

Influencing Lifelong Leadership: The Role of Early Years Experiences and SEL

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ABSTRACT

This qualitative study investigates the lasting impact of early childhood experiences and Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) on lifelong development and leadership effectiveness. Through in-depth interviews with industry leaders from diverse sectors—law, business, IT, film production, and education—the research explores how SEL attributes cultivated in formative years contribute to essential leadership skills. Participants were selected using specific criteria to ensure a broad range of perspectives and experiences. Methodological rigor was ensured through triangulation and member checking to enhance validity and reliability of the findings. The primary objective is to examine the critical link between early childhood experiences, SEL, and leadership excellence sustained over time. A detailed methodological description, including participant selection criteria and an interview guide, is provided to ensure transparency and replicability. The findings are analyzed within broader theoretical frameworks and compared with existing literature, illustrating how they confirm, challenge, or expand prior research. Practical recommendations for educators, policymakers, and organizations are offered, emphasizing the importance of early experiences and SEL in fostering lifelong leadership development. This study contributes valuable insights and suggests directions for future research to further build on these findings.

Keywords: Social-Emotional Learning (SEL), Early Childhood Development, Leadership Skills, Formative Years, Lifelong Learning, Etiquette Learning

The evolving landscape of education and leadership research underscores the critical impact of early childhood experiences on lifelong development and leadership potential^{[20],[19]}. Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) has been shown to foster essential leadership skills such as communication, empathy, and decision-making^{[4],[10]}.

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However, a significant research gap exists in understanding how specific early SEL components, combined with various childhood variables, shape leadership attributes throughout life^[8]. This study is important for several reasons. First, it addresses the lack of clarity on which SEL components are most effective in nurturing leadership skills^[17].

Second, it seeks to explore the long-term impact of early SEL experiences on leadership capabilities and career trajectories, an area that has been under-explored^{[7],[21]}. By filling these gaps, this study aims to enhance educational practices, inform policy-making, and improve leadership development programs^{[2],[18]}.

Research Objective/Hypothesis

To explore how early experiences, particularly those emphasizing Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) principles, influence the development and application of core leadership qualities throughout an individual's lifespan, this qualitative study aims to investigate the impact of specific SEL components and early childhood variables on lifelong leadership development. Here are some key research questions:

1. **Influence of Early Experiences:** How do early experiences, including parenting styles, family dynamics, and SEL-focused school environments, contribute to the development of leadership qualities such as communication, empathy, resilience, and collaboration?^{[1],[4]}.
2. **Translation to Leadership Practices:** How do early SEL experiences translate into effective leadership practices that drive achievements across educational, professional, and leadership domains, and how do these practices evolve over time?^[8].
3. **Perception of Early Influences:** How do leaders across various industries perceive the impact of their early experiences with SEL principles on their current leadership practices?^[7].

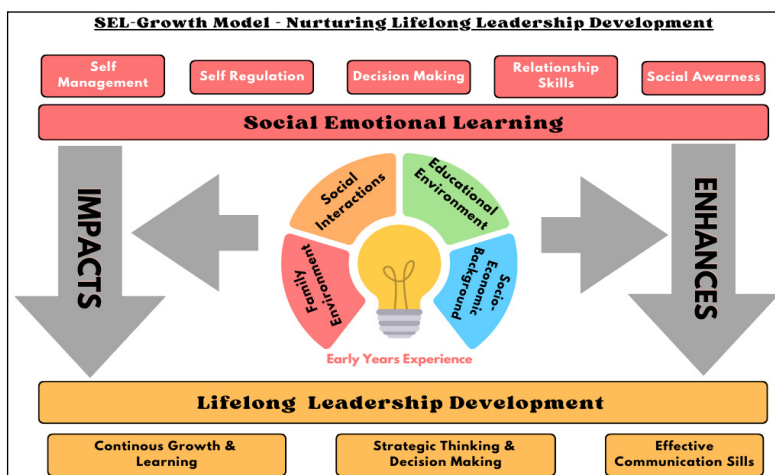


Fig. 1: This picture shows the framework of SEL and Leadership

Theoretical Framework: This study integrates Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) principles with leadership development theories. It suggests that early exposure to SEL—covering self-management, self-regulation, decision-making, relationship skills, and social awareness—forms a critical foundation for effective leadership^[6]. Self-management and self-regulation aid in emotional control^[5], decision-making

involves ethical choices, relationship skills enhance communication and conflict resolution, and social awareness fosters empathy^{[3],[19]}.

