

EXPLORING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ORGANIZATIONAL SOCIAL CONTEXT
OF SCHOOLS, INDIVIDUAL PROVIDER CHARACTERISTICS, AND TEACHER
ATTITUDES TOWARD SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING

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ABSTRACT

Marisa Enrico: Exploring the Relationship Between Organizational Social Context of Schools, Individual Provider Characteristics, and Teacher Attitudes Toward Social Emotional Learning
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Despite empirical evidence suggesting social-emotional learning (SEL) is critical for reducing risk behaviors and promoting mental health, prosocial behaviors, and academic achievement, SEL programs have not been routinely adopted in school settings (Durlak et al., 2011). Due to associated implications for adoption and implementation, recent research has focused on identifying factors that may influence attitudes toward mental-health evidence-based practices (EBPs). Empirical evidence shows an association between the organizational social context, individual provider characteristics, and attitudes toward EBPs (e.g., Aarons et al., 2012). Organizational social context, which includes the norms and expectations (i.e., culture) of the organization as well as the psychological impact of the work environment on the individual workers (i.e., climate), can impact how readily new practices will be considered and adopted (Aarons, 2005). Studies (e.g., Aarons, 2005; Aarons et al., 2012) have shown that negative organizational culture is associated with providers' negative attitudes toward adoption of EBP while positive cultures/climates are associated with openness to adoption of EBPs.

The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between the organizational social context of schools, individual teacher provider characteristics, and educators' attitudes toward social-emotional learning (SEL). In order to measure these variables, online surveys including The Collaborative on Academic and Social Emotional Learning (CASEL)'s Missing Piece Survey and the Organizational Social Context (OSC) survey were administered to 68

educators from North Carolina schools. Statistical analyses indicated that “grades taught” as well as educators’ perceptions of their organizational social context (e.g., engagement in their work goals and responsibilities) were significant predictors of educators’ attitudes toward the importance of SEL instruction. In addition, educators’ perceived stress in their work environment was a predictor of their perception of SEL barriers to implementation. Overall, the findings reinforce the notion that aspects of the school climate impact educators’ attitudes toward SEL instruction and challenges to SEL program implementation. It is hoped that these findings will provide important information about factors that can be leveraged to bridge the research to practice gap in SEL program implementation.

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and encouragement throughout this journey.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES	ix
LIST OF FIGURES	x
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	xi
CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION	1
CHAPTER II: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE	7
SEL Program Goals	7
Theoretical Underpinnings of SEL	9
Initial Attention on SEL	12
Outcomes Associated with SEL	13
Impact of SEL on Special Populations	18
SEL Program Adoption	22
Barriers to Adoption and Implementation	23
Attitudes Toward EBP Adoption	24
Attitudes Toward SEL Programming	26
Influences on Provider Attitudes Toward EBPs	29
Influence of Organizational-Level Factors on Attitudes Toward EBPs	35
Organizational Theory	38
Implications for Other Mental Health Service Organizations	39
Influence of Individual Provider Characteristics on Attitudes Toward EBPs	40

School Characteristics.....	42
Conclusion	43
Purpose of the Current Study	43
Research Questions and Hypotheses	45
CHAPTER III: RESEARCH METHODS	47
Procedures.....	47
Measures	52
Data Analysis	59
CHAPTER IV: RESULTS.....	62
Descriptive Analyses	63
Correlational Analysis	67
Regression Analyses	69
CHAPTER V: DISCUSSION	74
Limitations and Future Directions	78
APPENDIX A: SURVEY	83
APPENDIX B: RECRUITMENT LETTER	113
APPENDIX C: CONSENT FORM	114
REFERENCES.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. Participants' Age	50
Table 2. Participants' Years Teaching.....	50
Table 3. Participants' Educational Attainment.....	50
Table 4. Participants' Race/Ethnicity	51
Table 5. Participants' Grade Taught.....	51
Table 6. Participants' Subject Taught	51
Table 7. Within-Group Consistency for OSC Culture and Climate	64
Table 8. Educator Responses for Barrier Items 1-6.....	66
Table 9. Educator Responses for SEL Importance Items 1-4.....	67
Table 10. Correlation Matrix	68
Table 11. Regression for SEL Importance ANOVA	70
Table 12. Model 1 Regression for SEL Importance	71
Table 13. Model 2 Regression for SEL Importance	71
Table 14. Regression for SEL Barriers ANOVA.....	72
Table 15. Model 2 Regression for SEL Barriers.....	73

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. SEL Outcomes..... 15

Figure 2. Relationship Between Key Characteristics of OSC 38

Figure 3. Conceptual Framework 45

Figure 4. Description of Climate Subscales..... 56

Figure 5. CFA Fit Indices of OSC 57

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

SEL	Social Emotional Learning
EBP	Evidence Based Practice
PYD	Positive Youth Development
OSC	Organizational Social Context

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The national focus on standards-based reform due to federal legislation such as the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2002* (U.S. Department of Education, 2002) has prompted educators to reimagine ways to enhance students' academic performance and overall school success (Greenberg et al., 2003). Many effective schools have found that social, emotional, and academic growth are interdependent and that integrated instruction in all areas “maximizes students’ potential to succeed in school and throughout their lives” (Zins & Elias, 2006, p. 1). In fact, research has found that prosocial behavior is associated with both positive intellectual outcomes (e.g., DiPerna & Elliot, 1999; Haynes, Ben-Avie, & Ensign, 2003; Pasi, 2001) and is predictive of performance on standardized achievement tests (e.g., Malecki & Elliot, 2002; Welsh, Park, Widaman, & O’Neil, 2001). Educators and researchers alike believe schools have an obligation to students that extends beyond fostering intellectual growth (Romasz et al., 2004) and social-emotional learning (SEL) prepares students for successful futures.

SEL instruction, which includes the acquisition of skills to “recognize and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, appreciate the perspectives of others, establish and maintain positive relationships, make responsible decisions, and handle interpersonal situations constructively” (Durlak, Weissberg, Dymnicki, Taylor, & Schellinger, 2011, p. 406) is considered an essential component in school reform (Zins & Elias, 2006). SEL is defined by various social and emotional competencies including *self-awareness* or knowing one’s strengths and limitations, *social awareness* or understanding and empathizing with others, *relationship*

skills or being able to work in teams and resolve conflicts, *responsible decision-making* or making ethical and safe choices, and *self-management* or being able to stay in control and persevere through challenges (Civic Enterprises, Bridgeland, Bruce, & Hariharan, 2013).

Teaching skills that foster resiliency, defined as an individual's capacity for adapting in the face of adversity, is considered a primary focus of SEL programming. According to the Collaborative on Academic and Social Emotional Learning (CASEL), a leading voice in SEL research, social-emotionally competent students exhibit critical "emotional (e.g., understanding and managing emotions), cognitive (e.g., problem solving and goal-setting), and behavioral (e.g., understanding and displaying socially appropriate behavior) skills across different domains of home, school, and the wider community" (Elias & Haynes, 2008, p. 476) and are able to utilize these skills in a variety of settings.

Recent research shows that evidence-based SEL programs that are well-designed and determined effective based on extensive research are associated with improved academic performance as well as enhanced social, emotional, and behavioral competencies. In CASEL's (2003) review of 80 national SEL programs, researchers found that 83% of the programs produced academic gains (Zins, Bloodworth, Weissberg, & Walberg, 2011). Similarly, in Durlak et al.'s (2011) meta-analysis, researchers found that SEL participants demonstrated significantly improved social and emotional skills, attitudes, behavior, and academic performance that reflected an 11-percentile-point gain in achievement. Regarding social-emotional and behavioral gains, empirical evidence shows that SEL programs target crucial skills including emotion recognition, stress-management, empathy, problem-solving, and decision-making (Durlak et al., 2011). In fact, emotions have been found to play such a critical role in developing other competencies that researchers have posited that they can either facilitate or impede a variety of

student outcomes including academic engagement, work ethic, commitment, and ultimate school success (Durlak et al., 2011). Overall, SEL programs promote social-emotional, behavioral, and academic growth by encouraging students to apply SEL skills to improve their study habits, emphasizing integration of SEL with academic subject matter, and promoting teaching practices that foster positive social interaction.

Despite research on the effectiveness of SEL curricula on social, emotional, and academic functioning, many schools do not use the evidence-based programs or implement programs with poor fidelity (Durlak et al., 2011). According to results from a national study on attitudes toward SEL, less than half of the teachers surveyed stated that social and emotional skills are being taught on a school-wide programmatic basis (Civic Enterprises, Bridgeland, Bruce, & Hariharan, 2013). Given the empirical evidence supporting SEL's significant influence on child outcomes, it is critical to understand the barriers to adoption and subsequent implementation of SEL programs.

Due to multiple and often competing demands (Reinke et al., 2011), schools face many challenges in adoption and successful implementation of evidence-based practices (EBPs), such as SEL programs. Although educators recognize that school-based mental health programs like social-emotional interventions are essential for student success (Civic Enterprises et al., 2013), multiple barriers including competing responsibilities, parent engagement, logistics and support from administrators and teachers influence educators' attitudes toward EBPs and subsequent adoption and implementation. For example, educators may feel that the integration of SEL innovations is not feasible given the demands of teaching. Misconceptions regarding the EBP and its purpose can also contribute to attitudes regarding EBP feasibility and need.

Results from Civic Enterprises et al. (2013) study shed light on educators' attitudes

toward SEL programming, in particular. The study, which included interviews and surveys with teachers from schools with diverse characteristics, had several major findings. Responses indicated that teachers recognized the benefit and need to incorporate SEL into the student learning experience and believe that SEL concepts are teachable in the school setting. In addition, according to results, teachers believe SEL helps students achieve in work, school and life and should be given greater emphasis in schools. However, teachers identify major barriers to SEL implementation including time, professional development, and fragmented efforts to incorporate programs into the school mission. Four out of five teachers who completed the survey reported wanting further training regarding SEL. This study highlights the notion that although many teachers understand the need for and benefits of SEL innovations in the classroom, barriers often prevent schools from implementing programs effectively or at all.

Attitudes toward innovations, which can be both complex and varied, can be a facilitating or limiting factor in the adoption and implementation of new programs (Aarons, 2005). Aarons et al. (2012) captured the complexity of attitudes toward EBPs in the development of the Evidence-Based Practice Attitude Scale (EBPAS) and posited that four dimensions including the appeal of the EBP, the likelihood of adopting EBP as a result of institutional requirements, the perceived divergence between research-based and current practices, and general openness to learning new practices, are key components in attitudes toward EBPs. Although provider attitudes toward adoption of EBPs represent a few of many complex factors that affect adoption of EBPs (Aarons, 2005; Stahmer & Aarons, 2006), they are important to consider when examining the evidence to practice gap.

Due to associated implications for adoption and implementation, recent research has focused on identifying factors that may influence attitudes toward mental-health EBPs. Empirical

evidence shows an association between the organizational social context, individual provider characteristics, and attitudes toward EBPs (e.g., Aarons et al., 2012). Organizational social context, which includes the norms and expectations (i.e., culture) of the organization as well as the psychological impact of the work environment on the individual workers (i.e., climate), can impact how readily new practices will be considered and adopted (Aarons, 2005). Studies (e.g., Aarons, 2005; Aarons et al., 2012) have shown that negative organizational culture is associated with providers' negative attitudes toward adoption of EBP while positive culture was associated with openness to adoption of EBPs.

In addition, research suggests that certain provider characteristics at the individual level (e.g., years of experience, education level) influence each of the dimensions of attitudes toward EBPs (Aarons et al., 2012). Both higher educational attainment and more training experiences have been associated with openness to adoption of EBPs. In Aarons et al.'s (2012) study on the relationship of mental health clinicians' ratings of their organization's culture and climate and attitudes toward evidence-based practices, researchers found that certain provider characteristics at the individual level influence the dimensions of attitude differently. For instance, clinicians with advanced degrees described EBPs as more appealing than those without advanced degrees. However, clinicians with advanced degrees were also less willing to implement EBPs simply because they were mandated. However, the influence of both organizational social context and individual provider attitudes on attitudes is complex and as should be explored in more depth.

In conclusion, despite empirical evidence suggesting SEL is critical for reducing risk behaviors and promoting mental health, prosocial behaviors, and academic achievement, SEL programs have not been routinely adopted in school settings. Research shows that attitudes can either facilitate or impede consideration and adoption of EBPs. SEL programs can be considered

an EBP due to research-based evidence for successful student outcomes when specified program components are implemented with fidelity. Both organizational and individual provider-level characteristics have been found to be associated with attitudes toward EBPs in mental health settings. However, there is little research on the impact of these variables on attitudes toward specific mental-health EBPs such as SEL programs in related settings such as schools.

Attitudes toward specific mental-health EBPs, such as SEL programs, should be explored in order to determine factors that can support the adoption and subsequent implementation in school settings. This study explored the association between organizational social context as well as individual provider characteristics on attitudes toward SEL programs. Understanding the perspective of educators regarding SEL can help researchers and practitioners address barriers, issues for reform, and capacity-building (Reinke et al., 2011).

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The integration of social, emotional, and academic learning has become a crucial element of education in schools due to federal demands for improved student achievement and teacher accountability for student improvement (Zins et al., 2007). SEL has been recognized as a critical component of education due to the growing amount of empirical evidence showing positive student outcomes (Zins & Elias, 2006). Evolving largely from research on risk and resilience and positive youth development, SEL is the “process through which we learn to recognize and manage emotions, care about others, make good decisions, behave ethically and responsibly, develop positive relationships, and avoid negative behaviors” (Zins et al., 2007, p. 192; Zins & Elias, 2006). These characteristics, which have been linked to multiple positive academic, behavioral, and social-emotional outcomes with profound long-term implications, have become the focus of efforts to bolster student achievement (Zins et al., 2007).

SEL Program Goals

SEL programming is an integrated approach to learning that supports development of social-emotional competencies, mediating prosocial behavior and improved academic performance (Greenberg et al., 2003). The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL), which is a leading voice in the development and promotion of SEL programs, identified 5 interrelated sets of cognitive, affective, and behavioral competencies that provide the basis for SEL and program goals (CASEL, 2012; Weissberg & Cascarino, 2013). The proximal goal of SEL is to promote the social-emotional competencies linked to broad

student success including self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making (CASEL, 2005). Moreover, these short-term goals “provide a foundation for better adjustment and academic performance as reflected in more positive social behaviors and peer relationships, fewer conduct problems, less emotional stress, and improved grades and test scores” (CASEL, 2012; Durlak et al., 2011; Greenberg et al., 2003; Weissberg & Cascarino, 2013, p. 10). Mastery of these short-term goals provides a foundation for better adjustment and academic performance reflected in fewer conduct problems, less emotional distress, more positive social behaviors, and improved grades and test scores (CASEL, 2012; Durlak et al., 2011; Greenberg et al., 2003). On the other hand, overall long-term mastery of SEL competencies results in a shift from being “predominantly controlled by external factors to acting increasingly in accord with internalized beliefs and values, caring for others, making good decisions, and taking responsibility for one’s choices and behaviors” (Bear & Watkins, 2006; Durlak et al., 2011, p. 406).

SEL programming is based on the understanding that supportive relationships, caring learning environments, and coordinated sets of educational strategies enhance protective factors, school performance, and overall development (CASEL, 2005; Civic Enterprises et al., 2013; Linares et al., 2005; Weissberg & Cascarino, 2013). Social and emotional skills are viewed as “protective factors that reduce the probability that students exposed to risk factors will engage in problem behavior” (Sklad et al., 2012, p. 893). Systematic instruction through teaching, modeling, and practicing fosters the acquisition of SEL skills and application to diverse situations (Durlak et al., 2007; Izard, 2002; Lemerise & Arsenio, 2000). Fostering student engagement and creating opportunities to contribute to the school and community enhance students’ motivation, sense of belonging, and overall school satisfaction (Durlak et al. 2007;

Hawkins, Smith, & Catalano, 2004). SEL programs support students in applying skills for prevention of problem behaviors including interpersonal violence, bullying, or school failure (Zins & Elias, 2006). Overall, SEL skills are critical to being a good student, citizen, and worker and prepare students for life success (Civic Enterprises et al., 2013).

Theoretical Underpinnings of SEL

Positive youth development. Positive Youth Development (PYD), which is a prosocial approach to child development that focuses on the impact of creating positive environments within communities, schools, and families on youth development, provides a framework for the SEL perspective. According to PYD, positive environments are created by fostering self-efficacy, prosocial norms, belief in the future, resilience, supportive relationships, problem-solving, and civic engagement, similar to SEL competencies (Catalano et al., 2004; Catalano et al., 2008; Greenberg et al., 2003). The PYD framework was developed as a response to the changes in socialization dynamics that cultivated children's development. For example, there has been a shift in community members', families', and educators' roles in fostering social and emotional skills whereas more recently, schools have begun to play a major role in social-emotional development. These changes contributed to the reconceptualization of school and community responsibility and role in supporting children's social-emotional needs and overall development (Weissberg & Greenberg, 1997).

The PYD perspective brings attention to the importance of social and environmental factors that affect the successful completion of developmental tasks (Catalano et al., 2008). According to the theory, given a similar etiological base, the same risk and protective factors that predict problem behaviors are important in predicting positive outcomes (Catalano et al., 2008; Catalano, Hawkins et al., 2002). This assertion provides rationale for targeting strengths in

addition to or instead of weaknesses. PYD differs from other frameworks in that it takes a positive stance on child development and aims to reduce risk factors by enhancing skills, building assets, and promoting resilience to achieve positive outcomes. PYD interventions, like SEL programming, focus on cultivating assets and assert that because schools serve the developmental needs of children, they should target the promotion of youth development (Brackett & Rivers, 2014).

Ecological perspective. PYD is grounded in the ecological perspective, which asserts that children's development is impacted by multiple interconnected factors including individual characteristics and the community, family, and school context (Bronfenbrenner, 1977, 1979). Models based on the ecological perspective, such as PYD, serve to improve student outcomes, while creating a cycle of continuous improvement within and among environmental levels (Becker & Luthar, 2002). SEL instruction, for instance, is provided in schools and then reinforced in the school, home, and community. Thus, programming can be viewed within the context of systems of support that provides a “comprehensive continuum of services based on student needs” (Zins & Elias, 2006, p. 2).

According to the framework, all levels of interaction are related to SEL and must be considered in understanding children's development. At the most distal level of the environment is the macrosystem, which consists of cultural values, norms, and beliefs. According to this model, risk factors at the macro-level such as poverty can have a profound influence on children's social-emotional and overall development. Similarly, important proximal factors, such as the learning environment, impact achievement and overall development. As such, both proximal and distal factors must be explored and addressed in order to impact children's development.

