



ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION & LANGUAGE STUDIES

SCHOOL OF PSYCHOLOGY

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SOCIO-EMOTIONAL SKILLS AND
ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT OF STUDENTS IN PRIVATE MIDDLE
SCHOOLS IN ARADA SUB-CITY, ADDIS ABABA.

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MAY, 2025

ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA

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ADDIS ABABA.

THIS THESIS IS SUBMITTED TO THE COLLEGE OF EDUCATION & BEHAVIORAL
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DEVELOPMENTAL PSYCHOLOGY

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CERTIFICATE

This certifies that the thesis conducted by Aziza Yusuf on the subject of "*The Relationship between Socio-Emotional Skills and Academic Achievement of Students in Private Middle Schools in Arada Sub-City, Addis Ababa.*" is entirely original with the potential to be submitted for consideration for an MA in Psychology. As a university adviser, I have given my consent for this project paper to be submitted for review.

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DECLARATION

This is to declare that the thesis entitled “*The Relationship between Socio-Emotional Skills and Academic Achievement of Students in Private Middle Schools in Arada Sub-City, Addis Ababa*” is my own work and has never been submitted to any other institution for any other degree or certification. The assistance and support I received during the course of this investigation have been properly acknowledged.

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CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

This is to certify that the thesis prepared by Aziza Yusuf, entitled: “*The Relationship Between Socio-Emotional Skills And Academic Achievement Of Students In Private Middle Schools In Arada Sub-City, Addis Ababa*” and submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Psychology with the regulations of the University and meets the accepted standards with respect to originality and quality.

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ACRONYMS

SEL	Socio-Emotional Learning / Social and Emotional Learning
CASEL	Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
APA	American Psychological Association
Dev.	Development
Meta-anal.	Meta-analysis
E.C	Ethiopian Calendar
SD	Standard Deviation

ABSTRACT

This study explored the relationship between socio-emotional skills and academic achievement among students in private middle schools in Arada Sub-City, Addis Ababa. Employing descriptive correlational study research design, the study combined quantitative and qualitative approaches to provide a comprehensive analysis. Data were collected through structured questionnaires administered to 235 students, with 210 of which were completed and usable, making a 89% response rate. Additionally, interviews were conducted with twelve teachers and six principals to gain deeper insights. Descriptive analysis revealed that students rated their confidence highest in Self-Awareness and Responsible Decision-Making, followed by Self-Management, Social Awareness, and Relationship Skills. Correlation analysis showed positive and statistically significant relationships between all SEL dimensions and academic achievement. Responsible Decision-Making ($r = .747$) and Self-Awareness ($r = .711$) had the strongest correlations with academic success, while Relationship Skills ($r = .643$) exhibited the least influence. Despite these encouraging outcomes, the majority of students did not have access to formal socio-emotional learning programs or counseling services, and teachers had difficulties with resources and training. In order to promote students' emotional and intellectual development, the study emphasizes the significance of incorporating structured socio-emotional learning programs into school curricula, improving teacher capacity, and fortifying leadership support. Improving the middle school students' academic performance and general well-being requires these actions.

Keywords: Self-awareness, Social awareness, Self-management, Relationship management, Responsible decision-making, Academic achievement

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Study

In today's educational landscape, academic achievement is increasingly understood as the result of both cognitive and non-cognitive factors. Among the latter, socio-emotional skill is a set of abilities that enable individuals to recognize and manage emotions, build positive relationships, make responsible decisions, and navigate social environments are gaining significant attention (CASEL, 2020). These skills form the foundation of Social and Emotional Learning (SEL), which refers to the process through which children and adults acquire and apply the knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors necessary for emotional regulation, empathy, goal setting, and interpersonal communication (OECD, 2015; CASEL, 2021).

Globally, research demonstrates that SEL contributes not only to students' emotional well-being but also to improved academic outcomes. A landmark meta-analysis by Durlak et al. (2011), which examined 213 school-based SEL programs involving over 270,000 students, found that students who participated in SEL programs showed an 11% gain in academic performance compared to peers who did not. Further studies have emphasized that SEL enhances school climate, reduces behavioral problems, and promotes mental health and resilience (Jones et al., 2015; National Commission on Social, Emotional, and Academic Development, 2019). The OECD (2018) also identified socio-emotional competencies such as self-regulation and empathy as critical predictors of lifelong success.

In low- and middle-income countries, including sub-Saharan Africa, SEL is increasingly seen as a vital component of quality education. Evidence from regional studies highlights that SEL contributes to improved classroom behavior, higher engagement, and enhanced emotional coping skills, especially for students facing challenges such as poverty, violence, and family instability (Mendelson et al., 2020). Yet, most empirical research and policy discussions around SEL remain concentrated in high-income contexts, leaving a gap in localized studies that account for cultural and systemic differences in the Global South.

In the Ethiopian education system, academic excellence has historically been prioritized, while social-emotional development has received limited formal attention. However, recent educational reforms and national strategies (e.g., UNICEF, 2020) have begun to recognize the importance of emotional intelligence and student well-being in fostering holistic development. Despite this growing awareness, the integration of SEL into school curricula remains limited, especially in public institutions.

A study by Tadesse and Gemechu (2021) found that private schools in urban areas of Addis Ababa were more likely to adopt learner-centered teaching strategies, experiment with new educational approaches, and invest in student support systems compared to their public counterparts. However, these efforts are still in their infancy, and there is a lack of systematic research evaluating the impact of SEL on student outcomes. Moreover, the unique challenges faced by urban middle school students ranging from peer pressure and academic competition to socio-economic stressors underscore the need for targeted emotional and social support.

While global studies affirm the effectiveness of SEL, context-specific investigations are critical to determine how these skills function in local Ethiopian educational environments. Existing Ethiopian studies on socio-emotional development are scarce, and those that exist often focus on

early childhood or university populations rather than middle school students. For example, Genet (2022) examined SEL in Addis Ababa government schools but did not focus on the academic outcomes of private middle school learners.

Therefore, this study seeks to fill this empirical gap by assessing the relationship between socio-emotional skills and academic achievement among students in private middle schools in Arada Sub-City, Addis Ababa.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

While academic achievement in Ethiopian schools has historically emphasized cognitive outcomes, researchers are increasingly recognizing the vital role of socio-emotional skills in shaping students' learning success. Yet empirical studies examining this relationship—especially in primary and secondary school settings—remain sparse and fragmented.

Bekele & Tadesse (2020) in Southern Ethiopia found that primary school students' emotional intelligence components—self-regulation, self-awareness, empathy, motivation—significantly predicted academic achievement. Tulu & Daba (2021) at Madda Walabu University demonstrated a positive relationship between emotional intelligence and university students' GPA. Melaku & Fikirte (2022) in Injibara Sub-City found both emotional intelligence and self-efficacy to be key predictors of secondary students' academic performance. Additionally, Genet Tadesse (2018) investigated social emotional skills in Grade 7 and 8 government schools in Bole Sub-City, Addis Ababa.

However, these studies present three limitations:

Grade level gaps: Southern Ethiopia focused exclusively on primary schools; Injibara on secondary students; Genet's study addressed middle school but did not link them directly to academic outcomes.

Contextual diversity: Results from Southern Ethiopia, Northwestern Injibara, and Bole Sub- City may not reflect the socio-cultural realities affecting emotional intelligence and academics in urban primary schools in Arada Sub-City.

Skill breadth: While Genet assessed social- emotional levels broadly, none of the Addis-based studies examined how specific SEL skills—such as self-awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making—relate directly to academic performance.

By doing so, this study seeks to fill the gaps by focusing on primary students in selected schools within Arada Sub- City and investigating the relationship between socio-emotional competencies (self-awareness, relationship skills, responsible decision-making) and the student's academic achievement.

1.3. Research Questions

In light of the above-stated problem statement, the research will try to answer the relationship between Socio Emotional Skills (self-awareness, self-management, social awareness , relationship skill and decision-making) and academic performance of private middle school students in Arada Sub-City, Addis Ababa?

1.4. Objective of the Study

1.4.1. General Objective of the study

The general objective of this study is to examine the connection of socio-emotional competencies and academic performance of students in Arada Sub-City private middle schools, Addis Ababa.

1.4.2. Specific Study Objective

- To assess the level of socio-emotional skills (self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and decision-making) among private middle school students in Arada Sub-City.

1.5 Significance of the Study

This research seeks to investigate the connection between socio-emotional skills and attainment of private middle schools' students in arada sub-city, Addis Ababa. The importance of this study is as follows:

Theoretical and Practice Contribution in Education: Through investigating the connection between socio-emotional skills and academic achievement, this research aims to add to the educational psychology and Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) research foundation. It aims to add to the understanding of how socio-emotional skills influence academic achievement in students and providing education stakeholders with significant new information.

Implications for Education Policy and Curriculum Design: The findings of the study will enlighten policymakers and education stakeholders on the necessity of incorporating SEL programs in the curriculum. The determination of the link between socio-emotional skills and academic achievement will help in formulating policies to enhance students' socio-emotional

learning that will be critical to their holistic development.

Enhancement of Student Support Services: The findings of the study will be employed in creating support programs for enhancing students' socio-emotional development. The findings can be utilized by teachers and school leaders to come up with programs that focus on building essential socio-emotional competencies, helping students navigate through emotional challenges and improve their academic performance.

Improving Academic Performance in Private Schools: Since the research will be conducted on private middle schools in Arada Sub-City, the findings will give a more accurate representation of the contribution of socio-emotional skills to academic performance in these kinds of schools. The findings can serve as a guide for other private schools in Addis Ababa and elsewhere, leading to improved student performance in the private sector.

Filling Research Gaps in the Ethiopian Context: While interest in socio-emotional skill contribution is growing globally, it remains limited in Ethiopia, particularly in the context of private middle schools, and still remains the case. The current study will fill this gap by placing emphasis on the specific social and emotional needs of private school students in urban Addis Ababa. It will add to the literature that is particular to the Ethiopian educational system.

Practical Relevance to Educators and Teachers: Teachers and educators will be helped by the study's outcome through the realization of the significant contribution of socio-emotional skills to students' success. Educators will create a positive learning environment that will enhance emotional and academic development by incorporating SEL approaches in classroom teaching.

Concisely, this research will be significant in its potential to contribute to education policy, practice, and research, while addressing students' socio-emotional requirements, and improving the overall quality of education in Ethiopia.

1.6 Scope of the Study

The scope of this study is clearly defined by several key limitations, including geographical, conceptual, methodological, and temporal boundaries.

Geographically, the study will focus on private middle schools within Arada Sub-City, Addis Ababa. This specific location allows the research to explore the relationship between Socio-Emotional Learning(SEL) in a targeted urban environment, providing insights relevant to this particular context. By narrowing the study to schools in this area, the research can offer a more precise understanding of how SEL practices affect students in urban middle schools.

Conceptually, the study will examine five key components of SEL: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making. The dependent variable for this study is students' academic achievement, which will be assessed through indicators such as grades and overall academic performance. These specific variables help to focus the study on how SEL influences students' academic outcomes and emotional development, providing clarity to the research goals.

Methodologically, the study will employ a mixed-methods approach, combining both quantitative and qualitative research techniques. Quantitative data will be gathered through surveys and questionnaires distributed to Grade 6 students , while qualitative data will be collected through interviews with school principals and teachers. This combination allows for a comprehensive understanding of SEL's impact on students, offering both numerical data and in-depth qualitative insights.

Temporally, the study will be conducted within a fixed timeframe, beginning in February 2025 and concluding in May 2025. This timeline encompasses all research activities, including data collection, analysis, and report preparation. The study's time frame is constrained to this period, limiting its scope to the current academic year.

1.7 Limitation of the study

There are a number of limitations to this study. Many of which limit the scope and generalization within its findings which affect the sample size, geographic perimeter, methodology of data collection, and possible biases.

The research geographical focus is limited to focus on private middle schools located in Arada sub-city in Addis Ababa. The findings cannot be extended or generalized to other areas or even Public Schools, since the socio-emotional learning programs and their affective implementation and acceptance depend on the geographical regions or categories of schools. The lack of precise longitudinal documentation greatly affects the scope of the study regarding the ability to generalize the results to the entire Ethiopia and possibly other nations with diverse educational frameworks.

Also, the methods of collecting data—surveys, questionnaires, and interviews—have limitations. The quantitative data from a survey correlates to measurable insights, however, it does not capture the multi-layered nuances of the students' emotions and academics. Additionally, qualitative data obtained through interviews may fall prey to biases- bias from the interviewer, and bias from the respondents as participants often do not express their views fully due to social norms or personal biases.

Finally, the study's temporal scope is yet another limitation. Since the collection and analysis of data will take place within an academic year, the results will only represent the short-term impact of the SEL programs. To determine the sustained impact of SEL on students' academic and emotional skills, longitudinal studies would need to be implemented.

1.8 Operational definition

For the sake of clarity and uniformity of comprehension in understanding the key concepts involved in this study, the following terms are defined based on literature and education models:

Social-emotional skills: stipulates how school teachers teach their students social and emotional skills and assess the level of social and emotional skills of elementary school children

in terms of expressing feelings, developing relationships, and practicing social skills.

Self-Awareness: Self-awareness is among the essential socio-emotional skills that involve recognizing and knowing one's own feelings, thoughts, and behaviors. This involves having the capacity to understand how individual emotional states influence actions, academic engagement, and relationships with others (CASEL, 2021).

Self-Management: Self-management refers to the ability to regulate one's feelings, ideas, and actions across various situations. This includes stress management, regulation of impulsive behavior, and staying motivated towards personal and academic goals. It enables students to stay concentrated, reduce distractions, and continue despite failures, all of which are instrumental in achieving long-term academic success (Jones et al., 2015).

Social Awareness: Social awareness is defined by empathy and ability to understand other individuals' viewpoints, emotions, and requirements. It also involves comprehending social and ethical expectations in certain environments, for instance, school. Social awareness enhances collaborative learning as it allows learners to handle group work and conflicts in a manner that promotes academic achievement (CASEL, 2021).

Relationship Skills: Relationship skills are the abilities to build and maintain positive, healthy relationships with others. They include effective communication, active listening, teamwork, conflict resolution, and giving/receiving feedback. Good relationship skills enable students to work in teams effectively, seek help as and when they need it, and contribute well to team work, which have direct implications for academic participation and achievement (Durlak et al., 2011).

Responsible Decision-Making: Responsible decision-making is the ability to make positive, ethical choices through taking extreme care to weigh the potential consequences of one's

behavior. This ability entails evaluating the impact of decisions on oneself and others, ensuring that decisions made are aligned with personal and societal values. Responsible decision-making is particularly crucial in educational settings, where students often have to make decisions relating to their academic activities, relationships, and future goals. By the acquisition of this skill, learners are able to make decisions that improve their personal well-being as well as academic achievement (Soto et al., 2022).