The framework connects these SEL components with transformational leadership (motivating and inspiring others) and servant leadership (focusing on individual growth)^[18]. This integration highlights how SEL nurtures leadership qualities such as empathy, ethical decision-making, and effective communication^[9].

Explanation of Variables

☐ Independent Variables:

- ⊙ **Social Interactions:** Shape social skills and emotional development^[10].
- ⊙ **Family Environment:** Influences early emotional and social growth^[7].
- ⊙ **Educational Environment:** Affects leadership qualities through SEL opportunities^[2].
- ⊙ **Socio-economic Background:** Impacts access to developmental resources^[13].

☐ Dependent Variables:

- ⊙ **Continuous Growth and Learning:** Ongoing personal and professional development^[15].
- ⊙ **Strategic Thinking and Decision-making:** Enhanced decision-making and problem-solving^[17].
- ⊙ **Effective Communication Skills:** Improved information exchange and collaboration^[16].

☐ Impacts (Left Arrow):

- ⊙ Continuous Growth and Learning
- ⊙ Strategic Thinking and Decision-making
- ⊙ Effective Communication Skills

☐ Enhances (Right Arrow):

- ⊙ **SEL:** Enhances lifelong leadership development and emotional well-being.

The framework and its variables collectively illustrate how early SEL experiences shape long-term leadership capabilities, emphasizing the interconnectedness of personal development and leadership excellence.

Research Design: A qualitative design was used, involving thematic analysis of semi-structured interviews with industry leaders from various fields and thematic analysis of relevant literature. Participants were selected for their leadership experience and diverse career stages to gain insights into how early SEL experiences influence their leadership development^[11]. The arrows in the framework represent the flow of influence: early SEL components impact leadership qualities (transformational and servant leadership), which in turn affect long-term leadership attributes such as empathy, decision-making, and communication skills^{[20],[19]}.

Research Methodology: The research methodology for this study focuses on examining the impact of early Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) experiences on lifelong leadership development^[9]. The

approach is qualitative, aiming to capture the depth and nuance of individuals' experiences with SEL and its influence on their leadership capabilities throughout their lives.

- ❑ **Interviews:** Detailed interviews with these leaders provided direct insights into their personal experiences and perspectives. These conversations were designed to uncover nuanced details about their early lives, educational journeys, and leadership development^[1].
- ❑ **Observations:** Observational data was collected from various public and professional settings where these leaders are active. This helped understand how their early experiences and educational backgrounds translate into their leadership styles and interactions^[12].
- ❑ **Deep Dive into Early Childhood:** A comprehensive analysis of each individual's early childhood experiences, including family influences, early education, and formative social interactions, was conducted. This aimed to reveal how these early factors shaped their socio-emotional development and leadership approaches^[4].
- ❑ **Educational Background:** Examination of educational pursuits provided insights into how academic experiences and mentorship played a role in their leadership formation. This included analyzing formal education, key mentors, and how these factors contributed to their professional success^{[13],[5]}.
- ❑ **Socio-Emotional Development:** The study delved into the socio-emotional aspects of their upbringing, including how they developed resilience, empathy, and other essential traits^{[6],[18]}. This involved looking at personal narratives and early life challenges to understand how these shaped their leadership capabilities.
- ❑ **Leadership Philosophies and Achievements:** The final aspect of the research involved analyzing their leadership philosophies and major achievements to identify how early experiences and socio-emotional development influenced their leadership styles and successes in their respective fields^{[19],[8]}.

LITERATURE REVIEW

1. CASEL's Core Competencies (Durlak *et al.* 2011; Jones & Bouffard, 2012)

The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) defines five core SEL competencies: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making. These competencies are integral to holistic student development and academic success. CASEL's framework emphasizes that integrating SEL into educational curricula enhances students' emotional intelligence, interpersonal skills, and ethical decision-making abilities, which are foundational for leadership development.

