



Implementation of Social-Emotional Competence Based on the CASEL Framework: A Systematic Literature Review

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the implementation of Social Emotional Competencies (SEC) strategies across educational levels and examine the role of teachers in managing emotionally intelligent classrooms. This research employed a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) following the PRISMA guidelines. Articles were selected based on inclusion criteria, including empirical studies published between 2019 and 2026 that discussed the implementation of SEC or Social Emotional Learning (SEL) in educational settings and highlighted teachers' roles in learning and classroom management. Ten articles met the eligibility criteria and were included in the review. The findings indicate that the integration of the CASEL framework through active learning approaches, such as Problem-Based Learning (PBL), Project-Based Learning (PjBL), and differentiated learning, contributes positively to students' well-being, engagement, and academic achievement. The review also reveals that teachers with strong Social-Emotional Competencies are better able to create inclusive, supportive, and conducive learning environments. However, challenges remain, including limited instructional time, heavy administrative workloads, and insufficient professional training related to SEC implementation. Therefore, strengthening teachers' Social-Emotional Competencies through continuous professional development programs is recommended to support more holistic and student-centered learning practices.

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INTRODUCTION

This study provides a systematic synthesis of implementation strategies, teacher roles, and challenges in developing CASEL-based Social Emotional Competence (SEC) at various levels of education. Furthermore, this study identifies the need for teachers' techno-pedagogical competencies to support the development of SEC in digital and post-pandemic learning environments, a topic that has not been widely discussed in previous studies.

Therefore, this study aims to conduct a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) of the implementation of CASEL-based Social Emotional Competence (SEC) at various levels of education. Specifically, this study aims to map

SEC implementation strategies, analyze teachers' roles in supporting the development of students' social-emotional competencies, and identify various challenges faced in its implementation.

To achieve these objectives, this study is formulated into the following research questions: RQ1: What strategies are used to implement CASEL-based Social Emotional Competence in school settings?

RQ2: What is the role of teachers in supporting the implementation of CASEL-based Social Emotional Competence?

RQ3: What challenges have been reported in implementing CASEL-based Social Emotional Competence in various educational contexts?

METHOD

To accommodate the objectives of this study, the Systematic Literature Review (SLR) method was used with reference to the PRISMA model as a guideline for article selection. The PRISMA model is used to ensure the process of identifying and selecting articles is carried out systematically through four stages: identification, screening, eligibility, and inclusion. To accommodate the objectives of this study, the Systematic Literature Review (SLR) method was used with reference to the PRISMA model as a guideline for article selection. The literature search process was carried out through several databases, namely Google Scholar using the Publish or Perish application. Meanwhile, searches on ERIC and Garuda were conducted directly through the official pages of each database. The use of several databases aims to expand the scope of the literature, increase the completeness of sources, and minimize bias in the process of identifying relevant articles. The use of several databases

aims to expand the scope of the literature, minimize search bias, and increase the validity of the study results. The articles obtained were then selected through the stages of identification, screening, eligibility, and inclusion according to the PRISMA guidelines. In the initial introduction stage, a search using the keyword "SEC" resulted in 100 articles. Duplicate articles were then removed, resulting in 65 articles (35 articles were removed because they were identified as duplicates). The filtering stage, based on the publication year range of 2019–2026, resulted in 40 relevant articles. Further filtering was carried out by adding the keyword "CASEL," leaving 20 articles that were substantially relevant to the social-emotional competency framework. The next stage involved reading the abstract and full-text review with the addition of the contextual keyword CASEL-based social-emotional competency in the classroom, resulting in 10 articles that met the inclusion criteria and were further analyzed in this study.

