



RETHINKING LEARNING IN TEACHER EDUCATION: CREATING COMPASSIONATE TEACHERS

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Abstract:

"If we want to reach real peace in the world, we shall have to begin with the Children."

Mahatma Gandhi

The current education system needs to move away from compartmentalization of different aspects of learning where the focus has been on cognitive aspects only. NEP (2020) has stressed upon incorporating social, emotional and ethical learning in the school system. This calls for reform in teacher education curriculum which should be aligned with the SEE learning opportunities through formal and informal learning platforms. As pre-service teachers are the one who can scaffold in moving children's journey progressive related to developmental indicators of SEE learning. Through this paper, the researchers have made an attempt by suggesting strategies to equip pre-service teachers to main dimensions(Awareness, Compassion, and Engagement)core domains(personal, social and systems) and related competencies like: Communication, Critical Thinking and Problem Solving; Interpersonal Engagement; Global Citizenship and Civic Engagement, Information Literacy and Ethical and Moral Reasoning ,Self-Efficacy and Self-Awareness which can be explored in the context of SEE learning.

The researchers have recommended integrating SEE in Teacher Education curriculum framework for creating compassionate teachers who will create global humane citizens. For the successful implementation of SEE learning, there is a need for a pedagogical model which creates insightful thinkers by using four key learning threads: engaged learning pedagogies, scientific perspectives, critical thinking and reflective practices.

Key Words: Social, Emotional and Ethical Learning, Pre-service teachers, dimensions, domains; Competencies and Pedagogical model

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Introduction:

The aim of education has always been all round development of children that includes physical, social, mental and emotional development. But it is disheartening to see that from so many decades the focus of education had been predominantly on cognitive skills with the minimum attention on emotional and social intelligence. ASER (2019) Children were asked what they would do if their friend snatched their only toy while playing. Almost a quarter of all eight-year-olds gave responses like "will beat or fight with friend" suggesting that they would opt for escalating their anger. Only 2.5% of them said they wish to talk to their friend and ask for the toy back, pointing to children's unfamiliarity with conflict resolution strategies like communication. The purpose of



education should be to create students who are happy, should be able to resolve their conflicts and are well balanced in their life and in society at large. Even NEP(2020) had recommended on the similar lines where it is mentioned in the document, *“The purpose of the education system is to develop good human beings capable of rational thought and action, possessing compassion and empathy, courage and resilience, scientific temper and creative imagination, with sound ethical moorings and values.”*

Burroughs & Barkauskas (2019); Panayiotou, Humphrey, & Wigelsworth (2019) have emphasized upon offering youth to learn social and emotional skills to improve academic performance and their mental health.

International psychologist Daniel Goleman has contributed to the phenomenon of Emotional Intelligence also contributed to the concept of Social Emotional Ethical (SEE) Learning for school students, which is now introduced in India by Atlanta, USA-based Emory University and His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

In April of 2019, Social, Emotional, and Ethical Learning: Educating the Heart and Mind (CCSCBE, 2019b) was initiated for a global audience of more than 1,000 people from around 36 countries. Dr. Daniel Goleman, Dr. Mark Greenberg, Dr. Thupten Jinpa, Dr. Robert Roser, and Dr. Kimberly Schoner-Reichl in collaboration with the staff from Emory University, and in partnership with the Dalai Lama, designed this curriculum for enhancing social, emotional, and ethical skills and knowledge. This curriculum is secular in its approach designed to fit into school programs throughout the world. In schools, curriculum integration can be utilized to deeply and meaningfully embed SEE Learning competencies to justify what and how learning occurs.

Durlak J. A., & DuPre, E. P. (2008) found that Social and Emotional Learning interventions had a positive impact on academic gains, reductions in depression and anxiety, and reductions in conduct problems were approximately twice as large when implemented with full fidelity to design and dosage.

It is the prime duty of teacher education institutions to create such opportunities which can connect and engage a community of pre-service teachers. SEE Learning framework provides teacher educators with the tools required for development of emotional, social and ethical intelligence for pre-service teachers as well as for themselves.

Context of the Study:

Ancient Education system focused on creating an all-round development of the personality of a child by developing compassion along with cognitive development. But it is very unfortunate that today we are considering education merely as acquisition of language skills and numeracy where there is hardly any space for values of compassion, empathy and love.

