

# **Enhancing Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) Competencies among Education Students through the “Share a Book, Wake a Thought (SABWAT)” Activity**

**ANGELA C. NAPA**

<http://orcid.org/0000-0002-2696-8541>  
angela.napa@ub.edu.ph  
University of Batangas  
Batangas City, Philippines

**EDWARD E. BABASA**

<http://orcid.org/0000-0001-6784-3844>  
edward.babasa@ub.edu.ph  
University of Batangas  
Batangas City, Philippines

**EFSICA A. MARANAN**

<http://orcid.org/0000-0001-9545-4934>  
efsica.maranan@ub.edu.ph  
University of Batangas  
Batangas City, Philippines

**ARCELI G. GILERA**

<http://orcid.org/0000-0002-4464-6917>  
arceli.gilera@ub.edu.ph  
University of Batangas  
Batangas City, Philippines

**JUDITH ASISTIN**

<http://orcid.org/0000-0003-3260-3095>

[judith.asistin@ub.edu.ph](mailto:judith.asistin@ub.edu.ph)

University of Batangas

Batangas City, Philippines

Originality: 100% • Grammar Check: 98% • Plagiarism: 0%



This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/).

---

**ABSTRACT**

The holistic development of every learner is one vital aim of schools. Thus, the College of Education of the University of Batangas maintains and enhances students' intellectual, physical and socio-emotional growth and development through developmentally-appropriate activities such as the Share a Book Wake a Thought (SABWAT) project. This research intended to enhance the social and emotional learning competencies of the student-donors of the books and eventually improve the ways the SABWAT activity would be handled in the next years. It utilized the descriptive research design with a self-constructed questionnaire as the main data gathering tool based on the Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL) Frameworks. It also used focus group discussion to verify the information gathered. Using stratified random sampling, the researchers selected 111 student-respondents out of the 235 enrolled students in the College of Education. The researchers used descriptive statistics such as mean and standard deviation. The findings revealed that the Education students, after being involved in the SABWAT activity, gained social awareness, self-awareness, responsible decision making, relationship skills, and self-management skills; the manifested application of these competencies in life. Major issues and challenges were the limited number of books donated, the small number of students being involved in the actual donation day, and the lack of information about the activity. The proposed SABWAT improvement plan aims to address the issues and challenges like the aforementioned. It is also intended to improve the SEL competencies of students through the various activities relative to SABWAT.

**Keywords** — Education, Community extension activity, Social and Emotional Learning, Share a Book Wake a Thought, descriptive method, Philippines

## INTRODUCTION

The College of Education, as stated in its philosophy, firmly believes in the development of the total person in every student. Through different modes of instructional delivery, teaching strategies, and other classroom practices used by the faculty members, the College is determined to enhance all aspects of growth and development in each student. The focus is not only on academics that enhance the intellectual aspect but also on activities that lead them to acquire competence in the social and emotional aspects of life. As emphasized by Corpuz et al. (2018), developing a stable socio-emotional aspect leads to success in learning and life. Learners who can regulate emotions tend to be happier, better liked, and better able to pay attention and learn.

While teacher education programs have recently explored Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) opportunities, a majority of British Columbia classroom teachers have had limited exposure to SEL theory and benefits and are naturally concerned about incorporating content into their lessons. The same was observed in Philippine Higher Educational Institutions (HEIs), particularly in the academic institution under study. The study of Storey (2017) allows the teacher to understand the ‘big picture’ of SEL theory and integration. The authors also considered that progress might be realized by looking into the teachers’ education, professional development, and support for educators who facilitate the development of SEL knowledge and competencies.

Eraldemir-Tuyan (2019) stated that there is a need to give more prominence to emotion in education to meet today’s challenges. The researchers also looked into the teachers’ development program to improve their emotional literacy skills, creating opportunities to impart these skills to their students and the people in their personal lives. A related study by Intang (2021) emphasized that success in life is determined more by a healthy emotional state than by having a high level of intelligence. Lozano-Peña, Sáez-Delgado, López-Angulo, and Mella-Norambuena (2021) also believed that the teachers’ social-emotional competencies are essential to educational quality. Thus, to achieve better education and a better society, they need to be trained academically and socio-emotionally. Furthermore, the teachers’ social-emotional competence is crucial in promoting students’ positive learning environment. Hen and Goroshit (2016) found a strong positive association between the three social-emotional competencies such

as emotional abilities, self-efficacies, and empathy and the direct and indirect effects of emotional self-efficacy on empathy. These suggest that the teachers' belief in regulating their emotions contributes to their empathy in both ways. However, studies on teachers' social-emotional abilities are very limited.

