Chapter 5

Conclusions and Suggestions

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the conclusion of the study based on the findings discussed in Chapter 5. It summarizes the key findings, outlines the theoretical and practical implications, acknowledges the limitations of the study, and provides recommendations for future research and educational practice. The discussion is grounded in teachers' narrative experiences and framed through Mezirow's Transformative Learning Theory.

5.2 Summary of Key Findings

This study explored teachers' experiences in implementing Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) in a special needs school context. The findings indicate that SEL is not an isolated program but an integral and continuous component of daily teaching practice. Both teachers emphasized consistency, emotional awareness, and adaptability as essential elements of effective SEL implementation.

The findings further show that teachers encounter significant emotional and structural challenges, including limited resources, emotional instability among students, and inconsistencies between school and home environments. Despite these challenges, teachers demonstrated professional growth through reflection, collaboration, and experiential learning. These processes reflect transformative learning, where teachers revise their assumptions and develop new professional perspectives.

5.3 Theoretical Implications

The findings support the relevance of Mezirow's Transformative Learning Theory in understanding teachers' professional development within special needs education. Emotional challenges experienced during SEL implementation functioned as disorienting dilemmas that prompted critical reflection. Through dialogue with colleagues and experimentation with new strategies, teachers reconstructed their professional knowledge and teaching identities.

This study contributes to the literature by demonstrating that transformative learning occurs not only in formal professional development settings but also through everyday teaching experiences, particularly those involving sustained emotional engagement.

5.4 Practical Implications

5.4.1 Implications for Teachers

Teachers are encouraged to view SEL as an ongoing process that requires flexibility and reflective practice. Developing emotional awareness and engaging in peer collaboration can support teachers in managing emotional labor and enhancing SEL effectiveness.

5.4.2 Implications for Schools

Schools should provide structural support for SEL implementation by fostering collaborative cultures, allocating time for teacher reflection, and facilitating communication between teachers and parents. Consistent school-wide SEL approaches can strengthen emotional continuity for students.

5.4.3 Implications for Policy Makers

Educational policies should recognize the emotional demands placed on teachers in special needs contexts. Providing training, clear SEL guidelines, and adequate resources can enhance teachers' capacity to implement SEL sustainably.

5.5 Limitations of the Study

This study has several limitations. First, it involved only two participants from a single special needs school, which limits the generalizability of the findings. Second, the study relied on narrative interviews, which may reflect subjective interpretations of experience. Finally, the study focused on teachers' perspectives and did not include direct observations or students' viewpoints.

5.6 Recommendations for Future Research

Future studies may involve a larger number of participants across different types of special needs schools to provide broader insights. Incorporating classroom observations, student perspectives, and parental viewpoints may offer a more comprehensive understanding of SEL implementation. Further research could also examine the long-term impact of SEL on teachers' professional identity and emotional well-being.

5.7 Concluding Remarks

In conclusion, this study demonstrates that implementing Social-Emotional Learning in special needs education is both emotionally demanding and professionally transformative. Teachers' experiences highlight the importance of consistency, collaboration, and reflective practice in supporting students' emotional development. By recognizing teachers as emotional

practitioners and learners, schools and policymakers can better support meaningful and sustainable SEL implementation.

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