Additionally, the ecological perspective provides a basis for understanding changes in children's beliefs about achievement and motivation, both of which are considered key components in SEL programming and critical factors in success. According to this model, curricula, programming, and relationships affect the development of youth. For example, an SEL curriculum that builds on cultural knowledge that children bring to the classroom (e.g., Montgomery & Rossi, 2000), fosters self-expression, promotes supportive relationships with adults, and provides learning activities that are meaningful and relevant (e.g., Bluemenfeld, 1992) leads to increased engagement and improved self-efficacy (as cited in Zins & Elias, 2006). Similarly, educators have the opportunity to have a positive impact on children through the quality of their social interactions, their capacity to model appropriate social and emotional strategies (e.g., Greenberg et al., 2003; Payton et al., 2000), and their ability to manage behaviors and create an overall safe environment for their students (Zins & Elias, 2006).

Self-determination and social-cognitive theories. Principles of the self-determination and social-cognitive theories echo those of the ecological perspective, as they are based in the belief that children flourish in settings that address their social and emotional needs and foster meaningful, caring, and empowering interactions (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). The social-cognitive theory suggests that self-efficacy, specifically, plays a critical role in academic achievement and children's motivation to succeed, sustain effort, and persevere in the face of challenges (Bandura, 1979). Similarly, research suggests that similar competencies such as self-discipline have a profound impact on academic achievement. In Duckworth and Seligman's (2005) study on self-determination, researchers found that self-discipline predicted academic performance more robustly than IQ. Self-determination and social-cognitive theories have implications for understanding the role of social and emotional competencies in predicting

achievement. As such, it is crucial to explore the impact of SEL, grounded in social-cognitive and ecological theories shows, on student outcomes.

Initial Attention on SEL

It has become increasingly clear that social and emotional skills are necessary in order to manage the demands of our current society (Romasz et al., 2004). Preparing students for successful futures requires more than solely academic instruction. Although schools were initially thought to be only responsible for students' education, schools are now viewed as arenas for health promotion and primary prevention (Roeser, Eccles, & Samoroff, 2000; Zins & Elias, 2006). Empirical evidence from SEL research, in part, contributed to the movement toward preventative intervention implementation in schools and highlighted the relationships that exist between achievement, social emotional competence, and social support in school (e.g., Elias & Haynes, 2008; Zins et al., 2004).

The notion that emotions, caring relationships (Zins & Elias, 2006) and self-regulation (Liew, 2011) – hallmarks of SEL programming - affect how and what we learn was established prior to studies on SEL interventions. In fact, a supportive relationship with adults was found to be one of the single most commonly identified protective factors in literature on resilience (Becker & Luthar, 2002; Hughes & Swok, 2006). Research has shown that teacher-student relationships characterized by warmth and support are linked to increased academic motivation positive self-concept, and improved academic achievement (Hughes & Swok, 2006). Similarly, Hamre and Pianta (2005) found that the quality of teacher-student interactions and instructional practices are important predictors of student achievement and social adjustment. Research has found that programs that allow students to experience positive interactions with adults in the form of providing acceptance and supportive feedback will experience social-emotional growth

as well as a more nurturing classroom environment (Becker & Luthar, 2002; Hamre & Pianta, 2005). As a variety of social and emotional competencies including peer and teacher-student relationships have been shown to be important for social-emotional and academic functioning, research has shifted its focus to SEL, programming that incorporates skills for fostering positive relationships in addition to a variety of skills that are considered critical for student success.

Initial attention on SEL is due, in part, to the suggested impact on students' academic success - a major focus of federal legislation. Research suggesting that social-emotional factors influence nationally-emphasized student outcomes including drop-outs and failure (Zins & Elias, 2006) shifted educators' and policymakers' focus to social-emotional prevention programming and its impact on student achievement. Studies have shown that lack of SEL skills is correlated with student disengagement with learning (e.g., Bridgeland, Dilulio, & Morrison, 2006; Civic Enterprises et al., 2013), leading to failure. In fact, it is estimated that up to 60 percent of students become chronically disengaged from school by high school, but SEL skill development can have a profound impact on school engagement and significantly improve dropout and failure rates (Birdgeland et al., 2006). Although initial interest in SEL is partly due to its association with the prevention of academic failure, recent studies have shown the extent of the far-reaching effects of SEL programs on learning and overall student success.

Outcomes Associated with SEL

SEL is viewed as an important and "missing piece" in the educational puzzle (Civic Enterprises et al., 2013). Critical SEL skills including self-awareness, self-management, grit, determination, empathy and conflict resolution, discipline, and application of skills to real-world situations (Civic Enterprises et al., 2013) enable students to navigate school more successfully, impacting overall educational success and preventing negative outcomes including dropouts and

failures. In Wang, Haertel, and Walberg's (1997) study, researchers examined categories of influences on learning and found that 8 of the 11 most influential categories on learning involved social-emotional factors (e.g., student-teacher social interactions, classroom climate, and peer group). Similar early studies (e.g., National Center for Education Statistics, 2002) on learning influences cited social-emotional factors (e.g., feeling left out, not feeling safe, not getting along with teachers or peers) as a major reason for high drop out rates (Zins & Elias, 2006). Such research results suggested that "direct intervention in the psychological determinants of learning promises the most effective avenues of reform," providing initial evidence that SEL is a crucial component of school reform (Zins & Elias, 2006, p. 210).

A robust body of research shows that evidence-based SEL programming is linked to a variety of positive outcomes including improved social-emotional competence and academic achievement (e.g., Zins, Weissberg, Wang, & Walberg, 2004; Elias & Haynes, 2008). In Durlak et al.'s (2011) comprehensive meta-analysis of 213 studies and 270,034 students, researchers found multiple positive outcomes associated with SEL programming including significantly improved students' skills, attitudes, and behaviors. SEL skills are linked to improved attitudes about school, prosocial behavior, and academic achievement in addition to reductions in aggression, mental health problems, and substance use (Durlak et al., 2011; Greenberg et al., 2003; Zins et al., 2004). The acquisition of SEL skills has a profound influence on social-emotional competencies by improving attitudes about self, others, and the school. Improved self-concept and interpersonal relationships, in turn, improve students' prosocial behaviors, lowers conduct problems, improves emotional distress, and impacts academic success (Durlak et al., 2011; CASEL). Figure 1 shows the proximal and distal outcomes associated with the SEL competencies.

Figure 1. SEL Outcomes



Figure 1. Outcomes associated with SEL competencies (Civic Enterprises et al., 2013).

Social-emotional and behavioral outcomes. Research has shown that SEL programming has a direct impact on social-emotional competencies, improving school climate, promoting social-emotional and behavioral growth, and subsequently influencing academic gains (Weissberg & Cascarino, 2013, p. 11). Key skills including self-confidence, the development of positive relationships with peers and adults, concentration, effective emotion expression, and persistence on challenging tasks, or resilience, are main social-emotional and behavioral outcomes associated SEL programming. Additionally, risky behaviors such as drug use, violence, bullying, and dropping out can be prevented or reduced with integrated SEL program efforts (Civic Enterprises et al., 2013).

Several major meta-analyses suggest a strong association between SEL skills and social-emotional and behavioral improvements. In Sklad et al.'s (2012) analysis of 75 SEL studies, results showed that programs had beneficial effects on major social-emotional and behavioral outcome areas including social skills, positive self-image, prosocial behavior, antisocial behavior, substance abuse, and mental health. Durlak's (2011) meta-analysis showed similar results, indicating that compared to controls, students who participated in SEL programming demonstrated enhanced SEL skills, attitudes, and positive social behaviors following

intervention. Furthermore, results showed that many studies included in the analysis found significant effects for reduction of anxiety and depression or emotional distress, prevention of specific conduct problems like drug use, and prevention of antisocial behaviors (Durlak et al., 2011). Lower levels of emotional stress and fewer conduct problems were seen in students who participated in SEL programs (Durlak et al., 2011).

In studies that explored multiple SEL outcomes including academic, behavioral, and social-emotional development, the effect size for social skill performance was largest overall, suggesting that SEL programming has a significant and direct impact on enhancing prosocial competencies and decreasing antisocial behaviors (Durlak et al., 2011; Sklad et al., 2012). SEL programs have been found to decrease the amount of conduct referrals as well as bullying incidents (Civic Enterprises et al., 2013). Sklad et al.'s (2012) study indicated that social skills of students participating in SEL programming were approximately 7 standard deviations higher than their counterparts, meaning that the average participant had better skills than 76% of students who did not participate in programming. Programs also had moderate immediate effects on positive self-image, prosocial behavior, and antisocial behavior, as each of these outcomes improved by nearly one half a standard deviation (Sklad et al., 2012, p. 903).

Academic outcomes. Social-emotional competencies directly influence students' behaviors, thoughts, and emotions and subsequent academic success. For instance, the promotion of resilience, or the ability to persist despite great challenges, supports students in developing skills that will enable them to overcome academic obstacles. Aronson (2002) suggests that students who are more self-aware and confident about their learning capacities are more motivated to persist in challenges. Zins and Elias (2006) assert that students who use problem-solving skills in the face of challenges and responsible decision-making skills (e.g., studying,

completing homework) do better academically overall. One study showed that among one million students, positive emotions such as hope, well-being, and engagement accounted for 31 percent of the variance in students' academic success (Heitin, 2012). Academic gains can have profound effects on student outcomes, as skills gained by SEL programming enhance protective factors that prevent failure and dropouts while promoting resiliency.

Extant literature indicates a strong association between the acquisition of SEL skills and academic achievement. Schools that are strong in SEL supports are at least 10 times more likely to show substantial gains in reading and math than schools weak in supports (Civic Enterprises et al., 2013). Personal attributes and skills associated with SEL like goal-setting, self-discipline, stress management, and organization play an important role in work approach and subsequent overall academic gains (Duckworth & Seligman, 2005). Zins et al. (2004) notes that students' social-emotional competence fosters better academic performance due to improved core competencies such as self-awareness and motivation. Learning approaches to support feelings of belonging, academic self-efficacy and mental health result in lasting changes in students' beliefs about achievement and motivation to learn (Becker & Luther, 2002). For instance, "students who become more self-aware and confident about their learning abilities" are more motivated and apt to set goals, manage their stress, and organize their approach to perform better (Zins et al., 2004; Greenberg et al., 2003, p. 470).

Moreover, in Durlak et al.'s (2011) study, findings demonstrated SEL programs' significant effects on academic gains in the form of achievement tests and grades. Additionally, results showed that students who participated in SEL programs scored 11 percentile points higher than students who did not receive SEL interventions, which is consistent with a growing body of research indicating that SEL programming enhances students' connection to school and

academic achievement (Zins et al., 2004). Other studies have reported similar findings regarding academic gains. In a study conducted by the Consortium on Chicago School Research at the University of Chicago, researchers documented “noncognitive” academic competencies gained from SEL including academic perseverance, learning strategies, and social skills impact student success (Farrington et al., 2012).

Similar SEL studies (e.g., Wilson, Gottfredson, Najaka, 2001) reported findings in improved outcomes related to dropout and nonattendance – both of which are important factors in academic achievement and overall school success (Zins et al., 2007). SEL interventions help students stay in school by making school more enjoyable and helping them to better manage frustrations and overcome obstacles. Additionally, intrapersonal skills provide students with a sense of identity and purpose allowing them to succeed in college and within the community (Civic Enterprises et al., 2013). Studies show that with SEL interventions, dropout trends can be reversed, especially if action is taken early on, at the first signs of struggle (Civic Enterprises et al., 2013; Webster-Stratton, Gasper, & Sebra-Santos, 2012).

In conclusion, without strong SEL skills children are subject to a wide range of consequences. Romasz et al. (2004) assert that the absence of a strong sense of self and sound decision-making skills results in susceptibility to peer pressure and poor conflict resolution skills, while impulsivity can result in physical aggressiveness. By enhancing social and emotional competencies, students are better able to navigate their environment and multiple stressors.

Impact of SEL on Special Populations

Students from at-risk populations. Although empirical evidence indicates that all children should develop SEL skills in order to receive benefits that will enable successful

management of life tasks, certain groups of students are more at-risk for significant difficulties in various areas without the development of SEL skills (Romasz et al., 2004). Social and emotional skills are critical for students from at-risk populations, in particular, as they are faced with significant community and familial stressors including exposure to violence and drugs in the community, economic hardships, domestic conflicts, abuse, and a high prevalence of mental health and physical conditions as well as disabilities (Romasz et al., 2004). A growing challenge for schools is meeting the unique needs of students from these populations who are plagued by disadvantages in the education system.

In addition to exposure to environmental stressors, children from at-risk populations face barriers to quality education including poor curricula, overcrowded classrooms, inadequate school facilities, poorly trained teachers, and lack of teacher support (Elias & Haynes, 2008) - barriers that have dire consequences on academic success. Problems are further exacerbated by “the reality that schools in low income urban districts also have the lowest ratings of school climate, which have been shown to be concomitant with problems in student achievement and socialization” (Schaps & Solomon, 2003 as cited in Elias & Haynes, 2008, p. 475).

Negative outcomes are associated with students who encounter obstacles to education and do not have protective factors such as social-emotional competencies. Research suggests that children residing in communities with violence and social discord are not only at risk for mental health problems such as depression, anxiety and suicide, but they are also at risk for engaging in anti-social behaviors (Romasz, Kantor, & Elias, 2004). In fact, students from at-risk populations who lack social-emotional competencies become less connected to school and eventually disengage entirely. A large number of students who lack social-emotional competence believe their teachers do not care about them, and disrupt the educational experiences of their

peers (Payton et al., 2008). Subsequently, school disengagement and feelings of alienation and rejection are associated with school dropout (Becker & Luthar, 2002). Thus, the barriers that students from at-risk populations face lead to dire consequences that can have a profound impact on their lives' trajectory.

Despite exposure to risk factors, many students are able to succeed in incredibly challenging environments (Elias & Haynes, 2008). Protective processes, defined as the “strengths or resources associated with positive individual outcomes,” aid children in overcoming adversity in order to thrive in schools and within society (Dalton, Elias, & Wandersman, 2007, p. 245). Elias and Haynes (2008) suggest that key protective factors enhanced by SEL programming including social-emotional competencies and perceived social support foster resiliency. For instance, self-awareness and the ability to regulate emotions when frustrated or angry will impact energy that is devoted to learning (Elias & Haynes, 2008).

Although prior research on the impact of SEL curricula on children from at-risk populations is limited, some studies suggest that SEL programs are effective with students from socioeconomically and culturally diverse backgrounds including those from low SES populations (Payton et al., 2008). Research shows that students from schools with high poverty rates who receive high-quality SEL instruction demonstrate improved attitudes and behaviors, including enhanced motivation to learn, improved peer relationships, and a deeper connection to school (Civic Enterprises et al., 2013; Greenberg et al., 2003). For example, in Elias and Haynes' (2008) study, researchers found that social-emotional competence affects academic performance of children in at-risk, high poverty neighborhoods and variance in end-of-year academic outcomes was predicted by initial levels of social-emotional competence. Additionally, the findings suggested that SEL skills and support combined to serve as protective factors, albeit

inconsistently, across cultural and ethnic groups (Elias & Haynes, 2008). Similarly, results from Mitchell's (2003) research study suggests that social competence is a significant mediating factor in urban third-grade students' academic performance, "adding significant predictive value over and above variance accounted for by knowing their prior academic performance and skills" (as cited in Romasz et al., 2004, p. 93).

For these reasons, fostering social-emotional competency is particularly important for at-risk students. Empirical evidence indicates that numerous contexts including communities and schools influence children's development and life skills can aid students in functioning despite environmental injustices (Elias & Haynes, 2008). Overall, social-emotional skills play a crucial role in fostering school success for low-income, minority students, as these students are more likely to be faced with obstacles and have the need to rely on protective factors such as resilience to overcome these challenges (Becker & Luthar, 2002; Elias & Haynes, 2008).

Students with disabilities. Students with disabilities face unique challenges regarding academic achievement and social-emotional competency. Compared to students in general education, students in special education classrooms "have a higher risk of developing emotional and interpersonal problems and engage more often in problem behaviors that may disrupt their relationships with peers and teachers" (Chapman, 1988; Dudley-Marling & Edmiaston, 1985; Pearl, 1987, 1992; Schumaker & Hazel, 1988 as cited in Kam, Greenberg, & Kusche, 2004, p. 66). Students with disabilities tend to have more problems with social-emotional competence than students without disabilities. In fact, students with learning disabilities who lack social-emotional competence are more likely to have poorer outcomes, overall, than students without disabilities (Bender & Wall, 1994).

Recent research has examined the sustained outcomes of a comprehensive SEL program

on students with disabilities and found favorable outcomes. In a study on the impact of an evidence-based SEL program on the social and behavioral adjustment of children with special needs, results showed that the SEL curriculum was effective when implemented in special education environments (Kam et al., 2004). PATHS had a significant impact on reports of internalizing and externalizing problems and self-reported depression in the children. Due to the fact that internalizing and externalizing problems in children are highly comorbid, it is not surprising that gaining skills in emotion regulation, self-control, and problem solving had a positive impact on both internal and external problem behaviors (Kam et al., 2004). In addition, teachers and students recognized the significant effects and these effects were apparent two years after the intervention. In conclusion, SEL programming is critical in order to increase resiliency and enhance overall outcomes, as students from at-risk populations are at a greater risk of experiencing challenges with negative consequences.

SEL Program Adoption

Despite empirical evidence of substantial benefits for all children, including those from at-risk populations, SEL programs are not systematically integrated in many schools. Adoption and implementation of these programs in schools continues to be a challenge even with increased availability of, and policy support, for SEL programming. Results from the Civic Enterprises et al. (2013) survey study indicates that less than half of the 605 teachers surveyed (44 percent) stated that social and emotional skills are being taught on a schoolwide programmatic basis. The lack of SEL programming was even more evident at the high school level, according to results, with only 28 percent of high school teachers stating that it is occurring schoolwide, compared to 43 percent of middle school teachers and 49 percent of prekindergarten and elementary school teachers (Civic Enterprises et al., 2013). Survey results indicate that only 39 percent of high-

poverty schools have schoolwide SEL programming. These findings align with research on the implementation of mental health services and other EBPs in school settings, as studies have found that many schools face challenges in adoption or use of evidence-based prevention programs, despite empirical evidence supporting positive student outcomes (e.g., Domitrovich & Greenberg, 2000). Given the significant benefits of SEL on student outcomes, it is important to understand the barriers to adoption and subsequent implementation of SEL programs.

