SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING IN THE CLASSROOM: DO AFFECT AND COMMUNITY PREDICT ACADEMIC SUCCESS?

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines the impact of social emotional learning (SEL) on academic success. From a historical perspective it argues that emotional, social, and moral education has always been part of the public school system in the U.S., but that the nature of its presence has changed with shifting cultural contexts. The most recent literature examined here not only revealed that social and emotional factors influenced students' academic success, but also that social and emotional competencies could be taught using both explicit and implicit mechanisms for improvement in academic outcomes. The third section of the literature review examined the ways in which SEL uniquely interacts with students from marginalized populations. Conclusions consistently supported the use of SEL in the classroom, but analysis of the literature and the underlying belief system of the SEL movement led to the proposal of cautions one must consider when deciding whether or not to use prepackaged SEL curricula. Suggestions for further research on SEL and academic success are provided at the conclusion of this paper.

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PREFACE

This paper could not have been successfully completed without the help and input of a number of people. I express my gratitude to Dr. Anita Lenges and Dr. Jacque Ensign for their direction to and provision of sources for the literature review. Thank you to my colleagues: Chalen Kelly for her insights into the multicultural dimension of this paper, and Robert Gandy and Megan Lewis for their help with editing and revising the paper. I would like to recognize Dr. Terry Ford, whose research methods class and prompt responses to my questions that arose as I wrote the paper helped make its completion a relatively smooth process, and who, along with Dr. Sherry Walton, provided insights into techniques for making my writing more interesting. Finally, I extend many thanks to my faculty advisor, Dr. George Freeman. I am grateful for his time spent reading and rereading this paper, the precise and helpful feedback he provided, and the substantive, thought-provoking conversation about my research topic at all stages of the paper's development.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Introduction

The American school today faces a demand from the public to propel students through an increasingly rigorous academic curriculum while creating a stable social environment that promotes healthy decision-making practices in students from a wide variety of social and economic backgrounds. Increasing numbers of students with mental-health problems and behavioral disorders, coupled with the inconsistency of students' home lives, has fostered the adoption of a number of school-based intervention programs to address problems like drug abuse, dropout rates, teen pregnancy, and violence, and to promote service-learning, conflict resolution, multiculturalism and other positive social behaviors in students (Greenberg et al., 2003). Although many view these programs as enhancing the health, safety, and citizenship of students, and therefore critical to students' life successes, they have historically been implemented as add-ons to traditional academic learning, and not directly related to students' academic performance (Zins, Bloodworth, Weissberg & Walberg, 2004). As a result, intervention programs are inconsistent and seemingly easy to eliminate when relentless demands for greater academic achievement are piled onto schools.

Rationale

The Federal passage of the 2002, No Child Left Behind Act placed a heightened but not novel emphasis on standardized testing and evaluations (Reese, 2005). By largely defining schools based on their students' test scores, and penalizing those schools whose students consistently underperformed, No Child Left Behind added another element of pressure for schools to hone in on academic achievement. However, expectations for

schools don't stop there. A survey conducted in the early 1990s showed that "97 percent [of Americans surveyed] wanted the schools to teach honesty and over ninety percent also favored teaching democracy, tolerance, patriotism, 'caring for friends and family members,' 'moral courage,' and the 'golden rule'" (Reese, 2005, p. 327). The public holds the American school increasingly accountable for its students' academic performance as reports of failure to compete globally, particularly in areas such as math and science, lead many to the conclusion that schools are failing to effectively educate their pupils (Van de Walle, 2007). But there is also a strong public expectation that it is the job of American schools to successfully educate students both socially and emotionally to ensure their productive participation in society as they grow up.

The root of the public's desire for social and emotional education in schools is not difficult to uncover. While roughly 20 percent of youth in America suffer from mental health problems, 75 to 80 percent of these youth receive inappropriate treatment or no treatment at all (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 1999). Looking specifically at American youth ages 14 to 17, Dryfoos (1996) estimated that 25 percent are behind grade level, five percent have dropped out, 18 to 48 percent are involved in substance use, 22 percent carry weapons, and 53 percent are sexually active. Overall, she found that 30 percent of youth in this age group are considered high or very high risk, engaging in many or all risk behaviors, while another 35 percent are considered medium risk and engage in one to two of the aforementioned risk behaviors. These trends indicate the need for intervention, and many see public schools, one of the few remaining spaces shared by almost all American youth, as the appropriate venue for that intervention. Still, while some schools and educators struggle to find the time for these programs, others

continue to resist large scale teacher training in and implementation of socially and emotionally centered curricula, based largely on the supposition that these programs are incompatible with performance-based standards (Fleming & Bay, 2004).

Definition of Terms

One must recognize when evaluating interventions that not all programs are created equal. Although most were designed to encourage social and emotional development, many programs do not facilitate this development in an empirically supported, effective manner (Cohen, 2001). The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL, formerly the Collaborative to Advance Social and Emotional Learning) adopted the term Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) to address these discrepancies in intervention program quality (Elias, 2006; Elias et al., 1997). The conceptual framework underlying effective SEL programming is that it is culturally and developmentally appropriate, evidence based, attentive to the underlying causes of risk and problem behaviors, and an integral, necessary, and continual part of student success (Elias et al., 1997; Zins et al., 2004).

SEL is not categorically focused on eliminating or promoting a specific behavior, nor is it a short-lived add-on to a preexisting academic curriculum. This paper defines SEL as "the process through which children enhance their ability to integrate thinking, feeling, and behaving to achieve important life tasks" (Zins et al., 2004, p. 6). It examines not only programs and curricula that specifically promote SEL, but also teacher practices and behaviors that reflect the aforementioned goals.

A variety of research supports the understanding that SEL plays an important role in improving non-academic outcomes (McKenzie, 2004; Zins, et al., 2004). However,

The No Child Left Behind Act created an overwhelming need for schools to focus on academic achievement and meeting national standards. As a result, schools remain hesitant to implement or continue programs that do not predict clear improvement in students' academic achievement as defined by test scores (Zins et al., 2004). This paper reviews research focused on whether or not that predictive relationship exists. However, in evaluating the true effectiveness of SEL in contributing to improved academic outcomes, one must consider the academic success of the student as more complex than test scores. In consideration of this complex nature, this paper uses the term academic success to refer to improvement in school attitudes and academic behavior, as well as in academic achievement as defined by grades, subject mastery, and test performance (Zins et al., 2004).

Statement of Purpose

This paper reviews the research literature addressing SEL and academic success. While SEL plays an important role in improving nonacademic outcomes at school, in an era where increasing emphasis is placed on test score improvement above and beyond other school outcomes, one must consider the relationship between SEL and student performance on these tests. However, the complexity of the learning process demands that academic improvement be measured in a variety of ways. Therefore, this paper examines the effect of public school-based or affiliated SEL on students' academic success in kindergarten through twelfth grade.

Summary

Public expectations of schools today show that there is a vastly held belief that it is the job of teachers and schools to not only educate students in academic subjects, but

also in social and emotional competencies. However, the passage of The No Child Left Behind Act shifted emphasis away from the latter, while honing in on the need to improve students' standardized test scores. Due to this heightened emphasis on academic achievement as defined by test scores, programs that promote social and emotional learning are often ineffectively implemented or dropped from the curriculum altogether. While some advocate for test score improvement through increased academic press and instructional support, others argue that SEL is a key component of improving academic success while simultaneously promoting behavioral and social goals for students. Reflecting on this controversy, this paper will examine the effect of public school-based SEL on students' academic success in kindergarten through twelfth grade.

CHAPTER TWO: HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Introduction

A glimpse into the history of American schooling reveals that the controversies surrounding the proper place of Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) in the curriculum and the impact of SEL programs on students are rooted in long standing debates about the purpose and role of the public school system. Although SEL is a relatively new term, the conceptual framework of emotional, social, and moral (ESM) education that SEL is a part of is not revolutionary. This chapter explores the historical presence of SEL in education. It examines the manifestations of the SEL framework, particularly in the history of the American public school, with the goal of better understanding not only the fundamental role this idea has in education, but also why there has recently been a need to clearly define the overarching ideas behind and important elements of SEL and how those ideas relate to academic success.

Historical Perspectives of ESM Education

Americans' goals for public education display an overwhelming need to educate students in a way that stretches beyond academics to address who they are and the choices they make, both inside and outside of school. These expectations of holistic education can be found in the writings and teachings of a number of ancient cultures (Cohen, 2001; Elias, 2006). Cohen accurately described SEL as "a relatively new label for a process that is as old as humankind" (p. 4). Formal education, which emerged about 3,000 years ago in Egypt, India, and Greece, included components of SEL. Moreover, in Ancient Greece specifically, the exploration of self, and how that self interacted with others, was alone considered an inherently valuable educational inquiry.

Elements of SEL continued to have an important place in most schooling throughout history (Cohen, 2001). However, due to the narrow scope of this paper, the focus of the historical overview presented in this chapter shifts to a more recent time frame with the intent of familiarizing the reader with the role of SEL in the history of the American public school.

Values in the Common School: 1830-1900

Most view the emergence of the common school as the beginning of public schooling in the United States. Known as the father of the common school, Horace Mann (Reese, 2005) described the public schools he envisioned as "an education that was common in the highest sense, as the air and light were common; because it was not only the cheapest but the best, not only accessible to all, but, as a general rule, enjoyed by all" (p. 11). Although public schools then, as now, remained a far cry from providing true equality in education, common schools are widely recognized as the beginning of public education in the United States and are therefore where this paper begins its exploration of ESM education in American public schools.

Rather than being entities of purely academic teachings, common schools placed a heavy emphasis on both social and moral development, and in doing so explicitly embodied many of the elements of what is today defined as SEL. Along with access to both knowledge and values, proponents of the common school argued that it was a mechanism through which social stability could be achieved (Reese, 2005). Mann (Reese) questioned the idea of inherent goodness in people, and instead viewed them as instinctually self-indulgent, motivated towards vice and immorality. As a result, he believed the common school ought not teach knowledge alone but socially-redeeming

values that would promote character development and call forth the best in the country's citizenry as well.

Different populations of people living in the United States, however, had inconsistent beliefs about socially redeeming values. ESM education often promoted the cultural assimilation of non-Anglo, non-Protestant Americans into the largely Protestant, Anglo American culture in which the common school was rooted (Spring, 2008). As explored in chapter three, even today these issues of cultural assimilation play a prominent role in discussions of SEL. In fact, members of the dominant culture saw homogenization of the social and moral beliefs and practices as one of the primary functions of the common school. As a result, especially in schools that were designed to assimilate and Americanize other cultures, one can understand social and moral education as the primary goal of schooling.

As American society evolved in the late nineteenth century, so too, did the common school. William T. Harris was the preeminent leader in the school movement in the post-Civil War era (Reese, 2005). His ideas about eliminating Bible reading and prayer from secular public schools, as well as his aims to provide a common education for all Americans regardless of race made his leadership controversial. However, many later dismissed him as a conservative in the educational debate for his strongly oppositional stance to child-centered education and other progressive schooling movements. Still though, Harris's reign marks the introduction of a fundamental question that would make ESM education less cut and dry than it had been in the early days of the common school. By asking the public to consider whose values were being taught to students, and whether those values were aligned with the intended secular nature of

American public schools, Harris brought forth an issue that would remain prevalent in the debate over ESM education into the twenty-first century.

The emergence of the debate between Booker T. Washington and W.E.B. Du Bois in the late nineteenth century also revealed a fundamental question that would underlie many of the conflicts surrounding ESM education into the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Although centered on the education of the black community, the conflict between Washington and Du Bois revolved around the more universal question: what is the purpose of schooling? Washington (1903) purported that it was to prepare black people for work in a white society. On the other hand, Du Bois (1906) disagreed with the compromise of self and community inherent in Washington's views. Instead, Du Bois claimed that the purpose of black education was to educate future leaders of the black community.

Reservation and boarding schools for Native Americans provided yet another example of the culturally assimilative purpose of schooling in the United States. In addition to attempting to instill a strong but subservient work ethic in Native American students, the boarding schools also aimed to destroy the cultural heritage of and influences on students by removing them from their reservations at a young age (Reyhner & Eder, 2004). Proponents of these schools argued that segregation of Native American students from their tribes and families of origin, forced cultural and linguistic immersion, and the demanding manual labor expectations of the Indian boarding school served to save them from an uncivilized life and prepare them to live and work as productive members of society. From a historical perspective, though, Spring (2008) argued that the culturally assimilative tactics practiced in Native American boarding schools “were acts

of cultural and linguistic genocide" (p. 96). Similar to Washington's (1903) argument about schooling for African Americans, Native American boarding schools demonstrated the widely held belief that the purpose of education for racially oppressed populations was to prepare them to act as productive and subservient members of white society.

Many debates surrounding the education of both white people and people of color still return to this key question regarding the purpose of school that was brought forth in the black community by Washington (1903) and Du Bois (1906) at the end of the nineteenth century. Both society's expectations of schooling today, as well as the actions taken toward changing schooling with No Child Left Behind, reflect deeply rooted beliefs about the fundamental purpose of public schools. Additionally, as presented in chapter three, reflections on the education of students in racially marginalized populations demonstrate that these century-old questions are far from answered, and play a major role in how we understand SEL.

The rapid industrialization of the country during this era also proved important in shaping the common school. The movement towards uniformity and unity compelled by the industrialization of America provided the cultural context for age grading of public schools (Reese, 2005; Rogoff, 2003). Rogoff argued that industrialization further isolated schools from communities and turned them into institutions concerned more with training children to meet a certain important final goal than guiding them through a process of development. Still, in rural areas, there was little in the form of quantitative evaluations or uniform curricula to standardize schooling in the late nineteenth century, which stood out as an obvious problem to many education reformers who espoused the virtues of these standards in urban schooling (Reese, 2005).

Expectations placed on public schools today are not dissimilar from those of early reformers like Mann. They fundamentally rely on some sort of ESM education to address the whole child, rather than simply the academic child, and they continue to reflect the values of the dominant culture. However, just because the underlying cry of the public rings similarly more than a century and a half later, one cannot assume that the understanding of what it means to educate the whole child has not changed over time. Even by the end of the nineteenth century, many questioned the religious nature of the values taught to students in secular public schools and standardization of urban curriculum and evaluation was quickly taking hold as the right way to do public education.

Character and Citizenship Education: 1900-1960

The emergence of the school as a social center occurred in the early nineteenth century. Sports and community involvement soared, schools became places where communities congregated around social events, and direct emphasis on citizenship through discussion, pledges, and rules became commonplace in the public school (McKenzie, 2004; Spring, 2008). As a result, the realm of schooling expanded into community, and character and citizenship education flourished.

Although the twentieth century did not mark the emergence of conflict in opinions about educational reform, John Dewey put forth a philosophy of education in the early 1900s that exposed this debate more clearly than ever before. There were two main camps of education reformers—the traditionalists espoused the virtues of efficiency and management, while the progressives fought for democracy and social justice in schooling (Reese, 2005). Though often toted as an educational tool of progressives, after engaging

in the progressive movement, Dewey (1938/1997) had concerns with its reactionary nature and criticized the movement for simply overturning the old rather than deliberately constructing its own philosophy of education. However, in considering his influence on ESM education in American public schooling, what side of the debate he was on is relatively unimportant when compared with the philosophy of education that he proposed.

