

Psychological factors in the development of social-emotional competencies of primary school children

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Abstract

Purpose: This study aims to analyze the psychological factors that influence the development of social-emotional competencies in primary school children, emphasizing the role of empathy, self-regulation, cooperation, decision-making, and social responsibility in shaping personal growth and adaptability.

Research Methodology: A qualitative and descriptive design was employed using questionnaires, interviews, observations, reflection diaries, and role-play tasks. The methods were applied to evaluate how family environment, school context, and teacher-student interactions affect children's emotional-volitional qualities and social skills.

Results: Findings demonstrate that social-emotional competencies form an integrated system rather than isolated abilities. Children with stronger empathy and self-regulation exhibit better cooperation and decision-making, leading to higher academic success and resilience. Environmental determinants—family support, classroom climate, and peer relations—emerged as decisive factors for strengthening these competencies. Structured interventions such as emotional literacy training and cooperative learning tasks were found to significantly enhance self-awareness, emotional control, and interpersonal relationships.

Conclusions: The development of social-emotional competencies is central to holistic child development. Schools, families, and psychological services must collaborate to systematically integrate social-emotional learning into educational practice, ensuring sustainable academic and personal outcomes.

Limitations: The study mainly focuses on psychological and educational settings in primary schools, without large-scale quantitative validation across broader populations.

Contribution: This research contributes to educational psychology by providing practical recommendations for integrating social-emotional learning strategies, offering insights for teachers, parents, and policymakers to foster resilience and life skills in children.

Keywords: *Cooperation, Decision-making, Empathy, Self-regulation, Social Responsibility*

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1. Introduction

In the context of globalization and digital transformation, developing social-emotional competencies in the educational process has become increasingly relevant. Modern society requires not only academic knowledge and skills but also strong emotional and social abilities that ensure effective interpersonal

relationships, resilience in the face of challenges, and the capacity to solve problems constructively. These qualities are closely linked to psychological processes that begin to form in the early school years. Primary school age is considered a crucial stage in human development, as children at this stage not only acquire knowledge but also start shaping their personal characteristics through communication with peers, interactions with teachers, and relationships with the family. During this period, emotional-volitional qualities, empathy, self-regulation, cooperation, and responsibility become essential components of social-emotional growth (Sobirovich, 2020; Turdiyev, 2023).

Recent international studies (CASEL, OECD, UNESCO) emphasize that social-emotional competencies significantly determine students' academic success, life satisfaction, and adaptability to society. From this perspective, the effectiveness of the education system, family environment, and psychological support services play a key role in fostering social-emotional competencies among primary school children. The relevance of this study lies in analyzing the psychological factors influencing the development of social-emotional competencies in young schoolchildren and providing scientifically grounded recommendations for effectively organizing this process. In today's educational system, the focus is not only on developing students' intellectual potential but also on fostering their social-emotional competencies, which has become one of the most pressing issues in education. In the 21st century, in order to nurture a successful individual, knowledge and academic skills alone are not sufficient; qualities such as emotional stability, self-regulation, empathy, cooperation, and social responsibility are equally essential (Lawson, McKenzie, Becker, Selby, & Hoover, 2019).

Primary school age represents a critical stage in a child's development, during which the fundamental psychological characteristics of their personality begin to take shape. At this stage, the development of emotional-volitional and social skills plays a decisive role in ensuring academic success, personal well-being, and effective adaptation in everyday life. Recent international research (CASEL, OECD, UNESCO) demonstrates that the formation of social-emotional competencies is a key factor in determining an individual's future success, social adaptability, and psychological resilience. Therefore, it is crucial to identify pedagogical and psychological approaches that effectively contribute to the development of these competencies at the primary education level (Lawson et al., 2019; Mercado, Revalde, Duites, Opingo, & Linnox, 2024). The relevance of this topic lies in analyzing the psychological factors that influence the development of social-emotional competencies among primary school children, as well as in determining the role of the educational system and psychological services in this process. Such an approach is expected to provide both theoretical insights and practical recommendations for improving educational practice (Isik & Taskin, 2024; Santamaría-Villar, Gilar-Corbi, Pozo-Rico, & Castejón, 2021).

