

# **Application of Behavioural Emotional Rating scale (BERS 2nd ed.) to Study Social and Emotional Behaviour of Students at Middle Level in District Mirpur Azad Jammu Kashmir**

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## **Abstract**

*Social Emotional Learning (SEL) is an 'Umbrella term' which covers all the aspects of development of an individual and can increase positive attitude towards self and others, hence reduces negative thinking. Social Emotional Learning is necessary to provide awareness to develop five core competencies i. Self-Awareness, ii. Self-Management, iii. Relationship skills, iv. Social-Awareness, v. Responsible decision making in students, as it is prerequisite for learning process. It creates a stable person who knows, how to behave in certain circumstances. The objectives of the study were to analyze the self-management in students at Middle level, identify the factors associated with responsible decision making, to develop better relationship skills that associates confidence in children, to explore the social awareness rate, to examine the abilities of children self-awareness. This study was quantitative in nature as it was implementation of BERS Scale (2<sup>nd</sup> Ed.) which is accurate & valid scale to measure attitude & is based on 4-point Likert Scale. Data was collected through BERS Questionnaires which are authentic and comprises of 55 questions. Data was analyzed through applying of statistical techniques. Results showed majority of the students said that they are stable which indicate that Education system in Mirpur (A.J.K) has been improved in the past few years due to teacher training programs and facilities provided to the students. The study recommended that Social Emotional learning is essential for students. It also suggested that students can be saved from getting into depression, anxiety, regression, aggression and other mental disorders through proper parental care, eradication of poverty, teacher training, gifted & talented education (GATE) of teachers and turning of schools into homelike environment.*

**Keywords:** SEL (Social and emotional learning), BERS (Behavioral Emotional Rating Scale), Social awareness, Self-management, relationship skills

## **1. Introduction**

The procedure of teaching someone especially in school, college or university is known as education (Collegiate Dictionary, 1999). The redemption of new responses to various stimuli is called as learning

(Blackburn, 2002). Consequently, education is a bit different from learning in that sense; learning may be positive or negative, but education is always positive. Social and Emotional Learning is relatively a new label for education tradition that has originated in form or another since the inception of Formal Education 3000 years ago (Cohen, 1999). Social and Emotional Learning is the capacity to recognize and manage emotions, solve problems effectively and establish positive relationship with others (Zins and Elias, 2007). The action through which children and grownup attain and capably employ the knowledge, skills and attitudes to manage and recognize emotions, feel and show affinity for others, set and attain positive goals organize and maintain affirmative relationships and make accountable decisions is called as Social Emotional learning (Casel, 2016). Schools will be more profitable in their educational mission when they merge efforts to advance children's social emotional and academic learning. Fulfillment of social and emotional needs is a prerequisite for learning process. Moving from the underlying roots of the problem in the theory (Social-Emotional); the ordinary people admit the vital reason on which public schools were founded is to prepare the students to be responsible native of the country (Rose and Gallup, 2000). Learning demands fulfillers of social, emotional and physical needs prior to it, this is the base of success (Counsil, 2002). Social Emotional Learning is the phenomena through which children take control on their emotions and will be able to face the problems of the society in the future in a well-mannered way.

Social Emotional Learning Theory introduces five core competencies; Self-Awareness (Self-Confidence): Social Awareness (Interaction with others): Self-Management (Handling-Emotions): Relationship Skills (maintaining healthy relationships): Taking personal responsibility for ones decisions. Social-Emotional Theory also introduces a "Classic Meta-Cognitive Model" which was based on Self-Management Tips for students (Durlak, Weissberg, Taylor and Dymnicki, 2010).

There are five core competencies of Social and Emotional learning related to Cognitive, Affective and Behavioral sense of human beings:

- **Self-awareness:** It brings out confidence in individuals by assessing emotions and thoughts and their influence on the behavior.
- **Self-management:** A child can learn how to behave and react in certain circumstances. It involves motivating oneself for work, stress reduction ideas, management of impulses and academic goals.
- **Relationship skills:** Group work benefited a lot through learning of better relationship skills. This includes building of healthy relations with others and reward relationships. It promotes better communication skills in children.
- **Social-awareness:** There is no difference between black and white, it promotes ethics regarding diverse backgrounds and cultures of the people to recognize family, school, community resources and sports.
- **Responsible decision making:** A child will be able to develop confidence while taking decision in their personal matters and safety concerns which is better for the well-being of self and others (Casel, 2015).