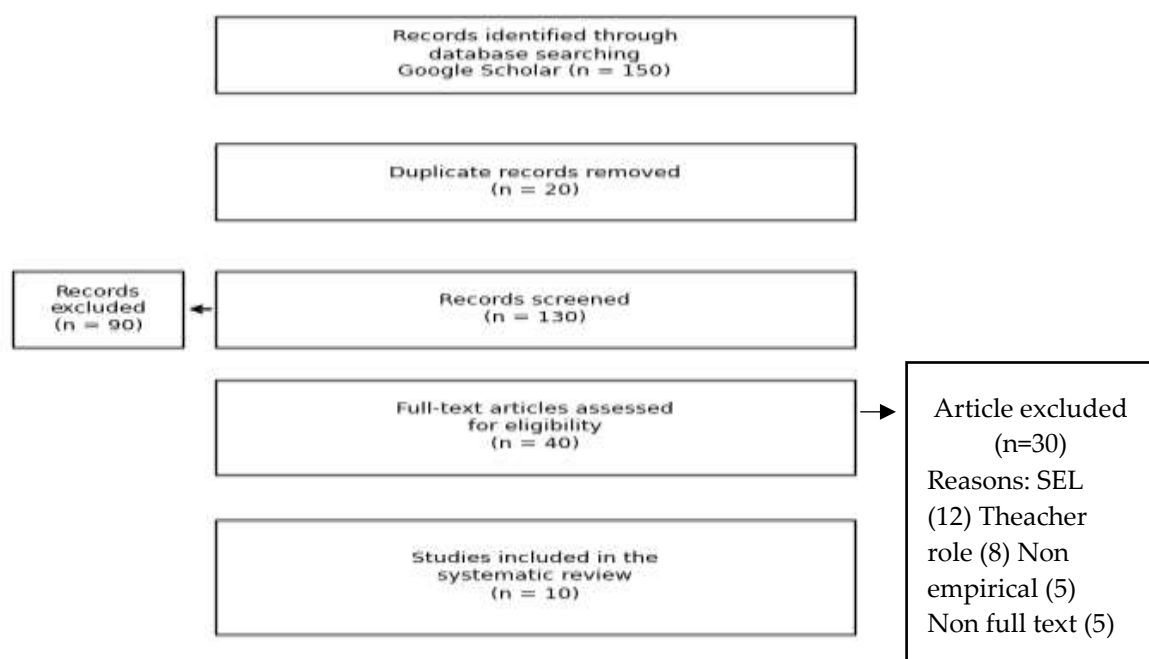


Figure 1. PRISMA 2020 Flow Diagram of Study Selection Process

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Result

Based on an analysis of 10 articles that met the inclusion criteria, it was found that the implementation of SEC at various levels of education is generally integrated into the learning process, not as a separate subject. The most frequently used learning models are Problem-Based Learning (PBL), Project-Based Learning

(PjBL), and differentiated learning. Furthermore, teachers also implement strategies such as role-playing, group discussions, self-reflection, and storytelling to develop students' social-emotional skills.

The predominant use of active learning models indicates that developing social-emotional competence requires direct student involvement in authentic learning experiences. Through PBL and PjBL, students not only acquire

academic knowledge but also learn to collaborate, communicate, manage conflict, and make responsible decisions. These findings align with the Social Emotional Learning (SEL) framework developed by CASEL, which emphasizes the importance of developing five core competencies: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making. Student-centered learning activities provide opportunities for the simultaneous development of these five competencies.

The synthesis also shows that teachers play a crucial role in the successful implementation of social-emotional competencies. Teachers function not only as transmitters of learning materials but also as facilitators, guides, behavioral role models, and classroom climate managers. Most articles emphasize that the success of Social-Emotional Competencies implementation is greatly influenced by teachers' ability to create a safe, inclusive learning environment that supports positive interactions between students. This occurs because students' social and emotional development is significantly influenced by the quality of interpersonal relationships formed during the learning process. When teachers demonstrate empathy, effective communication, and emotional management skills, students tend to emulate these behaviors through the social learning process.