DepEd Order 71, s. 2009 stipulated the infusion of SEL to the basic education curriculum, particularly focusing on self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making as these skills will facilitate academic achievement. Part of the strategies suggested to achieve this target includes integrating varied activities into the school curriculum.

Cognizant of the development of the learners at the tertiary level, The Commission on Higher Education (CHED) through CMO 9, s. 2013 mandated the importance of student affairs and services. Section 4 includes that the educational institution's responsibility is not only confined to teaching but also to acquiring life skills and values. It further states that higher education institutions must provide a set of student-centered activities and services in support of academic instruction to facilitate holistic and well-rounded learners.

The same idea was expressed by Wilczenski and Cook (2014). They also agreed that service-learning through active engagement in community activities promotes social-emotional and academic development. These activities challenge students to think beyond themselves and to develop empathy in service to others. Today, schools' economic resources are not enough to support individual counseling, but the authors believe that service-learning is a cost-effective preventative strategy to support mental health while fostering academic development. It serves as a prevention-oriented with grounding in positive psychology and strong school-family-community partnerships emphasizing proactive and systemic practices to build student social-emotional competencies. Ramirez et al. (2021) also recognized the positive impact of SEL programs. It has the potential to create more equitable, inclusive, and just learning environments. As Choudhury (2021) recommended, socio-emotional competency ultimately strengthens emotionally intelligent behavior that leverages the human capital, individual, or organization. However, they emphasized that few programs are intentionally designed with equity in mind, impacting both the teaching and learning of SEL skills. Moreover, the link between equity and SEL is not always clear, and the field of SEL currently lacks a coherent and unified definition of equitable SEL and what it looks like in the classroom. The field of SEL needs clearer practices that create more equitable learning environments for students and how it can be better integrated into SEL programming and practice.

Moreover, Wortham et al. (2020) argued that comprehensive well-being requires the following: (1) the development of multiple dimensions of human functioning such that individuals have an opportunity to become more whole; (2) simultaneous engagement with individual and social ideals, such that individuals have an opportunity to flourish and live respectfully with others; (3) the embrace of intrinsic and extrinsic goals, such that individuals have space to pursue truly worthwhile ends; and (4) the development of a larger sense of purpose so that individuals have an opportunity to discern and pursue a calling. These will allow educators to move beyond superficial, fragmented well-being approaches. Enhancing the social and emotional aspects of the students is now widely accepted and pursued by several schools. This is believed to bridge the gap so that individuals can do well to meet the needs of time and situations to become productive with a heart for others. As revealed in Kusic's (2018) work, social and emotional learning can promote the well-being of the youth. In a similar study in Singapore, Chong and Lee (2015), the roles of policymakers and educators are crucial in integrating SEL in the schooling of the learners, focusing on the emotional domain.

Like Wilczenski and Cook (2014), Kusic also noted that SEL could be a preventive measure for the alarming mental health issues that sometimes lead to isolated cases of more serious problems like depression and suicide. The same result was established by Boichenko et al. (2020), focusing on socio-emotional competence as a predictor of numerous psychological complications in the students' life. It was then pointed out that the primary challenge for schools is balancing a curriculum that promotes academic achievement through activities that foster emotional well-being. Similarly, Loinaz (2019) cited that social and emotional education (SEE) was more likely to be introduced in schools by teachers themselves. However, it was more likely implicit than explicit. This means that it was not taught as a separate subject but merely integrated with existing classes. Thus, Bueno and Pineda (2019) suggested that social-based activities must be implemented in order to prevent the development of depression, social anxiety, and related problems among young individuals. Knowing these educational concerns, the College of Education tries its best to integrate into every subject the value of SEL and how the students can also do the same when they finally become teachers in the future.

This research was conceptualized to determine the students' SEL competencies through its annual Share a Book, Wake a Thought (SABWAT) activity. SABWAT originated from the Education faculty's desire to reach out and address the needs of the cooperating schools in Batangas. SABWAT has become an arm of CEDU

to help one school each year to put up or improve their library facilities. CEDU, being an active stakeholder in these schools, ensures that future initiatives succeed. The school beneficiary receives the book donation before February ends each year, and it has become a tradition already among the Education students and faculty to start the SABWAT information and donation drive as early as the first month or after the first faculty meeting for the school year.

