
Enhancing Student Outcomes through the Synergistic Integration of Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) with IB Learner Profiles Attributes (LPA) and Approaches to Learning (ATL) Skills

Mabihi Shuping

NBHIS, China

Corresponding Author: Mabihi Shuping **E-mail:** mabihishuping@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

The intention of this paper is to summarise the large evidence-base on the integration of SEL, LPA and ATL into schools as a whole education approach. This integration is a demonstration of how the whole child approach could act as a catalyst for empowering and transforming student's engagement, behaviour, and development, and hence their lifelong potential for both academic and life success. Past research outputs on this subject have consistently shown the upsides. In a myriad of efficacy studies conducted, it has been found that the SEL programs enhanced students' emotional intelligence, classroom behaviour, and engagement, thus bettering their willingness for learning and the learning effects [Mahoney et al., 2018; Sklad et al., 2018; Yang et al., 2018]. In one of those studies, SEL was notably found to promote positive development and decrease the risks associated with students experiencing problems such as school failure or learning problems (Niles, 2021). Another study found that SEL also minimizes emotional distress, and it may impart important attitudes and skills for successful living (Durlak et al., 2011). In spite of growing interest in SEL, there is an *evidence gap* on how SEL, LPA, and ATL work together synergistically when co-employed in diversified school settings. This research aims to fill the existing *evidence gap* by combining empirical data from various sources in the literature. This empirical information is further supplemented in this study by practical insights obtained from a specific Chinese International Baccalaureate (IB) world school (herein referred to as School X). The purpose of this integration is to illustrate how such an orientation can promote a more holistic and enduring method of student development.

1. Introduction

There is an increasing transformation in contemporary education that moves away from an exclusively academic emphasis to a more comprehensive view of student growth (Callaghan, 2006). Educators, parents, and policy-makers largely concur that equipping students for success in an intricate world necessitates a holistic approach to education, one that fosters essential skills beyond mere content knowledge and academic qualifications. This emerging perspective acknowledges the significant interconnectedness of cognitive, social, and emotional dimensions in the processes of learning and development. It asserts that true student success encompasses far more than just proficiency in academic disciplines. It also involves personal well-being, the ability to cultivate positive relationships, a dedication to civic engagement, and the capacity to navigate a variety of life challenges. Within this comprehensive

framework, Social-Emotional Learning (SEL), Learner Profiles, and Approaches to Learning (ATL) have become essential components.

SEL is the base for understanding and managing emotions, for connecting with others (establishing and maintaining positive relationships), and taking responsible decisions. Learner Profiles provide in-depth, personalized insight into the student's strengths, preferences, and challenges across multiple learning dimensions. ATL skills are required to be taught to enable students how to learn in different settings, using metacognitive skills and strategies. This article articulates how weaving together these three unique, yet complimentary frameworks in a careful and deliberate manner establishes an impactful mechanism to cultivate holistic, involved, and resilient learners. This subsequently leads to better student outcomes in academic, behaviour, and emotional dimensions. Additionally, the article presents three pieces of evidence demonstrating the positive effects of social-emotional learning (SEL), supported by research findings at a specific IB school in China (i.e., school X).

1.1 Problem Statement

While there is increasing international acknowledgment of the importance of Social-Emotional Learning (SEL), Learner Profile Attributes (LPA), and Approaches to Learning (ATL) on education and as a fundamental part of school life, there exists a considerable paucity in understanding how these frameworks work in combination with one another when embedded in the context of schools on the ground. The majority of the current research data only investigates SEL (focusing mostly on SEL competencies), ATL, and LPA in isolation without investigating their joint effect on students' engagement, behaviour, and overall well-rounded development. In addition, there has been insufficient empirical evidence, especially in non-Western and bilingual international settings (e.g., Chinese IB World Schools), about how such integration correlates to quantifiable educational achievement. In addressing this *gap in evidence*, the article examines existing literature to investigate the integration of SEL, LPA, and ATL into educational practices and their effects on School X in China. The aim is to contribute to the development of a contextualized model for education that is suitable for the future. The subsequent research inquiry is as follows:

In what ways does the combined application of Social-Emotional Learning (SEL), Learner Profile Attributes (LPA), and Approaches to Learning (ATL) skills affect student engagement, behaviour, and overall development within the context of a bilingual IB World School?