2. Self-Awareness in Leadership (Brackett *et al.* 2009)

Self-awareness is crucial for both academic success and effective leadership. Students with strong self-awareness can better identify their strengths and areas for growth, leading to more purposeful learning. In leadership, self-aware individuals understand their impact on others, facilitating better decision-making

aligned with team goals and personal values (Kouzes & Posner, 2017).

3. Self-Management and Academic Achievement (Jones & Bouffard, 2012)

Self-management involves regulating emotions and behaviors to achieve goals, which correlates positively with academic performance. Improved self-regulation enhances focus, time management, and study habits. For leaders, these skills are vital for maintaining composure under pressure and setting a positive example for others (Goleman, 1995).

4. Social Awareness and Collaboration (Durlak *et al.* 2011)

Social awareness, which includes empathy and understanding diverse perspectives, is linked to better collaboration and group dynamics. In educational settings, students with high social awareness contribute to positive classroom interactions. Leaders who excel in social awareness build strong relationships and foster team cohesion (Boyatzis, 2008).

5. Relationship Skills and Leadership (Elias *et al.* 1997)

Effective relationship skills, such as communication and conflict resolution, enhance both academic and professional success. Students with strong relationship skills are better at seeking help and working collaboratively. In leadership, these skills are essential for building trust, motivating teams, and managing challenges (Kouzes & Posner, 2017).

6. Responsible Decision-making (Brackett *et al.* 2009)

Responsible decision-making involves making ethical choices that consider long-term consequences. This competency supports academic achievement by fostering better planning and goal attainment. Leaders with strong decision-making skills are seen as trustworthy and capable, integral traits for effective leadership (Gardner, 1995).

7. Early Childhood SEL Impact (Shonkoff & Phillips, 2000)

Early childhood experiences are critical for developing emotional regulation and social skills. Positive interactions and stimulating environments during this period significantly impact future success. Research indicates that early SEL exposure enhances leadership potential by fostering foundational emotional and social competencies (Heckman, 2006).

8. Socio-emotional Development and Leadership (Chantel, 2021; Samuelsson, 2008)

Early socio-emotional development, including skills like empathy and emotional regulation, is crucial for leadership. These skills support effective relationship-building and communication, essential for leadership success. Programs that focus on early socio-emotional skills contribute to better mental health and leadership capabilities (Samuelsson, 2008).

9. The Opportunity Project (Bakken, Brown & Downing, 2017)

The Opportunity Project (TOP) Early Learning Centers emphasizes high-quality early learning experiences

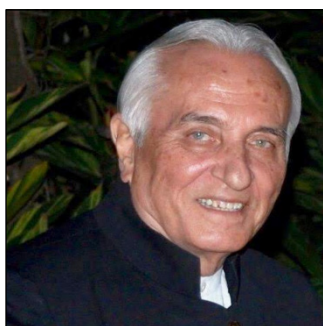
that support social, emotional, and academic growth. Evidence shows that children benefiting from such programs exhibit long-term success in school and personal development, underscoring the importance of early SEL interventions (Bakken *et al.* 2017).

10. SEL and Leadership Excellence (Goleman, 1998; Cherniss & Goleman, 2001)

Modern leadership demands strong emotional intelligence, including skills nurtured through SEL. Leaders with high SEL competencies are better at managing emotions, building relationships, and making informed decisions. Integrating SEL into leadership development helps cultivate leaders who excel in navigating complex interpersonal dynamics and inspiring teams (Boyatzis, 1982; Cherniss, 2001).

This review highlights the growing recognition of SEL's role in shaping effective leadership and the critical impact of early SEL experiences on long-term leadership potential. Further research is needed to explore how early SEL interventions can specifically influence leadership trajectories and effectiveness.

PARTICIPANTS' PROFILES



Lt. Gen. Arjun Ray: Education Leader, Soldier, and Social Reformer

Lt. Gen. Arjun Ray's early life was marked by the socio-political upheaval of the 1947 Hindu-Muslim riots, which instilled in him a profound sense of duty and resilience. Raised amidst these challenges, he developed essential attributes such as self-reliance, emotional intelligence, and empathy. His upbringing, influenced by his parents' emphasis on independence and creativity, laid a solid foundation for his future leadership roles.

