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Efficiency of social-emotional learning program on emotions management of students with hearing impairments in regular schools

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ABSTRACT

Lack of social and emotional skills is perhaps the most undermining problem that students with hearing impairments confront; by taking that into consideration, the goal of the present study is to appraise the effectiveness of Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) on the emotions management of students with hearing loss studying in normal schools. This study is based on an experimental method and a pre-test and post-test design has been applied to the control group. To that end, 30 male and female hearing-impaired students from junior and senior high schools covered by Tehran's Department of Exceptional Children Education were handpicked through multistage sampling and those who met the research criteria were randomly placed in two control and experimental groups and after a pretest, the social-emotional learning program was taught to the experimental group in 12 sessions. To measure the emotions management, Schutte Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire was used. The findings of the present research display a significant difference ($p< 0/0001$) between the control and experimental groups with regard to emotions management. The conclusion can be drawn that the Social-Emotional Learning program is efficient in the emotions management of students with hearing impairments in regular schools.

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Introduction

It is acknowledged that learning occurs by means of senses. Out of all senses, hearing is one of the most important ones in human beings. Hearing impairments greatly affect human's adaptability with his surroundings and delay our mental processes [1]. Communication has the key role in every individual's life. Communication is a means that connects individuals to their society. The personal and social growth of people in the community is highly dependent on communication [2]. Evaluation of psychological-social circumstances of deaf teenagers and adolescents reveals that weak self-confident, social insecurity, extensive anxiety, poor motivation, depression and situational aggression are among the distinct behavioral and personality qualities of many of such persons [3]. The findings of studies indicate that inabilities bring with themselves poor self-awareness and social growth and compared to other people at their age who are normal, they have less tolerance toward failure[4]. Social and emotional development in deaf children follows the same pattern of non-deaf children. Nevertheless, if hearing loss is severe upon birth, the perception of the world by the infant will be deeply affected [5]. Multitudes of studies prove that growth of deaf and partially-deaf students is posed with particular challenges. Results drawn from cognitive [6], educational[7], sciences and social-emotional growth [8] confirm that hearing perception diminution will impact many significant processes that play an important role in perceiving the world and interaction with others and special help is required in the education of these children. Individuals' social behavior is a big element in obtaining acceptability and approval from coeval children. Hearing-impaired students who go to regular schools often feel rejection and that is due to the absence of social and emotional skills for establishing a proper bond with others. A dearth of social and emotional skills could lead to the failure of the person with hearing loss in educational and occupational abilities, interaction with others and emotions management. Achieving self-awareness, emotions control, starting friendships, participation in coeval groups and feeling of independence are valuable life skills that are essential in the socialization process. Social, emotional and cognitive growth of deaf children depends on complex interactions between individual and peripheral factors relating to hearing impairment [9]. The Ecological Systems Model argues that child's development is influenced by systems such as parents, school and culture and in return, the personal traits of the child such as temper, intelligence, skills and physical abilities influence the systems with which child has interaction [10]. Dysfunction of one or some systems will affect the entire other systems that are in interaction with the child and increase the risk of psychological inadaptability and weaken the mental and emotional health. Deaf people are more exposed to the risk of Asperger syndrome, hence more prone to the risk of social and emotional problems [11].

In the research of Watson et al (1990), mothers who were subject to the study expressed the likelihood of hearing-impaired students' incapability to establish a good emotional bond with their friends and said that they deal with their friends mostly with aggression and such teenagers are more willing to befriend fellow teenagers with hearing loss[12]. Antia & Kreimeyer (1997) believe that weak and limited communication will lead to fragile social skills during adolescence, particularly during puberty crisis, that includes lack of ability to make decisions independently for personal matters, failing to appreciate emotions and needs of themselves and others, inflexibility, intolerance in the face of problems, despair, distrust of others views and absence of a healthy relationship with others[13].

