators and teachers regarding teacher facilitation of student SEL. This section also includes insights I gained related to the implications for social change, recommendations for alternative approaches, and future research.

Project Strengths and Limitations

Voelkel and Chrispeels (2017) found a positive correlation between engaging, effective professional learning communities and collective teacher efficacy that can improve student success. Elias (2019) supported a professional development cohort that is ongoing to invest in staff and effectively implement SEL for teachers and students. The current project had numerous strengths. First, this type of professional development is supportive to all stakeholders. The research indicated the benefit of ongoing professional learning opportunities that provide collaborative and reflective opportunities (Seglem, Vanzant, & Bonner, 2017). Based on these findings, this professional learning opportunity project will be ongoing and inclusive of all rather than a few select individuals. The resources are also a strength of this project because the information comes from experts in the field and is combined with the relevant experiences of the participants. Another strength of the project is that it is in alignment with the district's mission and vision. Therefore, any budget or pupil resource would be in alignment with the district's goals and purpose. Not only is this a district and school building level

indicator, but it is also supported by federal government ESSA funding for school improvement.

Despite of the strengths in this project, there were some limitations. The interviews revealed concerns with levels of support. Teachers expressed a need to have a safe, nonpunitive environment where they were comfortable adjusting to the changes associated with the inclusive, nonpunitive SEL approach. Teachers also expressed the need to see SEL implemented by a variety of educators, administrators, mentors, community members, and support staff. Teachers did not want to be solely responsible for the facilitation of SEL. Instead, they stressed the need for systemic implementation from transportation, nutrition services, noninstructional staff, and teachers, and they requested help from the parent liaison to connect the parents to SEL competencies. Consequently, the training will be available to all staff and redelivered throughout the year.

Another limitation is the lack of stakeholder belief and comfort with their ability to properly navigate their feelings and SEL's effectiveness or ability to improve behaviors and educational outcomes. The interviews revealed that administrators, teachers, and students faced challenges with identifying their feelings. Participants also expressed a level of discomfort with working through these challenges in a public environment (school). All interviewees expressed their need for further development in at least one of the following five SEL competency areas: self-awareness, self-management, relationship skills, social awareness, and responsible decision-making. Therefore, it was important to make sure the content is delivered by experts and essential that the

participants have access to relevant resources, ongoing professional learning, and supportive environments to implement the practices, receive feedback, and make the necessary adjustments.

Recommendations for Alternative Approaches

An alternative approach could have been to send teachers to additional training. However, schoolwide teacher trainings would pose many additional problems. The training would require funding, space, time, and materials. Also, the training would need to be ongoing to increase the effectiveness of the training, and that would require more funding. Another alternative would be to hire a consultant or higher SEL coaches for each school. Both of these approaches require funding that may not be available for this purpose. Also, making the consultant available to speak to all schools would require a huge venue, time, an evaluation tool to measure the effectiveness of a large session to make sure participants gained new information they could apply to their assigned school. This is significant because all school demographics are similar, so their stakeholder expectations vary and their SEL needs are not identical. Furthermore, using SEL coaches would require scheduling for them to support all schools. If funding is not available for hiring enough SEL coaches, this could be a rushed process.

Scholarship, Project Development, and Leadership Change

This process has taught me much as it relates to the importance of being a continuous learner. The initial stage taught me the importance of research. I realized the importance of not claiming to be an authority on topics. From that stance, I learned much about identifying a problem, forming a purpose statement, creating the research

questions, determining the methodology, and aligning everything to the problem and questions. I found that a comprehensive review of the literature is a tedious yet informative process. There are many databases, search terms, and technical approaches to finding relevant, peer-reviewed research. I also learned how to follow a systematic qualitative research design, conduct research, analyze my findings, and receive descriptive feedback on my research and writing.

Scholar and Practitioner

This process has the potential to further develop the SEL skills addressed in the study. My knowledge of professional learning communities, communities of practice, SEL, restorative practices, CASEL, trauma-informed practices, Goleman's SEL, and Bandura's social cognitive theory was expanded. It is my hope that this process was one critical part of my life journey of learning, application, reflection, and growth, and that my life will be forever connected to a larger community of people with whom I can share that which has been learned in SEL: relationship skills, self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and responsible decision-making.