Although different in his approaches to and beliefs about education, in his writing Dewey (1938/1997) echoed the ideas of community in schooling that had been put forth by Harris in the late nineteenth century (Reese, 2005). In doing so, he created an important focus on the social learning that happens in a classroom setting. He purported that "collateral learning in the way of formation of enduring attitudes, of likes and dislikes, may be and often is much more important than the spelling lesson, or lesson in geography or history that is learned" (p. 48). For Dewey, creating schools more connected to children's experience, the community, and larger society was the central dilemma facing modern education (Reese, 2005). That same dilemma is one that SEL looks to address today.

Much of what characterized education in the first part of the twentieth century was not simply the progressivism but the intense conflict that arose between its philosophies and those of conservative reformers. Character education fell under attack in the 1930s as a result of a study that criticized its theory, methods, and effectiveness (McKenzie, 2004). As schooling progressed, attacks on the value judgments being distributed through ESM education, as well as Supreme Court decisions that put a halt to the teaching of religious values in public schools pushed character education out of the

curriculum so that by the 1950s formal ESM education programs had been nearly eliminated from public schools.

Philosophically, the behaviorist perspective of learning combined with the increased emphasis on industrialism in the United States presented the most aggressive response to ESM education in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Edward Thorndike laid many of the foundations for the pedagogical approaches to teaching based on a behaviorist philosophy that emphasized concepts of habit development through stimulus and response systems (Spring, 2008). His beliefs about intelligence as measurable and genetically predetermined, as well as his strong convictions that intelligence testing should be used to scientifically place people in appropriate social roles, provided the foundations for his suggestions for schooling. Compounding the influence of Thorndike's pedagogical approaches was William Chandler Bagley's book *Classroom Management*—an important text used for training educators during the first quarter of the twentieth century (Spring, 2008). Like Thorndike, Bagley presented a strong behaviorist viewpoint and emphasized the role public schooling in creating industrial habits in students. With an ever-increasing focus on power and productivity in the United States in the early part of the twentieth century, behaviorism in education took a strong hold on the public school system.

Ellwood P. Cubberley was at the forefront of the political opposition to progressive reform in the early twentieth century (Reese, 2005). A top-down reformer, Cubberley saw major flaws in democracy and the governance of lay people. He proposed centralization of power and standardization of curriculum for rural schools, which found themselves increasingly impoverished in the early twentieth century as people migrated

in masses to urban centers, and he touted the virtues of newly designed intelligence tests and of efficiency and management in education. Politically, Cubberly worked to promote within the school system the philosophical approaches put forth by Thorndike and Bagley, and helped to establish many of the norms associated with public schooling today.

The educational conflict between progressive and traditional reformers in the first half of the twentieth century was rooted in the debate over the purpose of schooling. Just as Dewey set a modern framework for ESM education in the latter half of the twentieth century, so too did Cubberley set a framework for the public school system as it exists today. As Reese (2005) noted, while intellectuals like Dewey spent considerable energy attempting to gain insight into and an understanding of learning that could be applied to public schooling, Cubberley and other proponents of traditional schooling spent their time building the systems characterized by "testing, pupil classification, curriculum reforms, and administrative specialization and reform" (p. 148) that still dominate public schooling in the United States today.

Affect in the Curriculum: 1960-1980

Set in motion by the *Brown v. the Board of Education of Topeka* decision in 1954, the desegregation of public schools, along with the heightened push for scientific advancement during the Cold War era shaped the direction of development for public education during the 1960s and 1970s (Spring, 2008). The process of desegregation, unaided by strategies for implementation, was slow to take hold in many regions, however its impacts did not go unnoticed. Faced with the prospects of integrated schools, many whites moved to suburban developments, away from urban, and more racially

diverse communities, further exacerbating the gap between court-mandated desegregation and the reality of the desegregation process (Norton et al., 2007). White flight, combined with the influx of students of color into the Protestant Anglo American school system, significantly changed the face of public schools.

The Soviet Union's launch of *Sputnik I* in 1957 catapulted the changing demographics of schools and declining student achievement to the forefront of the American public's attention. Seen by many as the United States' failure to compete technologically on an international playing field, the government shifted its attention to the failure of public school teachers, and the inadequate preparation of their students (Spring, 2008). As a result, money poured into the school systems to identify the most mathematically and scientifically capable students through testing, and to implement government-provided curricula designed to rectify the failure of the schools. Additionally, gaps in preparedness of students left much of the public desiring a more standardized accountability system to address concerns about the failure of public schools and school teachers, particularly in the areas of math and science.

Even in the midst of the shifting emphasis toward improved math and science education, and after the almost complete removal of character education from the curriculum, the 1960s and 1970s also saw renewed interest in bringing ESM education back into the realm of the public school. Though much of school reform in the first half of the twentieth century focused on the development of students' industrial skills, when, in 1962, The Supreme Court ruled against prayer in public schools many felt that the moral and spiritual roles of schooling had been undermined (Spring, 2008). Two distinct moral education approaches rooted in Dewey's philosophies about learning and schooling

emerged during the 1960s (McKenzie, 2004). The first, known as values clarification, was based largely on the ideas of both Dewey and Abraham Maslow—a major contributor to the humanist approach to psychology (Glassman, 1995). It dealt primarily with trying to draw out students' own judgments around issues or instances in which values were in conflict, and became prevalent in the United States during the 1960s and early 1970s (McKenzie, 2004).

The second approach emerged from Lawrence Kohlberg's creation of a series of stages of moral development, and was largely influenced by Dewey, Immanuel Kant, and Jean Piaget (McKenzie, 2004). The goal of moral education, as defined by this approach, was to stimulate the movement from one stage of development to the next. Notably, both values clarification and cognitive-developmental moral education strongly rejected the imposition of culturally specific values on students that was a common feature in the character education of the early twentieth century. However, most public schools eventually abandoned these approaches largely due to inconclusive findings about their effectiveness.

In addition to the approaches to moral education described above, during the 1960s and 1970s affective education, a term introduced in Benjamin Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives, became commonly used to identify the emotional aspects of learning (McKenzie, 2004). Many developed and popularized affective education programs during the 1970s, which were often linked to other attempts at ESM education earlier in the twentieth century. However a lack of empirical evidence for the effectiveness of these programs also led to their eventual abandonment and a decline in

the popularity of the term affective education to describe the emotional, social, and moral components of curricula.

Standardized Testing and SEL: 1980 to Present

A dearth of empirical evidence for the affective and moral education programs of the 1960s and 1970s resulted in decreased implementation of ESM education during the 1980s (McKenzie, 2004). Additionally, when the Reagan administration released the report, *A Nation at Risk,* in 1983, blaming public schools for the difficulty America was having as a global economic competitor, issues of education once again focused on academic rigor and achievement (Spring, 2008). The eventual solutions proposed for educational reform by both the Reagan and Bush administrations of the 1980s and early 1990s did push to reinstate values in public schools through prayer, but did little to further the ESM educational movement of the 1960s and 1970s.

Solutions proposed by the Reagan and Bush administrations did however, push the educational system in America in important directions that influenced the scope of this paper. Following the issuance of *A Nation at Risk*, the Reagan administration became a major proponent of the partnering of big business and public school, which in many cases led to the transformation of school curriculum toward the more vocational needs of these companies (Spring, 2008). George H.W. Bush continued to emphasize this connection between schools and businesses after he was elected in 1988 (Spring, 2008). Included in Bush's Goals 2000 plan, which was eventually perpetuated by the Clinton administration, was the creation of both national standards and voluntary national achievement tests. With the goals of the plan in mind, the Bush administration cooperated with Congress and the National Governors Association to create the National Council on

Educational Standards and Testing, which began what would become known as an educational era defined by standardization.

The 1990s, however, also saw resurgence in ESM education in large part due to the perceived explosion of social problems connected to America's youth (McKenzie, 2004). Since the 1970s, increased mainstream awareness of humanistic approaches to psychology as put forth by Carl Rogers and Maslow also promoted the recovery of ESM education, which is today separated into four distinct approaches (Glassman, 1995; McKenzie, 2004). Modeled after ESM education programs of the early twentieth century, character education emphasizes both manners and obedience through indoctrination of students, while the second approach, moral education, is deeply rooted in Kohlberg's work of the 1960s and 1970s. The other two approaches are, in many ways, unique to the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries and have less clearly defined boundaries.

What McKenzie (2004) referred to as social skills training for specific problems is the first of these newer approaches to ESM education. Narrowly focused interventions to target specific behaviors such as bullying or drug abuse are examples of programs that focus on social skills training for specific problems. Critics of this approach argue that preventions and interventions are simply tacked on to the curriculum as piecemeal solutions to a complex problem (Elias et al., 1997; Zins, Bloodworth, Weissberg & Walberg, 2004). Others add that social skills training for specific problems is trying to find an easy, but temporary solution to problematic behavioral expression of these issues so that academic learning can continue (McKenzie, 2004).

Finally, the fourth approach to ESM education, and the one this paper focuses on, is SEL as defined in chapter one. The Collaborative to Advance Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL) developed alongside research from a number of recent psychological theories that are focused on student qualities such as social competence, social awareness, social problem solving, and emotional intelligence (McKenzie, 2004). Howard Gardner's work with multiple intelligences, including intrapersonal and interpersonal intelligences in the 1980s and 1990s, along with Daniel Goleman's compilation of research detailing the important role the development of emotional intelligence plays in both childhood and adulthood contributed significantly to the emerging SEL movement (Gardner, 1993; Goleman, 1995). Both Gardner and Goleman not only identified the important roles these intelligences played in the human experience, but also purported that they could be cultivated and developed; they were not genetically fixed at birth.

Robert Kegan's (1994) work around the demands of contemporary culture acted as another major contributor to the schools of thought that influenced the emergence of SEL. It added another layer to understanding social and emotional intelligences—considering them through the lens of how the intelligences we desire, develop, and cultivate in children and adolescents interact with the realities and expectations of modern society (Kegan, 1994). Most recently, the rapidly advancing field of neurobiology has begun to support the ideas of many of its theoretical predecessors. Brain research has become yet another field in which scientists argue that social and emotion interactions and functioning are paramount to what is learned (Jensen, 2005; Zull, 2002).

Rooted in the steady stream of research in humanistic psychology, neurobiology, multiple intelligences, and the cultural context of development, SEL is by far the most broadly focused of the four approaches to ESM education, generally emphasizing the social-emotional growth of students and prosocial behaviors. Its techniques are integrative and focus on decision making and problem solving skills that can be applied to a number of different situations (Elias et al., 1997). A great deal of the research published on SEL in the 1990s focused on the success of SEL programs in improving emotional development and behavior (McKenzie, 2004; Zins et al., 2004). However, a shift in that focus emerged in the late 1990s and early twenty-first century, as standardization boomed with the passage of the No Child Left Behind Act (Zins et al.). With the transitioning of the focus of CASEL (which now stands for the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning), Many recent studies have investigated more explicitly the effects of SEL on measures of academic success in an era of schooling where academic achievement in public schools is again the force that guides educators. Authors of these studies realized that to find a place in the curriculum, SEL must address the need for balance between academic, social, and emotional learning, as well as for integration of these components within the structure of the demands placed on the American public school and the reality of an increasingly fragmented and complex society (Elias, 2006).

Summary

While emotional, social, and moral components of curricula date back to the emergence of formal education in Egypt, India, and Greece, the history of ESM education in American public schools is complex and interwoven with many of the fundamental

questions of education. With the emergence of the common school, ESM education became a tool for combating the ills of society while simultaneously forcing immigrant and native peoples to assimilate into the dominant Protestant Anglo American culture. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries debates about both the purpose of education and the values appropriately taught in a secular public school system, coupled with the increasing role of the school as a community and social center were paramount in determining the role of the emotional, social, and moral in the curriculum, which was largely centered around character and citizenship education.

After a major movement away from ESM education between 1930 and 1960, the 1960s and 1970s showed renewed interest in the role of affect and morality in the curriculum, much of which was based on the earlier ideas of John Dewey. However, focus on the academic failure of public schools in the 1980s again pushed the country away from ESM in the curriculum. Instead, an era of standardization emerged in schooling that would be exacerbated in the early twenty-first century. The perception of a crisis in American youth, though, renewed interest in ESM education and sparked the development of four distinct approaches to its implementation, including SEL. The empirical evidence for the success of SEL in improving both behavior and emotional development led many researchers to shift their focus to examining the relationship between SEL and academic success, in order to add legitimacy to ESM education in an era of standardization.

CHAPTER THREE: CRITICAL REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

There is a long record of emotional, social, and moral (ESM) education in American public schools. In fact, at different times in history, ESM education has emerged as not only controversial, but also useful for different purposes, including those that perpetuate the agenda of the dominant culture. Recently, a perceived crisis of delinquency and social failure in American youth has again created the need for schools to refocus on more than just the academic student. However, this resurgence of ESM education has come about in an age where standardized achievement testing reigns more powerful as a gauge for student, teacher, and school success than ever before.

Within this new era of ESM education, many have argued for a new approach, identified as Social and Emotional Learning, that is designed to not only address the underlying causes of problem behaviors in general, but also to promote prosocial behaviors in a way that is integrative and supplemental to the academic agenda of the school. Some have met SEL with attitudes of dissent, arguing that it is incompatible with the increasingly performance-based standards of the United States. Still another problem is that educators and administrators often cannot find the time for programs or curricula that do not directly impact academic outcomes.

This chapter reviews the relevant research literature to examine the effects of public school based SEL on students' academic success in kindergarten through twelfth grade. It first explores that research which examines the relationship between social and emotional competency and academic success. Second, it reviews the findings regarding the social and emotional climate of the school or classroom, and the relationship that

climate has to achievement. Finally, it explores SEL as it applies to marginalized populations and investigates whether the research shows a unique academic response to SEL from these populations.

Social Emotional Competency

The first five studies in this section present the leading research on how social and emotional competency influence, or are influenced by students' academic success. This section first explores the relationship between emotion regulation, achievement scores and students' classroom behaviors through a study by Graziano, Reavis, Keane and Calkins (2007). It then examines the correlations between academic achievement and students' self esteem and sense of personal control as put forth by Ross and Broh (2000). Concluding the seminal pieces of recent research on social and emotional competencies as they relate to academic achievement is Fleming et al. (2005), which specifically addressed social, emotional, and decision-making skills as they related to test scores in adolescents.

Following these better known pieces of recent research, this section presents the work of Gómez-Chacón (2000), which examined the relationship between cognitive and affective processes in students engaged in challenging mathematical tasks. Finally, the inquiry into students' existent social and emotional competencies as they relate to academic success concludes with Ackerman, Izard, Kobak, Brown, and Smith's (2007) research on the direction of effects between internalizing behaviors and reading problems in students. After presenting the research on the relationships between students' social and emotional competencies and their academic success, this section presents four recent

studies that examine the effects of specific SEL curricula on changes in students' academic outcomes.

The first of the curricula examined is the Resolving Conflict Creatively Program, the impact of which was studied by Brown, Roderick, Lantieri, and Aber (2004). Then, this section provides research on the Unique Minds School Program and its effect on achievement through the work of Linares et al. (2005). The presentation of the literature on social and emotional competencies and academic success continues with Vespo, Capece, and Behforooz's (2006) study of the Nurturing Curriculum and its effects on academic immaturity. Finally, this section presents Spoth, Randall, and Shin's (2008) findings regarding the relationship between a school-affiliated, extra curricular SEL program—The Iowa Strengthening Families Program—and students' engagement in school and future academic success.