The importance of social-emotional competencies has gained significant attention in recent decades, largely because educational outcomes are no longer measured solely by academic knowledge but also by the holistic development of learners. The ability to demonstrate empathy, maintain self-control, build cooperative relationships, and make responsible decisions is now recognized as being as essential as literacy or numeracy. These competencies act as mediators, enabling children to use their academic skills more effectively in real-life contexts. For example, a student with high cognitive ability but poor emotional regulation may struggle to succeed in group projects, face difficulties in conflict resolution, or experience anxiety that undermines their performance in the classroom. Thus, the interdependence of cognitive and emotional development cannot be overlooked (Eriksen & Bru, 2023; McCormick, Cappella, O'Connor, & McClowry, 2015; Rocha, Borges, García-Perales, & Almeida, 2024).

At the primary school level, children are particularly sensitive to their surroundings. The family remains the first and most powerful context for emotional development, where children observe and internalize patterns of communication, expressions of empathy, and models of coping strategies (Susanti, Reniati, & Warlina, 2025). Parents who practice active listening, demonstrate warmth, and encourage problem-solving behaviors contribute directly to their child's social-emotional growth. Conversely, environments marked by neglect, conflict, or overprotection may hinder the development of autonomy, responsibility, and resilience in children. Research consistently shows that children exposed to nurturing family climates tend to exhibit higher levels of empathy and cooperation in school, which in turn

supports their integration into peer groups (Bire, Radja, Silvester, & Tungga, 2024). The school environment becomes increasingly significant as children grow older. Teachers not only transmit academic knowledge but also embody social models that children can imitate. The tone of classroom management, the way teachers handle discipline, and their responsiveness to student emotions provide cues that shape children's social-emotional competencies. Classrooms that emphasize collaborative learning, mutual respect, and problem-solving foster stronger relationship skills and a greater sense of responsibility among students. Rigid or punitive approaches often lead to fear, withdrawal, or resistance, undermining both academic and emotional development. Therefore, the integration of Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) into the curriculum is considered best practice. SEL programs provide structured opportunities for students to practice empathy, self-regulation, and cooperation in safe and supportive environments (Elbertson, Jennings, & Brackett, 2025; Santamaria-Villar et al., 2021).

In addition, peer relationships play a decisive role in primary school years. Friendships and group dynamics expose children to situations that require negotiation, compromise, and conflict resolution skills. These interactions can either reinforce positive behaviors or create challenges that require adult intervention. For instance, collaborative activities, such as group assignments or team sports, provide opportunities for children to experience the benefits of cooperation and shared responsibility. Conversely, bullying or exclusion can severely damage a child's self-esteem and hinder the development of social-emotional skills. Therefore, schools must establish policies and practices that actively promote inclusivity, empathy, and respect among peers to prevent bullying. Psychological support services are another crucial determinant. School psychologists, counselors, and trained educators can help children develop strategies to manage their emotions, cope with stress, and navigate social challenges. Interventions such as role-play, reflective journaling, and guided discussions about emotions are proven methods for strengthening self-awareness and empathy. Moreover, the early identification of children struggling with emotional regulation or social adaptation enables timely support, preventing long-term negative consequences. Thus, collaboration between educators and mental health professionals is essential for creating comprehensive support systems within schools (Pollak et al., 2024; Wigelsworth, Verity, Mason, Qualter, & Humphrey, 2022; You, Zhang, Zhang, & Mao, 2023).

