A National Crisis in Our Classrooms

Laura Ann Gomez-Green

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A National Crisis in Our Classrooms

Laura Ann Gomez-Green

A Dissertation Submitted to the Graduate Faculty

Lynn University of Boca Raton in Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirement for the Degree

Of Doctor of Education

Lynn University

Boca Raton, Florida

2020
A NATIONAL CRISIS IN OUR SCHOOLS

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ABSTRACT

Laura Ann Gomez-Green: A National Crisis in our Classrooms

There is a growing need for social-emotional learning that is evident everywhere in our world. The research explores the importance of a program that can have on our youth; however, there is little research on examines the support and professional development for teachers are lacking.

This study draws on teacher’s perceptions of their level of support provided for children when dealing with social-emotional learning in their elementary classrooms. Chapter one states the problem of lack of Social Emotional Learning and support for elementary school teachers when dealing with a crisis in the classroom. Chapter two consists of a literature review on the research that will impact the study. Chapter three is comprised of the methodology for the study. The study concludes with the proposal of a product to support students in crisis. It will also provide strategies for students to deescalate their feelings and support the teachers when dealing with crises in their classroom.

Key terms: Burnout, Classroom setting, Elementary school, Social Emotional Learning, Teacher stress
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Dedication

This journey to continue to grow both professionally and personally dedicated to my family. First, to my parents Joan and Pedro Gomez, who provided a solid foundation in life as well as the importance of family and education. My husband, Chuck Green, for his support and encouragement, during this journey. My reasons for everything in my life my children, Emmalyn Green, Charles Green, and Abigayle Wiley, I hope that you know how important you are and to the world, you may be one person, but to me, you are the world. Thank you to my siblings for their encouragement throughout this journey and all my nieces and nephews. This learning journey is for every educator and every child in the hopes that through social-emotional learning in the classrooms will create that their world will be positively influenced. Then the world can begin a world change for everyone.
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A National Crisis in Our Classrooms

Watch any nightly news show or read any headline news, and one is likely to see how poorly people behave. The situation has developed that see school violence, substance abuse, high stakes testing, and lack of parenting skills on most days (Jones et al., 2015; Zakrzewski, 2015). The need to address the social-emotional crisis is influencing the educational landscape. Educators need to re-examine the impact of emotional competencies within frameworks, curriculum, and classrooms and how administrators can facilitate an improvement (Stipp, 2019). A teacher has an essential role in developing and growing the skills both academic and social of our nation's young children (Zakrzewski, 2015). Teachers work with the academics’ areas, but their impact on social-emotional skills is often not recognized or measured (Melnick, 2017).

Currently, one of the focuses of schools is to academically prepare our students for their futures (Byrd, 2019). However, in order to become successful and motivated adults in society, students must have a foundation of social and emotional skills (Byrd, 2019). As such, for students to learn academically, schools should also support their social and emotional development (Melnick, 2017). According to Durlak et al. (2011), students who participated in SEL programming demonstrated significantly improved strong social-emotional competencies, attitudes, behavior, resulting in higher academic outcomes of a 13% increase in academic achievement. Domitrovich, Durlak, Staley, and Weissberg (2017) also provided evidence that implementing a school-wide intervention leads to positive effects when looking at externalizing behaviors, academic performance, social behaviors, and emotional distress. Through SEL, students can learn how to
manage their emotions, make responsible decisions, be able to set goals, and become empathetic (Domitrovich et al., 2017). Classroom teachers can help students develop social and emotional competencies by directly teaching these skills by using engaging curriculum materials and by implementing specific instructional and classroom-management practices (Durlak et al., 2011; Stillman et al., 2018).

**Overview of Profession/Problem**

Teaching is one of the most stressful occupations in the United States and has been compared to that stress of an emergency room doctor (Melnick, 2017). The high level of stress affects the teachers in a recent Gallup poll indicated that 46% of teachers reported high daily stress that is above nurses and doctors reporting 45% (Taylor et al., 2017). Stress is a significant contributor to causing a high burnout rate, a teacher shortage, teachers’ health, and wellbeing, job dissatisfaction poor performance that is causing the highest turnover rates in history (Schonert-Reichl, 2017). Teacher stress can be linked to teaching performance and student academic outcomes. This stress is not contained to the teacher but impacts our students and their learning opportunity (Schonert-Reichl, 2017; Zakrzewski, 2015). Herman et al. (2017) found evidence that teachers in a high stress, high burnout, and low coping class are associated with the most unsatisfactory student outcomes, including disruptive behaviors and academic achievement. Another study by Larson et al. (2018) indicated that teachers under stress due to work overload results in a decrease in the ability to implement effective teaching practices and strategies, which affect student learning outcomes. As such, social-emotional learning is a crisis in our classrooms, affecting both students and teachers.
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(Lam & Wong, 2017). One of the highest cost is the opportunities for our students who are not prepared to deal with social-emotional situations in life (Larson et al., 2018).

This crisis of teachers leaving our classrooms does not only affect students’ academic outcomes and teachers’ wellbeing, but it also costs our nation billions of dollars each year (Correa, 2017; Dusenbury & Weissberg, 2017; Lam & Wong, 2017). This turnover has an expense of up to seven billion dollars a year, according to a 2007 report from the National Commission on Teaching and America’s Future (Schonert-Reichl, 2017). Schools and districts are hiring beginning teachers with less experience or training, resulting in lower student achievement and significant training costs for our nation’s school systems as well as the loss of priceless learning opportunities for our children (Stillman et al., 2018).

Solution

Research supports that SEL programs have a positive return on investment with an eleven dollar return for each dollar spent (Belfield, 2015). Jones and Bouffard (2012) highlight that children's SEL abilities can be directly influenced by teachers' social-emotional competence as well as their pedagogical skills. Education needs to integrate SEL into teacher education and professional development training (Zakrzewski, 2017). Understanding social issues will help educators when dealing with kids in our classrooms today (Poulou, 2018). Educators have to ensure that a teacher has the social-emotional competency before they enter those classroom doors. Educators who have social-emotional competencies serve as a role model in classrooms and are more successful in implementing the SEL program to provide to their students (Peterson et al., 2018). There is a need to offer coursework in the college of educations, pre-service teachers, and ongoing for all educators to provide their own social and emotional competencies
(Mansfield, 2017). The demands of our learners who enter our classrooms and hearts come with some significant issues today (Melnick, 2017; Zakrzewski, 2017). Students who enter the schools suffer from homelessness, abuse, extended exposure to violence, and traumatic experience (Ferlazzo, 2016). According to Ferlazzo (2016), circumstances such as stresses and traumas inflicted upon children make it more challenging to maintain the mental reserve needed for SEL skills. Therefore, the well-being of both teachers and students are a priority and must acknowledged. SEL can be successful by providing training on social emotion competencies as part of the teacher preparation program, new teacher programs and ongoing professional development for all in the field of education to increase the outcome for our students (Poulou, 2018).

**Significance of the Study**

The importance of recognizing emotions and developing social-emotional competencies to handle them will benefit each student and teacher in the schools but ultimately impact society as a whole. SEL could also yield substantial future savings or return on investment for students who undertake it. SEL increases the financial outcomes for students, which will help guide them to college and a career (Correa, 2017). SEL provides a strong foundation for students to stay out of trouble with the law and be a productive member of society (Rosales, 2017). Taylor et al. (2017) reported that in promoting positive youth development through school-based social and emotional learning interventions, students who received SEL later demonstrated a 6% increase in high school graduation rates and an 11% increase in college graduation rates. Also, research analysis finds SEL students’ academic performance 3.5 years later is higher by 13 percentile points compared to non-SEL peers (Correa, 2017; Durlak et al., 2011). At
other follow-up periods, conduct problems, emotional distress, and drug use were all significantly lower for SEL students. Benefits were similar regardless of students’ race, socioeconomic background, or school location (Durlak et al., 2011). Byrd et al. (2019) and McCartney (2018) asserted this, stating that SEL is a valuable tool that all educators should learn because it allows them to give their students the necessary tools they need to succeed both in and out of school.

Programs that teach social and emotional learning (SEL) in schools have positive long-term impacts for all stakeholders (Peterson et al., 2018). The positive outcomes of SEL implementation can be translated into substantial monetary benefits for students and society as a unit (Dusenbury & Weissberg, 2017). Recent research reported that a student who graduates from high school has a lifetime income benefit of $367,687, and the prevention of a single case of conduct disorder saves society nearly $4 million (Taylor et al., 2017). From an economic standpoint, every dollar that spent on SEL programs yields $11 in overall long-term benefits that include reduced juvenile crime, higher lifetime earnings, and better mental and physical health (Belfield et al., 2015).

**Rationale of Study**

As an elementary school principal, the majority of the day is dealing with social-emotional breakdowns that lead to taking away from the academic focus understand and believe that schools need to address the whole child, not just academics. Society has changed from when a child was at home with family raising them to the daycares and babysitters. Schools are dealing with many aspects of social-emotional competencies that in years past had been taught at home in a small setting. As a five-year-old enters school, they are coming to class with a backpack both physically and emotionally.
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Competencies such as self-awareness, social awareness, self-management, relationship skills, and responsible decision making, help students gain a better understanding of who they are, how they relate to themselves and others, and how to make our world a better place (CASEL, 2017; Ryerse, 2017).

Education can be defined as the act or process of imparting or acquiring general knowledge, developing the powers of reasoning and judgment, and generally of preparing oneself or others intellectually for mature life (Correa, 2017). Students need to acquire skills both academically and socially to deal with challenges of daily life and attain later successes (Rae et al., 2017). Our founders created schools believed that education settings should create a competent citizen made up of independent and critical thinkers who can work effectively with others to contribute to society as a whole (Lam & Wong, 2017). To reach this goal, children should not only develop the ability to read, write, and arithmetic, but they also need social skills that will help them develop social skills to use daily as challenges or obstacles arise (Dusenbury & Weissberg, 2017). Research shares wherein the importance of teaching the whole child and implementing SEL in schools is essential for the wellbeing of students, staff, schools, communities, and the world (Correa, 2017). It is critical to teach youth SEL skills and competencies, also referred to as Emotional Intelligence, soft skills, non-cognitive skills, and interpersonal skills (CASEL, 2017). Thus, education should teach the whole child, not just their minds but their hearts.
Conceptual Framework

The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) is a non-profit entity that advocates and provides leadership training for evidence-based, high-quality SEL programming, and learning standards. In promoting social and emotional learning, the CASEL developed guidelines for educators and identified SEL proponents that aim to address what they deemed was the missing link in education (CASEL, 2017). That is, this set of guidelines focused on the whole student to include social and emotional wellbeing instead of solely focusing on test scores and academic measurement. Teachers view social and emotional competencies as critical skills to be successful as a learner as well as life opportunities.

