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The Benefits of Teachers' Workshops on Their Social and Emotional Intelligence in Four Countries

Markus Talvio, Minna Berg, Topi Litmanen, Kirsti Lonka

Department of Teacher Education, University of Helsinki, Helsinki, Finland
Email: markus.talvio@helsinki.fi

Abstract

Implementing 21st century skills at school, including social and emotional learning (SEL), has become increasingly important in many countries. The present study investigated in four countries the development of teachers' SEL, through which people develop their social and emotional intelligence, by using internationally widely-used Lions Quest (LQ) teacher workshops as an intervention. Possible changes in teachers' attitudes, values, knowledge, and skills during the LQ were explored. An exploratory factor analysis was conducted using data from the pre-test responses of two countries. This analysis produced three factors. The created factor structure was further confirmed using pre-test data from another two countries. Repeated measures ANOVA (GLM), giving its ability to perform overall comparisons in one step, and the specified follow-up comparisons were used to examine the gain scores between and within groups, and to statistically control for some characteristics. The results showed that the teachers perceived the importance of the LQ goals as more important after participating in the LQ teachers' workshop. In addition, they felt more competence in implementing the LQ content in their classrooms. Further, teachers valued the LQ higher after the workshop. In the comparison group, however, no changes were found. In conclusion, LQ appears to fulfill the expectations of supporting teachers in implementing LQ content, including 21st skills and SEL, in the classroom.

Keywords

Social and Emotional Learning (SEL), Continuing Teacher Training, Lions Quest, Intervention, 21st Century Skills

1. Introduction

During the last few years, the use of technology in learning has grown rapidly all over

the world. Contrary to the common opinion, the need for group skills and social interaction skills increases during the wave of digitalization. Pedagogically effective use of modern technology in schools takes place when pupils, for example, create and evaluate knowledge together in various kinds of groups (European Parliament, 2015; World Economic Forum, 2015). In these shared learning situations, social interaction skills, for example, expressing oneself clearly, listening, and solving problems effectively help the members of a group to work together and reach their goal. In addition, social and emotional learning (SEL), through which social and emotional competence and intelligence are developed (Elias et al., 1997), increases motivation and the sense of participation and autonomy relevant for learning and overall wellbeing of individuals (Leroy, Bressoux, Sarrazin, & Trouilloud, 2007). Since it is also known, however, that the best technology users suffer from the lack of enjoyment and enthusiasm at school (Li, Hietajärvi, Palonen, Salmela-Aro, & Hakkarainen, 2016), it is pedagogically reasonable that the current education focuses on SEL and overall well-being.

Not only digital change in education will affect our future, but also work itself will become more fragmented, less centralized, and based on short projects with larger groups of employees in different settings (Davies & Fidler, 2011; Khallash & Kruse, 2012; Watson, Buchanan, Campbell, & Briggs, 2003). In addition, Avolio, Walumbwa, and Weber (2009) stated that distributed and shared management as well as e-leadership will become more common in the future. In order to prepare workforces for the future, the concept of 21st century skills, including elements of SEL, was presented (Trilling & Fadel, 2009). In 2015, the World Economic Forum published a report regarding education defining those 21st century crucial abilities, and labeling them either competencies, such as collaboration, communication, critical thinking, and problem-solving, or character qualities such as social and cultural awareness, curiosity, and adaptability (World Economic Forum, 2015). Thus, 21st century skills and social and emotional intelligence seem to be at least partly connected with each other.

In education policy, implementing the 21st century skills and SEL has become increasingly important in many countries. For example, in the United States, lawmakers have recently introduced several bills to the House of Representatives for changing the federal education policy to promote SEL (Davis, 2015; Lewis, 2015; Ryan, 2015). In Finland, the reform of the national core curriculum for comprehensive schools emphasizes more social interaction skills and group skills than before (*Peruskoulun opetussuunnitelman perusteet 2014*, 2016). A similar trend can be found also in many other European countries, and, for example, in Australia, Canada and Singapore (Humphrey, 2013). Thus, as Humphrey (2013: p. 4) states, "SEL has perhaps become the dominant orthodoxy in education worldwide."

The intention of the present study was to investigate in four countries the change in teachers' readiness to promote SEL and 21st century skills during an international teacher workshop, Lions Quest.

1.1. What Is Social and Emotional Learning (SEL)?

Social and emotional learning (SEL) is a process through which people develop skills,

attitudes, and values necessary to gain the ability to understand, manage, and express social and emotional aspects of one's life in ways that enable, for example, successful learning, forming relationships, and solving problems (Elias et al., 1997). The SEL concept includes five aspects, namely, self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making (Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning, 2016). Even though SEL is mostly focused on supporting positive growth and drug-use prevention among young people and children, social and emotional intelligence can be developed throughout life.

