Social and Emotional Wellbeing of Students in Nagaland

DEPARTMENT OF SCHOOL EDUCATION
GOVERNMENT OF NAGALAND

DREAM a DREAM

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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ACRONYMS

SEW – Social and Emotional Well-being

NMHS – National Mental Health Survey

NCRB – National Crime Records Bureau

NBSE – Nagaland Board of Secondary Education

LSE – Life Skills Education

NEP – National Education Policy

SCERT – State Council for Education Research and Training

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Education illuminates a person's mind and thinking. It is a process of acquiring knowledge and information and thus prepares every individual for life's experiences. The purpose of education is to promote the holistic development of young learners and prepare them to be socially, emotionally and physically healthy individuals. While education prepares each student to face the real world, schools and teachers play a fundamental role in fostering children's intellectual abilities and skill sets through a holistic approach. Therefore, the wellbeing of educators and students is of the utmost importance. They should be equipped with the skills and competencies necessary to deal with stressful situations and thrive.

Therefore, the present study aims to examine the Social and Emotional Wellbeing (SEW) of students in Nagaland. It further aims to understand teachers and parents' perspectives on the social and emotional skill sets of students. This study involved students, teachers and parents from 30 schools spread across four districts in Nagaland.

The findings of the study highlight the need to enhance the social and emotional wellness of students. It sheds light on challenges faced by students and teachers that are multifaceted and interconnected, requiring a holistic approach to address them effectively. The analysis of parent interviews highlights the diverse experiences and challenges parents face in their relationships with children. The study results recommend the implementation of a curriculum that encompasses life skills and well-being; and empowers students with the necessary tools to navigate challenges fostering their holistic development. By gaining a better understanding of the challenges children face and working to address them, parents can create a positive and supportive environment for them to thrive. A strong and healthy collaboration among all stakeholders, including teachers, parents and policy makers, is essential for bringing about positive change so that children thrive and no child is left behind.

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Education is the most sustainable investment and a fundamental factor in human development. It enriches people's understanding of themselves and the world. Quality education is a fundamental right for every child. Education helps every person acquire basic literacy and numeracy skills, enjoy learning without fear, and feel valued and included, irrespective of where they come from (www.unicef.org/India). There is a widespread disparity in socio-economic parameters in a country like India with a rich diversity of cultures, religions and languages. Education, the most powerful tool for development, has the potential to uplift the marginalised and the disadvantaged and thus facilitate their being on par with the rest of the population.

Our country has made significant progress in improving access to quality education, increasing enrollment and reducing the number of dropouts. Primary school enrollment in India has been a success story, largely due to the various programmes introduced over the years. It has been widely acknowledged that quality education not only enhances academic skills but also the physical, mental, social and emotional development of children. It prepares them to become ethically strong and morally elevated individuals. Our present education system in schools aims only at improving the intellectual abilities of children focusing on just the content necessary for students to succeed in various tests and to get promoted to the next grade. Schools, the foundations for raising healthy children, place so much emphasis on academic and cognitive skills that non-academic skills needed for the holistic development of children are relegated to the background.

The standard and competency-based teaching in schools stress intellectual development, which is detrimental to affective and social development. These teaching methods create unwanted stress and anxiety in children. The increase in mental health and behaviour problems in children is a tell-tale sign of the need for social and emotional skills in children. A study by the National Mental Health Survey (NMHS) stated that 7.3% of children in the age group of 13–17 years on average suffered from mental health disorders (Gururaj et al., 2016). In 2018, the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) reported 10,159 students died by suicide, and the 2014–18 period witnessed a 26% increase from the former five-year period (Garai, 2020). The increasing access to technology and social media has its own effects on school-going students' social and emotional wellbeing. Studies have shown that new challenges require an immediate and effective response from a socially responsible education system. One of the primary focus should be an extraordinary emphasis on developing the skills of students so that they can cope with existing and future challenges and thus enhance their wellbeing (Prajapati and Sharma, 2017).

Nagaland has been making remarkable progress in the field of education, yet the state faces a number of challenges (Malakar, 2022). Nagaland borders the states of Assam to the west, Arunachal Pradesh to the north, Myanmar to the east, and Manipur to the south. The state is influenced by western lifestyles and modernisation and is going through transition and social change. The free-mixing and fund seeking nature of youngsters, dependence on parents, unemployment, etc. have a negative impact on their wellbeing. Social problems such as alcoholism and drug addiction are on the rise among individuals, families, and communities. All these make youngsters more vulnerable to engaging in risky behaviours,

which can affect their wellbeing (Nuken and Singh, 2013). A study conducted on the mental health status of adolescents in Nagaland revealed a prevalence of emotional problems (17%), hyperactivity (16.1%), conduct problems (15.2%), and lack of prosocial behaviour (5.1%), thus emphasising the need for early identification, treatment and promotion of mental health services (Keyho.K. et al., 2019). Though the state has a high literacy rate of 80.1 percent (census, 2011), the population is largely rural, with 71.4% living in rural areas.

The Nagaland Board of School Education (NBSE) looks after secondary and higher secondary education in the state. NBSE works towards ensuring inclusive and quality education and promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all children. It focuses on eliminating any kind of disparity, thus enabling young people to develop skills and competencies for life and work. It introduced Life Skills Education (LSE) for the first time in classes IX to XI in 2016. The textbooks focused on the importance of health and related problems, instilling dignity of labour, topics on disaster management, opening up vistas of artistic expression in the fields of music, fine arts, dance and other disciplines, clean elections, national integration, career guidance and helping students acquire values in life to mould their personalities and acquire the right attitude to become responsible in life (NBSE Portal). But life skills education was not given the same importance and recognition as other subjects such as Mathematics, Science, and English. In most of the schools, LSE classes are adjusted once or twice a week. LSE is often confused with vocational education (Malakar, 2022) and thus does not serve the purpose as envisioned.

The National Education Policy (NEP-2020), launched by the government, witnessed a new shift in the culture of education. The policy paved the way for reforms in schools and higher education by focusing on holistic development of students, capacity building of teachers and introduction of multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary teaching and learning approaches. This was followed by the introduction of NEP at the state level. Envisioning the holistic development of the children, NBSE decided to integrate life skills as a key component of the school's education and thus aimed at identifying the social and emotional skill gaps and factors that affect the wellbeing of students and teachers in Nagaland government schools.

1.1 The objectives of the present study are:

- To assess the well-being of students in Nagaland government schools and the contextual factors that affect it.
- To understand teachers and parents perspectives on the social-emotional skills set of students.

1.2 Operational Definitions of Wellbeing:

In the present study, the wellbeing of students encompasses multiple dimensions, which include social skills, emotional skills, personal skills, resilience and social support.

2. METHODOLOGY

Based on the given context, a descriptive cross-sectional survey design was adapted for this study. The study involved students and teachers from 30 state board schools in four districts of Nagaland (Mokokchung, Kohima, Mon and Zuneheboto). The schools were identified based on convenience and consent obtained from the SCERT (Nagaland). The study sample consisted of 902 students studying in grades 6–12. The study also involved 57 teachers and 61 parents.