2. Methodology

This is a qualitative-dominant mixed-methods case study on the conceptualization and integration of the constructs of SEL, LPAs and ATLS in a bilingual IB World School in China. The primary aim was to explore how this integration affected student engagement, behaviour and wholeness. This case study design afforded a rich contextual analysis of the functioning of these frameworks in a natural school setting. Furthermore, field evidence was collected from one Chinese IB World School based on classroom observation, document and school review, which added local perspective to the findings. The addition of such practical evidence, did not only augment the qualitative-dominant design, but also lent credibility and trustworthiness to the study through triangulating sources of data and by grounding the analysis in real school practice.

2.1 Data Collection Methods

Information was collated from various sources to enhance triangulation and validity. Teacher reflexive journals and records of post-lesson observations documenting changes in student engagement, interactions, and emotional expressions were maintained. Student feedback was obtained in the form of structured reflection prompts and anonymous questionnaires related to self-awareness, cooperation, and emotional well-being. School records and behaviour tracking documents were checked on students' shifts in attendance, homework completion, participation in school activities and minor referral rates. Documentation of curriculum and programs (e.g. unit planners) were reviewed to understand how the SEL, ATL, and LPA were embedded into teaching on a daily basis and in school culture.

2.2 Data Analysis

Thematic content analysis was used to analyze the qualitative data, including how to search for recurrent patterns and themes in teachers and students' written reflections. Findings were subsequently considered in light of prior SEL literature (e.g., Durlak et al., 2011; Jones & Kahn, 2017) to situate how integration at School X has influenced practice impact. Nevertheless, although the data are school-focussed and exploratory, there is a triangulated coherence in the findings which suggest that implementing a synergistic SEL, LPA and ATL model contributes to engaging emotionally competent and resilient learners. This method has the potential to fill the *evidence gap* mentioned in the introduction of this paper regarding the interaction of these frameworks in varied and international educational environments.

3. Defining SEL and Its Core Competencies

Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) is widely recognized as the method through which both youth and adults gain and utilize the knowledge, abilities, and mindsets necessary for cultivating positive identities and regulating their emotions (CASEL, 2020). This definition underscores SEL as a developmental asset building process that is initiated at birth and persists across the lifespan (Zins & Elias, 2007). The model - Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) has been developed as a particularly well-known and evidence-based model, which groups SEL into five primary, interconnected competencies (CASEL, 2020):

- **Emotion and self-awareness:** This includes the ability to be aware of both own's and other's emotions, an understanding of how they are affecting the thinking, and how they are related with one's own behaviour and that of others over time and across situations. It entails the ability to recognize one's strengths and limitations with realistic sense of confidence and purpose, and the ability to develop a growth mindset (Durlak et al., 2011).
- **Self-management:** Ability to manage one's emotions, thoughts, and behaviours effectively in different situations and to achieve goals and aspirations. This includes such abilities as impulse control, stress management, and the capacity to motivate oneself while remaining focused on the completion of tasks and also working in cooperation with others to meet goals (Reyes et al., 2012).
- **Social awareness:** This concerns the capacities to take the perspective of others and empathises of lifestyles and cultural traditions. It involves the ability to empathize and understand more far-reaching historical and social norms around how to behave and know what family, school, and community resources are available (Schonert-Reichl, 2017).
- **Interpersonal skills:** These are skills which are necessary to create and maintain healthy and supportive relationships. This is a mix of being clear communicators, active listeners, team players, collaborative problem solvers, constructive conflict navigators, and knowing when to ask for or lend a hand (Jones & Bouffard, 2012).
- **Responsible decision making:** This skill is the ability to make caring, constructive choices about personal and social behaviour across different situations. Ethical considerations, safety norms, useful norms, and respect for others. Judgments regarding likely interpersonal consequences of behaviour for the well-being of self and others. A synthesis of this conceptualization is that SEL focuses on issues of respect and care for self and others by comparing, weighing, and planning likely mean-spiritedness and kind-heartedness (Weissberg et al., 2015)