Academic Achievement: Academic achievement refers to those measurable outcomes of students' academic performance, typically measured by grades, test scores, mid term exam and final exam . Academic achievement reflects a student's ability to comply with learning standards and attain learning objectives. Academic performance can be influenced by the development of socio-emotional competencies, like self-regulation, self-knowledge, and relationship skills, that allow a student to engage in the learning process and react positively to testing (Jones et al., 2017).

1.9 Organization of the Study

This study is organized into five chapters. Chapter One introduces the study by giving the background, statement of the problem, questions of research, objectives, hypotheses, significance, scope, limitation, and key terms. Chapter Two deals with the literature on academic achievement and social emotional learning (SEL), using theoretical frameworks and empirical studies. Chapter Three lays out the methodology of the research, including the design, data collection methods, sampling, and methods of analysis. Chapter Four presents findings and data analysis, interpreting the findings in relation to the research questions and hypotheses. Chapter Five offers conclusions by summarizing the findings, drawing conclusions, and making policy, practice, and future research recommendations.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

The purpose of this literature review is to provide a comprehensive summary of the available literature related to socio-emotional learning (SEL) and its impact on academic achievement. It encompasses the theoretical foundations of SEL, the key components of SEL programs, and their implications for student achievement. In order to emphasize the significance of SEL in developing students' social and emotional competencies and how these competencies carry over into academic performance, it also examines actual research applied in a diverse set of educational environments, including in developing nations.

2.1. Theoretical Literature Review

Theoretically, this study is grounded on socio-emotional learning (SEL), which aims at building on the development of essential emotional and social capacities that define students' academic performance. SEL theories argue that learners endowed with self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making are more likely to excel academically. Central theoretical concepts of SEL, its components, and their connections with academic performance are explained in this section.

2.1.1. Emotional Intelligence Theory

Emotional Intelligence (EI), which was brought about by Goleman (1995), is another key theory related to socio-emotional learning. Emotional intelligence (EI) refers to the capacity to perceive, understand, and effectively manage one's own emotions and those of others. According to Goleman's model, emotional intelligence has an important influence on school success as it helps students manage their feelings, remain motivated, and relate well to others.

Goleman (1995) also refers to five components of emotional intelligence: self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills. These components also match fairly well with the SEL skills identified in the CASEL model and further reinforce the assumption that emotional and social skills are the foundation of academic success.

2.1.2. Social Cognitive Theory

Albert Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory (1986) also provides insight into how SEL influences academic achievement. Bandura emphasizes the role of self-efficacy in learning and academic performance. Self-efficacy is the perception that one can perform a task in certain situations. Bandura argues that those students who have high self-efficacy will be active participants in class, will persist when faced with adversity, and will succeed academically. By fostering self-awareness, self-management, and positive social relationships, social and emotional learning helps establish this sense of self-efficacy, all of which lead to students' academic success and persistence.

2.1.3. Theories of Motivation

Several motivation theories also overlap with SEL principles. Self-Determination Theory (SDT), for example, by Deci and Ryan (2000), focuses on the importance of autonomy, competence, and relatedness in the motivation of the individual. In SEL, the self-awareness, self-management, and relationship skills competence establish an environment in which students are rendered competent and able to succeed in school (Deci & Ryan, 2000).

2.1.4 Self-Regulated Learning Theory

Zimmerman's (2002) Self-Regulated Learning (SRL) theory also aligns with SEL principles. SRL focuses on how learners actively direct their learning through goal-setting,

progress monitoring, and regulating their strategy. SEL skill of self-awareness and self-management are specifically in line with SRL's main elements, including goal-setting, self-monitoring, and self-reflection. Students who possess these skills are better equipped to control learning, make smart academic decisions, and achieve educational objectives. In conclusion, socio-emotional learning theoretical models emphasize the critical role played by social and emotional skills to foster academic success. The CASEL model, emotional intelligence model, social cognitive model, theories of motivation, and self-regulated learning model all emphasize the development of students' self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making (CASEL, 2021; Zins et al., 2004).

2.1.5 The CASEL Theory

Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) provides the most prevalent model of Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) that is based on five broad competencies on which students' social and emotional development depends: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making (CASEL, 2021). This skill is essential to quality SEL programs and is believed to have a humongous impact on children's academic success.

Self-awareness allows the learners to recognize their emotions and be aware of their impact on behavior and learning and stay motivated and involved in learning activities (Zins et al., 2004).

Self-management enables students to regulate their actions, thoughts, and feelings, which helps with academic focus, stress management, and resilience against adversity (Elias, 2006). Social awareness supports empathy and perspective-taking and strengthens student-peer and student-teacher relationships, promoting healthy academic collaboration (Denham et al., 2012).

Social skills, including healthy relationships, conflict resolution, and communication, are vital in facilitating group learning and collaboration towards academic achievement (CASEL, 2021).

Sound decision-making empowers students to make responsible decisions that balance personal well-being, social conventions, and learning goals, allowing them to set goals, manage time, and stay focused on activities that will lead to academic success (Jones et al., 2017).

2.2. Conceptual Literature Review

Conceptual literature review offers an exhaustive examination of the fundamental concepts, theories, and models that inform the research in Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) and its influence on academic achievement, particularly in primary school learning. As a valuable intervention aimed at enhancing students' academic, social, and emotional development, SEL has gained widespread use in schools.

This review will examine the essence of SEL, its competencies, its theoretical frameworks that guide its implementation, and the close connection between SEL and academic success.

2.2.1. The Concept of Socio-Emotional Learning (SEL)

Socio-emotional learning (SEL) refers to the processes by which individuals, particularly children, learn emotional and social skills necessary for managing emotions, developing healthy relationships, and making good decisions. They are essential for long-term development and individual health as well as academic achievement.

Although the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) formally defined the term "socio-emotional learning" during the 1990s, its theoretical roots actually trace to earlier learning and psychological theory, such as John Dewey's (1933) emphasis on learning by doing and the importance of social interaction in a learning setting. Dewey promoted

education that builds both the mind and the emotions, and this is still the basis for building socio-emotional skills.

In essence, SEL is based on the belief that relationships are where learning happens best. SEL-promoting programs aim to build critical skills like empathy, emotion regulation, and conflict resolution that can reduce negative behaviors like bullying, violence, alcohol and other drug use, and school dropout. Successful SEL programs involve creating supportive classroom climates, engaging students in positive activities, and encouraging active community and family involvement (Bond & Hauf, 2004; Hawkins et al., 2004; Nation et al., 2003). CASEL's framework identifies five interrelated competencies: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making. These competencies combine cognitive, emotional, and behavioral development processes, each of which contributes to a student's overall growth. Erik Erikson's and Albert Bandura's development theories also provide further insight into the importance of SEL.

Erikson's theory of psychosocial development, his industry versus inferiority stage in particular, highlights the child's developmental function in establishing competence and self-confidence, both of which are central components of SEL (Erikson, 1963).

Similarly, Social Learning Theory by Bandura highlights the importance of self-efficacy—believing one can accomplish something—and its role in emotional regulation and interpersonal relationships, both of which are central to SEL (Bandura, 1977). In enhancing self-efficacy, SEL provides learners with the capacity to manage their emotions and demonstrate healthy social skills, thus leading to improved academic and personal achievement. Empirical evidence continues to show that SEL programs enhance not just the emotional well-being of students but

also their academic achievement, social skills, and behavior (McCall et al., 2023). SEL has also been described as a tool for eliminating educational inequalities.

Culturally responsive SEL frameworks, for instance, have been established to reduce gaps in academic success by creating inclusive settings that engage all kids irrespective of their background (Srinivasan, 2019; Jannah & Sugiarto, 2022). However, effective implementation of SEL is not merely about getting it incorporated into the curriculum but also with continuous teacher training, community participation, and policy backing (Durlak et al., 2011). Programs such as PATHS, adapted for low-income students, illustrate the merit of adapting SEL programs to be responsive to specific student subpopulations, leading to improved emotional regulation and academic achievement. Beyond these academic benefits, SEL has societal implications, including promoting social cohesion, empathy, and respect for each other. By cultivating these characteristics, SEL can bring about less unequal and stronger and more inclusive communities (Ramirez et al., 2021; Ruiz, 2023).

Finally, SEL offers an integrative educational model based on children's intellectual and emotional development. Its integration into school systems can turn learning spaces into more inclusive and equalized spaces along with improving the general performance of students individually.

2.2.2. Fundamental Elements of Social and Emotional Learning

Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) is a teaching model that emphasizes developing critical social and emotional skills in students. These skills are essential to the development of well-being, academic success, and healthy social relationships. SEL is not a distinct subject but an embedded model of education that gives students time to practice and apply these skills in various learning settings alongside explicit instruction. According to the Collaborative for

Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL, 2023), five key components form the foundation of SEL: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making. These skills not only develop individuals but also contribute to creating caring, inclusive, and productive learning communities (CASEL, 2023).

Figure 1: The Five Social and Emotional Learning Core Competencies



CASEL. (2020). SEL framework. Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning. Retrieved from <https://casel.org/>

Self-awareness refers to the ability to recognize and be aware of one's thoughts, values, and emotions, and how they influence behavior. By encouraging individuals to think about their strengths and limitations, this quality makes them emotionally intelligent and self-assured. Because it enables students to deal with problems with a clear perspective of their emotional states and reactions, high self-awareness is at the heart of personal growth. As claimed by Goleman (1995), self-awareness is a critical part of emotional intelligence since it influences individuals' ability to manage their emotions, as well as handle individuals.

Self-management is the ability to regulate one's emotions, thoughts, and actions in different situations. It involves skills such as stress management, impulse control, and goal-setting. Self-management helps students to be able to focus on their work, handle failures, and make sound decisions. Research by Durlak et al. (2011) highlights self-management's role in promoting resilience since students who can manage their emotions are better placed to handle academic stress and social conflicts. Furthermore, students who are highly skilled in self-management also have higher motivation and academic performance (Durlak et al., 2011).

Social awareness involves understanding and perceiving others' feelings, attitudes, and needs. This ability is particularly crucial in developing empathy, tolerance, and appreciation for diversity. Social awareness enables students to build positive relationships with people and assist in the development of a respectful, inclusive class community. Elias et al. (1997) contend that social awareness helps students grasp social dynamics, improve conflict resolution, and become more community-oriented. It also encourages a heightened sensitivity to social norms and ethical conduct, the foundation for healthy relationships (Elias et al., 1997).

Relationship skills include the ability to establish and maintain healthy and fulfilling relationships with others and groups of people. They include communication, listening actively, co-operation, conflict resolution, and partnership. Relationship skills are essential for students to cooperate effectively, resolve interpersonal issues, and engage in productive group work. According to Johnson and Johnson (2017), competent students in interpersonal relationships are said to possess a higher degree of social life involvement and are most likely to have positive interactions with others. In the classroom setting, the skills are crucial for promoting cooperative learning and a supportive learning environment (Johnson & Johnson, 2017).

Responsible decision-making is the ability to make productive and ethical choices in personal and social conduct. This includes evaluating consequences, resisting temptation, and weighing good of self-versus good of others. Effective decision-making is a critical element of SEL, as it equips students to meet complex situations and make sound, logical choices. Based on research by Zins et al. (2004), students who acquire skills in responsible decision-making are bound to exhibit prosocial behavior as well as make decisions that are not only in their own interest but also in the interest of the community. Furthermore, this competence creates a sense of citizenship and accountability that is essential in the long-term social and personal growth of students (Zins et al., 2004).

All these five elements form the cornerstone of SEL and are interdependent. Students learning self-awareness are more likely to manage their emotions and connect with others well. Similarly, responsible decision-making students are best equipped to handle social problems and have good relationships. Implementing SEL in school curriculum has been shown to enhance the performance of students, reduce behavior problems, and promote emotional well-being (Niemi, 2020). Apart from that, SEL programs also support the development of a healthy school climate under which students are valued, supported, and engaged in learning (Niemi, 2020).

As education systems worldwide increasingly realize the importance of SEL, increased emphasis has been placed on its implementation in various contexts. Teachers also play a crucial role in supporting students in the acquisition of these skills by modeling SEL behavior, creating supportive classroom climates, and explicitly teaching SEL skills. Interventions such as the PATHS program and Second Step have also shown positive impact on students' socio-emotional abilities and academic achievement (McCall et al., 2023). Moreover, integrating SEL in school policy and practice can help make the learning environment more inclusive and equitable. Here,

all the students are granted access to the resources and support needed for their success (McCall et al., 2023).

In short, the foundations of Social and Emotional Learning—self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making—can be needed for overall development of students. These skills not only result in academic success but also lead to emotional strength, positive interpersonal relationships, and civic engagement (CASEL, 2023; Durlak et al., 2011; Elias et al., 1997; Goleman, 1995; Johnson & Johnson, 2017; Zins et al., 2004).

2.2.3. Importance of Socio-Emotional Skills in Education

The central objective of education is to develop overall growth for the students so that they can be complete citizens of the nation. According to recent research work, education has two major elements: it promotes individual development and balances the formation of independent and interdependent individuals.

Education not only has to support the social integration of students by teaching norms, values, and acceptable behavior but also facilitate awareness of self so that the students are able to reflect on their own strengths and weaknesses and prepare for the future (Roeser et al., 2018; Jones et al., 2020). Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) is at the forefront of this development, equipping students with skills they can use to manage emotions, build relationships, and overcome issues in society (Durlak et al., 2011). SEL encompasses social and emotional competence, referring to the ability to know, regulate, and express emotions in a way that enables one to accomplish life tasks such as learning, relationship-building, and problem-solving (Greenberg et al., 2017).

The significance of SEL in education is also highlighted by several studies showing that students who participate in SEL programs enhance their academic grades and social conduct. For instance, a meta-analysis by Durlak et al. (2011) substantiated that students participating in SEL programs attained better academic results, enhanced emotional regulation, and more effective social skills. In the Ethiopian context, more recent studies have also highlighted the positive impact of SEL. Tadesse and Tsegaye (2020) examined that the Ethiopian students who were subjected to SEL programs demonstrated enhanced capacity for conflict resolution and superior academic performance, which is in line with global research on the effectiveness of SEL. Furthermore, global reports, such as that of the World Bank (2020), encourage the inclusion of SEL in schools' curricula to improve education outcomes and social cohesion, especially in developing countries like Ethiopia.

2.2.4. Students' Social and Emotional Learning and Academic Achievement

Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) is also critical in aiding students' academic achievement through enabling emotional and cognitive skills that may result in an overall education. SEL programs, designed to tackle the development of self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making, have been identified to improve academic achievement by fostering a favorable learning environment and social support (Durlak et al., 2011).

Research has consistently shown that students who are given SEL programming have better academic outcomes. A meta-analysis review by Durlak et al. (2011) found that students who had been given SEL interventions had a 11 percentile-point higher academic achievement compared to students who were not given the programming.