The study consists of two sections. The first section was quantitative in nature and assessed the wellbeing of students. The Social and Emotional Wellbeing (SEW) tool was used to assess the wellbeing and social-emotional skills of students. The second section consisted of parent and teacher interviews, which were analysed using a simple thematic analysis approach and a teacher checklist to assess the social emotional skill sets of students.

2.1   Measures used for the study:

2.1.1   Social and Emotional Wellbeing (SEW) Tool: The SEW tool is used to assess the social and emotional well-being of students. The tool measured five major dimensions of wellbeing: social, emotional, personal well-being, resilience and social support. The tool consists of 36 items, which are rated using a 5-point rating scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. The Internal consistency reliability for overall social emotional well-being is 0.88. The internal consistency reliability for the dimensions of well being are : emotional well-being (.69), personal well-being (.75), resilience (.61), social support (.68) and social well-being(.84).

2.1.2   Teacher checklist: The check list consisted of 20 statements. These statements focused on teachers' perceptions of students' social and emotional competencies.

2.1.3   Teacher Interviews: A semi-structured interview schedule was used to interview teachers. The interview questions were based on self-awareness, relationships with students, perceptions of life skills and contextual challenges experienced by teachers. There were a total of 21 questions. The interviews were conducted by trained researchers. Each interview took about 30-45 minutes.

2.1.4   Parent Interviews: Parents were interviewed using a semi-structured interview schedule. The interview consisted of seven questions that focused on identifying academic, behavioural and social challenges faced by children.

All the measurements used for the study were previously administered for similar need assessments, and they were fine tuned for the contextual realities of Nagaland.

2.2   Data Collection Process:

The data collection for the study began after obtaining consent from SCERT (Nagaland) and the respective school authorities. Convenience sampling was used to collect the data from schools in the

districts identified by the SCERT and NBSE in Nagaland. The students were informed that their participation was voluntary and that the confidentiality of the data would be strictly maintained.

The data was collected from 902 students studying in 30 schools in four districts of Nagaland (Mokokchung, Kohima, Mon and Zuneheboto). A team of trained assessors administered the wellbeing tool. The tools were administered in English, as the students were comfortable with it. 57 teachers teaching in grades 6–12 and 61 parents were interviewed about their perceptions of the skill sets and challenges faced by children. Four volunteers were recruited to assist in translating in Nagamese for parent interviews. These volunteers were trained on the techniques of data collection.

3. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

3.1 Demographic Details of the Students

Girls ■ Boys

412, 46%   490, 54%

Junior Grade(6-8 std)

Senior Grade (9-12 std)

441 49%   461 51%

Total Sample - 902

Mon

Longleng

Mokokchung

Wokha

Tuensang

Noklak

Zunheboto

Kohima

Kiphire

Dimapur

Phek

Peren

N

60 km

40 mi

Mercator

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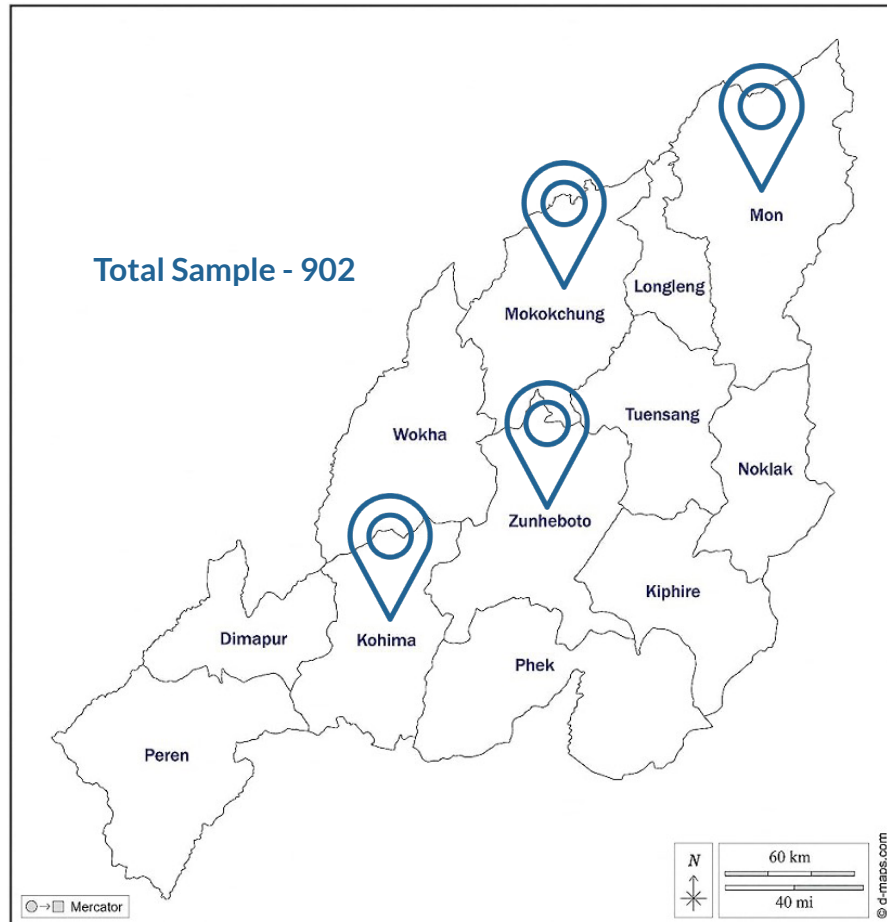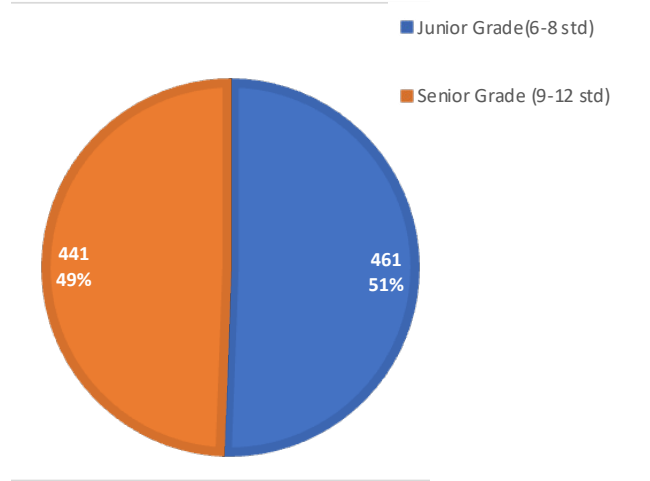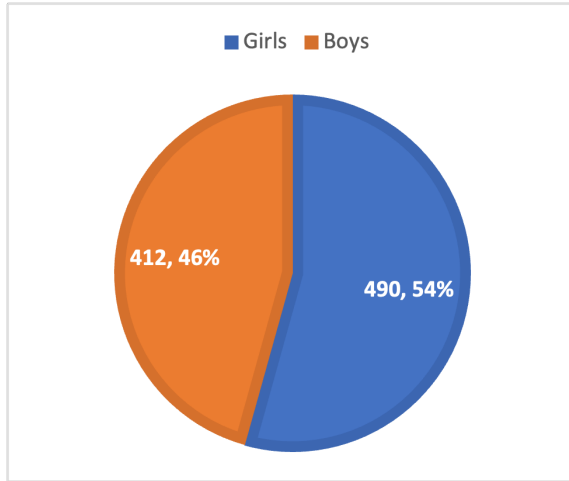
3.2   SECTION - I

Student Wellbeing

This section of the study examines the social and emotional wellbeing of students.