The digital age has introduced new complexities in the development of social-emotional competencies. While digital tools and online platforms can foster learning, they also expose children to risks such as cyberbullying, reduced face-to-face interaction, and overstimulation of the senses. Children must now develop not only traditional emotional skills but also digital social-emotional literacy, which is the ability to navigate online interactions responsibly, manage digital stress, and maintain empathy in virtual communication. This underscores the necessity of adapting educational practices to the realities of modern life, where digital experiences significantly shape children's socialization processes. Furthermore, the socio-cultural context in which education occurs must be considered. Different cultural traditions and values influence the understanding and nurturing of social-emotional competencies. For instance, collectivist cultures may place greater emphasis on cooperation, respect for authority, and group harmony, whereas individualist cultures highlight independence, self-expression, and personal responsibility. Therefore, effective pedagogical strategies must be culturally sensitive, ensuring that the development of competencies aligns with both global standards and local values (Goodman, 2021; Meland & Brion-Meisels, 2024; Xiao, Heidari, & Cholicheh, 2025).

The long-term implications of strengthening social and emotional competencies are substantial. Students who master these skills are more likely to succeed academically, adapt to workplace demands, and engage as responsible citizens in their communities. They exhibit higher resilience, better health outcomes, and stronger interpersonal relationships throughout their lives. Conversely, deficiencies in social-emotional skills are associated with behavioral problems, academic underachievement, and difficulties in adulthood. From a policy perspective, investing in SEL programs at the primary school level yields high returns by fostering individuals who can thrive personally and contribute positively to society. In conclusion, the development of social-emotional competencies in primary school children is a multidimensional process shaped by the family, school, peers, and broader social contexts. The integration of structured SEL programs, supportive environments, and psychological services is the

most effective means of nurturing these skills. In an era defined by globalization and digital transformation, prioritizing social-emotional learning is not a supplementary aspect of education but a fundamental necessity in education. By equipping children with emotional stability, empathy, cooperation, self-regulation, and responsibility, educators and policymakers can ensure that future generations are not only academically competent but also socially resilient and emotionally intelligent.

2. Literature Review

The issue of developing social-emotional competencies in primary school children has been widely discussed in international educational psychology literature. Scholars emphasize that social-emotional learning (SEL) is as important as cognitive development in ensuring a child's overall success. According to the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL, 2020), SEL includes five core components: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision making. These skills form the foundation of emotional stability, positive social interactions, and resilience in school-age children. Durlak, Weissberg, Dymnicki, Taylor, and Schellinger (2011) highlighted that students who participate in structured social-emotional learning programs demonstrate significant improvements in academic performance, behavior regulation, and peer relationships. Similarly, the OECD (2015) reported that the development of social-emotional skills in primary school predicts long-term outcomes such as employability, well-being, and civic engagement.

From a psychological perspective, Vygotsky (1978) socio-cultural theory explains the role of social interaction in shaping emotional and cognitive processes, while Erikson (1963) emphasizes that the stage of "industry vs. inferiority" in childhood is crucial for building confidence and competence. In addition, Bandura (1997) concept of self-efficacy is closely related to the development of perseverance and emotional control in young learners. More recent studies have focused on the role of family and school environments in promoting social-emotional competencies. Denham, Bassett, and Zinsser (2012) argue that parental emotional support and teacher modeling significantly influence children's ability to regulate their emotions and develop empathy. Schonert-Reichl (2016) also note that integrating SEL into school curricula fosters positive classroom climates and enhances both academic and emotional outcomes. In summary, the literature suggests that the development of social-emotional competencies in primary school children is determined by multiple factors, including pedagogical strategies, family upbringing, peer interactions, and psychological support. Therefore, identifying effective mechanisms to strengthen these competencies remains a crucial task in modern educational psychology.