Barriers to Adoption and Implementation

Due to multiple and often competing demands (Reinke et al., 2011), schools face many challenges in successful adoption and implementation of mental health practices. Although educators recognize that school-based mental health interventions are essential for success, schools may not be able to facilitate the provision of these services or provide adequate supports for adoption or implementation (Han & Weiss, 2005). Research on school-based mental health programs suggests that educators identify main barriers to the implementation of EBPs including competing responsibilities, parent engagement, logistics and support from administrators and teachers (Langley, Nadeem, Kataoka, Stein, & Jaycox, 2010). These barriers influence teachers' attitudes toward EBPs and subsequent acceptance of new innovations.

For many school professionals, focusing on social and emotional skills, in particular, when academic standards are being given greater emphasis is a profound challenge (Becker & Luthar, 2002). Educators often feel that the integration of SEL innovations into the mandated academic curricula is not feasible given the demands of teaching. In addition, misconceptions regarding EBPs and its purpose can also contribute to attitudes regarding EBP feasibility and need. Teachers may feel that they lack the knowledge and resources to impact mental health needs of children in the school setting (Kratochwill & Shernoff, 2004). Furthermore, some

educators believe that they do not have adequate training, professional development, or the support necessary in order to implement EBPs successfully. In Reinke et al.'s (2011) study on teachers' perceptions of mental health in schools, principal and administrator support, teacher support, financial resources, high quality training, and alignment of the intervention with school philosophies were among the essential characteristics that impacted program adoption and implementation identified by practitioners. Moreover, lack of adequate parent support and staff training are among the major barriers to program implementation identified by educators according to some research studies (e.g., Reinke et al., 2011).

Attitudes Toward EBP Adoption

Provider attitudes toward EBPs can limit or facilitate the adoption and implementation of effective interventions (Stahmer & Aarons, 2009). Recent research examined attitudes toward EBPs in an effort to gain insight into the specific factors that influence adoption and implementation. For instance, Aarons' (2004) study explored mental health provider attitudes toward the adoption of EBPs in community mental health settings and found an association between attitudes and adoption. Related studies suggest that attitudes toward adoption of EBPs can be a precursor to the decision to adopt or try a new practice (e.g., Rogers 1995). Aarons (2004) asserts that if EBPs are going to be adopted, implemented, and disseminated, it is crucial to consider attitudes of providers in order to tailor efforts for adoption, implementation, and dissemination to individual differences and school context.

Provider attitudes toward EBPs can be varied and complex (Aarons et al., 2012). While providers may have an overall positive or negative view of EBPs, they can also hold somewhat contradictory attitudes (Aarons et al., 2012). That is, providers can be positively predisposed to EBPs on one dimension and negatively predisposed on another. For instance, one may

understand the utility of an EBP, but at the same time believe that they lack support and resources in order to implement an innovation effectively. Similarly, providers may understand the need to use EBPs in practice, but might also be unwilling to implement specific EBPs that are mandated by the state or school (Aarons, 2004).

Proposed domains of attitudes toward adoption of EBPs. Aarons et al. (2012) captured the complexity of provider attitudes toward EBPs in the Evidence-Based Practice Attitude Scale (EBPAS), which includes distinct dimensions in providers' attitudes toward EBPs. Research suggests that there are at least four potentially important domains of provider attitudes toward EBP adoption including appeal of the innovation, likelihood of adopting EBPs as a result of institutional requirements, openness to change and learning new practices, and perceived difference between current and new practices (Aarons, 2005). Firstly, it is suggested that attitudes toward adoption of EBPs are likely influenced by the appeal of the information source (Frambach & Schillewaert, 2002 as cited in Aarons, 2005). For instance, providers are more accepting of information derived from colleagues than research articles. There may be skepticism by providers when the EBP comes from research or is imposed by a mandate (Aarons, 2005). Providers may perceive the views of colleagues, who likely experience similar working conditions, to be valuable.

In addition, requirements of the implementation of the innovation may impact the degree to which a provider accepts and adopts a practice. Openness to change is identified as an important component of workplace climate and individual differences in openness are related to organizational characteristics and job performance (Aarons, 2005). Business and organizational research has shown that "openness to innovation may be important in developing characteristics of 'learning organizations' that are more responsive and adaptive to internal and environmental

contingencies” (Anderson & West, 1998; Garvin, 1993 as cited in Aarons, 2005, p. 261). Finally, if incongruence exists between current and new practices, divergence may occur (Garland, Kruse, & Aarons, 2003).

Researchers (e.g., Aarons, 2005) suggest that these four domains are critical in understanding the attitudes toward and adoption of EBPs. Although there is limited research on attitudes toward EBPs, perceived barriers to the implementation of EBPs are important to consider in understanding the research to practice gap, as perceptions of challenges influence EBP adoption. More specifically, exploring educators’ attitudes toward EBPs in the school context can elucidate barriers and facilitators of adoption and implementation efforts for SEL programming.

Attitudes Toward SEL Programming

Civic Enterprises et al.’s (2013) Missing Piece survey study sheds light on educators’ attitudes toward SEL programming including their understanding of SEL core values, perceived need for SEL programming, and barriers to SEL program implementation. The study, which included interviews with a nationally representative sample of teachers from schools serving students from diverse sociocultural backgrounds, had several major findings. Firstly, responses indicated that teachers recognized the benefit and need to incorporate SEL into the student learning experience and believe that SEL concepts are teachable. However, results showed that although nearly all teachers (88 percent) reported that SEL occurs in their schools on some level, less than half (44 percent) stated that SEL skills are being taught on a schoolwide, programmatic basis (Civic Enterprises et al., 2013).

Impact on student outcomes. Furthermore, according to Civic Enterprises et al.’s (2013) study, nearly all teachers (95%) endorsed SEL for all students across grade levels, school types,

backgrounds, and SES levels. Respondents indicated that SEL would have a major benefit on student outcomes including workforce readiness, attendance and graduation, college preparation and academic success. Some district leaders who completed the survey also recognized the strong connection between SEL and academic learning, stating that SEL is the basis for academic success. Teachers in schools where SEL is taught were more likely to say their school is at least fairly successful in developing critical academic content and subject areas. Notably, teachers in high-poverty schools (schools with 60 percent or more students in free/reduced-price lunch program) were more likely to endorse SEL than peers in higher resourced communities. Therefore, although most teachers understand the importance of SEL programming on student outcomes, SEL programs are not being taught on a school-wide basis. This finding coincides with research on mental health EBPs and the assertion that effective interventions are not being implemented in schools, despite empirical evidence and availability (Civic Enterprises et al., 2013).

Findings from Civic Enterprises et al.'s (2013) study also revealed that teachers believe problems such as lack of engagement and bullying impact student learning and that SEL has major benefits on students' academic, social-emotional, and behavioral development. A majority of teachers believe that SEL has an impact on students' ability to graduate, increase standardized scores and overall academic performance. Seven in ten teachers reported students' lack of interest as at least somewhat of a problem in schools and three quarters of these teachers believe that SEL will improve academic performance. Similarly, nearly half of all teachers who completed the survey indicated that bullying is at least somewhat of a problem at their school and believe that SEL programs prevent and reduce bullying. Moreover, more than half of teachers who stated that there is too little emphasis on SEL also indicated the bullying is at least

somewhat of a problem. Survey findings show that out of the teachers who view school climate as a problem, a majority (80 percent) of them view SEL as a solution. Similarly, teachers in schools with successful SEL programs are half as likely to report negative school climate compared to teachers in schools that do not have successful SEL programming (21 percent versus 44 percent respectively). Finally, a majority of teachers believe teaching SEL skills to students will help to prepare them for college and become good citizens (Civic Enterprises et al., 2013).

Facilitators and barriers to implementation. Civic Enterprises et al.'s (2013) study results provide information regarding teachers' perceptions of barriers to and facilitators of SEL program adoption and implementation. Interestingly, only 15 percent of teachers identified school administration as a major barrier, contrary to some research results regarding attitudes toward mental health EBPs (e.g., Reinke et al., 2011). A majority of teachers (81 percent) ranked time as the biggest challenge to implementing SEL. Although approximately half of the teachers surveyed reported receiving some form of SEL training, most teachers (82 percent) reported wanting further training in SEL. In addition, lack of skill reinforcement at home was considered to be a big challenge for SEL implementation. About 80 percent of respondents who view SEL as important indicated that lack of reinforcement at home was a challenge (Civic Enterprises et al., 2013).

In terms of facilitators of SEL programming, most teachers (82 percent) indicated that additional training would be beneficial. Moreover, three out of four teachers view lack of training and knowledge on how to teach SEL skills as important to implement SEL in their classrooms. In addition, almost two-thirds of teachers think that the development of social and emotional skills should be explicitly stated in state standards and three in four teachers in low-

performing schools endorse this concept. In addition, teachers with experience and training in SEL are more receptive to the idea that these skills can be measured, further demonstrating the impact of teacher training on perceptions of SEL interventions. Teachers also recognize the importance of the connection between home and school, with 91 percent of teachers stating that lack of skills reinforcement at home is a big challenge. Despite perceived barriers to implementation, teachers still value SEL, with 81 percent of respondents saying they are fairly or very interested in receiving additional SEL training and 80 percent stating they believe SEL is very important.

The survey's findings have important implications for closing the research to practice gap. Results suggest that teachers strongly believe that the development of social and emotional skills is critical to ensure social-emotional, behavioral, and academic success as well as college and career readiness (Civic Enterprises et al., 2013). However, there are multiple challenges, including time and training, that impact teacher's perceptions of SEL programming. These challenges are consistent with prior research on barriers to implementation of mental health EBPs, suggesting that there are similarities between attitudes toward EBPs and SEL interventions and value in exploring perceptions of EBPs. Overall, results from CASEL's study suggest the need to further explore the complexities of teachers' perceptions of SEL programming within the school context in order to understand how to better support teachers in the adoption and implementation of interventions.

Influences on Provider Attitudes Toward EBPs

The context by which EBPs are adopted and implemented is complex and recently proposed models identify organizational factors that may facilitate or impede the adoption of innovations (e.g., Aarons, 2005; Aarons et al., 2012). There are multiple factors at system,

organizational, and individual levels that may influence program acceptability (Aarons et al., 2012; Aarons & Sawitzky, 2006). Some factors include social and economic, innovation-specific, and organizational characteristics (Aarons et al., 2012). Research (e.g., Moore, 2002; Rogers, 1995) suggests that although management may adopt an innovation, individual acceptance of the innovation relies on both organizational and individual factors and these factors, in turn, impact the degree to which evidence-based practices are implemented with fidelity and competence (Aarons & Sawitzky, 2006).

Research (e.g., Aarons et al. 2012; Han & Weiss, 2005; Stahmer & Aarons, 2009) has identified two broad categories of characteristics that impact educators' willingness to adopt and implement an innovation, which include individual provider-level characteristics and contextual characteristics of the setting. Organizational social context has been found to affect functioning and productivity within organizations (Glisson & James, 2002). Glisson and James (2002) suggest that climate and culture are critical components of organizational social context that are independent but correlated constructs that play an important role in the adoption of EDPs. Culture includes the organizational norms and expectations of a workplace, while climate reflects workers' perceptions of, and responses to, their work environment (Glisson & James, 2002). In addition to understanding organizational predictors of attitudes toward EBPs, it is also important to consider and control for individual-level variables. Providers' educational attainment and number of years teaching have been found to be associated with attitudes toward EBPs (Aarons, 2004; Aarons et al., 2012). As such, when examining attitudes toward adoption of EBPs, both individual and organizational-level characteristics should be considered.

Organizational social context. Aarons et al. (2012) posit that one of the most proximal influences on service providers' attitudes and behaviors is the "social context of the organization

in which they work” (p. 1). Organizational social context includes the norms, values, expectations, perceptions, interpersonal relationships, attitudes and other psychosocial factors that govern how members of an organization approach their work, interpret their work, feel about their jobs, and collaborate with others (Glisson, 2002; Glisson & James, 2002). Research (e.g., Glisson, 2002) suggests that the dimensions of organizational context that are particularly important to innovation are culture, climate, structure, and work attitudes. These constructs are essential to understanding attitudes toward EBPs because they create a social context that invites or rejects innovation and complements or inhibits the activities required for successful implementation of the innovation (Glisson, 2002).

Culture and climate are key constructs associated with organizational social context that are believed to influence attitudes toward evidence-based practices and implementations (Aarons, 2005; Aarons & Sawitzky, 2006). In addition, it is suggested that both climate and culture are important in the quality and outcomes of mental health services (Aarons & Sawitzky, 2006). According to Aarons et al. (2012), organizational social context includes “the norms and expectations (i.e., culture) of the organization for its members as well as the psychological impact of the work environment on the individual workers (i.e., climate)” (p.2). Although culture and climate are related constructs, there is evidence that they impact attitudes toward EBPs in unique ways (Aarons et al., 2012).

Climate. Organizational climate is defined as the perceptions of and emotional responses to the characteristics of the work environment (Glisson & James, 2002, p. 769). It describes the psychological impact of the environment on clinicians (e.g., stress) (Aarons et al., 2012). Climate can be measured at the individual and group or unit level. *Psychological* climate is the individual’s perception of the psychological impact of the work environment on his or her own

well-being (James & James, 1989) while *organizational* climate describes the shared perceptions among employees of the impact of their work environment at the group/unit level (as cited in Glisson & James, 2002, p. 769). In other words, when providers in the same organizational unit agree on their perceptions of the social climate, their shared perceptions can be combined to describe the overall organizational climate (Glisson, 2002). Figure 3 shows the distinction between organizational and psychological climate and how each domain fits into the overall organizational social context.

The psychological impact of the work environment is measured by multiple dimensions, including emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and role conflict (Glisson, 2002). The general psychological climate factor (PC_g), which is believed to underlie overall climate, represents the individual's perception of the overall psychological impact of the work environment, represented in positive or negative terms (James & James, 1989; James et al., 1990 as cited in Glisson, 2002). Organizational climates are expected to influence attitudes about EBPs. For instance, providers in high-stress work environments may feel that requirements and expectations imposed on them by implementing new EBPs are overwhelming and therefore, may have more negative views toward EBPs (Aarons et al., 2012).

In Aarons et al.'s (2012) study, researchers found that clinicians working in organizations characterized by engaged climates and less stressful climates had more positive attitudes toward the use of evidence-based practices. In addition, results suggested that providers working in settings with high levels of emotional exhaustion and role overload were less likely to respond favorably to policy or regulatory mandates requiring the use of evidence-based practices. Clinicians working in engaged organizational climates, defined by a sense of personal accomplishment and concern for clients, reported a greater likelihood of adopting an evidence-

based practice if it fit their views of clinical practice and their ability to effectively learn and use the practice (Aarons et al., 2012).

Culture. Culture, measured at the unit or group level, is defined as the normative beliefs and shared behaviors within an organization (Glisson & James, 2002). According to Aarons et al. (2012), organizational culture “captures the expectations and values about what is important in a specific organization” (p. 3) and influences the attitudes of staff members through their accommodation of work expectations. In other words, beliefs and expectations guide the way work is approached. Conformity, consensus, and motivation are potential outcomes associated with the accommodation of work expectations (Glisson, 2002). These expectations and values have the capacity to impact organization members who may seek to behave in ways to meet expectations of their workplace. As a result, organization culture influence attitudes about evidence-based practices like SEL in ways that align with expectations. (Aarons et al., 2012).

According to Aarons and Sawitzky (2006), constructive cultures are characterized by “organizational norms of achievement and motivation, individualism and self-actualization, and being humanistic and supportive” (p. 62). Additionally, these cultures encourage interactions with people and approaches to tasks that will enable staff to meet their needs. In contrast, defensive cultures are defined as “seeking approval and consensus, being conventional and conforming, and being dependent and subservient” (p. 62). On the other hand, defensive cultures encourage or require interaction with people in ways that do not threaten personal security (Cooke & Szumal, 2000 as cited in Aarons & Sawitzky, 2006).

Empirical evidence suggests that associations between culture, adoption of evidence-based practices, and organizational change. For example, Carmazzzi and Aarons’ (2003) study found that providers working in child and adolescent mental health agencies with more positive

culture had more positive attitudes toward the adoption of evidence-based practices, while those with more negative cultures had more negative attitudes (as cited in Aarons & Sawitzky, 2006). In addition, Feldman (1993) suggests that organizational culture can hinder or facilitate the change process. When organizational values are in conflict with the change, implementation of an innovation can be impacted (Feldman, 1993 as cited in Aarons & Sawitzky, 2006). According to Aarons et al.'s (2012) study, clinicians in proficient cultures in which organizations expect them to “place the well-being of the clients first, to be competent, and to have up-to-date knowledge” endorsed more positive overall attitudes toward adopting evidence-based practices (p. 5).

Structure. Organizational structure is a work unit-level construct of social context that describes “the centralization of power and formalization of roles in an organization” (Glisson, 2002, p. 236). According to Glisson (2002), structure includes participation in decision-making, hierarchy of authority, division of labor, and procedural specifications that guide work-related interactions among the members of an organizational unit. For example, in a mental health setting, structure may determine contribution to development of organizational policies or the flexibility in addressing needs of clients. Core technology, or mental health treatment, is considered to be a key element of organizational structure and critical to understanding how the organization should be structured. In general, it is posited that the more an organization’s structure complements and supports the work conducted in the organization’s core technology (e.g., mental health treatment) the more effective the organization (Glisson, 2002). Thus, the most effective organizations achieve a fit between social context and core technologies.

Glisson et al. (2008) assert that there is an association between structure and culture, whereas culture is considered the determinant of structure or the “deeper” construct. Although

values and assumptions are associated with organizational culture, normative beliefs and behavioral expectations are associated with the more visible aspect of culture, or organizational structure. The socio-technical model, which views organizations as creating a social context within which the technical work of the organization can be performed, posits that highly formalized divisions of labor and centralized hierarchies of authority could be appropriate for routinized practices. Similarly, more organic social structures characterized by less rigid and more flexible structures are needed for non-routinized practices in work environment that require teamwork, adjustments, adaptability, and continued development of new knowledge (Glisson et al., 2008).

Work attitudes. Work attitudes in organizational research include job satisfaction and organizational commitment (Glisson & Durick, 1988 as cited in Glisson, 2002). Organizational commitment is described as a willingness to exert effort on behalf of the organization and a strong desire to remain a member of the organization while job satisfaction is focused on an employee's specific tasks and duties (Mowday, Porter, and Steers, 1982). Therefore, organizational commitment focuses on attachment to the organization whereas satisfaction focuses on the specific tasks and duties (Mowday et al., 1982). Like other organizational context constructs, work attitudes are complex. Although job satisfaction and organizational commitment are expected to correlate, their relationship is not straightforward. For example, a provider who is attached to a specific organization may be dissatisfied with certain aspects of a job within that organization or vice versa (Glisson, 2002). Work attitudes contribute to the complex overall organizational social context and are important in examining attitudes toward EBPs.