Social Emotional Competency and Academic Success

Graziano et al. (2007) used a correlational study to determine that in kindergarten students ($N = 325$) better emotion regulation significantly predicted higher mathematics ($R^2 = .33$; $p < .05$) and early-literacy achievement ($R^2 = .22$; $p < .05$) scores, as well as teacher-reported success and productivity in the classroom ($R^2 = .29$; $p < .001$). The authors studied kindergarten subjects already participating in a larger ongoing study, for which they had been recruited at two years of age. The participants' parents completed the Emotion Regulation Checklist ($\alpha = .68$), a sub-scale of which became the focus of this study. To determine students' academic success, the authors collected measures of their academic competence from the students' classroom teachers, which were used to create an academic success and productivity composite score ($\alpha = .79$), and administered

literacy, mathematics and listening tests to a subset of students (n = 92). Using hierarchical regression analysis and controlling for students' measured IQ, the authors found a positive correlation between students' emotion regulation and academic success.

In the same study, Graziano et al. (2007) tested their data for two mediating factors of the aforementioned correlation: student behavior and the quality of student-teacher relationships. Using parents' assessment of their children's behavior problems, the authors found that subjects with more behavior problems performed significantly worse on both standardized assessments ($p < .05$) and teacher rated academic success and productivity ($p < .001$). The second mediating factor, the quality of student-teacher relationships as evaluated by the students' teachers, acted as a significant positive predictor of higher scores on standardized assessments ($p < .05$) and classroom academic success and productivity ($p < .001$). Controlling for the quality of student-teacher relationships as an influential factor eliminated the significance of behavior as a predictor of academic success. However, the quality of student-teacher relationships did not prove to be a mediating factor for the larger relationship between emotion regulation and academic outcomes. Instead, the authors found that better emotion regulation and higher quality teacher-student relationships were each uniquely correlated with higher levels of academic success.

Although it is impossible to rule out a sufficient number of variables to establish a causal relationship in correlational studies such as this one, by accounting for students' IQ, and examining potential mediating factors, the authors improved the internal validity of their research. Though they refer to their sample as racially and economically diverse (roughly two-thirds Caucasian and one-third African American), the authors failed to

report specific information on the socioeconomic status (SES) of and the geographic locations from which participants were drawn. As the authors acknowledged, their inability to obtain test scores for all students to counterbalance potential teacher bias in reports of classroom academic success limited the extent to which conclusions can be drawn from this study. Finally, though the authors acknowledged an important weakness in failing to include student input in their evaluation of the quality of teacher-student relationships, they neither explained nor provided reasons for excluding this input in their study.

Shifting from early schooling experiences to research with middle and high school students, Ross and Broh's (2000) longitudinal correlational study to determine the relationship between academic achievement, self-esteem and a sense of personal control in adolescents (N = 8,802) found that academic achievement in eighth grade significantly predicted both students' sense of self-esteem (B = .191, p < .05) and personal locus of control (B = .247, p < .05) in tenth grade, and that students' sense of a personal locus of control, but not self-esteem, in tenth grade significantly predicted (B = .074, p < .05) academic achievement in twelfth grade even after controlling for students' achievement history. The authors utilized data from the base year (1988), and first and second follow-up periods (1990 and 1992, respectively) of the National Education Longitudinal Study. They limited their sample to those students who had responded during all three periods. Test scores and grades provided measures of academic achievement in grades eight and twelve, while student responses to the Rosenberg self-esteem scale and Pearlin mastery scale measured students' self-esteem and sense of personal control in grade ten. The authors analyzed the data using an ANCOVA controlled for socio-demographic

variables. Additionally, they assumed no causal direction between self-esteem and a sense of personal control and freed the correlation between the two in their analysis.

The authors acknowledged that the relationship between the variables in this study cannot be assumed to be causal, due to the correlational nature of the analysis. Though there was a significant predictive relationship between a student's sense of personal control in tenth grade and his/her academic achievement in twelfth grade, that relationship was relatively weak when controlled for prior academic achievement. Another weakness in this study is that the authors did not report the reliability ratings of their instruments used to measure self-esteem and locus of personal control. Although the sample size and outcome measurements in this study strengthened its external validity, reliability, and objectivity they also limited the depth of understanding one can gain from its conclusions. By using grades and test scores as the sole measures of academic success, the authors revealed an unstated mechanistic bias about what they refer to as the academic achievement process.

Moving toward a broader understanding of academic success, in a longitudinal, correlational study Fleming et al. (2005) determined that stronger attention regulation (r values between .18 and .37), commitment to school (r values between .33 and .40), and social and problem solving skills (r values between .09 and .38) significantly predicted ($p < .01$) higher test scores and grades in tenth grades students ($n = 576$). The authors drew participants for the study from the Raising Healthy Children Project (RHCP), a longitudinal study of ten public schools in a suburban school district in Washington state. From the initial pool of RHCP participants ($N = 938$), failure to provide one or more of the following requirements eliminated nearly half of the subjects from analysis in this

study: a California Test of Basic Skills (CTBS) score from fourth grade, a Washington State Assessment of Student Learning (WASL) score from tenth grade, and information on parent household structure and income from the subject's seventh grade year. During the seventh grade year, surveys of parents, teachers, and subjects provided the authors with data to assess risk and protective factors for the participants (internal validity of child, parent, and teacher studies ranged from 0.66 - 0.92 for specific questions, 8 of 13 questions had an α or *r* number above 0.80). The authors assessed the data using unadjusted and partial correlations. They applied point biserial correlations to both overall and adjusted correlations between dichotomous variables and academic achievement as a measure of control for prior test scores and demographic variables.

Fleming et al. (2005) acknowledged the limits of the correlational study design, and its inability to uncover causal relationships between variables. However, they also made the claim that "taken as a whole, these findings support the argument that interventions that boost the social and emotional skills of children, increase their ability to stay focused in the classroom, and improve school bonding, are likely to increase academic performance," which suggested a causal relationship among the variables that could not be backed by the correlational data (Fleming et al., p. 347). Additionally, significant correlations among the variables were weak to moderate in strength. The generalizability of this study was compromised by the demographic composition of subjects (84 percent white and 14 percent low income), which could be traced to an unexamined bias present in the criteria required for participation.

Finally, a prominent weakness in this study is that the authors fail to report that the instruments used to measure test score outcomes were somewhat incompatible with

one another as measures of student performance. The CTBS is a multiple choice exam that measures a student's success against the success of other students, whereas the WASL is comprised of multiple choice, short answer, and essay questions and measures student achievement against preset standards rather than peer performance. Although Washington state did not use the WASL to measure student performance when the students were initially tested in fourth grade, a fact which limited the authors' choices of evidence, by failing to mention the incompatibility of these measures the authors weakened the credibility of their study.

Demonstrating mixed results, though a generally positive trend between students' social and emotional development and academic success, the preceding studies represent the prominent recent research on social and emotional competencies as they relate to current educational goals. Academic success, according to this research, is related to students' abilities to regulate their emotions, their sense of personal control, and their social emotional problem solving skills. The last two studies presented in this subsection focused on just how this relationship plays out during the completion of specific academic tasks, as well as the directionality of the relationship between social and emotional competence and academic achievement.

In a qualitative study using both ethnographic ($N = 48$) and case study ($n = 1$) approaches, Gómez-Chacón (2000) found that the most important interaction of elements between cognitive and affective processes during the performance of a challenging mathematical task were emotional reactions based on students' prior sociomathematical experiences and current expectations. The author used classroom observations, interview confirmations, and the participant’s evaluations of his/her own progress to focus her

research on the local affective response and the origin of the participants' emotional reactions when engaged in a mathematics task. She listened to and transcribed an average of forty-eight sessions per individual, and analyzed the data to arrive at significant units of analysis and categories used in excerpts.

In her analysis of the information gathered on the case study student, Gómez-Chacón (2000) found that several limiting beliefs related to both a social and mathematical understanding of the task influenced the participant. Pre-existing sociomathematical attitudes of the student included beliefs that mathematics was full of incomprehensible formulae and letters, it did not fit within the scope of common sense, problems could be solved using only one method, and that it was a subject for students coming from another social context (specifically, mid to high SES). However, though the student's self-concept as a mathematics student was lower than his actual abilities demonstrated, particularly when a given task that reminded him of a prior schooling experience, in solving the problems provided by the author, the student experienced a range of emotions during the process from anxiety to satisfaction to surprise.

With an average of forty-eight sessions with each of forty-eight subjects, the author had ample opportunity to eliminate inconsistent results from the study. She acknowledged self as instrument, and her analysis of one student in particular, which she presented as a case study, was thorough. However, after observing forty-eight students, she provided no other examples besides that of the case study to support the conclusions she presented in this article. The author provided her instrument of observation, but no evidence to demonstrate the reliability of that instrument. Finally, a major problem with this research is that it presented the reader with no information about the subjects'

demographics or grade levels, and therefore limited the extent to which the findings can be transferred to other situations.

Trying to deduce more specifically the nature of the relationship between social and emotional competence and success the next study analyzed internalizing behavior—antisocial behavior patterns directed inward, which include withdrawal, depression, and anxiety—as it related to achievement. In a longitudinal correlational study of mostly African American, economically disadvantaged students in grades one through five (N = 105), Ackerman et al. (2007) found that third grade reading problems predicted increases in internalizing behavior (adjusted $R^2 = .35$, $p < .01$), but third grade internalizing behavior did not significantly predict increased reading problems. The researchers followed participants from first through fifth grade, both observing and surveying the students to determine measures of inattention ($\alpha = .71$) and negative emotional experiences ($\alpha = .78$). Structured interviews with the subjects' mothers provided information about demographics, parenting processes, family history, recent life changes, family functioning, caregiver mood and personality, and child attributes and school performance. The subjects' teachers also reported on the students' academic performance and problem behaviors using the Teacher Report Form of the Child Behavior Checklist 4-18 ($\alpha > .90$ for each dimension of the assessment). The authors used reading achievement scores as an additional outcome. Their results provided evidence to suggest that reading problems are more likely a cause than an effect of teacher-reported internalizing behaviors.

Ackerman et al. (2007) acknowledged several limitations in their study, including the use of a relatively small sample of students, restricted to economically disadvantaged

families. The findings, therefore, cannot be generalized to all public school elementary students. While the study design accounted for subjects' history, without a control group of students the study had no way of accounting for maturation as a possible interfering factor. Internal consistency ratings for the surveys completed by subjects were reasonable. The authors also clearly stated their examiner biases and the limitations of a correlational study in determining causality and directionality between the variables studied. Additionally, after examining these limitations, the authors did make any claims in their concluding remarks suggesting causal or otherwise unexamined relationships between the data.

The last two studies in this subsection began to examine the nuances behind the relationships uncovered in the first three studies by examining more specifically the nature and directionality of the relationship between affective processes and achievement. However, these relationships are complex, and as shown, difficult to clearly and accurately interpret. To better understand the relationship between social and emotional competencies and academic success, the next set of research studies specifically examined changes in academic achievement and behaviors associated with academic success that occurred in tandem with SEL curricular interventions. The following studies move beyond the question of whether social and emotional competencies are related to achievement, and into the realm of whether teaching these competencies through specific SEL curricula is directly or indirectly related to improved student engagement and performance.

SEL Curricula

Curricula designed specifically under the umbrella of SEL, as well as those meeting most or all of the criteria of SEL are examined in this subsection. Though critiques are provided evaluating how well each of these programs reflected the conceptual framework of SEL, it should be noted that not all of these authors purported that their programs met the exact requirements for SEL curricula. Instead, some of these studies were chosen because their programs and questions fit well within the scope of this paper and its definitions of SEL and academic success.

Using an accelerated longitudinal nonequivalent control group design, Brown et al. (2004) found that high rates of instruction in the Resolving Conflict Creatively Program (RCCP) curriculum significantly predicted positive changes in first through sixth grade students' (N = 11,160) academic achievement in mathematics. Since the New York City schools in this research sample were already involved with the RCCP at the time this study was conducted, the authors sought to determine the varied degrees of program implementation, which they then categorized into four groups: beginning stage, integration of some program components, integration of all program components, and nonintervention. They drew schools equally from four major districts within the city, and selected schools where student race, ethnicity, poverty status, and school size were comparable both across district and stage of RCCP implementation. They also sought schools that were representative of the public elementary school population in New York City.

Research team members developed a management information system through which staff developers collected and recorded data annually on the two core components

of RCCP: staff development and number of lessons in RCCP a teacher taught to the children in his/her classroom. The authors then assigned individual scores reflecting the total amount of lessons each student received from their year one and year two classroom teachers, and the total amount of staff development received by their year one and year two classroom teachers. They collected data on the children's achievement in mathematics during the spring of 1994, 1995, and 1996 testing periods to measure the academic improvements of the study's participants. Children whose teachers taught an above average number of RCCP lessons but received only average amounts of staff development had the greatest increases (significantly more than the other 2 groups) in math test performance between the ages of seven and twelve and a half, but no statistical data were reported.

The strengths of this study included its large sample size and longitudinal design that aligned appropriately with the change over time goals of SEL. The study design also adequately accounted for history and maturation. However, SEL also considers academic success under a much broader lens than test scores, but this study limited its analysis to students' math test scores. Two final weaknesses were that the authors failed to acknowledge the biases that influenced their study design, and did not report any statistical significance values, or measurements of internal validity and consistency, although they claimed significance in their report of the data.

Moving away from the more specific problem solving nature of RCCP, the next study examined the Unique Minds School Program (UMSP)—a teacher-led curriculum designed for prevention through the development of all students' social, emotional, and cognitive competencies. Using a quasi-experimental study with a non-equivalent control

group design to determine the impact of the UMSP on the academic success of fourth and fifth grade students ($N = 119$), Linares et al. (2005) found that the intervention significantly improved student ratings of self-efficacy ($p < .01$) teacher ratings of students' attention and concentration ($p < .001$) and students' report-card math scores over two years ($p < .05$). The intervention did not significantly impact reading grades or CTBS math and reading scores. The authors conducted their study over two years in thirteen classrooms (6 at an intervention school and 7 at a control school) in low-risk, working class neighborhoods in New York City. From a pool of students whose parents had provided consent for the study, the authors selected a random sample of between four and thirteen students from each participating classroom. All participating classroom teachers at the intervention school taught the UMSP curriculum for one or two years prior to the study's commencement, and continued to receive training in the program during the study.

The authors obtained their data using multi-method, multi-agent assessments on outcomes of interest using records of grades and test scores, the Morgan-Jinks Student Efficacy Scale ($\alpha = .79$), and the Teacher Observation of Classroom Adaptation-Revised ($\alpha = .98$). Trained Observers, blind to the intervention philosophy and methodology (inter-rater reliability > .80), used classroom observations, questionnaires, semi-structured interviews, and school records to obtain data at the end of grades three (baseline), four (year one), and five (year two). Random regression procedures modeled the differential impacts of the UMSP intervention over time. The authors monitored for the effects of special education status, gender, and ethnic background by including these factors in the model and running a separate analysis of the data.

Though the participants were racially diverse, the authors acknowledged that the relatively small sample size and specificity of the geographic location in which this study took place limited its generalizability. Additionally, with only thirteen classrooms in the study, all data analyses were limited to the individual, rather than the classroom level. However, the use of a nonequivalent control group design strengthened the study's internal validity by accounting for history, maturation, testing, instrumentation, selection and mortality. The length of the study (two years) is the minimum length of time appropriate for evaluating a program intended as a multi-year intervention. A longer intervention and analysis period would strengthen the study's results. On a broader level, one strength of this study is that through their examination of students' improvement in many realms (e.g. behavior, attitudes/efficacy, grades, and test scores) Linares et al. (2005) recognized academic success as a complex and multifaceted outcome that cannot be accurately reflected with grades and test scores alone.