The students' socio-emotional side is triggered positively after being involved in SABWAT and they look forward to being active book donors. Their involvement showed their fervent desire to donate more books and motivate others to do the same. These are manifestations of the SEL competencies among the students. The researchers who are faculty in the College of Education have high hopes that with this research initiative, the SEL competencies of the Education students will be enhanced.

## **OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

This research centers on the enhancement of SEL competencies through student involvement in SABWAT and aims to further improve the project in the coming years, considering that it is an annual activity of the College of Education.

Specifically, the study seeks to (1) determine the SEL competencies enhanced among Education students after being involved in SABWAT activity, (2) describe the application of SEL competencies based on the given focus, (3) determine the issues, concerns, and challenges faced by the College during SABWAT implementation, and (4) propose a SABWAT improvement plan focusing on the enhancement of SEL.

This research was influenced by the concepts of Albert Bandura in his Social Learning theory which highlighted the value of observation, imitation, and modeling in development, as they enable the learners to self-regulate their actions and behaviors. The roles performed by teachers in guiding the learners are particularly significant in building key aspects of personality. This research focuses more on the socio-emotional aspect that is being enhanced by positive interaction between learners and teachers, among learners themselves, and interaction that takes place outside home and school through the book donation activity called SABWAT. Enhancing SEL competencies among students is one reason this research was conducted. Similarly, the theory of Urie Bronfenbrenner, Ecological Theory, provided ideas related to the current research study. The said theory focuses on the value of interaction and its effect on the child's life. Being

part of the microsystem or the first layer that influences the child, the school has a significant role in his overall development. The activities done in school create an impact on the life of the child.

## METHODOLOGY

This research initiative utilized the descriptive method with a questionnaire based on the Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning Framework (Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning [CASEL], 2020), which illustrates the learning standards and competencies that articulate what students should know and be able to do as the main data gathering tool. Part 1 contains five (5) SEL competencies: self-awareness, self-management, responsible decision-making, social awareness, and relationship skill. Part 2 describes how each SEL focus is applied to life. This includes empathy, ethical responsibility, perspective taking, leadership, appreciating differences, teamwork, problem-solving, and community building. Part 3 are the issues and challenges faced during the SABWAT activity. The data gathered was also supported by inputs from the focused group discussion.

Twelve (12) students who were representatives of the different programs in the College of Education were requested to be part of the FGD. Questions focused on how the SABWAT helped enhance the SEL and how they apply these competencies in life. Moreover, the discussion was documented and transcribed. On the other hand, the questionnaire was validated and improved by a panel of experts composed of psychologists and faculty members who have exposure to different students having varied experiences. The sample of 111 out of the 235 enrolled students was randomly selected using stratified random sampling based on a 5% level of significance and 95% confidence level, were asked to respond to the electronic survey. Descriptive statistics such as mean and standard deviation were utilized in analyzing the data.

The study was conducted following the study protocol approved by the University Research Ethics Committee (UREC). The questionnaire was distributed to the respondents through Google Forms after complying with the required documents. The participation of the respondents in this research was voluntary. In addition, the respondents will not be compensated for participating in the study. They were also given the assurance of strict data confidentiality and treatment. Likewise, the researchers ensured that no person or organization was harmed throughout the study.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### SEL Competencies of Education Students

Table 1 shows the manifested SEL competencies of the Education students after being part of the SABWAT activity of the College. Of the five core competencies, social awareness was most evident, particularly in respecting the various beliefs of others and respecting others’ feelings and expressions (M=4.32, SD=0.65). This was observed in the way the students interact with groups not only during SABWAT activities but also in doing other school tasks. Evaluating others’ actions seemed not evident, suggesting that most students focus on their actions toward others while being with others. Observance of positive social behaviors, such as getting along with others, helping others, showing concern for others, empathy, pro-social problem solving, peace building and cooperation can also take place having SEL activities in place (Mahoney et al., 2018).