This is because of the social skills and emotional regulation developed by the students under SEL, which enhance their ability to focus on learning, manage school stress, and engage effectively in classroom interactions.

For instance, students with high skills in emotional regulation will be less distracted or stressed by stressors, and they can therefore remain focused and memorize more facts than their peers with poor skills in emotional regulation (Durlak et al., 2011). SEL also promotes good behavior like persistence, problem-solving, and cooperation, which are highly related to academic success. Research conducted by Zins et al. (2004) indicates that learners with strong social and emotional competencies are more likely to take on productive learning behaviors such as goal setting and planning to achieve goals, seeking help when needed, and relating well to others. These are critical to the achievement of academics because they create a learning environment where students are able to take risks, navigate challenges, and learn from one another towards shared academic objectives (Dweck, 2006). In addition to improving academic performance, SEL also creates a positive and inclusive school climate that, in turn, promotes students' academic performance. Positive school climate, as reflected in teacher-student support, sense of belongingness, and respect for diversity, has been found to be associated with higher academic engagement and achievement (Thapa et al., 2013).

Besides, SEL enables the learning of vital life skills such as critical thinking and decision-making for academic success and lifelong learning. Through teaching to make good choices, manage emotions, and comprehend others, SEL enables the learning of cognitive skills directly applicable to academic processes (Zins et al., 2004).

In conclusion, social and emotional learning is vital in promoting the educational attainment of children.

SEL programs prepare children with the tools to succeed academically, form good relationships, and manage problems that they encounter within and outside the classroom by addressing the social and emotional dimensions of learning. The implementation of SEL into educational systems has been shown to improve academic success, facilitate positive school climate, and foster important life skills that are specific to students' overall achievement (Durlak et al., 2011; Zins et al., 2004; Dweck, 2006). As a result, SEL should be considered a part of the fabric of education in order to ensure that students not only become academically literate but also emotionally strong and socially competent.

2.2.5. Challenges in Implementing SEL Programs

Although there is universal recognition of the worth of SEL, there are several challenges in implementing SEL in schools. The most significant hindrance is that there are not enough resources, including time, finances, and trained personnel, to implement SEL programs (Greenberg et al., 2003). There may also be resistance to adding SEL to the existing curriculum in some schools since teachers only have time for academic curriculum and standardized testing (Durlak et al., 2011).

In addition, resistance from some teachers, parents, or administrators who place more value on regular educational subjects over social and emotional development also exists (Greenberg et al., 2003). These challenges must be addressed through developing awareness of the significance of SEL and highlighting its beneficial impact on academic performance as well as individual development (Payton et al., 2008). Implementation variation of SEL programs across schools is a grave challenge as well.

There is no one-size-fits-all approach to SEL, and programs must be adapted to meet the unique needs of students, schools, and communities (Zins et al., 2004). For SEL to be successful,

it must be embedded in the whole school culture, and teachers, students, families, and community members must be involved actively. A strategy on the whole-school level that fosters collaboration and ensures SEL is a core value and practice of the school will most likely yield the best results (CASEL, 2021).

In summary, social and emotional learning research points out how crucial it is to develop students' social and emotional intelligence as a means of improving their academic performance and overall well-being.

2.3. Empirical Literature Review

Socio-Emotional Learning (SEL) is becoming a key determinant of the general development, academic success, and well-being of children. It implies the ability to know and manage emotions, build worthwhile relationships, and make healthy decisions. Various studies have examined the impact of SEL on students' academic performance in varied school settings. These studies revealed that SEL competencies like self-awareness, self-regulation, and social awareness are key determinants of academic success.

However, most of this work has been accomplished in nations such as Nigeria, Malaysia, Indonesia, Iran, and America, and it remains to be considered how general these results will be when applied to the situation in Ethiopia, particularly to private middle schools within Arada Sub-City, Addis Ababa.

The following literature review combines seminal studies on the relationship between socio-emotional learning and academic achievement. The aim is to place international trends at the center, identify gaps in research, and highlight the need for further study of socio-emotional learning's effect on school performance in private middle schools in Ethiopia.

As socio-emotional learning has not been given ample research attention regarding its relationship with school performance in Ethiopia, more so in Arada Sub-City, this review highlights the need for undertaking local study to understand its impact in the context of Ethiopia's educational system.

Numerous research studies from different parts of the world have explored the role of socio-emotional learning towards achieving academic achievement, with a unique focus on the role of self-awareness. Obilor and Briggs (2021) carried out research among Nigerian secondary school students and found a positive correlation between academic achievement and self-awareness among the students. This further suggests that students who demonstrate higher levels of self-awareness achieve better academically. But such a background in this study in Nigeria might not exactly fit with Ethiopia's educational system, where curricula and academic standards diverge.

David and Ukpong (2016) also researched the impact of self-awareness on Nigerian Federal University students learning business education. Based on their findings, there was a significant impact of self-awareness on academic achievement. This study, carried out with regard to university-level business education, may not directly be relevant for Addis Ababa middle school students because the study environment and subjects of study are varied.

Amalu (2018) researched Nigerian secondary school students and found self-awareness to be a key predictor of academic performance. While this piece of research highlights the value of socio-emotional competencies in academic achievement, its findings could not be transferred straight away to the Ethiopian context due to differences in education systems and the comparative relative differences in academic performance between both countries.

Shuib et al. (2018) wrote about the relationship between scholastic attainment and self-awareness in Malaysian primary school pupils. They confirmed a high correlation, but the applicability to Ethiopian middle school students is diminished since this research targets primary school children. Moreover, the grading system of education from Malaysia and Ethiopia is different, which could impact the generalizability of the results.

Soeprijanto et al. (2022) in their research into Indonesian vocational schools determined that self-awareness positively affected the academic performance of students. While this adds to the body of knowledge about the importance of self-awareness, the focus of the study on vocational education and the specific context of Indonesia may not be readily extended to middle school students in Addis Ababa. The differences in academic focus and culture around education in Indonesia and Ethiopia additionally limit the generalizability of the results of the study.

Dost et al. (2017) studied the impact of education on self-awareness and the academic performance of Iranian pre-university students. The study's findings demonstrated a positive correlation between self-awareness education and academic achievement. The generality of this study to pre-university students and the variation in the context of this study in grading systems and educational institutions limit the generalizability of the study to middle school students in Ethiopia, namely private schools in Addis Ababa.

Pitlik (2021) examined the impact of self-awareness as an element of social-emotional learning on Iowa school performance. The study confirmed that academic success was associated with increased self-awareness. The college student setting and the United States educational system, however, may be quite distinct from what is found among secondary students in Ethiopia. The outcome therefore may not appropriately apply to the Ethiopian setting.

In the Ethiopian context, Gebre, Demissie, and Yimer (2025) did a meta-analysis that investigated the influence of teacher socio-emotional competence on student engagement. The research concluded that there was a positive correlation between teachers' socio-emotional competence and the levels of engagement among students, which showed the significance of teachers' competencies in creating an academic success-friendly environment. This study highlights the necessity of professional development initiatives that promote teachers' socio-emotional competence to enhance student achievement.

Mekonnen et al. (2015) examined factors of socio-emotional problems that deaf and hard-of-hearing students in Ethiopia encounter. It was revealed that the students experience severe socio-emotional problems that affect their school performance in a negative way. According to this study, there is a clear need for targeted interventions aimed at hearing-impaired students' socio-emotional development.

Mulat (2018) investigated the socio-emotional growth and self-concept of deaf and hard-of-hearing learners within different learning institutions in Ethiopia. Inclusive learning environments were found to enhance the socio-emotional growth and academic performance of the learners. The research identifies inclusive practices as critical for improving students with special needs' well-being and grades.

Bayley et al. (2022) examined socio-emotional and academic learning before and after COVID-19 school closures in Ethiopia. Their examination showed that the pandemic had a negative effect on students' socio-emotional skills, and these then had effects on academic functioning. The evidence suggests that strengthening socio-emotional learning is critical to academic recovery and resilience against disruption.

Lastly, the literature reviewed shows a strong and positive relationship between socio-emotional learning, specifically self-awareness, and educational achievement in varying contexts of education. While a lot of studies have bore witness to the facilitative role played by socio-emotional skills in academic achievement (Amalu, 2018; David & Ukpong, 2016; Dost et al., 2017; Obilor & Briggs, 2021; Pitlik, 2021; Shuib et al., 2018; Soeprijanto et al., 2022), a majority of them have been conducted in countries with different educational cultures and backgrounds, such as Nigeria, Malaysia, Iran, America, and Indonesia. Hence, the generalization of these findings to private middle schools in Arada Sub-City, Addis Ababa, is limited.

There exists an existing research gap regarding Socio-Emotional Learning's relationship with academic performance in the context of Ethiopian education, particularly within private middle schools. Even though global studies are insightful, the Ethiopian education system, curricula, marks structure, and pedagogy are distinct from those of the nations where these studies were conducted. This difference warrants additional studies to explore the role of SEL towards academic performance in the settings of private middle schools in Addis Ababa.

2.4. Conceptual Framework

This study is grounded on the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) model that identifies five competencies as significant to Social and Emotional Learning (SEL): self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making (CASEL, 2018, 2020). These competencies are independent variables in this study, as they influence students' emotional intelligence, interpersonal skills, and ability to manage behavior.

Self-awareness refers to the ability of students to recognize their emotions, thoughts, and values and understand how they regulate behavior. It also includes accurate self-perception, self-efficacy, and sense of personal identity (Borowski, 2019).

Self-management involves the ability to regulate emotions, control impulses, and set goals and achieve them, which are crucial in maintaining attention and resilience in schools (Melnick et al., 2017).

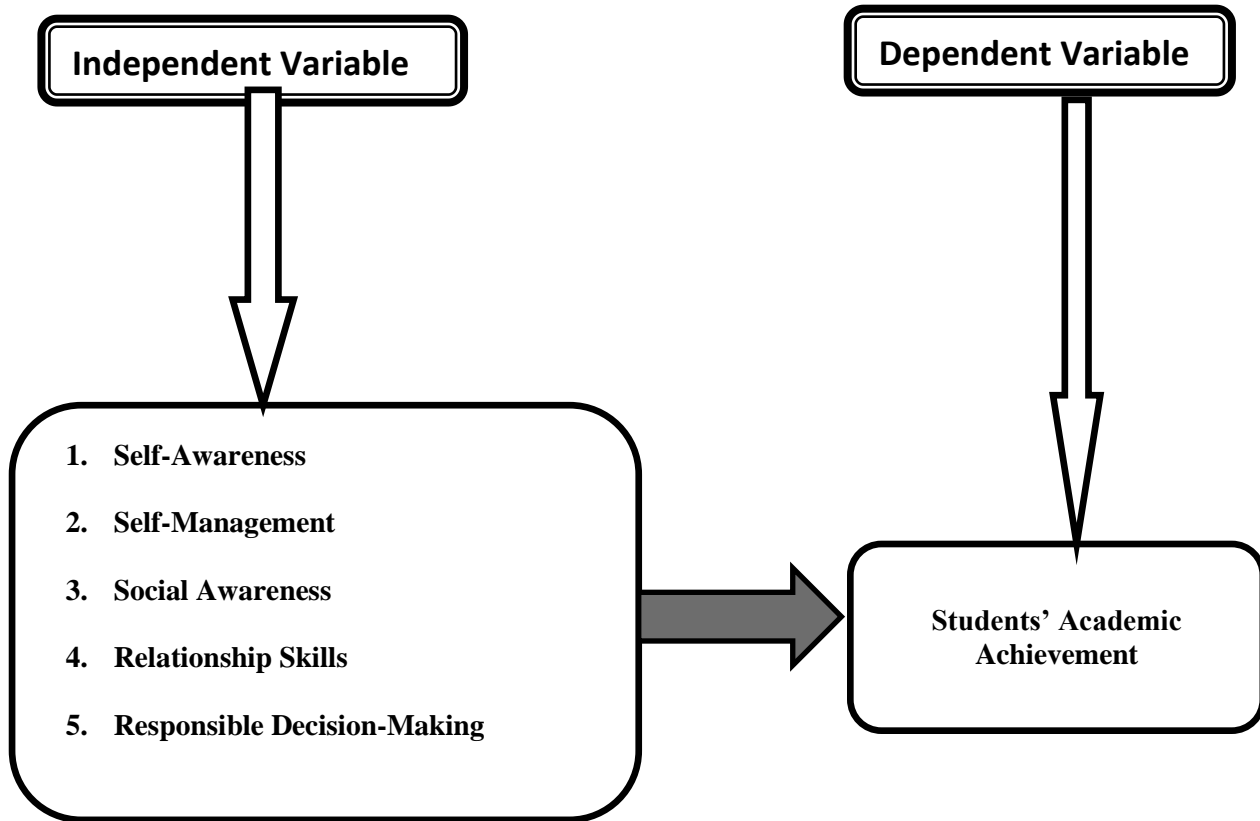
Social awareness refers to knowing and relating to others, feeling others' perspectives and appreciating social norms and ethical behaviors, which help in fostering positive school relationships (CASEL, 2020).

Relationship skills comprise effective communication, team working, conflict resolution, and building and maintaining healthy relationships with teachers, peers, and members of their families (Borowski, 2019).

Responsible decision-making is the capacity to make positive, ethical choices on the basis of realistic consideration of consequences, personal values, and social norms that directly affect students' problem-solving capabilities in school and in life (Melnick et al., 2017).

The dependent variable here is the academic achievement of students, and it is determined by the development and application of SEL competencies.

Figure 2: Conceptual Framework of the Study



Source: Portela-Pino, I., Domínguez-Alonso, J., & Alvariñas-Villaverde, M. (2025). Can we measure the level of socio-emotional competencies of adolescents? *Education Sciences*, 14(4), 395. <https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci14040395>

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter used research design and methodology thematic sequential: research approach, research design, target population, sampling method, sample size, data collection instrument and measurement, test of reliability and ethical concern.

3.1. Description of the study area

This research was carried out in Arada Sub-City, the central part of Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Arada was a very urbanized place, and it was recognized for its historical importance, dynamic market places, and as a center of culture and learning. It contained a diverse range of schools, both government and private, and was a prime area for studying educational practice. Arada Sub-City was home to 44 primary schools, which are evenly distributed between government and private schools.

Arada hosted 31,287 students and provided a rich learning setting, thus being a suitable platform to study the impact of social and emotional learning (SEL) skills on the academic performance of students. The study specifically focused on private middle schools within Arada, with students typically having access to higher resources and learning facilities than in public schools. For this reason, Arada Sub-City became a pertinent and suitable location for the study (Addis Ababa Mayor's Office, 2025).

3.2. Research Design

A descriptive correlational research design was employed in the study to examine the relationship between social and emotional learning (SEL) skills—self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making—and

students' academic performance.

A descriptive correlational design was appropriate for this study as it aimed to explore the relationship between students' social-emotional skills and their academic performance. This approach allowed for the collection of data as it naturally occurs, providing a clear picture of the existing levels of both variables and how they are associated, without any manipulation or intervention.