The CASEL developed a framework that identifies five core competencies associated with SEL: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship management, and responsible decision-making (CASEL, 2017; Ryerse, 2017; Zins, 2004). A related set of self-awareness and self-management skills involves the evaluation of abilities and interests, building strengths, and making effective use of family, school, and community resources. In contrast, social-awareness and interpersonal skills are critical to establish and maintain positive relationships (Correa, 2017). The fifth competency associated with SEL is responsible for decision-making, which involves the demonstration of responsible behaviors in personal, school, and community contexts (Zins, 2004). An essential competency to consider when equipping students with the ability to make informed, respectful, and responsible decisions based on their morals and values, safety, social norms, and potential consequences greatly enhances their wellbeing and the wellbeing of others (Dusenbury & Weissberg, 2017). Furthermore, this set of
competencies is vital to address in the educational setting given that establishing and maintaining positive relationships with others is central to success in school and life because it requires the ability to recognize the thoughts, feelings, and perspectives of others, including those different from one’s own (Correa, 2017). Regarding this set of core competencies associated with SEL, the CASEL framework will be used in this study to gain an understanding of the needs of elementary teachers dealing with students in crisis in the classroom setting.

Underpinning emotional intelligence, soft skills, non-cognitive skills, and interpersonal skills and competencies is the ability to acquire and effectively apply the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to understand and manage emotions, set, and achieve positive goals, feel, and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions (CASEL, 2017). The emotional crisis is a national public health concern impacting a teacher crisis amongst mental health concerns rising in society (Lam & Wong, 2017). The CASEL framework states that teachers should demonstrate not only competent and skillful in teaching SEL skills in classroom settings, but they should also practice compassion towards students (Correa, 2017). In addition to being a competent teacher, the most effective way to incorporate SEL in an educational program is the combination of direct instruction and embedding lessons across the curriculum (Poulou, 2018). According to the CASEL framework, SEL programs should follow a legitimate, research-based curriculum with a scope and sequence (CASEL, 2017). Thus, with the utilization of the CASEL framework as a point of reference, teachers can begin to identify the situations in the classroom that interrupt student learning and to address the social-emotional learning for all students in crisis,
practicing compassion towards their students (Lam & Wong, 2017). Additionally, the CASEL set of guidelines allows for the identification of techniques for classroom implementation to support social-emotional learning for all students.

**Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this qualitative case study is to gain an understanding of the needs of elementary teachers dealing with students in crisis in the classroom setting. Shedding more insight regarding teachers’ mindset to identify areas of need in the elementary classroom setting when dealing with students in crisis and add to the existing literature concerning this topic. It is vital to address given that teacher well-being is linked to teaching performance and student academic outcomes, as well as students and their learning opportunity (Schonert-Reichl, 2017; Zakrzewski, 2015). As such, social-emotional learning is a crisis in our classrooms, affecting both students and teachers. This study will address this study’s concern on how to address the situations in the classroom that interrupt student learning and to address the social-emotional learning for all students in crisis (Belfield et al., 2015; Taylor et al., 2017).

**Research Questions**

The following questions will guide the study.

1. What are the challenges that teachers face when dealing with students in crisis in the elementary classroom setting?

2. Do the current guidance model and set of strategies curriculum meet the needs of a student in crisis as well as to support the social-emotional learning for all students?

3. What obstacles exist between students in crisis/trauma and interventions?
Assumptions

All research involves interpretation wherein researchers view and interpret meaning through their viewpoint of how they understand the world to be (Creswell, 2012; Maxwell, 2005). One fundamental assumption identified is that the teachers from different elementary schools in Southeast Florida will participate in this study will be open about their viewpoints and experiences. Additionally, the researcher assumes that the respondents will be honest in their answers.

Definition of Terms

Burnout. Maslach and Jackson (1981) describe burnout as a state of emotional exhaustion characterized by detachment from their job and losing the sense of accomplishment or satisfaction for one’s work.

Classroom setting. An educational environment that includes and encompasses a broad range of educational concepts, including the physical setting, the psychological environment created through social contexts, and numerous instructional components related to teacher characteristics and behaviors (Miller & Cunningham, 2011).

Elementary school. In the United States, and for this study, elementary school is defined as the main point of delivery of primary education for children between the ages of four to 11 and coming between pre-kindergarten and secondary education (Brookover et al., 1978).

Social-emotional learning. Social and emotional learning (SEL) is the process through which children and adults understand and manage emotions, set and achieve
positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions (CASEL, 2017).

**Teacher stress.** The experience by a teacher of physiological responses such as tension, which stems from their work as a teacher. While stress does not always have to be negative, for this study, the researcher focused on stressors that inhibit a teacher’s ability to do their job well (Selye, 1974). According to Kyriacou (2001), these feelings are unpleasant and include emotions like anger, anxiety, frustration, or depression.

**Organization of the Dissertation**

This study will consist of five chapters. Chapter I provided the introduction and background regarding various points in connection with social-emotional learning in elementary classroom settings. Chapter II presents the literature review that covered the evolution of student learning, the importance of social-emotional learning, and current strategies and techniques of social-emotional learning in the context of elementary students within virtual learning. Chapter III highlights the methodology used in the conducted study. Analysis of data and findings presented in Chapter IV. Finally, Chapter V provides a summary, conclusions, implications for action, and recommendations for future study.
Chapter II - Literature Review

Introduction

The high prevalence of violence in schools, substance abuse, risk-taking, and absence of parental guidance is evident among youth as displayed through news media both in the United States and worldwide (Institute of Medicine and National Research Council Committee on the Science of Adolescence, 2011). For instance, as highlighted by Durlak et al. (2011), approximately 30% of high school students display multiple high-risk behaviors, including substance use, sex, violence, depression, and attempted suicide, which further impacts their academic performance and potential for overall life success. These actions are based on the behavior of individuals but also reflect the existence of a social and emotional crisis that must be addressed, as many students lack social and emotional competencies, which results to negative academic performance and behavior due to a lack of these skills (Durlak et al., 2011).

Educators play a role in addressing this crisis in their ability to impact the emotional competencies of their students through curriculum and learning, beginning with the social and academic education of young children (Zakrzewski & Lantieri, 2015). The role of educators is significant in that there is a strong correlation between social and emotional competencies and higher academic outcomes, including increased academic achievement (Durak et al., 2011). Teachers not only facilitate student learning and academic development but play a role in the social and emotional development of children (Greenberg et al., 2016). The integration of social and emotional competencies as a factor in academic achievement is, therefore, essential to consider in education.
The primary focus of education is on the academic development of students (Byrd, 2019). However, Melnick (2017) suggested that schools should develop the social and emotional skills of students in addition to their academic skills in order to provide these foundations for adulthood (Byrd, 2019). Research by Durlak et al. (2011) suggested that social and emotional learning (SEL) can provide a means of developing more substantial social and emotional competencies, attitudes, and behaviors among students. Similarly, Domitrovich, Durlak, Staley, and Weissberg (2017) suggested that SEL has a positive effect on teaching students to manage their emotions, make a responsible decision, set goals, and show empathy. What is also known is that social-emotional development is a trauma-informed practice that can help educators and classroom staff support students experiencing crisis, trauma, and stress. However, in many cases, educators and classroom staff supporting students in crisis/trauma, such as students in areas with high poverty, do not have the skills needed to support students in need (Anderson et al., 2015). Teachers can, therefore, help students develop their social and emotional competencies by teaching these skills through a curriculum that integrates SEL (Durlak et al., 2011; Stillman et al., 2018).

The purpose of this qualitative case study is to gain an understanding of the needs of elementary teachers dealing with students in crisis in the classroom setting. The goal of this study is specific to elementary students in crisis and experiencing trauma. In particular, this study will provide insight regarding the role of teachers’ mindset to identify areas of need in the elementary classroom setting when dealing with students in crisis. Although the evidence suggests that students who are educated by teachers who are experiencing high stress, burnout, and low coping in class have poorer student
outcomes, including disruptive behavior and lower academic achievement (Greenberg et al., 2016; Schonert-Reichl, 2017; Zakrzewski & Lantieri, 2015), have a more significant gap in the literature currently exists in understanding the between the connection between teacher performance in dealing with students in crisis as well as the role that SEL may play in supporting teachers in dealing with students in crisis. This study will address this gap and add to the existing literature on SEL in how SEL can be used to support students in crisis, with consideration of teachers’ mindset in supporting their students.

The following databases with this literature review: Google Scholar, Educational Resource Information Center (ERIC), Research Gate, and Springer Open. Of the 76 sources found for this literature, 90.8% (69) of sources were from 2015-2019, and 9.2% (7) of sources were from before 2015. The search terms used included social and emotional skills, social and emotional competencies, social and emotional development, elementary school, elementary classroom, elementary teachers, social-emotional learning, Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning, CASEL, social and emotional learning, a crisis in elementary, a trauma in elementary, and crisis and intervention in elementary. Relevant sources were generated from database searches using these keywords (both individually and in combinations). Each article was reviewed for content and relevancy. Articles that considered to be relevant were included in this literature review.

This literature review will begin by presenting the theoretical framework, which includes the social and emotional theory and the more specific Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) framework. Relevant studies from the review of the literature will be organized into categories, beginning with the broad
subject matter and progressing towards the gap to be studied based on the findings in the literature. From the review of the literature, the following themes were discussed: (a) factors contributing to student crisis, trauma, and stress and impacts on education (b) role of education in supporting students in crisis/trauma (c) Social and emotional learning (SEL) in the classroom and school; (d) teachers and social and emotional competencies; and (e) effectiveness of social and emotional learning (SEL) programs. This review will conclude with a discussion of key findings and gaps in the existing literature.

Theoretical Framework

The overarching theory to be used in this qualitative case study is the Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) theory (Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning, 2005; Jones & Bouffard, 2012). SEL theory and the push to implement SEL programs in classrooms and schools through the SEL movement are based on the concept that the development of the social and emotional skills of children through education is critical. In this way, SEL theory views the development of social and emotional skills of children as necessary for the academic success and healthy psychological development of children and adolescents (Poulou, 2015). The purpose of SEL as applied to education is to increase the capacity of students to integrate skills, attitudes, and behaviors to respond effectively and ethically to daily challenges.