These findings reinforce the view that teachers are key agents in shaping students' character. From a social constructivist perspective, interactions between teachers and students are a crucial means of building understanding, values, and social skills. Therefore, the success of Social-Emotional Competencies implementation is determined not only by the curriculum or learning methods used, but also by the professional and social competence of teachers in managing the learning process.

Regarding the impact of implementation, most studies report an increase in students' social-emotional competence after Social-Emotional Competencies implementation. This improve-

ment is evident in the ability to recognize one's own emotions, control behavior, demonstrate empathy, work collaboratively in groups, and resolve conflicts constructively. Furthermore, several studies also show an increase in learning motivation, student participation in learning, self-confidence, and academic achievement.

This improvement can be explained by the close relationship between social-emotional aspects and the learning process. Students who are able to manage their emotions well tend to have higher concentration in learning, are able to build positive social relationships, and are better prepared to face academic challenges. Conversely, difficulties in managing emotions often hinder the learning process. Therefore, developing social-emotional competence not only contributes to character formation but also supports the achievement of optimal learning outcomes. These findings demonstrate that educational success is determined not only by cognitive abilities but also by the social and emotional abilities of students.

However, the study also identified various challenges in implementing Social and Emotional Competence. The most frequently encountered obstacles include teachers' limited understanding of the Social and Emotional Competence concept, minimal ongoing training, limited learning time, and the lack of evaluation instruments capable of comprehensively measuring students' social and emotional development. Several studies also indicate that the implementation of Social and Emotional Competence still often relies on individual teacher initiative and has not been fully integrated into school policies or the curriculum.

This situation indicates a gap between the importance of developing social and emotional competencies and the support provided by the education system. However, the implementation of Social and Emotional Competence requires ongoing support in the form of teacher training, provision of learning tools, and a structured evaluation system.

Table 1. Journal Review Results

Title	Author/ Year	Level	Method	CASEL Components	Key Findings	Limitations
Classroom Management Strategies Based on Teachers' Social-	Agnesti Bilqis (2025).	Elementary School	Library research.	Five CASEL competencies	Social-Emotional Competencies teachers support	Lack of training

Title	Author/ Year	Level	Method	CASEL Components	Key Findings	Limitations
Emotional competencies					positive classroom management	
The Role of Teachers' Emotional Intelligence in Classroom Management and Student Engagement	Mujeebur Rahim 2021	School teachers.	Quantitative survey	Self-awareness, Relationship Skills.	Teachers increase student engagement	Focus on teachers
Developing Students' Social-Emotional Competence through Science Learning at SDN Cisarua 2 Purwakarta	Tita Nurhayati 2025.	Elementary School	Case study	Implementation of the five CASEL competencies	PjBL, role play, discussion to improve Social-Emotional Competence.	Administrative pressure
Implementation of the CASEL Framework in Lower Elementary School Grades: Teachers' Roles, Strategies, and Challenges in Teaching Students' Social-Emotional Competencies.	Hana Zakiiyyah and Yeri Sutopo (2026).	Elementary School	Case study	5 CASEL Competencies	Storytelling and effective cooperation	Limited time
Implementation of Social Emotional Learning Based on the CASEL Framework in Elementary Schools.	Amri (2025)	Elementary School	Literary study (library study)	CASEL Implementation	CASEL improves empathy and social relations	No field data
<i>Problem Based Learning Model Integrated with Social Emotional Learning to Improve Social Emotional Competence as well as Learning Activity and Outcomes</i>	Hanif Nur Fadhil, Dewi Handayani, and Puspa Darti (2023).	SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL	Classroom Action Research (CAR) in two cycles.	PBL integrated SEL	social-emotional competencies, activeness, increased learning outcomes	Limited sample
The Missing Piece in the CASEL Model: The Impact of Social-Emotional Learning on Online Literature Teaching and Learning	Orna Levin and Yael Segev (2023).	College	Qualitative	CASEL Techno-pedagogical	A new dimension of digital competence emerges	Online context
The Urgency of Developing Teachers' Emotional Intelligence for Learning Effectiveness.	Maslikha (2024)	Teacher	Mix method	<i>Self-management</i>	Teachers support learning	Not measuring students