It is high time that we need to reimagine our education system which should build a compassionate, caring attitude that is beneficial for social well-being and can contribute to the betterment of society. We as educationists need to reflect upon whether we are creating students who have the ability to cooperate and collaborate with others. Our curriculum should embed values and competencies among students which lead to holistic development. India has a critical need for a framework that focuses on overall development. In the words of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, the current education system focuses upon materialistic values, including external science but not inner science. Social, Emotional, and Ethical (SEE) Learning is an innovative new-age literacy

model. The rationale behind SEE Learning is creating an inclusive and comprehensive framework which can be applied in any educational set up and to teach social, emotional and ethical competencies irrespective of their pedagogies. Even, National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 has talked about the dire need of Social, Emotional, and Ethical (SEE) Learning.

Teacher education institutions need to create such training programs which include a progressive curriculum which should be easy to transact and give hands-on experience of creating resources for pre-service teachers' preparation. SEE Learning will help to empower pre-service teachers to engage ethically to support student well-being.

AIM

The main focus of a study is to analyze multiple pathways which can be practiced by pre-service teachers for implementation of SEE learning and suggest a pedagogical model for implementation of SEE learning in teacher education.

Objectives:

Researchers have framed following objectives while writing this paper:

1. To explore the theoretical framework and components of SEE learning in the context of teacher education curriculum.
2. To contextualize the pedagogical model/strategies for implementation of SEE learning for a pre-service teacher education curriculum.

Research Questions:

1. What is the theoretical framework and Dimensions of SEE learning in the context of a teacher education curriculum?
2. What are different engagement strategies in implementation of SEE learning for a pre-service teacher education curriculum?

Answering of Research Questions:

Researchers have tried to answer the following research questions:

RQ1: What is the theoretical framework and Dimensions of SEE learning in the context of a teacher education curriculum?



Figure 1

Domains	Dimensions		
	Awareness	Compassion	Engagement
Personal	Attention and self-awareness (1A)	Self-compassion (1Q)	Self-Regulation (1E)
Social	Interpersonal awareness (2A)	Compassion for others (2Q)	Relationship Skills (2E)
Systematic	Appreciating inter-dependence (3A)	Recognizing common humanity (3Q)	Community and Global Engagement (3E)

Figure 2



SEE Learning has three dimensions, which includes the types of knowledge and competencies it aims to promote in students. (Figure 1)

1. Awareness: Awareness refers to first-person understanding of thoughts, feelings, and emotions. Practice and attention refinement are must to cultivate this sort of awareness, and SEE learning approaches.

2. Compassion: Compassion refers to promoting a way of relating to oneself, others, and humanity as a whole by kindness, empathy, and a concern for their happiness and suffering. The values in SEE Learning are based on personal insight and understanding. Therefore crucial includes recognizing and discerning the needs of others, and finally arriving at realizing common humanity on a broader scale.

3. Engagement: Engagement refers to the methods for putting into practice based on learning from the awareness and compassion dimensions. It is related to learning the behaviors and forming the attitudes, dispositions and skills which are in favor of personal, social and communal well-being.

Furthermore, these three dimensions can be approached in three domains: that of (Figure 2)

(1) **Personal:** practices of self-regulation

(2) **Social:** social skills and the ability to relate to others

(3) **Systems:** engagement as a global citizen

The three dimensions of SEE Learning—Awareness, Compassion, and Engagement— relate closely to each other and look as overlapping. Each has a set of unique competencies that can be taught separately but is more vivid within the context of the whole expanded upon as one moves into the dimensions of Compassion and Engagement.

RQ 2: What are different engagement strategies in implementation of SEE learning for a pre-service teacher education curriculum?

The researchers have tried to answer the question by taking a base of key learning threads based on SEE learning pedagogical framework. As mentioned in figure 2: *Critical thinking, Scientific perspectives; Reflective practices* are the key skills needed for promoting SEE learning among pre-service teachers and the medium of incorporating these skills should be through *Engaged Learning Pedagogy*.



Figure 3

- **Critical thinking** cannot be imposed on pre-service teachers but it is a must for SEE learning therefore the right kind of platforms should be created for pre-service teachers through dialogic teaching with exploration and in depth investigations of themes. As a result, the key learning thread of critical thinking in SEE Learning will enable pre-service teachers to explore the base of making logical arguments and engaging in critical

reasoning.