Demonstrating the significance of SEL in education, Jones and Doolittle (2017) explain that research reflects that social and emotional learning (SEL) is vital for successful life outcomes, including academic success, college entry, and completion, and later success in life. Coinciding with the findings of Jones and Doolittle (2017), in a study of 321 elementary school students, Arslan (2015) discovered between educational
stress due to study, workload, worrying about grades, self-expectation, and despondency was negatively associated with social-emotional learning. In other words, an increase in educational stress resulted in adverse outcomes in social-emotional learning.

The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) framework will also use in this study as it is a powerful SEL framework. Although other frameworks exist, they tend to base on the CASEL framework, which has been implemented in some capacity in all 50 states in the United States (Jones & Doolittle, 2017). The CASEL framework provides a model for social and emotional learning (SEL), also referred to as social-emotional learning. The CASEL framework was derived from the CASEL project, which supports educators and policymakers in the interest of improving outcomes for students from PreK through Grade 12. Following the integrated nature of SEL, the CASEL framework is an integrated model that focuses on developing students’ competencies and capacities in five core competencies to promote the intrapersonal, interpersonal, and cognitive competence of students. CASEL has been significant in that it is currently supporting SEL programs in 10 large school districts and 45 smaller school districts. In the United States, all 50 states have SEL standards in place at the preschool level, with four states having SEL standards for kindergarten through grade 12 (Jones & Doolittle, 2017). These five core competency areas defined by CASEL for SEL will be considered in this study and are as follows:

1. Self-awareness—the ability to identify one’s own emotions, thoughts, and values and understand how they guide behavior;

2. Self-management—the ability to successfully regulate one’s own emotions, thoughts, and behaviors in different situations, and to set and work toward goals
3. Social awareness—the ability to take the perspective of and empathize with others, and to understand social and ethical norms for behavior;

4. Relationship skills—the ability to communicate clearly, listen well, cooperate with others, resist inappropriate social pressure, negotiate conflict constructively, and seek and offer help when needed; and

5. Responsible decision-making— the ability to make constructive choices about personal behavior and social interactions based on ethical standards, safety concerns, and social norms (Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning, 2005; Jones & Doolittle, 2017; Osher et al., 2016)

The Social and Emotional Learning theory is an appropriate framework for this study, as it has been used previously for similar studies. For instance, Poulou (2015) used SEL theory to analyze the findings of a study of 962 primary school students in which significant correlations discovered between teachers’ interpersonal behavior and students’ social and emotional skills concerning emotional and behavioral difficulties among students. Moreover, a specific analysis of the CASEL framework in social and emotional learning (SEL) conducted by Dusenbury et al. (2015). Through their analysis, Dusenbury et al. (2015) identified four overall approaches that help to understand what teachers need to do in the classroom and school to help students successfully achieve the goals of social and emotional learning (SEL) standards as defined by the CASEL framework. The four approaches that have been successful in promoting social and emotional development in students are a) free-standing lessons that provide step-by-step instructions to teach students’ social and emotional competencies; b) using general teaching practices to create classroom and school-wide conditions that facilitate and
support social and emotional development in students; c) integrating skill instruction or practices that support SEL within the context of an academic curriculum; and d) providing school leaders with guidance on how to facilitate SEL as a school-wide initiative (Dunsenbury et al., 2015). Similar to the findings of Dusenbury et al. (2015), results from McCormick et al. (2015) explained that the application of the CASEL framework in schools and classrooms throughout the United States is significant in developing the social and emotional competencies of students.

The SEL theory that will be used in this study to help understand the role of social and emotional competencies, for teachers and students, the ability of teachers to deal with students in crisis/trauma, also impacts the performance and development of the students themselves. The CASEL framework, as a predominant framework implemented in the United States, will provide specific guidance in this study through the five core competency areas as described above.

**Review of Relevant Literature**

This review of the literature presents evidence related to the role of social and emotional learning (SEL) in the classroom and in schools, as well as the relevance of SEL to students and teachers, including the role of educators in applying SEL to improve the social and emotional competencies of students in crisis/trauma. As developing social and emotional competencies, as described by the CASEL framework, is a critical component of SEL, the role of social and emotional competencies in education was examined in the literature. As this study is specific to students in crisis/trauma, the literature review also details factors contributing to the crisis, trauma, and stress in children, as well as the impacts that student crisis/trauma has on not only academic and
behavioral performance but outcomes later in life. As will be described, the literature also revealed the importance of developing the social and emotional competencies for teachers and how SEL can assist teachers in supporting children in crisis/trauma. The themes to be explored below are: (a) role of education in supporting students in crisis/trauma; (b) Social and emotional learning (SEL) in the classroom and school; (c) teachers and social and emotional competencies; (d) effectiveness of social and emotional learning (SEL) programs; and, (e) lack of training as a barrier to applying social and emotional learning (SEL) in the classroom.

Understanding factors related to student crisis, trauma, and stress are essential to understand how educators may support such students and how these factors may impact student performance and behavior in school (Anderson et al., 2017; Beal et al., 2019; Garrido et al., 2018; Taylor et al., 2017). Beal et al. (2019) explained that childhood adversity is related to several adverse health and psychological outcomes in adulthood, including risk-taking and substance abuse. Similar to the Beal et al. (2019) study, Garrido et al. (2018) found that adverse childhood experiences are associated with health-risk behaviors in adults and adolescents. As social and emotional competencies help in establishing coping mechanisms through self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making (Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning, 2005; Jones & Doolittle, 2017; Osher et al., 2016), the findings of Beal et al. (2019) and Garrido et al. (2018) are significant in understanding how educators may provide skills, such as the development of social and emotional competencies, in schools and the classroom for students in childhood to counter the potential for risk behaviors and adverse outcomes in adulthood. In particular,
child adversity can be linked to risk behaviors and adverse outcomes in adulthood as suggested by Beal et al. (2019) and Garrido et al. (2018), SEL may assist by developing the social and emotional competency of responsible decision-making in children (Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning, 2005; Jones & Doolittle, 2017; Osher et al., 2016).

Beal et al. (2019) and Garrido et al. (2018) demonstrated that child adversity, including trauma and crisis, have negative impacts on the health of children into adolescence and adulthood. Child adversity is a terminology used for individuals who experienced crisis/trauma in childhood (Lickteig & Lickteig, 2019; Taylor, 2017). Because child adversity is related to adverse outcomes in childhood, understanding that factors that contribute to crisis/trauma in children are vital in understanding what factors may lead to adverse outcomes for children later in life (Beal et al., 2019; Garrido et al., 2018). In understanding the factors that contribute to child adversity, Anderson et al. (2015) explained that schools in communities with high rates of poverty have the added challenge of meeting the needs of students who often experience family and environmental stressors. In the Anderson et al. (2015) study, the school social worker and principal in the schools with high rates of poverty interviewed, and in their interviews, they explained that teachers and classroom staff had difficulties working with students with challenging behaviors. Furthermore, the social worker and principal identified that the academic and behavioral difficulties of students were related to the poverty, poor living conditions, and environmental and family stress that the students were exposed to (Anderson et al., 2015).
As suggested by the Anderson et al. (2015) study, students experiencing a crisis, trauma, and stress are likely to enter school with these outside pressures and display academic and behavioral difficulties that yield poor outcomes in both schools and life in general. In defining students in crisis/trauma, Taylor (2017) explained that children in crisis include those that experience behavior issues such as escalated or explosive behavior in schools. This description of children in crisis closely relates the concept of adversity outside of school with poor behavior and academic outcomes in school for children in crisis/trauma (Taylor, 2017). Focusing on the development of these students in the classroom is, therefore, essential to ensure that children in crisis/trauma develop into successful adults despite their adversity in childhood (Beal et al., 2019; Garrido, 2018; Taylor, 2017). The following section will describe what role teachers and school staff can play in supporting students in crisis/trauma.

**Role of Education in Supporting Students in Crisis/Trauma**

As explained above, student crisis and trauma impact the academic performance and behaviors of students in the classroom and may result in adverse outcomes later in life. Students experiencing stress, trauma, and crisis also have higher needs in the classroom as a result of these factors and are likely to engage in behaviors that cause poor outcomes not only in academics but in outcomes later in life as a result of this adversity (Anderson et al., 2015; Beal et al., 2019; Taylor, 2017). Contributing factors for academic and behavioral difficulties include poverty, poor living conditions, and environmental and family stress (Anderson et al., 2015). Factors contributing to crisis/trauma can also be more severe such as in the case of foster students removed from their birth home due to other abuses (Lickteig & Lickteig, 2019). The need to address the
role of students in supporting students in crisis/trauma, Yang and Bear (2018) highlighted that the role of teachers in supporting students through student engagement could be facilitated by social and emotional learning approaches to promote positive outcomes and reduce risk behaviors such as delinquency, violence, teen pregnancy, substance abuse, and school dropout. In this way, Yang and Bear (2018) specifically noted SEL as a technique for supporting students experiencing behavioral difficulties consistent with children in crisis/trauma or those facing child adversity (Beal et al., 2019; Garrido, 2018).

Describing the role of teachers in supporting students with academic and behavioral difficulties as presented by Yang and Bear (2018), Taylor (2017) stated that it is the job of educators to support all children, especially students in crisis/trauma, as those are often the children who are struggling the most. Taylor (2017) also suggested that if educators focus more on students in crisis by supporting them, believing in them, and guiding them, they can assist in developing these children into contributing members of the community. The skills Taylor (2017) described as essential to developing in children in crisis are self-advocacy, compassion, and empathy.

In addition to students experiencing struggling in school due to behavioral difficulties, and therefore considered to be in crisis as described by Taylor (2017), children experiencing trauma are also likely to struggle as students (Lickteig & Lickteig, 2019). The article describes the issues faced by children in foster care, Lickteig & Lickteig (2019) explained that that causes for a child’s removal from their birth family is often related to childhood trauma such as neglect, physical or emotional abuse, parental substance abuse, and the caretaker’s inability to provide or cope with the child. As a result of these traumas and the feelings surrounding these events, including the removal
of the child from home, foster children tend to be at-risk learners in schools (Lickteig & Lickteig, 2019). Recognizing that young children who enter school without social and emotional competencies can develop these skills through SEL in the classroom, McClelland et al. (2017) explained that effective interventions should work to develop the SEL skills of children both at home and in school and can do so by engaging the families of students, when possible. As in the case in the Anderson et al. (2015) study in which student struggles can be related to poverty and poor living conditions, Lickteig and Lickteig (2019) revealed that the cause of students struggling in schools is primarily due to factors outside of the classroom, such as their home life. Furthermore, students in crisis/trauma, such as foster children, are often those with limited support in the classroom as they often overlooked, neglected, and under-addressed in the school system (Lickteig & Lickteig, 2019).