There is a growing body of literature concerning the benefits of SEL for pupils. In the review of 213 articles, Durlak et al. (2011) concluded that the SEL programs produced significant positive effects regarding self, others, and school. They developed students' prosocial behavior, decreased behavioral problems, and improved students' academic performance. Generally, the results of the benefits of studying SEL for students are similar in many other studies (Brock, Nishida, Chiong, Grimm, & Rimm-Kaufman, 2008; Durlak & Wells, 1997; Greenberg et al., 2003; Jiménez Morales & López Zafra, 2013; Wells, Barlow, & Stewart-Brown, 2003; Zins, Weissberg, Wang, & Walberg, 2004; Zins & Elias, 2006; Zins, Payton, Weissberg, & O'Brien, 2007).

In order to succeed in promoting SEL in classrooms, the implementing process of the SEL programs is central. Humphrey (2013) presents different elements of the implementation. The program itself can be easily implemented, as long as the instructor's manual is executable and applicable, including theory and assignments that engage the participants with the intervention. However, the way the instructor is trained is crucial, because the extent of how faithfully the principles and activities are replicated, how much of the content is delivered, and how effectively the students' other studies and background are considered, are dependent on the competence of the program's instructor. In addition, it is known that teachers without training in SEL are not always socially and emotionally competent (Talvio, Lonka, Komulainen, Kuusela, & Lintunen, 2013, 2015). Therefore, the Collaborative Academic, Social and Emotion Learning (CASEL) organization recommends only those SEL programs that include implementation support, such as initial training and ongoing support for the instructors (CASEL, 2013). It is thus important that the implementer is well prepared before starting the conducting process.

Naturally, it is important that the workshop gives practical tips for implementing the program for teachers. However, their attitude and sense of competence in promoting SEL is dominant. This is important especially in the case of SEL, because it does not have a similar status at school as other subjects, for example, math or history. SEL is typically taught during other lessons as an additional content. In addition, SEL is seldom formally and systematically assessed at school. The quality and quantity of implementing SEL is thus usually dependent on teachers.

Even though Göksoy (2014) found that pre-service teachers consider the training in SEL as important, there are teachers who choose not to attend training. It is possible that they feel themselves competent enough for teaching SEL without additional train-

ing, which is why they do not invest time on improving their skills. However, some teachers who do not attend training might find the SEL content worthless and the training useless. Therefore, it is imperative to look at what motivates teachers to participate in training.

1.2. What Motivates Teachers to Study SEL? Some Theoretical Aspects

We suggest that teachers' values and expectations play an important role in participating in continuing training. Further, such values and expectancies may change during successful training. Expectancy value theory (Eccles & Wigfield, 2002; Wigfield & Eccles, 2000) gives one interesting theoretical framework about the effects on the outcomes of SEL training. According to it, individuals choose tasks based on their expectancies and beliefs of their own performance related to the task. In addition, an individual's perceptions of the value and importance of the task has an effect on their choices of tasks, and also affects their resiliency. Accordingly, if they find the task, such as teaching SEL, valuable and feel they will succeed in teaching it, they are more likely to choose to start teaching it, and less likely to give up easily if problems arise. During training, the benefits and importance of training may become clearer to the teachers. Their personal interest may deepen (Hidi & Renninger, 2006), and they may become increasingly enthusiastic in implementing SEL in their classrooms.

Also, teachers' readiness to change (Prochaska, Norcross, & DiClemente, 1994) may play a role. This concept provides an interesting point of view to understanding teachers' thinking about their participation in the workshop. According to it, teachers who attend the workshop are at a higher stage of their readiness to change compared with those who remain at home. At the lowest, in other words, the precontemplation stage, the person has probably not even recognized the problem or a need to attend training. Those who come to the workshop are at a higher, typically at the preparation stage. They have recognized their need to improve their knowledge and skills, leading them to look for the workshop and then continue to an even higher, or the action stage, and attend it. Finally, attending the workshop may further result in proceeding to the maintenance stage, where the SEL is implemented in the classroom as part of the teachers' job (Prochaska et al., 1994).

Even though it might be impossible to get every teacher to become interested in SEL, it is important that the continuous training teachers attend supports their readiness to change. Hence, if the occurred change was focused on teachers' values and attitudes towards and their perceived competence in the studied content, it can be concluded that the workshop has reached its goal, as teachers are more ready to implement SEL in their classroom.

According to the *Self-Determination Theory* (SDT), sense of relatedness, autonomy, and a feeling of competence are factors that create motivation, as well as commitment to schoolwork (Niemiec & Ryan, 2009). The sense of competence may not be the same as true competence. Teachers' unrealistic beliefs about their competences may hinder them from participating. However, during training teachers may develop more realistic

sense of competence, the skills needed to promote SEL in their classroom.