The next study shifts the focus once again to the primary grades, and is unique in that it evaluates the effects of a program implemented in the classroom but designed and utilized primarily by parents prior to this research. In a quasi-experimental study with a non-equivalent control group design, Vespo at al. (2006) found that academic immaturity—inability to sit still, concentrate, and complete lessons—decreased significantly ($F = 45.41$, $p < .0001$) over time in kindergarten students ($N = 135$) when students' classroom teachers implemented the Nurturing Curriculum—a program intended to promote students' social and emotional growth. The deputy superintendent of an inner-city school district in the Northeastern United States selected the two schools (one experimental and one control) from her district to participate in the study due to

their similar economic status and ethnic diversity. Prior to curriculum implementation, at mid year, and at the end of the academic year, a graduate student (whose median correlation with an independent observer was .90 across subscales) observed eight kindergarten classrooms in the two schools and rated each student's academic immaturity. The authors then compared these observations to those of kindergarten students attending the experimental school the previous year. Using a stepwise multiple regression, the author's found that elimination of disruptive behavior and improvements in prosocial behavior were the strongest predictors (together accounting for 72 percent of the variance) of decreased academic immaturity.

Although the sample was not randomly selected, the selection of a non-equivalent control group design adequately accounted for many of the potential variables that can influence data interpretation. The authors acknowledged a potential weakness in their accountability for maturation, which compared only some students (n = 14) from only two of the kindergarten classrooms the previous year. The consistency of the findings across all eight of the experimental classrooms added reliability to the study. However, a weakness acknowledged by the authors included the lack of access to students' academic outcomes.

Although they addressed many weaknesses in their criteria of design, the authors of this study failed to acknowledge some of the assumptions underlying their research. Of primary concern is that academic immaturity is defined solely through a child's inability to sit still, concentrate, and complete lessons. Although the authors used research to link the reduction in academic immaturity as they defined it to improvement in academic outcomes such as grades and test scores, they did not acknowledge the mechanistic and

individualistic assumptions about learning one must hold to view sitting still, concentrating, and completing lessons as primary indicators of academic maturity.

Of the above studies in this subsection, only Linares et al. (2005) took an approach to research that demonstrated a more comprehensive understanding of learning and academic success, while the others assessed academic outcomes through the lens of a more traditional, behaviorist model of learning. Though valuable from the standpoint of the United States' emphasis on achievement, considering the focus of SEL and its rootedness in a more student-centered approach, to take a purely mechanistic view of students' successes in correlation with SEL programs is incomplete. The last study presented in this section approached SEL curricula from a slightly different perspective that involved both the parents and students in social and emotional competency training.

Spoth et al. (2008) used a nonequivalent control group design to test the effects of the Iowa Strengthening Families Program (ISFP) on students' ($N = 445$) school engagement in eighth grade and academic achievement in twelfth grade and found that both the direct and indirect effects of the program on academic achievement were significantly ($p < .05$) correlated with increased school engagement and, later, academic achievement. Families from 33 rural Midwestern schools participated in the study, and were randomly assigned to either a control group with minimal intervention, a group receiving an alternate treatment (Preparing for Drug Free Years), or the ISFP. All demographic variables were consistent between the three groups.

Families in the ISFP groups attended seven weekly sessions at participating schools, where parents and children received separate training, followed by a whole-group family session. Individual sessions for students consisted of modeling and

practicing positive behaviors such as goal-setting and strengthening, stress and emotion management, responsibility, and responding to peer pressure; parent sessions included discussions of how to understand and support youth through adolescence; and joint sessions were for practicing with the skills and knowledge developed in the individual sessions. The authors observed ISFP group leaders during two to three sessions to ensure that the key program concepts were targeted. A Likert-type scale completed by students provided information on school engagement ($\alpha = .64 - .77$), and grades reported by the mother, father, and student to improve validity ($r = .75$) provided achievement outcomes. The authors used a measurement model to assess the statistical significance of the data gathered and reported a 95 percent significance rating, but did not include data revealing the strength of the correlation between the ISFP, school engagement, and academic achievement.

One of the strengths of this study was that participants were not self-selected but randomly assigned. Additionally, the use of both a control group and a group receiving an intervention different from the focus of this study allowed the authors to better eliminate the possibility that any intervention, and not the ISFP specifically, could have caused the outcomes observed. As educational studies go, the nonequivalent control group design utilized by the authors accounted for many of the potential influences that could skew the results of the research. The authors also checked many of their initial assumptions about directionality of effects with the data they gathered prior to assessing the correlation between specific outcomes and the treatment program. This study had notable drawbacks as well. Its sample is specific—drawn from small towns in a single state—and is comprised almost entirely of white families. Additionally, while the outcomes were

assessed over a long period of time, the intervention itself lasted only seven weeks, which meant that while it targeted many of the same goals as other SEL programs, it lacked the element of consistency and duration that is a key feature of SEL curricula.

The most prominent recent research by Graziano et al. (2007), Ross and Broh (2000), and Fleming et al. (2005) suggested that there is a significant relationship between students' social and emotional competencies and their academic success. Arguments put forth in those studies aligned with Gómez-Chacón (2000), whose qualitative analysis demonstrated that there is a link between affective and cognitive processes. However, Ackerman et al. (2007) questioned the direction of effect between students' problems with emotional competencies and problems with reading in the intermediate grades. Finally, the last set of studies in this section examined the effects of curricula designed to explicitly teach social and emotional competencies, and presented arguments in favor of implementing these programs based on research demonstrating their impact on not only standardized achievement measures, but also, in one case, broader outcomes related to academic success.

Social Emotional Aspects of School and Classroom Climate

This section first examines whether and how instructional and emotional support affect students' academic success. It presents different analyses of the same data set by the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHHD, 2002), and Hamre and Pianta (2005), which explored the impacts of teacher-provided emotional and instructional support in the classroom. It then reports Perry, Donohue, and Weinstein's (2007) findings regarding the relationship between socially and cognitively rich instructional supports and academic adjustment. Then, using research from Stipek et al.

(1998) it examines the relationship between learning and engaging in mathematics and the affective environment of the classroom. Concluding the inquiry into instructional and emotional supports is a study by Lee and Smith (1999), who focused on describing the differences between and interactions among social support and academic press as they relate to academic achievement.

The second part of this section explores the relationship between students' perceptions of the school and classroom environment and their academic success. It begins by investigating Ryan and Patrick's (2001) research on the relationship between students' perceptions of school social environment and whether and how those contribute to changes in their motivation and engagement. It then presents findings by Roeser, Eccles, and Sameroff (2000), who inquired into the relationship between students' perceptions of self and environment and their grade point averages. Next, Marks (2000) studied the relationship between social support at school and student engagement. Finally, the inquiry into the relationship between perceived school climate and academic success concludes with a study by Solomon, Battistich, Watson, Schaps, and Lewis (2000) that explored the mediating effects of a sense of community on the relationship between school climate and students' social, ethical, and intellectual development.

Part three of this section looks into two studies that focused specifically on the correlation between school size and academic achievement and the factors that contribute to that relationship. Lee and Loeb's (2000) study investigated this relationship through the lens of teachers' attitudes about collective responsibility within their schools. In a different approach to understanding the interactions between school size and students' academic success, Darling-Hammond, Ancess, and Ort (2002) investigated the Coalition

Campus Schools Project (CCSP) intervention and used qualitative data to uncover how improvements in student outcomes were associated with smaller school size.

Instructional and Emotional Support and Academic Achievement

In 2002, The NICHHD conducted a quasi-experimental study with a nonequivalent control group design that examined the relationship between academic success and the emotional and instructional support offered by teachers to their first grade students ($N = 910$). They found that in classrooms where emotional support offered by the teacher was high, students were more often engaged in the assigned activity ($\beta = .181$, $p < .001$). The researchers recruited mothers from ten different hospitals in different regions of the country and followed their children through first grade. Assessments, at 54 months of age and in kindergarten provided measures of children's risk status and prior functioning on outcomes of interest. Trained observers obtained data on child achievement outcomes using the Woodcock-Johnson Psycho-educational Battery-Revised ($\alpha = .80$ at 54 months; $\alpha = .83$ in kindergarten) and measures of classroom process from the Classroom Observation System for First Grade. Observers passed a videotaped reliability test with six classroom scenarios with a score of at least 80 percent.

From this data, The NICHHD created classroom composites for emotional support and instructional support, and used these as classroom level indicators in statistical analyses (emotional support, $\alpha = .89$; instructional support, $\alpha = .70$). The composites were correlated with each other ($r = .59$, $p < .0001$). Using the same data set, with a different analysis approach, Hamre and Pianta (2005) found that students with high functional risk showed similar academic achievement to their low-risk peers in classrooms with high emotional support, but displayed significantly lower levels of

achievement than their low risk peers in classrooms where little or no emotional support was observed ($p < .05$). Hamre and Pianta categorized classrooms into those offering high, moderate, and low support (at 33 percent cut points). They divided their at-risk students into two risk categories—functional and demographic. They then entered instructional and emotional support variables into ANCOVA models to determine the effect of different levels and types of classroom support on participants' outcomes.

The extent to which this study tried to achieve an experimental design increased its internal validity, and the diverse regional distribution of a strong sample size strengthened its external validity. However, both the NICHHD (2002) and Hamre and Pianta (2005) acknowledged that the exclusion of children of teenage mothers, non-English speaking mothers, and children who were extensively hospitalized at birth or had diagnosed disabilities limited the study's diversity and therefore its generalizability. That the researchers conducted only one, three hour observation of each student's classroom further limited this study, though there were almost sixty classrooms with more than one participant that were observed multiple times (average correlation was higher than .70). Overall, however, the diverse regional distribution of over 900 subjects made the data collected more representative of and generalizable to the greater population than most educational studies, and the thorough evaluation of data, biases, and the limitations demonstrated the authors' careful steps to get closer to objective research.

The NICHHD's (2002) data analysis failed to take into account the potential combined effects of instructional and emotional support and compare those to classrooms where one or the other was present. On the other hand, Hamre and Pianta (2005) did a more complete job analyzing the data by compartmentalizing different types of risk

factors and different types of classroom support, and examining the relationships between each of these. Additionally, Hamre and Pianta also recognized the simplification of classroom processes and student outcomes through the use of global measures, which provide only a limited understanding of how teacher support relates to at risk students' achievement. Though working from the same data set, Hamre and Pianta's study more extensively evaluated the meaning and relationships of the data collected.

In another study with a similar age group, Perry et al. (2007) used a correlational analysis to examine the relationship between teaching practices that provide social and cognitively rich instructional supports and students' ($N = 257$) academic adjustment in first grade. The authors found that after controlling for the effects of prior achievement, socially and academically supportive teacher practices predicted higher student scores in letter-sound recognition ($R^2 = .39$, $p < .01$), reading fluency ($R^2 = .30$, $p < .05$), and math ($R^2 = .24$, $p < .05$). In fourteen classrooms in four rural California schools comprised of mainly middle and working class families with small populations of migrant farm workers, doctoral students in education and psychology observed the extent to which instructional and social teacher practices were intellectually and emotionally supportive using the Early Childhood Classroom Observation Measure ($\alpha = .85$ - $.91$). At the beginning and end of the school year, students took tests designed to assess their progress toward California's state academic standards, and teachers completed the Pupil Behavior Rating Scale ($\alpha = .68$ - $.88$) for each study participant. The authors used hierarchical linear modeling and regression techniques to determine the relationship between the percentage of students in each classroom that met state academic standards and the teacher support observed in that classroom.

By assessing students at both the beginning and end of the school year and observing classrooms with varying levels of teacher-provided support, the authors adequately controlled for both history and maturation in this study. Additionally, in an era where standards-based reform has become central to schooling, the authors evaluated a very relevant, though not comprehensive, measure of student success in school. Conducting statistical analyses on the classroom level to determine how many students met standards also strengthened this study as it allowed the data to reflect how many students the teachers effectively reached, and it was not vulnerable to skewed averages from high or low test scores. The authors acknowledged that determination of a causal relationship is limited by the study's correlational design. However, while the sample size was relatively small and from a specific locale, this study added to a body of research which, taken as a whole, accounts for a demographically diverse population.

The preceding studies examined specifically the effects of emotional, social, and in some cases academic support on students in the primary grades. Rather than looking at the effects of an SEL curriculum, the authors studied with teacher practices that demonstrated social and emotional competence, and as a result SEL through modeling and support of students in the learning process. The last two studies in this subset explored similar relationships from research with students in the intermediate elementary and middle school grades.

Using a nonequivalent control group design with two different control groups (N = 624) Stipek et al. (1998) found that for students in grades four through six the affective climate of the classroom, including the promotion of risk-taking, was positively correlated with help-seeking behaviors ($F = 10.34$, $p < .01$), mastery orientation ($F =$

3.78, $p < .10$) and positive emotions associated with learning fractions ($F = 5.05$, $p <. 05$). Additionally, they found that while student achievement gains on procedural fractions problems were not significantly correlated with teacher practices, a teacher's emphasis on learning orientation predicted gains on concept-based fractions problems ($r = .51$, $p < .05$). The authors invited teachers of grades four through six in a large, diverse, urban setting to participate in this study, and placed the teachers into three groups. Teachers who had stated a commitment to instructional reforms in mathematics and attended workshops in pursuit of that goal comprised two of these groups, while teachers in the third group expressed no interest in reform-oriented mathematics and taught using the textbook and more traditional practices. Of the two reform-oriented groups, teachers in one participated in an intensive intervention program intended to improve their efforts in teaching the reform-oriented curriculum.

The authors collected data on student motivation through the use of a questionnaire early in the school year, and again after the students had completed the unit on fractions. Videotapes of teacher practices were coded for the extent to which teachers emphasized student effort; focus on learning, understanding, and mastery; performance; autonomy; social comparisons; as well as the teacher's affect; enthusiasm and interest in subject matter; implementation of a threatening or risk-supportive environment; and emphasis on speed (only those with an interrater reliability of .86 or above were used in data analyses). Finally, teachers also completed questionnaires detailing the types of feedback and assessment strategies they used when evaluating students' work. Regression analyses provided the findings detailed above.

Stipek et al. (1998) acknowledged one of the major limitations of this study, which is the inability to draw any major conclusions about the causal relationships between the variables they examined. The diversity of the study's participants, as well as its place among a number of findings that show similar relationships between affect and mathematics achievement strengthened the generalizability of this research. While the study design accounted for students' history and maturation, the designation of the participating teachers into an intervention and two control groups based on their different attitudes toward teaching mathematics wasn't presented with a clear purpose in meeting the goals of the study. Finally, the short period of time over which this study was conducted is another weakness when considering it among this body of research.

Looking at a much larger data set, with different outcomes indicative of academic success, Lee and Smith (1999) examined the relationship between social support, academic press, and academic achievement in sixth and eighth grade middle school students (N = 28,318) using a correlational study with variable findings. Of those findings, the ones pertinent to this review suggested that students with high levels of social support learned significantly more than students with low or medium levels of social support in schools with both high and medium levels of academic press. However, students with only medium levels of social support in high academic press schools showed as much improvement as students with high levels of social support at medium level schools. Importantly, academic gains from social support are nonexistent at low academic press schools, but high and medium levels of social support do appear to mediate achievement losses at these schools. Finally, in all three cases (low, medium, and high academic press) students with low social support show a loss in achievement after a

one year period. The authors collected data from the Consortium on Chicago School Research, which has conducts ongoing studies of Chicago public schools. They used hierarchical linear modeling to analyze the data from surveys (88 percent response rate) of teachers and students, as well as Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) scores from the annual assessments of Chicago's elementary school students.