3.2.1 Overall Well-being of the Students
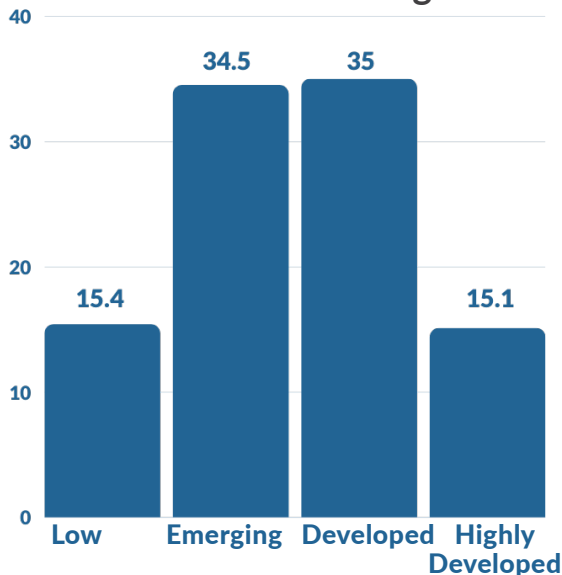
The bar graph above represents the overall social and emotional well-being scores of the students. The analysis shows that half(50%) of students have low or emerging wellbeing scores. Only 15 % of the students have a highly developed wellbeing score. This shows that the majority of the students' wellbeing is at risk, which includes poor social, emotional and personal skills and there is an immediate need to enhance their social and emotional wellness.

3.2.2 Emotional Wellbeing

The above graphindicates the emotional well-being of the respondents. 56.3% have a low or emerging wellbeing status. Only 12% of students had highly developed wellbeing. This indicates that more than half of the respondents have low or emerging emotional well-being that needs to be improved.

Emotional wellbeing among adolescents was further measured based on stress management and emotional regulation skills demonstrated by students. The analysis showed that more than 57% of the students had low or emerging emotional regulation and stress management skills, where they found it difficult to control their emotions and deal with stressful events at home, with peers and at school.

3.2.3 Social Wellbeing
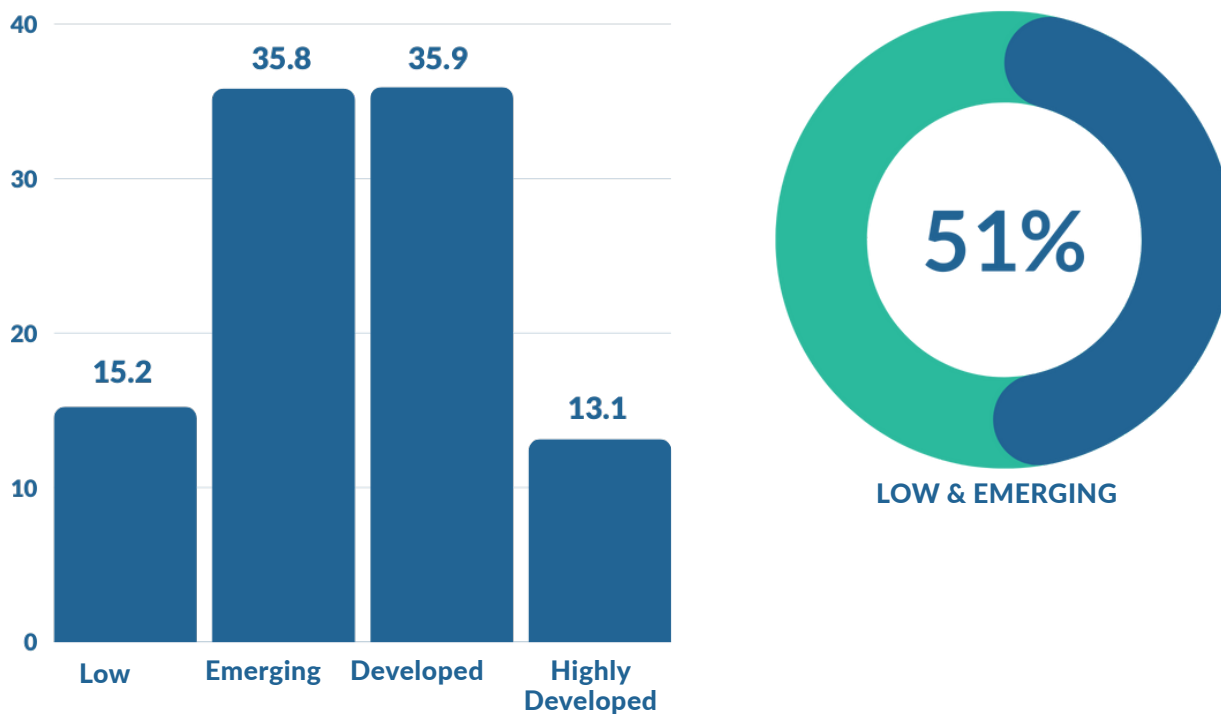
Table 5 displays the overall social wellbeing status of the respondents, in which 15.2% scored low and 35.8% had an emerging wellbeing status. Only 13% of the respondents have a highly developed well-being status.

The social wellbeing skills among adolescents were further measured based on the empathy and interpersonal relationship skills exhibited by students. The analysis showed that about 50% of the adolescents' empathy and interpersonal skills need to be improved. This emphasised that students should be encouraged to enhance social awareness (ability to understand and empathise with peers from diverse backgrounds) and learn a variety of social skills (such as problem solving, interpersonal skills, communication skills, etc).

3.2.4 Personal Wellbeing
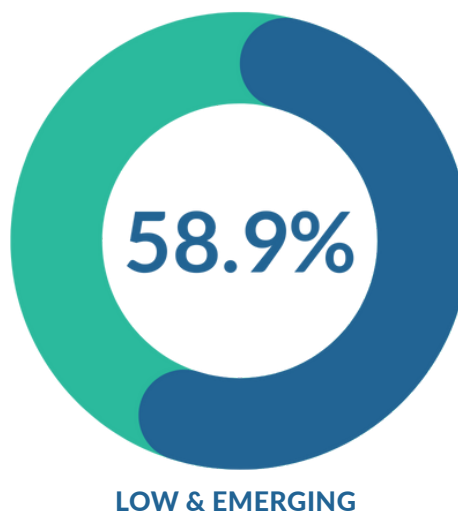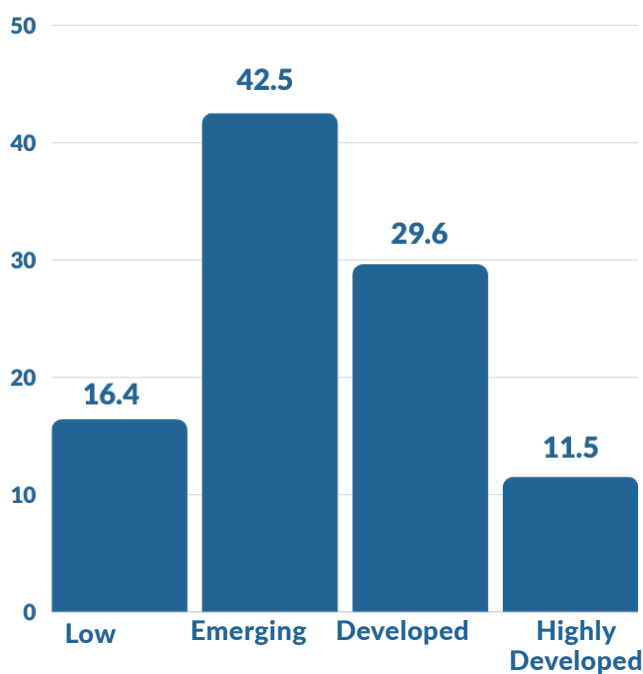
The respondents' personal wellbeing, the third SEW dimension, is shown in the graph above. More than 58.9% of the students had a low or emerging wellbeing score, which raises concern about the necessity of improving students' personal wellbeing.