Table 1. SEL competencies of education students after involvement in SABWAT

| Core Competencies  | Mean | SD   | Verbal Interpretation |
|--|------|------|-----------------------|
| Self-awareness   | 4.21 | 0.63 | More Evident          |
| Recognizing and understanding personal emotions                | 4.29 | 0.76 | More Evident          |
| Understanding own needs  | 4.15 | 0.79 | More Evident          |
| Understanding own strengths                                    | 4.22 | 0.82 | More Evident          |
| Understanding own limitations                                  | 4.19 | 0.80 | More Evident          |
| Paying attention to my own set of values                       | 4.27 | 0.77 | More Evident          |
| Managing own intentions  | 4.22 | 0.72 | More Evident          |
| Having an accurate self-perception                             | 4.05 | 0.81 | More Evident          |
| Analyzing own perspectives                                     | 4.32 | 0.73 | More Evident          |
| <br>   |      |      |                       |
| Self-Management  | 4.10 | 0.67 | More Evident          |
| Managing and regulating own behavior                           | 4.15 | 0.79 | More Evident          |
| Showing perseverance during difficult situations               | 4.15 | 0.82 | More Evident          |
| Being aware of own behavior in different situations            | 4.22 | 0.81 | More Evident          |
| Displaying the ability to regulate emotion                     | 3.96 | 0.98 | More Evident          |
| Having the ability to generate conclusions from things learned | 4.08 | 0.82 | More Evident          |
| Delaying gratification to achieve goals                        | 3.86 | 0.87 | More Evident          |
| Managing own emotions during difficult situations              | 4.13 | 0.89 | More Evident          |
| Showing self-control when needed                               | 4.24 | 0.81 | More Evident          |



| Core Competencies  | Mean | SD   | Verbal Interpretation |
|--|------|------|-----------------------|
| Responsible Decision-Making                              | 4.20 | 0.57 | More Evident          |
| Recognizing positive choices                             | 4.37 | 0.77 | More Evident          |
| Following the logical problem-solving pattern            | 3.98 | 0.80 | More Evident          |
| Considering varied options before making a decision      | 3.60 | 0.51 | More Evident          |
| Understanding the importance of making good decisions    | 4.43 | 0.77 | More Evident          |
| Analyzing situations to come up with the best decision   | 4.41 | 0.68 | More Evident          |
| Deciding based on personal, moral, and ethical standards | 4.34 | 0.73 | More Evident          |
| Being firm in decisions made                             | 4.17 | 0.74 | More Evident          |
| Evaluating benefits and consequences of decisions made   | 4.26 | 0.77 | More Evident          |
| Social Awareness   | 4.32 | 0.65 | More Evident          |
| Recognizing others' emotions                             | 4.28 | 0.82 | More Evident          |
| Respecting the various beliefs of others                 | 4.53 | 0.67 | Most Evident          |
| Recognizing the points of view of others                 | 4.43 | 0.72 | More Evident          |
| Respecting others' feelings and expressions              | 4.50 | 0.72 | Most Evident          |
| Taking an active and responsible role in the society     | 4.23 | 0.82 | More Evident          |
| Empathizing with others                                  | 4.24 | 0.83 | More Evident          |
| Identifying social cues in determining how others feel   | 4.23 | 0.84 | More Evident          |
| Evaluating others' actions                               | 4.12 | 0.84 | More Evident          |
| Relationship Skills                                      | 4.17 | 0.64 | More Evident          |
| Forming and maintaining positive social relationships    | 4.35 | 0.71 | More Evident          |
| Working successfully with others                         | 4.29 | 0.80 | More Evident          |
| Dealing effectively with conflicts                       | 4.01 | 0.89 | More Evident          |
| Communicating openly with others                         | 4.01 | 0.99 | More Evident          |
| Working collaboratively to achieve the goals             | 4.30 | 0.77 | More Evident          |
| Handling criticisms objectively                          | 4.01 | 0.84 | More Evident          |
| Appreciating suggestions from others                     | 4.42 | 0.69 | More Evident          |
| Expressing negative things in positive ways              | 4.00 | 0.91 | More Evident          |

Meanwhile, self-management resulted in the lowest ( $M= 4.10$ ,  $SD=0.67$ ), particularly in delaying gratification to achieve goals. Some students do not have the tolerance for long-term waiting. They like to see things done right away right before their eyes. Their impulsive attitude is shown in most of the things they do. Cherry (2020) mentioned that putting off what one wants now to get something better later on is not always easy and it is hard to resist temptation, especially if the long-term goal is not set clearly. However, when really needed, they can show a lot of control which is evident in the indicator showing self-control when needed. Relative to this, students now realize the value of waiting, perseverance, and patience, which are related to self-management. “I believe better results and decisions are achieved through effort and time,” one interviewee shared. Being patient in most things to do may allow them to have a more improved outlook in life that will benefit them in the long run.