Influence of Organizational-Level Factors on Attitudes Toward EBPs

Although limited research has been conducted on the relationship between organizational

context and EBP adoption in the mental health field, researchers have identified culture and climate as key factors in understanding provider attitudes toward EBPs (Aarons & Sawitzky, 2006; Aarons et al., 2012; Glisson, 2002). The beliefs and behavioral expectations that characterize the organization's culture, collaboration supported by the structure, and psychological impact of the work environment on the service provider affect the way in which service provider's approach and think about their work (Glisson, 2002). Thus, innovation has been found to be linked to cultures that value quality improvement, climates where providers are open to trying new practices, and structures that promote collaboration in decision-making and flexibility (Glisson, 2002; Rogers 1995). More specifically, safe organizational climates, constructive cultures characterized by support and motivation, climates that are low in emotional exhaustion and role conflict, structures that are less centralized and formalized, and positive work attitudes are believed to promote the adoption of new, efficacious practices (Glisson, 2002).

Due to the links between organizational social context, core values, and perceptions, studies have found that climate and culture represent processes that are likely to influence provider attitudes toward organizational change and more specifically, acceptance and adoption of EBPs (Aarons & Sawitzky, 2006). In Aarons & Sawitzky's (2006) study, researchers found that both culture and climate are associated with mental health service providers' attitudes toward adoption of EBPs. Research also shows that culture and climate are distinct aspects of organizational process (Glisson & James, 2002). For example, positive organizational culture is associated with positive attitudes toward EBPs and demoralizing organizational climate characterized by conflict, emotional exhaustion and depersonalization is associated with perceived divergence between usual practice and EBPs, or more negative attitudes toward EBPs

overall (Aarons & Sawitzky, 2006).

The relationship between culture, climate, and attitudes toward EBPs is complex (Aarons & Sawitzky, 2006). As culture captures the way things are done in an organization and climate captures the way people perceive their work environment, it is suggested that culture is a property of the organization while climate is a property of the individual (Glisson, 2002). In fact, culture is proposed to precede and affect climate. Organizational- (e.g., culture, structure) and individual- level (e.g., psychological and organizational climate) constructs are linked in a sequence of relationships (Glisson, 2002). Several key characteristics of the organizational social context are shown in the conceptual model shown in Figure 2.

According to Glisson (2002), this model shows the relationship between organizational domains and highlights the important role of organizational context in understanding outcomes of children's mental health services. More specifically, the model depicts work attitudes (e.g., job satisfaction, commitment) and behaviors (e.g., adherence, availability, responsiveness) at the individual level as a function of culture and structure at the work unit level, mediated by climate. In the first stage of the model, at the organizational level, the norms and values that drive behavioral expectations and the way the organization is structured determine how work is approached. The second stage depicts workers' perceptions of the impact of their work environment on their own well-being, creating a psychological climate for each worker. If the effects of the work environment create similar perceptions among most of the workers in the organization, then an organizational climate is formed. The third stage shows individual-level work attitudes and behavior, which are a function of workers' perceptions of their work environment, the organization's structure, and the norms and values driving behavior. In summary, the organizational social context model depicts the relationships between

organizational properties and individual work performance, mediated by perceptions of work environment (Glisson, 2002). Although additional research is needed to better understand the nature of these relationships, it is known that culture and climate, key components of organizational context, influence work attitudes.

Figure 2. Relationship Between Key Characteristics of OSC

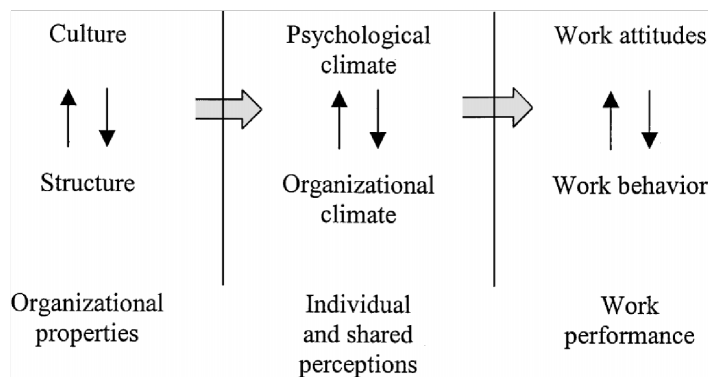


Figure 2. Relationship between key characteristics of OSC model (Glisson et al., 2008).

Organizational Theory

Organizational models focus on social context to understand how innovations are adopted and implemented. According to the organizational framework, culture and climate affect work performance and organizational effectiveness “by influencing how people go about their work, the priorities they emphasize in their work, and the psychological impact and meaning of that work” (Glisson et al., 2008, p. 127). Organizational culture theorists posit that social norms, expectations, meaning and perceptions are keys to understanding individual behavior as well as organizational effectiveness. As such, understanding norms, expectations, and perceptions is necessary for implementing innovations and improving overall organizational effectiveness. The organizational model conceptualizes the association of culture and climate with behavior and attitudes as integral in understanding organizational barriers to the adoption and implementation of new practices (Glisson et al., 2008).

Adopter-based innovation model. The adopter-based innovation model provides further insight into the impact of social context on the adoption and implementation of an innovation. The adopter-based theory posits that the adoption of an innovation is a function of the organization's social context (Glisson, 2002; Rogers, 1995). For example, constructive cultures promote innovation and are more likely to adopt EBPs, while defensive cultures are more likely to resist innovation (Cooke & Szumal, 2000 as cited in Glisson & James, 2002). The model also explains the impact of the organizational context on the implementation of the innovation. Context is critical to implementation as it determines how work is approached, priorities emphasized by individuals, and how problems are solved (Rogers, 1995). Overall, cross-level effects link "organizational social context to the adoption and implementation of innovations including organizational properties (e.g., culture and structure), individual-level properties (e.g., work attitudes, behaviors), and a psychological process (e.g, perceptions that comprise psychological climate)" (Glisson & James, 2002, p. 772). This adopter-based innovation model highlights the importance of considering social context in the adoption EBPs due to its impact implementation of the innovation.

Implications for Other Mental Health Service Organizations

Although past research on organizational social context is based mostly on mental health service organizations, the theoretical framework applies to similar organizations in which change takes place including child welfare, social services, schools, and primary care settings (Aarons & Sawitzky, 2006). Even though organizational structure and process likely vary across settings, all organizations have "contexts that may facilitate or hinder implementation of innovations" (Aarons & Sawitzky, 2006, p. 69). In fact, in Aarons and Sawitzky's (2006) study on organizational culture and mental health providers' attitudes toward EBPs, researchers assert that

findings of the study are likely to be relevant for organized care settings outside the mental health care sector.

Multiple similarities between school and mental health settings suggest that organizational social context theory is generalizable to school settings. For example, similar to child welfare systems, schools are highly bureaucratic in nature. In mental health settings like child welfare, the bureaucratic nature of the organization has been linked to poor service worker attitudes toward adoption EBPs (Aarons, 2004). In addition, service providers in mental health and school settings alike are subject to federal, state, and county policies and regulations and services taking place within organizational contexts that vary according to the quality of leadership and supervision, organizational norms, expectations and climate (Aarons, 2004; Glisson 2002). Perhaps most notably, schools are considered the largest provider of child mental health services and for many, it is the only setting in which they receive mental health services (Burns et al., 1995; Hoagwood, Burns, Kiser, Ringeisen, & Schoenwald, 2001, 2003 as cited in Kratochwill & Shernoff, 2004).

Moreover, there is notable ongoing research of EBPs in social services, primary care settings, and schools. Although organizational culture is noted to vary across these settings, it is critical to also highlight the similarities between these settings in order to draw comparisons and better understand provider attitudes in relation to organizational context. Overall, research shows that pre-implementation evaluation of attitudes toward adopting EBPs and organizational context can “target aspects of the work environment likely to impact attitudes toward change” (Aarons & Sawitzky, 2006, p. 69).

Influence of Individual Provider Characteristics on Attitudes Toward EBPs

Empirical evidence suggests attitudes toward innovation and change likely interact with

individual provider characteristics in addition to organizational social context (Aarons & Sawitzky, 2002; Glisson, 2002). Thus, in understanding organizational predictors of attitudes toward EBPs, it is important to consider and control for individual-level variables (Aarons and Sawitzky, 2002). More specifically, characteristics such as professional experience, educational attainment and training can be influential in willingness to adopt and implement an innovation (Aarons, 2004; Aarons & Sawitzky, 2002).

Educational attainment. Educational attainment has been found to be associated with endorsement of EBPs (Aarons, 2004; Ogborne, Wild, Braun, & Newton-Taylor, 1998). Aarons (2004) suggests that more positive attitudes toward adoption of EBPs are associated with higher educational attainment. Clinicians with more advanced degrees described EBPs as more appealing. Similarly, Rogers (1995) asserts that that having more formal education and more formal attitudes toward change are associated with more positive feelings toward adoption of EBPs. However, notably, in Aarons (2004) study, clinicians with higher advanced degrees who described EBPs as appealing were simultaneously less willing to implement EBPs simply because they were mandated or required. These results show the complex nature of attitudes toward EBPs and may suggest that clinicians with higher educational attainment not only value, but are open to the adoption of EBPs, with the caveat that EBPs are not mandated or required.

Professional status. There is also evidence that professionals completing their education (e.g., interns) and transitioning into professional roles are more flexible in regard to learning new interventions (Aarons, 2004). In other words, less-experienced clinicians tend to be more open to adoption of EBPs relative to providers who have been practicing for longer periods of time (Aarons, 2004). For instance, in Ogborne et al.'s (1998) study on mental health professionals' attitudes, results indicated that certified counselors were more likely than noncertified counselors

to adhere to traditional concepts of the causes and treatment of disorders (as cited in Aarons, 2004). Similarly, Garland et al. (2003) found that interns in mental health clinics reported more positive attitudes to using evidence-based assessment protocols. In Aarons et al.'s (2012) study of the association between organizational social climate and attitudes toward EBPs in mental health practices, researchers found that years of experience were associated with attitudes toward the use of EBPs. Specifically, clinicians with more years of experience were more negative in their attitudes toward EBPs. These results may indicate that clinicians who have more recent experiences in training programs may be exposed to the utility and need for EBPs and therefore, may be more open to the adoption of new practices.

School Characteristics

Research shows that school characteristics impact the experiences of school members (Lee & Loeb, 2000). In a (2000) study, Lee and Loeb considered the impact of a schools' physical location, social composition of schools, and school size on teachers' attitudes. Researchers found that in small schools, "teachers have a more positive attitude about their responsibility for students' learning" (Lee and Loeb, 2000, p. 3). In addition, studies show that structural characteristics including the physical location (e.g., rural, urban) and social composition of the school (i.e. socioeconomic status of student population) are important characteristics to consider when investigating teachers' attitudes and effects on student achievement (Lee & Loeb, 2000).

In fact, in CASEL's (2000) Missing Piece survey on educators' attitudes toward SEL, researchers found that attitudes differed according to school characteristics including the socioeconomic status of the student population, and school location (e.g., urban, rural) (Civic Enterprises et al., 2013). Research results showed that a majority of teachers (76%) in schools

with a high percentage of free/reduced lunch cite “lack of interest” as at least somewhat of a problem, compared to just half (54%) in schools with 30% or fewer students in the free/reduced lunch program. Teachers in high-poverty schools were especially convinced of the benefits of SEL, with 63% of teachers from low-SES schools reporting that they believe SEL instruction will improve relationships between teachers and students, compared to 49% of teachers from schools with less than 30% of the student population from low SES.

Conclusion

In response to the need for improved academic achievement and mental health services for children in schools, research on the use of school-based interventions for mental health and social-emotional problems has grown considerably (e.g., Reinke et al., 2011). However, Reinke et al. (2011) point out that despite increased empirical evidence and availability of EBPs, the widespread adoption of SEL programs has not occurred in many schools. Attitudes toward EBPs and perceived challenges, such as lack of support and time, impact adoption and implementation of innovations. Research shows that, in particular, organizational social context and individual provider characteristics including professional status and educational attainment are associated with attitudes toward EBPs. Investigation of factors that influence attitudes is critical in order to understand the research to practice gap with regard to SEL programming. Understanding the perspective of educators regarding SEL can help researchers and practitioners address barriers, issues for reform, and capacity building (Reinke et al., 2011). Attitudes toward EBPs need to be explored in order to determine factors that can support the implementation of SEL programming in school settings.

Purpose of the Current Study

Although associations between organizational social context in mental health services

and attitudes toward EBPs are documented in the literature, there has been little research on the relationship between organizational social context of schools and the impact on teachers' attitudes toward specific mental-health EBPs such as SEL programs. More specifically, the relationship between school social context, individual provider characteristics, and attitudes toward SEL programs has not been investigated in extant research. Exploring attitudes toward SEL programs, in particular, is critical in order to determine factors that can support the adoption and subsequent implementation of SEL programming in school settings. As such, investigating factors that impact attitudes including implementer/provider- level and organization level factors must be considered. Within the school setting, teachers are the implementers who can influence student outcomes through the use of mental health interventions like SEL EBPs (Elias et al., 2003). Additionally, assessing attitudes toward SEL programming will help in understanding factors that play into adoption and what supports are needed in order to support schools and educators. In order to ensure program adoption, implementation effectiveness, and subsequent positive student outcomes, educators must not only understand the benefits of the innovation, but they must also feel adequately trained and supported. It is hoped that understanding the educators' perspective of SEL innovations by examining organizational social context and individual factors provides information about factors that can be leveraged to bridge the research to practice gap in school based mental health programs.

For the purpose of this study, it was theorized that organizational social context and individual provider characteristics would predict attitudes toward SEL programs. As such, OSC domains (e.g., climate and culture) and individual provider characteristics (e.g., educational attainment and number of years teaching) were considered independent variables, while attitudes toward SEL innovations including subscales (1-importance of SEL instruction and 2-barriers to

SEL implementation) are dependent variables as well as proximal outcomes. Figure 3 provides a conceptual framework for the predicted relationship between school organizational context, individual provider characteristics, and attitudes toward SEL.

Figure 3. Conceptual Framework

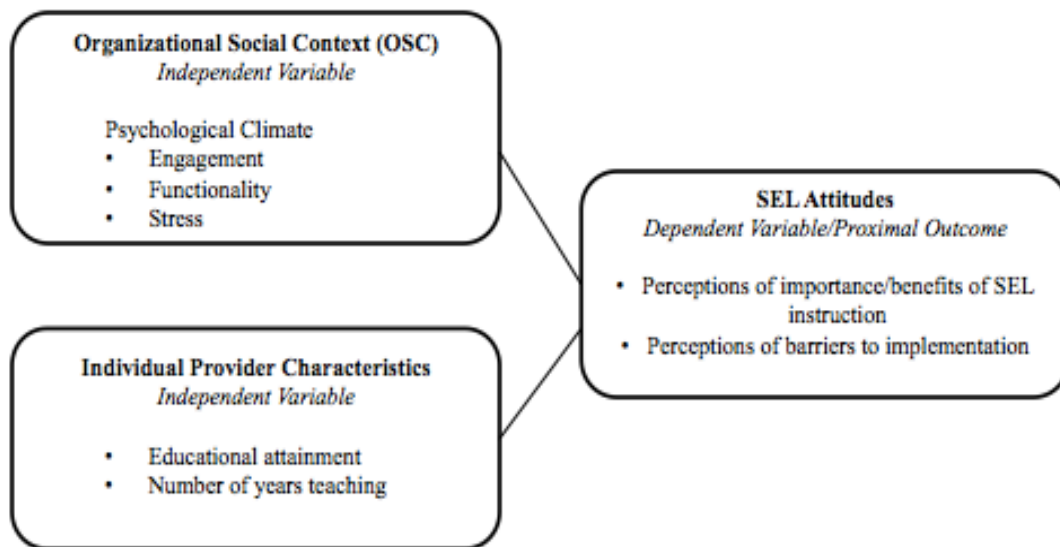


Figure 3. Predicted relationship between school organizational social context, individual provider characteristics, and attitudes toward SEL innovations.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

Research Question 1. What is the relationship between individual provider characteristics (e.g., educational attainment, professional status/number of years teaching) and attitudes toward SEL interventions?

Hypotheses associated with research question 1.

1a) Higher educational attainment will be significantly associated with more positive attitudes toward SEL (measured by survey responses indicating more 1-importance is placed on SEL instruction and 2-benefits and less perceived barriers to implementation).

1b) Lower professional status (i.e., number of years teaching) will be significantly

associated with more positive attitudes toward SEL (measured by survey responses indicating more 1-importance is placed on SEL instruction and 2-benefits and less perceived barriers to implementation).

Research Question 2. What is the relationship between organizational (school) characteristics (e.g., climate) and attitudes toward SEL interventions?

Hypotheses associated with research question 2.

2a) More negative climates (e.g., stressful) will be significantly associated with more negative attitudes toward SEL (measured by survey responses indicating less 1-importance is placed on SEL instruction and 2-benefits and more perceived barriers to implementation).

2b) More positive climates (e.g., functional, engaged) will be significantly associated with more positive attitudes toward SEL (measured by survey responses indicating more 1-importance is placed on SEL instruction and 2-benefits and less perceived barriers to implementation).

In this study, the researcher examined variance in educators' attitudes towards SEL innovations explained by specific dimensions of organizational social context and provider characteristics in order to better understand the role that these variables played in SEL program implementation in NC schools. The exploration of attitudes toward SEL among North Carolina educators will provide education stakeholders with crucial information on how best to support schools and teachers in SEL program adoption and implementation. Ultimately, providing support to schools and teachers in high-need schools will promote school success and long-term thriving in students.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODS

The present study used an exploratory research design in order to investigate the relationship between schools' organizational social context, individual provider characteristics, and teachers' attitudes toward SEL programs. The first portion of the proposed study included the collection and analysis of the quantitative data from self-report measures. Educators' ratings of the organizational social context of their schools were measured with the Organizational Social Context (OSC) scale. Individual items included on the survey measured demographics and individual provider characteristics, including professional status and level of education. In addition, educators' attitudes toward SEL programs were measured with the Missing Piece survey. All scale items were included on one survey to measure predictor and outcome variables and the final survey was distributed via Qualtrics, an online database for surveys, data collection, and analysis. Data was analyzed using the Statistical Program for Social Sciences (SPSS) software. Descriptive statistics provided information regarding general trends associated with educators' perceptions of their school climate, important individual characteristics, and their attitudes toward SEL including perceived importance and benefits of SEL as well as barriers to implementation. ANOVA and regression analyses were used to examine relationships between organizational contextual factors, individual provider factors, and attitudes toward SEL programs including perceived importance of SEL and barriers to implementation.