Self-efficacy and autonomy were two skills measured under the personal wellbeing dimensions. More than 50% of the students exhibited low and emerging autonomy (e.g., ability to make decisions on their own) and self-efficacy (e.g., a low belief in their abilities).

3.2.5 Resilience Skills
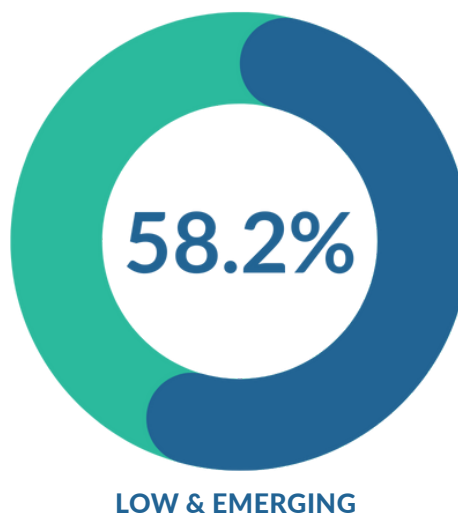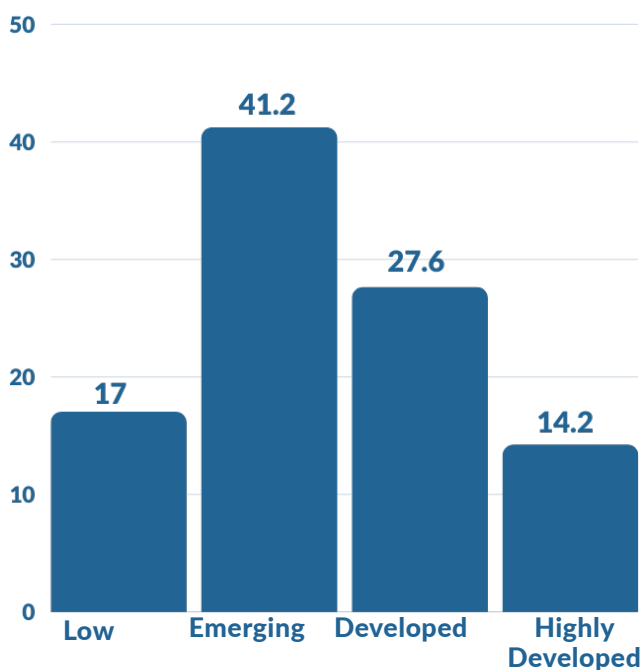
The resilience status of the students is shown in the graph. 41.2% of respondents have a low resilience status. It is significant to note that when combining the low (17%) and emerging (41.2%) wellbeing statuses, around 58.2% of the respondents' resilience skill sets need to be developed, which is a source of worry. Only 12.7% of the respondents have a highly developed state, indicating that students need to work on building their resilience (e.g., to deal with failure, setbacks in life, severe adversity, etc).

3.2.6 Social Support Skills
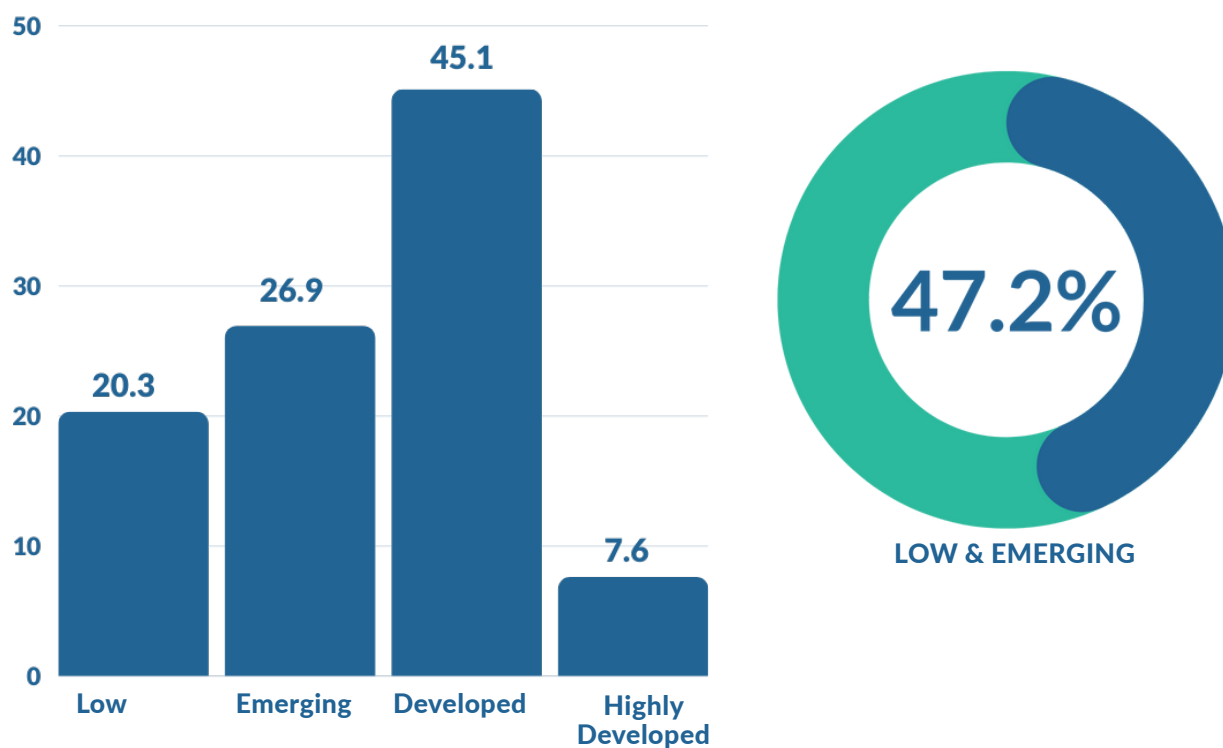
The graph above represents the social support status of the respondents. 20.3% of the respondents have very low social support status. Though about 45% of the respondents displayed a developed wellbeing status, there was an equal number who had either emerging or low wellbeing. Only 13.2% of the respondents have highly developed social support, which emphasises the need to improve social support for children. This further indicates that children should be provided with a supportive and enriching environment for their growth.