### **Application of Social and Emotional Learning Competencies**

Specific ways were identified on how the focus SEL competencies can be applied to life and bring in positive results. Table 2 clearly shows that the Education students accept and embrace the differences of others and try to build compassion and empathy towards others, regardless of their physical appearance ( $M=5.56$ ,  $SD=0.57$ ). Evident in their ways of relating with others is appreciating differences among others. This was also confirmed in the FGD done when a student mentioned, “It is only when you accept others together with their differences that you can finally learn to see yourself and accept it fully well, and that is the time one feels real satisfaction and genuine happiness.” This means that acceptance which is part of self-awareness can happen after experiencing life with others. In addition, achieving the “people-person” skill is a key to the enhancement of other positive behaviors.

As proposed by Aspelin (2019), socio-emotional competence in teacher education must be developed because it is an important pedagogical competence. Thus, there is a need to explore the relational competence of pre-service teachers, which refers to the ability and willingness to act sensitively, responsibly, and emotionally to promote students’ emotional development.

In addition, the students can learn to listen to differing views of people and make better decisions based on them ( $M=5.45$ ,  $SD=0.63$ ), able to share ideas on building relationships, and better understand that we are all “in this together” ( $M=5.45$ ,  $SD=0.63$ ), can relate to others with sensitivity, understanding, and acceptance ( $M=5.41$ ,  $SD=0.73$ ), can inspire other students to see the impact

a high-functioning group can make when they work together towards shared goals ( $M=5.40$ ,  $SD=0.68$ ), can influence other students to do good to other people ( $M=5.32$ ,  $SD=0.73$ ), able to identify problems and share decision-making skills and strategies with others ( $M=5.25$ ,  $SD=0.62$ ), and can feel empowered and ready to bring positive change to the life of others ( $M=5.22$ ,  $SD=0.74$ ). The results showed that Education students are manifesting behaviors relative to the applications of SEL competencies. In addition, the way they interact with other students, provide help in case of need, and the respect accorded to faculty and personnel of the school support this endeavor.

Poulou (2016) suggested that enhancing teachers' social-emotional and teaching competencies and skills would potentially promote positive teacher-student relationships that would prevent student emotional and behavioral difficulties. Furthermore, the author recommended considering the teacher perceptions of Emotional Intelligence (EI) and competence in implementing Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) practices as potential teacher-based factors in teacher-student relationships and students' behavior.

Among the given focus, leadership, particularly empowering oneself to bring positive change to the life of others, rated the lowest ( $M=5.22$ ,  $SD=0.74$ ). Though evident in most of the respondents, they need more experiences with people that will hone this aspect since they are just beginning to feel their essence in their group and community. Good relationship skill has evolved after experiencing SABWAT activities such as being part of the dissemination campaign, orientation initiative, collecting books, and being part of the group to visit the chosen school. However, they agreed they needed more time to enhance this aspect, as one student reiterated during the discussion. Further, according to Prieto et al. (2019), a good leader is not only technical in nature. It requires human skill or the ability to work effectively with people and build teamwork.

Table 2. Application of the SEL competencies

| Focus   | Mean | SD   | Verbal Interpretation |
|---|------|------|-----------------------|
| Empathy<br>I can relate to others with sensitivity, understanding and acceptance.         | 5.41 | 0.73 | Agree                 |
| Ethical Responsibility<br>I can influence other students to do good to other people good. | 5.32 | 0.73 | Agree                 |

| Focus   | Mean | SD   | Verbal Interpretation |
|---|------|------|-----------------------|
| Perspective-taking<br>I learned to listen to differing views of people and make better decisions based on them.   | 5.45 | 0.63 | Agree                 |
| Leadership<br>I feel empowered and ready to bring positive change to the life of others.  | 5.22 | 0.74 | Agree                 |
| Appreciating Differences<br>I accept and embrace the differences of others and try to build compassion and empathy towards others, regardless of their physical appearance. | 5.56 | 0.57 | Strongly Agree        |
| Teamwork<br>I inspire other students to see the impact a high-functioning group can make when they work together towards shared goals.                                      | 5.40 | 0.68 | Agree                 |
| Problem-solving<br>I am able to identify problems and share decision-making skills and strategies with others.  | 5.25 | 0.62 | Agree                 |
| Community Building<br>I am able to share ideas on building relationships and better understand that we are all “in this together”.  | 5.45 | 0.63 | Agree                 |