The literature on social-emotional competencies (SECs) in childhood emphasizes that these skills are not only desirable but also indispensable in the context of 21st-century education. The growing complexity of modern life, pressures of globalization, and rapid rise of digital technology have transformed the expectations placed upon young learners. Beyond achieving high scores on standardized tests, children are increasingly expected to demonstrate adaptability, resilience, ethical reasoning, and empathy. This redefinition of success reflects a paradigm shift in educational psychology, moving from a purely cognitive orientation to a more holistic model that integrates the emotional, social, and behavioral dimensions of learning. One of the most influential frameworks in this domain is the CASEL model, which identifies five interrelated competencies: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making (Liny & Purnama, 2024). These categories have been widely adopted across educational systems because they provide a clear structure for designing interventions, teacher-training programs, and curriculum integration. Self-awareness enables children to recognize their own emotions, strengths, and limitations; self-management focuses on impulse control, stress regulation, and goal setting; social awareness emphasizes empathy and appreciation of diversity; relationship skills encompass communication, cooperation, and conflict resolution; and responsible decision-making involves ethical, safe, and constructive choices. Each of these competencies reinforces the others, forming a web of interdependent skills that collectively contribute to both academic and life success (Chowkase, 2023; Lawson et al., 2019; Tandika, Ndibalema, & Lawrent, 2025).

International research has consistently demonstrated the positive impact of SEL programmes. For example, Durlak et al. (2011) analyzed over 200 studies and revealed that students participating in structured SEL initiatives not only exhibited improvements in social behavior but also outperformed peers academically, with an average gain of 11 percentile points in achievement tests. This finding suggests that emotional and social competencies do not detract from academic goals but serve as catalysts that enhance students' ability to focus, persist, and collaborate effectively. OECD (2015) longitudinal findings further support this argument by linking early social-emotional skills to long-term outcomes such as higher employability, civic engagement, and overall well-being. These results underscore the significance of embedding SEL in early education as a foundation for lifelong learning. From a theoretical standpoint, Vygotsky's sociocultural theory offers a valuable lens for understanding how social interactions shape both emotional and cognitive development. According to Vygotsky, learning is a fundamentally social process in which children internalize cultural tools, language, and norms through guided interactions with more knowledgeable people, such as teachers and peers. This perspective suggests that SECs emerge most effectively when children are placed in rich social environments that provide scaffolding, modeling, and opportunities for collaborative problem solving. SEL programs that emphasize peer learning, cooperative activities, and dialogic teaching align closely with this theory, offering children authentic contexts in which to practice empathy, negotiation, and SR.

Erikson's psychosocial theory, particularly the "industry vs. inferiority" stage, further highlights the critical role of primary school years in shaping a child's self-concept. Success in this stage depends not only on acquiring cognitive skills but also on developing a sense of competence and confidence through social validation and achievements. Failure to cultivate SECs during this period may lead to feelings of inadequacy, low self-esteem, and social withdrawal, which can hinder academic progress and personal growth. This underscores the argument that social-emotional development is not an optional supplement to cognitive education but an essential pillar of holistic development. Bandura's concept of self-efficacy also provides an important theoretical connection to the SECs. Self-efficacy refers to an individual's belief in their ability to succeed in specific situations or to accomplish tasks. Children with higher self-efficacy are more likely to persist in the face of challenges, regulate their emotions effectively, and approach social interactions confidently. SEL programs that incorporate goal-setting, feedback, and opportunities for mastery experiences directly contribute to strengthening self-efficacy, which in turn enhances academic and social outcomes (Artino, 2012; Saks, 2024).

Beyond theoretical frameworks, empirical studies have shed light on the contextual determinants of SEC development. Family is often described as the "first school of emotions," where children learn to interpret, express, and manage feelings through observation and imitation. Denham et al. (2012) demonstrated that parental emotional support and warmth strongly predict children's capacity for empathy and regulation. Parents who openly discuss emotions, model constructive coping strategies, and encourage perspective-taking provide their children with a rich emotional vocabulary and a sense of psychological safety. Conversely, environments characterized by neglect, conflict, or authoritarian discipline can impede emotional growth, leading to difficulties in self-regulation and in peer relationships. The school environment represents another decisive context for this study. Teachers serve not only as conveyors of knowledge but also as role models for emotional regulation and interpersonal conduct. Schonert-Reichl (2016) emphasize that teacher attitudes and behaviors have a profound impact on classroom climate, shaping students' willingness to engage, cooperate, and take risks in learning. Classrooms that prioritize collaboration, inclusivity, and respect foster SECs more effectively than those dominated by rigid controls and competition. Furthermore, integrating SEL into curricula—whether through dedicated lessons, cross-curricular activities, or embedded routines—ensures that children have consistent opportunities to practice these skills. Programs such as "PATHS" (Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies) and "Second Step" have been shown to be significantly successful in creating positive classroom environments and improving student outcomes.