Project Developer

After collecting and analyzing the data from this study, I went through a process to design a project that would address the perceptions of administrators and teachers regarding teachers facilitating student SEL. Prior to developing the project, I reviewed many projects. I also reviewed the responses and findings from the participants. In addition, I reviewed the scholarly literature to determine credible, research-based practices that would support educator needs. Findings led me to choose a preexisting

structure: monthly district administrator meetings. This required speaking with those who supervise leadership development at the district level to avoid adding much more to teachers' responsibilities. Schools were already meeting twice a month, and at least one of those meetings included agenda items reflective of the district meeting. Therefore, there would be fewer barriers to this type of implementation process. The expert-led, collaborative, district leadership team communities of practice that will be redelivered in school-level PLCs will assist with the development of professional knowledge, positive learning environments, communication, and professionalism, which are all evaluative standards for the state. The topic of discussion will also be in alignment with district educator standards of excellence.

Reflection on the Importance of the Work

I envision this work helping to close the gap in the literature related to administrator and teacher perceptions regarding teachers facilitating SEL. During a time when educators are charged with supporting students who face a variety of traumatic situations, and students often have to relive them through social media, it is imperative to support administrators and teachers as their role of student support widens. I was able to complete doctoral work on a practical topic that is impacting administrators, teachers, and students within the district, and the skills learned from this research and project can benefit students, administrators, and educators' SEL growth. The study has the potential to extend positive growth beyond school years and school walls. This aligns with practitioners creating positive environments that foster growth and achievement that is culturally relevant and a prerequisite for college and career readiness.

Through this study, I gained an in-depth understanding of administrator and teacher needs in relation to SEL, restorative practices, and trauma-informed practices as defined by CASEL and inclusive of Goleman's and Bandura's theories. Findings also revealed the importance of evaluating the effectiveness of PLCs and making sure the evaluation data are used to inform the length and quality of the ongoing professional learning opportunities. This work can serve as a key resource within the district, but with the federal emphasis on SEL it could also serve as an essential portion of information for other districts who are looking to help administrators and teachers facilitate the SEL process with students by investing in their staff (see Mackay, 2017).

Implications, Applications, and Directions for Future Research

In this study, I explored the perceptions and strategies of administrators and teachers regarding teachers facilitating SEL. The findings improved understanding of the ways to implement SEL, restorative practices, and trauma-informed practices. There is an opportunity to build educators' capacity through improved facilitation of SEL cultivation of positive learning environments. Doing so could improve teacher retention, teaching and learning, and student achievement (Rubens et al., 2018).

Individual, Family, Organizational, Societal Impact

The potential impact for positive social change is present because the study addressed the social interactions through administrator and teacher perceptions of teachers facilitating student SEL growth. This directly impacts administrators, teachers, and students, but it indirectly impacts those who come into contact with administrators, teachers, and students. For example, student and staff growth in SEL would not be

limited to their behaviors in school. Students and staff would have the opportunity to practice the same skills in their home environments, and students and staff make up the majority of the educational organization. Therefore, the impact of the study has the potential to be widespread. The body of research regarding SEL in schools is expanding, and the potential impact for positive social change in society is also growing because districts are writing them into evaluation measures and professional development training target outcomes (Kendziora & Yoder, 2016). The federal government is also recognizing the importance of SEL in schools (Gregory & Fergus, 2017).

Implications and Recommendations

The findings of this study revealed administrator and teacher needs for professional learning in SEL, restorative practices, and trauma-informed practices. Preparation is an ongoing educator process, yet there is room for continuous learning in the areas included in this project: SEL, restorative practices, and trauma-informed practices. Minor changes to the tool with those populations could further close the gap in the literature related to teacher facilitation of SEL. This extension throughout the school and into the community could make meaningful impacts on social change in the community. Furthermore, this project provides a route to professional development that could assist with increasing capacity with administrator and teacher perceptions, preparation, and strategies that can impact the learning environment, school culture, and student outcomes.