While the authors presented their data in both charts and graphs, most of the conclusions drawn about the intersection of academic press and social support as predictors of achievement came from the graphic representations which were not labeled with significance values. They also failed to report the reliability ratings of the surveys used to gauge levels and types of support. The study's sample size strengthened its external validity and its thoroughly reported and repeatable methods increased its reliability. However, the ITBS test is only one measure of student achievement, and it limited the scope of what could be concluded about academic success and student learning. Additionally, the authors did not acknowledge their biases, which are revealed in hypotheses that suggest academic press is likely a stronger predictor of achievement than social support.

Social support and the affective environment in both elementary and middle grades were correlated with measures of academic success in students. However, as many of the above studies demonstrated, improved academic outcomes were generally more closely tied to SEL and social and emotional support in school and classroom environments where there is an additional focus on the students' cognitive development and personal academic success. As Lee and Smith's (1999) research suggested, in order for SEL to do more than simply mediate the falling behind of students it must be

contextualized in an academically rigorous and instructionally supportive environment. The next set of studies in this section shifted focus from outside observers' perceptions of school and classroom environment to students' perceptions of social and emotional support within schools and classrooms and evaluated how those perceptions are related to academic outcomes.

Students' Perceptions of Environment

In a correlational study to determine how eighth grade students' ($N = 233$) perceptions of the social environment relate to changes in motivation and engagement when students move from seventh to eighth grade, Ryan and Patrick (2001) found that the overall classroom social environment correlated positively with academic efficacy ($r = .30$, $p < .001$) and self-regulated learning ($r = .20$, $p < .01$). Within that finding, the authors determined that the only dimension that contributed uniquely to changes in academic self efficacy ($\beta = .31$, $p < .001$). and increased self-regulated learning ($\beta = .35$, $p < .001$) was student perceptions of the teacher promoting mutual respect. Students in this study were a subgroup of a larger longitudinal study examining the relationship between adolescent development and the learning environment. Trained research assistants administered surveys to the subjects in the spring of the seventh grade and fall of the eighth grade year to gauge students' social and academic efficacy, self-regulated and disruptive behaviors, and perceptions of their classroom and social environments (internal validity on specific questions ranged from .69 to .90). The authors conducted Principal Axis Factor analysis on the entire data sample, on boys and girls separately, and for African American and Anglo American students separately. They controlled for prior

achievement using math grades from the students' final semester of the seventh grade year.

This study examined student motivation and self-efficacy in relation to students' perceptions of teacher support and respect. Though it is only one perspective, the choice of this perspective in particular strengthened the applicability of the study because in the classroom it is students' perceptions of these supportive elements that matter more than those of a teacher or observer. The authors controlled for both history and maturation in their correlational design and did not make claims of causation in their discussion of the data. The fact that this study took place in only three middle schools in two Midwestern school districts weakened the external validity of the study. However, the study's participants were racially and economically diverse, and its findings, as well as the findings presented in the next article reviewed, added to an increasing volume of research centered on the relationship between school environment and academic success in middle school.

In order to uncover the relationship between school and social emotional functioning in middle school students (N = 814 - 945), Roeser et al. (2000) used a correlational study to determine that adolescents' perceptions of self and school environment emerged as significant predictors of grade point average (GPA) and students' motivation to learn. More specifically, self-perceptions of academic competence predicted higher GPAs (seventh grade: R = .35, p <. 01; eighth grade: R = .32, p < .01). Perceptions of school as emphasizing self-improvement and task mastery as the main indicators of success, teachers having positive regard for the academic ability of their students, a meaningful and relevant core curriculum, and teacher availability to assist

with emotional problems also predicted increased motivation to learn. On the other hand, students who perceived their environment as emphasizing competition and relative ability as its main measures of success, and their teachers and staff as disrespectful toward students reported declining motivation to learn over time.

Data for this study came from the Maryland Adolescent Development in Context study (1991-1993). Trained community members interviewed subjects and caregivers in their homes at the beginning of the subjects' seventh grade year and the end of their eighth grade year. English, science, math, and social studies grades provided the data for students' GPAs at the end of both the seventh and eighth grade years. The authors used nomothetic statistical analyses to determine the relationship among variables across the whole group, and idiographic analyses to identify patterns of experiences and outcomes among particular groups differentiated by gender and race (African American = 67 percent of the sample; white = 21 percent of the sample). However, they found no significant differences in relationships among variables between the differentiated groups.

The assumptions about student learning presented in this article reflect an understanding of academic development that goes beyond grades to encompass motivation and attitudes toward school. The authors also acknowledged the other assumptions they made during their analysis. However, though they provided a complete description of the relationships uncovered through their analysis, the authors failed to report the correlational coefficients and significance values for those factors influencing student motivation, thereby weakening their claims.

Using a correlational study design, Marks (2000) shifted the scope of research to a broader age range and found that social support was a predictor of student ($N > 3{,}660$) engagement in grades five ($R = .19$, $p < .001$), eight ($R = .19$, $p < .001$), and ten ($R = .18$, $p < .001$), and that the relationship between classroom support and student engagement increased significantly as students progressed through school (grade 5, $R = .18$; grade 8, $R = .22$; grade 10, $R = .25$, $p < .001$). In order to investigate students' engagement in school, the authors concentrated on a portion (grades five, eight, and ten) of the data collected in a study by the Center on Organization and Restructuring of Schools. During the original data collection, students responded to survey items about their experiences, behaviors, and attitudes in their mathematics or social studies class, about school experience, and about personal and familial demographic history. From these questionnaires, the author constructed a factor containing four component measures—completion of assignments, attentiveness, lack of boredom in class, and student efforts—of student engagement in instructional activity ($\alpha = .69$). She employed two way ANOVAs for initial analyses, and hierarchical linear modeling for multivariate analyses. Her analysis controlled for gender, race, ethnicity, SES, and prior achievement.

This study had a strong sample size and accounted for participants' history by controlling for prior achievement. However, without a control group, it could not account for maturation as a potential variable affecting student engagement. One of the most problematic aspects of this study is that, though it takes individual achievement history into account, the conclusions drawn about the relationship between classroom support and student engagement failed to control for the fact that the elementary schools, middle schools, and high schools measured had significantly different achievement levels as

compared to the national average. Taken as a group, the high schools in this study ranked considerably below the national average, whereas both the middle and elementary schools ranked above the national average. In concluding that classroom support was more important as students progressed through school, the author did not acknowledge the possibility that the influence of classroom support may also be related to the broader achievement levels of the schools studied.

The next study examined a specific curriculum, but is placed in this subsection because within that curriculum it addressed the mediating effect of school climate on academic outcomes. Solomon et al. (2000) used a longitudinal, nonequivalent control group design to determine whether or not the Comer School Development Program (SDP)—a holistic, school-wide intervention that targets social, emotional, and academic improvement—had a positive effect on elementary school students' (N = 6,828) social, ethical, and intellectual development, and whether that effect was contingent on creating a caring climate within the school. Though the results demonstrated variable findings on achievement as gauged by test scores, the authors found that when compared to their control schools, high levels of program implementation and a strong sense of community were significantly ($p < .01$) positively associated with academic attitudes, motives, and behavior as demonstrated by reading in school (R = .18), reading outside of school (R = .21), enjoyment of reading (R = .39), liking for school (R = .66), enjoyment of class (R = .72), engagement in class (R = .22), enjoyment of helping others learn (R = .72), academic self-esteem (R = .49), preference for challenging tasks (R = .34), intrinsic academic motivation (R = .34) and task orientation (R = .61).

The selection of six school districts, three from the West Coast, one from the lower Midwest, one in the Southeast, and one in the Northeast, took place through an iterative process. Within each of these districts, the authors selected two schools to implement the SDP and two comparison schools which matched the program schools as closely as possible with respect to school size, ethnic distribution, poverty level, percent limited English speakers, and achievement test results. Students completed questionnaires (α = .70 - .92) to assess perceptions of school environment, academic, personal, and social attitudes and feelings, and cognitive academic performance. Standardized achievement test scores provided another measure of academic achievement. The authors constructed an index of implementation for each program school (mean α = .74 over three years) using the results of teacher questionnaires (α = .61 - .83) and systematic classroom observations, conducted by separate teams of four observers per district—newly hired and trained each year to maintain observer blindness to the conditions and hypotheses. The authors assessed the direct effects of the program using a series of univariate ANOVAs and ANCOVAs, and used a second set of analyses to test the hypotheses that students' sense of community mediated program effects on students. The data presented in the study represented the differences found between the five schools found to have high levels of implementation and their matched, control comparisons, which represented the full range of demographic features present in the larger sample.

The authors of this study extensively examined the problems that arose from the study design and implementation and maintained that lens of limitations in drawing conclusions from the study. Additionally, the study design accounted for potential problems that could arise from history, maturation, testing, instrumentation, selection,

and mortality. By analyzing five program schools with a range of demographic characteristics, and a matched control school for each intervention school, the authors strengthened the external validity and generalizability of their research, and were able to more accurately distinguish the impact of the variables. Finally, its longitudinal study design, in conjunction with the diversity of ways in which the authors assessed academic success is students, made this study reflective of the intentions behind the SEL school of thought.

The above studies examined a number of different measures of both students' perceptions of environment, as well as their academic outcomes, and presented findings that generally suggested a relationship between students' perceptions of the social and emotional school and classroom environments and their academic success. The final two studies in this section examine the relationships between climate, achievement, and school size, a factor that has historically been touted as one solution to both student and teacher disinterest and apathy in the public school system.

School Size and Academic Achievement

Lee and Loeb (2000) used a correlational study to examine the relationships between school size and collective responsibility on kindergarten through eighth grade students' (N = 22,599) academic and social achievement and found that the size of Chicago Elementary schools related to teachers' attitudes about collective responsibility (medium vs. small, $\gamma = -.406$, $p < .05$; large vs. small, $\gamma = -.589$, $p < .001$) and significantly affected the mathematics achievement of students in the schools (medium vs. small, $\gamma = -.073$, $p < .05$; large vs. small, $\gamma = -.041$, not significant). The Consortium on Chicago School Research, which surveyed all sixth, eighth, and tenth grade students,

all teachers, and all principals in Chicago public schools, provided the data for analysis in this study. The major independent variable for the current study was school size, and all participant schools were divided among three size categories and school demographics. The multilevel analysis focused on collective responsibility as its major dependent measure for teachers and schools. The collective responsibility composite measured the extent to which teachers thought their colleagues shared responsibility for student learning and for students' academic and social development ($M = 5.68$, $SD = 2.17$). The students' 1997 math scores on the ITBS provided the major dependent variable. The authors controlled the analysis for differences in race/ethnicity, age for grade level, and mobility. They analyzed all of the above data using Hierarchical Linear Modeling.

As in many studies with a large sample size, this study was limited to analyzing test scores as its main indicator of academic success. The correlation between math achievement and school size is weak, and in the comparison between large and small schools is insignificant. Additionally, the authors were unclear about why they chose to include only students' math scores in their analysis, when the ITBS also assesses language and reading at all grade levels, and social studies and science in the eighth grade exam. Though the sample size was large, it was regionally specific and limited to an urban school district, which limits its generalizability to students from other regions and more suburban and rural settings. As a final point of critique, in their discussion, the authors focused on the how schools can be made smaller based on the claim that small schools work better. Because this is a correlational study, it was inappropriate to make the assumption that the relationship between school size, teachers' sense of collective responsibility, and student achievement was causal. However, equally problematic was

that by limiting the discussion to making schools smaller, the authors neglected their stated purpose for completing this research, which was to discover whether the relationship between school size and student achievement was mediated by teachers' senses of collective responsibility. Armed with the knowledge that there was, in fact, a relationship between teachers' perceptions of collective responsibility and student achievement, it seems that the next action step should include a procedure for determining if and how that sense of collective responsibility can be transferred to larger schools.

Using a combined quantitative (nonequivalent control group design) and qualitative (ethnographic) approach to assess whether and how new schools can be created on the basis of successful design rather than leaders within the school, Darling-Hammond et al. (2002) found that the Coalition Campus Schools Project (CCSP)—which replaced two of New York City's most troubled high schools with smaller schools at other sites—resulted in a significant increases in attendance (14.2 percent; $p < .01$), and English language acquisition (38.2 percent, $p < .05$). Additionally, the seven year graduation rate of students at CCSP was 86.4 percent and the college going rates of graduates was 91 percent by 1998. In qualitative interviews, respondents consistently identified, and observers confirmed small school size, personalization of strong relationships in the schools, coherent and purposeful curriculum, explicit teaching of academic skills, ability to adapt instruction to students' needs, school wide performance assessment, flexible support systems for student learning, and strong teachers supported by collaboration and problem solving as factors important to the new schools' success.

This study reported specifically on the closing down of Julia Richman High School through the CCSP, and its replacement with five smaller schools. Principals assisted in selecting the student sample to represent diversity in gender, race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, age, and the entire range of academic achievement. The researchers drew data from the New York City school record data sheet on student characteristics, attendance, achievement, and graduation. They used qualitative samples of student work, including portfolios and interviews, to supplement the quantitative data collected. Data collection took place in three waves: documentation of the planning and initiation, collection of record data on student achievement, and finally, onsite data collection when the first two cohorts of students graduated. T-tests generated comparisons of data from the new schools with comparable data from Julia Richman and similar schools within the city. The researchers used an iterative process to analyze qualitative data and identify prominent themes and specific findings, and triangulated their results by reviewing data from different sources.

The longitudinal nature of the study fit well into the framework of SEL, and the collection of both qualitative and quantitative data provided a balance of perspectives about not only the changes in school climate, but also the measures of academic success. Additionally, the researchers clearly acknowledged the biases present in their approach. However, it remained unclear how well the authors achieved their goal of disaggregating the findings based on the design from the impact of the individuals who implemented the intervention, which was the stated purpose of the study. This brought up the important question of whether or not these two aspects of SEL curricula can actually be separated. Additionally, with a program like CCSP that so drastically changed the nature of

schooling, it could be argued that change, in and of itself, would produce many of the studied outcomes, and there is no clear evidence about what linked the specific changes studied here to the more general positive outcomes of the CCSP.

The findings presented in the first part of this section from the NICHHD (2002), Hamre and Pianta (2005), Perry et al. (2007), Stipek et al. (1998), and Lee and Smith (1999) showed a strong, though in some cases differential relationship, between both instructional and emotional support in the classroom and students' academic success. In the second part of this section, research by Ryan and Patrick (2001) Roeser et al. (2000) and Marks (2000) linked students' perceptions of their school and classroom environments with an array of indicators of academic success including GPA, engagement, and motivation. Solomon et al. (2000) also found that a variety of desirable student outcomes resulted from the improved sense of community at school created by the Comer SDP. Lee and Loeb's (2000) study demonstrated the mediating effect of teachers' attitudes about collective responsibility within their schools on the relationship between school size and achievement. Finally, this section demonstrated findings by Darling-Hammond et al. (2002) that revealed a number of influences at work in the success of the smaller schools in New York City's CCSP.

SEL and Marginalized Populations

This section is divided into two parts. The first is an investigation of the effects of SEL interventions on large samples of students from marginalized populations. The second focuses mostly on qualitative research with marginalized populations that investigated the effects of intervention at the personal, individual level. Presented first are the results of Griffith's (2002) study that examined how school learning and social

environments related to minority achievement. The remainder of the first part explores schools with exceptionally high populations of racially marginalized students, and the effects of implementing the Comer School Development Program (SDP)—a school-wide intervention that targets changing the social and emotional climate as the first step in improving academic success—at these schools. Though presented elsewhere in this literature review for its effects on more generalized populations, the Comer SDP was designed for use with racially marginalized populations and is better researched in this area. This section examines the findings of Cook, Murphy, and Hunt (2000), which is one of the more large scale analyses of the SDP on reading and math scores. Then, it looks more specifically at the effects of implementing the SDP at a New Jersey Elementary school, as reported in Emmons, Efimba and Hagopian (1998) and Emmons and Baskerville (2005).