The present study focuses on investigating how teachers' perception of the importance of, and their sense of competence related to promoting social and emotional learning in the classroom change during their participation in the Lions Quest (LQ) teachers' workshop on SEL and overall well-being.

1.3. What Are the Lions Quest Goals for Students?

Lions Quest (LQ) is an international SEL program that, according to the LQ website, is now available in 90 countries (Lions Quest, 2015). The program has been in use for 25 years, and more than 13 million pupils have participated in LQ, with more than half a million teachers implementing LQ in their classrooms (Lions Quest, 2015). To maintain the quality of LQ, teachers must participate in the LQ teacher workshop that provides the tools necessary to apply LQ to work settings. The goals of the LQ for students have grown to aim at promoting well-being, by supporting positive youth development in school settings through *health promotion*, *strengthening SEL*, and *giving emphasis to service*. In addition to studying SEL skills in the classroom, LQ promotes the *creation of a safe learning environment*.

Promoting health and *strengthening SEL* are rooted in the historical aspects of the LQ-program, as it started out as a drug and alcohol abuse prevention program (see Talvio & Lonka, 2013). In promoting health, SEL also plays a critical role by means of seeking to promote pupils' self-esteem. According to Mann, Hosman, Schaalma, and Vries (2004), self-esteem is related to better health and social behavior, whereas poor self-esteem is related to a broad range of mental disorders, as well as social problems and substance abuse.

A *safe learning environment* can be promoted by using and strengthening SEL in the classroom. For example, listening skills, giving feedback in a constructive way, and skills in making responsible decisions help students and the teachers to develop a better learning environment (Durlak et al., 2011; Elias et al., 1997; Talvio, 2014). In addition, by encouraging the maintenance of solid connections with pupils' families and networks beyond school and the entire school community, positive school climate will be maintained. According to Elias et al. (1997), students, parents, and school staff are together responsible for promoting positive school climate and SEL.

Service learning is a widely-used educational approach that connects community service to classroom learning, by giving students volunteer placements in community organizations. Students have intentional learning goals, and they reflect actively on what they are learning throughout the experience (Hébert & Hauf, 2015; Levesque-Bristol, Knapp, & Fisher, 2010). During the service learning, the students are taught responsible decision-making as well as social awareness, both of which are elements for strengthening SEL. Thus, promoting service learning in school settings also aims at supporting students' mental health. Martela & Ryan (2015) postulated yet another dimension of SDT, namely, prosocial acts. Such acts can be defined as externally non-rewarding, but are nevertheless frequently executed, because they feel good in a direct

sense and add to a sense of wellness. They also suggested that benevolent acts may be associated with basic psychological satisfactions, which when realized lead to increased sense of well-being (Martela & Ryan, 2015).

Hence, all the different LQ goals aiming to increase well-being can theoretically be seen as quite well-connected with each other. The primary aim of this study was to look at the development of teachers' perceptions of the importance of LQ goals, and their experienced competence in promoting the different LQ goals. However, in order to look at the quality of the LQ, we also investigated the participants' perceived coherence of the LQ goals, because, according to Seidel, Rimmele & Prenzel (2005), the coherence and clarity of the goals results in positive competence development during the training.

Even though there is a growing body of research available about the benefits of SEL, to our knowledge, recent international studies about the benefits of LQ for students or teachers are quite rare. Gol-Guven (2016) explored the effectiveness of the LQ. The participants were 397 students from four schools where the research employed a quasi-experimental design with a control group. Observations, interviews, and questionnaires were used for data collection. Data were collected from both students and teachers, in order to investigate the effects of the program on school climate, students' behaviors, students' perceptions of school, and students' conflict resolution skills. The study indicated a positive effect of LQ on school climate, students' behaviors, and conflict resolution skills, but did not have any significant effect on students' perceptions of school (Gol-Guven, 2016).

Eisen, Zellman, Massat and Murray (2002) investigated the effectiveness of LQ as a drug education program. They collected the first data from 6239 participants after one year of completing the LQ. Recent cigarette smoking was significantly lower for LQ participants than for controls, as was lifetime marijuana use. After two years of completing the LQ program, they collected the data again from the same participants, altogether from 5691 eight-graders (Eisen, Zellman, & Murray, 2003). Two significant treatment main effects, lifetime and recent marijuana use, were lower in LQ than control schools, with pretest usage and salient demographic and psychosocial variables controlled. The studies showed the effectiveness of the LQ program in health promotion.