His diverse educational experiences—from pre-primary schools in Khetri to St. Xavier's School and Rajasthan College—exposed him to varied cultural contexts, enhancing his social awareness and adaptability. These formative years not only shaped his worldview but also contributed to his development of key SEL competencies such as self-awareness and social skills.

Lt. Gen. Ray's leadership journey, particularly in launching Operation Sadbhavana, reflects the significant impact of his early socio-emotional development. His ability to navigate complex situations with empathy and compassion underscores the role of SEL in shaping effective leadership. His experiences with restrictive communication and exposure to diverse perspectives further enriched his leadership approach, emphasizing independent thinking and acceptance of diversity.

His career achievements, including strategic military roles and educational reforms through the Indus Trust, highlight the practical application of SEL principles. Lt. Gen. Ray's reflections on leadership emphasize the importance of vision, passion, and the development of leaders rather than followers, illustrating how SEL attributes cultivated in early life contribute to a leader's effectiveness and resilience throughout their career.

In summary, Lt. Gen. Arjun Ray's narrative demonstrates the enduring influence of early socio-emotional development on leadership. His life and career exemplify how SEL principles foster resilience, empathy, and effective leadership, making a significant contribution to understanding the intersection of SEL and leadership excellence.



Dr. Ramesh Aravind: Actor, Director, and Philanthropist

Dr. Ramesh Aravind's journey as a renowned Indian actor, filmmaker, and philanthropist is profoundly influenced by his formative years. Growing up in Tamil Nadu, India, he was shaped by his parents' positive attributes. His mother's patience, empathy, and kindness, coupled with his father's support for his unconventional career choice, significantly impacted his early development.

His homeschooling provided the freedom to explore interests without external pressures, fostering resilience and confidence. A pivotal moment during his early education, where his father reassured him about his difficulties with English,

instilled a lifelong attitude of fearlessness and self-belief.

Dr. Ramesh's leadership qualities were nurtured in an environment devoid of negativity, where integrity, discipline, and trust were emphasized. These influences are evident in his prolific career, including over 100 Kannada films and significant contributions to Tamil, Telugu, and Hindi cinema. His achievements, such as the national award-winning film "Hoomale" and his motivational speaking engagements, reflect his commitment to positive change.

Reflecting on his journey, Dr. Ramesh emphasizes commitment, lifelong learning, emotional balance, and positive thinking. His early experiences of independent decision-making and supportive parenting continue to influence his leadership style and success in the competitive film industry.

In conclusion, Dr. Ramesh Aravind's narrative highlights the enduring impact of early life experiences on personal and professional development. His transition from a supportive childhood to a successful career underscores the role of early socio-emotional learning in shaping effective leadership and lasting success.



Sajai Singh: Lawyer

Sajai Singh's career as an esteemed compliance lawyer and Chair of the IBA Technology Law Committee is deeply rooted in his early experiences. Raised in a Rajput family, Sajai was instilled with values of respect, honor, and integrity. An early display of discipline and propriety, such as refusing a toy offer, exemplifies the strong mannerisms and traditional values his upbringing emphasized.

His educational journey, marked by frequent relocations due to his father's military career, reflects a life of adaptability and exposure to diverse educational systems. From schools in Ajmer and Agra to higher education in Delhi and

Philadelphia, Sajai's academic path underscores his ability to thrive in varied environments and his commitment to continuous learning.

Sajai's early experiences of constant relocation honed his ability to adapt and seek opportunities within challenges. His parents' emphasis on integrity and his ability to recognize opportunities in adversity, developed through his childhood, are key components of his leadership style. These experiences fostered a readiness to embrace change and navigate new circumstances with confidence.

In leadership, Sajai's philosophy revolves around trust, integrity, and respect. His notable achievement as the first Asian on the Executive Committee of ITechLaw and his leadership at JSA reflect his commitment to these values. His role in educating and mentoring young lawyers further demonstrates his dedication to nurturing future leaders in the legal field.

Sajai Singh's reflections on leadership emphasize the transformative power of trust and the impact of character. His efforts to educate clients and his innovative contributions to legal and technical domains highlight his global perspective and commitment to excellence.