Conclusion

My understanding of the qualitative research process has increased throughout this process. The research process is based on the exploration of the problem and identification of the gap in the literature that the researcher attempts to reduce (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). Qualitative processes differ from quantitative processes in their research questions, data collection, analysis, reporting of findings, and measures of trustworthiness (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). According to Shekhar, Prince, Finelli, Demonbrun, and Waters (2019), qualitative studies allow for rich understandings of that which is being investigated, and in the case of the current study the qualitative case study yielded opportunities for me reach understandings of teachers of administrator and teacher perspectives as they relate to teachers facilitating student SEL .

Through this process, I also gained a better understanding of sources. I learned how to use multiple databases with specific search strategies. Though there were many articles available, I gained a deeper understanding of credible and valid sources. I improved my organizational skills and gained a deeper understanding of synthesizing resources and collecting valuable information from the sources.

The IRB process and implementation of protection of the subjects was another part of my learning experience with this project. Many steps were taken to gain approval to begin the data collection process. It was equally important to communicate with the district, participants, and university to protect the participants. Beyond that, I learned about storing information in a manner that would allow the participants' identities to remain confidential.

Resilience, grit, and purpose were necessary to complete this challenging process. The process was lengthy and caused me to have a genuine respect for all scholar practitioners. There were many challenges that could be equated to failures, but there were multiple opportunities to learn from the failure, grow from failure, and embrace the humility and scholarly experience that comes from the project study process. I have struggled and feared, but I was not a coward to my fear; instead, I have grown and learned.

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Appendix A: The Project

Social Emotional Learning, Restorative Practices, Trauma Informed Practices Professional Development

Purpose: The purpose of this project is to respond to the perceptions of administrators and teachers about teachers facilitating student SEL by coaching them through the process of implementing effective strategies and sustaining SRT professional development inclusive of necessary support and resources. By the conclusion of the professional learning, the participants in the professional learning opportunities will return to their school with an SEL plan that will be updated by the administration and school based SEL team with feedback from their stakeholders. These updates will take place at least once each nine weeks, and they will continue throughout the school year. The living document will serve as a guide that clarifies and unifies their actions around SRT.

Goals: The goal of this project is to respond to the perceptions of administrators and teachers about teachers facilitating student SEL by coaching them through the process of implementing effective strategies and sustaining SRT by coaching them through the process of implementing effective strategies and sustaining SRT professional learning inclusive of necessary support and resources. The essential goals of this professional learning project are to provide valuable information, strategies and support for administrators and teachers who facilitate SEL; assess the implementation of SEL; improve the quality of the implementation of SEL in participating schools; and improve

stakeholder success with the most emphasis on student centered, inclusive opportunities to achieve a positive learning environment.

Objectives: By the conclusion of this professional learning, the participants will be able develop school based professional learning communities that utilize the knowledge of social emotional learning, restorative practices and trauma informed practices to support teacher facilitation of SEL in student learning environments. The leaders and teachers will use the SRT professional learning PD Institute based on teacher and student needs.

Learning Outcomes: Administrators and teachers will collaboratively develop a school wide SEL plan to address inclusive opportunities for students to learn in an instructional environment that also includes SEL strategies, administrative support for teachers and students, and teacher preparation to facilitate SEL.

Target Audience & Outline: components, timeline, activities

The PD is designed for all interested K-12 administrators and teachers in a school district who are already participating in a SEL community of practice. The PD will occur over a total of three days. The days will be spread over the school year to include one day in July, October, and March.

The first session will include an SEL coach, district representation, and school leadership teams. I will welcome the participants and share the goal, objectives, and learning outcomings. outline of the session. Participants will complete a pre-assessment evaluation. The remaining portion of the session will provide an opportunity for leaders to learn more about SEL, review district SEL expectations, and review district and school SEL survey data. This data will be inclusive of student, parent, and staff responses. The

team will take this information back to their home schools to review district expectations, analyze the school data, compare it the district data and identify school-based strengths and support needs.

During session two, school leadership teams will review main elements of session onehear information on restorative practices and trauma informed practices. They will use this information to draft an initial school-based SRT plan that will be updated throughout the school year. After the session, the leadership team will redeliver the restorative practice and trauma informed practices information to their staff, and the staff will review the draft and provide feedback. The team will be responsible for tracking the initial implementation of the plan.

The third session will include a presentation of information on SEL, restorative practices, and trauma informed practices, a review of school artifacts, evidence, success, and support needs. This final session will also include a culminating activity that displays the results – current year survey, resources, and strategies – from the entire school year with the plans for the upcoming school year. Lastly, participants will complete their post evaluation.