3.3. Research Approach

The research used a mixed-methods design, integrating both qualitative and quantitative research approaches in an effort to obtain an exhaustive overview of how SEL skills were related to the academic performance of students.

Quantitative component of the study involved the use of questionnaires and standardized surveys to gather numerical data from seventh-graders. This data enabled the identification of patterns and trends with regard to the relationship between SEL skills and academic performance, along with the quantification of the strength and significance of the relationships.

The qualitative component consisted of semi-structured interviews with teachers and school administrators. The interviews probed the participants' experience with SEL programs, especially their perception regarding how these skills influence academic performance.

Qualitative data provided detailed insight into the impact of social-emotional learning (SEL) on students' academic performance.

Through the combination of both qualitative and quantitative methods, the research had a complete perspective on how SEL influences the academic achievement and development of students.

3.4. Target Population, Sampling Technique and Procedure

3.4.1. Target Population

The target population in this research was Grade 7 students studying in private middle schools in Arada Sub-City, Addis Ababa. The research targeted students who were enrolled in Socio-Emotional Learning (SEL) programs or study in schools where SEL was a subject in their curriculum.

According to data presented by the Arada Sub-City Education Office (January 2025), the total number of students in Grade 6 within the six sampled schools is 571. The schools were chosen because of their willingness to participate in the study. School administrators and teachers have also been included as participants in the qualitative data collection to listen to their opinions regarding the contribution of SEL to academic achievement.

3.4.2. Sampling Technique

For this study, a stratified random sampling technique was employed to ensure that the sample was representative of the heterogeneity in the target population of Grade 6 students among the six targeted private middle schools in Arada Sub-City, Addis Ababa.

Stratified random sampling involves the division of the population into groups, or strata, based on specific characteristics, in this case, the individual schools. Once these strata have been established, a random sample was drawn from each subgroup to enable proportional representation. In this study, the strata was on the six private schools, and each one was treated as a different subgroup.

In the school, the sample was was selected at random so that each student within the school had an equal chance of being part of the study. The sample from each school was in

proportion to the number of students in Grade 6 at that school .And, overall, the sample was designed so that it represented best the spread of students across the schools. This method ensures that the sample was generalizable to different schools participating in the study, thus increasing the generalizability of the results to the broader population of Grade 6 students in private middle schools in Arada Sub-City.

3.4.3. Sample Size

Sample size for Grade 6 students was computed using Yamane's (1967) formula for calculating sample size, which yielded statistically sound representation of target population. Sample size determined was 235 and, questioner was distributed according to table. Therefore, Proportional sample determination formula for each branch was presented in the table:

Target population, sampling fraction and number of samples

Sample Woreda	Sample School	Target Population	Sample Size	%
Woreda 1	Nejashi Academy	110	45	19.15
Woreda 2	Gage Academy	84	35	14.89
Woreda 3	Elon Academy	127	52	22.13
Woreda 4	Radical Academy	129	53	22.55
Woreda 5	Aweliya Muslim	51	21	8.94
Woreda 6	Laura Academy	70	29	12.34
	Total	571	235	100%

Source: Arada Sub-City Education Office as of January 2025

3.5. Data Type and Source

This study used both primary and secondary data to critically analyze the relationship between social and emotional ability and Grade 6 student achievement in selected private middle schools of Arada Sub-City, Addis Ababa.

Primary Data: Primary data was obtained directly from the participants through semi-structured interviews and structured questionnaires. The Social Emotional Competence Questionnaire (SECQ), adapted from the validated instrument by Portela-Pino, Domínguez-Alonso, and Alvariñas-Villaverde (2025), was used for the assessment of socio-emotional competencies of students.

The SECQ consisted of 25 items which are distributed over five domains: self-awareness, social awareness, self-management, relationship management, and responsible decision-making. Each item was rated on a five-point Likert scale from 1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree.

Also, individual interviews with a subset of teachers and school administrators was employed to gather qualitative data regarding how SEL was enacted and how it influenced academic achievement. This mixed-method design allowed for a comprehensive understanding of the relationship between SEL and academic achievement. **Secondary Data:** Secondary data was obtained from Addis Ababa education bureau. The records included students' academic performance data, which was used to examine the interconnection between their SEL skills and academic performance. Statistical analysis techniques was applied in this research to compare SEL scores with measures of academic performance in order to gain a greater insight into students' academic achievement as played by social-emotional skills. Through the blending of

both primary and secondary data, this study had to provide an even-handed evaluation of how SEL skills influence students' academic achievement.

3.6. Data Collection Instruments

The study employed the use of a questionnaire, interview, and secondary data to comprehensively assess the relationship of Socio-Emotional Learning (SEL) with students' academic achievement. By utilizing multiple data collection instruments, the study provided both quantitative and qualitative information on the effects of SEL on the emotional regulation, interpersonal relationships, and academic performance of students.

3.6.1. Questionnaire

Primary data for the research was collected through structured questionnaire. The questionnaire was a modification of the Social and Emotional Competence Questionnaire (SECQ) of Portela-Pino, Domínguez-Alonso, and Alvariñas-Villaverde (2025). The instrument was utilized to measure students' social-emotional competencies in the five primary domains of Social and Emotional Learning (SEL): self-awareness, social awareness, self-management, relationship management, and responsible decision-making.

The SECQ consisted of 25 items, each of which falls into one of these dimensions, and students responded on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). The SECQ is intended to assess grades 7 students to the extent they recognize and regulate their emotions, interact with others, and make ethical decisions in family, school, and community contexts. The tool was also sensitive to change over time and thus appropriate for the function of measuring areas that required improvement. The tool was founded on the CASEL (2008) Framework for SEL, which focuses on developing emotional intelligence with the aim of

enhancing students' social skills, emotional regulation, and students' academic performance. And translated to Amharic.

3.6.2. Interviews

In addition to the questionnaires, semi-structured interviews with principals and teachers of the schools was conducted to obtain in-depth qualitative data on the implementation and perceived effect of Socio-Emotional Learning (SEL) in the classroom. The interviews explored how SEL programs were integrated into the curriculum, how the teachers facilitated SEL competencies, and the challenges faced in the process of implementation.

The interview schedule was designed to talk over some of the significant issues like the benefits of SEL on the emotional and social development of students, the effect of SEL On the academic success of students, and dilemmas for educators in incorporating SEL in their teaching. In addition, the participants were asked to provide their opinions on whether SEL programs hold any measurable impact on the emotional regulation, social relationships, and academic success of students overall. The semi-structured format allowed for flexibility in the conversations, with new issues emerging while still keeping in perspective the main objectives of the study.

3.6.3. Secondary Data

Secondary data was gathered from Addis Ababa Education office, which provided quantitative data on the academic performance of Grade 6 students for a period of one school year (2016 E.C or 2024/2025 G.C). This data included students' regional exam scores and overall academic performance. The secondary data was also used to compare students' academic achievement with their social and emotional skills, as assessed through the SECQ. Additionally, relevant published and unpublished literature, electronic databases, and annual abstracts were

reviewed to inform the literature review and contextualize the findings.

3.7. Data Analysis Methods

Information procured through structured questionnaires and semi-structured interviews were subject to both descriptive and inferential statistics in order to get a holistic picture of the the relationship of social and emotional learning (SEL) on the academic performance of Grade 6 students in the chosen private middle schools of Arada Sub-City.

3.7.1.Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics was used in describing and summarizing the key characteristics of the data collected. This included calculation of measures like the mean, standard deviation, frequencies, and percentages to provide a clear picture of the distribution of academic achievement and social and emotional competencies of the students. Descriptive statistics allowed for the understanding of the central tendencies and variability in the students' SEL scores and academic performance.

3.8. Pilot Test

In order to pilot test questionnaires' strength, pilot testing was conducted at Sumeya School on a small sample of 28 Grade 7 students, which was not a part of the sample study. Pilot test was done by the researcher for testing the questionnaire's clarity, and to make all the amendment needed such as to reform questions, remove some biased question words, and eliminate grammatical errors.

Table 1: Reliability Statistics

S/N	Reliability Test by Item-Total Statistics	Cronbach's Alpha
1	I know what I am thinking and doing.	0.819
2	I understand why I do what I do.	0.809
3	I understand my moods and feelings.	0.751
4	I know when I am moody.	0.757
5	I can read people's faces when they are angry.	0.863
	Self-Awareness	0.7998
6	I recognize how people feel by looking at their facial expressions.	0.775
7	It is easy for me to understand why people feel the way they do.	0.708
8	If someone is sad, angry, or happy, I believe I know what they are thinking.	0.812
9	I understand why people react the way they do.	0.754
10	If a friend is upset, I have a pretty good idea why.	0.85
	Social Awareness	0.7798
11	I can stay calm in stressful situations.	0.795
12	I stay calm and overcome anxiety in new or changing situations.	0.775
13	I stay calm when things go wrong.	0.707
14	I can control the way I feel when something bad happens.	0.718
15	When I am upset with someone, I will wait till I have calmed down before discussing the issue.	0.83
	Self-Management	0.737
16	I will always apologize when I hurt my friend unintentionally.	0.705
17	I always try to comfort my friends when they are sad.	0.718
18	I try not to criticize my friend when we quarrel.	0.723
19	I am tolerant of my friend's mistakes.	0.751
20	I stand up for myself without putting others down.	0.796
	Relationship Management	0.7386

21	When making decisions, I take into account the consequences of my actions.	0.805
22	I ensure that there are more positive outcomes when making a choice	0.776
23	I weigh the strengths of the situation before deciding on my action.	0.726
24	I consider the criteria chosen before making a recommendation.	0.737
25	I consider the strengths and weaknesses of the strategy before deciding to use it.	0.876
	Responsible Decision-Making	0.784

Source: SPSS result of Survey Data, (2025)

SPSS version 26 was used to test the reliability and validity of questions when questionnaires were completed and returned. Cronbach's alpha was computed for all scales to establish the internal consistency of the instrument.

The pilot trial with 28 Grade 7 students at Sumeya School also yielded high scores for reliability for all the socio-emotional learning (SEL) variables. Internal consistency was determined using Cronbach's Alpha through SPSS version 26. Results showed that Self-Awareness scored 0.781, the highest for Social Awareness at 0.818, Self-Management scored slightly lower at 0.779, and Relationship Management and Responsible Decision-Making both scored 0.738.

Total measure of reliability of the whole survey was 0.770, which shows that the instrument has a very high internal consistency and that the instrument is reliable and valid in measuring the relationship between socio-emotional skills and academic achievement of students.

3.9. Ethical Consideration

In accordance with the integrity of the study and safeguarding the rights of participants, ethical considerations formed an integral part of the study. The entire private and sensitive data of the respondents was maintained strictly confidential. To ensure anonymity and alleviate fears of their names and identities being revealed, participants were advised to refrain from sharing their names, addresses, or any other information that could identify them in the questionnaires.

Informed consent was obtained from all participants, and they were fully aware of the purpose of the study, their participation, and the voluntariness of their participation. Participants were assured that they would face no harm if they withdrew from their participation at any time. Additionally, all participants were told that their responses would be used for scholarly purposes only. All sensitive data, whether personal or business-oriented, was safely stored and only the researcher could access it to ensure anonymity of the material. The research followed ethical principles by not causing harm to the participants and no third parties receiving the data gathered.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

This study is about determining the relationship between Socio-Emotional Skills and Academic Achievement of Students in Private Middle Schools in Arada Sub-City, Addis Ababa. This chapter deals with analysis, presentation and interpretation on the base of data obtained through questionnaires. This chapter focuses on the analysis, presentation, and interpretation of data obtained through questionnaires.

The sample size for this study involved 235 students working under different Branches both at the managerial level and non-managerial level. Descriptive statistics (includes frequencies, percentage analysis, arithmetic mean, and standard deviation) and inferential – (Correlation) were used to analyze collected data.

The findings from the questionnaires were analyzed by using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 26. The findings are provided in the context of descriptive and as per the study objectives.

4.1. Response Rate

Table 2: Response Rate

Description	Respondents
Sample size	235
Questionnaire Distributed	235
Questionnaire Returned	210
Response Rate	89%
Usable Response	210

Source: SPSS result of Survey Data, (2025)

In order to answer those research questions and also to fulfill the main objectives of the research 235 questionnaires were prepared and distributed among the respondents. Out of these 235 questionnaires 210 questionnaires were received back which is 89% response rate. Fowler (2013) suggested 60%, and De Vaus (2013) argued for 80% as a minimum benchmark for response rate.

4.2. Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

This section summarizes key background details of the respondents—such as gender and age to provide context for interpreting the study’s findings.

Table 3: Demographic characteristics of respondents

Item	Variable	Category	Frequency	Percent
1	Sex	Male	98	46.7
		Female	112	53.3
		Total	210	100.0
2	Age category	12 years old	23	11.0
		13 years old	142	67.6
		14 years old	45	21.4
		Total	210	100.0
3	Do you participate in any socio-emotional learning programs at your school?	Yes	54	25.7
		No	156	74.3
		Total	210	100.0
4	How long have you been attending this school?	2 Years	7	3.3
		3 Years or More	203	96.7
		Total	210	100.0
5	Do you have access to any additional support in your school	Yes	32	15.2
		No	178	84.8
		Total	210	100.0

6	Parent's Participation in Your Education	Never	7	3.3
		Rarely	14	6.7
		Occasionally	63	30.0
		Frequently	59	28.1
		Always	67	31.9
		Total	210	100.0
7	Teacher's Participation in Your Socio-Emotional Learning	Never	21	10.0
		Rarely	62	29.5
		Occasionally	106	50.5
		Frequently	7	3.3
		Always	14	6.7
		Total	210	100.0

Source: SPSS result of Survey Data, (2025)

This section provides the demographic profile of participants in the study "The Relationship between Socio-Emotional Skills and Academic Achievement among Students in Private Middle Schools in Arada Sub-City, Addis Ababa." The demographic profile of the participants is crucial in interpreting results as well as in having useful information in terms of how students' social and personal backgrounds may affect their socio-emotional growth and academic performance.

As for gender split, the study had 210 participants and quite an even split: there were 98 males (46.7%) and 112 females (53.3%). This relatively even split allows for an inclusive gender comparison of socio-emotional learning and academic outcomes. From research that has been done, gender can influence emotional intelligence and socio-emotional activity levels, with females on average scoring higher for socio-emotional abilities, which can have a positive impact on outcomes in school.

Age wise, the majority of the students (67.6%) were 13 years old, followed by 21.4% who were 14 years old and 11.0% who were 12 years old. This indicates that the majority of the participants were in early adolescence, an age that is characterized by increased self-consciousness, emotional control, and formation of social identity. Given that socio-emotional competencies are particularly crucial at this age, such ages are very consistent with the study focus.

