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Analysing the Social Skills and Problem Behavior of the Immigrant Learners

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ABSTRACT: *This research analysed the social skills and problem behavior of immigrant learners inside the classroom at L'enfant Roi Montessori Kindergarten. This study utilized a descriptive correlational design. It utilized an adopted survey questionnaire instrument. It was conducted at L'enfant Roi Montessori Kindergarten School, Elementary Department, located in Kirchberg Luxembourg. The respondents were 84 parents and 16 teachers, purposively selected, of the learners enrolled in kindergarten, who gave their analysation as to the social skills and problem behavior of the immigrant learners. The parent respondents were analysed in terms of the number of siblings, country of origin, educational attainment. The teacher respondent analysed the social skills and problem behavior of the immigrant learners. The data gathered were statistically treated using frequency count, simple percentage, weighted mean, and Pearson Correlation Coefficient (r). Findings revealed that the teacher's respondent analysed the social skills to the immigrant learners inside the classroom as 3.00, suggests that these issues have significantly happened sometimes. The teacher's respondent analysed the problem behavior to the immigrant learners inside the classroom as 2.46 suggests that these issues have rarely occurred to immigrant learners. There was a low positive correlation was found on the impact of social skills and problem behaviour on immigrant learners. This is hard to find constant dynamic nature of educational strategies highlights the need for ongoing adaptation to the varying needs and challenges encountered by learners. It is concluded that there were no relationship of social skills and problem behaviour were varied between the number of siblings, origin; and the education attainment of the parents, regarding the interventions in family, and teacher, highlighting the need to improved language course for learners and parent or after school program to better cope up the problem of immigrant in the new country. It is recommended that should be adopted to establish stronger communication channels between teachers and parents to address he educational challenges and formulate better and consistent interventions.*

Key words*: Immigrant, Luxembourg, L'enfant Roi Kindergarten, Problem Behavior, Social Skill.*

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1. Introduction

Migration is a key aspect of globalization, leading to classrooms around the world that are more diverse (Arak et al., 2019). Students who are immigrants face specific challenges as they adjust to new educational environments (Khanal & Gaulee, 2019; Alsahafi & Shin, 2019). These challenges include language problems, differences in culture, and changes in their social and emotional well-being (Can et al., 2021; Lee, 2021). For instance, these students bring valuable perspectives and experiences to the classroom, but they may also display unusual social tendencies and have difficulty integrating socially (Sadowski, 2021). It is essential for

educators, politicians, and psychologists who wish to create inclusive and successful learning environments to understand their social skills and problem (Bennouna et al., 2021).

According to Frey et al. (2019) the ability to communicate, collaborate, and regulate one's emotions are essential social skills that contribute to academic success and personal development. Nonetheless, immigrant students may encounter challenges in these skills due to cultural disparities, social isolation, or previous traumatic experiences (Santiago et al., 2021). Conversely, some youngsters may build resilience and adaptability, which can facilitate the improvement of their social skills. Identifying these distinctions facilitates the development of focused interventions that promote their social and intellectual advancement (Lopez-Aymes et al., 2020).

Moreover, when people are under stress, face prejudice, or have trouble adjusting to new standards, they may develop problem behaviors like violence, disengagement, or resistance (Trip et al., 2019). These habits can disrupt the learning process, cause interruptions in the classroom, and have an effect on relationships with classmates (Cicekci & Sadik, 2019). In addition, research shows that immigrant students' psychological well-being is affected by a number of factors, including acculturation stress, parental participation, peer interactions, and school support networks (Tulowiecka, 2024). Thus, educators need to come up with proactive remedies to troublesome behaviors when they understand the underlying causes of these behaviors.

This study aims to investigate the ways in which cultural adaptability, language proficiency, and school surroundings affect the social skills and problem behaviors of immigrant students. The study aims to provide insights that can be used to improve educational policy, teacher training programs, and psychological support mechanisms for immigrant children by identifying patterns in social integration and behavioral problems. It is essential to provide immigrant kids with adequate social and emotional support in a setting that is becoming more diverse. This is important for their academic success and overall well-being. We hope that this study will contribute to the development of a more inclusive and understanding educational system that acknowledges and supports the various needs of immigrant learners.