Peer interactions also play a vital role in primary school years. Friendships, group work, and playground activities provide children with real-world laboratories to practice cooperation, negotiation, and conflict resolution. Positive peer relationships contribute to a sense of belonging and self-worth, whereas negative experiences, such as bullying, can have long-lasting detrimental effects on emotional health.

Therefore, schools must establish proactive strategies for peer mediation, anti-bullying initiatives, and inclusive practices to ensure that all children benefit from healthy social experiences. Psychological support services within schools further enhance the development of SECs (Cahyaningrum, Prasetya, & Mustiawan, 2025; Perryman, T, & Frost, 2025). Counselors, psychologists, and specialized educators can provide targeted interventions for children struggling with emotional regulation, social anxiety, and behavioral challenges. Techniques such as role-play, mindfulness exercises, and cognitive-behavioral strategies have been found to be effective in strengthening children's emotional resilience and coping skills. The collaboration between teachers and mental health professionals ensures a comprehensive support system that addresses both academic and emotional needs (Donner, Lundström, & Heikkilä, 2024; Johnson & Johnson, 1996; Van Ryzin & Roseth, 2019).

Digital technology has added a new dimension to the discourse on SECs.

The rise of social media, online learning platforms, and digital communication has transformed children's interactions, learning, and relationship-building. While digital tools offer opportunities for collaboration and access to resources, they also pose risks such as cyberbullying, reduced face-to-face interactions, and digital addiction (Fathoni, 2025; Sapariati, Widnyani, & Dewi, 2025). Children now require digital social-emotional literacy, which involves applying empathy, self-regulation, and responsible decision-making in online environments. Educational systems must adapt to these challenges by integrating digital citizenship and online empathy training into SEL initiatives. The cultural context further shapes the development and expression of SECs. In collectivist societies, emphasis is often placed on harmony, respect for authority, and group cohesion, whereas individualist cultures prioritize autonomy, assertiveness, and personal responsibility. These cultural differences influence how competencies such as empathy, cooperation, and decision-making are understood and developed. Therefore, cross-cultural research is essential for designing interventions that are both effective and culturally appropriate. For instance, strategies that emphasize group cooperation may resonate more in collectivist settings, while approaches that highlight self-expression may be more suitable in individualist contexts (Mulyapradana, Aghus Jamaludin, Farikhul, Safna, & Nafiatul, 2025; Otariyani, Nofrima, & Febriyanti, 2025; Saleha, Baharun, & Utami, 2022).

The implications of fostering SECs extend beyond the classroom environment. Children who develop strong social-emotional skills are more likely to become resilient, adaptable, and socially responsible adults. They are better equipped to handle workplace challenges, build supportive relationships, and contribute positively to their community. Conversely, deficits in SECs are linked to a range of negative outcomes, including poor academic achievement, behavioral problems and difficulties in adult life. This evidence has motivated policymakers worldwide to integrate SEL into educational standards, teacher-training programs, and national curricula. In conclusion, the literature demonstrates that the development of social-emotional competencies in primary school children is a complex, multidimensional process influenced by the family, school, peers, psychological services, and broader cultural and technological contexts. Theoretical frameworks such as Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, Erikson's psychosocial stages, and Bandura's self-efficacy provide strong foundations for understanding how these competencies emerge and why they are essential. Empirical evidence highlights the effectiveness of structured SEL programs and the decisive role of supportive environments in fostering children growth. Moving forward, the challenge lies in scaling up these practices, adapting them to diverse cultural settings, and preparing children not only for academic success but also for meaningful, resilient, and socially responsible lives in the future.