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In recent years, one aspect of social intelligence has been progressive: emotional intelligence that is about how people learn to control their emotions and excitements, how to differentiate them and benefit from this information in directing their thinking and actions [14]. Emotion is a complex interaction of biological, psychological and environmental effects. Emotions management helps the individual to recognize emotions in themselves and in others and learn how they impact behavior and be able to react appropriately to different emotions [15]. Emotions adjustment is the ability to moderate emotional stimulation to strengthen a proper level of interaction with the environment that would prevent stressful negative thoughts and maladjusted behaviors [16]. Mastering the emotions management skill helps us demonstrate a proper reaction to dangerous and threatening situations, take advantage of happiness and bliss in our life and that of others around us, better understand the needs of others, sympathize with them and offer them help. It will also help us develop a sense of responsibility[17]. Emotional intelligence, as a set of individual abilities for suitable recognition, management and expression of emotions, in some circumstances can act as a confrontational strategy. Humans possess emotional intelligence that helps them manage life pressures, that partly have an emotional side to them and optimize the problem-solving ability. The quality of emotions management, which is found in great proportions in some people, can serve well in organizing emotions and prevent emotional crises. In addition to the prevention mechanism, emotion organization can socially improve the individual's adaptability [18].

Emotional intelligence is the ability to identify emotions of oneself and others and control emotions in social situations. Emotional intelligence attempts to elaborate and interpret the task of emotions in human capabilities. Emotions have a considerable effect on decisions and behaviors. Salovey and Mayer(1990) expanded the concept of emotional intelligence by putting across the importance of emotions. They have defined emotional intelligence as understanding emotions and using them in line with supporting ideas, understanding emotions, emotional information and emotions adjustment for psychological and emotional development [19].

Social-Emotional Learning(SEL) is a process through which children and youngsters can reach awareness about their emotions and manage them as well as identify others' emotions, develop empathy, acquire good decision-making abilities, commence positive friendships and effectively deal with challenges and situations [20]. The notion of Social-Emotional Learning has been borrowed from the works of Goleman (1995) and Salovey and Mayer (1990) on Emotional Intelligence and refers to a category of skills including motivation and self-confidence, recognition of expected behaviors, reining shocks, understanding how to ask for help, self-assertion and accompaniment of others[21][14]. The Social-Emotional Learning concept was first recognized in 1994 by Fetzer Group [22]. The group formulated a framework for meeting emotional needs of children and teenagers and how schools should respond to these needs. Their goals were: help develop Social-Emotional Learning, transform this science to efficient scientific teachings, spread and circulate the information of educational strategies of Social-Emotional Learning, present educational programs for improving knowledge of teachers, create connection and cooperation with concerned scientists and scholars in order to increase interaction in the domain of Social-Emotional Learning [23]. Studies carried out on Social-Emotional Learning programs (SEL), indicate the importance and impact of teaching social and emotional skills. The results of these researches demonstrate that education based on Social-Emotional Learning programs would boost social and emotional skills and subsequently the emotional intelligence, living standards and quality of social relationships [24].

Following comprehensive surveys, Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (2013) points out the advantages of this program as follows: better academic performance, self-management and controlled behaviors by the student, improved relationships in all levels of society and school, decreased aggressive behavior among students, better classroom management by teachers and better psychological health[25].

Some surveys recognize key subjects and concepts of Social-Emotional Learning as follows: self-awareness, social-awareness, identifying and recognizing emotions of one self, communication skills, empathy and responsible decision-making [26]. Social-Emotional Learning is about "necessary skills for management of ourselves, our relationships and our work in a moral and effective way" [20]. Although the lists of special skills are different across studies, these skills generally include: awareness and understanding of emotions in oneself and others, emotions management of oneself, tolerance of different viewpoints, ability to have an active role in establishing constructive relationships with others [27].

In a research entitled "integration of Social-Emotional Learning program with high school curriculum", Lindsay (2013) states that not only does teaching social-emotional skills increase educational skills, but it prepares students for encountering life issues in the future[28]. In a research, Snyder et al(2012) found out that applying Social-Emotional Skills programs can positively impact quality of schools[29]. In a meta-analysis carried out on 213 schools operating on Social-Emotional Learning program, Durlak, Dymnicki, Taylor and Schlesinger(2011) reviewed effectiveness of such programs. Research samples were 270034 students from kindergarten to high school. Compared to the control group, participants of Social-Emotional Learning programs demonstrated perfection in emotional and social skills, attitude, behavior and academic performance[30].

In a study, Jamali (2012) reviewed impact of Social-Emotional Learning program on children with Oppositional Defiant Disorder and the results bore a significant difference between control and experimental groups[31]. Dividing students into two groups of control and experimental and a 12-session training of social-emotional skills, Sadri, Akbarzadeh and Poshneh (2008) verified that learning social-emotional skills is effectual in enhancing emotional intelligence parameters[32].

It could be perceived from the aforementioned information that teenagers with hearing disability fail in social and emotional skills.