3.2.7 Gender and Well-being Status

Table 13 Gender		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t value	Sig.
Emotional Regulation	Girls	490	12.80	2.363	0.107	-0.568	0.570
	Boys	412	12.89	2.378	0.117		
Coping with Stress	Girls	490	9.23	1.912	0.086	1.406	0.160
	Boys	412	9.05	1.901	0.094		
Emotional Well-being	Girls	490	22.03	3.139	0.142	0.432	0.666
	Boys	412	21.94	3.036	0.150		
Resilience	Girls	490	12.74	2.490	0.113	1.417	0.157
	Boys	412	12.98	2.617	0.129		
Social Support	Girls	490	19.45	3.388	0.153	2.013	**0.444**
	Boys	412	19.00	3.342	0.165		
Empathy	Girls	490	19.20	3.251	0.147	4.652	**0.000**
	Boys	412	18.19	3.295	0.162		
Interpersonal Relationship	Girls	490	16.27	2.863	0.129	-1.470	0.142
	Boys	412	16.55	2.904	0.143		
Social Well-being	Girls	490	35.47	4.739	0.214	2.299	**0.022**
	Boys	412	34.74	4.819	0.237		
Self-efficacy	Girls	490	16.90	3.123	0.141	-1.284	0.200
	Boys	412	17.17	3.068	0.151		
Autonomy	Girls	490	14.50	2.789	0.126	-0.913	0.361
	Boys	412	14.57	2.836	0.140		
Personal Well-being	Girls	490	31.40	4.271	0.193	-1.522	0.128
	Boys	412	31.84	4.333	0.213		
SEW Global	Girls	490	121.09	10.425	0.471	0.849	0.396
	Boys	412	120.49	10.653	0.525		

Table 3 shows the gender and wellbeing status of the respondents. An independent sample t-test was conducted to assess wellbeing (male and female students) based on the five dimensions of wellbeing and their sub skills. The statistical test conducted showed no significant difference in the overall wellbeing of male and female students, which meant their social and emotional wellbeing remained the same. The analysis showed a significant difference in only two out of the five dimensions (social support and social wellbeing). Female participants had higher scores in both dimensions. The study also showed there was no significant difference in male and female scores in any sub-skill except empathy.

3.3   SECTION - II

This section of the study examined the social emotional competencies and skills set of students as perceived by teachers and parents.

3.3.1 Teacher Perception of Students' Skills

A total of 57 teacher interviews were analysed and four overarching themes were identified. These themes and recommendations are presented below with detailed quotes from the participants.
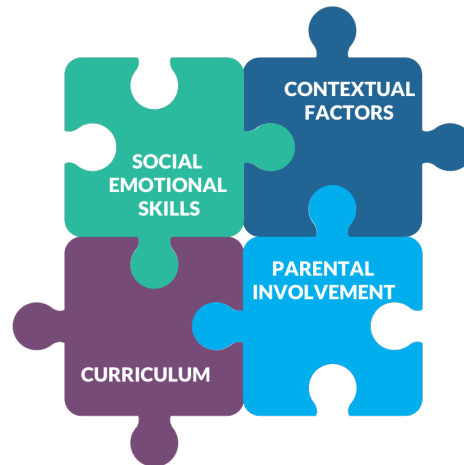
1. Social Emotional Skills:

When teachers were asked about social emotional skills of students in the classroom, five sub- themes were identified. This contributed to a better understanding of the challenges and perspectives of teachers.

(i) Managing emotions

The analysis showed that 49.3% of the teachers felt that students need to improve their emotion management skills. According to most of the teachers interviewed, there have been regular incidences of angry outbursts among secondary school students that have gone unresolved. They explain that as students often come from nearby districts and live as domestic help with guardians, they are unable to cope with housework and academics. The lack of time to complete homework often leaves children feeling frustrated and angry. Additionally, students often resort to verbal abuse and physical fights to express their anger. One teacher remarked, "Sometimes students slam their books on the desk when they are angry."

(ii) Lack of positive peer relations

The majority of the teachers (53.3%) felt that the students need to improve their relationships skills with peers and teachers in and outside the classroom. The lack of positive peer interactions in the classroom has resulted in increased disciplinary concerns. One teacher said, "Quarrels and physical spat between students happen. Boys are aggressive towards girls, verbal spats among students occur. They damaged school property and student's guardians had to pay." Two teachers noted that boys often display physical aggression towards girls, while girls tend to avoid boys and prefer sitting only with their female friends. Some teachers also suggested involvement from the education department would promote peer relations in the classroom. A teacher said, "System needs to be supportive so that students can develop academic achievements and understand social relationships".

(iii) Lack of student expression

Majority of teachers stated that students tend to be hesitant and do not express their doubts freely. They expressed that students rarely engage in classroom interactions or ask questions. This makes it difficult for teachers to gauge whether students are comprehending the syllabus. Teachers suggested that promoting emotional wellbeing in students can help them open and express themselves freely in the classroom. One teacher said, "Students need support with emotional wellbeing as they may not be treated well at home."

(iv) Low attention span

Students frequently exhibit restlessness and distraction and have low attention spans. 51.7% of the teachers said that their students were not attentive, did not obey the instructions given in class and never completed the given tasks within the allotted time.

Six teachers mentioned that students often feel sleepy and do not interact in the classroom. They added, students often seem distracted and do not take notes during the class. One teacher attributed this to the impact of COVID and social media, stating that they have reduced students' ability to focus.

(v) Low self-worth

The societal identity attached to tribals in Nagaland can add to the lack of motivation among students. Due to historical marginalisation and discrimination, many tribals in Nagaland have internalised a sense of inferiority and lack of self-worth. They may face discrimination and prejudice in their daily lives, which can create a sense of hopelessness and no/less motivation to strive for better opportunities. 69% of the teachers felt that the students displayed low or emerging self-awareness abilities (eg: less confidence, less awareness of strength and limitations). Teachers said, "We are tribals, backwards and therefore can't go into our society" this translates to the expectation they have of their students as well.

2. Contextual factors

When teachers were asked about the challenges at the school level, seven sub themes were identified. This contributed to a better understanding of contextual factors influencing wellbeing in schools.

LACK OF INFRASTRUCTURE	LEARNING GAP	STUDENT BACKGROUND	LANGUAGE BARRIER
LACK OF PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT	LACK OF FINANCE	SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND DROPOUT	
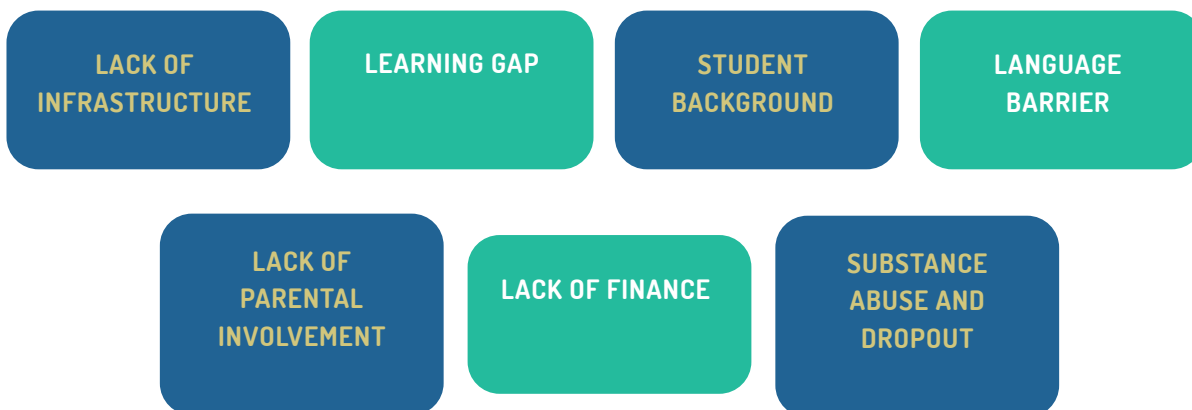
(i) Lack of infrastructure

Majority of teachers expressed a lack of proper infrastructure in the classrooms. One teacher said that classrooms are often small and overcrowded, making it difficult for students to concentrate. They suggested that for a classroom to promote positive wellbeing, it needs to be spacious, have charts and be clean.