Educators can provide support for children in crisis/trauma by providing a safe, stable space in the classroom that acts as a routine environment to support the student by providing a feeling of control (Lickteig & Lickteig, 2019). The teacher’s role is to provide, therefore, a sense of control, loyalty, stability, structure, and routine to provide something constant in the child’s life to address their unique emotional and social needs (Lickteig & Lickteig, 2019). Providing such support can assist students struggling academically and behavior to develop the skills needed to improve the adverse outcomes that are associated with the crisis/trauma that they experience outside of school (Lickteig & Lickteig, 2019).

Similar to the theme of stress and trauma explored by Anderson et al. (2015), Martín-Antón et al. (2016) explained the impact of social skills in elementary children,
particularly in their ability to develop social and emotional competencies, as well as the role educators can play in confronting the issue of peer-rejection. Martín-Antón et al. (2016) examined social situations for peer-rejected students in elementary school. They determined that students rejected have more difficulties than average students in: (a) respect for authority and rules, (b) being disadvantaged, (c) prosocial and empathic behavior, and (d) response to own success. Martín-Antón et al. (2016) emphasized the importance of programs to prevent and reduce early childhood rejection in the classroom to avoid these difficulties. The findings of Martín-Antón et al. (2016), therefore, link the role of schools in supporting students in crisis/trauma with the use of SEL to overcome adverse outcomes, such as behavioral difficulties, associated with student crisis/trauma.

These social and emotional competencies of students can develop through social and emotional learning (SEL), as evident by the application of the CASEL framework in schools and classrooms throughout the United States. SEL programs can be directed at teachers or students, or a combination of both (McCormick et al., 2015). By implementing SEL programs into the curriculum, educators can help students develop the social and emotional competencies they do not learn outside of the school either at home or in their community (Lickteig & Lickteig, 2019; Oksuk, 2016; Taylor 2017). The role of teachers in helping “at-risk” students is to develop social and emotional skills that are vital to improving the behavior and academic outcomes for a child as well as preventing risk behaviors that may reduce in adverse life outcomes for these children in the future due to their adversity in childhood (Beal et al., 2019; Garrido, 2018; Lickteig & Lickteig, 2019; McKown, 2017; Oksuk, 2016; Taylor 2017).
Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) for Students in Crisis/Experiencing Trauma

Reflecting on the findings of Lickteig and Lickteig (2019) and Taylor (2017), the use of SEL to support students experiencing crisis/trauma is critical, as students experiencing these adversities tend to struggle in school, partly due to their lack of social and emotional skills. Because students do not develop these skills at home or in their communities, schools provide a platform to help students develop their social and emotional competencies, particularly in the case of students experiencing crisis/trauma due to factors outside of the school environment (Lickteig & Lickteig, 2019). The literature provides specific evidence to support the use of SEL for students experiencing crisis/trauma by explaining how SEL can help with skills related to emotion, behavior, and other factors, as will be described. The theme of SEL for students in crisis/experiencing trauma is closely related to the section above and the section to follow. However, it is essential to note that no specific evidence exists on how the specific integration of SEL effects students in crisis/experiencing trauma. Instead, the evidence available demonstrates that educators have a role in supporting students in crisis/trauma, students experiencing crisis/trauma may benefit from SEL, and, separately, SEL has a positive impact on student outcomes (Lickteig & Lickteig, 2019; Nix et al., 2016; McClelland, 2017; Oksuk, 2016; Taylor, 2017).

Social and emotional learning for students in crisis/experiencing trauma is essential as social and emotional competencies are related to skills such as emotional recognition, conflict recognition, and coping skills (Oksuk, 2016), which are each necessary for dealing with crisis/trauma and to avoid risk behaviors related to child adversity (Beal et al., 2019; Garrido, 2018). Related to the social and emotional skills of
children, Oksuk (2016) conducted a study on the emotional literacy of 4th-grade students over two months. In this study, Oksuk (2016) found that the students that participated in the study developed and improved their social and emotional skills, including emotional recognition, sharing, cooperation, conflict resolution, labeling emotions, and coping skills. Those who developed their emotional literacy skills were also able to share and reflect their experiences and compare their experiences with those of others (Oksuk, 2016). Based on these results, Oksuk (2016) concluded that SEL should be integrated within the curriculum so that teachers can support the development of social and emotional competencies among children.

One way in which education can support students emotionally and socially, as briefly mentioned above and will be further demonstrated in the following section, is through SEL programs, which play a role in the social and emotional development of students, including those in crisis (Oksuk, 2016; Taylor, 2017). However, as demonstrated by the lack of evidence available in this section, limited information exists on the specific role of SEL for students in crisis/trauma.

The suggestion by Oksuk (2016) that social and emotional learning should be a priority in the curriculum of primary (elementary) school education is significant. The curriculum used as the foundation for teachers in educating students in the classroom. By implementing the SEL curriculum itself, teachers are supporting students in crisis/trauma by assisting them in developing their conflict resolution, labeling emotions, and coping skills (Oskuk, 2016). As will be described further in the sections to follow, social and emotional competencies are essential in the ability of children to regulate their emotions and play a role in problem-solving, prosocial skills, and general behavior (Housman,
As a problem solving, social skills, conflict resolution, coping and behavioral skills are related to an individual’s response to crisis/trauma, the role of SEL may have positive implications for students experiencing crisis/trauma. Similarly, the findings of the study by Oksuz (2016) suggests that by developing emotional literacy through SEL programs, students can share, reflect on, and compare their experiences with others, which may also play a role in the ability of students in crisis/trauma to share, reflect on, and cope with their experiences.

**Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) in the Classroom and School**

Social and emotional literacy can develop positive outcomes for students and can be implemented in the classroom through the school curriculum, as Oksuk (2016). Based on the findings of the study, Oksuk (2016) concluded that social and emotional learning must be included in the instructional curriculum in primary schools and must include emotional literacy and emotional intelligence. The suggestion by Oksuk (2016) that social and emotional learning must be a priority in the curriculum of primary (elementary) school education is significant as the curriculum used as the foundation for teachers in educating students in the classroom. By implementing the SEL curriculum itself, teachers are supporting students in crisis/trauma by assisting them in developing their conflict resolution, labeling emotions, and coping skills (Oskuk, 2016).

Developing the concept of incorporating SEL into the school curriculum, Durlak et al. (2011) explained that teachers play an essential role in the social, emotional, and academic components because, in schools, students learn in collaboration with their teachers and peers, with the encouragement of their parents. Social-emotional competencies among students are essential for behavioral regulation, attention skills, and...
the ability to problem-solve in students and are, therefore, critical to the academic outcomes of children (McCormick et al., 2015). In a study of 213 school-based, universal SEL programs that included 270,034 kindergartens through high school students, Durlak et al. (2011) found that when compared to controls, SEL participants had significantly improved social and emotional skills, attitudes, heavier, and academic performance. In this study, the SEL programs conducted by school educators.

SEL is particularly important in early childhood because the ages 0-6 for children represents a vital period of the development of emotional competencies, including the ability to identify, understand, express, and regulate emotion, which are all necessary components of self-regulation later in life (Housman et al., 2018). Housman et al. (2018), therefore, suggested that positive relationships between students and teachers are essential in developing positive learning and emotional guidance for the development of emotion regulation in children. The results of Housman et al. (2018) confirm the consensus that presented about the positive relationship between the implementation of SEL and improved student and teacher outcomes. Poulou (2015) further support the link between social and emotional competencies and the outcomes in the classroom by looking at the role of social and emotional skills and student behavior.

SEL programs may involve utilizing targeted curricula towards teachers and all students in a school or classroom to improve classroom quality and social interactions within the classroom (Oksuk, 2016; McCormick et al., 2015). In a study on teacher-student relationships based on questionnaires from 962 primary school students, Poulou (2015) discovered that the social and emotional skills of students were more of a determinant of their behavior than teachers’ interpersonal behavior as related to the
student. They were demonstrating the importance of social and emotional competencies in preventing emotional and behavioral difficulties among students.

Specifically related to students in crisis/experiencing trauma, McLeod et al. (2017) explained that teachers are increasingly encouraged to implement evidence-based practices to support students with problem behavior in early childhood settings by addressing their social, emotional, and behavioral health needs (McLeod et al., 2017). Addressing the social, emotional, and behavioral health needs of children include developing their social and emotional competencies, using SEL as an evidence-based practice to support students in crisis/trauma, and experiencing problem behavior as a result (McLeod et al. 2017). Linking problem behavior with SEL, Konishi, and Park (2017) urged that educators play a role in teaching social and emotional competencies in the classroom to children who do not have these learning experiences at home or in their communities. Those children were at risk of struggling academically and socially due to a lack of these skills.

The role of a teacher in teaching SEL as explained by Konishi and Park (2017) links the concept that children with problem behaviors in school often are experiencing crisis/trauma outside of the classroom, which impacts their academic performance as they do not develop the needed social and emotional competencies in their home or community setting (Anderson et al., 2015; Taylor, 2017). However, in order to implement SEL, educators need the skills and their own social and emotional competencies to teach to their students (Greenberg et al., 2016; Konishi & Park, 2017).
Teachers and Social and Emotional Competencies

Social and emotional competencies are significant for both students and teachers in schools and classrooms as they promote more positive outcomes in school, including more positive behavioral outcomes for students at risk. Teachers play a role in not only introducing SEL in the classroom but in developing their own social and emotional competencies so that they can adequately implement SEL to support their students (McClelland et al., 2017). Developing social and emotional competencies requires the proper training of teachers to develop these skills effectively enough to deliver in the classroom (McClelland et al., 2017). As described previously, Greenberg et al. (2016) explained that the social and emotional competencies of teachers are vital in managing teacher stress and assist teachers in developing positive student-teacher relationships.

One way teachers can develop their social and emotional competencies for the effective implementation of SEL interventions is through specific training of teachers, including building skills by applying SEL themselves (McClelland et al., 2017). Building the SEL skills of children and using interventions that develop the social and emotional competencies of children through daily activities in the classroom has proven to be useful in implementing SEL in school (McClelland et al., 2017). As presented by McClelland et al. (2017), the effective implementation of SEL relies on the ability of teachers to apply these skills in the classroom, which may require them to build their own social and emotional competencies. Beyond the practical application of SEL in the classroom for students, Hen and Goroshit (2016) presented the positive impacts SEL can have on the social and emotional competence and classroom outcomes for both students and teachers.
Hen and Goroshit (2016) described the importance of the social-emotional competence of teachers in promoting a positive learning environment for students. However, limited research exists regarding the social-emotional competencies of teachers. In their study, Hen and Goroshit (2016) determine that there is a strong positive association between three social-emotional competencies and empathy. In other words, the belief that teachers’ in their ability to regulate their emotions contribute to their empathy both directly and indirectly (Hen & Goroshit, 2016).