2. Review of Related Literature

Early childhood education and the development of children's cognitive, emotional, and behavioral abilities are greatly impacted by their social skills. Social skills such as self-regulation, empathy, communication, and cooperation are necessary for positive peer relationships and academic success (Gresham and Elliott, 2017). The social development of immigrant children is frequently impeded by language barriers, cultural differences, and prejudice (Suárez-Orozco et al., 2018). Immigrant kindergarteners could have trouble forming social relationships since they haven't had much experience with the language and culture of their new home (Pong & Zeiser, 2018). Some of these problems may manifest as a lack of confidence in social situations, a lack of interest in class, or an over-reliance on instructors. Additionally, immigrant kids are able to feel included and integrate through culturally responsive teaching and bilingual education initiatives (Garcia & Wei, 2019).

Immigrant students' problematic behavior is becoming an increasing topic for worry due to the impact it can have on both academic achievement and classroom relationships. According to Perreira and Ornelas (2017), immigrant children may exhibit unusual conduct as a result of acculturation, family separation, and socioeconomic disadvantages. Disengagement, aggression, hyperactivity, and disobedience are among symptoms that might stem from emotional distress or dissatisfaction (Motti-Stefanidi, 2018). Peer interactions and emotional regulation are two areas where children who struggle with social competency are more likely to exhibit problematic behaviors, according to research by Ladd and Troop-Gordon (2020). Furthermore, tackling these challenges requires an educational setting. According to Jung et al. (2019), immigrant kindergarteners exhibit fewer problem behaviors and show more social adaptation when there are positive teacher-student connections, culturally inclusive curricula, and peer mentoring programs. Early childhood education programs that aim to improve social and behavioral outcomes can be better developed if educators and legislators have a better grasp of these processes.

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Table 1. Highest Educational Attainment of the Parents Respondents.

Educational Attainment	Mother	Father	Total	%
Doctorate Graduate	20	21	41	24.40%
Doctor Unit	3	1	4	2.38%
Master Graduate	41	46	87	51.79%
Master Unit	5	1	6	3.57%
College Graduate	15	15	30	17.86%
College Level	0	0	0	0
Total	84	84	168	100%

3. Results and Discussion

The table shows the highest educational attainment of the parents of the immigrant kindergarten learners. Most of the parents have completed a master's degree, with 41 mothers and 46 fathers, making a total of 87 parents (51.79%). A smaller number of parents have finished a doctorate, with 20 mothers and 21 fathers, totaling 41 parents (24.40%). Some parents have taken doctorate-level courses without completing the degree (doctorate units), with only 4 parents (2.38%) in this category. Similarly, only 6 parents (3.57%) have taken some master's courses (master's units) without completing the degree. There are also 30 parents (17.86%) who have a college degree. Interestingly, no parents were reported to have only attended college without graduating (college level). These results suggest that most of the parents have a high level of education, with more than half holding a master's degree, which may positively influence their children's learning and development.

Table 2. Country of origin of the Parent-Respondents

Country of Origin	N	%
Italy	40	48%
Portugal	19	23%
Spain	11	13%
London	10	12%
Luxembourg	4	5%
Total	84	100%

The table presents the country of origin of the parent-respondents of the immigrant kindergarten learners. The majority of the parents come from Italy, with 40 parents (48%), making up nearly half of the respondents. Portugal is the second most common country of origin, with 19 parents (23%). Following this, Spain accounts for 11 parents (13%), while London represents 10 parents (12%). The least number of parents come from Luxembourg, with only 4 parents (5%). These findings indicate that the immigrant learners in the study come from diverse European backgrounds, with a significant portion originating from Italy and Portugal. The results highlight the need for schools to consider cultural differences and language diversity when supporting immigrant students and their families.

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Table 3. The social skills as perceived by the Teacher-Respondents to the immigrant learners inside the classroom.