Some teachers expressed that the school often lacked proper toilets, resulting in poor hygiene among students, which often led to students falling sick. They also encouraged the idea that all students should have school uniforms to promote a sense of belonging. Additionally, five teachers expressed concerns that the absence of a science lab prevented them from demonstrating practical science experiments. One teacher expressed, "We have all the resources, but no room to set them up." Another teacher remarked, "There is no space for experiential learning."

(ii) Learning gap

All teachers remarked that students in secondary school often lack foundational skills in Math, English, and Science, which leads to poor learning outcomes. A teacher expressed, "Children come from poor families. They live with guardians and get less time to study. Their foundation is weak and some of them cannot understand basic English. So, we have to start from the basics." Secondary school students often struggled to keep up with the curriculum due to the lack of basic numeracy and reading skills.

(iii) Student background

Almost all teachers expressed that students' background posed a challenge to education. They explained that students often came from under resourced areas and lacked access to education in their foundational years.

(iv) Language barrier

The first challenge that teachers face is the language barrier when teaching students from nearby villages who may not speak the same dialect as the teacher. A teacher said, "Students come from different

villages and speak different languages. Sometimes it is difficult to understand them." To overcome this, teachers often seek the help of students from the same tribe to translate.

(v) Lack of parental involvement
Another significant challenge is the lack of parental involvement in their child's education. As remote areas of Nagaland have limited educational opportunities, young children live away from home to attend school. In some cases, they may end up living as domestic help in economically advanced districts until they complete their education. While these children are able to live and study for free, they often lack the guidance and support of their parents, which can have a significant impact on their lives. On the other hand, children staying with parents may have limited interaction opportunities due to parents' work commitments or lack of academic knowledge.

So, the lack of parental presence can make students feel unsupported and disconnected, which can lead to poor academic performance and a lack of motivation to succeed (Mao, Zang and Zhang, 2020). Living away from home and working as domestic help can be physically and emotionally demanding, leaving little time and energy for studying and other academic pursuits. Four teachers also expressed that parents were unable to dedicate extra time to children with additional needs.

In general, children face a lack of mentorship and guidance outside of school hours. During these non-school hours, they often find themselves without a supportive figure who can help them explore and develop their passions and interests.

(vi) Lack of finance
Financial constraints, such as the inability to purchase stationery or access running water for proper hygiene further contributes to the lack of motivation. As one teacher explained, "Students don't do their homework; they don't buy the new textbook. I bought it for them."

(vii) Substance abuse and dropout
According to teachers, middle school- students are particularly vulnerable to issues such as drug abuse, gang involvement and dropping out of school. Girls are often at risk of eloping for marriage, while boys may resort to substance abuse. One teacher said, "more girls drop out than boys. We need to help students earn a livelihood."

3. Teacher well-being

Teachers expressed that they often felt overburdened with administration work and the pressure to complete the syllabus. They explained that the increased administrative work often prevented them from having one on one conversations with students. These individual conversations often helped them understand the students better and support them in their studies. A teacher said, "it is often tiresome with the amount of workload to look after the students' progress."

Teachers also expressed that they often had to work for long hours, which influenced their social life. One teacher said, "I get less time to spend with friends."

Teachers also expressed a need for a collaborative effort. One teacher mentioned that, despite the

government's efforts to develop many curricula, the needs of the children are not being adequately addressed. However, there is still hope for collaborative efforts in the education system to improve the situation. It is important to ensure that all voices are heard and included, including those of teachers, who play a vital role in shaping society's future.

4. Curriculum

When teachers were asked about their understanding of wellbeing and life skills three sub-themes were identified. This contributed to a better understanding of teachers' perception of a life skills and wellbeing curriculum.

(i) Understanding of life skills and well-being

Most teachers indicated that life skills encompassed physical, mental and emotional stability, which are crucial for facing various life situations. A majority of teachers said, "life skills is mental, physical balance." Some teachers said, "being mentally fit, spiritual, good in all aspects."

Others emphasised the importance of vocational training, such as farming. carpentry, knitting and entrepreneurship, which can help individuals acquire skills for their livelihood. Teachers also mentioned the significance of interpersonal skills, conflict resolution and maintaining hygiene, which are essential for social and personal development. Three teachers highlighted the need for sexual health education and career awareness.