### ***1.1 Statement of the Problem***

The study was focused to explore Social and Emotional behavior of students at Middle level in Mirpur (A.J.K) by implementing BERS. The research investigated five core competencies of Social and Emotional learning related to Cognitive, Affective and Behavioral sense of human beings. Social Emotional Learning is the phenomena through which children take control on their emotions and will be able to face the problems of the society in the future in a well-mannered way.

### **1.2 Objectives of the Study**

The objectives of this study were;

- To analyze the self-management in students at Middle level.
- To identify the factors associated with responsible decision making.
- To identify better relationship skills that associates confidence in children towards the teacher and the society.
- To explore the social awareness rate in students.
- To examine the abilities of children self-awareness.
- To contribute towards the existing body of the research.

## **2. Literature Review**

A great deal of research has been done on ESL. Social Emotional Learning is necessary if we want a success of a child for which we need to tell a student how to manage his/her emotions by giving them ways to critically thinking outside the box and taking care of them. Social Emotional Learning is the 'Blanket term' which refers to student's understanding and management of emotions, gaining of skills, develop interest and concern for others, make accountable decisions, managing challenging situations and develop positive relationships adequately (Casel, 2016). Social Emotional Standards are driven by intentions and not by grade level. They will not be able to understand in early childhood years and are introduced successfully at secondary level but are not a part of academics. These include Interpersonal Awareness, Self-Esteem, Motivation, Commitment, Decision making and Empathy (Schmitz, 2016)

Social emotional learning has positive impact on human brain and brain functions get better through it. Fulfillment of social emotional needs is necessary and is a prerequisite for learning process (Davidson, 2008). Hassan, (2016) said that our beloved Prophet (S.A.W) provide us the theories of Co-operative learning, Humanistic psychology, Theory of Behaviorism and response to intervention long before any scientific research. He said that understanding and meeting the personal and psychological needs of people is necessary. A saying of Hazrat Muhammad (S.A.W) we learn, 'O Aisha! Never estrange any needy from your door empty handed'. He PBUH never used foul language and taught to use minds not hands to teach the children and do take care of their self-respect. Bullying, Vanity, Pride, Selfishness and Lying are the sins according to Islam. Islam teaches respect, patience, sharing, kindness, tolerance and brotherhood. Monthly khutbah, counseling, prayers are the type of social-emotional learning and have deep roots in Islam.

Kastanek, (2011) did a study on elementary class teachers of grade level 1<sup>st</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup>. Different teachers (classroom teacher, special education teacher or administrator, classroom Aide) from Amery district have

been chosen; Survey done through 'Survey Monkey' online survey builder tool. 84 % teachers said that Social Emotional program is necessary in classrooms for avoiding distractive behavior of children. A great deal of research has been done on ESL. Lasel, (2012) Hodgins, Larm, Ellenbogen, Vitaro & Trembley, 2013; Pingault et al., 2013 concluded in their studies that Social Emotional and Behavioral attitudes are the keys of development of overall individual. Failure in developing of any one these aspects will result in Poverty, Poor relationships with others evolve a criminal.

A research has been done on Glasgow schools including children from pre-school (4-5yrs), P3 (7-8yrs) and P6 (10-11yrs). Analysis was done through providing of Good man's strength and difficulties questionnaire (SDQ) (Good man.,2013b). Questioners were filled by teachers at pre-school and P3 while at P6 by students. This research indicates that when students are introduced in school they show 'Hyperactivity' and 'Inattentiveness' and later in P6 they have got stability (Marryat, 2014). The children at Glasgow show huge misbehavior in the early years of school as compared to that in UK. This is due to the environment provided to them (Poor background belongingness, Lack of parent's attention and Criminal society) when the free lunch and care is provided at school, they got stability. Parents and teachers should take care of a child in early school years. Because these early years of development decides that whom a child is going to be in the future. Teaching students who have two bags with him while coming to school; one emotional and other book baggage, it's more than some of us agreement for.

Psychological Functioning are interrelated this is proved by experiment. When we show positive attitude to others it will result in better relationships and hence lead to enhanced Psychological functioning (Wilhelm & Gross, 2012). Research has been done on twenty culturally and linguistically diverse high school students by introducing 12 lesson SEL intervention which completes all data points (Pre, post and follow up) in order to check the impact on students Resiliency and Internalizing problems. This research includes 15 males from grade 9 and 10. It results in high level of resiliency even after two months of intervention but no reduction in internalizing problems were observed (Cramer, 2013). Children's with hearing loss face a lot of difficulties with mastering Social and Emotional Development (Meadow & Dysseegaard, 1983). Preschoolers with hearing loss face lot of difficulties to maintain attention and interact with others (DeLuzio & Girrolametto, 2011). Parents of children with hearing loss face huge amount of due to inability of their child to adopt SED (Hintermair , 2006). Social Emotional Learning is basically for special education and for others with severe behavioral issues. 'A teacher that show empathy and is educated in the field of SEL tends to make a big difference both socially and academically' (Stanfield, 2017).