Similar to the findings of Hen and Goroshit (2016), Poulou (2015) found a positive relationship between the social and emotional competencies of teachers and outcomes in the classroom. Poulou (2015) determined that significant correlations exist between teachers’ interpersonal behavior and students’ social and emotional skills to emotional and behavioral difficulties. Therefore, the literature generally reflects that social and emotional competencies are indicators for student and teacher outcomes and that the social and emotional competencies of teachers help in yielding positive outcomes in the classroom.

Greenberg et al. (2016) explained that teacher stress has a negative consequence for both teachers and students. A career in education today has also been identified as one of the most stressful professions in the United States. The effects of teacher stress result in poor health and well-being, teacher burnout, lack of engagement, job dissatisfaction, poor performance, and high turnover rates. The four primary sources of teacher stress identified by Greenberg et al. (2016) are student organizations, job demands, work resources, and teacher social and emotional competence (SEL). Social and emotional competency, Greenberg et al. (2016) explains that the lack of social and
emotional competence is a cause of teacher stress and that teacher SEL competence is necessary for teachers to manage stress as it allows them to maintain a healthy classroom through a more positive student-teacher relationship. SEL programs also note the importance of improving behavior and promote SEL among students to reduce teacher stress and develop positive outcomes in the classroom through more positive student engagement (Greenberg et al., 2016).

Social and emotional competencies are essential for teachers, particularly in their capacity for empathy (Arslan, 2015; Greenberg et al., 2016). Furthermore, teacher stress and lack of social and emotional competencies are a contributing factor for teacher stress, which results in poor outcomes for students in the classroom (Greenberg et al., 2016). However, the use of SEL can be utilized as a tool by teachers to reduce stress, improve student-teacher relationships, and improve outcomes for students displaying behavioral or academic struggles (Arslan, 2015; Greenberg et al., 2016). The integration of SEL into the curriculum for teachers thereby yields improvements that can contribute to the reduction of teacher stress (Arslan, 2015; Greenberg et al., 2016; Oksuk, 2016). SEL programs are identified as providing positive outcomes for both student and teachers (Greenberg et al., 2016; Poulou, 2015), it is important to consider evidence of the effectiveness of these programs to understand their role in improving outcomes for students.

**Effectiveness of Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) Programs**

Students who are experiencing poverty and poor living conditions as in theAnderson et al. 2015 study, the results of a randomized-controlled trial of students in Head Start REDI programs by Nix et al. (2016) revealed that children who were in the
program were statistically significantly more likely than children in the control group to have optimal development trajectories in social competence, aggressive-oppositional behavior, learning engagement, attention problems, student-teacher closeness, and peer rejection. The HEAD Start REDI program contained components of integrated language-emergent literacy and social-emotional skills curriculum, and of the 356 children in the study, 70% lived in poverty (Nix et al., 2016). From the results of this study, Nix et al. (2016) concluded that high-quality experiences in early education have long-lasting benefits for the social-emotional functioning and core competencies that are critical to the academic success of children living in poverty.

The results of the Nix et al. (2016) study, was conducted among children living in poverty, are significant considering the findings of Anderson et al. (2015), which revealed that students from communities with high rates of poverty also have additional challenges related to poverty, poor living conditions, and the environmental and family stress. The results of Nix et al. (2016) demonstrate that SEL may be effective among children experiencing the behavior and academic challenges described by Anderson et al. (2015).

Similar to the Nix et al. (2016) study, Martínez (2016) used a practitioner-driven methodology to investigate the impacts of an SEL intervention on students and teachers in a school in a disadvantaged urban community in California (United States). The findings of the study focused primarily on the views of teachers. They found that SEL had a positive impact on teachers’ views about social and emotional competencies and deepened the commitment of teachers to their students. Martínez (2016) concluded that teachers benefitted from SEL and would further benefit from training and coaching that
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involves reflection, observation, and feedback on their practice in implementing SEL. Although Martínez (2016) focused on the views of teachers in SEL in the United States, a study by Klapp et al. (2017) uncovered the long-term effects of developing the social and emotional competencies of children as related to their behaviors and outcomes in life.

Klapp et al. (2017) discovered that SEL interventions in schools in Sweden among 663 students resulted in better mental health outcomes and less drug use later in life. In this study, SEL programs associated with better mental health outcomes and less drug use as students were less likely to engage in risky behaviors and violence due to their ability to develop their social and emotional competencies. Klapp et al. (2017) concluded on their results that SEL interventions are cost-effective because students who developed their social and emotional competencies such as self-awareness, empathy, and self-regulation early in life had reduced drug use, which ultimately reduces costs to society. As in the findings of Martínez (2016) and Nix et al. (2016), evidence of the Klapp et al. (2017) study supports the concept that SEL is beneficial for students and teachers to improve social and emotional competencies that yield improved outcomes in the classroom.

In the studies mentioned earlier, therefore, SEL programs have demonstrated positive effects in both outcomes in the classroom and at the child level (McCormick et al., 2015). However, positive outcomes through SEL depend on the proper and effective implementation of SEL programs by teachers (McClelland et al., 2017). As will be described in the section to follow, barriers exist to the effective implementation of SEL in the classroom, which thereby prevents educators from utilizing SEL as a tool to improve outcomes and support children in crisis/trauma (Anderson et al., 2015; Konishi & Park,
2017; McClelland et al., 2017; McCormick et al., 2015). As will be described, the main barrier to implementing SEL programs in the classroom is the proper training of teachers in social and emotional learning skills (Anderson et al., 2015; Konishi & Park, 2017; McClelland et al., 2017; McCormick et al., 2015).

Lack of Training as a Barrier to Implementing Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) Programs

Although SEL programs are effective and yield positive outcomes as described above, barriers exist in successfully implementing SEL programs to help students develop their social and emotional competencies (McCormick et al., 2015). As a practical matter, if educators are unable to implement SEL in the classroom, they are unable to use SEL as a tool to support students in crisis/experiencing trauma. The most significant barrier to implementing SEL in schools is the lack of training and skills on the part of teachers in how to implement such a program to support their students (Anderson et al., 2015; Konishi & Park, 2017; McClelland et al., 2017). This issue was described by McClelland et al. (2017), who linked SEL skills directly to academic performance, suggesting that young children who enter school without such skills have more significant difficulty learning. However, as mentioned, McClelland explained that the problem is that early childhood educators do not have the training to support children in developing SEL skills effectively. Teachers can utilize their own social and emotional skills and support students in crisis/trauma in developing their SEL competencies to improve their academic and behavioral outcomes both in the classroom and in life (Klapp et al., 2017; Lickteig & Lickteig, 2019; McKown, 2017; Nix et al., 2016; Oksuk, 2016; Taylor 2017). Providing teachers with the skills, training, and tools needed to implement
effectively is therefore crucial in ensuring they can overcome barriers to effectively implement SEL and support students in crisis/trauma by developing their social and emotional competencies (Anderson et al., 2015; Konishi & Park, 2017; McKown, 2017).

SEL skills for teachers include teachers monitoring the progress of their students when applying SEL skills. McKown (2017) recommended that developing SEL assessments to help teachers monitor student progress and make informed decisions is essential in meeting social and emotional competency assessment goals for children from prekindergarten through high school. These assessment skills should be meaningful, measurable, and malleable to help teachers assess and evaluate the thinking, behavior, and self-control skills of their students to improve their life and academic outcomes (McKown, 2017). In addition to the assessment skills described by McKown (2017), in some cases, teachers lack the skills and familiarity with SEL needed to implement SEL programs in the classroom properly (Anderson et al., 2015; Konishi & Park, 2017; McClelland et al., 2017).

The classroom staff that supports educators in the classroom, often do not have the skills or opportunities to provide SEL interventions that may benefit students with higher needs. Therefore, in their study, Anderson et al. (2015) conducted a needs assessment of classroom staff to determine what skills they lacked to address the needs of students experiencing stress and trauma adequately. Based on this need assessment, Anderson et al. (2015) determined that classroom staff often were unaware of how to meet the needs of students experiencing stress and trauma. Without this knowledge, classroom staff was not only ill-equipped but unable to meet the needs of children in crisis/trauma due to poverty and poor living conditions (Anderson et al., 2015).
As in the issue described in the Anderson et al. (2015) study, Konishi and Park (2017) stated that the issue that although SEL is useful in the classroom for children who are at risk due to not experiencing SEL outside of school. Teachers often feel unprepared or uncomfortable with teaching SEL techniques for promoting the social and emotional competencies of students. Again, although educators can improve the social and emotional competencies of children in schools, the feeling of being unacquainted with these skills leads to the failure of educators in effectively applying SEL tactics in the classroom (McClelland et al., 2017; McCormick et al., 2015; McKown, 2017; Konishi & Park, 2017).

**Conclusion**

Students experiencing a crisis, trauma, or stress outside of school are likely to have academic and behavioral difficulties in school (Anderson et al., 2015; Beal et al. 2019; Garrido, 2018; Lickteig & Lickteig, 2019). However, classroom staff supporting students in areas of high rates of poverty, students experiencing trauma/crisis, and children with high needs do not have the skills, such as skills for social and emotional learning, that are needed to help students in need (Anderson et al., 2015). There is also a general lack of specific evidence in the literature regarding the role of social and emotional learning for students experiencing crisis/trauma. Despite the lack of evidence directly linking children experiencing crisis/trauma with SEL, evidence suggests that social and emotional competencies are essential for students in both their academic performance and their likelihood for success in into adulthood (Arslan, 2015; Beal et al., 2019; Garrido, 2018). As demonstrated by Klapp et al. (2017), social and emotional competencies are essential in preventing and reducing the likelihood of risk behaviors.
such as substance abuse, due to their ability to develop competencies such as self-awareness, empathy, and self-regulation early in life. Many of these risk factors occur early in childhood and are displayed in children experiencing behavioral problems and are therefore labeled “at-risk” (Konishi & Park, 2017; Lickteig & Lickteig, 2019; Taylor, 2017). Social and emotional competencies may, therefore, prove to be important not only in developing these skills in children but in the ability for teachers to show empathy in dealing with students in crisis/trauma, particularly as these children often struggle behaviorally and academically and have higher needs than their peers (Anderson et al., 2015; Lickteig & Lickteig, 2019; Oksuk, 2016; Taylor 2017).