Materials, implementation plan, evaluation plan

The PD will require a data projector, participant laptops, and Internet connectivity, chart paper, markers, and pens. The space will be a multipurpose facility that allows for large group sessions, table work, and enough space for breakout sessions. The same materials will be used for the school-based redelivery. Although the PD is only four sessions, they span an entire school year.

Agenda

The sessions will begin with a 10-minute welcome and review of the norms and agenda. Next, participants will experience a one-hour expert session, a 15-minute break, and a 30-minute district session. After that, schools will experience school-based breakout sessions for 1 hour. Next, participants may break for a one-hour lunch, and return for a 30-minute school-based wrap up session inclusive of support from the expert and district representatives. Everyone will transition with a 10 minute break, and conclude with 2 hours of small group presentations. Surveys will be given to all leadership team participants during the first and last sessions. School-based stakeholders will also complete surveys in August and May.

Session 1	Time	Resources
<p>Introduction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome • Goal, Objectives, Learning Outcomes • Outline of Sessions • Pre-Assessment Evaluation Survey <p>Review</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Casel SEL <p>Practice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current implementation • What’s working? • Barriers • Needs Regarding SEL Strategies <p>Reflection</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SEL goals 	8:30 – 9:15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slides 1 - 3 • Google Form • Google Document (school note-taker) • Chart Paper – PD notetaker
	<p>Break</p> <p>9:15 – 9:30</p>	
	9:30 – 11:30	

Lunch	11:30 – 1:00	
All groups <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present What’s working • Present SEL Goals • Receive Feedback & Resources (digital) 	1:00 – 2:30	
	Break 2:30 – 2:45	
	2:45 – 3:15	
Session 2	Time	
Introduction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome • Goal, Objectives, Learning Outcomes • Outline of Sessions • Review of Conclusion from Session 1 & Provide Updates from School Based Changes & Implementation 	8:30 – 10:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chart Paper • Post – it Notes • Worrldle.com (projected on the screen – participant laptop)
	Break 10:30 – 10:40	
Review <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restorative Practices Practice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current implementation • What’s working? • Barriers • Needs related Administrative Support Reflection Create Restorative Practice Goals & Merge them with the SEL goals	10:40 – 12:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chart Paper • Markers • Google Doc.
LUNCH	12:00 – 1:00	
All groups <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present What’s working • Present merged SEL/Restorative Practice Goals • Receive Feedback & Resources (digital) 	1:00 – 2:30	
	Break 2:30 – 2:45	
	2:45 – 3:15	
Session 3		

<p>Introduction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome & Logistics (restrooms, lunch, parking, etc.) • Goal, Objectives, Learning Outcomes • Outline of Sessions • Review of Conclusion from Sessions 1 -2 & Updates from School Based Changes & Implementation 	<p>8:30 – 9:30</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Go2Meeting.com
<p>Review</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trauma Informed Practices <p>Practice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current implementation • What’s working? • Barriers • Needs Related to Teacher Preparation <p>Reflection Create Trauma Informed Practices Goals & Merge them with the Restorative Practice Goals & SEL goals</p>	<p>9:40 – 11:00</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chart Paper • Markers • Google Doc.
<p>LUNCH</p>	<p>11:00 – 12:00</p>	
<p>All groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present What’s working • Present merged SEL/Restorative/Trauma Informed Practice Plan for Facilitation of student SEL at the school level • Receive Feedback & Resources Post Professional Development Questionnaire 	<p>12:00 – 2:30</p>	<p>Google Doc</p>
	<p>Break 2:30 – 2:45</p>	
	<p>2:45 – 3:15</p>	

Evaluation Plan: All participants will be asked to complete a post professional development questionnaire. The information gained its completion can be used to better the perceptions of administrators and teachers by providing information regarding SEL, restorative practices and trauma informed practices in schools. It can be used to create

and improve future professional development opportunities and daily positive learn environments within the school.

Professional Development Slide Deck

Perceptions of Administrators and Teachers as Facilitators of Social Emotional Learning

Crystal J. January
Walden University
July 2020

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The collected data and review of literature supported the need for professional development/training. The professional development project will occur at district locations that are already preselected for monthly leadership training, and the leaders will redeliver it monthly in their own schools.