We studied the teachers' readiness to promote LQ and the development of participants' perceived coherence of LQ goals achieved through the LQ program in Finland. In addition, we looked at the qualitative change in teachers' knowledge and applied knowledge during LQ. Altogether, 153 teachers participated in LQ, and 105 teachers comprised a comparison group not attending LQ. The data from the intervention group were collected before and after the LQ teacher workshops, and the data from the comparison group at approximately the same time. Teachers participating in LQ rated the goals as more important and relevant after receiving training, and they felt more competent in skills related to the LQ goals than the teachers not attending LQ (Talvio, Berg, Ketonen, Komulainen, & Lonka, 2015). The LQ intervention resulted in a significantly increased coherence in the 'safe environment' and 'promoting SEL' variable pairs

among training participants compared with the comparison group. Participating in the LQ training did not, however, increase the coherence significantly with regard to the "help others" or "healthy life" variable pairs compared with the comparison group (Talvio, Berg, Komulainen, & Lonka, 2016). In the qualitative study, the answers of the open-ended questions were analyzed, and the categories were established based on both theory and data. After the training, the participants showed more knowledge of the topics taught, and were also more capable of applying their knowledge to typical situations related to the teaching profession (Berg, Talvio, & Lonka, 2015).

2. Method

2.1. Participants and Procedures

The participants of the present study were 940 teachers from Finland (n = 232), Italy (n = 202), Japan (n = 304), and Lithuania (n = 202). Of the participants 89% were female and 11% male. Most participants were classroom teachers (37%) or subject teachers (29%), both classroom and subject teachers (10%) or special education teachers (10%), while the other professions, such as principals, assistants, and members of the school health service staff represented a smaller group (14%) of professionals in the present study.

The length of the LQ workshop varied depending on the country between two and two and a half days. In spite of the difference in duration, the content of the workshop was quite similar in each participating country. However, some minor cultural differences, such as narratives used in the training, existed.

The intervention group consisted of 528 teachers who participated in the Lions Quest teaching workshop. The questionnaire was completed twice, immediately before and again after the workshop. Altogether 412 teachers in the comparison group did not participate in LQ teacher workshop, and they were selected from schools in which no-one took part in the LQ training during the time measurements were carried out. They, too, completed the questionnaire twice, at approximately the same time as the intervention group (Table 1).

2.2. Ethical Considerations

The teachers participating in the present study were informed about measures taken to protect their privacy, and were assured of their information and responses remaining anonymous. They were also informed about their right to withdraw their responses from this study at any time without advance warning or explanation. However, none of the participants asked for their answers to be removed from the data.

2.3. Measures

The LQ inquiry consisted of two components, namely, how teachers perceived the significance of the goals, and their experienced competence in promoting the LQ goals. They evaluated 24 statements developed using a seven-point Likert scale, with response options ranging from "totally disagree" (1) to "totally agree" (7) or "not at all important"

Table 1. Characteristics of the participants.

	Finland		Japan		Lithuania		Italy		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Intervention group	166	72	157	52	101	50	104	52	528	56
Comparison group	66	38	147	48	101	50	98	48	412	44
Total	232	100	304	100	202	100	202	100	940	100
Male	32	14	134	44	11	5	15	7	192	20
Female	200	86	163	54	191	95	185	92	739	79
No information	0	0	7	2	0	0	2	1	12	1
Total	232	100	304	100	202	100	202	100	940	100
Class teachers	94	41	165	55	18	9	76	38	353	38
Subject teachers	54	23	68	22	58	30	73	37	253	27
Special teachers	41	18	20	7	15	8	31	16	107	11
Others	43	18	51	16	111	53	22	9	227	24
Total	232	100	304	100	202	100	202	100	940	100

(1) to "very important" (7). Examples of statements used to measure participants' perceptions of the importance of LQ included "It is the teacher's duty to teach interactive skills such as listening and conversation skills classroom" and "It is the teacher's duty to teach emotional skills such as self-control". We investigated teachers' opinions of their competence in promoting the LQ goals using statements such as "I am very skilled at teaching interactive skills, such as listening and conversation skills" and "I am very skilled at teaching emotional skills, such as self-control". In addition, the LQ questionnaire consisted of five statements regarding teachers' perceived task value. We used statements such as "The course had significance to my work as an educator" and they were evaluated using a seven-point Likert scale where response options ranged from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree".

The questionnaire was translated into the participants' mother tongue. Back-translation was used in order to maintain high quality of the translation of the questionnaire. A translator blind to the original questionnaire was asked to translate the questions back into the original language. The back-translation was then compared with the original questionnaire, and any differences were explored; when needed, questions were rewritten.

2.4. Data Analysis

The data analysis was performed in two phases. First, the structure and reliability of the used measurement was evaluated using a combination of exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis. Second, using the obtained structure, outcomes of the LQ workshops were analyzed with repeated measures ANOVA (GLM).

The exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was conducted using Maximum Likelihood

extraction method with Varimax rotation. For the CFA, three different fit indices were used: the Comparative Fit Index (CFI), the Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI) and the Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA), as suggested by Schreiber et al. (2006). For CFI and TLI, values greater than 0.90 are associated with an acceptable fit, and values greater than 0.95 with a well-fitting model. RMSEA values of 0.05 or less indicate a good fit, whereas values smaller than 0.08 are still indicative of an acceptable fit. Exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses were conducted with different subsets of the data. Reliabilities were measured using Cronbach's alpha.

Repeated measures ANOVA (GLM) was used to examine the gain scores between and within groups and to statistically control for some characteristics, given its ability to perform overall comparisons and the specified follow-up comparisons in one step. Effect sizes were measured using partial eta squared (ηp^2). Values of 0.01, 0.06 and 0.14 were interpreted as small, medium, and large, respectively. Amos and SPSS 23 were used in the statistical investigations.

3. Results

3.1. Factor Analysis

The exploratory factor analysis was conducted using the combined data from the pre-test responses from Japan (n = 304) and Lithuania (n = 202). This analysis produced three factors describing (1) Participants' perceived importance of LQ goals, (2) Participants' perceived competence towards implementing LQ goals, and (3) Task value. Three items were omitted from analysis because they did not load on any factors. The factor structure is illustrated in Figure 1.

The created factor structure was further tested with a CFA using pre-test data from Italy (n = 202) and Finland (n = 232). Initial fit indices for the three factor model were CFI = 0.894; TLI = 0.881 and RMSEA = 0.072, (90% CI =0.066 - 0.079) representing a modest fit. After adding additional covariates as illustrated in Figure 1, an acceptable fit was achieved (CFI = 0.922, TLI = 0.907, RMSEA = 0.064, 90% CI = 0.057 - 0.071). This structure was further confirmed with the post-measurement data resulting in a satisfactory fit (CFI = 0.910, TLI = 0.890, RMSEA = 0.064, 90% CI = 0.060 - 0.068).

Reliabilities for the three factors were good as measured with Cronbach's alpha. Participants' perceived importance of LQ goals (α pretest = 0.89; α posttest = 0.93), Participants' perceived competence towards implementing LQ goals (α pretest = 0.92; α posttest = 0.92), and Task value (α pretest = 0.80; α posttest = 0.90) all reflected good reliability.

3.2. Differences between Intervention and Comparison Groups

Table 2 shows that the mean values for the post-test scores were higher than the pre-test scores for all variables measured among the intervention group. Among the comparison group, however, the mean values of the post-test scores were lower at the second measuring point. When controlling for the possible effects of gender, country, job title, and years of experience, no influence was carried on other variables. Next, we