### **3. Research Methodology**

#### **3.1 Research Design**

The study was quantitative in nature. BERS was applied to collect the data.

#### **3.2 Population and Sampling**

The population of the study consisted of all 84 public middle schools of in Mirpur, Azad Jammu & Kashmir. Eight schools were taken as Sample, 20 students were taken from each school from 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> classes only.

**3.3 Research Instrument**

BERS (Behavioral Emotional Rating Scale) was used as data collection instrument.

**3.4 Validity and Reliability**

BERS has been applied in other researches as well and it is a standardized scale.

**3.5 Data Collection**

With the help of class teachers scale was applied and taken personally from teachers.

**4. Data Analysis and Results**

Collected data was analyzed through descriptive analysis i.e. percentage.

Table 1. My family makes me feel wanted

RESPONSES	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
NOT AT ALL LIKE YOU	0	0
NOT MUCH LIKE YOU	30	19
LIKE YOU	40	25
VERY MUCH LIKE YOU	90	56
TOTAL	160	100

Table 1 illustrates the family influence on student behavior, 19% of the participants were of the view that their families were not making them feel wanted, 25 % were also liked by families and 56% of the students were strongly of the view that they were felt wanted.

Table 2. I believe in myself

RESPONSES	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
NOT AT ALL LIKE YOU	02	1.25
NOT MUCH LIKE YOU	27	17
LIKE YOU	77	48
VERY MUCH LIKE YOU	54	34
TOTAL	160	100

Table 2 describes the believe of students in themselves, 17% of the participants were not confident of their belief in themselves,48 % were in liking with their belief in themselves, 34% of the students were strongly believe in themselves

Table 3. I get along well with my family

RESPONSES	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
NOT AT ALL LIKE YOU	0	0
NOT MUCH LIKE YOU	15	9
LIKE YOU	30	19
VERY MUCH LIKE YOU	115	72
TOTAL	160	100

Table 3 shows that 9% of the students were not comfortable with getting along with family, or, 19% of the participants were of the view that they get good going with families, 72 % students were strongly engaged with their families.

Table 4. I care about how others feel

RESPONSES	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
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NOT AT ALL LIKE YOU	0	0
NOT MUCH LIKE YOU	28	18
LIKE YOU	46	29
VERY MUCH LIKE YOU	86	54
TOTAL	160	100

Table 4 defines the family influence on student behavior, 18% of the participants were caring for other, 29 % were caring in nature for others and 54% of the students were strongly believe in caring others.

Table 5. I complete tasks when asked

RESPONSES	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
NOT AT ALL LIKE YOU	0	0
NOT MUCH LIKE YOU	30	19
LIKE YOU	40	25
VERY MUCH LIKE YOU	90	56
TOTAL	160	100

Table illustrates that 19% of the participants were not completing their tasks when asked, 25% were satisfactorily completing their tasks, 56 % were also liked by families and 56% of the students were completing their tasks well in time

Table 6. I think about what could happen before I decide to do something

RESPONSES	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
NOT AT ALL LIKE YOU	11	07
NOT MUCH LIKE YOU	30	12
LIKE YOU	80	50
VERY MUCH LIKE YOU	39	24
TOTAL	160	100

Table 6 illustrates that 7% of the participants were having no knowledge of the future impact of the decisions they took, 12 % were not bothered to think of their decision’s future, 50% of the students were in thinking habit about their decision making, and 24% were strongly thought before taking decisions about future consequences.

Table 7. I respect the rights of others

RESPONSES	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
NOT AT ALL LIKE YOU	02	01
NOT MUCH LIKE YOU	33	21
LIKE YOU	103	64
VERY MUCH LIKE YOU	22	14
TOTAL	160	100

Table 7 defines 21% of the participants were having not considerable respect for the rights of others,64 % were really giving respect to the rights of others, 14% of the students were respecting the rights of others.