### Issues and Challenges Relative to SABWAT

Based on the result, the more evident issue was the limited number of students who could go and join the group to bring the books ( $M=3.54$ ,  $SD=1.22$ ). It has been the policy of the CEDU not to hamper the flow of regular classes even during SABWAT day. Students are given equal chances to be part of the distribution day every year. In addition, involvement in SABWAT is not only on the day itself but from day one (1) of the school year after the conceptualization and planning stage up to the distribution day. Limited books available for donation ( $M=3.52$ ,  $SD=1.00$ ) was another issue faced by the project. Some students were motivated to share by giving a number of books. The others, however, remained passive. The third issue was on information dissemination ( $M=3.43$ ,  $SD=1.14$ ). Though it is always part of the orientation at the start of the school year, students need to be reminded regularly about this. Some say it is their busy schedules that hamper their full involvement in the activity. In addition, other challenges include donated books that are no longer physically appealing with torn pages and having scribbles on most pages ( $M=2.67$ ,  $SD=1.19$ ), parents/guardians not

even knowing about this activity ( $M=2.96$ ,  $SD=1.18$ ), students who are not interested in reading and have nothing to donate ( $M=2.87$ ,  $SD=1.18$ ), and lack of families' support ( $M=2.51$ ,  $SD=1.11$ ).

Table 3. Issues and Challenges

|  | Mean | SD   | Verbal Interpretation |
|--|------|------|-----------------------|
| Limited books were available for donation.   | 3.52 | 1.00 | More Evident          |
| Unawareness of students on information dissemination about SABWAT was observed.              | 3.43 | 1.14 | Evident               |
| Only limited students were allowed to join in going to the chosen public school.             | 3.54 | 1.22 | More Evident          |
| Some books given were no longer pleasing to the eyes of the readers.                         | 2.67 | 1.19 | Evident               |
| Some students were not interested in books and in reading; thus, they had nothing to donate. | 2.87 | 1.18 | Evident               |
| The family of the students was not aware of the SABWAT activity.                             | 2.96 | 1.18 | Evident               |
| Some parents did not allow book donation or its equivalent.                                  | 2.42 | 1.14 | Less Evident          |
| The support of family members about the idea of donating to SABWAT was not felt by students. | 2.51 | 1.11 | Evident               |

The item about some parents not allowing book donations rated the lowest ( $M= 2.42$ ,  $SD=1.14$ ), which means that some parents are not informed or maybe not be interested in participating in the project or giving away some books that they own. The objectives of the SABWAT Project directly relate to the ideas presented in numerous studies. For instance, Admin (2020) stated that sharing a book with children in any way possible can reinforce their Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) skills. On the other hand, Croteau (2020) believed that it is essential to teach students to give back to the communities because it instills the idea that they can make the world better. The author also added that giving the students opportunities to volunteer in service projects helps strengthen their social-emotional core focusing on empathy, ethical responsibility, perspective-

taking, leadership, self-regulation, teamwork, problem-solving, and community building.

**Proposed SABWAT Improvement Plan**

The SABWAT activity is the College of Education’s way of showing gratitude to the cooperating schools where most Field Study students are deployed. The benefits gained through the books being donated are appreciated by the school heads, teachers, and students and by the parents as well, as this helps improve the library facilities of the school. Most importantly, the students will have better opportunities to enhance their reading, language, research, and other related skills through these books. Their love for reading will also be developed. Teachers are also aided in their daily lesson preparations and instructional material development. Moreover, parents are assured that with the available books, their children may no longer visit other schools to do research-related tasks.

The College of Education students are also benefited but in a much different way. Through their involvement in the activity, they become better individuals, having enhanced social and emotional learning competencies that will prepare them to face life and its challenges. The College believes that a more stable socio-emotional aspect in a person will bring all the other aspects together in a much better shape. This is what the country needs for its people. This should start with the young generation.

This improvement plan is proposed for consideration to achieve the purpose of this research, which is to enhance the SEL competencies of the students through the SABWAT activity.