As presented by the literature, evidence is missing regarding the specific relationship between applying SEL in the classroom as an intervention for students in crisis/trauma and outcomes for students and teachers. However, as described above, there is sufficient evidence to conclude that: a) SEL can result in positive outcomes for both students and teachers; b) children struggling behaviorally and academically tend to experience factors outside of the home that contributes to a crisis, trauma, and stress that yields these adverse outcomes at school; and c) students with academic and behavior difficulties tend to have higher needs and lack social and emotional skills as they often do not develop these skills in their home and community; d) SEL can be useful in supporting children struggling academically and behaviorally, including those students struggling due to crisis/trauma (Anderson et al., 2015; Arslan, 2015; Greenberg et al., 2016; Klapp et al., 2017; Lickteig & Lickteig, 2019; McClelland, 2017; McKown, 2017; Nix et al., 2016; Oksuk, 2016; Taylor 2017).
Chapter III

Introduction

The purpose of this case study is to create an understanding of the needs of elementary teachers dealing with students in crisis in the classroom setting and virtual learning platform. The qualitative study will include teachers’ mindset to identify areas of need in the elementary classroom setting when dealing with students in crisis. The goal is to address the situations in the classroom that interrupt student learning and to address the social-emotional learning for all students in crisis. The research will develop a set of strategies curriculum or go-to techniques for classroom implementation to support social-emotional learning for all students. The comprehensive literature review is intended to support the need for the program/techniques to benefit both classroom teachers and students in the elementary school setting.

Research Questions

The following questions will guide the study.

1. What are the challenges that teachers face when dealing with students in crisis in the elementary classroom setting?
2. Do the current guidance model and set of strategies curriculum meet the needs of a student in crisis as well to support the social-emotional learning for all students?
3. What obstacles exist between students in crisis/trauma and interventions?

Description of Population and Sample

The population of the research will focus on certified elementary school teachers in the school setting in the areas of Florida. An elementary school teacher is defined as
teaching Kindergarten through Fifth Grade students. The teachers will that will be surveyed are certified elementary teachers in southeast Florida. The collection of the sampling will be heterogeneous of school types. The data will be collected using a survey sent to certified elementary teachers in southeast Florida using Survey Monkey™.

The participants selected in this study will consist of one hundred elementary school teachers that have a certification in Elementary education in Southeast Florida. In qualitative studies, the minimum sample size requirement is based on the point of data saturation (Fusch, & Ness, 2015; Tran, Porched, Falissard, & Raved, 2016).

The survey will be to collect information on social-emotional learning and the impacts in the classroom setting and virtual learning platform. The survey will also collect information from the teacher on their experience and the implementation of a program in their schools.

**Research Design – Rationale for Design**

The purpose of this qualitative case study is to gain an understanding of the needs of elementary teachers dealing with students in crisis in the classroom setting. Case study research could provide answers to questions about inquiry-based research (Yin, 2014). When conducting a case study, it is vital to include questions and analysis connecting the data, as well as criteria for interpreting the findings (Yin, 2014). This case study will focus on certified elementary teachers who are dealing with students in crisis in the classroom setting who have recently implemented the SEL curriculum in the classroom. This qualitative study will explore participants’ thinking and experiences.

This particular research design was selected because a case study centered on teacher surveys will provide a more generalizable collection of data that can assist in
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bringing value to this study. Another research designed was action research; however, because the purpose of the study was to gain an understanding of teacher perceptions, it was not utilized. Action research is a systematic inquiry that involves the collection and analysis of data (Masters, 1995).

As Creswell (2013) explains, the case study allows the researcher to observe and engage in conversation that may shed light and open new perceptions or ideas. According to Baxter and Jack (2008), it is best to use a case study when the research wants to answer how and why. Studying human perception in which boundaries are not clear between the phenomena and the context is also relevant to this case study. This study will explore the perceptions of teachers, and the context is social-emotional learning in elementary classroom settings.

**Data Collection**

In order to examine the teacher insights, obstacles, knowledge of, and practice regarding social-emotional learning in elementary classroom settings in elementary school settings, a case study will be employed. This case study will allow teachers to reflect on their practices, professional development, pre-service training, and pedagogy. In this case, the pedagogical practice is social-emotional learning. One hundred teachers will be the target number of contributors participating in this study. The one hundred elementary teachers from Southeast Florida receive the invitation via email address will receive a link for the Survey Monkey™ to participate. The survey questionnaire will be sent to elementary certified school teachers using the mailing addresses received from the Florida Department of Education request.
Ethical Considerations

In order to maintain validation of the research, it is essential to identify the ethical issues and create procedures for decision-making (Newhart & Patten, 2017). Some of the potential issues that can arise are conflicts of interest, assessment, and researcher bias. In order to preserve the credibility and validity of the study, the researcher removes any personal bias from the study itself by monitoring his/her prejudices with objectivity regularly. The researcher will provide all participants with an invitation and corresponding documentation. There will be no discrimination based on age, gender, gender identity, race, ethnicity, culture, religion, sexual orientation, disability, or socioeconomic status.

Participants will be informed, and consent is indicated by participating with voluntary participation in taking the survey. The identified information of the participants will be anonymous. There will be no monetary incentive for the participating survey. The survey can be terminated at any time while taking the survey if the participant decides they do not want to continue. All data will be collected from Survey Monkey™ and analyzed by the researcher on a password-protected computer. All materials and records are required to be maintained for the two years after the dissertation defense and then will be destroyed.

Quality of Data

To gain an understanding of the needs of elementary teachers dealing with students in crisis in the classroom setting, this case study will utilize teacher surveys. In this study, the topic is teacher perceptions of social-emotional learning in elementary classrooms
Data Analysis

In the process of analyzing case study data, Yin (2013) recommends focusing on the theoretical propositions that guide a study and connect the data across common themes. This study focuses on the perceptions of teachers regarding current practices, materials or programs, training procedures, and challenges that impact social-emotional learning in elementary classrooms for all students in crisis.

During the survey process, the researcher will aim to analyze the participants’ points of view and attitudes—data collection designed as a qualitative study through a survey questionnaire. The questionnaire created using Survey Monkey™. There will be short open-ended responses. A reminder email will follow up at one week and two weeks to ensure the collection of data. The Survey Monkey™ Premium Service will be utilized to collect the data and analyze the data. The ability to use custom variables will allow the researcher to look at a group within the study.

Limitations and Delimitations

As Berg, Lune, and Lune (2004) points out, and delimitations are the traits of a particular study that control and outline the study’s parameters. This study has delimitation since it only certified elementary educators participating are in southeast Florida and certified in elementary education. This study aims to understand the needs of elementary teachers dealing with students in crisis in the classroom setting. The case study design focuses on a small population. Limitations of the study are outside the control of the researcher (Berg et al., 2004). This study will be limited to certified elementary school teachers in the areas of southeast Florida.
The limitation of the environment plays a crucial role in this study. The study is limited to certified elementary teachers within Southeast Florida. Although the demographics represent a diverse population, the study is limited to one regional area with different populations of students and teachers. Patton (2014) points out that the researcher must be aware of the limitations in order to find the best approach.

In terms of environmental limitations, there is a possibility that the respondent teachers may not be honest or, in some cases, comfortable with the questions. Limitations to this study also include lack of generalizability, as the study is only one hundred elementary certified teachers in the areas of Southeast Florida.

**Summary**

The study’s methodology is a vital part of obtaining a credible and valid data set. Through this study, the researcher will aim to understand teacher perception and needs regarding social-emotional learning when dealing with elementary students in crisis in classroom settings—a case study approach of survey questions, data collected, and analyzed. Understanding the challenges and needs of teachers when dealing with elementary students in crisis was fundamental to the study.
Chapter IV: FINDINGS

The purpose of this qualitative research study was to investigate the need for Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) in elementary classrooms. SEL strategies and curriculum when dealing with crisis/trauma due to the lack of guidance counselors available were the central focus of this study. The research study survey was emailed to certified elementary teachers from the southeast region of Florida (Palm Beach, Broward, and Miami-Dade counties). One hundred and thirty-six teachers participated in an online survey using Survey Monkey™. Qualitative data extracted from the survey questions allowed the researcher to view the levels of implementation of SEL programs and the needs teachers perceived about SEL.

This chapter describes the data collected to establish an overall perception of SEL in today's classrooms and teachers' needs to implement SEL in their classrooms. The findings from the survey are shared as they relate to SEL and each of the research questions. All participants are anonymous to protect them.

Description of Respondents

The initial database for emails from the Florida Department of Education to include certified elementary educators in southeast Florida school districts (Palm Beach, Broward, and Miami-Dade counties) provided over 55,000 emails. Emails went out several days to have as many participants as possible the target for the study was 100 participants. The survey was sent out, and within three days, the number of participants had exceeded the desired number for the study between Monday, August 3, 2020, to Thursday, August 6, 2020. The survey collected 136 responses in the study Figure 4.1 Participant Survey over three days. All participants were included in the study with
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thirty-eight not currently teaching in an elementary setting but had previously taught in elementary.