(ii) Recommendations for trainings
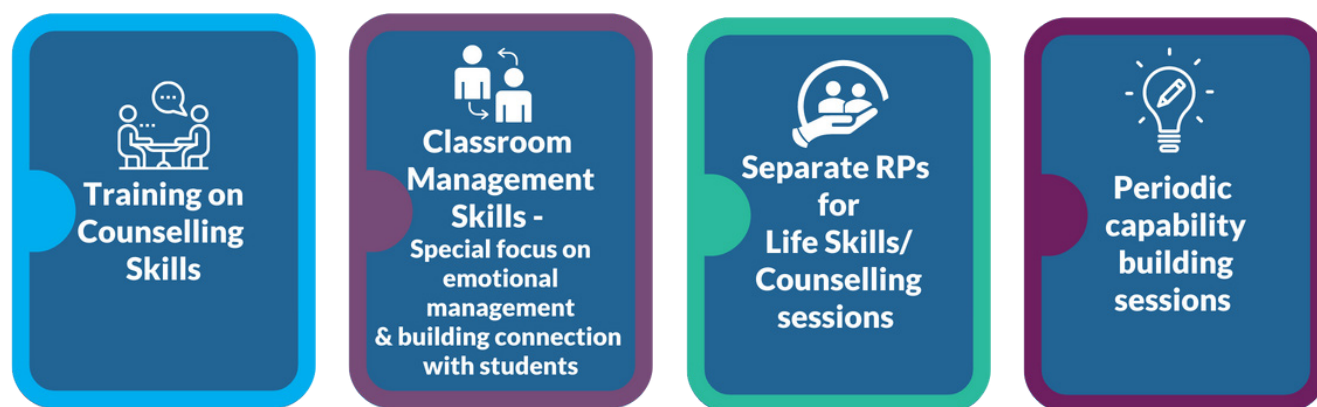
Majority of teachers expressed the need for training in counselling skills to support children, in addition to the training they have received on STEM, pedagogy and technology. Teachers suggested having a separate life skills teacher and counsellor in school.
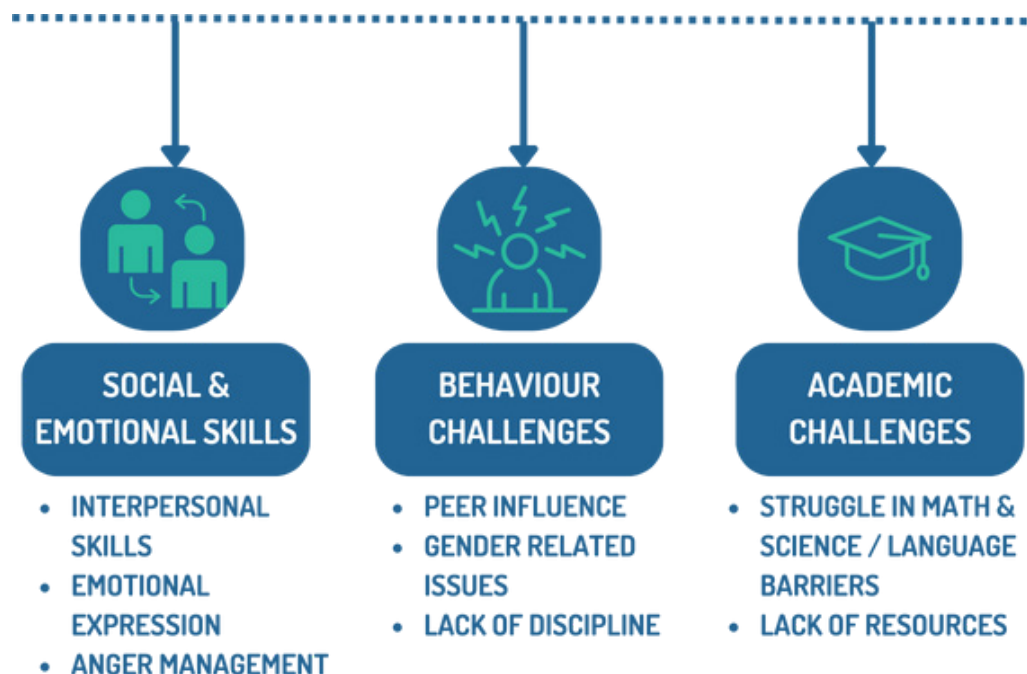
Specifically, they suggested training on anger management in the classroom, addressing different learning levels and building connections with students. Some teachers explained that they sometimes use the threat of punishment to scare students into studying. They explained that they struggled with classroom management strategies, and had to resort to corporal punishment.

Majority expressed interest in attending short, interactive, activity-based training during school hours. Training should be repeated every two months and periodic visits would enable feedback. One teacher said, "Teacher training is very helpful and if we practise, school becomes better. If we get to attend social emotional learning training, it will be good for teachers."

In conclusion, the analysis of teacher interviews in Nagaland government schools sheds light on important themes and recommendations for improving the education system. The challenges faced by teachers and students are multifaceted and interconnected, requiring a holistic approach to address them effectively. It is evident that collaboration among all stakeholders, including teachers, parents and policymakers, is essential for bringing about positive change. By implementing a curriculum that encompasses life skills and well-being, educators can empower students with the necessary tools to navigate challenges, foster their holistic development and cultivate a brighter future for the children of Nagaland.

3.3.2 Parents/Guardian Interviews

The second section of the study analysed 63 parent interviews. The three overarching themes were identified and the recommendations are presented below with detailed quotes from the participants.

SOCIAL & EMOTIONAL SKILLS
- INTERPERSONAL SKILLS
- EMOTIONAL EXPRESSION
- ANGER MANAGEMENT

BEHAVIOUR CHALLENGES
- PEER INFLUENCE
- GENDER RELATED ISSUES
- LACK OF DISCIPLINE

ACADEMIC CHALLENGES
- STRUGGLE IN MATH & SCIENCE / LANGUAGE BARRIERS
- LACK OF RESOURCES

1. Social and emotional skills

When parents were asked about challenges related to emotional expression and social skills, three sub-themes were identified. This contributed to a better understanding of peer relations.

(i) Interpersonal skills
Most parents mentioned that children often prefer doing household work and rarely go out. This may limit their exposure to social situations. They explained that children lack public speaking and leadership skills. They are often quiet and don't interact with other people.

Most parents also expressed that some children are outgoing and friendly and they have no trouble making friends. These children are often active in sports and other social activities. They also tend to have good communication skills and leadership qualities. Four parents also mentioned the children take initiatives in devotional activities and have good public speaking skills.

(ii) Emotional expression
Most parents shared that their children do not share their problems at home. They prefer to isolate and keep their problems to themselves. While some children may only share their problems when asked. Parents also remarked that some children are timid and do not express their emotions openly. They may find it difficult to share their feelings with others or may only express their emotions when they are happy.

(iii) Anger
Parents remarked that children often display aggression and have difficulty regulating their anger. They may become angry or violent when they feel misunderstood or when there is a miscommunication. These behaviours could also be triggered by various situations, such as being assigned household work or being prohibited from going out with friends.

2. Behavioural challenges

When parents were asked about behaviour challenges, three sub-themes were identified. This contributed to a better understanding of parents' perception of a child's behaviour.

(i) Peer influence
Three parents mentioned that their child's peers were a bad influence on their behaviour. This could lead to issues such as going out after school, using phones instead of listening to parents, or even involvement in drugs or alcohol.

(ii) Gender-related issues
Four parents reported strong concerns about their child's behaviour not conforming to gender norms. This could manifest in behaviours such as acting like a boy (for girls) or not behaving like a girl (for boys). Parents also preferred if girls did household work and came home from school. While they were comfortable if boys went out with their friends after school and came back on time.

A parent said, "She needs to behave like a girl."

(iii) Lack of discipline
Some parents reported concerns around their child's lack of discipline. This could manifest in behaviours such as laziness, lack of cleanliness and careless actions. Some parents mentioned that their child was forgetful or careless. This could lead to issues such as not focusing on studies or reacting quickly when feeling angry.

feeling angry.

One parent said, "He does work, but sometimes he becomes lazy."

3. Academic challenges

When parents were asked about academic challenges, two sub themes were identified. This contributed to a better understanding of barriers to academic achievement.

(i) Struggle in subjects

A majority of parents reported that children struggled with Maths and Science. Language barriers also appeared to be a significant issue, with multiple children having trouble with alternative English or struggling to keep up due to a lack of proficiency in the language of instruction. Four parents mentioned the children are slow in learning and two parents mentioned that their children have additional needs.

(ii) Lack of resources

Some children face additional challenges, such as financial difficulties that affect their ability to pay for tuition. Some children lacked support or mentorship, which impacted their academic progress. Two parents also mentioned that children feel burdened with household work and are unable to prioritise their studies.

In conclusion, the analysis of parent's interviews of Nagaland, highlight the diverse experiences and challenges that parents face in their relationships with their children. While there are common themes, each parent and child's situation are unique, and it is important to consider the individual needs and circumstances of each family. By gaining a better understanding of these challenges and working to address them, parents can create a positive and supportive environment for their children to thrive.

Ultimately, strong and healthy parent-child relationships can have a significant impact on a child's emotional and social development, academic success and overall well-being.