Professional Development Description

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This training will yield the following: curriculum and materials, an ongoing capacity building in effective SEL implementation, data analysis, collaboration about next steps. The project includes a Power Point Presentation that will be used for the three sessions. The sessions will be a part of the preexisting monthly leadership communities of practice.

Professional Development Description

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Welcome

- Logistics
- Time Commitment

Goals

- Coaching & Strategies
- Professional Development & Support / Resources
- Assessment
- Improve Implementation: SEL

If your emotional abilities aren't in hand, if you don't have self-awareness, if you are not able to manage your distressing emotions, if you can't have empathy and have effective relationships, then no matter how smart you are, you are not going to get very far.

-Daniel Goleman

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Welcome

- Logistics
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If your emotional abilities aren't in hand, if you don't have self-awareness, if you are not able to manage your distressing emotions, if you can't have empathy and have effective relationships, then no matter how smart you are, you are not going to get very far.

-Daniel Goleman

Pre-Assessment Evaluation 10 minutes



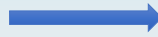
Strongly agree

Agree

Disagree

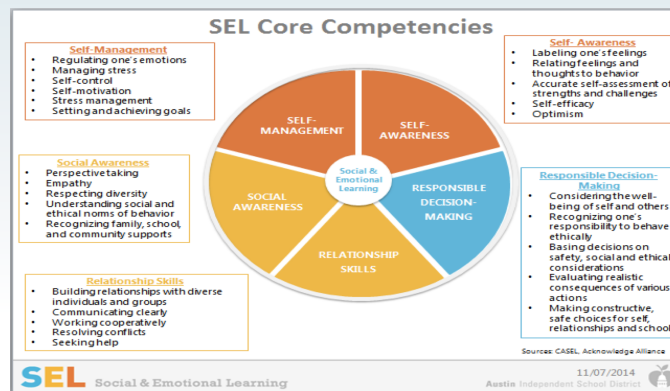
Strongly disagree

Day 1: CASEL



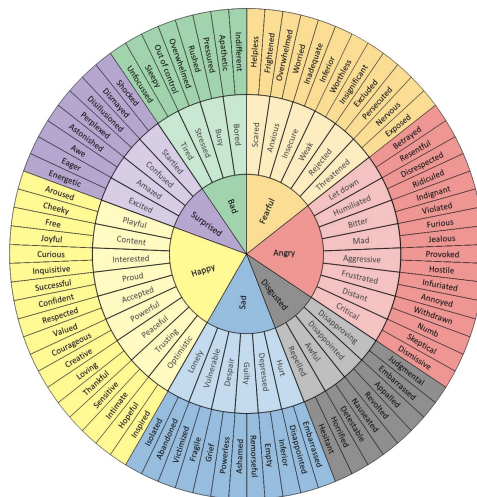
SEL Competencies

- Self-Awareness
- Self-Management
- Responsible Decision Making
- Relationship Skills
- Social Awareness



Self Awareness

- Who am I?
 - How do I feel?
 - I am different because...
 - My growth areas are...
 - I aspire to become the person who...
 - I can, do, and will add value to my community by...
- Consider using the slide after the title slide to summarize your presentation's points (like an abstract for a paper).



Feelings Wheel

Graphic by Geoffrey Roberts

Self-Management

- Strategies
- Goals
- Plan
- Action Steps
- Support
- How do I get help?
- How do I achieve balance?



Social Awareness

- Care for others
- Appreciation for Individualization
- Respect
- Mindful
- Inclusive

Relationship Skills

- Friend
- Health relationships
- Communication skills
- Ask for help

Responsible Decision Making

- Identify multiple strategies
- Consider the sources
- Be Solution oriented



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Practice: Current Implementation

What's working

What's NOT working



Pic taken from CDC.gov Overcoming Barriers to Referral
<https://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/dsmes-toolkit/referrals-participation/overcoming-barriers.html>

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Small Group SEL Goals

Examples

- Scheduled a daily advisory for explicit instruction
- Merge SEL curriculum into the daily instruction content
- Form an SEL team
- Form an SEL club
- Train all faculty and staff
- Host an informational parent meeting
- Hire a professional consultant