Therefore, purpose of the present study is to determine effectiveness of Social-Emotional Learning program on emotions management (emotion adjustment, evaluation and expression of emotion and using emotions to one's advantage) of students with hearing loss in normal schools. Thus the research question is: Does the Social-Emotional Learning program have any effect on emotions management (emotions adjustment, evaluation, expression and exploitation) of students with hearing loss in regular schools?

Methodology

The present study is an experimental research with pretest-posttest design and control group.

Table 1. Statistical Indexes of Performance of Two Groups in Emotion Management Test and their Nominal scales in pretest and posttest

Nominal scales	Group	Average		Standard Deviation	
		Pretest	Posttest	Pretest	Posttest
Emotions Adjustment	Experimental	26.46	43.40	5.87	4.50
	Control	28.06	29.26	7.39	6.75
Emotions Evaluation and Expression	Experimental	30.60	52.33	7.53	5.70
	Control	34.93	34.66	6.99	6.60
Emotion Exploitation	Experimental	25.80	41.40	6.14	4.40
	Control	26.60	27.73	5.43	5.49
Emotion Management Total Grade	Experimental	83.46	137.13	17.45	13.55
	Control	89.60	91.66	18.81	17.48

Table 2. Results of single-variable covariance analysis of Social-Emotional Learning program impact on emotion management

Sources of Variation	Sum of Square	Degree of Freedom	Mean of Squares	F	Degree of Significance	Eta Squared	Statistical Power Test
pretest	5437.91	1	5437.91	103.60	0.000	0.79	1
Group membership	18321.85	1	18321.85	349.07	0.000	0.92	1

Table 3. Results of multi-variable covariance analysis of group membership impact on emotions management's nominal scales

Sources of Variation	Statistical Index	Amount	F	Hypothesis Degree of Freedom	Error degree	Degree of Significance	Effect Size	Statistical Power Test
Group Membership	Wilk's lambda	0.060	121.049	3	23	0.0001	0.94	1

Table 4. Results of multi-variable covariance analysis of impact of Social-Emotional Learning program on emotions management's nominal scales

Dependent Variables	Sources of Variation	Sum of Square	Degree of Freedom	Mean of Squares	F	Degree of Significance	Eta Squared	Test Power
Emotions Management	Pretest	150.517	1	150.517	16.246	0.0001	0.39	0.97
	Group Membership	1429.94	1	1429.94	154.34	0.0001	0.86	1
Emotions Evaluation and Expression	Pretest	70.565	1	70.565	6.769	0.015	0.21	0.70
	Group Membership	2542.43	1	2532.43	242.91	0.0001	0.90	1
Emotions Exploitation	Pretest	40.420	1	40.420	6.492	0.017	0.20	0.68
	Group Membership	1201.67	1	1201.67	193.001	0.0001	0.88	1

Fig 1. Research General Design

E	R	X_1	O	X_2
C	R	X_1	-	X_2

Statistical Population, Subjects and Sampling Method: the statistical population consists of the entire male and female students at junior and senior high schools covered by Tehran's Education of Exceptional Students who study in regular schools.

To select the subjects, the multi-stage sampling method was practiced; 10 districts were chosen from 22 districts of Tehran. Afterwards, 100 schools were randomly picked from these 10 districts. A list of these students was provided by the Ministry of Education. Eventually, randomly and based on research entrance criteria, 30 students were chosen and accidentally placed in the control and experimental groups. The entrance criteria of the study were: 1. Being a student of regular schools, 2. Having a hearing loss range of more than 40 dB and being graded with moderate to severe impairment, 3. Not having other types of invalidity, 4. Having an intelligence within the range of natural intelligence and higher.

Data Gathering Tools:

Schutte Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire: this questionnaire was designed in 1998 by Shutte et al based on the emotional intelligence theoretical model of Salovey and Mayer (1990) and is used to measure emotional intelligence of teenagers[33]. This questionnaire contains 33 items and 3 nominal scales. In Siarochi-Deen study (2000), quoted by Khosro Javid (2002), executed on 13 to 15-year-old teenagers, the total reliability was 0.84 and for the nominal scales it was as follows: Emotions adjustment: 0.66, Emotions evaluation and expression: 0.76 ,Emotions exploitation: 0.55[34]. The standardization of this test in Iran was performed by Khosro Javid (2002). Khosro Javid carried out his research on 234 female and male junior high school students of Tehran and by implementing the 33-article form of this scale. The reliability of emotional intelligence scale was grasped based on Inner Alpha of 0.81. The Factor Analysis of scales through Principal Component Analysis bears the following results: 0.81 Alpha for emotions adjustment, 0.67 Alpha for emotions evaluation and expression and 0.50 Alpha for emotions exploitation. The total emotional intelligence and its three scales in the present study

showed the respective correlations of 0.80, 0.74 and 0.69, all of which were at a significant level (p<0.01)[35].