4. KEY FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

4.1 Student SEW

- Need to enhance the social and emotional wellness of students as 50% of them had low or emerging wellbeing scores.
- Only 13% of the students exhibited highly developed social wellbeing, indicating that interpersonal skills and pro-social behaviour among students need to be strengthened.
- Need to develop resilience skills among students to cope with failure and challenges in life as only 14.2% of students had highly developed resilience skills.
- 56.3% of the students had low or emerging emotional wellbeing, which indicates the need to enhance the emotional competencies of students.
- Only 11.9% of the students had highly developed scores, stressing the need to improve the personal wellbeing of students.

4.2 Teacher and Parent Interviews Findings

- 49.3% of the teachers felt that students need to improve their emotional management skills.
- Teachers reported regular incidences of unresolved angry outbursts among students, stemming from frustration and lack of time for homework completion.
- Students exhibited restlessness, distraction, and reduced interaction in the classroom, often attributed to the impact of COVID and social media.
- Negative peer interactions led to disciplinary concerns, including quarrels, physical spats, and property damage. Parents suggested that peer influence can lead to negative behaviour, such as involvement in drugs or alcohol. The involvement of the education department was suggested to improve peer relations.
- 69% of the teachers felt that the students displayed low or emerging self-awareness abilities (eg: less confidence, less awareness of strength and limitations).
- Secondary school students lacked basic literacy and numeracy skills, resulting in poor learning outcomes. Additionally, parents mentioned children struggled with subjects like maths and science. This was attributed to language barriers and lack of proficiency in the language of instruction.
- 53.3% teachers felt that the students need to improve their relationships skills with peers and teachers in and outside the classroom.
- Students hesitated to express doubts or engage in classroom interactions, making it challenging for teachers to assess comprehension. Promoting emotional well-being was recommended to encourage student expression.
- Students lack a mentor figure in their lives and need support and motivation to study. Increasing parent investment in schools and conducting workshops can help parents build better relationships with children.
- 51.7% of the teachers said that their students were not attentive, did not obey the instructions

given in class and never completed the given tasks within the allotted time.

- Teachers cited inadequate classroom space, absence of science labs, poor hygiene facilities and the absence of school uniforms as factors hindering student well-being.

- Teachers felt burdened by administration work, long working hours, and a lack of time for individual student conversations. Collaboration and support from the education system were desired.

- Teachers viewed life skills as encompassing physical, mental, and emotional balance, along with vocational training and interpersonal skills. They highlighted the need for sexual health education and career awareness.

- Teachers desired training in counselling skills, anger management, addressing different learning levels, and building connections with students. They suggested having dedicated life skills teachers and counsellors and interactive, activity-based training.

- Teachers recommended a context-specific curriculum, bilingual and inclusive, focusing on life skills, conflict resolution, leadership, interpersonal skills, managing emotions, and building positive learning environments through collaborative learning and mentorship programmes.

5. KEY INSIGHTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1 UPSKILLING STUDENTS & TEACHERS WITH EMOTION MANAGEMENT SKILLSETS

2 BUILDING POSITIVE PEER RELATIONS AMONG STUDENTS

3 UPSKILL TEACHERS WITH CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT & FACILITATION SKILLS

4 BUILDING SAFE LEARNING SPACES FOR STUDENTS & DEVELOP SELF WORTH AMONG STUDENTS

5 ADDRESSING SUBSTANCE ABUSE THROUGH LIFE SKILLS SESSIONS

6 STRATEGIES FOR PARENTS' ENGAGEMENT IN STUDENTS' HOLISTIC DEVELOPMENT

7 CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES FOR TEACHERS WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO STUDENTS' WELL-BEING

- **Anger management:** Equipping students with anger management strategies can help them express their unresolved anger in a healthy way. Teaching students effective ways to manage their emotions, such as deep breathing, mindfulness and self-reflection can help them express their anger and frustration in healthy ways (Gupta et al., 2019). Teachers can be trained in ways to provide a safe space for children and navigate emotions in the classroom.
- **Increasing attention span:** Creating a positive learning environment by establishing a rapport with students, using positive reinforcement; and creating a safe and inclusive classroom can help students feel more comfortable and engaged in the learning process (Karmarkar et al., 2020). Additionally, incorporating short movement breaks into the class to allow students to move around and release some energy. This can help students refocus and increase their attention span.
- **Building positive peer relations:** Conflict resolution skills can help students navigate conflicts with their peers in a respectful manner. This can help prevent conflicts from escalating and creating a more peaceful classroom environment. Social skills training can help students develop social awareness and interpersonal skills, such as empathy, active listening and effective communication (Gresham, 2016). This intervention can involve teaching students specific social skills and providing opportunities for them to practise these skills in a safe and supportive classroom environment.
- **Learning gap:** Emotional regulation strategies can help students cope with negative emotions and stress that may arise from learning gaps. This can involve teaching students specific strategies, such as cognitive reappraisal, relaxation techniques, and problem-solving skills.
- **Teachers** can be trained on ways to include **positive reinforcement** in the classroom to help students cope. This can help students feel valued and supported in the classroom, which can promote a

positive learning environment (Kelly and Pohl, 2018). This intervention can involve providing students with verbal praise, tangible rewards, or other forms of positive feedback for their academic achievements and efforts.

- **Encouraging student expression:** Students may struggle to express themselves because they lack the vocabulary to describe their emotions. The curriculum can teach emotional vocabulary by introducing new emotion words, talking about the meanings of these words, and encouraging students to use them in their own conversations. This can help students express their feelings and foster social skills in the classroom (Miller et al., 2005).
- **Equipping teachers with classroom management strategies:** Encouraging positive classroom management strategies instead of "showing the stick" can help teachers manage student behaviour. This can also promote positive teacher student relations as teachers help students manage their behaviour in a respectful manner (Sieberer-Nagler, 2016).
- **Reducing substance abuse and dropout:** Life skills interventions can promote interactive, decision-making, problem-solving, critical thinking and stress management skills and lead to more social acceptability, which in turn reduce drug abuse tendency (Moshki, Hassanzade and Taymoori, 2014)
- **Building self-worth:** Developing self-compassion and growth mindset skills in students can help them have a positive outlook on life (Klingle and Van Vliet, 2017). This can also help them feel more confident and capable of achieving their goals.
- **Fostering thriving:** Fostering thriving in students can promote higher levels of academic engagement, achievement, and motivation. It also inculcates meaningful relationships with peers, faculty and staff, which can provide a sense of belonging and social support. Additionally, students who are thriving may have a greater sense of purpose and direction, as well as greater resilience to challenges and setbacks (Cuevas et al., 2017).
- **Increased parent investment:** The curriculum can also include workshops for parents on how to support their children's social emotional development. These workshops can focus on topics such as effective communication, positive reinforcement and setting appropriate boundaries. This will help parents understand their children and support them better
- **Teacher training:** Continuous professional development of teachers through teacher training can promote wellbeing in the classroom. This can include building teacher empathy, effective communication skills and celebrating teachers in the classroom. Specific strategies can include deepening their understanding of child development and developing personal connections with young people by listening deeply and offering authentic validation (Ravindranath and Arumugham, 2020).

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