When asked if they had participated in any socio-emotional learning programme in school, only 25.7% of the respondents indicated that they had been involved in the programme, while 74.3% indicated that they had not. This large disparity suggests that many of the participating schools lacked formal SEL programs, although mounting evidence has been linking SEL with increased academic performance as well as total health.

School attendance was also probed for duration. Almost a majority (96.7%) of students reported attending school for three or more years, while only 3.3% of them had been in school for two years.

Long duration of attendance may lead to stability in the learning environment and improved peer and teacher relations, which are critical in socio-emotional development. In terms of access to other support services—training, counseling, or mentoring—only 15.2% of the students reported such access while a staggering 84.8% reported no such additional support. This kind of emotional or psychological support shortfall can limit access to stress and interpersonal management by students, thus having a negative impact on their performance. Parent involvement was also a variable taken into consideration in student development. A total of 31.9% of students reported that their parents always participated in their education, and 30% reported occasional participation.

However, a small percentage of the respondents noted no or minimal parental participation, with 3.3% reporting their parents never participating. High levels of parental participation are occasionally associated with better grades and increased emotional competence among students.

Involvement of teachers in socio-emotional learning was reported to be moderate. 50.5% of the students reported that teachers sometimes supported their socio-emotional learning, while 29.5% of them said teachers hardly did so, and 10% reported that teachers took no part. However, only 6.7% reported that teachers always offered SEL assistance. That is to say, there is some inconsistency in the implementation of SEL in classroom practice on a day-to-day basis, which can be addressed with teacher training as well as curriculum design.

Generally, demographic distribution of the survey respondents reveals some significant trends to the study objectives. Although gender and age distributions were even and appropriate for the analysis of early adolescent socio-emotional development, the data revealed significant gaps in institutional and programmatic support for SEL. The low participation levels in organized SEL programs, limited availability to additional support services, and inconsistent teacher roles suggest that most students may not be receiving the coordinated support to foster high-quality socio-emotional development. Conversely, relatively high parental involvement presents a potential area of strength that can still be further leveraged.

4.3. Descriptive Analysis of Social Emotional Competence

Here, the students' views on socio-emotional skills based on questionnaire responses are listed. Descriptive statistics frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation were used in the data analysis.

A Likert scale with 5 points ranging from "Strongly Disagree" (1) to "Strongly Agree" (5) was employed. According to Zaidaton and Bagheri (2009), mean scores of less than 3.39 are low, 3.40 to 3.79 are moderate, and above 3.80 are high.

The results reveal mixed scores, with some socio-emotional skills highly rated and others rated moderately. This reveals both the strengths and weaknesses. The analysis points to the significance of these skills in influencing students' learning experiences in Arada Sub-City private middle schools.

4.3.1. Descriptive Analysis of Social Emotional Competence

Table 4: Descriptive Analysis of Self-Awareness

S/N	Items	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	SD (%)	D (%)	N (%)	A (%)	SA (%)
1	I know what I am thinking and doing.	210	3.97	0.945	0.0%	3.3%	36.2%	21.0%	39.5%
2	I understand why I do what I do.	210	4.00	0.966	0.0%	3.3%	36.7%	17.1%	42.9%
3	I understand my moods and feelings.	210	4.18	0.889	0.0%	3.3%	21.9%	28.1%	46.7%
4	I know when I am moody.	210	4.22	0.898	0.0%	3.3%	21.4%	24.8%	50.5%
5	I can read people's faces when they are angry.	210	3.90	0.938	0.0%	3.3%	39.5%	21.4%	35.7%
	Self-Awareness Average %		4.05	0.93	0.0%	3.3%	31.1%	22.5%	43.1%

Source: SPSS result of Survey Data, (2025)

Self-awareness is also a crucial aspect of emotional intelligence that will influence one's personal growth, school performance, and interpersonal relationships. Self-awareness allows students to recognize and understand their own emotions, thoughts, and behavior, and how they affect other people.

Here self-awareness in 210 participants is tested using five Likert-scale items measuring how well an individual knows their thoughts, motives, feelings, and their ability to read others' feelings.

The first statement, "I know what I am thinking and doing," had an average of 3.97 and a standard deviation of 0.945, which indicates very high agreement. While 0.0% of the participants strongly disagreed and 3.3% only disagreed, 36.2% were neutral. Surprisingly, 21.0% agreed and 39.5% strongly agreed. These figures imply that most of the participants are well aware of their actions and thoughts at the time.

The second affirmation, "I know why I do what I do," was on average 4.00 with a standard deviation of 0.966. Strong disagreements were not found here, and only 3.3% disagreed. A huge percentage, 36.7%, was neutral, 17.1% agreed, and 42.9% strongly agreed. This is an indication of overall sentiment of internal motivation and reflective awareness among the respondents.

The third statement, "I know my feelings and moods," had a slightly higher mean of 4.18 with a standard deviation of 0.889. While 3.3% disagreed, 21.9% were neutral, and the majority answered positively—28.1% agreed and 46.7% strongly agreed. This shows that subjects are confident they can recognize their emotional states.

The fourth one, "I know when I am moody," had the highest mean of 4.22 and standard deviation of 0.898. There was disagreement by only 3.3% and neutrality by 21.4%. Although 24.8% agreed, there was a significant 50.5% strongly agreeing. These results infer a strong

presence of mood awareness, which reflects good emotional awareness.

The fifth item, "I can read people's faces when they are angry," had the lowest mean of the five at 3.90, and the standard deviation was 0.938. Although no one strongly disagreed, 3.3% disagreed, 39.5% were neutral, 21.4% agreed, and 35.7% strongly agreed. This item had the greatest number of neutral responses among the other items, suggesting that participants are not as confident about being able to read other people's emotional faces, particularly anger.

Typically, the total average mean score on self-awareness for all items was 4.05 and a group standard deviation of 0.93. This indicates a high overall level of self-awareness. The average percentages per Likert category were 0.0% strongly disagreed, 3.3% disagreed, 31.1% neutral, 22.5% agreed, and 43.1% strongly agreed. These figures would suggest that most respondents have a good awareness of their thinking, behavior, and emotional states. However, the slightly lower score of individuals' facial expression points towards the need for development of social awareness, which is analogous to self-awareness of the individual in emotional intelligence theory. The results corroborate with the existing literature on emotional intelligence. Goleman (1995) and Salovey & Mayer (1990) both emphasize that high self-awareness supports emotional control, goal setting, and interpersonal communication. Also, Bar-On (2006) and Schutte et al. (1998) suggest the need for identification of one's own emotions in order to develop empathy and handle social relationships in a proper way.

4.3.2. Descriptive Analysis of Social Awareness

Table 5: Descriptive Analysis of Social Awareness

S/N	Items	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	SD (%)	D (%)	N (%)	A (%)	SA (%)
1	I recognize how people feel by looking at their facial expressions.	210	3.74	1.199	7.6%	3.3%	32.4%	21.0%	35.7%
2	It is easy for me to understand why people feel the way they do.	210	3.73	1.131	3.8%	7.1%	36.7%	17.1%	35.2%
3	If someone is sad, angry, or happy, I believe I know what they are thinking.	210	4.15	0.876	0.0%	3.3%	21.9%	31.4%	43.3%
4	I understand why people react the way they do.	210	3.92	1.078	0.0%	14.8%	17.6%	28.1%	39.5%
5	If a friend is upset, I have a pretty good idea why.	210	3.55	1.190	3.8%	14.8%	35.7%	13.8%	31.9%
	Social Awareness Average %		3.82	1.095	3.0%	8.7%	28.9%	22.3%	37.1%

Source: SPSS result of Survey Data, (2025)

Social awareness is also an essential element of emotional intelligence that requires sensitivity and attention to others' feelings, needs, and concerns. Social awareness influences interpersonal relationships, empathy, and communication. Five items are being assessed in this section to identify the ability of the respondents to perceive and recognize others' social and emotional signals. The first, "I can tell how people feel from their face," had a mean of 3.74 and a standard deviation of 1.199. While 3.3% disagreed and 7.6% strongly disagreed, a considerable percentage, 32.4%, declined to give an opinion either way. On the positive side, 21.0% agreed and 35.7% strongly agreed. This is a moderate belief by the respondents to be capable of reading other's facial expressions, although most of them are not sure or cannot.

The second item, "It is easy for me to understand why people feel the way they do," had a mean of 3.73 and a standard deviation of 1.131. Here, 3.8% strongly disagreed and 7.1% disagreed, while 36.7% were neutral. The positive answers were 17.1% agreed and 35.2% strongly agreed. This high rate of neutrals reflects some uncertainty but still the overall 52.3% agreement levels reflect a fairly good ability to resonate with others' affective states.

The third, "If someone is sad, angry, or happy, I think I know what they are thinking," had a fairly high mean of 4.15 and low standard deviation of 0.876. Nobody disagreed very strongly, and only 3.3% disagreed. 21.9% were neutral, and notably 43.3% agreed and 31.4% strongly agreed. These were clear indicators of emotional sensitivity and the ability to read emotional cues accurately from others.

The fourth statement, "I know why people behave the way they do," was scored on a mean of 3.92 and a standard deviation of 1.078. No one disagreed strongly, although 14.8% disagreed and 17.6% did not know. On the positive side, 28.1% agreed and 39.5% agreed strongly. These show high degrees of knowledge of the reasons why people behave as they do, despite a high

percentage being in a state of disagreement or doubt.

The fifth statement, "If a friend is upset, I have a pretty good idea why," received the lowest mean of 3.55 with a standard deviation of 1.190. Around 3.8% strongly disagreed and 14.8% disagreed. Most were neutral at 35.7%, but only 13.8% agreed and 31.9% strongly agreed. These results show that while certain of the respondents were certain about identifying emotional distress in their friends, a large percentage are either undecided or unsure about understanding their emotional responses.

Overall, the total mean score for social awareness was 3.82 and the mean standard deviation was 1.095, suggesting a relatively high degree of social perception from the respondents. The mean percentages of the Likert-scale were: 3.0% strongly disagreed, 8.7% disagreed, 28.9% neutral, 22.3% agreed, and 37.1% strongly agreed. The outcomes suggest that most respondents possess a fair to strong ability to recognize emotions in others, but there is evidently variation, especially in more subtle interpersonal situations like judging reasons for a person's distress. This finding is in line with early research in emotional intelligence. Social awareness is how Goleman (1995) defines a key component of social intelligence and defines it as playing a vital role in empathy, service orientation, and awareness of the organization. Salovey and Mayer (1990) also highlight that this ability to identify emotions in others plays a crucial part in communication competence and social adjustment. Each level of concord here also illustrates Bar-On's (2006) understanding that emotional competencies develop unevenly and are influenced by individual, social, and situational determinants.

4.3.3. Descriptive Analysis of Self-Management

Table 6: Descriptive Analysis of Self-Management

S/N	Items	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	SD (%)	D (%)	N (%)	A (%)	SA (%)
1	I can stay calm in stressful situations.	210	3.85	0.969	0.0%	6.2%	36.7%	22.9%	34.3%
2	I stay calm and overcome anxiety in new or changing situations.	210	3.90	0.949	0.0%	3.3%	40.0%	19.5%	37.1%
3	I stay calm when things go wrong.	210	4.01	0.883	0.0%	3.3%	28.1%	32.4%	36.2%
4	I can control the way I feel when something bad happens.	210	4.23	0.867	0.0%	3.3%	18.6%	30.0%	48.1%
5	When I am upset with someone, I wait till I calm down before discussing.	210	3.96	0.885	0.0%	3.3%	31.0%	31.9%	33.8%
	Self-Management Average %		3.99	0.911	0.0%	3.9%	30.9%	27.3%	37.9%

Source: SPSS result of Survey Data, (2025)

Self-management is one of the emotional intelligence features that explain to what level individuals manage their emotions, particularly during stress or challenging situations. The table above presents the participants' capability to remain calm, manage anxiety, and control their

emotional responses whenever they face adversity or disagreement among themselves.

The first statement, "I can be calm when under stressful conditions," had an average score of 3.85 with a standard deviation of 0.969. Surprisingly, no subject strongly disagreed with this statement, but 6.2% disagreed and 36.7% were neutral. However, over half of the subjects—22.9% agreed and 34.3% strongly agreed—were certain that they could remain calm while under stress.

For the second statement, "I stay calm and manage anxiety in new or changing situations," the mean was slightly higher at 3.90 with a standard deviation of 0.949. In this case, there was no robust disagreement reported, as only 3.3% disagreed. Nevertheless, 40% were neutral, reflecting some ambiguity or disparity in how participants manage feelings of anxiety in new or changing situations. Nonetheless, a total of 56.6% agreed or strongly agreed that they manage these feelings well.

The third statement, "I remain calm when things go wrong," also recorded a mean of 4.01 and a lower standard deviation of 0.883, indicating higher consensus. For this, there was no strong disagreement among any participant, and just 3.3% disagreed. About 60% of the participants agreed (32.4%) or strongly agreed (36.2%) that they remain emotionally calm during setbacks, indicating a reasonably strong ability to handle difficult situations.

When asked, "I can control the way I feel when something bad happens," participants had the highest mean score of 4.23 and the lowest standard deviation of 0.867. No high level of disagreement was noted, where only 3.3% of the participants disagreed and the rest (78.1%) agreed or strongly agreed that they could control how they felt in difficult situations. This shows the majority of the participants have a high degree of emotional control.

Finally, the answer "When I am angry with someone, I wait until I have cooled down before

talking about it" recorded a mean of 3.96 with a standard deviation of 0.885. No one disagreed strongly, and 3.3% of them disagreed. About one-third were neutral (31%), while about 66% agreed (31.9%) or strongly agreed (33.8%) that they slow down and calm themselves before handling conflict, indicating reflective emotional regulation in social relationships.

A mean score of 3.99 and standard deviation of 0.911 was obtained for the self-management scale. The response distribution on the Likert scale was: 0.0% strongly disagreed, 3.9% disagreed, 30.9% neutral, 27.3% agreed, and 37.9% strongly agreed. The results show that most of the respondents have a high level of emotional regulation, especially in managing unpleasant feelings or stressful situations. But the seeming rate of neutral response indicates that there are a few who are still gaining confidence or consistency in self-management capacity.

These findings resonate strongly with earlier emotional intelligence studies, showing that effective management of self is necessary to reduce stress, prevent acting on impulse, and attain better interpersonal relationships (Goleman, 1995; Salovey & Mayer, 1990). The ability to remain calm and control emotions lies at the heart of not only individual well-being but also occupational success and social harmony.

These findings also concur with those of Gross and Munoz (1995) and Goleman (1995), who hypothesized that emotional regulation is a critical facet of emotional intelligence which has implications for both well-being and school performance.