Procedures

Data were collected in the summer and fall of 2016. Details regarding recruitment,

consent, and data collection are outlined in the following sections.

Recruitment. Convenience sampling of the participants was utilized in order to obtain a pool of participants who were effective candidates for addressing the research questions. After obtaining permission from various NC districts, emails were sent to school administrators with information about the research project and participation in the study (see Appendix B). The criteria for participant selection included (1) educators working with students in a North Carolina public, private, or charter school, (2) having given consent before completing the survey (see Appendix C). Volunteer participants from various NC schools were provided with a link to the online Qualtrics survey. Participants who provided consent completed the Qualtrics survey at their convenience and were given the option to be entered into a lottery to win SEL resources including curriculum guides, books, and SEL kits upon completion of the survey. The lottery offered participants an added incentive for completing the survey.

Consent. A convenience sample was used, as administrators and representatives from a variety of NC districts were informed about that project and those who granted approval for teachers and faculty members to participate were given additional information for volunteer participants to proceed with the study. The recruitment email sent to district representatives and teacher participants (see Appendix B) described the purpose of the study, responsibilities of the participants, potential benefits of participating in the study, protection of privacy, possible risks, and entering the lottery for SEL resources upon completion of the survey.

In order to protect the rights and privacy of the participants involved in this research project, several measures were taken to ensure that individuals were informed about their involvement and responsibilities as participants. Before data collection took place, the project was submitted to the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill Institutional Review Board for

approval. Participants read and signed an informed consent form that was made available online with the survey. The survey was set up so that the informed consent had to be signed before proceeding with the first item of the survey. The consent explained the purpose of the study, benefits and risks of participation, responsibilities of participants, information regarding confidentiality, and the rights of the individuals to terminate participation at any time without penalty. No identifying information was included on the consent form. In addition, the information participants' disclosed in surveys, including email address for the lottery for SEL resources, was kept confidential and secure. Individual names were not included on surveys. School-specific data including student demographics (e.g., title I status, race/ethnicity percentages) were obtained via public record (e.g., DPI school report card data published online).

Participants. The sample included 68 educators (teachers, psychologists, and school personnel) from 52 North Carolina public, private, and charter schools across 16 counties. A majority (69%) of participant schools were in urban areas of NC and 57% of schools, overall, were considered Title I due to high percentages of children from low-income families. The desired sample size (approximately 100 educators) was based on a power analysis, conducted a priori for multiple regression analyses using an anticipated effect size (f^2) of .15, desired statistical power level of .8 and .05 probability level. Most participants (61.8%) were between the ages of 30 and 50, with a majority falling in the 30-34 years of age range. Regarding race/ethnicity, 81% of participants were White, with only 18% identifying as African American, American Indian, Alaska Native, Asian or Other. Most participants reported teaching for over 5 years, with 28% of participants teaching more than 20 years. Twenty percent of participants taught 3-5 years and 19% taught between 6 and 10 years. With regard to educational attainment, approximately half of participants reported that they had a Masters degree while 10% reported

earning a doctoral degree or a college degree only. There was variation in the current subject(s) or field(s) taught by participants, with a majority of participants (24%) reportedly teaching general education and the remaining participants indicating other subjects. In addition, most participants were elementary school teachers (55%), while 39% of participants were either middle or high school teachers. A summary of demographic information is provided below in Tables 1-6.

Table 1

Participants' Age

Age	Frequency	Percent
21-24	4	5.9
25-29	8	11.8
30-34	14	20.6
35-39	8	11.8
40-44	8	11.8
45-49	12	17.6
50-54	5	7.3
55-59	6	8.8
60-64	2	2.9
65-69	1	1.5

Note. n=68

Table 2

Participants' Years Teaching

Years	Frequency	Percent
Less than 1 year	6	8.8
1-2 years	2	2.9
3-5 years	14	20.6
6-10 years	13	19.1
11-15 years	5	7.4
16-20 years	9	13.2
More than 20 years	19	27.9

Note. n=68

Table 3

Participants' Educational Attainment

Educational Attainment	Frequency	Percent
College degree	7	10.3
Some graduate school	11	16.2
Masters degree	34	50.0
Doctoral degree	7	10.3
Other	9	13.2

Note. n=68

Table 4

Participants' Race/Ethnicity

Race/Ethnicity	Frequency	Percent
White	55	80.9
African American	9	13.2
American Indian or Alaska Native	1	1.5
Asian	1	1.5
Other	2	2.9

Note. n=68

Table 5

Participants' Grade Taught

Grade	Frequency	Percent
Preschool	3	4.4
K-2	16	23.5
3-5	22	32.4
6-8	9	13.2
High school	18	26.5

Note. n=68

Table 6

Participants' Subjects Taught

Subjects	Frequency	Percent
General education	16	23.5
Special education	11	16.2
ESL	3	4.4
Math	6	8.8
Science	3	4.4
Social studies	1	1.5
Other	28	41.2

Note. n=68

Measures

The Organizational Social Context (OSC) survey was used to measure the social context of schools in terms of its culture and climate. Although the OSC has been used in only mental health fields in past studies, research shows that the scale is generalizable to settings that have a similar organizational structure to those in the mental health field, including schools (Aarons & Sawitzky, 2006). In order to ensure that OSC items were appropriate for participants in the field of education, language on OSC items was slightly altered to reflect schools as the work environment or organization. Items that referenced the “boss” or “organization” were altered to reflect language more applicable to schools including “principal” and “school.” For example, the item “There is only one way to do the job – the boss’ way” was changed to “There is only one way to do the job – the principal’s way.” The University of Tennessee-Knoxville research team, including the developer of the OSC survey, Dr. Philip Green, approved language revisions to survey items after assessing for content validity.

Organizational (measured at the group/unit level) and psychological (measured at the individual level) Climate, as well as organizational Culture constructs on the OSC were designated as the set of “organizational social context construct” variables. Demographic items including educational attainment and professional status were considered the “individual provider” variables. Missing Piece survey items measured attitudes toward SEL constructs, including teaching goals, SEL knowledge, importance of SEL, current SEL practices, and barriers to implementation.

Organizational Social Context (OSC) survey. The OSC was used in order to measure the organizational social context of schools. The OSC is a 105-item survey measure that assesses main domains of the social context of mental health and social service organizations. According to Aarons et al. (2012), domains form 16 first-order factors and seven second-order factors

confirmed in national samples of social and mental health service organizations. Factors are grouped by the domains of structure, culture, psychological and organizational climate, and work attitudes. Structure describes the centralization of power and formalization of roles within the organization; culture describes the norms and values that drive behavior in the organization; climate describes the psychological impact of the work environment on the individual; and work attitudes describe the individuals' morale as defined by job satisfaction and commitment to the organization. These dimensions provide a comprehensive profile of an organization's social context when taken together and can be compared with national norms. Items are answered using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from Not at All (1) to A Very Great Extent (5) (Aarons et al., 2012).

The OSC, which is based on the model of organizational social context, is intended to be used for a variety of intervention efforts within the mental health services field. The structure, culture, climate, and work attitudes subscales are believed to be important because they create a social context that facilitates or rejects innovation. Although the OSC measurement system was designed for use in the mental health and social service organizations, research suggests that it is relevant to settings outside the mental health field that have similar organizational structures such as schools (Aarons & Sawitzky, 2006).

Organizational culture. The OSC measures organizational Culture, which is defined as the expectations that govern how work is done in an organization, on three second-order dimensions including Rigidity, Proficiency, and Resistance. Multiple studies (e.g., Glisson, 2002; Glisson et al., 2008; Glisson & James, 2002) have provided evidence of the validity and reliability of the OSC scales and the association between organizational culture and attitudes toward EBPs in a variety of mental health and social service organizations.

According to Aarons et al. (2012), organizational Culture can be categorized as Rigid, Proficient, or Resistant. A Rigid organizational culture is characterized by expectations that clinicians will have little flexibility in carrying out their jobs, not be given the opportunity to provide input into key management decisions, and carefully follow bureaucratic rules and regulations. This dimension is assessed with items measuring centralization (e.g., “I have to ask my principal or supervisor before I do almost anything”) and formalization (e.g., “The same steps must be followed in processing every piece of work or task”). The alpha reliability for measuring Rigidity in this sample is .81 (Aarons et al., 2012).

Aarons et al. (2012) posit that a Proficient organizational culture is characterized by expectations that providers will hold the well-being of the client in high regard, have up-to-date knowledge, and be competent. Proficient cultures expect providers to be skilled and attentive to the needs of the client or student. Proficiency is assessed with items measuring responsiveness (e.g., “Teachers of my school are expected to be responsive to the needs of each student”) and competence (e.g., “Teachers of my school are expected to have up-to-date knowledge”). The alpha reliability for this domain is .94. Finally, a resistant organizational culture is characterized by expectations that providers will show little interest in change and new ways of providing services or show apathy toward change. Resistance is assessed with items measuring apathy (e.g., “Teachers of my school are expected to not make waves”) and suppression (e.g., “Teachers of my school are expected to be critical”). The alpha reliability for measuring Resistance is .81 (Aarons et al., 2012).

Organizational and psychological climate. Climate, which is defined as the providers’ perceptions of the psychological impact of the work environment on their own well-being and functioning in the organization, is formed when providers in the same organizational unit share

similar perceptions about the psychological impact of their environment (James & James, 1989). *Psychological* climate is the individual's perception of the psychological impact of the work environment on his or her own well-being" (James & James, 1989). The psychological climate of a work environment is measured by individuals' emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and role conflict, but general psychological climate underlies all dimensions and represents workers' overall perception of the psychological impact of the work environment, which can be either positive or negative (James & James, 1989). The OSC measures climate on three second-order factors including Engagement, Functionality, and Stress.

Aarons et al. (2012) assert that Climate can be categorized as Engaged, Functional, or Stressful. An Engaged climate is characterized by employee perceptions that they are able to personally accomplish worthwhile tasks, remain personally involved in their work and sustain concern about their clients. Engagement is assessed with items measuring personalization (e.g., "I feel I treat some of the students I serve as impersonal objects" – reverse coded) and personal accomplishment (e.g., "I have accomplished many worthwhile things in this job"). The alpha reliability for measuring Engagement is .78. A Functional climate is characterized by employee perceptions that they receive the cooperation and help they need from coworkers and administrators to do a good job, have opportunities for personal advancement and growth, and have a clear understanding of how they fit in, and can work successfully within the organization. Functionality is assessed with items measuring growth and advancement (e.g., "This school provides numerous opportunities to advance if you work for it"), role clarity (e.g., "My job responsibilities are clearly defined"), and cooperation (e.g., "There is a feeling of cooperation among my coworkers"). The alpha reliability for measuring Functionality is .90 (Aarons et al., 2012).

Employee perceptions that they are emotionally exhausted from their work, overloaded in their work, and unable to get the necessary things done characterize a Stressful climate. According to Aarons et al. (2012), stress is assessed with items measuring emotional exhaustion (e.g., “I feel like I am at the end of my rope”), role conflict (e.g., “Interests of the students are often replaced by bureaucratic concerns, e.g., paperwork”), and role overload (e.g. “The amount of work I have to do keeps me from doing a good job”). The alpha reliability for measuring Stressful Climate in this sample is .94 (Aarons et al., 2012). See Figure 4 for climate subscales and Figure 5 for second-order Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) fit indices for measurement model.

Figure 4. Description of Climate Subscales

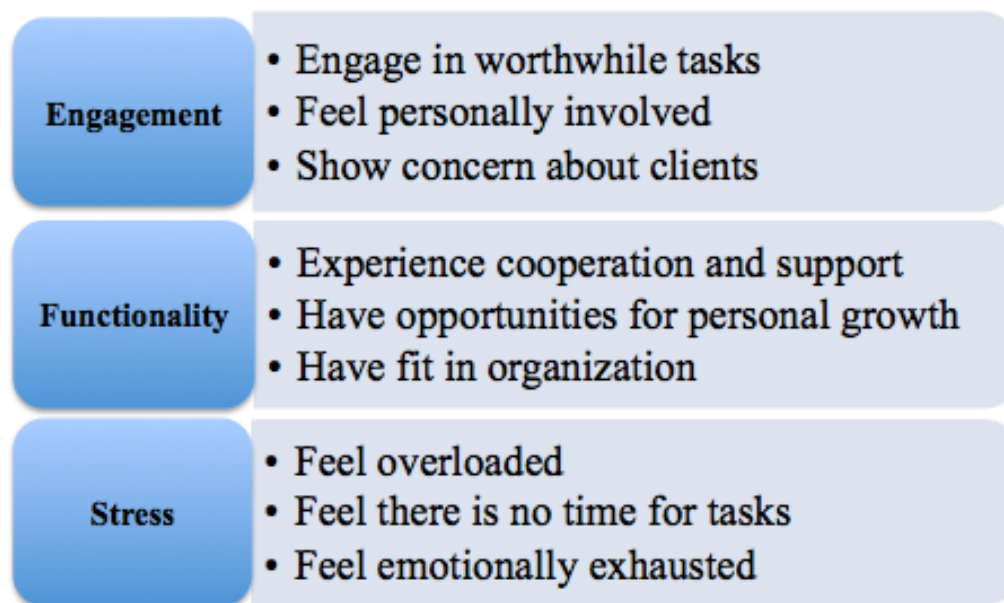


Figure 4. Description of climate subscales.

Figure 5. CFA Fit Indices of OSC

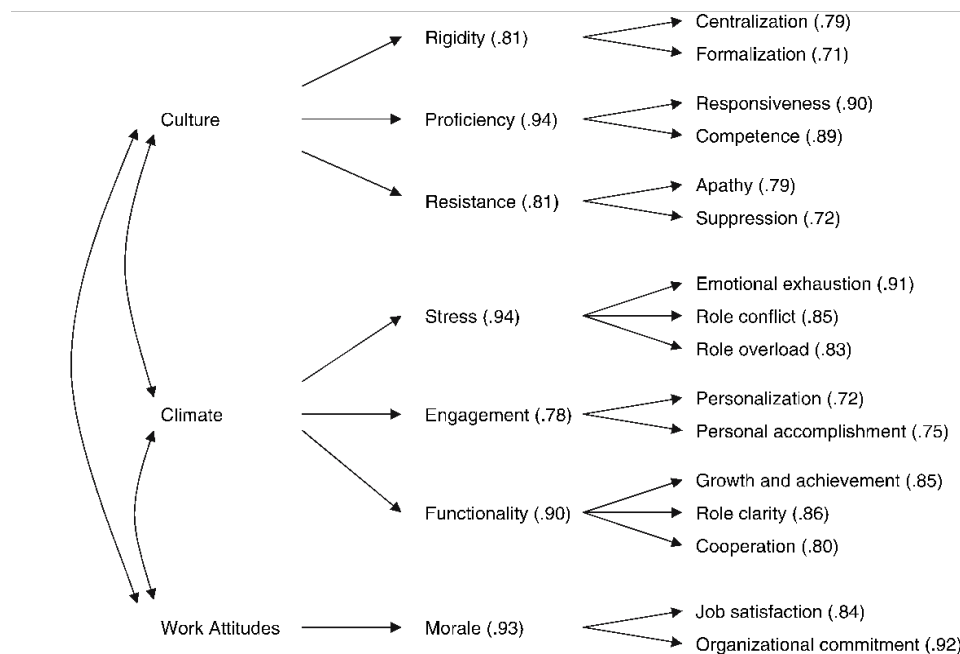


Figure 5. Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) of organizational social context (OSC) (Glisson et al., 2008).

Missing piece survey. The Missing Piece survey is a 38-item survey that assesses educators' perspectives of social-emotional learning, adoption of SEL programming, current SEL practices, barriers to implementation and adoption, potential influences on attitudes toward SEL innovations. For the purpose of this study, the survey consisted of 5 items, some with multiple sub-items, that measure the following constructs: perceptions of teaching goals, SEL knowledge, importance of SEL, current SEL practices, and barriers to implementation. Most items consisted of a 5-point scale ranging from Not Important at All (1) to Very Important (5), Not Interested at All (1) to Very Interested (5), or similar scales.

According to Civic Enterprises et al. (2013), the Missing Piece survey was initially used for a national study on teachers' perspectives of SEL programming. Survey development was informed by three focus groups that explored survey topics and provided educators with an

opportunity to express their views on social-emotional learning in their own words. Educators from prekindergarten, elementary, middle and high school were used in the focus groups. Survey development was also informed by 15 one-on-one, in depth interviews with middle and high school students, discussions with key leaders from business, philanthropy, government and education sectors, as well as an exhaustive literature review of the most current research on social emotional learning. The survey was used to assess a nationally representative sample consisting of 605 preschool through twelfth-grade teachers. The sample was comprised of teachers from diverse school settings. Slight weights were applied to ensure that the sample matched teacher and school characteristics of public school teachers (Civic Enterprises et al., 2013).

Attitudes toward SEL were measured by responses on the Missing Piece survey items. Positive attitudes toward SEL were evidenced by responses that endorsed: emphasis should be placed on SEL instruction (e.g., “A great deal of emphasis should be placed on developing students’ social-emotional skills”), knowledge of SEL (e.g., “Students from all types of backgrounds would benefit from SEL skill sin schools”), value for fostering SEL competencies (e.g., “It is very important for schools to promote the development of social and emotional skills”), and feasibility for SEL program implementation (e.g., “Social and emotional skills are teachable in a school setting”). The online Qualtrics survey included items from both the OSC and Missing Piece scales and took approximately 20 minutes to complete in total. A more detailed description of each instrument is provided below and copies of the instruments can be found in Appendix A.

Individual provider characteristics and demographic items. In order to measure individual provider characteristics and participant demographics, individual items were added to

the survey. Items measured participant age, race/ethnicity, grades taught, subject/fields taught, educational attainment, and number of years teaching. School demographics that were used to create units (consisting of participants working in schools with similar population demographics and settings) were found online via the NC school websites that included school report cards.

Data Analysis

Data including demographic information, individual provider characteristics, and responses from the OSC and Missing Piece survey were summarized and analyzed by the investigator using SPSS. In the first stage of analysis, descriptive statistics of the survey data were calculated. Analyses were done for both individual participant scores as well as unit or organizational scores, which comprised of 3 or more participants from schools with similar student demographics including population size, Title I status, and school setting. The University of Tennessee-Knoxville research team, including the developer of the OSC survey, Dr. Phillip Green, conducted initial analyses of OSC data, including t-scores for Psychological Climate (computed at the individual level), within-group correlations for units, and t-scores for Organizational Culture and Organizational Climate for the associated subscales (Proficiency, Rigidity, Resistance, Engagement, Functionality, Stress), which were calculated at the unit level. These OSC constructs measured at the individual and unit (or group) levels were designated as the set of “organizational construct” variables.