SEL may be understood as the systematic process of learning about, reflecting on, and applying attitudes, norms, and skills to make responsible and caring decisions about personal behaviour, instead of harmful choices (CASEL, 2020). Significant conceptual overlap leads to a variety of concepts, including social-emotional skills, social and emotional learning (CASEL, 2020; Weissberg et al., 2015). The fact that so many independent sources emphasize the CASEL framework and its five key competencies indicates a high level of unanimous agreement in the educational industry and research sector about the fundamental components of SEL. It is then not simply a linguistic agreement that a common definition is widely used, but it is an essential aspect of the maturity and usefulness of the field (Osher et al., 2016). This conceptual common ground makes research comparable, and less challenging to compare and combine research results, and thus to generalize. Moreover, it allows practitioners to implement SEL programs with a shared and explicit understanding of the goals and elements, a crucial aspect for scaling up and transferring efficient interventions to different educational contexts (Taylor et al., 2017). Without a strong, common base of evidence and a framework, research involving SEL would invariably become disjointed and the on-the-ground impact of SEL would be stymied.

4. Learner Profiles and Their Components

Learner Profiles in an International Baccalaureate IB program seek to establish a holistic and progressive picture of an individual's learning experience (IBO, 2017). These profiles are not accumulative report cards; rather, they are moving documents that weave information from various sources to paint a full picture of the student (Tomlinson and Imbeau, 2010). Elements such as academic achievement, personal attributes, and social-emotional information are widely recognized to be the most common building blocks of IB's Learner Profiles. They represent a student's learning style, strengths, and areas that need specific attention for development. These aspects of learning are often shaped by various factors, including an individual's learning style, intelligence preferences, cultural background, and gender (Sousa & Tomlinson, 2018).

One other key aspect to keep in mind regarding Learner Profiles is that they should evolve over time rather than remain fixed. This adaptability is essential for enabling educators to consistently modify their teaching strategies in line with the changing requirements of each student (Bray & McClaskey, 2015). The primary benefit of Learner Profiles lies in their ability to facilitate differentiated instruction, a teaching approach tailored to cater to the unique needs of individual learners. By presenting student strengths and challenges in a comprehensive and nuanced way, Learner Profiles assist educators in effectively implementing differentiation across various dimensions as follows: (Tomlinson, 2014).

Content: Adapting the knowledge that will be learned, including how it will be presented, and the perspective from which it will be taught to make it more accessible or relevant to the individual learner (Tomlinson, 1999/2014).

Procedure: Changing the way the material is being presented, serving various styles of learning, whether visual, auditory, or kinaesthetic preference (Gardner, 2011).

Product: Breaking how learning is observed and assessed so that students can show their learning in a variety of ways that play to their strengths (CAST, 2018; Tomlinson, 2014).

Environment: The design of classroom resources and the culture to support learning and positively affect student behaviour, to establish an inclusive and supportive environment (Hall, Strangman, & Meyer, 2003).

This type of differentiated instruction is critical as no single teaching approach can cater to the wide variation in what students know, understand, and can do (Tomlinson, 2014). With the information gained from Learner Profile attributes, teachers can also ensure that all students have equitable access to the curriculum, that student engagement is increased, that both academic and social inclusiveness are promoted, and that high levels of self-efficacy are established among both student and teacher (CAST, 2018). In an environment of personalized learning, Learner Profiles support students in developing and sharing a personal understanding of themselves as learners, setting individual goals for their own growth and development (Bray & McClaskey, 2015).

5. ATL Skills And their Classifications

The ATL skills are a collection of skills and strategies that are intended to support students to be self-regulated and independent, life-long learners by teaching them "how to learn" (International Baccalaureate Organization [IBO], 2015). These competences are supposed to be embedded in all curriculum orders and subjects, becoming a shared language that teachers and students can reflect on and in the learning process (MacKenzie, 2016). ATL skills are widely recognized as important by the International Baccalaureate (IB) framework, and they are grouped into five cores, overlapping areas:

Thinking: This domain includes multiple processes such as critical thinking (analyzing and evaluating issues or ideas), creative thinking (coming up with new ideas or viewing an issue in a new way), transfer (applying what has been learned to new and diverse contexts), reflection and metacognition (thinking about the process of learning) (Costa & Kallick, 2008).