| Objectives   | Description of Activities   | Persons Involved                 | Date   | Expected Result   |
|--|---|----------------------------------|--------|---|
| Facilitate initial SABWAT meeting to lay the plans for the school year.                              | Faculty Meeting with FEU officers   | Dean, Faculty, Students          | August | A well-prepared SABWAT plan.  |
| Re-orient SABWAT through interactive presentation emphasizing the value of sharing books with others | Orientation The previous SABWAT activities can be presented and discussed through an interactive presentation for information dissemination purposes. | Dean, Faculty, Students, Parents | August | Delivered Information on SABWAT that is understood clearly by students and parents. |

| Objectives  | Description of Activities   | Persons Involved   | Date                 | Expected Result  |
|---|---|--|----------------------|--|
| Determine the library needs of the target public school   | Library Visit to a target public school. Through this visit, the College can identify the books and materials needed to improve the school library.   | Faculty-in charge of SABWAT  | September            | Books needed are identified.   |
| Inform the Education students of the possible types of books needed for the school library  | Room-to-room information dissemination by faculty and interested student leaders  | Faculty & staff, students, FEU officers                                    | October              | List of needed books and related materials are identified.                             |
| Re-create activities that will revive the student's motivation to go back to reading and appreciate the benefits they get out of it | <p>Activities to be proposed are SEL-inspired, in line with the National Book week celebration, and coordinated with the library personnel.</p> <p>Getting back to hard-bound books can be exciting. This will also lessen screen time as they give more to reading books.</p> <p>May include the following: story-telling, slogan making, and Big Book making.</p> | Dean, Faculty & staff, Library personnel, students                         | November to December | Observable active participation among Education students; regained interest in reading |
| Make the books ready for distribution.  | Collecting books from student donors and making them ready for distribution.  | Faculty & staff, students, FEU officers                                    | December-January     | Well-packed books for distribution were made ready                                     |
| Lead a simple program for children of the target public school in coordination with the school head and teachers                    | Short program will include dramatic reading, poem reading, and story-telling.   | Dean, CEDU faculty, Principal, teachers, and students of the public school | February             | Activities are successfully done through a well-prepared program                       |
| Require Education students to write a reflection paper on how the SABWAT activity helped them become better individuals.            | Reflection paper writing on SABWAT and how it helped them as students and as individuals  | Faculty & staff, students  | March                | Well-written reflection paper by each student  |

| Objectives   | Description of Activities   | Persons Involved | Date  | Expected Result                |
|--|---|------------------|-------|--------------------------------|
| Require every student to do a graffiti board online, showing how the SABWAT activity has helped them as a person and future professionals. | The graffiti board will be shared with friends and classmates to signify their active involvement in the SABWAT project. Through this final activity, their SEL competencies will also be enhanced. | Students         | April | Graffiti board creatively done |

## CONCLUSIONS

Based on the results of this research, it was found that the Education students, after being involved in SABWAT activity, gained the following SEL competencies: social awareness, self-awareness, responsible decision making, relationship skills, and self-management skills. In addition, specific ways on how the focus SEL competencies can be applied to life include accepting and embracing the differences of others and trying to build compassion and empathy towards others, regardless of their physical appearance, among others. However, issues like limited books, parents’ lack of support, limited student involvement in SABWAT activity, and others need to be addressed.

This study established the importance of community extension activities like the SABWAT program, which focuses on the students’ development of socio-emotional skills. This, in particular, will help increase the pre-service teachers’ SEL competencies essential to their personal and professional development as future teachers.

The authors recommended that the SEL competencies gained from SABWAT can be made more life-changing through the integration of varied learning activities catering to the enhancement of SEL in the lessons to be taken in class. Part of the research utilization is integrating lessons on SEL in the syllabus and related instructional materials to be implemented in the Education subjects in the coming years. The impact assessment will be done to see if the objectives are realized. With this, it is expected that enhancing the socio-emotional aspect will help the students become more mature as professionals and ready to face whatever comes their way. In addition, future research may explore the applicability of SEL programs to other educational contexts. Education students may have richer opportunities to apply the SEL competencies through active involvement in the outreach program of the school and of the College. Moreover, the activities proposed in the SABWAT improvement plan may be considered in the future



years. The proposed activities can reduce, if not prevent, issues and problems confronting the SABWAT activity.

### ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The researchers have nothing but heartfelt gratitude to the University of Batangas for funding this research project. Same gratitude is extended to the Research and Publications Office (RPO) and everyone who has supported to finish this academic endeavor which hopefully will be life-changing to the Education students as the research beneficiaries.