S/N	Indicators	Wm	Verbal Description
1.	Controls temper in conflict situations with peers.	2.83	occasionally
2.	Introduces herself or himself to new people without being told.	2.60	Occasionally
3.	Appropriately questions rules that may be unfair.	2.65	occasionally
4.	Compromises in conflict situations by changing own ideas to reach agreement.	2.54	Rarely
5.	Responds appropriately to peer pressure.	2.74	occasionally
6.	Says nice things about himself or herself when appropriate.	3.07	occasionally
7.	Invites others to join in activities.	3.19	occasionally
8.	Uses free time in an acceptable way.	3.15	occasionally
9.	Finishes class assignments within time limits.	3.43	occasionally
10.	Makes friends easily.	3.55	Very Frequently
11.	Responds appropriately to teasing by peers.	2.52	Rarely
12.	Controls temper in conflict situations with adults.	2.80	occasionally
13.	Receives criticism well.	2.81	occasionally
14.	Initiates conversations with peers.	2.93	occasionally
15.	Uses time appropriately while waiting for help.	2.95	occasionally
16.	Produces correct schoolwork.	3.08	occasionally
17.	Appropriately tells you when he or she thinks you have treated him or her unfairly.	2.95	occasionally
18.	Accepts peers' ideas for group activities.	3.12	occasionally
19.	Gives compliments to peers.	2.71	occasionally
20.	Follows your directions.	3.15	occasionally
21.	Puts work materials or school property away.	3.06	occasionally
22.	Cooperates with peers without prompting.	3.08	occasionally
23.	Volunteers to help peers with classroom tasks.	3.18	occasionally
24.	Joins ongoing activity or group without being told.	3.40	occasionally
25.	Responds appropriately when pushed or hit by other children.	2.85	occasionally
26.	Ignores peer distractions when doing class work.	3.00	occasionally
27.	Keeps desk clean and neat without being reminded.	2.71	occasionally
28.	Attends to your instructions.	3.15	occasionally
29.	Easily makes transition from one classroom activity to another.	3.11	occasionally
30.	Gets along with people who are different.	3.69	Very Frequently
	Aggregate Mean	3.00	occasionally
	Standard Deviation	0.29	

The table presents the social skills of immigrant kindergarten learners as perceived by their teachers. The overall average score is 3.00, which means that the learners "occasionally" demonstrate social skills in the classroom. Among the indicators, the highest-rated skill is "Gets along with people who are different" with a score of 3.69, indicating that learners "very frequently" interact well with diverse peers. Another highly rated skill is "Makes friends easily" with a mean score of 3.55, suggesting that many immigrant learners are sociable and able to form friendships without much difficulty. However, some social skills are rated lower. The lowest score is "Responds appropriately to teasing by peers" with a mean of 2.52, which falls under "rarely", indicating that some learners struggle with handling teasing in a positive way. Similarly, "Compromises in conflict situations by changing own ideas to reach agreement" is rated at 2.54, suggesting that learners may find it difficult to adjust their perspectives to resolve conflicts.

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Overall, the results show that while immigrant learners often demonstrate positive social behaviors, there are still areas where improvement is needed, particularly in handling conflicts, responding to peer pressure, and managing teasing. Teachers may need to provide additional support and guidance to help these children develop stronger social skills in these areas.

Table 4. Analysing the problem behaviour of the immigrant learners as perceived by Teacher-Respondents.

S/N	Indicators	Wm	Verbal Description
1	Fights with others.	2.45	Rarely
2	Has low self-esteem.	2.24	Rarely
3	Threatens or bullies' others.	2.00	Rarely
4	Appears lonely.	2.45	Rarely
5	Is easily distracted.	3.44	occasionally
6	Interrupts conversations of others.	2.67	occasionally
7	Disturbs ongoing activities.	2.55	Rarely
8	Shows anxiety about being with a group of children.	2.06	Rarely
9	Is easily embarrassed.	2.44	Rarely
10	Doesn't listen to what others say.	2.65	occasionally
11	Argues with others.	2.50	Rarely
12	Talks back to adults when corrected.	2.01	Rarely
13	Gets angry easily.	2.68	occasionally
14	Has temper tantrums.	2.49	Rarely
15	Likes to be alone.	2.51	Rarely
16	Acts sad or depressed.	2.23	Rarely
17	Acts impulsively.	2.43	Rarely
18	Fidgets or moves excessively	2.60	Rarely
19	Aggregate Weighted Mean	2.46	RARELY
20	Standard Deviation	0.33	