The second part of this section first examines Floyd's (1996) research into the motivating forces behind high achievement in African American youth living in poverty. Valenzuela's (1999) research follows with a larger scale qualitative examination of what motivated and discouraged Mexican and Mexican-American students in an American public high school. Then, this section presents findings by Murray and Malmgren (2005), who examined the effects of a teacher-mentoring program on at risk African American students, and Cartledge, Sentelle, Loe, Lambert and Reed's (2001) case study that explored an intervention program designed to improve the cultural understanding, and therefore effectiveness of a white teacher of gifted African American students. A study by Brizuela and García-Sellers (1999) follows, which investigated the factors mediating the successful transition of Spanish Speaking immigrant students into American

schooling. Finally, the section closes with an examination of Raskind, Goldberg, Higgins, and Herman's (1999) study of factors influencing the adult life successes of students with learning disabilities.

Large Scale SEL Interventions and Marginalized Populations

Griffith (2002) used a correlational, multilevel analysis to analyze how school learning and social environments related to minority achievement in third through sixth grade students ($N = 25{,}087$) attending public elementary schools. He found that, in the sample as a whole, only classroom expressive (social and emotional) support was significantly ($R = .36$, $p < .01$) associated with students reporting higher grades. When examining more specifically the relationships between subsamples and the school environment, his findings revealed that in schools with lower socioeconomic status (SES), low levels of expressive support predicted higher grades in classrooms with lower rather than higher levels of instrumental (academic) support. However, at schools with high levels of expressive support, grades were higher in classrooms with higher rather than lower levels of instrumental support. Conversely, in schools with higher SES, Griffith found that higher levels of instrumental support positively correlated with higher grades only when expressive support at the school was low. Finally, school expressive support combined with classroom instrumental support was associated with the smallest gaps in grades between minority and non-minority students ($\beta = .297$, $p < .006$).

The author drew his sample of students from 117 schools in a large, metropolitan area suburban school district. Classroom teachers administered student questionnaires with 40 statements using a four point Likert-type scale ($\alpha = .54$ - $.76$), which assessed perceptions of school learning and social environments at the school and classroom

levels. Students also reported grades from their last report cards. The author used hierarchical linear modeling to analyze the relationships between the data.

Though this study analyzed a large sample size, its generalizability is limited by the fact that the author drew the sample population from only one school district. Such a large sample size limited the depth to which the author explored students' academic success to student-reported grades. Additionally, the surveying methods did not account for history and maturation, and the low internal consistency of the questionnaires called into question their validity as an instrument of measuring outcomes. Griffith (2002) analyzed race, gender, and socioeconomic status to determine how each of these influenced the relationship between the school social and academic environment and GPA, but did not report the racial or gender distributions of the sample. Finally, the author provided no clear values of statistical significance for the relationship between SES and school social and academic support levels. However, he remained within the confines of the correlational design when analyzing his data by not bringing forth any assumptions of causality. Additionally, he analyzed the study's weaknesses and suggested a number of factors that could be improved in future research.

In continued exploration of what Griffith (2002) called expressive support on students from marginalized populations, Cook et al. (2000) used a non-equivalent control group design to determine that implementation of the Comer SDP predicted a gain of between 1.1 and 6.7 points in math and reading ($p < .01$) in primarily low SES, racially marginalized fifth through eighth graders ($N = 1,685$). The Comer SDP was introduced as part of a citywide educational reform movement in Chicago Public Schools. Nineteen schools (10 intervention, 9 control) remained in the study for all four years of the

experiment. At the end of grades five through eight students completed questionnaires through which the authors evaluated school climate, and student backgrounds and outcomes (α = .64 - .88; 95 percent completion). Staff also completed questionnaires to rate aspects of school climate and program implementation (α = .64 - .93; 90 percent completion). ITBS scores provided the sole measure of student achievement. Scores from grade three accounted for students' prior achievement. The authors used Hierarchical Linear Modeling to analyze the data at both the school and individual levels.

The authors extensively discussed the limitations of this study that arose as a result of the differences between its intended and achieved design. They argued that many of these limitations resulted from this being the largest and most economically disadvantaged school population on which the Comer SDP has been tried as part of a school reform effort. However, the authors failed to fully examine the assumptions underlying their study and arrived at conclusions in their discussion that were not fully supported by the data. By using ITBS scores as the only measure of student academic achievement, the authors limited the scope of academic success to a theoretically more objective, but not comprehensive measure of student learning. Additionally the gains in scores reported at the Comer School, while significant, were relatively small when controlled for standard deviation. However, more problematic was that an analysis of the individual schools showed that no significant correlation could be found between the individual school's academic gains and their improvement in social and academic climate, yet in the conclusion the authors make the claim that “the Comer Program caused positive changes in . . . standardized test scores” (Cook et al., 2000, p. 589).

Over about a ten year time period, in a qualitative study with supplementary quantitative data, Emmons et al. (1998) and Emmons and Baskerville (2005) studied the effects of the implementation of the Comer SDP at Norman S. Weir Elementary School ($N = 260$), a kindergarten through eighth grade urban school comprised almost entirely of students from racially marginalized populations. In 1991, Norman S. Weir Elementary School, in Paterson, NJ, began a restructuring process in response to having been identified as one of the lowest performing schools in its district. The school adopted the Comer SDP with aims to improve both school climate and achievement, and the faculty implemented the program in 1994.

Emmons et al. (1998) performed an initial analysis of the school in 1996, after the program had been in place for two years, and found that implementation of the program resulted in increased achievement on state-mandated tests in reading and math. They collected qualitative data on a number of different outcomes, and demonstrated improvement in achievement through a before and after comparison of student achievement on state-mandated standardized exams. Though the authors provided this quantitative raw data with their qualitative research, it was not run through any statistical analyses. Ten years after the implementation of the Comer SDP, Emmons and Baskerville (2005) returned to follow up on the original study and found that the initial positive effects of the Comer SDP had been sustained. Academic achievement had further improved since 1996, but the authors again provided data of students' achievement gains without any statistical analysis.

Though the data provided accounts for history and maturation through comparisons of Weir's data to both district and state test scores and to Weir's prior

achievement scores, the authors' failure to analyze the data for its significance was a prominent weakness in these studies. With gains between 18 and 45 percentage points, as compared to no more than a ten percentage point gain at the district or state levels, it seemed likely that the school made significant gains in achievement. However, the actual significance of these findings remained uncertain because the authors' did not provide statistical analyses. Though not explicitly stated by the authors, this lack of statistical analysis revealed an underlying assumption about learning aligned with a less quantifiable, holistic viewpoint. It therefore provided a unique perspective when considering the impacts of social emotional learning on students' academic success. The authors were largely concerned with qualitative analysis, but the part of this study relevant to this literature review on academic success was concerned primarily with their quantitative data. It was therefore difficult to analyze the data for its validity as either a quantitative or qualitative piece.

These studies do, additionally, have a number of other weaknesses. Their external validity suffered from the fact that the implementation of this program on a school-wide scale could be influenced by a number of uncontrolled variables such as the teachers and administrator responsible for implementing the program, and their interpretations of and attitudes toward it. As an examination into the effect of a school-wide, long term intervention program on marginalized populations, the lack of a non-marginalized population to compare it to is also a factor that one must take into consideration when analyzing the data.

The Comer SDP, which was designed to focus on school climate as the gateway to students' engagement and academic success has made significant progress toward

accomplishing these goals. However, isolating the components of the program that are most effective in school reform is a difficult and perhaps inappropriate task because, like most SEL programs, it was designed to be an integrative, long term program, not a fragmented add-on to the existing curricula. With the intent of gaining a more comprehensive understanding of SEL and marginalized populations, the following section looks more specifically at how individual students, rather than large samples, have been impacted by SEL interventions in their schooling.

Individual SEL Interventions and Marginalized Populations

In an ethnographic study to determine how high-achieving, African American students ($N = 20$) continued to focus on and excel in their education, despite the occurrence or reoccurrence of serious problems due or related to socioeconomic insecurity, Floyd (1996) found that students often referred to teachers and specific teacher behaviors—sense of belief in the student, high expectations, making curriculum relevant to outside of school interests, and providing opportunities to the student that he/she had previously been unaware of—as motivating influences in the students' quests for academic achievement. The researcher chose the African American youth as participants for her study based on their having met a certain criteria of academic success: having taken at least college preparatory class and qualified for college entrance. She used four individual interviews of about forty-five minutes each, and one collective dialogue to determine which adults in the students' lives had been the most influential in their sustained academic efforts and achievements, and what behaviors those adults had specifically exhibited that contributed to the students' successes.

By investigating the support systems of successful African American students, Floyd's (1996) approach was somewhat unique to the literature presented in this paper because it looked at achieved academic success and tried to uncover what life factors facilitated that success. A strength of this approach was that it made no assumptions about the forces at work in these students' lives, but rather looked to the participants to provide that insight. However, its sample size was small, and the author did not provide evidence of member checking or acknowledging self as instrument. While there was also no triangulation in this study, the single perspective approach was appropriate for examining what factors academically successful, at-risk, African American youth saw as important to their achievement.

In a larger study, using a modified ethnographic approach, Valenzuela (1999) found that Mexican and Mexican-American high school students in an urban Texas high school ($N = 95$) were acutely aware of and responsive to their schooling environment and performed better when teachers were authentically (as opposed to aesthetically) nurturing and socially and culturally additive rather than subtractive or dismissive of the students' cultures. Over a three year period, the author made use of participant observation, as well as individual and group interviews to collect the qualitative data for this study. Within these data major themes of youths' perceptions of caring and culturally responsive practices by their school and teachers emerged. Valenzuela gained access to the study's participants through creating ongoing relationships with them in the school environment, and interviewing them primarily during their lunch hours working from the assumption that at that time, in the cafeteria environment, students would be more likely to open up to her in an honest way.

Valenzuela (1999) used a thorough methodological approach in the study. She sought out studies that attempted to answer similar questions to her own, and designed her research to address the weaknesses that she found in their methods. Her sample size was ample for a qualitative study, and she acknowledged self as instrument in the data collection process. She provided extensive examples to support the conclusions drawn, and improved the study's credibility through the use of member-checking and triangulation. Though the author acknowledged her own assumptions and her own experiences that led her to this study topic, she also searched for unexpected and unfamiliar themes (such as students' perceptions of care and nurturing in their academic environment). She addressed issues of dependability by interviewing students of similar ages and cultural backgrounds during the summers between the academic years while she was not interacting with this study's participants. Finally, Valenzuela explored in her conclusions but did not test the transferability of this study, suggesting that for any culturally marginalized population, culturally subtractive schooling and teachers' attitudes toward students' learning and lifestyles are likely important factors in shaping students' attitudes toward and achievement in school.

Caring and authenticity of relationships reigned paramount in the two studies above. The next three studies attempted to investigate whether or not these important mentoring relationships for students from marginalized populations can be created and fostered as an intervention, rather than simply as an innate quality of their teacher or school. They examined the implementation of programs designed to intentionally place teachers in mentoring roles, to train teachers to better understand the cultural background of the students with whom they are working, and to mediate the teacher, student, family

relationship by someone outside of the school system who had cultural ties to students and their families.

Murray and Malmgren (2005) examined the effects of a program designed to improve African American adolescents ($N = 48$) relationships with at least one teacher in an urban high school using a nonequivalent control group design and found that students in the intervention group had significantly higher GPAs following the intervention than those students in the control group ($F = 4.46$, $p < .05$). However, the data provided no significant findings about the emotional and school adjustment of the students. Eight teachers volunteered to serve as mentors for at-risk youth participants nominated by teachers at the school. The researchers developed the intervention method with the teachers' input. The intervention included weekly meetings with each student in the experimental group, and teacher completed measures of student adjustment completed just prior to and five months after implementation. The researchers collected subjects' academic grades from three of the primary content areas (English, math, social studies, and science), excluding for each student the grade received from his or her mentor. Analyses of variance and covariance determined significant relationships between the intervention and the measured outcomes.

The authors of the study acknowledged the weakness created by the short-lived nature of the intervention studied, as well as the threat to internal validity created by the fact that the mentoring teacher evaluated the students' social, emotional, behavioral, and academic adjustment. While removing grades from the mentor teacher in calculation of GPA increased the scientific objectivity of the study, the authors failed to acknowledge the potential influence mentoring could have on a student's performance in the mentor

teacher's class specifically. This study was also limited by its small sample size drawn from only one high school. However, the nonequivalent control group design adequately accounted for potential variance in results due to history, maturation, instrumentation, implementation, testing, selection, and mortality, and therefore strengthened the study's internal validity.

Shifting focus from functionally at-risk students, the next study considers the role of the teacher when working with gifted African American students. Cartledge et al. (2001) used a qualitative case study in a fourth/fifth grade gifted classroom with primarily low socioeconomic status, African American students (year 1, $N = 18$; year 2, $N = 17$) to examine the effects of the Effective Behavioral Supports (EBS) program on pupil disorder and maximization of the schooling process. The authors found that with training and support from the EBS intervention team that was familiar with the cultural and instructional needs of the learners, the classroom teacher was able to cover more material, and reported that her students learned more and displayed less disruptive, more respectful behavior.

After identifying a Caucasian teacher struggling to manage her gifted classroom consisting of primarily African American students, a team consisting of one professor and four doctoral students from Ohio State University visited the classroom to help the teacher implement the EBS program over a one and a half year period. The intervention team initially identified teacher behaviors that they perceived as contributing to classroom management problems, and helped the teacher develop a list of behavioral expectations for the students. In the second year, the team coached the teacher on how to

explicitly teach social skills to the students for thirty minutes each week. The research team conducted no formal evaluations of the students or the teacher.

This study had no visible strengths. Member checking, triangulation, and self as instrument were notably absent from the research. No evidence besides the self-report of the teacher supported the conclusions drawn. Generalizability should not be claimed in a qualitative study. However, the authors generalized the applicability of their findings to white teachers working with students of color, which is not only inappropriate for the nature of the study, but also questionable considering the small sample size and lack of evidence collected.

In another piece of research that examined the role of an outside mediator in navigating cultural differences between school faculty and students, Brizuela and García-Sellers (1999) used a case study to determine what enabled six and seven year old, first and second generation Spanish speaking immigrant children ($N = 16$) to transition into American schooling. The authors conducted a year long study that followed the adaptation process of immigrant children, their families, and their teachers. One of the authors, a Latina of South American origin, mediated the family and school relationship with the intent of understanding the relationships between subjects, family, and school. She visited and contacted the families regularly, and familiarized herself with the characteristics of the subjects' home lives. She also met regularly with teachers and provided feedback and support to both parties. They found that a number of important factors contributed to the subjects' abilities to transition to the optimal Adapted with Support mode. Primarily, support from family and teacher who were able to develop holistic images of the child that included both strengths and weaknesses, and the presence

of a mediator who shared cultural and language background with the student were important for facilitating the transition. Additionally, this case study pointed to the fact that evaluating students' transitions and success at school could not be viewed solely in terms of academic success or English language competence.