In conclusion, Sajai Singh exemplifies a leader shaped by early experiences, adaptability, and unwavering values. His mantra, "Do your duty and leave the rest to the Universe," captures the essence of his approach to leadership and personal growth, illustrating the profound influence of his formative years on his professional journey.



Karishma Lalwani: Technology Leader, Investor, Innovator

Karishma Lalwani, a prominent technology leader, keynote speaker, and early startup investor, has a career spanning 17 years in software application design and development. Raised in a close-knit joint family in Mumbai, her early years were characterized by warmth, laughter, and a sense of security, instilling in her the value of creating lasting bonds—a principle she integrates into her personal and professional life.

Her educational path in Mumbai included St. Lawrence School, St. Louis Girls Convent School, Jai Hind College, and Thadomal Shahani Engineering College, culminating in a degree in Computer Engineering. After graduating

in 2005, she began her impactful career at Accenture Technology Services.

A defining moment in Karishma's early life occurred at age 3 when she exhibited remarkable observational skills and leadership. After a mishap with her school bus, she navigated her way home with the help of others, displaying both quick decision-making and compassion by sharing her lunch. This experience foreshadowed her future capabilities in leadership and teamwork. Her upbringing in a diverse family taught her teamwork, empathy, communication, and conflict resolution. These values have been central to her approach as a Senior Director of Product at Salesforce, where she leads teams with members often twice her age, demonstrating her extensive knowledge and authentic leadership. Karishma's career includes significant roles at Accenture, CapGemini, and over a decade at Salesforce. She has led digital transformation projects globally, filed four patents, and earned accolades such as being named Woman of the Month in June 2021 for her leadership during the Covid pandemic. Her advocacy for increasing women in tech underscores her commitment to gender diversity in STEM fields.

Her leadership philosophy is grounded in empathy and authenticity. Promoted to Senior Director at 35, Karishma leads by example, reflecting her technical expertise and dedication. Despite often being the only woman in her field, she remains resilient and determined, continuing to break barriers and inspire others.

In conclusion, Karishma Lalwani stands out as a trailblazer, merging social, spiritual, and family values with professional excellence. Her journey highlights the transformative impact of early experiences and values on shaping a leader's character and achievements. Karishma aspires to be a role model for young girls, demonstrating how to balance career and family life while pursuing one's dreams.



Suresh Sugavanam: Business Leader, Thought Leader, and Keynote Speaker

Suresh Sugavanam's early years were marked by frequent relocations due to his father's government job, instilling in him a sense of flexibility, adaptability, and resilience. Raised in a dynamic environment, he developed essential socio-emotional skills such as responsibility, adaptability, and a strong value system. His upbringing in a part-nuclear/part-joint family taught him to navigate diverse social settings and embrace change, which laid a foundation for his leadership qualities. Suresh's educational journey, including degrees from IIT Delhi, Chicago-Booth, and executive programs from institutions like Yale and MIT, reflects his commitment to lifelong learning and adaptability. His early experiences of adapting to new environments and the emphasis on education in his family influenced his approach to leadership and decision-making.

In his professional career, Suresh's achievements, including leading UL Solutions in South Asia and his role in the Testing, Inspection, and Certification (TIC) Council, highlight the practical application of the resilience and adaptability developed in his early years. His emphasis on integrity, positivity, and responsibility reflects the values instilled in him from a young age.

Suresh's leadership philosophy underscores the impact of early socio-emotional development on his approach to leadership. His career and contributions demonstrate how early experiences of adaptability and resilience can shape effective and grounded leadership, making a significant impact in the business and thought leadership arenas. In summary, Suresh Sugavanam's story illustrates the profound influence of early socio-emotional development on leadership. His career achievements and leadership approach reflect the enduring impact of early life experiences, showcasing how adaptability, resilience, and a strong value system contribute to effective leadership.

Findings and Interpretation

This analysis is grounded in qualitative research, focusing on an in-depth exploration of the life stories of five distinguished leaders. The research methodology employed includes a combination of in-depth interviews, observational insights, and a thorough examination of each individual's early childhood experiences, educational background, socio-emotional development, and leadership philosophies.