Next, SEL items were grouped according to construct measured for data analysis. Ten items from the Missing Piece survey were grouped together to measure SEL importance/benefits and 6 items were grouped to measure perceived challenges to SEL implementation. These grouped SEL items (measuring SEL importance and perceived challenges to SEL implementation) were used to measure the outcome variable “attitudes toward SEL.” For these

subscales, a mean score was calculated to summarize SEL attitudes. Descriptive statistics, only, were used for remaining items measuring additional SEL constructs including perceptions of student receptivity to SEL instruction, the need for SEL instruction in schools, measurement of SEL skill acquisition, teachers' accountability for SEL skill acquisition, need for SEL instruction for students with SEL difficulties, and current status of SEL instruction in school. An examination of t-scores for individual and organizational OSC scales (organizational Culture and Climate, psychological Climate) and mean scores for Missing Piece subscales provided important information regarding general perceptions of OSC and attitudes toward SEL based on ratings from educators.

In order to measure organizational Culture and Climate at the unit level, participants were grouped according to school characteristics including Title 1 status, population size, free/reduced lunch percentage, school type (e.g., elementary, middle, high), and school setting (e.g., urban, rural, suburban). Scores were aggregated in order to yield mean organizational or unit t-scores. Mean t-scores were calculated for Organizational Culture (e.g., Rigidity, Proficiency, Resistance) and Organizational Climate (e.g., Stress, Engagement, Functionality) for the 13 units (consisting of mean scores) created. An index of within-group consistency of responses was computed for each construct measured at the organizational or group level. The level of agreement of participant responses to each Culture and Climate scale was assessed for each school using the r_{wg} coefficient. OSC scores were aggregated by school demographics and the r_{wg} were calculated using a .7 cutoff r score.

After all descriptive statistics were calculated, additional analyses were conducted in order to examine individual OSC scores along with individual provider characteristics and SEL scores further. A correlation matrix was created in order to examine the relationships among

variables and possible significant associations. Regression analyses were conducted to examine the relationship between the predictor (OSC, individual, provider characteristics) and outcome (attitudes toward SEL) variables in more depth. Two models incorporating - 1) individual provider characteristics and demographics and 2) individual provider characteristics, demographics, and OSC individual scores – as the predictor variables were used to understand the distinct relationship between provider characteristics, OSC, and SEL attitudes. The outcome variable, SEL attitudes, included two SEL subscales that measured educators’ perceptions of 1) importance/benefit of SEL instruction and 2) barriers to implementation.

Regression analyses were conducted to determine the association between independent variables including organizational predictors, individual provider-level predictors (e.g., educational attainment, professional status), and the dependent variable (e.g., attitudes toward SEL). Analyses assessed both research questions (e.g., “What is the relationship between organizational social context [e.g., Climate] of schools and educators’ attitudes toward SEL interventions?”, “What is the relationship between individual provider characteristics [e.g., educational attainment, professional status/number of years teaching] and attitudes toward SEL interventions?”). Individual-level demographic covariates (i.e., ethnicity) were included to control for any differences in these variables when assessing the unique effects of other variables in the model. The analysis also determined the percentage of variation in the outcome variable that could be explained by predictor variables.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

Results provided information about the relationship among variables, the predictive value of OSC and provider characteristics, as well as the strength of the relationship among variables. First, data from self-report measures completed by participants was collected and analyzed. Educators' perceptions of their school organizational social context (Climate) were measured using the OSC while individual provider characteristics including educational attainment and number of years teaching were measured using individual demographic items added to the surveys. The outcome variable, "attitudes toward SEL," which consisted of 2 subscales including educators' perceptions of 1) the importance of SEL instruction and 2) barriers to SEL implementation and skill development, was measured using grouped items from the Missing Piece survey. In order to measure OSC at the organizational level, educators were grouped according to their school characteristics. Groupings yielded organizational scores for both Culture and Climate scales. Using only individual OSC scores and individual provider characteristics as predictor variables, regression analyses were conducted to examine the relationship among variables.

All analyses were conducted using SPSS (Version 22.0). Although 68 participants completed the surveys, 9 participants had missing scores on one or more OSC and Missing Piece variables and, therefore, were omitted from the analysis. After completing the listwise deletion, the total sample size used for descriptive statistics was N=68, while the sample size for ANOVA and regression analyses was N=59.

Descriptive Analyses

Organizational social context. Individual Climate t-scores for each subscale including Engagement, Functionality, and Stress were calculated in order to provide insight into educators' perceptions of their schools' climate. Although the mean Engagement score was 51.88, individual scores ranged drastically, with a minimum score of 19.08 and a maximum score of 64.97. The range in scores shows participants' perceptions of their ability to accomplish worthwhile tasks and remain concerned about their students varied. On the other hand, the variability of scores for Functionality and Stress was less pronounced. The mean score for items measuring role clarify, cooperation, and growth/advancement was 53.64 with a minimum score of 35.29 and a maximum score of 70.59. Overall, the mean Functionality score for individual participants was approximately 1 standard deviation (SD) above the mean, with many participants reporting role clarity and opportunities for growth. Although the mean score for Stress was higher than other subscales, indicating highly stressful work environments, the range of scores was similar to the Functionality subscale. The mean t-score for Stress was 51.48, with scores ranging from 32.51 to 76.70. The high mean score shows that many educators reported that they are emotionally exhausted from their work, overloaded, and feel like they are unable to get necessary tasks done.

Within-group consistency for organizational culture and climate. Organizational-level OSC scores for Culture and Climate were calculated for "units," which included averaged scores for groups of participants, grouped according to school demographics, including population size, school setting, and Title I status. An index of within-group consistency of responses, r_{wg} , was computed for each construct measured at the organizational or group level. The r_{wg} is reported for each construct in Table 7. The r_{wg} values for each construct for all units ranged between .5128 and .9892, with an average of .9155. Overall, values show within-group

consistency and provide justification for aggregating individual-level responses to measure organizational-level constructs (organizational culture and climate), despite teacher participants working in different organizations or in this case, schools.

Table 7

Within-Group Consistency for OSC Culture and Climate Subscales

Unit	Proficiency	Rigidity	Resistance	Engagement	Functionality	Stress	Morale
1	.9645	.8983	.8494	.8666	.9677	.9130	.9088
2	.9801	.9722	.9565	.9670	.9292	.9366	.9307
3	.9734	.9526	.9058	.9664	.9562	.9083	.9674
4	.9825	.9558	.9251	.9016	.9348	.5128*	.9689
5	.9283	.9172	.9479	.9622	.9539	.9607	.9155
6	.9833	.9651	.9294	.7891*	.9466	.9508	.9280
7	.9611	.9168	.9319	.9536	.9645	.9302	.9841
8	.9766	.9637	.9630	.9914	.9662	.9792	.9867
9	.9332	.9445	.9289	.9079	.8781	.9268	.8513
10	.9449	.9324	.8673	.9194	.9228	.8921	.9541
11	.9801	.8235	.8176	.9506	.9801	-.9524*	.9424
12	.9757	.9646	.9432	.9639	.9819	.9738	.9766
13	.9813	.9882	.9411	.9296	.9662	.9842	.9892

Note. $r_{wg} < .8$ *

Similar to psychological Climate scores, organizational Climate subscales yielded scores for Engagement, Functionality, and Stress. Mean scores for these subscales were 53.27, 57.65, and 52.64 respectively. The unit consisting of high school educators working in schools without Title 1 funds and a low percentage of students with free/reduced lunch reported the highest level of Engagement, with a score of 70.03. On the other hand, high school educators from schools with similar student demographics (e.g., low percentage of free and reduced lunch) reported the lowest score for the Engagement subscale. In terms of the Functionality subscale, unit scores fell between 48.17 and 79.00. The range of scores for Stress was 31.71 to 73.89 with a higher score indicating a more stressful environment. Mean t-scores for organizational Culture scores including Proficiency, Rigidity, and Resistance were 45.72, 43.84 and 53.75. There was a large

range of scores among units for Proficiency, with t-scores falling between 25.11 and 62.88.

Overall, there were no significant trends in group t-scores according to unit school characteristics. Ultimately, unit scores were not included in the final regression model.

Attitudes toward social-emotional learning instruction. Scores from the Missing Piece survey show that educators had overwhelmingly positive attitudes toward SEL instruction. Most participants reported that a great deal of emphasis should be placed on developing students' SEL skills (97% of educators), students from all backgrounds would benefit from learning SEL skills in schools (91%), schools play an important role in SEL development (90%), and teaching SEL skills improves relationships between teachers and students (80%). Most educators also indicated that students from all backgrounds would benefit from learning SEL skills (91%), schools have an important role to play in SEL instruction (90%), and teaching SEL skills in school will improve relationships between teachers and students (79%). Overall, there was little variation among educators' attitudes toward SEL instruction.

However, educators' perceptions of SEL barriers to implementation in addition to current SEL program implementation status in educators' schools showed some variation. Overall, educators felt differently about a variety of barriers to SEL implementation. Variation in responses was notable, ranging from "a very big challenge" to "not a challenge at all." Most educators indicated that lack of reinforcement of skills at home, teachers not having enough time to take on something new, teachers' lack of training and knowledge of how to teach SEL skills, lack of consensus among teachers that SEL should be taught in schools, and SEL not being a priority for the school district or administrators were at least somewhat of a challenge for their schools. Table 8 provides percentages for educator responses to the following SEL implementation barriers: *teachers lack of reinforcement in the home* (Item 1), *teachers not*

having enough time to take on something new (Item 2), lack of training and knowledge of how to teach social and emotional skills (Item 3), not a priority for your school district (Item 4), lack of consensus among teachers that SEL skills can be taught in school (Item 5), not a priority for school administration (Item 6).

Table 8

Educator Responses for Barrier Items 1-6 in Percentages

Item	A Very Big Challenge	A Fairly Big Challenge	Somewhat of a challenge	Not much of a challenge	Not a challenge at all
1	29.4	29.4	33.8	5.9	1.5
2	32.4	50.0	16.2	1.5	0.0
3	29.4	44.1	22.1	4.4	0.0
4	10.3	23.5	44.1	17.6	4.4
5	11.8	41.2	29.4	10.3	7.4
6	5.9	20.6	29.4	30.9	13.2

Note. n=68

The remaining individual SEL items measured students' receptivity to SEL instruction, SEL's place in school versus the home, accurate measurement of SEL skill acquisition, teachers' accountability for students' SEL skill acquisition, the need for SEL instruction for all students, and current SEL practices. Regarding current SEL practices, most educators indicated that SEL was part of some teachers' curricula but not others in their school (55%), while 25% of educators noted that SEL was not taught in their school at all. Only 19% of participants reported that SEL is taught on a programmatic, school-wide basis. Most educators indicated that students in their school would "probably" or "definitely" be receptive to SEL instruction. There was some variation in educators' responses to the following items: *SEL should be taught at school, not at home (Item 1), students acquisition of SEL skills can be accurately measured and assessed (Item 2), teachers should be held accountable for students' development of SEL skills (Item 3), and SEL skills should only be taught to students with SEL problems (Item 4),* with responses ranging

from “definitely not true” to “definitely true.” Percentages of participant responses for these specific items are summarized in Table 9.

Table 9

<i>Educator Responses for SEL Importance Items 1-4 in Percentages</i>				
Item	Definitely True	Probably True	Probably Not True	Definitely Not True
1	5.9	23.5	32.4	38.2
2	16.2	54.4	26.5	2.9
3	13.2	38.2	36.8	11.8
4	4.4	0.0	23.5	72.1

Note. n=68

Correlational Analysis

The relationships among the measured variables in the study were examined. The derived correlation matrix of variables is presented in Table 10. An examination of the matrix indicates a significant relationship was found between demographic variables including number of years teaching and age, years teaching and measures of Engagement, Engagement and perceptions of barriers to SEL program implementation, Functionality and perceptions of SEL barriers, Engagement and perceptions of SEL instruction, as well as Stress and perceptions of SEL barriers. Significant relationships were also found between all OSC subscales.

The positive relationship found between number of years teaching and Engagement indicates that as the number of years teaching increases, Engagement scores also increase (or educators’ engagement in their school environment and purpose increases). The negative association between Engagement and SEL instruction suggests that as Engagement scores increase teachers rating of SEL importance decreases. On the other hand, scores show that as educators’ Engagement increases, educators are not as likely to view barriers to implementation and skill development as challenges (indicated by reverse scoring). The negative association

between Functionality and Stress demonstrates that as stress increases, educators' perceptions of their functionality in each organization or school decreases. Also of note, as Functionality increases perceptions of barriers scores decrease, indicating educators are not as likely to view barriers to implementation and skill development as challenges. The negative association between Stress and barriers to implementation indicates that as Stress scores increase, educators' perceptions of barriers scores decrease or in other words, educators' are less likely to view barriers as challenges to implementation.

Table 10

Correlation Matrix

	Age	Minority	Years Teach	Educ. Level	OSC Engage	OSC Func.	OSC Stress	SEL Instruct	SEL Barrier
Age	1.00	-.128 .298	.739 .000*	.144 .277	.189 .152	.136 .306	-.225 .086	-.045 .716	.124 .314
Minority		1.00	.011 .927	.057 .666	-.047 .722	-.114 .389	.078 .558	.034 .785	.179 .144
Years Teaching			1.00	.168 .205	.284 .030*	.191 .147	-.168 .205	-.186 .128	.168 .170
Education Level				1.00	.219 .116	.176 .207	-.002 .986	-.130 .326	.180 .173
OSC Engage					1.00	.635 .000*	-.602 .000*	-.425 .001*	.295 .023*
OSC Func.						1.00	-.482 .000*	-.144 .278	.305 .019*
OSC Stress							1.00	.013 .924	-.372 .004*
SEL Instruction								1.00	-.138 .261
SEL Barriers									1.00

Note. $*p < .05$

Regression Analyses

Regression analyses were conducted to investigate the role of individual provider characteristic and organizational social context in predicting attitudes toward SEL instruction. Individual OSC scores were used in analyses, as group OSC scores aggregated by school characteristics did not add any additional value to the analysis. Two models were used in the analyses in order to examine the distinct relationships between OSC variables and SEL attitudes as well as individual provider characteristics and SEL attitudes. In the first model, individual provider characteristics, including educational level and number of years teaching, were included as predictor variables to answer the first research question, while the second model incorporated OSC variables (Engagement, Functionality, Stress) in addition to individual provider characteristics to answer the second research question. In addition, two SEL subscales including 1) educators' perceptions of SEL importance/benefits and 2) educators' perceptions of barriers to SEL implementation were used to measure the outcome variable, "attitudes toward SEL." The demographic variables of race/ethnicity and grade level taught (elementary, middle, high) were considered possible confounding variables and analyses were run with these variables to determine their significance.

SEL importance. Regression analyses were conducted in order to measure the relationship between provider characteristics, OSC subscales, and the first outcome variable, attitudes regarding SEL importance. Predictors for the first regression model included demographics (race/ethnicity), grade taught (elementary, middle, high), as well as provider characteristics (educational attainment, number of years teaching), while predictors for the second regression model included OSC subscales, Stress, Functionality, and Engagement.

ANOVA results for Model 1 and “SEL importance” indicated significant effects $F(4,51)=3.328$, $p<.05$, $R^2=.154$ ($p\text{-value}=.018$). These results suggested that demographics and/or individual provider characteristics predicted educators’ attitudes regarding the importance of SEL instruction. Similarly, results for Model 2 and “SEL importance” showed significant effects $F(7,51)=4.733$, $p<.05$, $R^2=.339$ ($p\text{-value}=.001$), indicating that OSC subscales predicted attitudes toward SEL importance. Results from the analyses indicated that approximately 15% of the variance in the outcome variable was explained by individual provider characteristics and 34% of the variance in the outcome variable was explained by OSC subscales. See Table 11 for the regression for SEL importance ANOVA.

Table 11

Regression for SEL Importance ANOVA

	Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	P-Value
Model 1	Regression	.542	4	.136	3.328	.018*
	Residual	1.915	47	.041		
	Total	2.457	51			
Model 2	Regression	1.055	7	.151	4.733	.001*
	Residual	1.402	44	.032		
	Total	2.457	51			

Note. * $p<.05$

In order to examine the predictive value of individual provider characteristics with educators’ attitudes toward the importance of SEL instruction, a regression analysis for Model 1 was conducted. Results showed that the coefficient, “teaching elementary school,” was a significant predictor of educators’ perceptions of the importance of SEL instruction ($p\text{-value}=.002$). Results indicated that educators teaching elementary-aged students, compared to those teaching middle or high school students, showed a decrease in the outcome by .419 units ($\beta=-.419$). Therefore, elementary school educators’ SEL scores suggested that a greater deal of

emphasis should be placed on SEL instruction in schools (Great Deal of Emphasis = 1; No Emphasis=5).

The second research question, which aimed to examine the relationship between educators' perceptions of OSC and attitudes toward SEL importance, was examined in Model 2. Results from regression analyses indicated that the coefficient, OSC Engagement, was a significant predictor of educators' perceptions of the importance of SEL instruction (p-value=.000). For each unit increase in the Engagement score, there was a unit decrease of .705 in educators' SEL attitudes score. This suggested that educators who felt more accomplished in their roles within the school rated SEL instruction as more important. In addition, the Teach Elementary coefficient was significant, with a p-value of .014. Results show that educators teaching elementary-aged students, compared to those teaching middle or high school students, show a decrease in the outcome by .313 units ($\beta = -.313$). Elementary school educators' SEL scores indicated that a greater deal of emphasis should be placed on SEL instruction in schools (Great Deal of Emphasis = 1; No Emphasis=5). A summary of the regression analyses for "SEL importance" is provided in Tables 12-13.