4.3.4. Descriptive Analysis of Relationship Skills

Table 7: Descriptive Analysis of Relationship Skills

S/N	Items	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	SD (%)	D (%)	N (%)	A (%)	SA (%)
1	I apologize when I hurt my friend unintentionally.	210	3.85	1.070	3.8%	3.3%	32.9%	24.3%	35.7%
2	I try to comfort my friends when they are sad.	210	3.44	1.252	11.4%	3.3%	43.3%	13.8%	28.1%
3	I try not to criticize my friend when we quarrel.	210	3.62	1.278	11.4%	3.3%	29.0%	24.3%	31.9%
4	I am tolerant of my friend's mistakes.	210	4.07	1.076	3.8%	3.3%	21.4%	24.8%	46.7%
5	I stand up for myself without putting others down.	210	3.70	1.205	7.6%	3.3%	35.7%	17.6%	35.7%
	Relationship Skills Average %		3.74	1.18	7.6%	3.3%	32.5%	20.9%	35.6%

Source: SPSS result of Survey Data, (2025)

Relationship skills refer to the extent to which individuals interact well with others, in particular in the sense of maintaining healthy and supportive relationships. This table displays participants' self-ratings in skills such as apologizing, comforting friends, conflict resolution, tolerance, and assertiveness.

The most robust item was the initial one, "I apologize when I hurt my friend by accident," with a mean value of 3.85 and standard deviation of 1.070. Even though 3.8% very strongly disagreed and 3.3% disagreed, the majority held positive attitudes: 24.3% agreed and 35.7% very strongly agreed that they take responsibility and apologize sincerely. This suggests that the majority of participants enjoy reconciling relationships and taking responsibility.

For "I try to comfort my friends when they are sad," the mean was lower at 3.44, and the standard deviation was greater at 1.252, indicating more varied responses. Interestingly, 11.4% strongly disagreed with the activity, meaning that comforting others will come naturally to some participants. To give this some perspective, 43.3% were neutral, and only about 42% agreed or strongly agreed. This pairing holds promise for improvement in demonstrating empathy and emotional support.

The item "I try not to criticize my friend when we quarrel" was of a mean of 3.62 and with a high standard deviation of 1.278. In the same vein as comforting friends, 11.4% disagreed very much and 29% were neutral. Combined, 56% agreed or agreed very much, and that is to say that although numerous strive to manage conflict by being polite when they speak, other individuals do not complement conflict well with being critical.

With respect to tolerance, "I am tolerant of my friend's mistakes" had the highest mean value of 4.07 with a standard deviation of 1.076. In this, the majority of respondents were sure of being tolerant towards others' faults as 24.8% showed agreement and 46.7% showed strong agreement.

Strongly disagree was mere 3.8%, indicating that there exists a strong culture of patience and acceptability among respondents.

Lastly, "I stand up for myself without putting others down" also had a mean of 3.70 and a standard deviation of 1.205. Even though 7.6% strongly disagreed, 35.7% strongly agreed that they could stand up for themselves in a respectful manner. This was a demonstration of respect and assertiveness in interactions with people, although some of the participants may be in the process of learning this skill.

The average interpersonal skills score was 3.74 and the standard deviation was large at 1.18, indicating a general moderate but somewhat variable level of interpersonal competence in participants. The pattern of responses up and down the Likert scale was 7.6% strongly disagree, 3.3% disagree, 32.5% neutral, 20.9% agree, and 35.6% strongly agree. These results suggest that the vast majority of individuals possess healthy relationship abilities such as tolerance, apologizing, and assertiveness but with some variation, especially in comforting others and conflict resolution without fault-finding.

Variation aligns with social-emotional learning literature, which asserts that the development of relationship skills is the outcome of learning from experience and reflecting on it (Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning [CASEL], 2020). Relationship skills operate in guiding not only personal satisfaction but also cooperation, conflict resolution, and community building. Past research also shows that students have skills in apologizing, comforting, not blaming, and tolerating others' mistakes. All these skills are consonant with the cultivation of emotional intelligence, as demonstrated by Goleman (1995) and Saarni (1999), and are most critical in building good interpersonal relationships.

4.3.5. Descriptive Analysis of Responsible Decision-Making

Table 8: Descriptive Analysis of Responsible Decision-Making

S/N	Items	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	SD (%)	D (%)	N (%)	A (%)	SA (%)
1	When making decisions, I take into account the consequences of my actions.	210	3.84	1.086	4.3%	3.3%	32.4%	24.3%	35.7%
2	I ensure that there are more positive outcomes when making a choice.	210	3.94	0.926	0.0%	3.3%	35.7%	24.3%	36.7%
3	I weigh the strengths of the situation before deciding on my action.	210	4.18	0.876	1.0%	3.3%	15.2%	38.1%	42.4%
4	I consider the criteria chosen before making a recommendation.	210	4.22	0.880	1.0%	3.3%	14.3%	35.7%	45.7%
5	I consider the strengths and weaknesses of the strategy before deciding to use it.	210	3.94	0.864	0.0%	3.3%	30.5%	35.2%	31.0%
	Responsible Decision-Making Average %		4.02	0.93	1.3%	3.3%	25.6%	31.5%	38.3%

Source: SPSS result of Survey Data, (2025)

Decision-making responsibility is a very critical competence that reflects the way individuals evaluate options, forecast outcomes, and make choices that lead to fruitful outcomes. Overall, the results reveal a general inclination on the part of the respondents towards conservative and cautious decision-making.

For instance, the saying "When making decisions, I think about what I might do if something goes wrong" was rated 3.84 on the mean and 1.086 on the standard deviation. While 4.3% strongly disagreed and 3.3% disagreed, 24.3% agreed and 35.7% strongly agreed—exhibited awareness of consequences when they were deciding. This indicates that most of the respondents are conscious of the necessity of looking ahead in their decisions.

Similarly, "I ensure there are more favorable outcomes when making a decision" also had a higher mean of 3.94 with no respondents strongly disagreeing and only 3.3% disagreeing in total. Nearly 61% agreed or strongly agreed with this item, again reflecting the focus placed on causing positive outcomes.

The most highly scored items were "I weigh the strengths of the situation before deciding on my action" (4.18) and "I consider the criteria chosen before making a recommendation" (4.22). These items also showed relatively low disagreement rates (1.0% strongly disagreeing, 3.3% disagreeing), which suggests that most participants weigh things up before ultimately deciding. This analytical style of decision-making is reflective of a contemplative and strategic approach.

The final one, "I consider the strengths and weaknesses of the strategy prior to its implementation," recorded a mean of 3.94 with the majority falling in the direction of agreement or strong agreement. There was a very small minority (3.3%) that disagreed, and this shows that respondents do take time to reflect and deliberate when selecting strategies.

Overall mean score of 4.02 and standard deviation of 0.93 for responsible decision-making reflected high responsibility in decision-making tendencies among respondents. The range of response showed that a meager 1.3% strongly disagreed, 3.3% disagreed, 25.6% were undecided, while a cumulative 69.8% agreed or strongly agreed. This demonstrates that the majority of respondents carefully consider decisions and reflect on consequences, outcomes, and related standards before acting.

These results follow earlier studies, which emphasize that effective decision-making is associated with greater problem-solving, ethical decision-making, and responsibility (Bandura, 1986; Dewey, 1910). Thinking through possibilities and the ability to anticipate outcomes are elements of effective personal and social functioning.

These results are similar to Jones et al. (2016) and Zins et al. (2007) studies, which indicate the importance of such skills in emotional intelligence. The low mean scores reflect that there must be increased focus on education in responsible decision-making activities because they are the foundation of personal and academic success. The variability in response, as attested to by the moderate standard deviations, indicates that while there are students who can make proper decisions, many others would require extra counseling and guidance so they may acquire such potential.

4.3.6. Summary of Descriptive Analysis

Table 9: Summery of Descriptive Analysis

S/N	Descriptive Statistics	Mean	Std. Deviation
1	Self-Awareness	4.05	0.720
2	Social Awareness	3.82	0.839
3	Self-Management	3.99	0.684
4	Relationship Skills	3.74	0.861
5	Responsible Decision-Making	4.02	0.713

Source: SPSS result of Survey Data, (2025)

Table 9 shows Grade 6 private school students in Arada Sub-City social and emotional competencies as perceived by themselves. The five basic areas that were measured are Self-Awareness, Social Awareness, Self-Management, Relationship Skills, and Responsible Decision-Making. The scores overall suggest the students are largely confident with their ability in these life competencies, and all the scores were near the top of the range.

Under Self-Awareness, the students scored themselves high at 4.05 out of 5. This shows that they are very aware of their weaknesses and strengths and how they feel. Self-awareness is crucial because it helps the students recognize when they are not doing it and when they are doing it, and this may prompt them to ask for help or celebrate.

Responsible Decision-Making was also very high, with an average of 4.02, which shows students do feel they are able to make ethical and considerate decisions—skills that are useful

both in and outside the classroom.

Self-Management, or managing emotions and staying on task, was almost as high at 3.99. This indicates that students like to think they can manage stress and control their emotions, which they will need to do in order to stay motivated and be capable of doing assignments successfully. Social Awareness was slightly lower but still a high score at 3.82, so students like to think they understand other individuals' feelings and perspectives, though there could be some differences from individual to individual.

The lowest area of skill students believed they were capable in was Relationship Skills, at a rate of 3.74. Still a high rate, it does mean there will be some students who will find it harder to build and maintain good relationships with other students and staff. As good relationships can make school a more enjoyable and beneficial place, this is one area schools could do with some additional work.

These findings are consistent with what has been found in other research. For instance, research on the development of these skills would indicate that self-awareness and decision-making come earlier and are more of a natural process, whereas relationship building will take time and effort (Zins et al., 2007; Jones & Bouffard, 2012). The generally flat scores here are an indication these students are building a strong base of social and emotional abilities, although assisting them in building their relationships would make their overall well-being and academic achievement even more pronounced.

In total, the students in these schools feel they are managing their emotions, making appropriate decisions, and coming to know themselves and others. Creating improvement in the way they communicate and relate to others can very well produce a more positive and supportive learning atmosphere that benefits all of them.

4.4. Correlations of Analysis

The knowledge of students' academic performance and social-emotional competence has become a core field of educational research. Social-emotional learning (SEL) is a set of abilities that enable individuals to recognize and manage emotions, form healthy relationships, make responsible decisions, and resolve interpersonal conflicts effectively. These abilities are more outlined as the pillars of academic performance, underlying cognitive functions and acquiring well-rounded student success (CASEL, 2020).

As the attention to SEL models such as the CASEL model continues to grow, the need exists to empirically investigate the degree to which different aspects of social-emotional competence are associated with academic achievement across different schooling contexts. These studies provide evidence for the use of SEL programs within school curricula.

4.4.1. Correlation between the Social Emotional Skill and Academic Achievement

The aim of the study was to identify whether or not there is a relationship between social emotional competence sub-scales of students of some private middle schools in Arada sub city and academic achievement are measured and interpreted which are as follows:

Table 10: Correlation between Sub-scales of Social-emotional Competencies and Academic

Achievement

Correlations							
		Self-Awareness	Social Awareness	Self-Management	Relationship Skills	Responsible Decision-Making	Student Academic Achievement
Self-Awareness	Pearson Correlation	1					
	Sig. (2-tailed)						
	N	210					
Social Awareness	Pearson Correlation	1.000**	1				
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000					
	N	210	210				
Self-Management	Pearson Correlation	.880**	.880**	1			
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000				
	N	210	210	210			
Relationship Skills	Pearson Correlation	.752**	.752**	.789**	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000			
	N	210	210	210	210		
Responsible Decision-Making	Pearson Correlation	.892**	.892**	.831**	.794**	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000		
	N	210	210	210	210	210	
Student Academic Achievement	Pearson Correlation	.711**	.711**	.691**	.643**	.747**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	
	N	210	210	210	210	210	210

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: SPSS result of Survey Data, (2025)

The findings of the present study revealed statistically strong and positive correlations between sub-domains of social-emotional competencies—viz., Self-Awareness ($r = .711$, $p < .01$), Social Awareness ($r = .711$, $p < .01$), Self-Management ($r = .691$, $p < .01$),

Relationship Skills ($r = .643, p < .01$), and Responsible Decision-Making ($r = .747, p < .01$)—and Student Academic Achievement. These results are also consistent with the theoretical foundations of the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) model, which places the development of five key competencies at the center of students' academic and personal success (CASEL, 2020). The present results are comparable to those of earlier studies that emphasized the important contribution of social-emotional learning (SEL) to academic success.

The study was in alignment with the previous research evidence Ross and Tolan (2017) examined the five-factor CASEL model in a large longitudinal sample and reported that there were positive and high correlations between SEL skills and academic performance in U.S. fifth-grade students. Naseem, Naseer, and Rahim (2024) also found all five CASEL domains had positive and significant correlations with academic performance in distance learning students further confirming the collective benefit of SEL.

In the same vein, Kasikci and Ozhan (2021) found that 18% of the variance of academic achievement of middle school students was accounted for by students' SEL competencies with a moderate to strong correlation. Furthermore, the present findings are strongly in line with studies of emotional intelligence, a trait that is highly correlated with SEL. Suleman et al. (2019) reported a very high correlation ($r = .880$) between emotional intelligence and academic achievement in a sample of Pakistani college students. Jenaabadi et al. (2015) reported a very high positive correlation ($r = .69$) in Iranian secondary school students. These convergent results at varying ages and cultures reflect the robustness of the relation of socio-emotional skills and academic success. Taken together, this evidence tips the balance in support of the inclusion of SEL in school curricula. Not only does such inclusion increase students' intrapersonal and

interpersonal skills, but it also has a significant effect on their academic achievement, especially if informed by models like that of the CASEL.

4.4.2 Correlation between Overall Social Emotional Skill and Academic Performance

Table 11: Correlation between Sub-scales of Social-emotional Competencies and Academic Achievement

Correlations			
		Total Socio-Emotional Score	Student Academic Achievement
Total Socio-Emotional Score	Pearson Correlation	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)		
	N	210	
Student Academic Achievement	Pearson Correlation	.765**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	210	210
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).			

Source: SPSS result of Survey Data, (2025)

There is a significant and strong positive correlation between the total socio-emotional competency score and students' academic achievement ($r = .765$, $p < .01$), as indicated in Table 11. Here, it can be observed that where students' social-emotional competence is better, their respective academic performance also gets better accordingly. The correlation coefficient is well above the widely accepted minimum for a psychological study of a strong relationship, typically at $r \geq .50$ (Cohen, 1988), thus validating the strong impact of social-emotional learning (SEL) on academic performance.

These findings are in line with an expanding empirical literature identifying the crucial role of SEL in promoting academic achievement. For instance, Ross and Tolan (2017) examined the five-factor CASEL model in a large longitudinal sample and found there were strong positive correlations between SEL skills and academic achievement for U.S. fifth-grade students. Similarly, Naseem, Naseer, and Rahim (2024) reported that all five CASEL domains showed positive and significant relationships with academic achievement in distance learning students further establishing the collective merit of SEL. In another related study, Kasikci and Ozhan (2021) determined that students' SEL skills accounted for 18% of the variance in academic achievement in middle school students, showing a moderate to strong relationship. Moreover, the present results are very congruent with studies examining emotional intelligence, a construct strongly related to SEL.