Selection of Participants: The participants were selected based on their notable leadership achievements and diverse backgrounds, providing a broad perspective on different pathways to leadership. Each individual was chosen for their unique contributions and the distinct experiences that shaped their leadership styles:

- ❑ **Sajai Singh:** Chosen for his significant role in technology law and leadership within the legal field. His early exposure to leadership roles and family support provides insights into how these factors contribute to leadership excellence.
- ❑ **Karishma Lalwani:** Selected for her impact in the tech industry and advocacy for women in technology. Her personal narrative of overcoming adversity and maternal influence highlights the role of early life challenges in shaping leadership approaches.

- ❑ **Suresh Sugavanam:** Included for his achievements in quality assurance and his educational background. His frequent relocations and adaptability offer a perspective on how diverse environments can influence leadership development.
- ❑ **Lt. Gen. Arjun Ray:** Chosen for his distinguished military career and leadership in various operations. His experiences during socio-political upheavals and military training provide insights into how early life experiences and socio-political contexts shape leadership.
- ❑ **Dr. Ramesh Aravind:** Selected for his accomplishments in the film industry and motivational speaking. His unique upbringing through homeschooling and supportive parental influence offer a perspective on how a nurturing environment and personal freedom contribute to leadership success.

Analysis of Individual Narratives

| Aspect | Sajai Singh | Karishma Lalwani | Suresh Sugavanam | Lt. Gen. Arjun Ray | Dr. Ramesh Aravind |
|-----------------------------|---|--|---|---|--|
| Early Childhood Experiences | Benefited from strong family support and early leadership roles, fostering resilience and ethical foundation. | Overcame adversity with significant maternal influence, shaping her leadership approach. | Adapted to frequent relocations, developing flexibility and resilience. | Influenced by socio-political upheavals and nurturing parents, instilling self-reliance and a strong sense of duty. | Benefited from positive parental influence and a nurturing environment, building lifelong confidence and resilience. |
| Educational Pursuits | Attended prestigious law school with guidance from influential mentors. | Studied Computer Engineering across multiple institutions, emphasizing adaptability and technical expertise. | Completed Chemical Engineering (IIT) and an MBA (Chicago-Booth), gaining diverse educational experiences. | Experienced varied schooling environments complementing military career and leadership development. | Received unique homeschooling education, allowing freedom to explore interests and develop a broad skill set. |
| Socio-Emotional Development | Developed resilience and integrity through Rajput traditions and family values. | Demonstrated early decision-making and leadership skills, supported by a nurturing family background. | Gained adaptability and flexibility from frequent school changes and diverse experiences. | Cultivated self-reliance and empathy through early military and family experiences. | Built lifelong confidence and resilience from supportive parental encouragement and a nurturing environment. |
| Leadership Philosophies | Emphasizes trust, integrity, and respect for everyone. | Advocates for empathy, authenticity, and inclusivity in leadership. | Values integrity, positivity, and responsibility as key leadership traits. | Prioritizes independent thinking and a secular, open-minded approach. | Focuses on integrity, discipline, and a positive mindset in leadership. |

| | | | | | |
|-----------------------------|---|--|--|---|--|
| Achievements and Milestones | Chair of IBA Technology Law Committee and JSA Co-Chair. | Senior Director at Salesforce, notable contributions to women in tech, and patent filings. | Managing Director at UL Solutions, influential in quality assurance. | Commanded 14th Corps in Ladakh, led Operation Sadbhavana, and is CEO/MD of Indus Trust. | Acclaimed actor with over 100 films, motivational speaker, and recipient of national awards. |
|-----------------------------|---|--|--|---|--|