3. Research Methodology

This study employed a qualitative descriptive research design to explore the psychological factors influencing the development of social-emotional competencies in primary school children. The qualitative approach was chosen because it allows for an in-depth understanding of children's emotional, social, and behavioral expressions within their natural environments, while the descriptive orientation makes it possible to identify patterns and relationships among the variables studied.

3.1 Research Focus

This research focused on five interrelated psychological factors: empathy, self-regulation, decision-making, cooperation and communication, and social responsibility. These dimensions were selected based on theoretical frameworks from Casel (2020), socio-cultural theory Vygotsky (1978), psychosocial stages Erikson (1963), and concept of self-efficacy Bandura (1997), as well as empirical findings from recent SEL studies.

3.2 Participants and Setting

The study targeted primary school children aged 7–11 years, as this developmental stage is considered crucial for shaping emotional-volitional qualities and social adaptation in children. Participants were observed in classroom environments, peer group activities and family related contexts. Teachers, parents, and school psychologists were also included as secondary informants to triangulate the data.

3.3 Data Collection Techniques

Multiple methods were used to ensure the validity and reliability of the findings.

- a) Questionnaires: Standardized scales, such as the “Empathy Scale” and “Self-Regulation Indicators” were administered to assess emotional and behavioral tendencies.
- b) Observations: Naturalistic classroom and playground observations were conducted to evaluate cooperation, communication, and peer interaction.
- c) Reflection Diaries: Children were encouraged to document their emotional experiences and responses to daily events, providing insight into self-regulation and decision-making processes.
- d) Role-play and Interactive Exercises: Structured group activities were designed to analyze collaboration, problem-solving, and conflict resolution skills.
- e) Interviews: Semi-structured interviews with teachers, parents, and school psychologists explored contextual influences, such as family support, classroom climate, and educational practices.

3.4 Data Analysis

The data were analyzed using thematic content analysis. Qualitative data from interviews, diaries, and observations were coded into categories aligned with the five psychological factors, while quantitative data from questionnaires were used to support qualitative findings through descriptive statistics. Triangulation was applied by comparing the results from different sources and methods to ensure the credibility of the interpretations.

3.5 Ethical Considerations

This study adhered to the ethical standards for research with children. Informed consent was obtained from the parents and school authorities, and assent was obtained from the participating children. Confidentiality was strictly maintained, and all participants were informed of their right to withdraw from the study at any stage.

3.6 Limitations of Methodology

The methodology is limited by its qualitative scope and relatively small sample size, which restricts the generalizability of the findings. However, the use of multiple methods and triangulation enhances reliability and provides rich insights into the psychological processes underlying social-emotional development.

4. Result and Discussion

The findings of this study confirm that the development of social-emotional competencies in primary school children is strongly influenced by psychological, pedagogical, and social factors. The analysis shows that while academic knowledge provides children with cognitive growth, the ability to manage emotions, interact positively with peers, and demonstrate resilience in challenging situations is equally critical for holistic development. One of the important outcomes of this research is that social-emotional competencies cannot be treated as isolated skills; rather, they function as an integrated system that shapes children’s personalities and behaviors. For example, the development of empathy and cooperation is closely tied to self-regulation and decision-making skills, creating a complex network of interrelated competencies. This supports the findings of Denham et al. (2012) and Durlak et al. (2011),

who argued that social-emotional growth contributes to both academic performance and psychological well-being.