Raven's Progressive Matrices: for measuring the students' intelligence to meet the criteria of entering the research, Raven's intelligence test was applied. This visual test is one of the most appropriate tools for measuring the intelligence of students with hearing loss. The Raven's test has been variously evaluated in terms of reliability and validity. Results show that the matrices hold the required psychometric conditions and they can particularly be relied on in research as trustable scales. To determine the reliability of the test, the test-retest method was utilized and range of the correlation coefficient was reported to be 0.76 to 0.78 and the same range through bisection method was reported to be 0.75 to 0.96 [36]. Sepahvandi (2006) also reported the test's reliability to be 0.89 by applying the bisection method[37].

Research Procedure:To conduct the research, after determining the goals and defining the statistical population and taking into consideration the sampling criteria, 30 students with hearing impairments were selected and randomly placed in two groups of control and experimental. Afterwards, the Schutte Questionnaire was distributed among them to be completed.The students answered the questionnaire with aid of the researcher. After the completion of the questionnaire, educational programs were designed based on Social-Emotional Learning program on the ground of social skills and emotion management and their parameters to be taught to students. This educational program was taught in 12, one-hour sessions through the techniques of role-play, social stories and plays. At the beginning of each session, the desired topic was raised. Then the students were divided into groups and each group acted a play or recounted a relating story and in the end, the students were given homework assignments to practice skills at home. Subsequent to the completion of 12 sessions, a posttest was given and after grading the questionnaire, a statistical analysis in line with the study's targets was performed. Every session has been designed based on various Social-Emotional Learning programs and the details are as follows:

First Session: preliminarily introduction of Social-Emotional Skills to students

Second Session: teaching self-awareness skills (identifying personal strengths and interests) through acting plays.

Third Session: teaching skills of recognizing oneself and others' feelings through storytelling.

Fourth Session: teaching verbal and non-verbal communication skills (teaching body language and communicative skills for establishing relationships with regular students).

Fifth Session: teaching interpersonal skills (techniques to present oneself and establish relationships) through role-play technique.

Sixth Session: teaching interpersonal skills (empathy, cooperation) through performing plays and role-play techniques.

Seventh Session: teaching social awareness skill (understanding collective goals, perception of others' viewpoints) through story-telling.

Eighth Session: teaching emotions management skills (identifying emotions) through discussion.

Ninth session: teaching emotions management skills (understanding emotions of oneself and others) through storytelling.

Tenth Session: teaching emotion management skills (correct way of stating and expressing emotions) through the role-play technique.

Eleventh Session: teaching emotion management skills (ways of dealing with emotions of oneself and others and emotion control) through plays and storytelling

Twelfth Session: conclusion of the educated material and final outcome of the teaching sessions.

Data Analysis Methods: In order to analyze the data and review the research hypotheses, descriptive and inferential statistics were utilized. At the stage of descriptive statistics, average and standard deviation were used and at the stage of inferential statistics, analysis of covariance was utilized. The calculations were carried out on SPSS19 program.

Study Findings

Hypothesis: Social-Emotional Learning program is effective in emotion management of students with hearing loss in regular schools.

The information of Table 1 demonstrates the average and standard deviation of pretest and posttest grades of the control and experimental groups under the variable of emotions management and nominal scales of emotions adjustment, emotions evaluation and expression as well as emotions exploitation. According to these data, the average of experimental group rose following interference and it shows that from a descriptive viewpoint, teaching Social Emotional Learning program has been effective and as a result, emotion management (emotions adjustment, evaluation, expression and exploitation) has increased.

To verify the assumption of normal distribution of the grades, Shapiro-Wilk test and Kolmogorov–Smirno test were applied. The outcome of Shapiro-Wilk test and Kolmogorov–Smirno test on grades of emotions management and its nominal scales showed that by bearing in mind the degree of significance, the normality assumption of grades distribution is asserted (0/05 > P) and analysis of covariance can be used to analyze the presumptions.