will summarize the gain scores analyzing differences in changes between the intervention group and the comparison group. After that, we will look at the differences between groups at the first and second measurement points. Finally, will we report the changes between the measurement points for both groups.
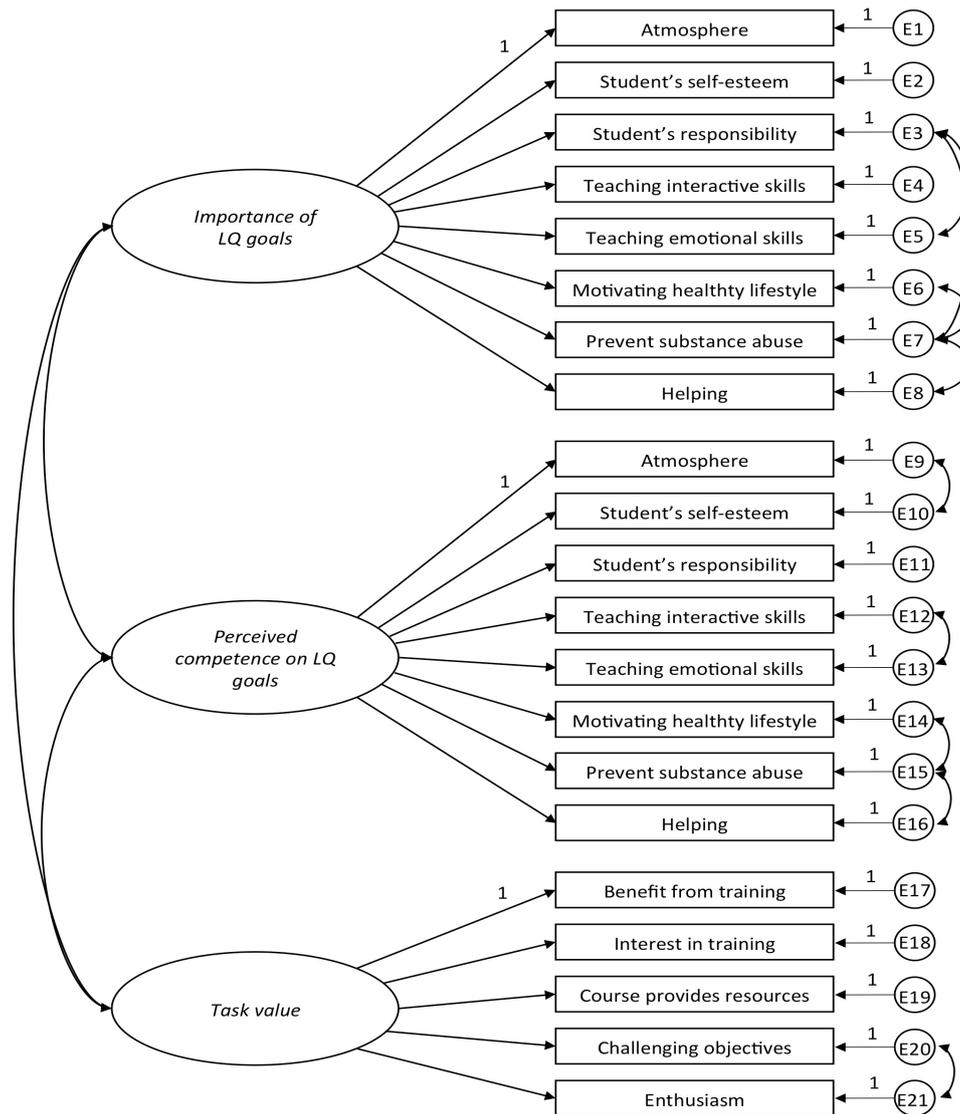

Figure 1. Factor structure for the three-factor model measuring participants' experiences of importance, perceived competence, and task value concerning the Lions Quest goals.

Table 2. Means and standard deviations of the variable.

	Importance M (*SD*)		Competence M (*SD*)		Task value M (*SD*)	
	t^1	t^2	t^1	t^2	t^1	t^2
Intervention group	6.34 (0.62)	6.59 (0.51)	4.69 (1.10)	5.23 (1.02)	5.38 (1.08)	6.16 (0.71)
Comparison group	6.23 (0.74)	6.12 (0.82)	4.94 (1.06)	4.94 (1.03)	4.40 (1.39)	4.40 (1.34)

Note: t^1 = first measurement, t^2 = second measurement.

3.3. Participants' Perceived Importance of LQ Goals

Figure 2 shows that in the intervention group, the perceived importance increased, whereas in the comparison group, it remained the same. The gain scores between groups differed significantly ($p < 0.001$, $\eta p^2 = 0.099$). The between-groups difference was already significant in the pretest ($p < 0.05$, $\eta p^2 = 0.006$), and the difference increased in the post-test scores ($p < 0.001$, $\eta p^2 = 0.107$). The development during LQ among the intervention group was significant ($p < 0.001$, $\eta p^2 = 0.107$). Among the comparison group, the development between the two measurements was also significant ($p = 0.001$, $\eta p^2 = 0.018$), however, in the negative direction.

3.4. Participants' Perceived Competence in Implementing LQ Goals

Figure 3 shows that the mean values for the participants' perceived competence in implementing LQ goals improved among the intervention group, whereas among the comparison group, the mean values remained the same. The gains differed significantly ($p < 0.001$, $\eta p^2 = 0.106$). The difference was significant in the first measurement point ($p < 0.01$, $\eta p^2 = 0.012$), where the intervention group scored lower than the comparison group. In the second measurement point ($p < 0.001$, $\eta p^2 = 0.019$), the difference between the intervention group and the comparison group was significant, but now the mean value of the intervention group was significantly higher than the mean value of the comparison group. Accordingly, the development of the intervention group during the LQ was significant ($p < 0.001$, $\eta p^2 = 0.219$), while among the comparison group, no significant change ($p = 0.83$, $\eta p^2 = 0.000$) between the two measurement points was detected (Figure 3).