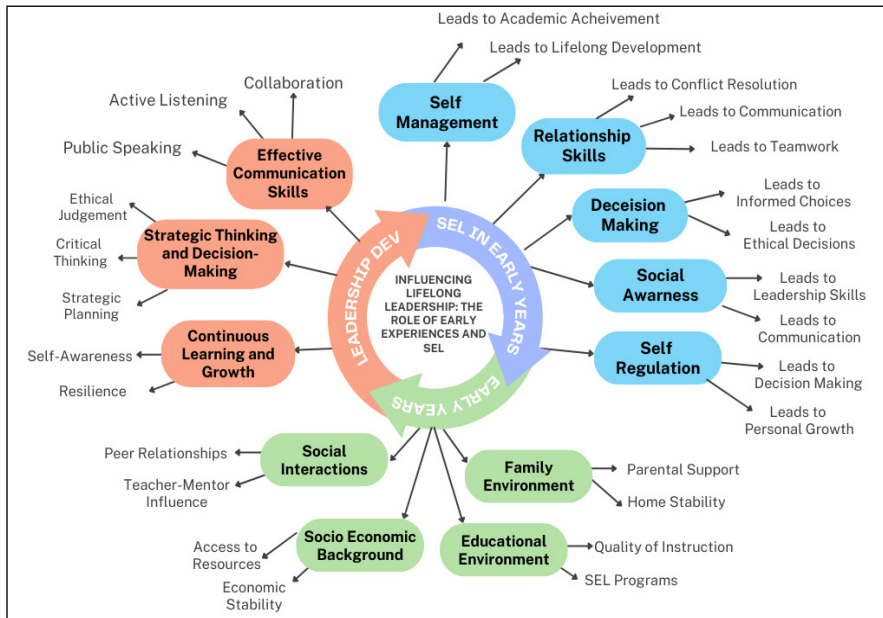


Fig. 2: Illustration of how early SEL components influence leadership development

Thematic Analysis and Interpretation

Thematic patterns from the study, illustrated in Fig. 2, show how early socio-emotional learning (SEL) components influence leadership development. These findings align with established research on the impact of early SEL experiences on leadership potential^{[1][4][8]}. The thematic analysis reveals key patterns in early experiences and their impact on leadership development:

- ❑ **Self-management:** Early development of self-management leads to academic achievement and lifelong personal and professional development. Leaders with strong self-management can effectively regulate their emotions and set examples for others, demonstrating composure under pressure (Goleman, 1995; Jones & Bouffard, 2012)^{[13][15]}.
- ❑ **Relationship Skills:** These skills facilitate conflict resolution, teamwork, and effective communication, which are essential for building trust and cohesion within teams. Leaders with well-developed relationship skills inspire confidence and respect (Elias *et al.* 1997; Boyatzis, 2008)^{[10][3]}.

- ❑ **Decision-making:** Involves making ethical choices and enhancing leadership capabilities. Leaders with strong decision-making skills are seen as trustworthy and capable, integral traits for effective leadership (Brackett *et al.* 2009; Gardner, 1995)^{[4][11]}.
- ❑ **Social Awareness:** Improves leadership skills and communication. Leaders with high social awareness build strong relationships and foster team cohesion (Durlak *et al.* 2011; Cherniss & Goleman, 2001)^{[8][6]}.
- ❑ **Self-Regulation:** Supports decision-making and personal growth. Effective self-regulation helps leaders maintain composure and make well-considered decisions (Brackett *et al.* 2009; Goleman, 1995)^{[4][13]}.

CONCLUSION

This research has revealed the significant connections between early experiences, Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) components, and leadership development. The findings highlight the lasting influence of early SEL experiences on leadership qualities and underscore the importance of integrating SEL principles across various domains^{[4],[10]}. For educational practices, embedding SEL into curricula is crucial for nurturing well-rounded leaders equipped with essential socio-emotional skills^{[2],[18]}. Policymakers should prioritize SEL in educational policies to support holistic development from early childhood^{[17],[21]}. Parents play a pivotal role by instilling values and life skills that shape leadership potential^{[8],[7]}. Organizations can enhance leadership development programs by fostering inclusive environments that promote innovation and collaboration, acknowledging the enduring impact of early experiences^{[18],[19]}. Future research should focus on longitudinal studies to assess the sustained impact of SEL, cross-cultural studies to explore diverse cultural influences, and the integration of SEL into professional development programs to understand ongoing leadership development^{[7],[21]}. In summary, this research provides a comprehensive understanding of how early experiences and SEL contribute to leadership development. It offers valuable insights for educational reforms, parenting strategies, and organizational practices, demonstrating the transformative potential of early SEL experiences in shaping future leaders capable of navigating complex challenges^{[4],[10]}.

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