

SOCIO-EMOTIONAL COMPETENCES AND THEIR RELATIONSHIPS WITH SCHOOL ENGAGEMENT AND FUTURE ORIENTATION IN PRIMARY SCHOOL CHILDREN

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Abstract

Research studies suggest the importance of some developmental assets in promoting positive youth development: studies on Social and Emotional Learning have shown the benefits of acquiring these competencies on academic performance and well-being. In addition, future orientation emerged as a dimension that impacts on nonadaptive behaviors and educational performance but also on the agency they recognize themselves over their life trajectory and goals, reach greater academic achievement. Limited evidence is available on the role of and relationships between the developmental assets mentioned in primary school children.

The study aims to deepen our understanding on how do these developmental assets vary in primary school children and what are the relationships between Social Emotional Competences that primary school children recognize themselves and both school engagement and future orientation.

Data collected in a psychoeducational action promoted by the PSSmile project (Social-Emotional Capacity Building in Primary Education, <http://smile.emundus.it/>) were used to address these questions. A hundred and fifty four, 8 to 11 years old, primary school students participated in the study.

Direct and indirect, qualitative and quantitative tools have been used to address the study issues.

The analyses confirm the specific patterns that characterize the two age groups. Specific relationships and patterns of association emerge between main dimensions of Social Emotional Competences, Positive Experiences and belonging at school, and Future Orientation.

The need to address these issues early in primary school and understand the variability that may lead to vulnerability in the development emerge, and, stemming also from current societal challenges and consequences of the global pandemic, to promote educational and prevention actions.

Keywords: Socioemotional competences, school engagement and future orientation, primary school.

BUILDING A COMMON STRENGTH CULTURE INTEGRATING CHILD, PARENTS, AND TEACHER TITLE

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Abstract

Waters (2020) found that families who were engaged in positive interventions were significantly happier than families in a control group, emphasizing the importance of strengths-spotting practices in the family system. They also showed that adolescents who view their parents as strengths-based report higher well-being and greater strengths use. It is known that strengths have a significant positive effect on academic achievement and predict engagement and perseverance of teen (Waters, Loton, & Jach, 2018).

Even on children, strengths-based parenting was found to relate significantly to strengths-based coping and negatively to stress. It is suggested that strengths-based parenting encourages children to use more strengths-based coping when they face stress and adversity, which partially explains these beneficial outcomes (Waters, 2015). Strengths use has also a lot of benefit (Shubert, Wray-Lake, Syvertsen, Metzger, 2018).

Regourd-Laizeau, Gay, Verger, Bressoud, & Shankland, (2018) showed positive consequences on children from 7 to 10 using a booklet improving strengths identification and use. It seems very useful to help parents, children and teacher to go the same way toward strengths use with a common perspective. This presentation will deepen theoretical researches on developing strengths, from childhood, to adulthood with the topics presented in Waters, & Loton, (2021). The impact on academic achievement and positive outcome of using strengths creating a common strengths culture can also be developed using a tool called "In the universe of character strengths". This book can be used by children, by parents at home and teacher at school. 24 chapters develop the 24 character strengths of VIA-IS. The different points of each

chapter aim 1) to introduce the topic, 2) to deepen the consciousness of the children about its character strengths, 3) give 3 tips to develop the strength 4) give examples of job using this strength 5) give precise advices to parents and teacher to take this strength in account in the classroom or in family life. The children are invited to choose 5 strengths on 24, and become “strengths ambassador”, they are given a little diploma, telling he knows his strengths, and can help his friends to find out theirs. The first results of using this tool are encouraging from the point of view of children, teacher and parents with higher rate of self esteem for all, better integration of strengths topic as founded by Niemiec, & McGrath, (2019).

Keywords: *Strength-based parenting, positive psychology, strengths-spotting practices, strength culture, educational context.*

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PROMOTING MENTAL HEALTH AT SCHOOL: IMPLICATIONS FOR TEACHERS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract

The paper presents the results of an experimental study developed in order to test the efficiency of a mental health curriculum, especially the impact on the teachers' personal development. The curriculum is developed under an Erasmus project and it was validated in trials in six countries. The present study intends to measure the effects of program implementation on teachers' personal development. The experimental design involved 104 teachers, 61 in experimental group and 43 in control group. The