Communication: These skills are centred around the proper communication of information. This includes speaking clearly, listening carefully, making sense of what we hear, reading and writing with purpose, and using a range of tools, including digital technology, to access, develop, and communicate our ideas (Pritchard, 2018).

Social: This skill focuses on the development of good relationships and the ability to work well with others. That includes the ability to understand perspectives different from your own, manage your emotional expressions and feelings while engaging in social interactions, and effectively collaborate and connect with others. Of particular interest, the latter category directly conceptually maps onto the social-emotional competencies of the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL, 2020).

Self-management: These include organizational skills (using time and managing tasks effectively) as well as affective skills concerning the state of mind. This includes mindfulness, self-control, emotion regulation, self-motivation, and grit (Duckworth & Gross, 2014).

Research: As a skill needed for inquiry learning and including information literacy (such as framing and planning questions, locating and recording information, interpreting, and synthesizing information, and critically evaluating and communicating findings) and the responsible use of media and information (Booth, Colomb, & Williams, 2016).

ATLs are essentially life skills that go above and beyond traditional academic settings by helping learners to cope with and respond to challenging situations in school, home, with friends, and in future relationships (Claxton, 2008). These skills are to be taught and evaluated in a discrete manner in the classroom, and a deliberate focus is placed on what skills to develop in which units of inquiry (IBO, 2015). Integrating ATL skills into the curriculum and giving students ample opportunity to practice and understand these skills through authentic activities creates effective learning opportunities (PYP 2013). Successful implementation of ATL means that these skills are not only explicitly taught and learned at an appropriate depth but, more crucially, that students have multiple, abundant, and realistic opportunities to transfer these abilities across the curriculum and to real life. This purposeful embedding takes ATL skills beyond mere curricular compliance to a lived pedagogical practice where the students are powerfully encouraged to see themselves as agents of their own decision-making and problem-solving in learning (Mackenzie 2016).

6. Conceptual Frameworks for Integrating SEL, LPA & ATL

Learner Profiles and ATL skills are not an additive but truly a synergistic combination, which generates a strong and responsive ecosystem that is about student well-being. The Learner Profile is the base data through which personalization is made possible. The personalized information that allows us to know who each student is academically, socially, and emotionally. Such specificity informs the ways in which SEL competencies and ATL skills may be taught, practiced, and developed in a very personal way, thus helping to target interventions to individual student needs (OECD, 2018; Elias et al., 1997).

International Baccalaureate (IB) programs clearly illustrate this integration by linking ATL skills with LPA. Such an approach highlights the fact that education does not only revolve around the acquisition of knowledge, but also the acquisition of attitudes, values, and habits, as seen in the Learner Profile and ATL is expedient for social success (IBO, 2017; Ritchhart & Perkins, 2008). This combination gives students leverage to control their own learning, which results in increased learner autonomy and self-regulation (Duckworth et al., 2007).

In addition, there is a clear conceptual congruence between SEL competencies and ATL skills. To adduce, one of the ATLs, such as Social skills, already captures some of the core aspects, such as recognizing other's perspectives and regulating one's emotions (CASEL, 2020). Analogously, ATL's like Self-management skills include managing mindset, motivation, and resilience (Durlak et al., 2011). This embedded relationship implies that teaching ATL naturally promotes SEL development, and conversely, that a unified rather than divided strategy to student development is supported (Zins & Elias, 2006).

7. Empirical Knowledge and Case Studies Of Integrated Approaches

The International Baccalaureate (IB) framework is an excellent example of case research in the successful integration of Learner Profiles, ATL, and SEL. In a global perspective, a socio-emotional well-being study conducted by Cunha et.al (2021) at one of the IB World Schools, educators identified that certain elements of the curriculum, particularly the Learner Profile and Approaches to Learning (ATL), were very beneficial for student well-being (Cunha et al., 2021). Importantly, the study at that school stressed that it was the permeating ethos of the IB and a holistic mindset

that allowed the school to address the social and emotional wellness of its students in a real way and not just in bits and pieces or papers. This is an important finding in that it implies that successful integration is not simply a process of tackling components onto a curriculum, but about creating a consistent philosophical imperative around the philosophy of full development that penetrates the ethos of the school (International Baccalaureate Organization [IBO], 2017). This ethos is intended to prevent the perception of SEL, Learner Profiles, and ATL as *separate programs* divorced from each other, but rather as interrelated aspects of a holistic educational philosophy, designed to permeate curriculum design, pedagogical choices, and school culture at any level (Boix Mansilla & Jackson, 2011).