- **Reflective practices** based activities should be organized leading to personal, inner experience to develop a deeper personal understanding and internalize the skills of the area covered in learning. The pre-service teachers should be engaged in a cycle of reflection through attention, observation, and reflective examination. The Reflective Practice will serve to guide pre-service teachers in making thoughtful connections which will further anchor the learning process.
- As SEE learning majorly focuses upon emotional literacy with ethical development, it is crucial that pre-service teachers should develop **Scientific Perspectives** towards understanding of self and their emotions. Relevant knowledge from topics from disciplines from biology, psychology, and neuroscience should be infused in SEE Learning. This will empower pre-service teachers for engage in the curriculum as they will be familiar with the science informing the pedagogies and themes in SEE Learning.
- **Engaging learning Pedagogy:** For delving into teaching part of SEE learning, strategies and methods should be based on constructivism which makes students more participatory and active in learning. So to mention a few pedagogies which pre-service teachers can be trained into: cooperative learning, art integration, Scenario-based learning and Story Circles can be used.

Besides this, researchers have also recommended certain strategies like *Understanding the diverse and complex socio-cultural milieu*, *Age appropriate strategies*; *Realistic self-analysis and evaluation* and *Service learning*.

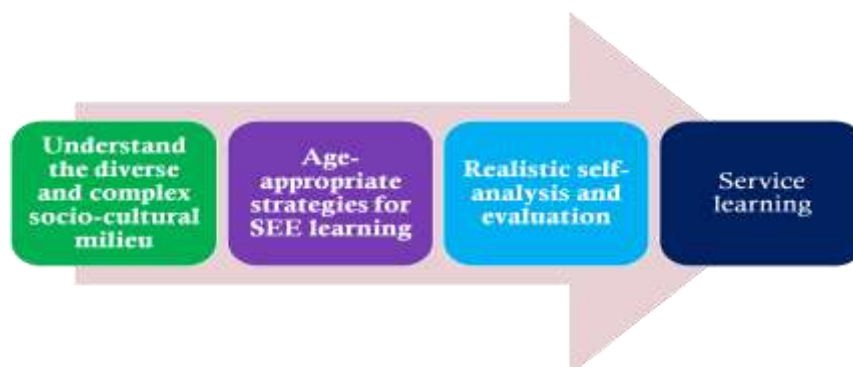


Figure 4

- Pre-service teachers should be sensitive to understanding the classroom ecology and diverse socio-economic, linguistic and cultural backgrounds of the students. This will enable them to be more empathetic and compassionate teachers.
- Pre-service teachers should be equipped with age-appropriate strategies for conflict resolution. SEE training module based curriculum should be designed to train and prepare pre-service teachers for dealing with most unexpected challenges at the most critical junctures in educational set ups.
- **Realistic self-analysis and evaluation:** Training in SEE learning should enable pre-service teachers to do SWOC by themselves and make them understand themselves on both philosophical and practical grounds. This will enable pre-service teachers to maintain a sense of balance in their overall approach to life, career, and other pursuits.



- Different platforms should be created in teacher education institutes where pre-service teachers get opportunities to be engaged in Service learning. This should be spread across courses and semesters. Reflection sessions should be organized where pre-service teachers connect knowledge and theory to practice by combining service learning.

Conclusion:

To put in nutshell, SEE learning has potential to promote compassion as well as the recognition of common humanity, orientation to kindness and reciprocity. Teacher education colleges should provide pre-service teachers experiences based on SEE learning enhancing the foundational knowledge and skills so that pre-service teachers can move with confidence through each subsequent phases of their teaching training journey leading to a sense of agency and ownership of the core ideas.

So to conclude, if we want future citizens to be compassionate, we need to create teachers who are empathetic and ready for transformed India with social cohesion among youth.

Recommendations:

For the Teachers: In-service as well as pre-service teachers should be trained in modules of SEE learning so that they can play a vital role in establishing the culture and conditions for SEE learning in their educational set up. Curriculum should be aligned which support skill development for promoting SEE learning with focus on social and emotional competence. This will enable to put pre-service teachers well positioned to explore the next elements of SEE Learning, developing attention and creating emotional awareness.

For Students: When students will be groomed in supportive relationships and opportunities to develop and practice social, emotional, and ethical skills across many different contexts, their holistic development will also accelerate. Through SEE learning, students will be better equipped to restraint from behaviours that harm themselves and others, a key factor of ethical intelligence.

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