3.5. Participants' Perceptions of the Task Value

Figure 4 shows that the task value was much higher in the intervention group already
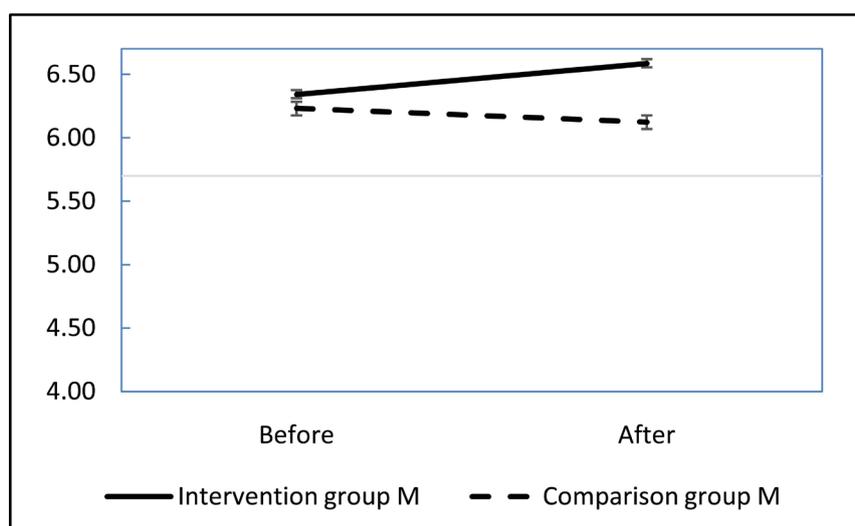

Figure 2. Mean and 95% CI values of the participants' perceived importance of LQ goals between pre- and post-test scores. The y-axis scale only includes values falling between 4.00 - 6.50.
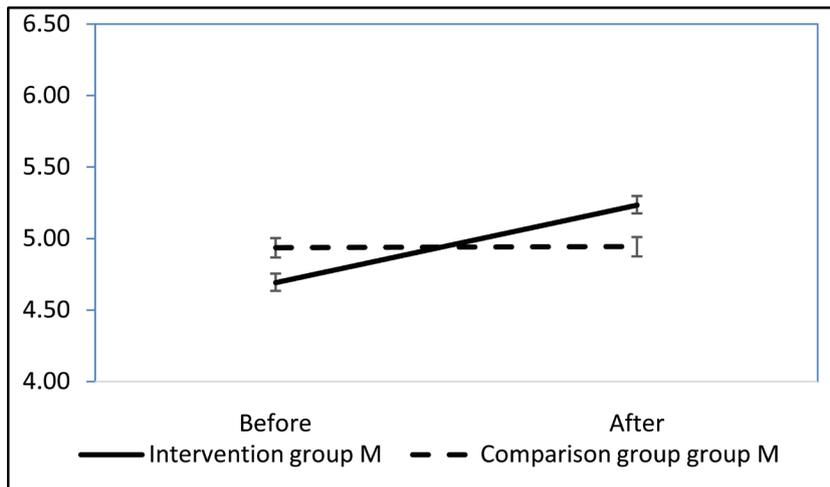
Figure 3. Mean and 95% CI values of the participants' perceived competence towards implementing LQ goals between pre- and post-test scores. The y-axis scale only includes values falling between 4.00 - 6.50.
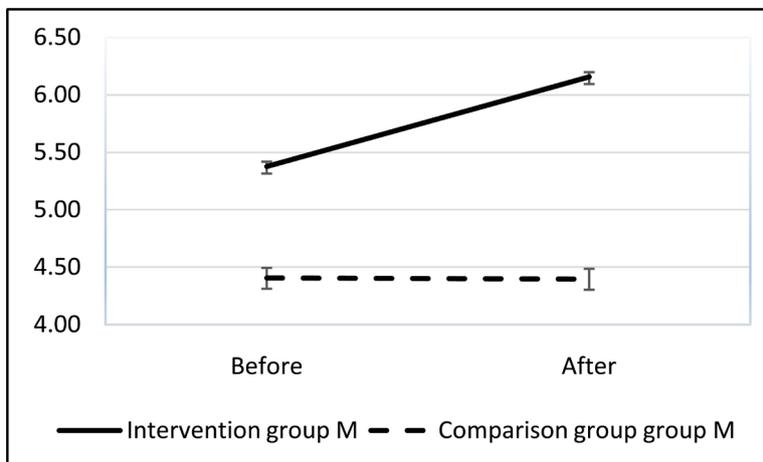

Figure 4. Mean and 95% CI values of the participants' task value between pre- and post-test scores. The y-axis scale only includes values falling between 4.00 - 6.50.

in the beginning. Further, the task value increased in the intervention group, but remained the same in the comparison group. The gain scores of the task value between the intervention group and the comparison group differed significantly ($p < 0.001$, $\eta p^2 = 0.136$), showing different development of the groups between the two measurements. The difference was significant at both the first measurement point ($p < 0.001$, $\eta p^2 = 0.135$) and the second measurement point ($p < 0.001$, $\eta p^2 = 0.419$). In the intervention group, the difference of the mean values during LQ was significant ($p < 0.001$, $\eta p^2 = 0.266$), while among the comparison group, no statistical difference in the mean scores was found between the two measurement points ($p = 0.86$, $\eta p^2 = 0.000$).