Figure 4.1 Participant Survey

The demographics of the participants included the number of years of teaching in an elementary school setting. The data reflected their current teaching assignment for the participants included 60% (81) as an elementary homeroom teacher, 7% (9) were ESE teachers in elementary schools, 6% (7) has various positions connected to education, 5% (7) were fine arts teachers, 5% (7) were VPK or Prekindergarten educators on an elementary school campus, and 1% (2) were administrators with prior elementary experience, 4% (6) were secondary educators with elementary experience. Figure 4.2 below illustrates the current teaching assignment of the participants. The majority of the sample were elementary general education teachers.
The study included the number of years of teaching experience at the elementary level, as evident in Figure 4.3. Teaching experience at the elementary level, all participants answered the question. The largest group of experience was the group that had thirteen to twenty years of experience with 38% of the participants, the smallest group of experience was the educators with between zero and three years of teaching experience. According to Figure 4.3, the number of years of teaching experience in the elementary level varies from a first-year teacher to teachers with twenty plus years in education. The data indicates that 68% of the participants have over 13 years of elementary experience at the elementary level.
The participants, 132 out of 134, answered the following question "Do you feel that you are prepared to deal with students in crisis/trauma at the elementary level?" The majority of the responses, 59 replied, "Yes," representing 44% of the group. The 43 responding with "No," which represented 32% of the participants. Additionally, there were 32 responds with "Somewhat," representing 24% of the population. The data in Figure 4.3 reflects the total number of educators and their perception of being prepared to handle a crisis/trauma in the elementary school setting.
Educators shared the curriculum used at their school. There were 132 out of the 134 who answered this question. Figure 4.5 Social-emotional programs at their school details that nearly half of all participants did not have any research-based curriculum at their school, and another 7 participants were unaware of any school programs. Several participants were able to name a few programs that were at their school sites.
Educators shared what type of training provided to them for a social-emotional program at their schools. Nearly half of the participants indicated that the staff’s training had was at the school site by staff, district workshops consisted of 18.7% of participants, and there had been 6% who had participated in online training. Training for specific research-based programs for the participants was 9.7%, and 17.2% had no training for social-emotional learning.
The survey collected information on how any social-emotional program implementation at their schools. Figure 4.6 Word Cloud of how SEL implemented in schools shows the data revealed that there are many different ways that SEL programs were implemented in schools. The word cloud displays the ways SEL is shared with the majority of participants indicating Morning Meeting and teacher-guided as the most common implementation ways. The number of participants was 132, with 4 participants skipping the question.
The following question looked at the implementation of the social-emotional learning programs in their classrooms. The number of participants for this question was 132 answered, with 2 participants skipping the question. The results were very similar to the implementation at a school site. The majority of participants indicated that students were participating daily for the morning meeting. Another focus highlighted activities, feelings, and talk, all of which are part of many social-emotional programs.
Figure 4.8 Social-emotional implemented in classrooms

The participants identified the amount of time that social-emotional behaviors took to handle during the school day, the times varied from never to the entire school day in some responses. The total number of participants was 133, with 1 skipping this question. The most significant time identified by 38 participants was "took less than an hour" of their academic day to handle behaviors. The next most significant number by 36 participants indicated that the amount of time varies day to day and student to student. One participant shared "whether it is directly dealing with the behavior issue, teaching social-emotional, re-directing students, handling conflict amongst peers, and reviewing rules" the time can be short and straightforward or time draining academic time." Figure 4.8 summarizes the time used by participants during the school day.
When implementing social-emotional learning in their classrooms, what was an area of concern that the participants felt was important. All 134 participants answered this question, as seen in Figure 4.9, Teacher concerns with implementation SEL in their classrooms. One participant shared "social-emotional learning is huge, but little emphasis is placed on it compared to academics" the lack of time was the most significant concern from 37 participants. Another considerable concern was that lack of training was a concern to 22 participants. There were 21 participants had no concerns for them, student concerns were a concern for 18 participants, and 15 participants have various other concerns with implementation. The smallest concerns had by the participants were materials (9), support from administration and
parents (7), and 5 participants don't know what concerns they would have with implementation in their classrooms.

Figure 4.9 Teacher concerns with implementing SEL in their classrooms

![Figure 4.9: Teacher concerns with implementing SEL in their classrooms](image)

The survey continues to engage the participants with how important do they think social-emotional learning is at the elementary level. All 134 participants answered the question. All of the participants have high importance for the teaching of social-emotional learning at the elementary school level. Collectively all participants felt that it was a need for students and extremely important, displayed in Figure 4.10 The importance of teaching SEL at the elementary level. Not one participant felt it was not important to teach SEL within the elementary level.
Figure 4.10 The importance of teaching SEL at the elementary level?

Educators shared behaviors at the elementary level that are the most concerning to deal with within the classroom. All of the 134 participants answered this question. The themes evident from the data were the bullying of students, lack of respect, aggressive behaviors, anxiety, and anger.
One of the participants stated, "Many students today are coming into school with no structure and have difficulty adjusting to a structured schedule and dealing with consequences if they do not have them at home; therefore, the parent support is not always there." Another educator shares that "students struggle with coping with their emotions and then have very destructive behaviors, even as young as Kindergarten. This affects the safety of others and how effectively I can teach and get the students to where they need to be by the end of the year academically." Additionally, the themes of racism, sexism, and disrespect listed through over 50% of the participants.

Social-emotional learning in classrooms, the educators shared what they needed to be successful with implementation. In Figure 4.12, What teachers need to support
students with SEL in their classrooms? Data from all 134 participants answered the question resulting in the most considerable need for teachers to be successful with teaching social-emotional programs was time, 27.7% of participants listed, training was another primary concern with 15.8% stating that this a need, there were 15.8% of the participants that had no concerns to implement a social-emotional program successfully in their classroom. Other concerns that were shared were student concerns with 12.9%, materials 6.9%, support 5%, not sure of needs 5%, and other concerns was 10.9%.

Figure 4.12 What teachers need to support students with SEL in their classrooms?

This last question of the survey is a snapshot of what educators from varying levels of experience feel that implementing a successful social-emotional learning program is needed—many of the questions focused on the teacher perspectives of social-
emotion learning programs. The data demonstrated that from training, implementation, support, time, and concerns that face them daily in our elementary classrooms.
CHAPTER V: DISCUSSION

Restatement of the Problem

This study aimed to investigate the challenges that elementary teachers face when dealing with students in crisis in the classroom setting. Traumatic events can harm children at any level and from any background (SAMHSA, 2014). Teachers need to be able to help support students in their classrooms due to the lack of guidance counselors available for students in crisis/trauma. The implementation of SEL in elementary schools is essential in connecting "education with the larger social world and set the responsibilities that children will encounter as adults" (Elias & Arnold, 2006, p.1).

Educators maintain their ability to teach and improve student achievement hindered by student behaviors that occur in the classroom setting. The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA, 2018) defines trauma as any "event, series of events, or set of circumstances experienced by an individual as physically or emotionally harmful or life-threatening with lasting adverse effects on the individual's functioning and mental, physical social, emotional, or spiritual well-being."

Students can demonstrate the negative impacts in various ways, including lower academic performance, absenteeism, and higher disciplinary infractions (Plumb, Bush, & Kersevich, 2016).

There are many obstacles between students in crisis/trauma and interventions that can help them. Educators need to focus on SEL to provide training and tools necessary to respond to our students dealing with crisis/trauma in the classroom setting (Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development [ASCD], 2018). "SEL is the process through which children and adults acquire and effectively apply the knowledge, attitudes,
and skills necessary to understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions” (Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning[CASEL], 2018). SEL in the classroom is a necessary and crucial component to building not only trauma-informed schools but also in supporting educators in fostering classroom pedagogy and school systems that seek to support the success of the whole child (Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development [ASCD], 2018). Such an approach to teaching and learning within an elementary setting can lead students to thrive not only academically but also in developing both social and emotional skills necessary to make informed decisions and overcome challenges that may hinder their ability to learn in school and succeed in life beyond the school setting (CASEL, 2018; SEAD, 2019).

The research survey focused on the following research questions:

4. What are the challenges that teachers face when dealing with students in crisis in the elementary classroom setting?

5. Do the current guidance model and set of strategies curriculum meet students' needs in crisis and support the social-emotional learning for all students?

6. What obstacles exist between students in crisis/trauma and interventions?

The study consisted of one-hundred thirty-six educators in southeast Florida (Palm Beach, Broward, and Miami-Dade counties) currently or previously taught at the elementary level.
Summary of Findings

SEL is an essential aspect of a school system. The results from the survey suggest that SEL is present in varying degrees of implementation at most schools. When teachers shared the curriculum used at their schools, seventy-three of the participants had no curriculum or used a teacher-created system, which lends itself to the need for research-based programs and professional development. The various grades that responded to the survey indicated that time and training were a missing element to help improve SEL in their schools and classrooms. Furthermore, when asked if they felt prepared to deal with students in crisis/trauma, seventy-five indicated that they did not feel prepared or somewhat prepared to lead the researcher back to the elements necessary for educators is training. When asking about the amount of time lost the academic day to deal with students in crisis/trauma, it impacts the majority of each day from less than an hour to all day for specific students—the loss of learning time for the child in crisis and the other students in that classroom.

As schools prioritize SEL practices at their schools to support teachers and students, it is essential for educators to collectively understand what SEL consists of and how it impacts learning when not practiced. A shared understanding of SEL and how it can provide the implementation in daily classrooms and schools will positively impact behaviors and student achievement. Schools need to focus on intentional and collaborative professional development to support teachers as they change their perceptions of students struggling with crisis/trauma in their classrooms. The vital piece is that all stakeholders are informed on the process and can grow together to benefit our learners, both adults, and students.
As an overarching theme, when looking at the data from the survey, it was evident that educators, regardless of their experience or teaching assignment, believe that SEL is essential. SEL impacts the daily lives of everyone at a school site and therefore needs to be a top priority to implement and support for the positive impacts. As a researcher, it is a priority to continue to study the impacts of SEL in the field of education as we grow in many different ways.

**Major Findings**

**RQ 1** What are the challenges that teachers face when dealing with students in crisis in the elementary classroom setting?

The challenges an educator faces each day in the classroom begin before arrival with students not have a safe and nurturing home environment. They arrive at school often hungry and dirty how can we expect to engage them when the basic needs have not been met, so our job is to feed them and get them clean clothes or shoes that fit, all before the bell rings. The challenges for growth continue within the classroom with the lack of fundamental social skills to the frustration of not being able to learn. The list can go on and on, but it is vital to remember that each classroom can have twenty or more students with varying needs and only one teacher.

The teacher is facing the demands of high stack testing and lack of necessary time allotted by the administration to focus on SEL during the school day. Teachers need and want to promote their social-emotional skills and increase their academic ability; however, they need support in order to accomplish these goals, from parents and administrators. The task of deepening and understanding the SEL and ways that SEL processes can be used to mitigate the lacking SEL skills impacting our students.
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Educators also need to understand the impact of crisis/trauma in their own lives and how they influence their practice. SEL needs to be a focus for adults on campus as priority one in order for SEL to be a priority in their rooms.

RQ2 Do the current guidance model and set of strategies curriculum meet students’ needs in crisis and support the social-emotional learning for all students?

It is evident from the data that the guidance model did not make an impact in the classroom setting that teachers only referred to guidance counselor four times, and it was for removal of a student in crisis/trauma. Many schools indicated that some program was used by their guidance counselor to teach SEL on the wheel. However, we cannot teach SEL once a rotation with minimal focus daily. SEL has to have a set time focused on teaching and discussing strategies or curriculum in the daily schedule.

RQ3 What obstacles exist between students in crisis/trauma and interventions?