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Welcome Back

- Logistics
- Time Commitment

Goals

- Coaching & Strategies
- Professional Development & Support / Resources
- Assessment
- Improve Implementation: SEL, Restorative Practices

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SEL Competency Review Discussion

- Table words include one of the 5 competencies
- Table discusses what they remember from the previous session and what has been applied
- Table charts information from bullet 2 and adds additional questions and suggestions
- All tables share out to the larger group

Restorative Practices

“Implementing restorative practices is about changing the hearts and minds of everyone so that they are focused on strengthening and repairing relationships in their classrooms and across the community. The focus needs to be about how we prevent problems from occurring in the first instance and what we need to ensure this practice and that our policies support it.”

Thorsborne, M., & Blood, P. (2013). *Implementing restorative practices in schools: A practical guide to transforming school communities*. Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

Restorative Questions 1

- What happened?
- What were you thinking at the time?
- What have you thought about since?
- Who has been affected by what you have done?
- What do you think you need to do to make things right?

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Restorative Question 2

- What did you think when you realized what had happened?
- What impact has this incident had on you and others?
- What has been the hardest thing for you?
- What do you think needs to happen to make things right?

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Restorative Practices

- Description of current Implementation
- What's working?



Restorative Circle



Restorative Practices

- Discuss & Chart Barriers



Administrative Support

Effective Administrative Support

- Table Discussion
- Chart
- Share Out

Goal Setting: SEL & Restorative Practices

Effective Administrative Support

- Table Discussion
- Chart
- Share Out



Picture taken from <https://www.techsmith.com/blog/merge-videos/>

Feedback & Resources Restorative Practices

- Affective Statements/
Questions
- Conferences
- Circles
- Social Discipline
- Repair Harm
- Apologies
- Needs
- Punishment
- Compass of Shame
- Consequences
- Self-Assessment

Costello, B., Wachtel, J., & Wachtel, T. (2019). *The restorative practices handbook: For and administrators*. International Institute for Restorative Practices.

Welcome Back

- Logistics
- Time Commitment

Goals

- Coaching & Strategies
- Professional Development & Support / Resources
- Assessment
- Improve Implementation: SEL, Restorative & Trauma Informed Practices

Welcome Back

Opening Circle

- Talking Stick
- Safe
- One thing that happened to you during our time away
- One thing you remember about SEL
- One thing you remember about restorative practices

Review of SEL and Restorative Practices

- Table words include one of the 5 competencies
- Table discusses what they remember from the previous session and what has been applied
- Table charts information from bullet 2 and adds additional questions and suggestions
- All tables share out to the larger group

Trauma

“Despite the seemingly boundless human predilection to inflict suffering and trauma on others, we are also capable of surviving, adapting to, and eventually transforming traumatic experiences” (Levine, 2015, p. xviii).

Trauma

“Trauma happens when any experience stuns us like a bolt out of the blue; it overwhelms us, leaving us altered and disconnected from our bodies. Any coping mechanisms we have are undermined, and we feel utterly helpless and hopeless.” pg. 4 (Levine & Kline)

Levine, P. A., & Kline, M. (2006). *Trauma through a child's eyes: Awakening the ordinary miracle of healing; Infancy through adolescence*. North Atlantic Books.

Trauma Informed Practices Current Implementation

- Table Discussion
 - What's working?
 - What are the barriers



- Chart
- Share Out

Teacher Preparation Needs

- Professional development
- Holistic approaches
- Wrap around services
- Parent resources
- Support staff
- Peace corner, self-esteem materials, etc.
- Trauma intervention options for teachers

Strategies

- Trigger identification
- Self-regulation
- Games
- Self-Care
- Physical Activity
- Connectedness
- Skill-building
- Therapy

Treisman, K. (2016). *Working with relational and developmental trauma in children and adolescents*. Routledge.