4. Discussion

Factor analysis showed that all the items loaded on three factors, namely, importance,

perceived competence, and task value. Since the items represented different goals of the LQ, the participants considered the LQ goals as different aspects of the same phenomenon. The high internal consistency of the factors showed that the measuring instrument used in this study was reliable. In addition, since the goals of the LQ teacher workshop were considered coherent, it can be concluded, in line with Seidel and others (2005) that the LQ workshops were of high quality, having an overall well-being or health promotion as an umbrella for the other goals.

The results showed that the teachers perceived the importance of the LQ goals as more important after participating in the LQ teachers' workshop. In addition, they felt more competent in implementing the LQ content in their classrooms. Further, teachers valued the LQ higher after the workshop. In the comparison group, however, no changes were found.

It was also interesting to find that in the first measurement, the teachers in the comparison group rated themselves as more competent in implementing LQ type of training than those who attended the workshop. In addition, the intervention group rated LQ type of training as more valuable prior to the LQ. It may be that those who attended LQ had recognized their incompetence, and were ready to invest their time by participating in the workshop and learning new knowledge and skills. Accordingly, they were in the higher stage of readiness to change than the comparison group. With contradictory perceptions, the comparison group with their directly opposite perceptions, did not come to the training, because they felt happy with their competence and did not perceive participating in the LQ type of training as valuable. Hence, their readiness to change was in the precontemplation stage (Prochaska et al., 1994), which may explain why they did not participate in the training.

It was also remarkable that the background variables had no influence on other variables. This result differs, in part, from our previous study in Finland, in which female teachers scored better in promoting students' SEL (Talvio et al., 2015). It was also surprising that although the countries, especially Japan, are culturally different from each other, they did not differ from each other with respect to the results of the present study. However, it may be that the LQ goals including health promotion and SEL are quite universal, and can be studied in a similar way anywhere. We also believe that the procedure of implementing the LQ in a new country works well. It produces for the local level good pioneer trainers who recognize the local differences and current topics of education. They constantly develop the program so it follows the original LQ curriculum, yet adopting it to the local culture and needs.

Since teachers found LQ goals more important and felt more competent in implementing the goals into practice after the training, it is likely that they would promote LQ in their classrooms, or at least, their readiness to implement LQ in their classrooms increased due to the course. However, implementing is not dependent only on teachers' attitudes and skills. According to Humphrey (2013), for example, school administration and its decisions also affect teachers' choices. It is possible that the teachers do not get the chance to apply LQ in their teaching, because of tight teaching and learning plans.

Accordingly, it cannot necessarily be concluded that the extent of implementing the content of the LQ in the classroom depends only on the quality of the teachers' workshop. The reader should bear in mind, however, that unlike, for example, math, LQ is not a subject studied weekly according to an official schedule, but as an extra content during any lesson. For the teachers, this results in the freedom to choose how much and how well they teach LQ in the classroom. If they are motivated and feel competent in teaching LQ to their students, they will find the ways to include the content of LQ in their teaching. This study showed that after LQ, the participants were more motivated and ready to implement LQ content in their teaching than before it. It can be concluded that LQ fulfills the expectation that it supports teachers in promoting LQ content in the classroom.

4.1. Future Visions

Importantly, the present study did not give us much detailed information about the differences in teachers' learning. In this study, we wanted to find out on a general level whether teachers in different countries benefit from SEL training that is not designed by local experts but is, rather, an imported application of an American concept. However, it would be interesting to investigate the differences between countries more in detail. Indeed, our next aim is to increment data collection by increasing the number of participating countries, and to use this information to perform more thorough analyses between the different countries.

It would also be interesting to follow these newly-trained teachers and investigate their ways of implementing the LQ in practice. The follow-up study would give us valuable information about the sustainability of teachers' perceptions regarding SEL and well-being.

4.2. Educational Implications

Social and emotional competence and competence in using technology parallel help students to prepare themselves for tomorrow's labor market. On the one hand, it is important to learn at school how to use technical tools and applications that are common at work. On the other hand, it is also important to utilize the potential information technology brings, such as the possibility to collaborate in various ways with people from different cultures, even from the other side of the globe. Bringing up digitally enabled workforce requires emphasizing social and emotional skills. In order to benefit from the overall global change in working life, it is important that students study SEL for the future.

In addition to SEL, all the LQ goals aim to prepare workforces for upcoming demands, because they all promote well-being among the students. In order to cope with challenges in the future, it is very important to be able to maintain the well-being of the workforce, not only for an individual's sake, but also for the sake of the whole society.

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