Title	Author/ Year	Level	Method	CASEL Components	Key Findings	Limitations
The Role of Teachers with Social-Emotional Competence in the Implementation of Differentiated Learning to Build <i>Student Well-Being</i> in Secondary Schools	Firliandini, et al. (2022)	JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL	Literature review	Social-Emotional Competencies and well-being	Differentiation supports student well-being	Conceptual
Social-Emotional Competency Development Strategy for Early Childhood Education Teachers.	Gun (2025).	Early Childhood Education	Case study	Social-Emotional Competencies teacher	Training increase quality of learning	Large number of students

Discussion

Based on the synthesis of the ten articles analyzed, the implementation of CASEL-based Social Emotional Competence shows a shift from a stand-alone approach to an integrated approach in the learning process. Almost all studies place Social-Emotional Competencies as part of daily learning activities through active learning models such as Problem-Based Learning (PBL), Project-Based Learning (PjBL), cooperative learning, role-playing, storytelling, and differentiated learning. These findings demonstrate a shared view that the development of Social-Emotional Competencies is more effective when practiced directly in the learning context rather than taught as separate material.

However, there are differences in implementation strategies in each study. Fadhil *et al.* (2023) found that the integration of Social-Emotional Competencies in the PBL model effectively improves social-emotional competence, activeness, and learning outcomes because students are involved in problem-solving that requires collaboration and decision-making. Meanwhile, Nurhayati (2025) showed that PjBL, group discussions, and role-play are more effective in developing empathy, social skills, and self-reflection because they provide broader opportunities for students to interact and understand others' perspectives. At the lower elementary school level, Zakiyyah and Sutopo (2026) found that storytelling and cooperative learning are more appropriate because the characteristics of student development still require a concrete and contextual approach. These differences indicate that the success of Social-Emotional Competencies implementation is not only determined by

the learning model used, but also by the suitability of the strategy to the characteristics of students and the educational context.

The synthesis also confirms that teachers are the most crucial factor in the successful implementation of Social-Emotional Competencies. All studies consistently show that teachers' social-emotional competence influences the quality of learning interactions, classroom management, and student engagement. Bilqis (2025) emphasized that teachers who possess self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making skills are able to create a more inclusive and supportive learning environment. These findings are reinforced by Rahim (2021), who found a positive relationship between teachers' emotional intelligence and effective classroom management. Therefore, Social-Emotional Competencies implementation not only focuses on developing student competencies but also requires strengthening teachers' social-emotional competence as the primary agents of change in learning.

Despite having the same goals, the implementation of Social-Emotional Competencies shows different focuses at each level of education. In early childhood education and elementary school, teachers play a greater role in developing emotional regulation, empathy, and basic social skills through play activities and direct interaction. Conversely, at the secondary school level, Social-Emotional Competencies implementation is more associated with differentiated learning, student well-being, academic stress management, and strengthening critical thinking skills. These findings indicate

that Social-Emotional Competencies implementation is contextual and needs to be adapted to the developmental needs of students at each level of education.

In terms of impact, all studies indicate that Social-Emotional Competencies positively contributes to student development. However, there is variation in the reported impacts. Fadhil *et al.* (2023) emphasized improved learning outcomes and student engagement, while Nurhayati (2025) and Amri (2025) focused more on improvements in empathy, social skills, and decision-making abilities. Firliandini *et al.* (2022) found that integrating Social-Emotional Competencies into differentiated learning contributed to improved student well-being after the pandemic. A commonality among these findings is that student emotional engagement is a mediating factor in learning success. This suggests that socio-emotional and academic aspects are not separate components, but rather mutually supportive in the learning process.