Possible Next Steps

- Education
- Integration into content
- Develop Safety Improvements (reporting and responding)
- Communities / Tribes
- Staff Flexibility (non-traditional /alternative options)

Discussion & Feedback

- All tables will chart next steps inclusive of (SEL, Restorative Practices & Trauma Informed Practices)
- All tables will share the plan with the entire group
- All tables will receive immediate feedback on their plan
- Participants will plan to redeliver at their local schools

Closing

- Post Questionnaire
- Closing Circle – Best way to use circles to implement SEL, restorative practices, and trauma informed practices

- Feeling



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References

Costello, B., Wachtel, J., & Wachtel, T. (2019). *The restorative practices handbook: For teachers, disciplinarians and administrators*. International Institute for Restorative Practices.

Levine, P. A., & Kline, M. (2006). *Trauma through a child's eyes: Awakening the ordinary miracle of healing; Infancy through adolescence*. North Atlantic Books.

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References

Thorsborne, M., & Blood, P. (2013). *Implementing restorative practices in schools: A practical guide to transforming school communities*. Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

Treisman, K. (2016). *Working with relational and developmental trauma in children and adolescents*. Routledge.

SEL: PRE-EVALUATION CHECKLIST

I developed the Post-Evaluation Form for the purpose of this professional development/training Curriculum Materials.

Please take a few minutes to answer the questions below to assess your knowledge of teacher and student SEL excellence.

1. I have enough knowledge about teachers facilitating SEL to currently rate myself as
 - Exemplary
 - Proficient
 - Ready to implement but Needs more professional development
 - Not ready to implement SEL
2. What are the five SEL competencies?
3. Most of the students you encounter within the school use and apply the core social-emotional competencies.
 - True
 - False
4. Most of the staff you encounter within the school apply the core SEL competencies.
 - True
 - False
5. Most of the staff you encounter help facilitate student SEL skills.
 - True
 - False
6. What additional support do you or your colleagues need to facilitate SEL in your school?

SEL: POST-EVALUATION CHECKLIST

I developed the Post-Evaluation Form for the purpose of this professional development/training Curriculum Materials.

Please take a few minutes to answer the questions below to assess your knowledge of teacher and student SEL excellence.

7. I have enough knowledge about teachers facilitating SEL to currently rate myself as
 - Exemplary
 - Proficient
 - Ready to implement but Needs more professional development
 - Not ready to implement SEL
8. What are the five SEL competencies?
9. Most of the students you encounter within the school use and apply the core social-emotional competencies.
 - True
 - False
10. Most of the staff you encounter within the school apply the core SEL competencies.
 - True
 - False
11. Most of the staff you encounter help facilitate student SEL skills.
 - True
 - False
12. What additional support do you or your colleagues need to facilitate SEL in your school?

SEL: Teacher and Student Excellence Form

I developed the Post-Evaluation Form for the purpose of this professional development/training Curriculum Materials.

Please take a few minutes to answer the questions below to assess your knowledge of teacher facilitation of SEL.

13. I have enough knowledge about teachers facilitating SEL to currently rate myself as
- Exemplary
 - Proficient
 - Ready to implement but Needs more professional development
 - Not ready to implement SEL
14. What are the five SEL competencies?
15. What are the best three SEL strategies to implement in your school and why?
16. On a scale of 1-5, how prepared are you to implement SEL in your school?
17. What restorative practice would be beneficial in your school, and how would it be implemented?
18. What trauma informed practice would be beneficial in your school, and how would it be implement?
19. What additional support do you need to effectively facilitate SEL, restorative practices, and trauma informed practices in your school?

Appendix B: Interview Questions

Administrators

1. Describe how administrators support teacher facilitation of self-management in this district.
2. Describe how administrators support teacher facilitation of self-awareness in this district.
3. Describe how administrators support teacher facilitation of social awareness in this district.
4. Describe how administrators support teacher facilitation of relationship skills in this district.
5. Describe how administrators support teacher facilitation of responsible decision making in this district.

Teachers

6. Describe how teachers facilitate student development in the area of self-management.
7. Describe how teachers facilitate student development in the area of self-awareness.
8. Describe how teachers facilitate student development in the area of social awareness.
9. Describe how teachers facilitate development in the area of building relationship skills.
10. Describe how teachers facilitate development in the area of responsible decision making.

SEL Strategies

11. Describe the SEL strategies that work best.
12. Describe the SEL strategies that are the least effective.

Teacher Preparedness

13. What should a teacher preparing to facilitate student SEL know?
14. What type of support is critical for a teacher facilitating SEL?