Suleman et al. (2019) discovered a very high correlation ($r = .880$) between emotional intelligence and academic performance among a sample of Pakistani undergraduates. Jenaabadi et al. (2015) also discovered a strong positive correlation ($r = .69$) between Iranian high school students. These convergent results across different age groups and cultures underscore the robustness of the relationship between socio-emotional capabilities and school achievement. Considered in aggregate, this evidence militates in favor of the inclusion of SEL in school curricula. Not only does such inclusion increase students' intrapersonal and interpersonal skills, but it also meaningfully adds to their academic performance, particularly when guided by models like that of the CASEL.

4.5. Qualitative Data Analysis

This section presents the qualitative data analysis of teachers' and school principals' semi-structured interviews at six private middle schools in Arada Sub-City, Addis Ababa. Analysis

here examines how socio-emotional learning (SEL) is linked with academic achievement, i.e., how SEL components—self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making—are perceived to influence students' performance. The responses were coded and analyzed to identify dominant themes and findings regarding the implementation and effects of SEL programs within these schools.

Data analysis is based on research objectives that aim to explore how the five socio-emotional skills (self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making) influence students' academic outcomes. Through the responses of teachers and principals to the interview questions, we gained more information about the role of SEL in private middle schools and how it is related to students' learning and behavior. The analysis involved coding responses under the broad themes that correspond to each purpose to fit the study's variables.

Self-Awareness and Academic Achievement Principals and teachers were queried as to the impact of students' knowledge of their own strengths and feelings. In both groups, it was emphasized that self-awareness plays a crucial part in students' performance in the classroom. Self-aware students can better control their emotions, benefiting academic work.

One teacher responded, "*When students understand their emotions, they can control themselves better. If they get stressed, for instance, they understand how to relax before they can carry out work, and this leads to improved concentration and performance in class.*" Another school principal commented, "*Self-awareness allows the student to see their strengths as well as weaknesses, and that raises their confidence and academic performance.*" This indicates that students with a high degree of self-awareness are more likely to address learning in an effective manner, enhancing their academic performance.

Self-Management and Academic Achievement: From a self-management perspective, the majority of teachers reported that students who were able to self-manage and maintain a focus for difficult activities or high-stress situations tended to perform better academically. Impulse control and being able to handle time were mentioned as major factors.

A teacher stated, *"Students who manage their emotions and are focused on work do well." For instance, if they are able to keep their cool during test dates or with challenging content, they're likely to score higher. "When students can regulate their emotions, whether frustration or impatience, they can stay focused on their schoolwork, which looks good on their grades,"* a principal added as well. That means emotional regulation and focus are critical for attaining higher levels of academic achievement.

Social Awareness and Academic Success: Social awareness, empathy for others, and respect for varied opinions were found to be highly correlated with good classroom behavior and academic achievement. Teachers and principals noted that socially aware students better participate in group work and are more considerate of the opinions of others, reflecting a peaceful learning environment.

One teacher described it thus: *"Kids who have empathy and others' viewpoints are more likely to be positives to work with on group projects and class discussions. This group effort makes learning more effective, which improves grades."* Another school administrator had this to say: "Social awareness creates a positive classroom environment, where students are comfortable sharing ideas and working together." This cooperation most often yields better academic results. The responses indicate that knowledge of the social initiates' cooperation, which subsequently enables success in academics.

Relationship Skills and Academic Success: Principals and teachers said that students who possess good relationship skills—good communication, listening, and conflict resolution—were more motivated and successful. Positive peer relationships correlated with increased student engagement and a positive classroom climate.

A teacher stated, *"Students who get along with others are more likely to work with their classmates, and they have an easier time solving conflicts."* This creates a positive classroom climate where everyone is encouraged to contribute, thereby enhancing performance. One principal went on to add, *"If students can communicate well with their peers and teachers, they feel more connected to the learning process, and it leads to better academic performance."* These results suggest that positive interpersonal relationships within the classroom lead to a climate conducive to learning and academic achievement.

Responsible Decision-Making and Academic Achievement:: The connection between accountable decision-making and academic success was emphasized by teachers and principals, who indicated that students who take responsible decisions about their academic assignments, studying, and time management tend to do well academically.

One teacher reported, *"Pupils who are responsible in making choices in their learning, such as planning tasks and seeking assistance when necessary, will perform better academically."* They are more disciplined and committed to studying." Another principal of a school stated, *"Appropriate decision-making allows students to manage their schoolwork, avoid procrastination, and improve their performance overall."* These responses indicate that responsible decision-making is a fundamental factor for academic success, particularly time management.

General Implementation and School Support: Responding to questions on strategies utilized for the development of socio-emotional skills among students, there were some recurring themes. The majority of the principals and teachers noted that SEL is integrated in the curriculum through specific activities, discussion, and role-playing activities. A principal, for example, said, *"We conduct workshops on managing emotions and conflict resolution and incorporate SEL activities in our everyday lessons to allow students to learn these."* Teachers also mentioned implementing group discussion and reflection activities to enable self-awareness and social skills. Challenges were mentioned as well.

One teacher explained, *"The greatest challenge we have is the inability to provide proper training and resources to integrate SEL into curriculum entirely."* Additional professional development for teachers would be appreciated. Principals agreed, one noting, *"While we have a good SEL foundation, it is limited by not having enough materials and time."* These quotes indicate the need for greater training and assistance to successfully apply SEL.

School Leadership and Support: School leadership support was also referred to as being a necessary element in successfully integrating SEL into the curriculum. Principals emphasized that SEL must be prioritized and sustained by leadership. One principal indicated, *"As a leader, I ensure SEL is included in our school vision and that teachers are provided with the resources and support to carry out these programs effectively."*

Another educator described, *"The school leaders have a vital role to play in promoting SEL through a positive climate and by encouraging teachers to make these practices work."* This points out the fact that good leadership is essential to the integration of SEL and enhancing the academic performance of the students.

In summary, qualitative analysis of data indicated that Students who are able to regulate their own emotions, empathize with individuals, communicate effectively, and make good choices excel academically. However, challenges such as inadequate sufficient resources and teachers' training were discovered to be barriers in fully implementing SEL programs. Also highlighted were the school leadership support and how it played a role in ensuring the effective implementation of SEL into the curriculum. Overall, the findings from the study show that SEL plays a major role in the academic success of the students and should be prioritized within the school environment.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter presents a summary of the key findings, conclusions drawn from the study, and the recommendations based on the results. The conclusions and recommendations aim to address the research objective, which was to assess the relationship between socio-emotional skills and academic achievement of students in private middle schools in Arada Sub-City, Addis Ababa.

5.1. Summary of the main Findings

The main purpose of this research was to investigate the relationship between socio-emotional competencies and academic achievement of private middle school students in Arada Sub-city, Addis Ababa.

Descriptive research design was employed, entailing both quantitative and qualitative methods to come up with a holistic understanding of the issue. Questionnaires were sent to 235 students from six middle schools under a structured format, and data were analyzed using SPSS version 26. Besides that, qualitative interviews were also carried out with twelve teachers and six school principals to further develop the understanding of the connection between socio-emotional skills and educational performance. The main findings are outlined below:

- ❖ **Response Rate:** With 235 questionnaires distributed and 210 returned, the response rate is a whopping 89%. This is above the recommended thresholds proposed by Fowler (60%), De Vaus (80%), and Mugenda and Mugenda (50% adequate, 60% good,) making it optimal and reliable for analysis.
- ❖ **Demographic Characteristics of respondents:** Among the 210 respondents, 53.3% were females and 46.7% were males. Slightly more than half (59.5%) were 12 years old, indicating a focus on

early adolescence. A surprisingly high rate of 74.3% of students answered that they had not participated in formal socio-emotional learning (SEL) programs, indicating an important area of unmet support. Moreover, although 96.7% of the participants had been at their respective school, for three or more years, only 15.2% had counseling available to them. Parent participation was largely positive, with 31.9% reporting frequent involvement. Teacher involvement in SEL was moderate, suggesting the need for increased commitment to SEL implementation and support services. These results indicate that students feel most confident in their self-awareness and decision-making abilities. However, Relationship Skills received the lowest average score, highlighting it as the area where students feel least confident, suggesting a need for targeted interventions to improve peer interaction capabilities.

- **Correlation Analysis:** All five SEL categories showed a positive correlation with academic performance. Among these, Responsible Decision-Making ($r = .747$) and Self-Awareness ($r = .711$) emerged as the most influential factors, underscoring their critical role in academic success. Relationship Skills ($r = .643$), while positively correlated, had the least impact compared to other SEL dimensions. The total SEL competence score was strongly associated with academic performance ($r = .765$), affirming that students with higher socio-emotional competencies tend to achieve better academically.

These results strongly support the CASEL framework, which identifies five core competencies as central to students' holistic development. The findings are also in agreement with numerous international studies. For example, Ross and Tolan (2017) and Kasikci and Ozhan (2021) found similar associations between SEL and academic outcomes in middle school contexts.

- **Qualitative Findings:** Interviews with teachers and principals confirmed the significant impact of SEL on academic performance. Key themes emphasized that self-awareness and responsible decision-making enhance students' emotional regulation, empathy, and cooperation, contributing to improved academic outcomes. However, challenges such as insufficient training, limited resources, and inadequate SEL program integration were noted as barriers. Effective school leadership was highlighted as essential for successful SEL implementation and prioritization in school curricula.

In summary, the study revealed a very strong positive correlation between socio-emotional competencies and academic achievement among private middle school students in Arada Sub-city, Addis Ababa. While all five SEL dimensions relate positively to academic success, special attention should be given to strengthening Responsible Decision-Making and Self-Awareness as primary drivers of student achievement.

5.2. Conclusion

This study examined the correlation between socio-emotional skills and provide middle school student' academic performance in Arada Sub-city, Addis Ababa. The study clearly demonstrate that socio-emotional skills play a significant role in students academic success . All five socio-emotional dimensions showed a positive correlation with academic success. Notably, responsible decision –making and self awareness emerged as the most essential factors, highlighting their critical importance in fostering students' academic growth. Conversely, Relationship Skills, while still positively linked to achievement, had a comparatively smaller impact, suggesting a need for greater focus on enhancing students' interpersonal competencies.

These findings were confirmed in interviews with teachers and principals, who described how socio-emotional skills help students manage their emotions, be more empathetic, and get

along better with others-all of which result in better school performance. At the same time, the study revealed some obstacles: the majority of schools have no overt socio-emotional learning initiatives, and teachers mostly lack training and resources necessary to promote these competencies.

From these results, it's clear that schools need to place more focus on adding socio-emotional learning to their curriculum. Increasing teacher training and providing additional leadership support are also necessary steps to allow students to gain these important skills and have more academic success. Ultimately, these domains will serve students both academically and in their overall personal growth.

5.3. Recommendation

From the findings of this study, the following are the recommendations for strengthening the development of socio-emotional skills and academic achievement among middle school students in Arada Sub-City private schools: atego

Integrate Structured Socio-Emotional Learning Programs: Schools should establish and implement formal SEL programs that prioritize all five essential competencies- self-awareness, social awareness, self-management, relationship skills, and responsible decision making – to support students' emotional and academic development.

Strengthen Teacher Training: Provide Steady training and professional development for teachers to empower them with the best practices and tools to promote socio-emotional capabilities in their classrooms.

Expand Access to Counseling Services: Schools must expand access to counseling and guidance services in an effort to help students deal with emotional challenges and improve their academic performance.

Strengthen school leadership support : School leaders should actively promote and give priority to socio-emotional learning programs by providing funding, supporting teacher involvement, and monitoring program implementation.

Encourage parental and community engagement: Parents and the general community can be engaged by schools to support the socio-emotional development of students through workshops, awareness-raising campaigns, and collaborative activities.

These recommendations can be used to develop a collaborative learning climate that optimizes students' socio-emotional capacities and academic attainment.

5.4. Suggestion for Future Research

The study evaluates that relationship between socio-emotional abilities and private middle school students' academic performance in Arada Sub-city, Addis Ababa. Although it had beneficial results, it also has some drawbacks that can be improved by future studies. Therefore, the following suggestions are submitted to future research:

- ❖ **Broader Scope:** Future studies need to extend beyond a single region and small sample size.

Research in other regions of Ethiopia or other school systems can provide a clearer understanding of the impact of socio-emotional skills on academic performance in varied contexts.

- ❖ **Expand the study to Government Schools:** Future research should incorporate students from government schools in order to make comparisons between socio-emotional development and

academic performance in various types of schools. The expanded scope could generate a more complete picture of the education system in Addis Ababa.

- ❖ Carry out Longitudinal Research: a longitudinal study design would enable the exploration of the long-term effect of socio-emotional learning on academic achievement. Tracking students over a number of years may provide a better image of how SEL influences academic and personal growth over time.
 - ❖ Examine the Teacher's SEL Competence Function: Further research can examine how teachers' own socio-emotional competencies affect the effectiveness of SEL programs and students' academic performance. This insight could help improve program and training design.
 - ❖ Study Other Variables Affecting: Further research ought to consider other variables that may mediate or moderate the relationship between socio-emotional skills and academic performance , such as socio-economic status, parental involvement, or school climate.
- by addressing these aspects, research in the future has the potential to contribute to a more refined conceptualization of socio-emotional skills and their role in educational attainment, in addition to providing actionable recommendations for supporting student growth.

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APPENDIX I: QUESTINERIE

ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION & LANGUAGE STUDIES SCHOOL OF
PSYCHOLOGY

Dear Respondents - First of all I would like to convey my gratitude for giving your precious time and energy to fill this questionnaire and contribute your part for the completion of this study.

Objective – The objective of the study is to examine “The relationship between socio-emotional skills and academic achievement of students in private middle schools in arada sub-city, Addis Ababa”. The Research is done as a partial fulfillment of academic requirements of M.A. degree in Psychology. The results of the study will have a paramount important to the institutions, to concerned government offices and policy makers and others. To this end, this questionnaire is prepared to gather pertinent information.

General Guideline - Please put tick mark (“√”) adjacent to your choice of the answer. Write your short answer for open ended questions.

Confidentiality - Any information gathered in this questionnaire will be used strictly for academic purpose only. There is no necessity to mention your name, position, department or branch and any response gathered from this questionnaire will be kept in private and treated with at most secrecy.

Therefore, I request your cooperation to properly complete all the items covered in the questionnaire since your genuine feedback is most importance in determining the study’s outcome. I thank you in advance for sharing your valuable experience and time in completing the questionnaire.

Sincerely,

Aziza Yusuf

Part I: -Demographic Information

Please fill in the following information by marking (✓) in the appropriate boxes.