Table 12

Model 1 Regression for SEL Importance

	B	SE B	β	(t)	P-Value
Minority	.004	.074	.006	.049	.961
Teach Elementary	-.186	.057	-.419	-3.244	.002*
Education Level	-.039	.035	-.144	-1.101	.277
Years Teaching	-.013	.015	-.114	-.870	.389

Note. *p<.05

Table 13

Model 2 Regression for SEL Importance

	B	SE B	β	(t)	P-Value
Minority	.006	.067	.011	.092	.927
Teach Elementary Education Level	-.139	.054	-.313	-2.563	.014*
Years Teaching	-.002	.014	-.021	-.177	.860
OSC Engagement	-.013	.004	-.705	-3.777	.000*
OSC Functionality	.004	.004	.150	.920	.363
OSC Stress	-.006	.003	-.295	-1.849	.071

Note. * $p < .05$

Barriers to SEL program implementation. ANOVA results for Model 2 and “barriers to implementation” indicated a significant effect $F(7,51)=3.062$, $p < .05$, $R^2=.328$ (p-value=.010). Results suggested that approximately 33% of the variance in the outcome variable “barriers to SEL implementation” could be explained by OSC subscales. In addition, OSC Stress was found to be a significant predictor of educators’ perceptions of barriers to implementation. For each unit increase in Stress, there was a unit decrease in unit scores by .416 on perceptions of barriers (1=A Very Big Challenge; 5=Not a Challenge at All). In other words, educators who felt that their schools were high-stress environments were more likely to perceive barriers as a challenge to SEL program implementation. Notably, ANOVA results for Model 1 and the outcome variable, “SEL barriers,” did not indicate significant effects. Regression analysis summaries are shown in Tables 14-15.

Table 14

Regression for SEL Barriers ANOVA

	Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	P-Value
Model 1	Regression	2.223	4	.556	1.718	.162
	Residual	15.200	47	.323		
	Total	17.423	51			
Model 2	Regression	5.707	7	.815	3.062	.010*
	Residual	11.716	44	.266		
	Total	17.423	51			

Note. *p<.05

Table 15

Model 2 Regression for SEL Barriers

	B	SE B	β	(t)	P-Value
Minority	.229	.193	.150	1.186	.242
Teach Elementary	.248	.156	.210	1.584	.120
Education Level	.185	.095	.258	1.954	.057
Years Teaching	.034	.040	.111	.851	.399
OSC Engagement	-.012	.010	-.247	-1.218	.230
OSC Functionality	.021	.012	.296	1.673	.102
OSC Stress	-.023	.010	-.416	-2.404	.021*

Note. *p<.05

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

Despite empirical evidence suggesting SEL is critical for reducing risk behaviors and promoting mental health, prosocial behaviors, and academic achievement, SEL programs have not been routinely adopted in school settings. Research shows that educators' attitudes can either facilitate or impede consideration and adoption of EBPs like SEL programs (Aarons et al., 2012). Both organizational and individual provider-level characteristics have been found to be associated with attitudes toward EBPs in mental health settings. However, there has been little research on the impact of these variables on attitudes toward specific mental-health EBPs such as SEL programs in related settings such as schools.

The purpose of this study was to explore the relationship between the organizational social context of schools, individual provider characteristics, and educators' attitudes toward SEL. More specifically, the study examined the association between educators' perceptions of their school climate (e.g., Engagement, Stress, Functionality), individual provider characteristics including number of years teaching and educational attainment, and SEL attitudes including perceptions of the importance of SEL instruction and barriers to SEL program implementation.

Descriptive statistics were conducted to obtain general information regarding teachers' perceptions of their school climates, their individual characteristics, as well as their attitudes regarding the importance of SEL instruction and barriers to program implementation. Educators' perceptions of their school organizational social context (Climate) were measured using the OSC while individual provider characteristics, including educational attainment and number of years

teaching, were measured using individual demographic items added to the surveys. The outcome variable, “attitudes toward SEL,” which consisted of 2 subscales including educators’ perceptions of 1) the importance of SEL instruction and 2) barriers to SEL implementation and skill development, was measured using grouped items from the Missing Piece survey. Using individual OSC scores and individual provider characteristics as predictor variables, regression analyses were conducted to understand the relationship among variables.

Scores from the Missing Piece survey indicated that educators have overwhelmingly positive attitudes toward SEL instruction. Most participants reported that a great deal of emphasis should be placed on developing students’ SEL skills (97% of educators), students from all backgrounds would benefit from learning SEL skills in schools (91%), schools play an important role in SEL development (90%), and teaching SEL skills improves relationships between teachers and students (80%). However, educators’ perceptions of SEL barriers to implementation showed some variation. Overall, educators felt differently about a variety of barriers to SEL implementation. Most educators indicated that lack of reinforcement of skills at home, teachers not having enough time to take on something new, teachers’ lack of training and knowledge of how to teach SEL skills, lack of consensus among teachers that SEL should be taught in schools, and SEL not being a priority for the school district or administrators were at least somewhat of a challenge for their schools.

Findings on educators’ attitudes toward SEL from this study were consistent with Civic Enterprises et al.’s (2013) research in which nearly all teachers (95%) endorsed SEL for all students across grade levels, school types, backgrounds, and SES levels. However, Missing Piece study results showed that less than half of the teachers surveyed said SEL skills are being taught on a schoolwide programmatic basis (Civic Enterprises et al., 2013). Eighty-one percent of

teachers surveyed in the national study reported that time and lack of skill reinforcement at home were challenges in implementing SEL programs at their school. In addition, 73% of participants viewed lack of training and knowledge on how to teach SEL as at least somewhat of a challenge. Overall, results from the current study and past research demonstrate that although educators understand the importance of SEL instruction, many feel that challenges including time and lack of training prevent schoolwide, programmatic implementation.

Similarly, ratings of organizational climate in the current study showed that despite feelings of accomplishment, many educators experienced high stress in the field, ultimately impacting their attitudes about SEL and barriers to implementation. Although the mean Engagement score on the OSC was 51.88, individual scores ranged drastically, with a minimum score of 19.08 and a maximum score of 64.97. The range in scores shows participants' perceptions of their ability to accomplish worthwhile tasks and remain concerned about their students varied. The mean t-score for Stress ($t\text{-score}=72.08$), on the other hand, was higher than other subscales, indicating educators perceived their work environments to be highly stressful, overall.

Notably, regression analyses demonstrated that aspects of the school climate impacted educators' attitudes toward SEL instruction and challenges to SEL program implementation. In order to address the first research question, which aimed to investigate the relationship between individual provider characteristics and attitudes toward SEL, analyses were conducted using educators' educational attainment and number of years teaching to measure the independent variable and their SEL scores to measure the outcome variable. Predictors for this regression model included demographics (race/ethnicity), grade taught (elementary, middle, high), as well as provider characteristics (educational attainment, number of years teaching). ANOVA results

for Model 1 and the outcome variable “attitudes toward the importance of SEL instruction,” indicated significant effects $F(7,51)=3.328$, $p<.05$, $R^2=.154$ ($p\text{-value}=.018$), suggesting that demographics and/or individual provider characteristics predicted educators’ attitudes regarding the importance of SEL instruction. Results indicated that educators teaching elementary-aged students, compared to those teaching middle or high school students, showed a decrease in the outcome variable by .419 units ($\beta=-.419$). In other words, elementary school teachers were more likely to indicate that SEL instruction should be emphasized in schools.

The second research question, which aimed to examine the relationship between educators’ perceptions of OSC and attitudes toward SEL, was examined in Model 2. This model, which compared OSC subscales (Engagement, Functionality, Stress) with SEL attitudes, indicated significant effects for “perceptions of SEL importance” $F(7,51)=4.733$, $p<.05$, $R^2=.339$ ($p\text{-value}=.001$) as well as “barriers to SEL implementation” $F(7,51)=3.062$, $p<.05$, $R^2=.328$ ($p\text{-value}=.010$). The analysis suggested that approximately 34% of the variance in the outcome variable, perceptions of the “importance of SEL instruction,” and 33% of the variance in the outcome variable, “barriers to SEL implementation,” was explained by OSC subscales or provider characteristics.

More specifically, educators’ perceived stress in their work environment was a predictor of their perception of SEL barriers to implementation. For each unit increase in Stress, there was a decrease in unit scores by .416 on perceptions of barriers (1=A Very Big Challenge; 5=Not a Challenge at All). In other words, educators who felt that their schools were high-stress environments were more likely to perceive barriers as a challenge to SEL program implementation. Similarly, OSC Engagement, was a significant predictor of educators’ perceptions of the importance of SEL instruction ($p\text{-value}=.000$). For each unit increase in the

Engagement score, there was a unit decrease of .705 in educators' SEL attitudes score. This indicates that educators who felt more accomplished in their roles within the school rated SEL instruction as more important. Both findings were consistent with hypotheses and demonstrated an association between aspects of OSC and SEL attitudes.

Overall, the findings from the current study reinforced prior research suggesting that aspects of organizational climate are associated with educators' attitudes toward EBPs. In Aarons et al.'s (2012) study, results indicated that organizational Culture and Climate were associated with clinician's attitudes toward adoption EBPs. In particular, clinicians working in organizations characterized by less stressful and more engaged climates reported more positive attitudes toward the use of EBPs. Similarly in Aarons and Sawitzky's (2012) study, Culture and Climate were associated with attitudes toward EBP adoption, with more positive climate associated with more positive attitudes.

Findings from the current study and past research suggest that the OSC within workplaces can have a significant impact on provider attitudes, which ultimately, impacts acceptance and implementation of meaningful innovations. "Effective" climates maximize the likelihood that innovations will be accepted and implemented (Hemmelgarn et al., 2006). As such, it is hoped that current findings will provide important information about factors that can be leveraged to bridge the research to practice gap in SEL program implementation in schools.

Limitations and Future Directions

Although the study adds to the research base demonstrating that organizational social context is associated with clinician attitudes toward the adoption and use of EBPs, the use of convenience sampling, the scope of inquiry, and research design limits the generalizations that can be made to other contexts. First, the sample gathered may not be representative of educators

in North Carolina and perhaps more notably, across the country. Although the desired sample included a demographically diverse group of teachers from NC schools in order to be representative of the educator population, the variation in sample demographics was limited, with most participants identifying as Caucasian females with Masters degrees working in public elementary schools in rural or suburban areas. Due to limited variation in participant demographics, provider characteristics, and subsequent perceptions of OSC and SEL attitudes, findings likely do not represent the entire educator population and, therefore, cannot be generalized across populations and settings.

Although the study was considered exploratory, the method for data collection may have impacted the validity of the results. Utilizing quantitative measures alone presents challenges in adequately describing constructs as complex as social context or attitudes (e.g. Aarons et al, 2012). In addition, with the use of self-report measures comes an additional risk of response bias. In this case, participants may have rated their school climates and attitudes toward SEL positively in order to be viewed favorably. Due to the complexity of provider attitudes, the construct is difficult to measure and a reliance on self-report measures, only, is not ideal. In the future, it will be useful to study attitudes both quantitatively and qualitatively.

It should be noted that the Missing Piece survey is not a validated survey, which can be considered a limitation to the study. Although this survey was initially used as part of an extensive qualitative study, it has not been used to quantitatively assess attitudes toward SEL. Notably, the EBPAS is a validated measure used to assess mental health provider attitudes toward EBPs. The EBPAS was considered for the current research study; however, the items did not adequately measure the outcome variable for the intended. As such, a validated measure such as the EBPAS should be considered and potentially, adapted, to examine attitudes toward

specific EBPs in future studies.

In addition, past research (e.g., Aarons et al., 2012) recognized that determinants of educator attitudes and behaviors are multifaceted and although OSC and provider characteristics were examined in the current study, there are a variety of other determinants that affect attitudes toward SEL. Aarons et al., 2012 noted that other predictors of provider attitudes may include social norms, self-efficacy, locus of control, expectancies, habits and behavioral constraints as well as the fit of an innovation with the needs of the school and students. Additional research is needed in order to understand educators' complex attitudes more extensively.

Despite limitations to the study, findings support the notion that attitudes are affected by the organizational context in which educators' work. As such, it is important to consider the ways in which changes to the school climate can impact educators' understanding of the importance of SEL instruction as well as perception that they have the capacity to implement programs in meaningful ways. In particular, findings suggest that fostering environments in which educators feel more supported and less stressed can have a significant impact on their attitudes. However, changing organizational climate to support educators' acceptance and implementation of SEL programs requires strategic planning by schools and support by administration and the school community.

Based on Civic Enterprises et al. (2012) study in addition to participants' perceptions of barriers to program implementation in the current study, there are a variety of ways schools can accelerate the use of SEL programs in classrooms and schools. Firstly, adopting schoolwide SEL programming would create a sense of consistency and consensus among educators and suggest SEL as a common goal within the school community. Lack of consensus among teachers and SEL not being prioritized within the school district were considered barriers to implementation

in the current study. Therefore, a schoolwide SEL initiative would provide the school with a more systematic approach to implementing SEL programs, ultimately increasing buy-in from teachers.

Findings from the current study suggest that teachers' lack of training and knowledge of how to teach SEL skills is a challenge to implementation. Improving and increasing professional development for SEL would allow teachers to feel more effective and thus, experience more personal investment in the program's success (Civic Enterprises et al., 2012). When providers feel that a program is effective, they are more likely to view the program as important. A more positive view of program effectiveness will, in turn, reduce feelings of stress and increase a sense of accomplishment. Therefore, creating a more supportive environment in which educators' feel successful will impact their openness to program adoption and implementation.

Although educators are expected to implement evidence-based SEL programs with fidelity, they are faced with the challenging task of balancing the need for SEL program implementation with high-stakes academic testing demands. In order to aid educators in negotiating these demands, utilizing SEL consultants and coaches in program implementation and evaluation is crucial. Civic Enterprises et al.'s (2013) study highlighted critical ways in which CASEL's Collaborating Districts Initiative (CDI) engages school districts to "plan, implement, and monitor systematic changes" by implementing SEL EBPs (p. 46). CASEL consultants work with administrators to support school teams to plan and implement SEL programs. In this way, the burden of systematic implementation of an SEL innovation is removed from educators. Consultants collaborate with administrators in order to integrate SEL with existing initiatives, establish a plan for communicating with stakeholders, and monitor SEL implementation. Moreover, consultants should continue to collaborate with administrators and

educators throughout implementation, while coaching and providing support when needed. This process will support educators in balancing the many demands placed on them to support students' academic and social-emotional needs.

Due to the proven positive effects of SEL instruction from extant research, the implementation of SEL programs on a schoolwide, programmatic basis can be considered a critical change effort that can drastically improve outcomes for students (Civic Enterprises et al., 2013). Based on findings from the current study and prior research, educators need to feel supported, effective, and engaged in their school in order to be open to SEL program implementation and understand the importance and benefit of SEL instruction on their students. Aarons et al. (2012) suggest that by improving the organizational social context of schools, we not only improve the work environment for providers, but we also support the implementation of effective programs and ultimately affect the success of students. Helping teachers to feel more supported will, in turn, have a direct and lasting effect on children.

Appendix A

Survey

Please read the following information and indicate if you voluntarily agree to participate in the research study.

Title of Study: Exploring the Relationship Between Organizational Social Context of Schools, Individual Provider Characteristics, and Teacher Attitudes Toward Social Emotional Learning

Principal Investigator: Marisa Enrico, M.S.T

Contact Information: enrico@live.unc.edu, 732-779-7202

Faculty Advisor: Steven Knotek, Ph.D.

Contact Information: sknotek@email.unc.edu, 919-843-2049

What are some general things you should know about research studies?

You are being asked to take part in a research study. Joining the study is voluntary. You may refuse to join, or you may withdraw your consent to be in the study at any time without penalty. Research studies are designed to obtain new knowledge. Although you may not receive any direct benefit from being in the research study, this new information gained from the study may help people within your field in the future. You may ask the principal investigator or faculty advisor any questions you have about this study at any time.

What is the purpose of this study?

This study will examine the relationship between school organizational social context, individual provider characteristics, and attitudes toward social-emotional learning (SEL). Exploring both organizational characteristics and teachers' perspectives will allow researchers and education stakeholders including district and state representatives, administrators, and teachers to better understand supports needed to aid schools and teachers in adopting and implementing evidence-based practices like SEL programs. This research will impact administrators, teachers and, subsequently, student outcomes. By supporting administrators and teachers in adoption and implementation, we are better able to meet students' needs. You are being asked to participate in this study because you are a teacher and your views and experiences are considered extremely important in understanding SEL and its role in schools.

How many people will take part in this study?

If you decide to be in this study, you will be one of approximately 50-100 teachers in this research study.

How long will your part in this study last?

Your involvement will include completing online surveys that take approximately 20 minutes to complete total. There will be no additional follow-up associated with this study.

What will happen if you take part in this study? You will complete an online survey on a) the organizational social context (e.g., culture and climate) of your school and b) your attitudes toward SEL and individual characteristics (e.g., years teaching, educational attainment). The

survey should take approximately 20 minutes to complete online via Qualtrics, an online survey database.

What are the possible benefits from being in this study?

Research is designed to benefit society by gaining new knowledge.

What are the possible risks or discomforts involved in this study?

There are limited potential risks or discomforts involved in this study. You may feel uncomfortable completing the surveys that ask about your views regarding your school's culture and climate or your attitudes toward SEL. However, teachers and administrators complete work climate surveys often and the potential discomfort associated with this project should be considered to be similar to other routine work climate surveys completed within your field.

How will your privacy be protected?

No names will be included on surveys. All school-related information will be taken from public records available online via the Department of Public Instruction. Survey responses cannot be linked to participant names. Participants will NOT be identified in any report or publication about this study.

What if you want to stop before your part in the study is complete?

You can withdraw from this study at any time, without penalty. The investigators also have the right to stop your participation at any time. This could be because you failed to follow instructions or the entire study has been stopped/postponed.

Will you receive anything for being in this study?

In order to thank you for your participation in the study, your school will receive SEL resources such as SEL program kits, curriculum guides, discounted trainings, and other resources from the following programs: Responsive Classroom, MindUp, Second Step, Caring School Communities, I Can Problem Solve, Open Circle, and Positive Action via lottery. (Please indicate your school below, if interested in receiving SEL resources). Your school may optionally receive general recommendations for improving its' culture and climate and/or supporting teachers in implementing new innovations.

Will it cost you anything being in this study?

There will be no costs for being in this study.

What if you have questions about this study?

You have the right to ask and have answered any questions you may have about the research. If you have any questions or concerns you should contact the researchers listed on the first page.

What if you have questions about your rights as a research participant?

All research on human volunteers is reviewed by a committee that works to protect your rights and welfare. If you have questions or concerns about your rights as a research participant or if you would like to obtain information, you may contact the International Review Board at 919-966-3113 or by email to IRB_subjects@unc.edu.

Participant's Agreement

I have read the information provide above and I voluntarily agree to participate in this research study.

- ☐ Yes (1)
- ☐ No (2)

If No Is Selected, Then Skip To End of Survey

Q4 In which state/district do you currently work?

Q4B In which school do you currently work? (SEL resources may be sent to your school to thank you for your participation in this study).

Q5 What is your educational attainment?

- ☐ Some college (1)
- ☐ College degree (2)
- ☐ Some graduate school (3)
- ☐ Masters degree (4)
- ☐ Doctoral degree (5)
- ☐ Other (6) _____

Q6 For how many years have you been teaching?