IBO's interdisciplinary model seeks to educate international mindedness, respectful and responsible, inquiring, knowledgeable, and caring young people (IBO, 2013). The IB Learner Profile, which encompasses more than just academic success, implies a basic orientation towards respecting oneself, others, and our world. This serves as an example of the extent to which these structures are reflexive and embedded in the educational philosophy, not as mere impositions (Gardner, 2006). Beyond the IB, more general research on personal learning environments also encourages this integration. These contexts tend to see SEL as a core component of the vision with social-emotional skills integrated with the curriculum and explicitly acknowledged as necessary for long-term success (Aspen Institute, 2019). In these environments, individual learner profiles are actively used to support each student's understanding of themselves as learners and to establish meaningful goals about their learning and development (Pane et al., 2017).

The combined approaches mentioned in the foregoing paragraph offer students the opportunities to decide, explore, reflect, and provide feedback with their teachers and peers, thus contributing to autonomy and self-regulation (Patrick et al., 2013). Combining SEL with Learner Profiles and ATL forms a potent feedback loop that drives student agency and self-regulation to much higher levels. Learner Profiles impart to students a rich sense of themselves as learners - who they are and what they need, know about themselves as learners, in terms of their capabilities, challenges, and inclinations (Ritchhart & Perkins, 2008). This self-knowledge is foundational. Supporting this, ATL provides metacognitive tools and learning strategies that focus on the process of learning. These encompass areas such as thinking, research, communication, social skills, and self-management (IBO, 2017). Finally, SEL develops the social-emotional and social competencies - how to manage oneself and relate effectively with others. These are vital elements for accessing learning, handling setbacks (resilience), and working with others toward common goals (Durlak et al., 2011). This dynamic interplay demonstrates the way in which each area enhances the other, resulting in a virtuous circle where students are more and more capable of leading their own learning, moving forward to face new challenges, and reaching personal and collective objectives. This leads to a graduate agency, where students are ready to embrace lifelong learning (OECD, 2018). **Table 1** below summarises the synergetic relation of **SEL, LPA,** and **ATL** skills as follows:

Table 1: Alignment and Synergy: SEL, LPA, and ATL

SEL Core Competency (CASEL Framework)	Corresponding ATL Skill Category (IB Framework)	Relevant Learner Profile Attribute (IB Framework)	Synergistic Outcome/Description of Overlap
Self-Awareness	Self-management skills (e.g., mindset, motivation)	Reflective, Inquirer	Learner Profile characteristics such as <i>Reflective and Inquirer</i> promote students' comprehension of their learning styles and capabilities. The "Self-awareness" aspect of SEL enhances this understanding by cultivating insight into emotions and their effects. Meanwhile, the "Self-

			management" skills from ATL equip individuals with strategies to regulate their emotional state.
Self-management	Self-management skills (e.g., organization, perseverance, emotional management)	Balanced, Risk-Taker	Learner Profile characteristics like <i>Balanced and Risk-Taker</i> promote resilience and the establishment of goals. Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) emphasizes "Self-management," equipping individuals with skills for regulating emotions, controlling impulses, and achieving objectives. Additionally, Approaches to Learning (ATL) includes "Self-management," which presents practical methods for organization and determination. This combination fosters improved self-regulation, greater personal agency, and successful goal attainment.
Social awareness & Relationship	Social skills (e.g., collaboration, empathy, managing emotions)	Caring, Communicators, Open-minded	Learner Profile attributes like <i>Caring, Communicator,</i> " and "Open-minded" foster empathy, respect for diversity, and effective expression. SEL's "Social Awareness" and "Relationship Skills" develop capacities for understanding others'
Responsible decision-making	Thinking skills (e.g., critical thinking, reflection, problem-solving)	Principled, Thinker, Inquirer	Learner Profile characteristics like <i>Principled and Thinker</i> promote ethical awareness and creative solutions to challenges. The "Responsible Decision-Making" aspect of SEL empowers students to make positive choices by considering ethical principles, safety issues, and potential outcomes. Meanwhile, ATL's "Thinking skills" offer essential tools for critical analysis, assessment, and problem resolution. This combination fosters thoughtful and ethical

			behavior, enhances problem-solving capabilities, and cultivates a robust sense of both individual and communal accountability.
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8. Supporting Evidence