One of the strengths of this study was that its findings were consistent with its original purpose and context. Additionally, its examination of academic success and transitional success went beyond objective measures of achievement and language acquisition to take into account a broader perspective of the children's development. However, this study also contained a number of weaknesses. The authors did not state their biases and perspectives, and there was no evidence of member checking the data. This is particularly problematic because the presentation of the data and the construction of the research suggested that there was a preexisting belief that the model used by the mediator would work. Finally, while the authors' reported that changes in teacher conduct took place, they provided no evidence to support this claim, making it difficult to evaluate the ways in and extent to which these changes occurred.

While the above studies focused exclusively on the relationships between SEL and academic achievement in racially marginalized populations, the last study in this section presents research done on the factors influencing both academic and more general life success in students with learning disabilities. Finding research specific to examining the relationship between SEL and academic success was a difficult task. The findings presented below attempt to broaden this paper's definition of marginalized student populations beyond simply race. However, as will be discussed later in this paper,

research conducted examining the influences of SEL on academic success for student populations facing marginalization due to factors in addition to or besides race is sparse.

In a longitudinal correlational study of students with learning disabilities ($N = 41$), Raskind et al. (1999) found that self-awareness ($r = .69$; $p < .05$) and emotional stability ($r = .55$, $p < .05$) positively correlated with successful life experiences and that lack of support systems ($r = -.84$, $p < .05$), emotional instability ($r = -.78$, $p < .05$), and lack of self awareness ($r = -.58$, $p < .05$) negatively correlated with successful life experiences. The findings presented in this article represented the second phase of a research project that collected data from a group of former students of Pasadena, California's Frostig Center over the course of twenty years. Of the 50 students successfully contacted for the ten year follow up, the authors located 41 for phase two, which took place twenty years after the students left the center. The quantitative data collected in phone interviews fell into 3 major categories: self-awareness/acceptance of one's learning disability, goal setting, and support systems available and utilized. Each participant received a score from four researchers ($k = .96$) in the above categories based on a written transcript of the interview. The authors compared these to the participant's overall success rating ($k = .97$) as determined by responses about employment, education, independence, family relationships, community relation/interests, crime/substance abuse, physical health, and psychological health.

Among the strengths of this study was its longitudinal nature, which considered the success of students with learning disabilities beyond their years in school, and also provided several data collection points over time. Additionally, the qualitative nature of the original study, from which the quantitative questions were developed, eliminated

some of the biases that often go into a researcher's choice of interview questions. Finally, another positive aspect of this research was its multi-faceted definition of success, which included but was not limited to academic success in the school setting. However, this study had several weaknesses. As acknowledged by the authors, a small sample size drawn from a single region with a mostly upper class SES as well as the changing definitions of what constituted a learning disability over the past twenty years severely limited the generalizability of these findings, particularly to populations of students with learning disabilities today. Finally, this study did not have a control group, which made it difficult to arrive at any conclusions about how self-awareness, goal setting, and support systems predicted success uniquely in people with learning disabilities.

In this section, Griffith (2002) presented data suggesting that there were significant differences in the way social and emotional support affected marginalized populations in public schools. Findings from Cook et al. (2000) demonstrated the variable effects of implementing the Comer SDP on a large scale with marginalized populations. However, both the initial and follow up studies conducted at Norman S. Weir by Emmons et al. (1998) and Emmons and Baskerville (2005) suggested the potential magnitude of the SDP's success when implemented at the single school level by a committed faculty and administration.

On the personal intervention level, Floyd (1996), Valenzuela (1999), and Murray and Malmgren (2005) examined the importance of adult mentoring and authentic caring for demographically at-risk students. Cartledge et al. (2001) presented an argument for the necessity of adjusting the practice of white educators to meet the needs of African American students. Finally, along both a similar and different vein, Brizuela & García-

Sellers (1999) found that the presence of a mediator who shared a cultural connection to Spanish speaking immigrant families allowed for improved communication between school and home and more successful American schooling experiences, while cautioning that a number of factors ought to be considered when evaluating the success of immigrant children's transitions into American classrooms. Finally, in a study examining the relationships between social-emotional factors and school and life successes in students with learning disabilities, Raskind et al. (1999) found that self-awareness, emotional stability, and presence and use of support systems were all highly correlated with success in students with learning disabilities.

Summary

Chapter three reviewed the current literature evaluating relationship between SEL and students' academic success. Research presented in the Social Emotional Competency section dealt specifically with the relationship between students' social and emotional competencies and their academic outcomes. This research not only indicated that there was a positive correlation between these factors, but that SEL curricula designed to enhance social and emotional competencies had resulted in improved academic success in students. In Social Emotional Aspects of School and Classroom Climate, the research focused on how both outside observers' and students' perceptions of academically and socially supportive school environments were significantly related to students' academic success. Finally the SEL and Marginalized Populations section provided a summary and analysis of research with variable findings about whether and how SEL affected samples of primarily racially marginalized populations differently than samples representative of privileged populations. Chapter four provides a summary of findings in this chapter. It

then describes the implications of these findings for classroom practice and future research in the field.

CHAPTER FOUR: CONCLUSION

Introduction

As educators, we shoulder the responsibility not only to teach certain skills and knowledge our students need to pass through society's gatekeeping mechanisms, but also to foster their development as individuals and future leaders in their communities. Though all teachers must make decisions about how to incorporate both of these elements into their practice, in an era where schools and teachers are pressed for enough time to fit everything in, test preparation and skills-based learning often play a more significant role in the classroom than students' holistic development and learning. Additionally, as government mandates for schooling become more centralized, curricular additions are subject to scrutiny for their utility and effectiveness in meeting the standardized testing goals of the United States. The purpose of this paper was to examine one type of proposed curricular amendment, Social Emotional Learning (SEL), which some have suggested can address both the testing and holistic development goals of teachers, and present and evaluate the most recent empirical evidence that analyzes the relationship between SEL and academic success in kindergarten through twelfth grade students.

Chapter one presented the public's current expectations for schooling and SEL. It demonstrated that, in the historical context of the No Child Left Behind Act, academic achievement as demonstrated by standardized test scores reigns paramount for evaluating the success of students, teachers, and schools. However, the public's expectations of schools as places where students receive education in social and emotional competencies has not dwindled, even with this heightened emphasis on achievement. In fact, with the perceived crisis of the nation's youth participating more frequently in high risk behaviors,

many continue to view public schools as the place where students can and should be educated to become moral and productive citizens of the United States. However, due to the renewed focus on academic rigor and achievement, the intervention programming historically associated with character building in the schools is often one of the first things to be cut when time and money run short.

The American public school has always been characterized by the presence of some sort of emotional, social, and moral (ESM) education. However, since the early days of the common school movement, the nature of ESM education has varied with the nation's changing social fabric. Chapter two provided historical perspectives on ESM education, contextualized within the framework of the major school reform movements that took place against the backdrop of industrialization, movements in African American education and integration, and the Cold War and international arms race. It closed with an examination of the most recent movements in ESM education and the psychological frameworks into which these movements fit, with a specific focus on the branch of ESM education referred to as SEL.

Chapter three presented and evaluated the most recent research literature on the relationship between SEL and academic success. This research fell into three major sections—Social and Emotional Competency, Social and Emotional Aspects of School and Classroom Climate, and SEL and Marginalized Populations. Each of these sections provided relevant findings to the topic, and evaluated the methodology behind the research and findings.

This chapter concludes this paper by reviewing the major findings of each section in chapter three. It then shifts to a discussion of the body of research as a whole,

exploring its significance, conclusions, strengths and weaknesses. It presents implications of the research body for classroom practice. Finally, it closes with suggestions for further research on this topic, closing with concluding statements about the paper as a whole.

Summary of Findings

What is the relationship between SEL and students' academic success in kindergarten through twelfth grade? This paper attempts to answer that question through the three major frameworks presented in chapter three. First, it presented research that evaluated the relationship between students' social and emotional competencies and their academic success. In the most prominent pieces of research recently produced on that topic, Graziano, Reavis, Keane, and Calkins (2007), Ross and Broh (2000), and Fleming et al. (2005) found that students who were more socially and emotionally competent showed better academic outcomes than students who demonstrated deficits in emotion or attention regulation, a sense of personal control, and/or social problem solving skills. However, work by Gómez-Chacón (2000), and Ackerman, Izard, Kobak, Brown, and Smith (2007) found that breaking down the nature of these relationships is often complex. Specifically, while both of these pieces of research suggested that there was a significant social and emotional component associated with academic success, their findings call into question the directionality of effects, leaving readers to wonder whether academic success or failure is the precursor to or the result of students' social and emotional competence.

One reason studies are often catapulted into the spotlight around a certain topic is that the simplicity of their designs, perceived objectivity of their measurements, and large sample sizes help to establish trust and confidence in their results. This is one of the

major strengths of Graziano et al. (2007), Ross and Broh (2000), and Fleming et al. (2005). However, such strengths often come with inherent weaknesses. As these studies and Ackerman et al. (2007) demonstrated, academic success outcomes were largely limited to students' test scores—a fact which, though it played into the test-driven nature of our current public schooling atmosphere, also supported the assumption that academic success and learning are about achievement on standardized exams. The purpose of these exams is most often to evaluate student's discrete knowledge and capacity at a particular type of testing rather than their understanding of subject matter. Gómez-Chacón (2000), on the other hand, investigated much more thoroughly the ways in which students' emotions interacted with their work on academic tasks through a qualitative study design. However, in order to do this she compromised certain elements such as sample size, simplicity of design, and the notion of scientific objectivity that can give a study much broader mainstream validity.

The second part of the first section examined whether and how SEL curricula influenced social, emotional, and academic competencies in students. Brown, Roderick, Lantieri and Aber (2004), Linares et al. (2005), Vespo, Capece, and Behforooz (2006), and Spoth, Randall, and Shin (2008) found that the implementation of curricula designed to target the social and emotional competencies of students resulted in increased academic success in the treatment group, when its outcomes were compared against those of a control group. Each of these studies had medium to large sample sizes and utilized a nonequivalent control group design to evaluate the effectiveness of their programs. The nature of this research design, which eliminates the influence of many potential sources of variation, made this set of studies stronger, in general, than the ones presented in the

first half of the section. However, of the studies evaluating the effectiveness of SEL programming, only Linares et al. (2005) evaluated outcomes that reflected a deeper understanding of students' academic success than test scores or grades. The others reflected the similar behaviorist assumptions to those in the first half of this section, and their results, therefore, must be interpreted with that in mind.

The section titled Social Emotional Aspects of Classroom and School Climate presented research analyses of the relationship between the school and classroom climates, as perceived by outside observers and students, and the academic success of students in those environments. A 2002 study by the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHHD) whose data were later analyzed by Hamre and Pianta (2005) found that in primary students, teacher provided emotional support played an important role in the development of academic habits for at-risk youth. Perry, Donohue, and Weinstein (2007), similarly found that first grade students' academic success was positively correlated with not only their teachers' provision of high levels of social support, but also high levels of instructional support as well. Stipek et al. (1998) and Lee and Smith (1999) validated the findings that the presence of both social and academic supports was positively correlated with successful academic outcomes, and some of their findings suggested these forms of support relied on or maximized the effects of one another.

All of these studies utilized nonequivalent control group or correlational designs to arrive at their conclusions. Medium to large sample sizes added to their validity, and research methods were designed with the goal of scientific objectivity. However, as noted before, approaching research from this angle has limitations as well, including the

overreliance of test scores as indicators of academic success. However, Stipek et al. (1998) attempted to evade the understanding of academic success solely through the lens of discrete knowledge by distinguishing between students achievement on procedural versus conceptual problems.

Ryan and Patrick (2001), Roeser, Eccles, and Sameroff (2000), Marks (2000), and Solomon, Battistich, Watson, Schaps, and Lewis (2000) examined a similar relationship to the studies above, but focused on students', rather than researchers' perceptions of school environment. All of these studies found that students' perceptions of their school or classroom environments as socially and emotionally supportive significantly predicted academic success. Though the correlational nature of most of these studies limited the interpretation of their results as a collective body of research, they successfully met the criteria for establishing trust and confidence in their results. Sample sizes were medium to large, and all took into account measures of students' academic successes that often included, but were not limited to test scores and/or grades. Lee and Loeb (2000), and Darling-Hammond, Ancess, and Ort (2002) showed similar findings to those above, but went a step further in trying to evaluate the relationship between school climate and school size. However, these studies were largely unsuccessful in separating the two variables, and their results were inconclusive.

The final major section in chapter three focused specifically on the relationship between SEL and marginalized populations. In the sole study in this section that evaluated the differences between SEL's relationship to marginalized and non-marginalized populations, Griffith (2002) found that what he characterized as expressive support was more important for achievement in students from low SES backgrounds than

for students from upper and middle classes. Additionally, he found that combining high levels of expressive and instructional support was the most effective way to reduce the achievement gap between socioeconomic and racial minority and non-minority students.

Cook, Murphy, and Hunt (2000), Emmons, Efimba and Hagopian (1998), and Emmons and Baskerville (2005) continued the investigation of social and emotional support for racially marginalized populations by evaluating the effects of the Comer School Development Program (SDP), the initial primary focus of which is school climate. The authors found anywhere from small to very large gains in academic achievement at both the individual and school-wide levels. Again, one of the major strengths of these studies also proved to be a weakness—that is, due to their medium to large sample sizes the studies presented a limited view of academic success, often relying on either test scores or grades to speak for the academic outcome of the students. Additionally, with the exception of Cook et al., these studies suffered from statistical incompleteness in their reporting, which limited the verifiability of their results.

By qualitatively investigating high school students from marginalized populations and their relationships with social and emotional support as related to achievement both Floyd (1996) and Valenzuela (1999) found that caring relationships with teachers played an important role in students' academic successes. Valenzuela's research, which was more thorough in its methodology, also found evidence that culturally additive schooling—that which authentically values and supports the culture of students from marginalized populations—played an important role in academic commitment and success. Murray and Malmgren (2005), Cartledge, Sentelle, Loe, Lambert and Reed (2001), and Brizuela and García-Sellers (1999) all found that these relationships could be fostered through an

outside intervention by a program or individual, but with mixed results in how effectively they contributed to academic achievement. Additionally, the reliability and credibility of these studies is limited by major gaps in study designs. Finally, in a topic that will be touched on more thoroughly in suggestions for further study, Raskind, Goldberg, Higgins, and Herman (1999) found that among students marginalized by learning disabilities, academic success was significantly correlated with both social and emotional support and competence. However, the reliability of these findings was heavily impaired by the lack of further studies demonstrating similar results.

Taken as a whole, the findings from chapter three demonstrated that there is a relationship between social emotional competencies, SEL, and students' academic success. Additionally, they suggested that this relationship is not one that should be pursued at the cost of instructional support, but rather in tandem with. One of the major strengths in this body of research came from the multitude of studies with large sample sizes and strong quantitative designs. Though the correlative studies could not legitimately suggest directionality between variables, most of the studies with nonequivalent control group designs found that SEL and social and emotional competencies did positively impact academic achievement. However, the recent surge in quantitative research with large sample sizes around this topic also contributed to one of its most significant weaknesses, especially when trying to draw conclusions about the nature of the relationship between SEL and academic success.

The mechanisms by which SEL works to influence academic success cannot be fully understood through studies reliant on large scale, objective analyses, particularly those that take into account students' academic outcomes as measured solely through

standardized testing. However, certain meta-themes emerged in the research presented here, particularly with respect to the types of social and emotional environments and support that predicted students' academic success. Consistently, research found that without regard to the preexisting social and emotional skills of students, classroom and school environments that provided noncompetitive, community-based support, and that focused on individual learning and personal mastery rather than performance predicted better academic outcomes. Additionally, school and classroom environments that supported the development of student identity through cultural responsiveness and relevance improved measurable outcomes of student success including test scores, grades, attitudes, behaviors, and motivation to learn.