Outcome of Levene's test showed that regarding the degree of significance, the equality assumption of variances in all variables is affirmed (0/05 > P). Therefore, analysis of covariance can be used for analyzing the assumptions.

To determine whether the presumption of grades covariance equality is correct, Box-Pierce test was used to confirm that. The results say that the presupposition of covariance equality of dependent variables' grades is valid and the mentioned presupposition has been observed in the present research.

The results illustrated in Table 2 show that by controlling the pretest, there would be a significant discrepancy in the posttest grades between experimental and control groups in terms of emotions management (P<0/05). The effectiveness in emotion management is 0.92. It means 92 percent of the posttest variance is related to the teaching of Social-Emotional Learning program. In other words, 92 percent of the divergence in the posttest results in experimental and control groups is due to exertion of dependent variable.

The table's contents show that the difference between the centroids in the group, considering the 3 dependent variables, is significant. In other words, with regard to 3 dependent variables there is a significant difference between experimental and control groups (p<0/0001).

The results displayed in Table 4 for the nominal scales of emotions adjustment, evaluation, expression and exploitation with controlling the impact of the pretest as the slack variable, lays bare the significant difference between control and experimental groups (p<0.0001). The level of impact on the parameters of emotions adjustment is 0.86, on emotions evaluation and expression is 0.90 and on emotions exploitation

is 0.88. Hence, it can be concluded that the Social-Emotional Learning program has been effective on emotions adjustment, evaluation, expression and exploitation in students with hearing loss who go to normal schools.

Discussion and Conclusion

Students with hearing loss who study in the regular schools system are confronted with difficulties in communication and social-emotional skills. Due to hindrances in communicational tools, these persons have problem communicating with others and consequently, are at risk of rejection or non-acceptance by others. Nonetheless, these persons can easily establish relationships with those similar to themselves and are accepted by them [38]. Studies done at the Center for Social-Emotional Education under the title of Social-Emotional Learning Programs signify the importance and effectiveness of teaching social-emotional skills. The mentioned studies prove that trainings with the help of SEL programs increase social-emotional skills and eventually lead to an increase in the emotional intelligence of the students. With regard to the efficiency of social-emotional skills on social skills and emotions management of individuals, the present study investigates the effectiveness of Social-Emotional Learning program on social skills and emotions management of students with hearing loss in regular schools.

The research hypothesis presumes that Social-Emotional Learning program is effective on emotions management of students with hearing impairment in regular schools. Results presented in Table 1 show that emotions management skills have risen in students after training of Social-Emotional Learning program. Also Tables 2 and 4 testify the effectiveness of Social-Emotional Learning on emotions management and its nominal scales. Thus the premise that social and emotional skills can improve hearing-impaired persons in emotions management can be substantiated. Since these people have to confront numerous difficulties in identifying emotions of themselves and others and managing these emotions, education is required. Results of the present study on effectiveness of Social-Emotional Learning program on students' emotions management are in harmony with the findings of Sadri (2008) [32], Kazemi (2009)[39], Omeroglu & Ulutas (2007)[40], Siarouchi, Ciarrochi, Heaven & Supavadeeprasit (2008)[41], Alberti & Emmons (2008)[42], Heidaripour et al (2012)[43], Yousefi (2007)[44]. Quantitative and qualitative results of this research on the subject of students' emotions management showed that teaching Social-Emotional Learning program helps identify positive and negative emotions, regulate and control emotions and take advantage of emotions in various situations and by implementing this program with particular methods (teamwork, plays, role-playing, etc.), the level of emotions management including understating oneself and others' emotions, expressing emotions appropriately, emotions adjustment and using emotions in suitable situations significantly improves. According to the results of the present research and similar studies, instruction of Social-Emotional Learning program positively impacts emotions management (emotions regulation, evaluation and expression of emotions and using emotions in one's favor) in students.

The present research was subject to study limitations such as spotting students with hearing loss in regular schools, being short of decent questionnaires that are agreeable to the needs of hearing-impaired students and lack of research background on the ground of interference for students with hearing impairment. It is suggested that education of social skills be executed in the form of extracurricular classes at all levels in institutes and schools where hearing-impaired students are present, and teachers as well as regular students receive training aimed at understating and communicating better with hearing-impaired people so that they can easily use the ordinary school system. It is also important that more research be done in the related fields of social, emotional, communicative and educational skills parallel with the needs of these students.

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