8.1 Empirical Evidence: Effect of SEL on student engagement

Scholarly inquiry repeatedly shows that bringing teaching of SEL to classrooms on purpose increases student involvement in the classroom. Students in SEL programs generally have better school functioning, as indicated by higher levels of motivation, better attendance, and increased completion of homework (Taylor et al., 2017; Durlak et al., 2011). The growth of SEL skills like self-management and responsible decision-making, links with two of the five IB ATL skills that seek to help students take ownership of their learning path. This sense of autonomy is the very thing that leads to more involvement and greater sustained effort. For instance, developing a growth mindset—one of the central elements of self-awareness—is critical in encouraging students to move away from pursuing fixed goals toward a focus on ongoing improvement through effort (Yeager & Dweck, 2012). This orientation predisposes for more academic success and higher sustained interest, even in the presence of obstacles or difficulties (Elias et al., 1997). The internal motivation and feeling of being in control are strong motivating factors in taking an active part in meaningful learning.

At School X, a bilingual IB World School that offers the PYP, MYP, DP, and CP programmes, the application of the SEL program in practice is consistent with these research findings. This school year (2025), in which the school will be visited by the IB's evaluation team, generic SEL practices have been purposefully incorporated in daily homerooms, interdisciplinary projects, and reflective exercises, centered on self-management and emotional regulation. Educators reported a significant increase in class participation, completion of homework, and communication/enhancement of collaboration among peers. There were higher participation rates in the learning data in the lower secondary grades, and teachers reported that students were more likely to engage in inquiry tasks and were willing to take more risks in their learning. Students' reflections highlighted an increasing awareness of their emotional triggers and means of stress management, particularly at assessment points. These changes might indicate that the implementation of SEL at School X encourages engagement and develops an IB learner profile in a self-sufficient and resilient community of learners.

8.2 Evidence from studies: The Positive effect of SEL on student behaviour

Empirical evidence routinely demonstrates that trained SEL skills in such programs reduce problem behaviours in the classroom, resulting in decreased classroom disruptions and enhanced, academic-focused learning environments. There is also evidence that SEL interventions improve social behaviours and conduct problems and decrease emotional distress among students (Zins & Elias, 2006; Payton et al., 2008). For example, an action research study with kindergarten children found that a six-week social-emotional intervention led to significant changes in academic performance and particular behavioural outcomes, such as reduced blurting out and physical aggression (Domitrovich et al., 2010). This demonstrates how an SEL would provide students with necessary skills such as those related to emotion regulation and impulse control, as well as connectedness skills, which in turn, enable them to function more appropriately in social situations and comply more readily with the norms of the classroom.

At School X in China, the embedding of SEL this year has resulted in marked improvements in students' behaviour in the primary and middle years grades. After one semester of implementing regular SEL lessons infused into advisory and content area classes, teachers reported decreases in classroom disruptions such as off-task behaviour and interpersonal conflict. The school's tracking system of behavioural data indicated a noticeable reduction in the number of minor disciplinary referrals for emotional outbursts and classroom non-attendance. Additionally, students started showing their developed positive peer communication with increased conflict-resolution techniques (especially during group work and student council meetings). Teachers credited these behavioural gains to explicit

training in emotional regulation, empathy, and responsible decision-making, which are key SEL skills that resurfaced daily in classroom activities. This case demonstrates that the intentional and purposeful embedding of SEL into school culture can lead to a less chaotic, more respectful learning environment that supports both academic engagement and emotional safety.