The table illustrates the problematic behaviors of immigrant kindergarten students as observed by their educators. The cumulative average score is 2.46, indicating that the learners "rarely" display problematic behaviors in the classroom. The most highly reported issue behavior is "Is easily distracted," with a mean score of 3.44, signifying that learners "occasionally" have difficulty sustaining focus throughout classroom tasks. Additional behaviors that manifest "occasionally" encompass "Interrupts conversations of others" (2.67), "Doesn't listen to what others say" (2.65), and "Gets angry easily" (2.68), indicating that certain learners experience minor difficulties with attention, impulse control, and emotional regulation. Conversely, behaviors such as "Threatens or bullies others" (2.00), "Shows anxiety about being with a group of children" (2.06), and "Talks back to adults when corrected" (2.01) earned the lowest scores, indicating that these difficulties infrequently manifest. Correspondingly, variables associated with loneliness, sadness, or diminished self-esteem had low ratings, indicating that the majority of immigrant learners do not often encounter substantial emotional distress. The findings suggest that although immigrant learners do not exhibit significant behavioral issues, some may require assistance in sustaining attention, regulating urges, and coping with frustration in social contexts. Educators and school personnel could offer organized activities, emotional control techniques, and positive reinforcement to assist students in improving their classroom conduct.

Table 5. Test of Significant Relationship Between Social Skill and Behavior Problem.

Variables	R-value	Strength of correlation	p - value	Decision	Result
Social skill and behaviour problem	0.24	Low Positive	0.03*	Reject Ho	Significant

The table illustrates an analysis of the considerable correlation between social skills and behavioral problems among immigrant kindergarten students. The correlation coefficient (R-value) is 0.24, signifying a

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weak positive association between the two variables. This indicates that as social abilities enhance, behavioral issues may marginally rise, albeit the correlation is weak. The p-value is 0.03, which is below the significance threshold of 0.05, resulting in the rejection of the null hypothesis (Ho). This is a statistically significant correlation between social skills and behavioral issues among the students. Despite the small correlation, the findings indicate a partial association between social abilities and behavioral issues. This may suggest that learners with more social engagement may also display behavioral issues, potentially stemming from difficulty in peer interactions or adapting to classroom norms. These findings underscore the necessity of balanced interventions that improve social skills while simultaneously addressing potential behavioral issues to foster a supportive learning environment for immigrant kindergarten students.

4. Discussion

Teachers believe kindergarteners who are immigrants have average social skills, according to this study. The greatest social ability assessment, "Gets along with people who are different," implies that these students are flexible and can adapt to varied educational situations. This supports Suárez-Orozco et al. (2018), who found that immigrant children learn cross-cultural skills from being exposed to multiple languages and cultures. However, the study found lower ratings for social skills like peer teasing and compromise. Immigrant learners can make friends, but they may struggle to resolve problems and advocate for themselves in social situations. Garcia and Wei (2019) say language and culture affect social skills. This may explain why immigrant students struggle with social skills. To fill these gaps, systematic social-emotional learning programs and peer contact may help.

The study also found that immigrant students are mostly distractible and rarely misbehave. According to Pong and Zeiser (2018), immigrant students, especially those learning a new language, may struggle to focus in an organized classroom. Impulsivity and anger management disorders were occasionally reported, although bullying and social disengagement were rare. A minor but significant positive connection ($R = 0.24$, $p = 0.03$) was found between social ability and behavior issues. As social interaction rises, behavioral issues may occur. Ladd and Troop-Gordon (2020) found that peer interactions may increase conflict, peer pressure, and misconceptions. Thus, in addition to social skills, teachers should emphasize emotional regulation and behavioral interventions to help pupils manage social interactions. These findings stress the necessity of culturally adapted teaching approaches and social-emotional support for immigrant kindergarteners' well-being and effective integration.

5. Conclusion

The study showed that immigrant kindergarteners sometimes show good interpersonal abilities. Many of them can make friends and get along with others, but some have trouble dealing with teasing and fixing problems. Most problem behaviors were not often seen, but some children had trouble focusing, controlling their emotions, and managing their anger. The data revealed a small but important link between social skills and behavior problems. This means that as children get better at socializing, they might also face some difficulties when interacting with their peers. These results show that it is important to help immigrant students by providing programs that teach social and emotional skills. This support can help them improve their communication, handle conflicts better, and manage their emotions. Schools and teachers should provide a welcoming and culturally responsive environment to help these children adjust better, build good relationships, and succeed in their learning journey.

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