When examining the major themes that emerged from this body of research through a broader lens, one must consider their alignment with philosophies of education and learning presented in chapter two. Particularly, the literature reviewed here aligned with Dewey's (1938/1997) arguments that community was of primary importance in the classroom and that, in order for learning to take place, schooling must be relevant to the lived experience of the student. Kegan's (1994) research on the demands of modern society heightened the importance of this philosophy, as it suggested that much as Du Bois (1906) argued in the early nineteenth century, the purpose of schooling is to create leaders in communities. This review's confirmation of many of these historical and more modern philosophies has important implications for the classroom teacher.

Implications for Classroom Practice

When examining what the above research means for educators, one must first establish a solid understanding of how academic success is defined according to his/her

beliefs about teaching, learning, and schooling. That is, what do we hope our students will achieve as participants in our classrooms? Due to the heightened pressures placed on teachers and schools for their students to perform well on standardized exams, and the esteem with which these exams are often looked upon by outside institutions, achievement as defined by standardized test scores and students' grades is certainly one piece of academic success that must be acknowledged. To ignore that is an act of social injustice in a society where test scores and grades act as gatekeepers for employment and higher education (Delpit, 1995/2006). However, when thinking beyond the responsibility teachers have to give students the tools they need to pass through the system toward a broader understanding of educating the whole child, one must embrace a more complete understanding of academic success than simply that recorded by grades and test scores.

Taken as a whole, the research above suggests that social and emotional competencies and support are significantly related to a range of student academic outcomes. Additionally, a number of the articles reviewed here demonstrated that beyond students' existing social and emotional competence, or the instinctive provision of social and emotional support by teachers, the implementation of SEL curricula that aimed to improve social and emotional competencies in both students and teachers was related to better academic outcomes (Brizuela & García-Sellers, 1999; Cartledge et al., 2001; Lantieri & Aber, 2004; Linares et al., 2005; Murray & Malmgren 2005; Spoth et al., 2008; Vespo et al., 2006). Although more and better research is certainly needed in this area, because these finding appear consistently in recent studies of SEL they have important implications for classroom practice.

Even without taking extra time to teach SEL curricula, there are many things teachers can do to create a more socially and emotionally supportive environment in the classroom. For teachers of primary grades, the research suggested that instructional, social, and emotional support each play important roles in the development of academically successful students. However, specifically with this age group, the nature of social and emotional support provided is unique in that there is a heightened focus on creating a nurturing environment (Brizuela & García-Sellers, 1999; Cartledge et al., 2001; Murray & Malmgren, 2005; Vespo et al., 2006). However, as teachers begin to work with students in the intermediate elementary grades up through high school, different definitions of what it means to be socially and emotionally supportive replace this need for nurturing. Put another way, the findings here suggested that the type of nurturing that supported academic success in older students is more about autonomy, efficacy, personal mastery, authenticity, the modeling of successful adult behavior than it is about emotional sensitivity.

The focus of the research done on intermediate elementary school students and SEL demonstrated that social and emotional support during these years becomes less about nurturing the individual student, and more giving the student skills for cooperation and fostering the development of intrinsic motivation. At this stage, the research focused on both the social and problem-solving skills of students as well as their developing concept of themselves learners (Emmons & Baskerville, 2005; Emmons et al., 1998; Griffith, 2002; Linares et al., 2005; Marks, 2000; Solomon et al., 2000; Stipek et al., 1998). However, of the research on intermediate elementary students, Stipek, et al. was the only one which examined the nature of instructional support as socially and

emotionally supportive—a key finding when considering the aim of SEL as a form of ESM education which is integrated into rather than separate from the academic curriculum. In fact, this study found that as early as fourth grade, students were acutely aware of the types of instructional support provided by teachers, and responded better to those that promoted a cooperative, learning focused environment, as opposed to a competitive, performance focused environment. Rather than simply adding a nurturing or emotionally supportive element to their teaching, educators must change their instruction in academic subjects in order to effectively integrate SEL into the curriculum.

Research duplicating these findings about the social and emotional elements of instructional support is more prevalent at the middle and high school levels. Studies of secondary students predominantly showed that cooperative, learning centered classrooms; authentic teacher interaction with students; intrinsic, noncompetitive rewards for learning; and relevant and meaningful curricula were all predictors of academic success (Darling-Hammond et al., 2002; Floyd, 1996; Marks, 2000; Roesser et al., 2000; Ross & Broh, 2000; Ryan & Patrick, 2001; Valenzuela, 1999). When taking these findings into consideration with those from Griffith (2002) and Lee and Smith (1999), which suggest the necessity of academic, social, and emotional support not only for the success of all students but for narrowing the achievement gap between marginalized and non-marginalized populations, important implications arise for educators concerned with social justice.

Research presented in this paper found that the explicit teaching of social and emotional competencies through SEL curricula was associated with gains in students' achievement (Brown et al., 2004; Linares et al., 2005; Spoth et al., 2008; Vespo et al.,

2006). However, as discussed more thoroughly in chapters one and two, there is little, if any room in the curriculum for more content. My own experience in the classroom indicated that while ever more attention was diverted toward the development of discrete literacy and math skills, subjects such as social studies and science, particularly in the elementary school classroom, had slipped through the cracks. Though results of SEL programming are related to improvement in students' grades and test scores, if SEL is to be a truly integrated and permanent part of the curriculum, it must come from a broader perspective—one that research indicated cannot simply be taught, but must be modeled by educators as well. In fact, there is an inherent contradiction in advocating SEL as an integrated, broad, long-term solution, and then prescribing a particular SEL curriculum to teach it as an add-on to existing curricula.

Current brain research suggests that students not only come into our classrooms with pre-existing social and emotional competencies, they also continue to construct these competencies throughout their lives whether we explicitly teach them or not (Jensen, 2005; Zull, 2002). In reflecting holistically on the research presented in this paper, neurobiological research on how students' construct knowledge, the current social and political climate, and the state of public schooling today, certain conclusions arise. First, the importance of including socially and emotionally supportive, developmentally and culturally relevant, and cognitively engaging instruction in the classroom cannot be overemphasized. Second, findings that demonstrated the ability of this type of instruction to support the learning of marginalized populations obligate educators to examine how their teaching practices reflect this type of integrated, community-based, and culturally responsive instruction. And finally, though the implementation of SEL curricula has been

associated with gains in achievement, there are several cautions worth mentioning before deciding to introduce one of these curricula into the classroom.

Learning-focused rather than performance-focused environments, and teacher emphasis on cooperation and personal mastery rather than individualism and competition are important for fostering academic success in all students. Specific suggestions for educators that arise from these research findings include giving students a sense of autonomy and personal control in the classroom, providing cognitively demanding and culturally relevant tasks, striving for authentic relationships with students that not only respect but value the cultures that make up their identities, and creating an environment where learning through risk-taking and mistakes is safe. In what Valenzuela (2002) referred to as subtractive schooling, the absence of these features in the classroom and school environments is an important player in the perpetuation of social injustices and race-based social and economic stratification.

Though the explicit teaching of certain social and emotional skills for the purpose of creating a more functional learning environment should not be neglected (Cohen, 1994), in the context of the current political climate and the issues facing public schools today, educators and institutions must exercise caution when deciding whether to implement a program of this nature. First, though words such as holistic, integrated, and long-term solution have been associated with the recent SEL movement (Elias et al., 1997; Zins et al., 2004), no prepackaged curricula, be it for reading, writing, or social and emotional competence, can adequately address the needs of the unique group of students in front of a teacher or the specific learning goals the teacher has for those students. Second, time, money, and achievement—three of the most prominent deficits faced by

public schools today—each present a unique roadblock to the successful implementation of SEL programs. Finally, a teacher's modeling of, as well as the sustained use of social and emotional strategies to solve real problems as they arise in real classrooms will likely, according to our current understanding of how the brain constructs knowledge and the research presented here, have a greater impact on the students SEL than a prepackaged curriculum.

To conclude this section, the findings in chapter three suggested that teachers ought not ignore the social and emotional fabric of their classrooms. Depending on the age and developmental stages of their students, the nature of the social and emotional support needed changes. Still, across age groups findings demonstrated that its presence is an important factor in students' academic success, and that to be successful it must be coupled with, and ideally an integral part of instructional and academic support in the classroom. However, as with all good things, educators must be wary of the packaging of SEL in the form of universal curricula. Students have unique developmental and cultural needs, teachers have unique learning goals for students, and ultimately holistic teaching comes from working with the realities and experiences of the students in one's classroom, not fitting one's classroom to the specification of a curricular program. The integration of SEL into one’s teaching is not an issue of having the right curriculum. Rather the teacher, no matter the structure, must develop his/her cultural, social, and emotional competencies and integrate these into his/her classroom behavior, expectations, and curriculum.

Suggestions for Further Research

Recently, in trying to make a case for the presence of SEL in public schools, a number of prominent studies have been executed with the intent of creating an objective,

empirical body of evidence around SEL and academic success. Given the context in which this research was completed—an era where the notion of scientific objectivity still wields a powerful hand in the public arena—this is neither surprising nor inappropriate. However, it can only tell us so much about the nature of the relationship that exists between SEL and academic success, especially when success is measured by grades and standardized test scores. The challenge for research in this arena is two-fold: it must continue to keep in mind the important role testing and grades play in our society, while not losing sight of the fact that being an educator is at its core about facilitating the learning and development of all students—something that generally cannot be reflected by evaluating so called, objective measures.

While this paper examined a number of qualitative studies, many of them reflected weak study designs or were incomplete in the ways that they evaluated the themes that the authors uncovered. There is a need for more thorough, and well-designed qualitative studies in this area—studies that examine not only whether or not a relationship exists between SEL and academic success, but also the mechanisms by which that relationship works. Without fully understanding the ways in which these two elements interact, prescribing a treatment of SEL has the potential to be as unsuccessful as past ESM education programs and movements. Beyond the research as a whole however, certain areas in particular demonstrate major gaps in our understanding of SEL and academic success.

As mentioned in the previous section, most of the research presented in this paper suggested more nurturing support, and explicit teachings of social and emotional competencies for elementary-aged students, while the findings from secondary samples

demonstrated the relationship between cooperative, learning- and learner-centered environments. However, one must not overlook the fact that these findings were inherently biased by the questions posed by the researchers. In particular, to enrich the findings in Stipek et al. (1998), further research should be done on the relationship between providing social and emotional support imbedded in instructional support and the academic success of primary and intermediate elementary school students.

Another area in which gaps in the research are prevalent is the relationship that exists between marginalized populations and SEL. While a number of studies in chapter three focused their research specifically on racially marginalized populations of students, with the exception of Griffith (2002), no study presented in this paper explicitly compares the same SEL treatment or support given to both privileged and marginalized groups of students. This dearth of research made it difficult to draw any clear conclusions about whether and how students of color are affected differently by SEL. An additional suggestion is to expand the research on racial marginalization, SEL, and academic success that has focused primarily on African American and Latino students, to include students from all racially marginalized backgrounds.

Along the trend of broadening, future research must extend its definition of marginalized populations beyond racially marginalized groups. Chapter three presented only one study on students with learning disabilities due to the lack of research that examined this populations' academic response to social and emotional influences in the learning environment. The prominence and varied nature of learning disabilities, and the mechanistic approaches often used to teach students with learning disabilities creates a great need for more research in this area. However, the gaps in the research around

marginalized populations are even more widespread than this. I found no studies on the relationship between SEL and academic achievement in students oppressed as a result of their religion, gender, sexual orientation, physical disabilities, or size. If we, as teachers, hope to use educational research in this and other areas to narrow achievement gaps between oppressed and privileged populations, and to teach with social justice in mind, it is impossible to make informed suggestions about the incorporation of SEL into the curriculum without more research on whether and how SEL related to academic success in students from all of the aforementioned populations.

Conclusion

Framing the purpose of this literature review, chapter one argued that the state of public schooling today, as well as the expectations placed on public schools by both the public and the government necessitated a better understanding of how students' social and emotional development interacted with their academic success, and what role the classroom teacher and schools play in fostering that interaction. Within the context of the No Child Left Behind Act, easily measurable and quantifiable academic outcomes place expectations on teachers and schools that often mold the curricular content in ways that focus on discrete knowledge and test taking skills rather than a holistic approach to learning. As a result of that conflict, this paper focused on whether or not approaches to teaching that focus on the social and emotional development of students must be sacrificed with the heightened focus on testing. More specifically, it asked whether SEL affects academic success as defined by both the limited information provided from standardized testing and grades, as well as outcomes that aim to reflect the multifaceted nature of the learning process.

Chapter two discussed the historical background of the conflict between holistic learning, social and emotional education, and the mechanistic philosophies of learning that have predominantly characterized public schools in the United States. It demonstrated that this dilemma has, in fact, been present since the emergence of the Common School, and that ESM education not only influenced many racially and culturally oppressive tactics used in public schooling, but also characterized the major debate between Booker T. Washington and W.E.B. Du Bois about the underlying purpose of education for African Americans. It concluded by focusing on more recent developments in psychology, education, and public policy that have resurfaced this old conflict between mechanistic learning and SEL.

In chapter three, the most recent research literature demonstrated the intersection of SEL and academic success and the ways in which SEL influenced academic outcomes. These findings suggested that SEL played an important role in improving academic outcomes for students in kindergarten through twelfth grade in American public schools. Specifically, the first section of research demonstrated that social emotional competencies are important predictors of academic success and that these competencies can be explicitly taught for some measured improvement in academic outcomes. The second section examined the socially and emotionally supportive aspects of school and classroom climates and found that, particularly when incorporated into a relevant, meaningful curriculum and a learning-oriented, community-based classroom, social and emotional support were significant predictors of academic success. Finally, the third section examined the ways in which SEL interacted with marginalized populations. It demonstrated that social and emotional support, with an emphasis on the development of

students' cultural identities, played a significant role in the academic success of students from marginalized populations.

Chapter four revisited these findings through the historical lens presented in chapter two, and demonstrated that they reflected the holistic learning philosophy of John Dewey, which has become even more important in the context of the leadership demands placed on citizens in the modern day. It went on to suggest that, while the research demonstrated that SEL curricula have had positive effects on academic outcomes, educators must cognizant of the dangers inherent in implementing a one-size fits all curriculum that claims to address the unique social and emotional needs of their students. It suggested, as an alternative, that educators use these findings to develop relevant, culturally additive curricula, and to create an environment that emphasizes learning and community. Finally, chapter four concluded by suggesting that further research should be done on SEL and academic success. It argued that there is a need for more research focused on academic outcomes related to learning rather than performance, and demonstrated that there is a need for research with a more diverse sampling of marginalized populations.

The development of students' social and emotional competencies occurs alongside and interacts significantly with their academic success. In an era where academic achievement based on standardized test scores has become the prevalent measure of student, teacher, and school success, educators should not forget that our goal is to promote equity and foster the development of leadership. To do so we must take a holistic approach to teaching—one that includes attention to not only the explicit development of our students' social and emotional competencies, but also the implicit

messages we send about community, cultural identity, and learning in the classroom. Dewey (1938/1997) argued that “collateral learning,” or learning outside of the intended curriculum, was a more important factor in shaping and solidifying students' attitudes toward and understanding of the world than the more direct lessons put forth by the teacher. The research presented here suggested a similar lens to understand SEL in the classroom. That is, in order to teach social and emotional competence to our students, we must not simply inform them, but also create socially, emotionally, culturally, and academically supportive environments and model the community and learning-oriented attitudes that we want our students to adopt.

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