8.3 Empirical Evidence: How SEL improves holistic development

Besides the immediate impact on students' engagement and behaviour, SEL is important in enhancing students' holistic growth. This includes their mental health, social competence, and resilience. It plays a major part in their long-term potential for good health, wellness, productivity and safer communities. SEL curricula are proven to substantially improve emotional regulation, empathy and resilience, all necessary capacities that enable students to cope with adversity and stress in positive and productive ways (Jones & Kahn, 2017). This growth also promotes better self-concept and self-esteem among students (CASEL, 2020). An extensive and increasing body of evidence, including several meta-analyses, consistently shows that SEL enhances academic achievement. According to Durlak et al. (2011), the average performance of students receiving SEL programs is 11% higher when standardised achievement tests are administered than students who were not exposed to SEL programming. This important finding demonstrates that SEL is not at odds with the acquisition of basic academic skills; on the contrary, it reinforces them. The benefits of SEL go beyond the classroom and show long term and global benefits. The development of social and emotional skills through SEL programming has been associated with increased well-being up to eighteen years later (Jones, Greenberg, & Crowley, 2015). In addition, these competencies have been found to predict significantly reduced risk of negative adult outcomes (e.g., living in public housing, receiving public assistance, police contact) in such samples (Dymnicki et al., 2013).

At School X in China, the implementation of a whole-school SEL initiative has yielded observable benefits in students' holistic development. Over the course of one academic semester, the school has embedded SEL competencies into its advisory curriculum, community service projects, and reflective journaling activities. School counsellor and teachers collaboratively tracked students' emotional well-being, resilience, and interpersonal growth through regular check-ins and feedback loops. Notably, students reported improved stress management and self-confidence, especially during high-pressure periods such as midterms exams and student exhibitions. Peer mentorship programs and class meetings further enhanced empathy and community-building. Teachers observed that students who previously struggled with anxiety or low self-esteem became more active participants in class discussions and co-curricular leadership roles. These trends suggest that when SEL is integrated into both academic and relational aspects of school life, it significantly strengthens students' emotional health, self-awareness, and capacity for long-term flourishing.

9. Limitations and Opportunities for Further Research

Despite the highlighted positive results, it is important to note that, although the study utilized a practical context from a Chinese International School (i.e., School X), the conclusions may not be broadly applicable elsewhere because of the unique institutional and cultural environment. Therefore, the study does have salient limitations. The study is largely theoretical and relies heavily on secondary data. To some extent, some empirical examples are offered, but the absence of longitudinal, multi-site, and cross-context empirical research restricts the generalizability of conclusions. In future research, cultural factors, funding imbalances, and the level of implementation fidelity should be taken into cognisance as variables that require further investigation. In addition, it is methodologically difficult to quantify the combined effects of these three mechanisms independently versus together.

Future research should thus concentrate on such robust and context-sensitive longitudinal designs that would explore the integrated model in different school systems, especially in under-resourced or non-Western educational contexts. Case studies describing implementation difficulties and facilitating factors would also contribute to enrich the evidence.

10. Conclusion

The focus of this paper was to look at the end game integration of Social-Emotional Learning (SEL), Learner Profiles (LPA), and Approaches to Learning (ATL) skills. The presented evidence is compelling in framing this collective framework as a change model for education. The paper provided further evidence that inclusively embedding SEL into the framework of ATL skills and Learner Profiles attributes is not only a value-added optional extra, but an essential building block for enhancing student engagement, emotional welfare, behaviour, and learning success

(Durlak et al., 2011; Taylor et al., 2017). The comprehensive nature of this model results in students possessing the cognitive, emotional, and social skills to be successful not only in academic life but also in authentic social scenarios.

Moreover, the integration allows for more individualised learning through Learner Profile attributes, and promotes lifelong learner behaviours through the use of ATL skills. Paired with the emotional intelligence and self-regulation skills that SEL promotes. This triumvirate encourages autonomy, resilience and ethical decision making – three traits of future-ready learners. The ramifications for schools are profound, systematic realignment around whole child education that must be reflected in pedagogy, professional development, leadership, and school culture needs to be actualised.

In summary, this research has clarified that the infusion of SEL throughout Learner Profiles and ATL is not top-heavy programming, but rather an integral, research-based move to develop whole, flexible, self-regulating learners. The framework offers a powerful opportunity for schools to adopt genuinely inclusive and responsive pedagogy for a future-fit education. In an increasingly complex world, education must change in order to challenge not only what students know but who they are, their good character, compassion, and capacity. This paper has successfully advocated for a deliberate, well-resourced and sustained integration of SELs LPAs and ATL skills as an approach to form the backbone of that future-fit education.

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