- ☐ Less than 1 year (1)
- ☐ 1-2 years (2)
- ☐ 3-5 years (3)
- ☐ 6-10 years (4)
- ☐ 11-15 years (5)
- ☐ 16-20 years (6)
- ☐ more than 20 years (7)

Q7 How old are you?

- ☐ 21-24 (1)
- ☐ 25-29 (2)
- ☐ 30-34 (3)
- ☐ 35-39 (4)
- ☐ 40-44 (5)
- ☐ 45-49 (6)
- ☐ 50-54 (7)
- ☐ 55-59 (8)
- ☐ 60-64 (9)
- ☐ 65-69 (10)
- ☐ 70-74 (11)
- ☐ 75 and over (12)

Q8 What is your race?

- ☐ White (1)
- ☐ African American (2)
- ☐ American Indian or Alaska Native (3)
- ☐ Asian (4)
- ☐ Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander (5)
- ☐ Other (6) _____

Q9 What grade or grades do you currently teach?

- ☐ Preschool (1)
- ☐ K-2 (2)
- ☐ 3-5 (3)
- ☐ 6-8 (4)
- ☐ High school (5)

Q10 What subjects or fields do you currently teach?

- ☐ General education (1)
- ☐ Special education (2)
- ☐ Art/music (3)
- ☐ Foreign language (4)
- ☐ ESL (5)
- ☐ Math (6)
- ☐ Science (7)
- ☐ Social studies (8)
- ☐ Other (9) _____

SEL11 AA) Social and emotional learning focuses on knowledge, attitudes, and skills in five competency areas— 1–Self-awareness, like knowing your strengths and weaknesses 2–Self-

management, like being able to stay in control and persevere through challenges 3–Social awareness, like understanding and empathizing with others 4–Relationship skills, like being able to work in teams and resolve conflicts 5–Responsible decision making, like making ethical and safe choices Thinking about this definition of social and emotional learning as a whole, how important do you think it is for schools to promote the development of these skills?

- ☐ Very important (1)
- ☐ Fairly important (2)
- ☐ Somewhat important (3)
- ☐ Not very important (4)
- ☐ Not at all important (5)

SEL12 How much of an emphasis should be placed on each goal in your school?

	A great deal of emphasis (1)	A fair amount of emphasis (2)	Just some emphasis (3)	No emphasis at all (4)
A) Developing critical thinking and reasoning abilities in students (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
B) Developing students' knowledge and skills in key content and subject areas such as english, history, science, and math (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
C) Developing students' ability to apply knowledge and skills to real-world situations (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
D) Developing students' social and emotional skills (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

SEL13 Please indicate how true you believe each statement about social and emotional learning is.

	Definitely True (1)	Probably True (2)	Probably Not True (3)	Definitely Not True (4)
E) Students from all types of backgrounds--both affluent and poor--would benefit from learning social and emotional learning (SEL) skills in school (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
F) Schools have an important role to play in SEL (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
G) Teaching SEL skills in school will improve relationships between teachers and students (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
H) SEL skills will improve relationships among students and reduce bullying (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I) Teaching SEL skills will improve students' academic performance including test scores (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
J) Students in your school would be receptive to	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

teaching on SEL skills (6)				
K) SEL should be taught at school, not at home (7)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
L) Students' acquisition of SEL skills can be accurately measured and assessed (8)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
M) Teachers should be held accountable for students' development of SEL skills (9)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
N) SEL skills should only be taught to students with SEL problems (10)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

SEL14 O) To what extent is teaching students social and emotional skills happening in your school?

- ☐ Happening on a programmatic basis school-wide (1)
- ☐ Part of some teachers' curricula but not others (2)
- ☐ Not really taught in my school (3)

SEL15 For each challenge, please indicate whether for your own school this would be a very big challenge, a fairly big challenge, somewhat of a challenge, not much of a challenge, or not a challenge at all.

	A very big challenge (1)	A fairly big challenge (2)	Somewhat of a challenge (3)	Not much of a challenge (4)	Not a challenge at all (5)
P) Lack of reinforcement of these skills at home (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q) Teachers not having enough time to take on something new (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
R) Teachers' lack of training and knowledge of how to teach social and emotional skills (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
S) Not a priority for your school district (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
T) Lack of consensus among teachers that social and emotional skills should be taught in school (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
U) Not a priority for your school administration (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

OSC16 These survey questions assess the organizational characteristics of schools. Please indicate to what extent each statement is true.

	Not at all (1)	A slight extent (2)	A moderate extent (3)	A great extent (4)	A very great extent (5)
1. How often do your coworkers show signs of stress (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. I have to ask the principal or a supervisor before I do almost anything (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. I really care about the fate of this school (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. I can easily create a relaxed atmosphere with the students I serve (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. Teachers of my school are expected to have up-to-date-knowledge (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. How often does your job interfere with your family life (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. I understand how my performance will be	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

evaluated (7)					
8. How satisfied are you with the chance to do something that makes use of your abilities (8)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9. Teachers of my school are expected to avoid being different (9)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10. I feel like I'm at the end of my rope (10)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

OSC17 Please indicate to what extent each statement is true.

	Not at all (1)	A slight extent (2)	A moderate extent (3)	A great extent (4)	A very great extent (5)
11. I am willing to put in a great deal of effort in order to help this school be successful (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
12. I feel exhilarated after working closely with the students I serve (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
13. Teachers of my school are expected to be critical (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
14. The same procedures are to be followed in most situations (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
15. A teacher can make his or her own decisions without checking in with anyone else (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
16. I feel I treat some of the students I serve as impersonal objects (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
17. Teachers of my school are expected	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

to improve the well-being of each student (7)					
18. I have accomplished many worthwhile things in this job (8)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
19. How satisfied are you with the chances for advancement (9)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
20. Once I start a task, I am not given enough time to complete it (10)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

OSC18 Please indicate to what extent each statement is true.

	Not at all (1)	A slight extent (2)	A moderate extent (3)	A great extent (4)	A very great extent (5)
21. Teachers of my school are expected to evaluate how much we benefit students (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
22. To what extent are the objectives and goals of your position clearly defined (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
23. This school provides numerous opportunities to advance if you work for it (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
24. We usually work under the same circumstances day to day (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
25. Teachers of my school are expected to stay uninvolved (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
26. I deal very effectively with the problems of the students I serve (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
27. My job responsibilities are clearly	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

defined (7)					
28. I am proud to tell others that I am a part of this school (8)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
29. Teachers of my school are expected to criticize mistakes (9)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
30. How satisfied are you with the freedom to use your own judgment (10)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

OSC19 Please indicate to what extent each statement is true.

	Not at all (1)	A slight extent (2)	A moderate extent (3)	A great extent (4)	A very great extent (5)
31. This school emphasizes growth and development (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
32. When I face a difficult task, the people in my school help me out (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
33. Teachers of my school are expected to place the well-being of students first (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
34. I find that my values and the school's values are very similar (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
35. People here always get their orders from higher-ups (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
36. No matter how much I do, there is always more to be done (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
37. Teachers of my school are expected	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

to find ways to serve students more effectively (7)					
38. I know what the people in my school expect of me (8)	○	○	○	○	○
39. I feel fatigued when I get up in the morning and have to face another day on the job (9)	○	○	○	○	○
40. To what extent do your coworkers trust each other (10)	○	○	○	○	○

OSC20 Please indicate to what extent each statement is true.

	Not at all (1)	A slight extent (2)	A moderate extent (3)	A great extent (4)	A very great extent (5)
41. Teachers of my school are expected to avoid problems (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
42. How satisfied are you with the feeling of accomplishment you get from your job (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
43. There is only one way to do the job – the principal’s way (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
44. This school rewards experience, dedication, and hard work (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
45. Teachers of my school are expected to be stern and unyielding (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
46. We are to follow strict procedures at all times (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
47. I feel used up at the end of the workday (7)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
48. I feel I’m positively influencing other people’s lives through my work (8)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

<p>49. Teachers of my school are expected to act in the best interest of each student (9)</p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<p>50. People here do the same job in the same way every day (10)</p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

OSC21 Please indicate to what extent each statement is true.

	Not at all (1)	A slight extent (2)	A moderate extent (3)	A great extent (4)	A very great extent (5)
51. Teachers of my school are expected to become more effective in serving students (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
52. I talk up this school to my friends as a great school to work for (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
53. In my work, I am calm in dealing with the emotional problems of others (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
54. Teachers of my school are expected to be competitive with coworkers (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
55. How satisfied are you with the prestige your job has within the community (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
56. Whenever we have a problem, we are supposed to go to the	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

same person for an answer (6)					
57. There can be little action until the principal or a supervisor approves the decision (7)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
58. Teachers of my school are expected to go along with group decisions (8)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
59. I feel burned out from my work (9)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
60. I have become more callous towards people since I took this job (10)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

OSC22 Please indicate to what extent each statement is true.

	Not at all (1)	A slight extent (2)	A moderate extent (3)	A great extent (4)	A very great extent (5)
61. Any decision I make has to have the principal's or a supervisor's approval (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
62. Teachers of my school are expected to strive for excellence (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
63. Rules, regulations, or mandates often get in the way of getting things done (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
64. How satisfied are you with being able to do things the right way (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
65. Interests of the students are often replaced by bureaucratic concerns (e.g., paperwork) (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
66. Teachers of my school are expected to interact positively with others	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

(6)					
67. There is a feeling of cooperation among my coworkers (7)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
68. To what extent is it possible to get accurate information on policies and administrative procedures (8)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
69. How satisfied are you with the chance to try your own approaches to working with students (9)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
70. Teachers of my school are expected to learn new tasks (10)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

OSC23 Please indicate to what extent each statement is true.

	Not at all (1)	A slight extent (2)	A moderate extent (3)	A great extent (4)	A very great extent (5)
71. How well are you kept informed about things that you need to know (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
72. How often is there friction among coworkers (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
73. To what extent are you constantly under heavy pressure on your job (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
74. Teachers of my school are expected to follow rather than lead (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
75. How satisfied are you with the chance to do things for students (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
76. This school really inspires the very best in me in the way of job performance (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
77. I have to do things on my job that are against	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

my better judgment (7)					
78. Teachers of my school are expected to be dominant and assertive (8)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
79. There are not enough people in my school to get the work done (9)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
80. There are more opportunities to advance in this school than in other jobs in general (10)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

OSC24 Please indicate to what extent each statement is true.

	Not at all (1)	A slight extent (2)	A moderate extent (3)	A great extent (4)	A very great extent (5)
81. How often do you end up doing things that should be done differently (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
82. Teachers of my school are expected to be available to each student we serve (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
83. The amount of work I have to do keeps me from doing a good job (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
84. I am extremely glad that I chose to work for this school (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
85. How things are done around here is left pretty much up to the teacher (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
86. Teachers of my school are expected to pay attention to details (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
87. I feel	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

emotionally drained from my work (7)					
88. Its hard to feel close to the students I serve (8)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
89. How satisfied are you with the recognition you get for doing a good job (9)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
90. Teachers of my school are expected to not make waves (10)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

OSC25 Please indicate to what extent each statement is true.

	Not at all (1)	A slight extent (2)	A moderate extent (3)	A great extent (4)	A very great extent (5)
91. The same steps must be followed in processing every piece of work (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
92. How often do you have to bend a rule in order to carry out an assignment or task (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
93. I worry that this job is hardening me emotionally (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
94. Teachers of my school are expected to be number one (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
95. I feel I'm working too hard on my job (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
96. How often do you feel unable to satisfy the conflicting demands of your principal or supervisor (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
97. For me this is the best of all possible	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

schools to work for (7)					
98. Teachers of my school are expected to plan for success (8)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
99. I feel that I am my own boss in most matters (9)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
100. Teachers of my school are expected to be thoughtful and considerate (10)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

OSC26 Please indicate to what extent each statement is true.

	Not at all (1)	A slight extent (2)	A moderate extent (3)	A great extent (4)	A very great extent (5)
101. Opportunities for advancement in my position are much higher compared to those in other positions (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
102. Teachers of my school are expected to defeat the competition (e.g., students' end of year grades, adequate yearly progress) (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
103. At times, I find myself not really caring about what happens to some of the students (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
104. Inconsistencies exist among the rules, regulations, and mandates that I am required to follow (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
105. Teachers of my school are expected to be responsive to the needs of	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

students (5)					
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Q26 To thank you for participating in this survey, SEL resources may be gifted to your school. If you would like to be contacted directly regarding SEL resources, please provide an email or other contact information where we can reach you. If you do not wish to provide your email, please click SUBMIT.

Appendix B

Recruitment Form

Dear Educator,

I hope you are doing well. I am a doctoral student from the school psychology program at UNC - Chapel Hill. I am studying the organizational characteristics of schools and teachers' attitudes toward social-emotional learning (SEL) as part of my dissertation research study under the supervision of my dissertation committee at UNC.

Would you be able to participate in a brief (15-20 min.) survey on school culture and your attitudes toward SEL in order to receive SEL resources for your school?

In order to thank you for your participation in the study, your school may receive SEL resources such as SEL program kits, curriculum guides, discounted trainings, and other resources from the following programs: *Responsive Classroom*, *MindUp*, *Second Step*, *Caring School Communities*, *I Can Problem Solve*, *Open Circle*, and *Positive Action* via lottery. In addition, your school may optionally receive general recommendations for improving its' culture and climate and/or supporting teachers in implementing new innovations based on results from the study.

Additional information about the research is included below.

Thank you so much for considering participation in this study! As a former special education teacher and psychology student, I truly appreciate your support in helping to meet students' SEL needs.

Please complete the survey using this anonymous survey link:

https://newqtrial2015az1.az1.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_0feGFzZUPHoUaWh

Sincerely,

Marisa Enrico, M.S.T.

Appendix C

Consent Form

IRB Study #: 15-1364

Consent Form Version Date: 6/2/16

Title of Study: Exploring the Relationship Between Organizational Social Context of Schools, Individual Provider Characteristics, and Teacher Attitudes Toward Social Emotional Learning

Principal Investigator: Marisa Enrico, M.S.T.

Contact Information: enrico@live.unc.edu, 732-779-7202

Faculty Advisor: Steven Knotek, Ph.D.

Contact Information: sknotek@email.unc.edu, 919-843-2049

UNC-Chapel Hill Department: School Psychology

What are some general things you should know about research studies?

You are being asked to take part in a research study. Joining the study is voluntary. You may refuse to join, or you may withdraw your consent to be in the study at any time without penalty.

Research studies are designed to obtain new knowledge. Although you may not receive any direct benefit from being in the research study, this new information gained from the study may help people within your field in the future. You will be given a copy of this consent form for your records. You may ask the principal investigator or faculty advisor any questions you have about this study at any time.

What is the purpose of this study?

This study will examine the relationship between school organizational social context, individual provider characteristics, and attitudes toward social-emotional learning (SEL). Exploring both organizational characteristics and teachers' perspectives will allow researchers and education stakeholders including district and state representatives, administrators, and teachers to better understand supports needed to aid schools and teachers in adopting and implementing evidence-based practices like SEL programs. This research will impact administrators, teachers and, subsequently, student outcomes. By supporting administrators and teachers in adoption and implementation, we are better able to meet students' needs. You are being asked to participate in this study because you are a teacher and your views and experiences are considered extremely important in understanding SEL and its role in schools.

How many people will take part in this study?

If you decide to be in this study, you will be one of approximately 50-100 teachers in this research study.

How long will your part in this study last?

Your involvement will include completing online surveys that take approximately 15-20 minutes to complete total. There will be no additional follow-up associated with this study.

What will happen if you take part in this study?

1. You will complete a consent form indicating your voluntary decision to participate in this study.
2. You or a representative from your school will have the option to indicate (via email) a preferred date and/or time (e.g., common lunch, prep, professional development meeting, before/after the school day, etc.) to complete the online surveys. *Please note that this step may have already been completed by a school representative earlier in the recruitment process for your convenience.
3. You will complete online surveys on a) the organizational social context (e.g., culture and climate) of your school and b) your attitudes toward SEL and individual characteristics (e.g., years teaching, educational attainment). The surveys should take approximately 15-20 minutes to complete online via Qualtrics, an online survey database.

What are the possible benefits from being in this study?

Research is designed to benefit society by gaining new knowledge.

What are the possible risks or discomforts involved in this study?

There are limited potential risks or discomforts involved in this study. You may feel uncomfortable completing the surveys that ask about your views regarding your school's culture and climate or your attitudes toward SEL. However, teachers and administrators complete work climate surveys often and the potential discomfort associated with this project should be considered to be similar to other routine work climate surveys completed within your field.

How will your privacy be protected?

- No names will be included on surveys.
- School names will be deidentified with alphanumeric codes. All school-related information will be taken from public records available online via the Department of Public Instruction.
- Consent forms will be stored in an encrypted, password-protected folder on a computer accessible only to the principal investigator.
- Surveys responses cannot be linked to participant names.
- Participants will NOT be identified in any report or publication about this study.

What if you want to stop before your part in the study is complete?

You can withdraw from this study at any time, without penalty. The investigators also have the right to stop your participation at any time. This could be because you failed to follow instructions or the entire study has been stopped/postponed.

Will you receive anything for being in this study?

In order to thank you for your participation in the study, your school may receive SEL resources such as SEL program kits, curriculum guides, discounted trainings, and other resources from the following programs: *Responsive Classroom*, *MindUp*, *Second Step*, *Caring School Communities*, *I Can Problem Solve*, *Open Circle*, and *Positive Action* via lottery. In addition, your school may optionally receive general recommendations for improving its' culture and climate and/or supporting teachers in implementing new innovations based on results from the study.

Will it cost you anything being in this study?

There will be no costs for being in this study.

What if you have questions about this study?

You have the right to ask and have answered any questions you may have about the research. If you have any questions or concerns you should contact the researchers listed on the first page.

What if you have questions about your rights as a research participant?

All research on human volunteers is reviewed by a committee that works to protect your rights and welfare. If you have questions or concerns about your rights as a research participant or if you would like to obtain information, you may contact the International Review Board at 919-966-3113 or by email to IRB_subjects@unc.edu.

Title of Study: Exploring the Relationship Between Organizational Social Context of Schools, Individual Provider Characteristics, and Teacher Attitudes Toward Social Emotional Learning

Principal Investigator: Marisa Enrico, M.S.T.

Contact Information: enrico@live.unc.edu, 732-779-7202

Participant's Agreement

I have read the information provide above and I voluntarily agree to participate in this research study.

If you would like to be entered into the lottery for SEL resources such a kits, curriculum guides, and books, please enter an email where you would like your gift sent:

Email: _____

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