Another key point is the decisive role of the environment. The family provides the first foundation for children's emotional development, whereas the school context plays a critical role in shaping their social behaviors. Teachers' attitudes, classroom climate, and peer relationships are important determinants of confidence, empathy, and emotional stability. These findings align with Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, which highlights the importance of social interactions in cognitive and emotional growth. This study also emphasizes the need for the systematic integration of social-emotional learning (SEL) into primary education. When psychological services, teachers, and parents work collaboratively, children are more likely to develop resilience, self-control, and a sense of responsibility. This suggests that policy-level support and school-based programs aimed at fostering SEL can significantly enhance children's personal and academic outcomes. In conclusion, the discussion highlights that social-emotional competencies are not supplementary but central to child development. Addressing the psychological determinants that influence these skills provides opportunities to improve educational practices, strengthen family-school cooperation, and equip children with the necessary abilities for lifelong success.

The results of this study clearly demonstrate that social-emotional competencies are central to the overall development of primary school children. While traditional education often prioritizes cognitive knowledge and academic achievement, the findings highlight that the ability to regulate emotions, establish positive social relationships, and make responsible decisions plays an equally important role in shaping a child's personality and achieving long-term success. One of the most significant insights emerging from this study is that the development of social and emotional competencies cannot be considered a secondary or supplementary aspect of education. Instead, it must be viewed as a fundamental dimension of holistic learning. The close interconnection between emotional stability, empathy, cooperation, and self-regulation indicates that these qualities form a unified system that supports academic and personal growth. This corresponds with international research (CASEL, OECD, UNESCO), which consistently emphasizes that children who receive structured support in social-emotional learning demonstrate higher levels of resilience, well-being, and adaptability to social demands.

Another important aspect is the role of the environment. The family provides the first social and emotional experiences that lay the groundwork for a child's behavior and interpersonal skill development. A warm, supportive, and emotionally responsive family environment fosters empathy, self-confidence, and the ability to cope with difficulties in children. Conversely, a lack of such support may result in insecurity, low self-esteem, and difficulty in peer relationships. The findings suggest that parental involvement in nurturing emotional skills is as crucial as academic support. Simultaneously, the school environment becomes a decisive factor during the primary school years. Teachers serve as providers of knowledge and role models for emotional regulation and social interaction. Classroom climate, peer dynamics, and teacher-student relationships all contribute to the formation of children's self-regulation, cooperation, and conflict resolution abilities. This resonates with Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, which highlights the importance of social context and interaction in shaping both cognitive and emotional processes.

Another key finding was the importance of collaboration between teachers, psychologists, and parents. The study confirms that when educational and psychological services work together systematically, children develop stronger social-emotional competencies. Structured interventions, such as role-play activities, problem-solving workshops, and emotional literacy training, significantly enhance children's self-awareness and interpersonal skills. This supports the conclusions of Durlak et al. (2011), who demonstrated that targeted SEL programs produce measurable improvements in both academic outcomes and social adjustment.

Moreover, the results indicate that today's primary school children face new challenges compared with previous generations. The impact of digitalization, reduced face-to-face interactions, and exposure to

online risks creates additional demands for emotional resilience and critical social thinking. Therefore, modern approaches to education must address not only traditional competencies but also equip children with strategies to cope with stress, navigate social pressures, and engage responsibly in digital communications. In conclusion, the discussion highlights that the psychological factors influencing the development of social-emotional competencies are multifaceted, involving the interplay of family environment, school practices, and broader social influences. The findings strongly advocate for a holistic, integrated approach that combines educational strategies with psychological support to ensure that children acquire the emotional and social tools necessary for lifelong success.

Table 1.