1. Write your Reg. Number _____

2. Gender:

 Male

 Female

3. Age: _____

4. Do you participate in any socio-emotional learning programs at your school?

 Yes

 No

5. How long have you been attending this school?

 Less than 1 year

 1 year

 2 years

 3 years or more

6. Do you have access to any additional support in your school (e.g. counseling and training)?

 Yes

 No

7. Parent's Participation in Your Education: How often do your parents participate in your learning or educational activities (e.g. Assisting you in your study and attending parent-teacher meetings)?

Never

Rarely

Occasionally

Frequently

Always

8. Teacher's Participation in Your Socio-Emotional Learning: How often do your teachers engage in activities related to socio-emotional learning (e.g., teaching lessons on emotions, providing support, discussing social skills)?

Never

Rarely

Occasionally

Frequently

Always

Part II: Questions Related to the Social Emotional Competence Questionnaire (SECQ)

Please put right mark (√) on the spaces that specify your choice from the options that range from strongly agree to strongly disagree.

1-Strongly Disagree (SD) 2-Disagree (D) 3- Neutral (N) 4- Agree (A) 5- Strongly Agree (SA).

No.	Self-awareness	1	2	3	4	5
1	I know what I am thinking and doing.					
2	I understand why I do what I do.					
3	I understand my moods and feelings.					
4	I know when I am moody.					
5	I can read people's faces when they are angry.					
Social Awareness		1	2	3	4	5
1	I recognize how people feel by looking at their facial expressions.					
2	It is easy for me to understand why people feel the way they do.					
3	If someone is sad, angry, or happy, I believe I know what they are thinking.					
4	I understand why people react the way they do.					

No.	Self-awareness	1	2	3	4	5
5	If a friend is upset, I have a pretty good idea why.					
	Self-management					
1	I can stay calm in stressful situations.					
2	I stay calm and overcome anxiety in new or changing situations.					
3	I stay calm when things go wrong.					
4	I can control the way I feel when something bad happens.					
5	When I am upset with someone, I will wait till I have calmed down before discussing the issue.					
	Relationship Skills					
3	I try not to criticize my friend when we quarrel.					
1	I will always apologize when I hurt my friend unintentionally.					
2	I always try to comfort my friends when they are sad.					
4	I am tolerant of my friend's mistakes.					

No.	Self-awareness	1	2	3	4	5
5	I stand up for myself without putting others down.					
	Responsible Decision-Making					
1	When making decisions, I take into account the consequences of my actions.					
2	I ensure that there are more positive outcomes when making a choice					
3	I weigh the strengths of the situation before deciding on my action.					
4	I consider the criteria chosen before making a recommendation.					
5	I consider the strengths and weaknesses of the strategy before deciding to use it.					

Thank you for Your Cooperation!

APPENDIX II: AMHARIC VERSION QUESTINERIE

አዲስ አበባ ዩንቨርሲቲ

የትምህርት እና ሥነ-ባሕርይ ጥናት ኮሌጅ

የስነ-ልቦና ትምህርት ክፍል

ውድ መላሾች :- በመጀመሪያ ከሁሉም በማስቀደም ውድ ጊዜያችሁንና ጉልበታችሁን

ሰጥታችሁ ይህንን መጠይቅ ለመሙላት እና ይህን ጥናታዊ ዕሁፍ ለማጠናቀቅ የእናንተን

አስተዋፅዖ ስለምታበረክቱ ምስጋናዬ ከፍ ያለ ነው ።

የጥናቱ ዓላማ፡ ይህ ጥናት በአራዳ ክፍለ ከተማ የመካከለኛ ደረጃ የግል ት/ቤቶች ላይ

“የማህበራዊ እና የስሜት ክህሎቶች በተማሪዎች ውጤት ላይ የሚያደርገው ተጽዕኖ መዳሰስ

ነው ። የጥናቱ ውጤት ለትምህርት ተቋማት፣ ለትምህርት ለባለቤቶች እና ለመንግስት መረጃ

አቅራቢዎች አስፈላጊ ነው።

አጠቃላይ መመሪያ:- በተቀመጡት ጥያቄዎች ፊት ለፊት ላይ የመልስ መስጫ በታወ ውስጥ

ይህን ምልክት (“√”) ብቻ በማስቀመጥ መልስዎትን ይስጡ።

ሚስጥራዊነቱ:- ማንኛውም በመጠይቁ ላይ የምትመልሱት መልስ ለመመረቂያ ዕሁፍ ግበዓት

ብቻ የሚሆን ነው። በቃለ መጠይቁ ላይ ስሞትን፣ የስራ መደብዎን፣ የስራ ክፍል ወይንም

ቅርንጫፍ መጥቀስ አያስፈልግም። እንዲሁም ማንኛውም በቃለ መጠይቁ ላይ የመለሷቸው

መልሶች በሚስጥር የሚያዝ ይሆናል። ስለዚህ ጥናታዊ ዕሁፉም ውጤታማ የሚሆነው እናንተ

በምትሞሉት ትክክለኛ መረጃ በመሆኑ ሁሉንም መጠይቆች በአግባቡ በመሙላት

እንድተባበሩን ስል በአክብሮት እጠይቃለሁ ።

ከሰላምታ ጋር

አዚዛ ዩሱፍ

ክፍል 1: የዲሞክራሲ መረጃ

እባክትን በተገቢው ሣጥን ውስጥ (✓) ምልክት በማድረግ ትክክለኛውን ምላሽ ስጡ ወይም ባይ ቦታው ላይ አጭር መልስ ይስጡ

1. የመመዘገቢያ ቁጥርን ይፃፉ _____
2. እድሜ: _____
3. ፆታ:
 - ወንድ ሴት
4. በትምህርት ቤትዎ የማህበራዊ - ስሜታዊ ትምህርት መሳተፊያ ፕሮግራም ላይ ተሳትፏል?
 - አዎ አይ
5. እዚህ ትምህርት ቤት ለምን ያህል ጊዜ ቆይተዎል ?
 - ከ1 ዓመት በታች 1 ዓመት
 - 2 ዓመት 3 ዓመት ወይም ከዚያ በላይ
6. በትምህርት ቤትዎ ተጨማሪ ድጋፍ አግኝተዎል (ለምሳሌ: የመማክርት አገልግሎት እና ስልጠና)?
 - አዎ አይ
7. በትምህርት-ህ/ሽ ላይ ወላጆችህ/ሽ ተሳትፎ ያደርጋሉ? (ለምሳሌ እንድታጠኑ መርዳት፣ የወላጅ-አስተማሪ ስብሰባዎች ላይ ት/ቤት መገኘትና መወያየት)
 - በጭራሽ በጣም ጥቂት
 - አልፎ አልፎ በተደጋጋሚ ሁሌም

8. የማህበራዊ-ስሜታዊ ክህሎታችሁን እንድታዳብሩ መምህራን ምን ያህል ድጋፍ ያደርጉላችኋል? (ለምሳሌ በማህበራዊ ክህሎቶች ዙሪያ ማወያየት ፣ በስሜት ዙሪያ ትምህርቶችን ማስተማር እና ድጋፍ መስጠት)?

- በጭራሽ
- በጣም ጥቂት
- አልፎ አልፎ
- በተደጋጋሚ
- ሁሌም

ክፍል II: ስለ ማህበራዊ ስሜታዊ ችሎታ መጠን (SECQ) የተያያዘ ጥያቄዎች

መመሪያ:- ከዚህ በታች ያሉት ጥያቄዎች እራስን ማወቅ፣ ማህበራዊ እውቀት፣ እራስን ማስተዳደር፣ ግንኙነቶችን ማስተዳደር እና ሀሊፊነት በተሞላበት መልኩ ውሳኔ የመወሰን ክህሎትን በተመለከተ ተማሪዎች ያላቸውን የእውቀት ደረጃ ለማወቅ የተዘጋጀ መጠይቅ ነው።

እባክዎ የመስማማት ደረጃዎን ይግለጹልን። 1 -እጅግ በጣም አልስማማም 2- አልስማማም 3- እስማማለሁም አልስማማም 4-እስማማለሁ 5 -እጅግ በጣም እስማማለሁ እባክዎ (√) በተገቢው ቦታ ሊይ ያስቀምጡ።

ተ.ቁ.	እራስን ከማወቅ ጋር የተያያዙ መጠይቆች (Self-Awareness)	1	2	3	4	5
1	የማደርገውንና የማስበውን ነገር አውቃለሁ።					
2	ለምን እንዳደረኩ እና ምን እንዳደረኩ መረዳት አችላለሁ።					
3	ስሜቴንና ፍላጎቴን እረዳለሁ።					
4	ጥሩ ስሜት ላይ ስሆን እረዳለሁ					
5	ሰዎች ሲናደደዩ የሰዎችን ፊት ማንበብ አችላለሁ					

	ከማህበራዊ ግንዛቤ ገደብ የተያያዙ መጠይቆች(Social Awareness)	1	2	3	4	5
1	የፊት ገጽታቸውን በማየት ምን እየተሰማቸው እንደሆነ መረዳት እችላለሁ።					
2	ሰዎች ስለተሰማቸው ስሜት ለምን እንደሆነ ማወቅ እችላለሁ።					
3	አንድ ሰው ሲያዘን፤ ሲናደድ ወይም ሲደሰት ምን እያለበ እንደሆነ ማወቅ እችላለሁ።					
4	ሰዎች የሚሰጡት አጻፋ/ምላሽ ለምን እንደሆነ መረዳት እችላለሁ።					
5	ጎዳኛዬ ቢሰላጭ ለምን እንደተሰላጩ በትክክል ማወቅ እችላለሁ።					
	እራስን ከማስተዳደር ጋር የተያያዙ መጠይቆች (Self-Management)	1	2	3	4	5
1	በሚያስጨንቅ ሁኔታ ውስጥ ተረጋግቼ መቆየት እችላለሁ።					
2	ጭንቀት ውስጥ ስሆን አዲስ ወይም መፍትሄ በሚሆኑ መንገዶች እራሴን አረጋጋለሁ።					
3	ነገሮች በተሳሳተ መንገድ ሲሄዱ ተረጋግቼ መቆየት እችላለሁ።					
4	መጥፎ ነገሮች ሲፈጠሩ ሲሜቴን መቆጣጠር እችላለሁ።					
5	በሆነ ሰው ስበሳጭ በነገሩ ላይ ከማውራቴ በፊት እስክረጋጋ አጠብቃለሁ።					
	የግንኙነት አስተዳደር የተያያዙ መጠይቆች (Relationship Management)	1	2	3	4	5
1	ባለማወቅ ጓደኛዬን ካስከፋው ይቅርታ እጠይቃለሁ።					
2	ጓደኞቼ በሚያዘኑበት ወቅት መቻላት እንዲሰማቸው ለማድረግ እሞክራለሁ።					
3	ከጓደኛዬ ጋር በምጣላበት ጊዜ ላለመውቀስ እሞክራለሁ ።					

4	ጓደኞቹ በስህተት ሲያስከፉኝ እታገላለሁ ::					
5	ሌሎችን ሳልጎዳ የራሴን መብት አስከብራለሁ::					
	ሀላፊነት በተሞላበት መልኩ ውሳኔን የመወሰን ከህሎት ጋር የተያያዙ መጠይቆች (Responsible Decision-Making)	1	2	3	4	5
1	ውሳኔ ስወስን ውጤቱ ምን ሊሆን እንደሚችል ከግምት ውስጥ አስገባለሁ::					
2	ምርጫ በምመርጥበት ወቅት የበለጠ አዎንታዊ የሆኑ ውጤቶች እንደማገኝ እርግጠኛ ሆኜ ነው::					
3	በድርጊቴ ከመወሰኔ በፊት የነገሮችን ክብድት አያለሁ ወይም ግንዛቤ ውስጥ አስገባለሁ::					
4	አስተያየት ከመስጠቴ በፊት የተመረጡ መስፈርቶችን ግንዛቤ ውስጥ አስገባለሁ::					
5	እኔ እቅዴን ለመጠቀም ከመወሰኔ በፊት የእቅዱን ጥንካሬና ድክመቱን እመላክታለሁ::					

APPENDIX III: INTERVIEW

ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION & LANGUAGE STUDIES

SCHOOL OF PSYCHOLOGY

Dear Respondent,

The objective of this study is to examine "The relationship between socio-emotional skills and academic achievement of students in private middle schools in Arada Sub-City, Addis Ababa."

This research is part of my M.A. degree in Psychology.

Your insights are crucial for understanding how socio-emotional learning affects student performance in middle schools. Please note that your responses will be kept confidential and used solely for academic purposes. Thank you for your cooperation.

Interview Questions for Teachers and School Principals

✦ Self-Awareness and Academic Achievement

- How does students' understanding of their own emotions and strengths affect their learning or classroom performance?

✦ Self-Management and Academic Achievement

- In your experience, how does students' ability to control emotions and stay focused help improve academic outcomes?


✦ Social Awareness and Academic Achievement

- How do students' abilities to empathize with others and respect diverse perspectives affect their classroom behavior and academic success?
- ✦ Relationship Skills and Academic Achievement
 - How do positive peer interactions and communication skills influence students' motivation and academic performance?
- ✦ Responsible Decision-Making and Academic Achievement
 - How do students' decision-making skills affect their academic responsibilities and outcomes?
- ✦ General Implementation and School Support
 - What strategies or activities does your school use to develop these socio-emotional skills in students?
 - What challenges have you faced in promoting SEL in the school?
 - How does school leadership (or you as a principal) support the integration of SEL into academic learning?
 - What improvements or supports would you suggest to strengthen SEL practices and enhance academic achievement?

Thank you for your time and thoughtful responses!

ANNEXES

I. Supporting Letter

 **የትምህርት ቤቅ ድህረ ገጽ**
College of Education and Language Studies

የሳይክሎሎጂ ትምህርት ቤቅ
School of Psychology

Date: _____
Psyc/08/25/17

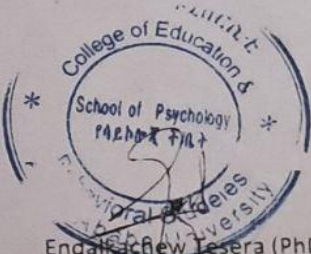
To: _____

Subject: Request for Cooperation
AZIZA YUSUF is a graduate student in the school of psychology, Addis Ababa University. He/she is now working on his/her thesis which requires a fieldwork at your organization.

This is, therefore, to request your good office to facilitate the fieldwork at your facility. We guarantee that the student will follow all ethical standards and guidelines during her/his work.

Thank you in advance for your usual.

Kind regards,


 Endalkachew Tesera (PhD)
 Head, School of Psychology
 Addis Ababa University

+251-11-1-225949

psych@aau.edu.et

aau.edu.et

SEEK WISDOM, ELEVATE YOUR INTELLECT, AND SERVE HUMANITY