### LITERATURE CITED

- Admin, W. (2020). Five ways to support social and emotional learning with children's books. *Wellesley Centers for Women*. <https://bit.ly/39nlGQF>
- Aspelin, J. (2019). Enhancing pre-service teachers' socio-emotional competence.
- Boichenko, A., Shukalova, O., & Dzhabbarova, L. (2020). Research of socio-emotional competence and its importance in students' personality development. *Habitus*, 2(18). <https://doi.org/10.32843/2663-5208.2020.18.2.3>
- Bueno, D. & Pineda A. (2019). School, Home, Personal and Mental-Related Issues of Senior High Students in a Catholic School in the Philippines. *CC The Journal: A Multidisciplinary Research Review*. DOI:10.13140/RG.2.2.32578.94404
- Cherry, K. (2020). Delaying gratification and impulse control. *Very well mind*. <https://bit.ly/2W0kPTa>
- Chong, W. H., & Lee, B. O. (2015). Social-emotional learning: Promotion of youth wellbeing in Singapore schools. In *Rethinking youth wellbeing* (pp. 161-177). Springer, Singapore.
- Choudhury, J. (2021). Emotional Intelligence, Socio-Emotional Competence and Human Capital. *Ra Journal of Applied Research*, 7(4), 2932-2938.
- Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning. (2020). CASEL'S SEL Framework: What are the core competence areas and where are they

- Promoted?. *CASEL*. <https://casel.org/casel-sel-framework-11-2020/>
- Commission on Higher Education. (2013). Enhanced policies and guidelines on student affairs and services. *Commission on Higher Education*. <https://bit.ly/3xqNVty>
- Corpuz, B., Lucas, M. R., Borabo, H. G., & Lucido, P. (2018). *The Child and Adolescent Learners and Learning Principles*. Quezon City: *Lorimar Publishing Inc.* <https://bit.ly/3xFN0ql>
- Croteau, J. (2020). These volunteer projects help teens build important SEL Skills. *We Are Teachers*. <https://bit.ly/3nUaMdX>
- Department of Education. (2009). July 6, 2009 DO 71, s. 2009 Guidelines for the Effective Implementation of the Elementary Curriculum. *Department of Education*. <https://bit.ly/3IE7MzA>
- Eraldemir-Tuyan, S. (2019). An Emotional Literacy Improvement (ELI) Program for EFL Teachers: Insiders' Views. *European Journal of Educational Research*, 8(4), 1113-1125.
- Hen, M., & Goroshit, M. (2016). Social–emotional competencies among teachers: An examination of interrelationships. *Cogent Education*, 3(1), 1151996.
- Intang, B. (2021). The Effect of Socio-Emotional Learning on Students' Mathematics Competence. In *International Conference on Educational Studies in Mathematics (ICoESM 2021)* (pp. 46-51). Atlantis Press.
- Kosic, M. (2018). Media Literacy and for the Net Generation. *International Journal of Emotional Education*, 10(1), 68-88.
- Loinaz, E. S. (2019). Teachers' Perceptions and Practice of Social and Emotional Education in Greece, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom. *International Journal of Emotional Education*, 11(1), 31-48.
- Lozano-Peña, G., Sáez-Delgado, F., López-Angulo, Y., & Mella-Norambuena, J. (2021). Teachers' Social–Emotional Competence: History, Concept, Models, Instruments, and Recommendations for Educational Quality. *Sustainability*, 13(21), 12142.

- Mahoney, J. L., Durlak, J. A., & Weissberg, R. P. (2018). An update on social and emotional learning outcome research. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 100(4), 18-23.
- Poulou, M. S. (2017). Social and emotional learning and teacher–student relationships: Preschool teachers’ and students’ perceptions. *Early Childhood Education Journal*, 45(3), 427-435.
- Prieto, N., Arcangel, C., & Corpuz, B. (2019). *The Teacher and the Community School Culture and Organizational Leadership*. Quezon City: Lorimar Publishing Inc. <https://bit.ly/3QgcvpA>
- Ramirez, T., Brush, K., Raisch, N., Bailey, R., & Jones, S. M. (2021). Equity in Social Emotional Learning (SEL) Programs: A Content Analysis of Equitable Practices in PreK-5 SEL Programs. In *Frontiers in Education* (p. 306). Frontiers.
- Storey, M. (2017). Considering Core Competencies: Social and Emotional Learning in British Columbia’s Redesigned Curriculum. *Journal of Contemporary Issues in Education*, 12(2).
- Wilczenski, F. L., & Cook, A. L. (2014). Toward positive and systemic mental health practices in schools: Fostering social-emotional learning through service. *Health Psychology Report*, 2(3), 145-151.
- Wortham, S., Love-Jones, R., Peters, W., Morris, S., & García-Huidobro, J. C. (2020). Educating for comprehensive well-being. *ECNU Review of Education*, 3(3), 406-436.