SEL is not simple or quick to get it done goal. It will take a growth mindset of every adult in a school system and school site. The work required to create a shared understanding and leadership both as administrator and as teacher leaders must ensure that adult learning is authentic and happens in a safe environment. It is to model the learning for implementation in the classrooms. Data must be collected and monitored to that SEL is understood, implemented with fidelity, integrated, and utilized in all classrooms. When we have the intention of professional development and continuously provided updated best practices, it will make SEL successful. The staff has to be a part of the process and use the data to illustrate SEL successes and opportunities for growth, and it can’t be a top-down approach it needs to coffee talk.
Limitations
As stated in the participants' description, the study was compromised of a small area of educators as well the focus of only elementary level. Thirty-eight participants were not currently teaching elementary levels but had experienced previously in the elementary levels. The study had one hundred thirty-six participants, and most answered all the questions; however, two skipped several questions in the survey.

Recommendations for Future Research & Implications for Practice
Research on SEL is a leading area for education in our nation, as discussed in the literature review (Hansen, 2017). This study was able to begin a process of looking at a snapshot of experienced educators from large urban school districts and their challenges that teachers face when dealing with students in crisis or trauma in the urban elementary classroom setting and the tools needed to impact classrooms. The obstacles that faced with implementation were a global concern with the lack of time and training. Further research and data collection around specific questions for researchers and educators can help bridge a gap in the impact of SEL programs when implemented with fidelity in elementary classrooms. These questions would include:

1. How do district and school-based leaders measure the SEL outcomes?
2. How is SEL implementation differentiated to differences such as socioeconomic status, ELL status, ethnicities, and education level?
3. How would the teacher's perspectives of SEL be with secondary educators, ESE full inclusion educators?
4. How do teacher education programs or beginning educator programs address SEL for teachers?
5. How do teachers with experience need training and professional development benefit from SEL training?

6. How does SEL implementation affect staff turnover, burnout, and stress levels for our educators?

As researchers begin examining the SEL in education, it would be beneficial for researchers to explore the use of SEL to mitigate the negative effects of crisis/trauma for young children in schools. A longitudinal study of students that have been exposed to SEL integration through secondary education in comparison to those students who had not participated in SEL integration. The data collected from the longitudinal data could identify the long-term impact of SEL integration. Classroom visits and direct interviews with teachers would broaden the lens to provide in-depth data and examples of SEL in the classrooms.

Most districts across the country have a laser focus on standardized testing, and the results the research needs to show the impact of SEL programs can bring to their students. Data has to be available for districts and schools, showing SEL can positively impact the student and academic achievement. Teacher education programs need to see the data to incorporate SEL into their programs as a core area for educators as we have a large number of teachers who enter the profession as a second career we need to incorporate SEL training into their first-year educator support training. Department of Education should consider this as a requirement to earn their professional certificate. This training will help prepare future teachers to handle the classroom demands and the importance of SEL but also support the teacher's mental health. As with any professional development, we cannot use the one and done for training. It should be part of each
meeting and professional development each year to grow capacity for everyone. SEL research needs to focus on being beneficial for successful implementation in our schools across the nation. Just as everyone breathes here on earth, our children are no different. However, when we look into our classrooms, it is evident that not every child knows how to deal with crisis and trauma in their young lives. As educators, we teach Reading, Writing, and Math, but we need to do better because we know better that we need to reach them first with our hearts before we can teach their minds. When they enter our classrooms, schools, and hearts, we know that SEL is the link that builds a foundation for each child to be able to grow and develop the cornerstone of the future of the ethical democracy and mental well-being in elementary schools.
Appendix A: Recruitment Flyer and Procedures

Flyer/Email

Study Participants Needed

For Online Survey

Who: Elementary certified Florida educators. Who is currently teaching in a full-time classroom setting in grades Kindergarten through Grade 5 in Palm Beach, Broward, and Miami-Dade school districts to participate via Survey Monkey™ about social-emotional learning (S.E.L.) programs, training and support provided.

What: Responding to a 10 -15-minute online survey regarding their social-emotional learning program and training provided that are being used during classroom/virtual teaching and support with K-5 grade students.

Title: A National Crisis in Our Classrooms

Benefits and Risks: This survey is strictly voluntary. This survey is entirely anonymous. There are minimal risks, such as possible stress from answering questions regarding school issues. At any time, participants can exit the survey and choose not to participate. There are no benefits; however, participants may enjoy answering questions regarding S.E.L. practices and support.

By participating in the study, your information will be a benefit in research in the social-emotional learning training and programs and support for the elementary level. This survey is part of a research study that is part of a dissertation in practice.

How to access the study:

1. Copy to following SurveyMonkey™ web address in the internet search bar: https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/2TXQXLW
2. Follow directions and press NEXT.
3. At the end of the Informed Consent page, you will see a button entitled "OK" by clicking "OK"; you agree to participate in the survey.

Researcher’s contact information: Laura Ann Green, E.d.D Candidate at Lynn University, Ross College of Education. Phone Email address: lgreen@email.lynn.edu

Appendix B: SurveyMonkey© Online INFORMED CONSENT
Informed consent
Survey Monkey©

Purpose of the Research

The purpose of this case study is to create an understanding of the needs of elementary teachers dealing with students in crisis at the elementary level. The qualitative study will include teachers' mindset to identify areas of need in the elementary setting when dealing with students in crisis. The goal is to address the situations in the classroom that interrupt student learning and to address the social-emotional learning for all students in crisis. Crisis or trauma for this study will be defined as an "event, series of events, or set of circumstances experienced by an individual as physically or emotionally harmful or life-threatening with lasting adverse effects on an individual's functioning and mental, physical, social, emotional, or spiritual well-being." The research will be used to create a set of "Choose your own reaction book" or "Go to Techniques" for classroom implementation to support the social-emotional learning for all students. The comprehensive literature review is intended to support the need for the program/techniques to benefit both classroom teachers and students at the elementary level.

Specific Procedures

Your participation in this study will assist in learning more about the program and training received to support your role in the classroom with social-emotional learning. You will be asked to answer twelve questions about your opinions on your personal experience with the subject.

Duration of Participation and Compensation
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The total duration for your participation should be no longer than 10 -15 minutes. There will be no compensation for participation.

Risks

This online survey is strictly voluntary, and no penalty will be imposed for non-participation. There are minimal risks in participating in the survey. However, if you feel uncomfortable or anxious at any time, you may exit out of the survey.

Benefits

There are no benefits in answering the survey questions. However, you will be contributing to the knowledge of how teachers support elementary school-aged students when dealing with a crisis at the elementary level. This is part of a research study for a dissertation.

Confidentiality

This survey is strictly anonymous, and there is no identifying information. No I.P. addresses will be kept or known to the researchers. Your answers to questions will be stored for two years on a password-protected jump drive, and after that time will be deleted. This project's research records may be reviewed by departments at Lynn University responsible for regulatory and research oversight.

Contact Information

If you have any questions about the research project, you may contact Laura Ann Gomez-Green (phone: [redacted] email: lgreen@email.lynn.edu). For any questions regarding your rights as a research participant, you may call Dr. Patrick Cooper, Chair of the Lynn University Institutional Review Board for Protection of Human Subjects, at (561) 237-7407 or pcooper@lynn.edu
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Documentation of Informed Consent

I have had an opportunity to read the consent form and have the research study explained. I am prepared to participate in the research study described above. By clicking "OK," I am consenting to participate in the study.
Appendix C: SurveyMonkey® Online Survey Protocol

Survey Monkey® Questionnaire

The first question will be the informed consent

1. What is your current teaching assignment?
2. As an elementary classroom teacher, how many years of experience do you have at the elementary level?
3. Do you feel prepared to deal with students in crisis/trauma at the elementary level?
4. As a classroom teacher, what social-emotional learning curriculum is used?
5. What type of training or professional development/training for social-emotional learning strategies have you participated in?
6. How is the social-emotional learning program implemented at your school?
7. How is your social-emotional learning program implemented in your class?
8. How much time during a school day is used to handle students with a social-emotional situation or behaviors?
9. What is an area of concern with implementing social-emotional learning in your classroom?
10. How important do you think it is to teach social-emotional learning at the elementary level?
11. What behaviors at the elementary level are the most concerning to deal with as an educator today?

12. In order to support students with social-emotional learning in your classroom, what do you need to be successful?

A National Crisis in our Classrooms

Informed Consent

Purpose of the Research

The purpose of this case study is to create an understanding of the needs of elementary teachers dealing with students in crisis at the elementary level. The qualitative study will include teachers’ mindset to identify areas of need in the elementary setting when dealing with students in crisis. The goal is to address the situations in the classroom that interrupt student learning and to address the social-emotional learning for all students in crisis. Crisis or trauma for this study is defined as an “event, series of events, or set of circumstances experienced by an individual as physically or emotionally harmful or life-threatening with lasting adverse effects on an individual’s functioning and mental, physical, social, emotional, or spiritual well-being.” The research will be used to create a set of “Choose your own reaction book” or “Go to Techniques” for classroom implementation to support the social-emotional learning for all students. The comprehensive literature review is intended to support the need for the program/techniques to benefit both classroom teachers and students at the elementary level.
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Specific Procedures

Your participation in this study will assist in learning more about the program and training you received to support your role in the classroom with social-emotional learning. You will be asked to answer twelve questions about your opinions on your personal experience with the subject.

Duration of Participation and Compensation

The total duration of your participation should be no longer than 10-15 minutes. There will be no compensation for participation.

Risks

This online survey is strictly voluntary and no penalty will be imposed for non-participation. There are minimal risks in participating in the survey. However, if you feel uncomfortable or anxious at any time, you may exit out of the survey.

Benefits

There are no benefits for answering the survey questions, however you will be contributing to the knowledge on how teachers support elementary school aged students when dealing with crisis at the elementary level. This is part of a research study for a dissertation.

Confidentiality

This survey is strictly anonymous and there is no identifying information. No IP addresses will be kept or known to the researchers. Your answers to questions will be stored for two years on a password protected jump drive and after that time will be deleted. This project’s research records may be reviewed by departments at Lynn University responsible for regulatory and research oversight.

Contact Information

If you have any questions about the research project, you may contact Laura Ann Gomez-Green (phone: [Redacted], email: lgreen@email.lynn.edu). For any questions regarding your rights as a research participant, you may call Dr. Patrick Cooper, Chair of the Lynn University Institutional Review Board for Protection of Human Subjects, at (561) 237-7407 or pcooper@lynn.edu
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Documentation of Informed Consent

I have had an opportunity to read the consent form and have the research study explained. I am prepared to participate in the research study described above. By clicking "OK" I am consenting to participate in the study.

Thank you for taking the time to support the research as part of the dissertation.

Laura Ann Gomez-Green
E.d.D. Candidate
Lgreen@email.lynn.edu
Lynn University
Dr. Kathleen Weigel
Supervising Chair/Dean of Education
Lynn University

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