No.	Psychological Factors	Research Methods	Purpose	Expected Outcomes
1.	Empathy	Questionnaire, observation, “Empathy Scale” test	To assess children’s ability to understand the feelings of others	The level of empathy and its connection with social-emotional competencies will be identified
2.	Self-regulation	Personal reflection diaries, “Self-Regulation Indicators” methodology	To study pupils’ ability to control emotions and behavior	The relationship between self-regulation, academic success, and adaptability will be revealed
3.	Decision-making	Problem-solving tasks, interactive exercises	To analyze children’s ability to make independent and responsible choices	The impact of positive decision-making on social adaptability will be determined
4.	Cooperation & Communication	Group assignments, role-playing, sociometry	To examine pupils’ ability to cooperate with peers and build effective communication	The influence of social interaction on the development of emotional-volitional qualities will be clarified
5.	Social responsibility	“Personal Orientation” methodology, interviews	To explore children’s sense of responsibility and adherence to social norms	The role of responsibility in personal development will be scientifically substantiated

The methodological framework presented in the table highlights five key psychological factors that play a decisive role in the development of social-emotional competencies in primary school children: empathy, self-regulation, decision-making, cooperation, and social responsibility (Aliyevna, 2025). Each of these factors is interconnected, and together they form the foundation of a child’s emotional and social growth. The analysis shows that empathy is a fundamental skill that enables children to understand and share others’ feelings. Using questionnaires and observational methods, it becomes possible to identify not only the level of empathy but also how it supports the development of cooperation and positive peer interactions. Self-regulation is another critical determinant. Reflection diaries and diagnostic tools demonstrate that children who can manage their emotions and behavior are more successful academically and socially. This indicates a strong correlation between emotional control and adaptability in school environments.

Regarding decision-making, problem-solving tasks and interactive activities reveal children’s ability to act independently and responsibly. The results highlight that those with better decision-making skills are more resilient to social pressures and can avoid maladaptive behaviors, which enhances their long-

term social adjustment. The factors of cooperation and communication are revealed through role-playing, group assignments, and sociometric analysis. The findings suggest that pupils who actively engage in cooperative learning tasks display stronger interpersonal skills and higher levels of mutual support. This confirms that teamwork builds academic competencies and strengthens emotional-volitional qualities. Finally, social responsibility emerged as an integrative factor. Interviews and diagnostic tools indicate that students with a higher sense of responsibility are more likely to follow social norms, demonstrate respect, and develop self-discipline. This factor supports the broader aim of preparing children to become socially competent and responsible citizens.

Overall, the analysis confirmed that these psychological factors do not function in isolation but rather as a holistic system. Their combined development significantly contributes to students' personal growth, academic success, and resilience in the face of modern social challenges. Therefore, targeted pedagogical and psychological interventions focusing on these factors are essential to strengthen the social-emotional competencies of primary school children.

5. Conclusion

5.1 Conclusion

The study demonstrates that the development of social-emotional competencies in primary school children is a multifaceted process influenced by psychological, pedagogical and social factors. Among these, empathy, self-regulation, decision-making, cooperation, and social responsibility play decisive roles in shaping children's emotional stability, interpersonal relationships, and overall personal growth. The analysis highlights that social-emotional competencies function as an integrated system, supporting both academic success and everyday adaptation. Family environment, school practices, and teacher-student interactions are crucial determinants that either strengthen or hinder the formation of these skills. Furthermore, the findings indicate that targeted interventions, such as structured role-play activities, reflective exercises, and collaborative learning tasks, significantly enhance children's self-awareness, emotional regulation, and cooperation skills (insert reference). The integration of social-emotional learning (SEL) into educational practice, supported by both teachers and psychologists, ensures sustainable outcomes in pupil development.

5.2 Suggestions

Based on these conclusions, schools should systematically integrate social-emotional learning (SEL) into the curriculum through structured role-play, reflective exercises, and collaborative activities. Teachers should be trained not only as knowledge transmitters but also as role models of emotional regulation and empathy. Psychologists and counselors need to be actively involved in providing support programs that strengthen children's self-regulation and cooperation skills. Parents are advised to create a supportive home environment that fosters responsibility, empathy, and positive communication, thereby complementing the efforts of schools. Policymakers should develop guidelines and allocate resources to ensure the sustainable implementation of SEL across educational institutions, enabling children to achieve both academic success and holistic personal growth.

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