On the other hand, the implementation of Social-Emotional Competencies still faces various challenges that are relatively consistent across almost all studies. The most frequently reported obstacles include limited learning time, high teacher administrative burdens, lack of specific training related to Social-Emotional Competencies, and large class sizes. Bilqis (2025), Gun (2025), and Zakiyyah and Sutopo (2026) consistently report that lack of training is a major obstacle to Social-Emotional Competencies implementation. These findings indicate that the success of Social-Emotional Competencies implementation cannot be solely attributed to teachers. Structural support is needed in the form of supportive school policies, the provision of ongoing training programs, the integration of Social-Emotional Competencies into the curriculum, and a reduction in administrative burdens that allow teachers to focus more on student development.

An interesting finding in this synthesis is the emergence of a techno-pedagogical competency dimension reported by Levin and Segev (2023). This research indicates that social-emotional learning in digital environments requires additional skills not explicitly covered in the CASEL framework. Teachers are not only required to be able to build social relationships directly but also to be able to facilitate interaction, collaboration,

and emotional engagement of students through digital platforms. This finding indicates that the development of educational technology has expanded the scope of Social-Emotional Competencies implementation. Therefore, future CASEL model developments need to consider the digital competency dimension as part of the skills supporting social-emotional implementation in the digital learning era.

Although the synthesis results show consistent findings, there are several limitations to the reviewed articles. First, most studies used qualitative approaches and desk studies, so the empirical evidence generated is still limited to specific contexts. Second, the majority of studies were conducted at the elementary education level, so findings regarding the implementation of Social-Emotional Competencies in secondary and higher education are relatively limited. Third, most studies focused on the Indonesian context, so generalizing the results to different educational contexts requires caution. Fourth, variations in research designs, measurement instruments, and Social-Emotional Competencies indicators make comparisons between studies less than fully equitable. Therefore, future research is needed to incorporate longitudinal designs, broader coverage of educational levels, and more standardized Social-Emotional Competencies measurements to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of CASEL-based Social-Emotional Competencies implementation.

Overall, this synthesis confirms that Social-Emotional Competence is a crucial component of 21st-century learning. Its successful implementation is influenced by the appropriateness of learning strategies, teachers' social-emotional competence, school policy support, and the ability to adapt to developments in educational technology. These findings reinforce the importance of systematically integrating Social-Emotional Competence into educational practices to support students' holistic academic, social, and emotional development.

CONCLUSION

The results of the Systematic Literature Review indicate that the reviewed studies indicate a positive contribution of CASEL-based Social Emotional Competence (SEC) to the creation of a positive classroom climate, improved student well-being, student

engagement in learning, and learning outcomes. SEC implementation is generally carried out through various active learning models integrated into the learning process, with teachers acting as social emotional facilitators who support student development holistically. However, SEC implementation still faces challenges such as time constraints, teacher administrative burdens, and a lack of specialized training. Therefore, systemic support is needed through teacher professional development and school policies that support the ongoing implementation of SEC. This study has limitations because it only reviewed ten articles and used a limited database coverage. Therefore, further research is recommended to use broader literature sources and a larger number of articles to obtain a more comprehensive picture of CASEL-based SEC implementation.

RECOMMENDATION

This study only reviewed ten articles with limited database coverage, so it's possible that relevant research remains unidentified. Furthermore, variations in research methods and contexts across the reviewed articles may influence the generalizability of the findings. Teachers need to develop Social-Emotional Competencies (SEC) through ongoing training and integrate them into active learning models, such as Problem-Based Learning (PBL), Project-Based Learning (PjBL), and differentiated learning. Strengthening techno-pedagogical competencies is also necessary to support digital learning. For Schools and Policymakers: Schools and policymakers need to provide ongoing Social-Emotional Competencies training and reduce the administrative burden on teachers so they can focus more on character development and student emotional well-being. For Future Researchers: Future research is recommended to use more databases, implement a more systematic article quality assessment, and employ more comprehensive synthesis methods to strengthen research findings.

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