Table 8. Follow the rules at home

RESPONSES	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
NOT AT ALL LIKE YOU	23	14
NOT MUCH LIKE YOU	27	17
LIKE YOU	76	48
VERY MUCH LIKE YOU	34	21

TOTAL	160	100
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Table 8 describes 14 % of the participants were not following rules at home, 17 % were slightly following rules at home 48% of the students were nicely respecting the rules at home, and 21% were following the rules at home.

Table 9. I have a plan for my future career

RESPONSES	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
NOT AT ALL LIKE YOU	13	8
NOT MUCH LIKE YOU	31	19
LIKE YOU	89	56
VERY MUCH LIKE YOU	27	17
TOTAL	160	100

Table 9 illustrates 8% of the participants have not any plan of their future, 19% were with a little future plan, 56% were have future plan with them, 17% were clear future career planning.

### 5. Findings

Following findings were found based on data analysis:

1. 56 % of the participants were comfortable with their family at home and feel wanted by them.
2. 48% of the students were having strong belief in themselves.
3. 72% of the participant kept healthy engagement with their family.
4. 54% of the students were in habit of taking care of others.
5. 50% of the participants were aware of the consequences of their decisions.
6. 56% of the participants were completing their tasks well in time.
7. 64% of the students were obliging the rights of others.
8. 48% of the respondents were following the rules at home.
9. 56% of the participants were with clear future career planning.

### 6. Discussion

The present study sought to examine the implications of Behavior and Emotional Rating scale to study social and emotional behavior of the students. The findings indicate that most of the students were stable socially and emotionally may be due to the improvements which had taken place in the Education system of AJK in the past few years due to teacher training programs and facilities provided to the students. Malik (2016) published in his blog that, Pakistan remains unable to meet the Millennium Development Goals and its literacy rate is still 58%; the ministry of education neglects the social and emotional learning of children if this condition remains continue it will fade out the future of Pakistan. According to a survey 25 million students are out of school in Pakistan due to Health issues, Education, Children Rights, Child labor, juvenile justice and violence (“The International News”,2015). Huge amount of children’s suicide due to harsh treatment, fear of punishment and mental torture, Due to Regression students start taking drugs, teenage pregnancy becomes a critical issue due to lack of sex education, Many teens in foreign countries were

suffering from AIDS, Several students are involved in schools based delinquency, Students faces a huge level of stress during the time of their studies due to different reasons.

Social Emotional Learning is the overall development of an individual (Psychological, Social, Emotional, and Physical, Linguistic etc.). It is mostly given in foreign countries like U.K; Canada etc. It can be given either merged in curriculum or separately taught during free time like through lunch time. Kastanek 2011, did a study on elementary class teachers of grade level 1<sup>st</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup>. Different teachers (classroom teacher, special education teacher or administrator, classroom Aide) from Amery district have been chosen; Survey done through 'Survey Monkey' online survey builder tool.84 % teachers said that Social Emotional program is necessary in classrooms for avoiding distractive behavior of children. Lasel; 2012, Hodgins, Larm, Ellenbogen, Vitaro & Trembley, 2013; Pingault et al., 2013 concluded in their studies that Social Emotional and Behavioral attitudes are the keys of development of overall individual. Failure in developing of any one these aspects will result in Poverty, Poor relationships with others evolve a criminal. Children's who attend Social & Emotional classes have no Psychiatrist disorders, those having ADHD and Conduct disorders also got stability up to 89 % by enrolment into SEL schools Cassidy et al, 2001.

Social Emotional Learning improves behavior and Grades of all types of learners, but Special children are more benefited from these programs. Social Emotional Learning often called as 'Soft Skills' or 'Character Education'. Special children's do not understand social cues easily and have difficulty in management of emotions and behavior (Schlinger, 2013). The above discussed research through their results and conclusions support the current study that fulfillment of social emotional needs is necessary and is a prerequisite for learning process and stable social and emotional behavior.

## **7. Conclusions**

1. The study concluded that SEL helps students in making students self-managed and progressive in studies.
2. SEL enables students in empowering them in decision making.
3. SEL enhances the ability of self-awareness in students to lead academic affairs positively.

## **8. Recommendations**

1. As SEL helps in making student self-managed and progressive in studies, the steps may be taken at private and public sector school system to provide such environment to fulfill SEL needs.
2. Training programs may be launched to facilitate the school administration to work for creating decision making abilities which will help students to become future leaders.
3. SEL may incorporated in curriculum for the development of better relationship skills in students.
4. The result of the study suggest that resourceful sessions may be conducted to enhance the capacity of self-awareness.
5. The current study in the light of its results highlight the importance of developing five core competences of social emotional learning vital for students in their academic progress.



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