

# Professional Development Models for Equipping Teachers with Social Emotional Learning (SEL) Pedagogical Skills in Indian Contexts

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## ABSTRACT

This paper explores the current landscape of professional development models aimed at equipping teachers in India with Social Emotional Learning (SEL) pedagogical skills. It examines government-led, NGO-driven, private/blended, whole-school, and pre-service education models, highlighting their strengths, limitations, and modes of SEL integration. The analysis reveals that while government programs offer broad reach, they often lack sustained support; NGO initiatives provide contextualized and reflective training but face challenges in scalability; and private and whole-school models offer deeper cultural embedding but remain limited in reach. Pre-service teacher education shows promise but is yet to be standardized nationwide. Based on these insights, the paper proposes a comprehensive roadmap for sustainable and scalable SEL teacher development, emphasizing policy integration, multi-stakeholder collaboration, experiential learning, technology-enabled outreach, capacity building, and robust monitoring mechanisms. The findings underscore the importance of a coordinated approach to prepare teachers for fostering emotional and social competencies in students, contributing to holistic education and well-being in the Indian context.

**Keywords:** Social Emotional Learning, Teacher Professional Development, SEL Integration, India, Pre-Service Education, In-Service Training, NGO Initiatives, Whole-School Model, Educational Policy, Teacher Training Roadmap

## INTRODUCTION

India's education system has undergone significant reforms over the last few decades, with increasing emphasis on holistic, inclusive, and learner-centered education. The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 marked a transformative shift, stressing the importance of cognitive, social, emotional, and ethical development in schools. Within this framework, Social Emotional Learning (SEL) has gained prominence as an essential component of quality education. Social Emotional Learning refers to the process by which learners acquire and effectively apply the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to understand and manage emotions, set goals, show empathy, establish positive relationships, and make responsible decisions. In a culturally and socioeconomically diverse country like India, SEL is not just a pedagogical approach but a tool for nation-building, fostering values such as secularism, empathy, respect, and cooperation.

However, the successful integration of SEL in Indian classrooms is heavily dependent on the competencies and readiness of teachers, who often lack exposure to SEL-specific training during their pre-service or in-service education. Many Indian teachers operate in challenging conditions—large class sizes, limited resources, bureaucratic pressures—which hinder their ability to focus on emotional and relational dimensions of learning. This paper critically explores the professional development models currently used or emerging in India to equip teachers with SEL pedagogical skills. It reviews the national policy backdrop, institutional frameworks, and training programs, while also proposing a roadmap for sustainable and scalable teacher development in SEL.

In the context of Indian education, equipping teachers with Social Emotional Learning (SEL) pedagogical skills is gaining attention as part of holistic education reform, especially under the guidance of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. Several professional development (PD) models have emerged across the country, initiated by government bodies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and private institutions. These models vary in

structure, scale, and effectiveness, yet collectively contribute to building a foundation for SEL implementation in classrooms.

### Government-Driven Professional Development Models

The State Councils of Educational Research and Training (SCERTs) and District Institutes of Education and Training (DIETs) are key players in teacher training at the state level. Several Indian states have actively integrated Social Emotional Learning (SEL) into their teacher training programs through diverse approaches and partnerships. In Delhi, SCERT Delhi collaborates with organizations like Labhya Foundation and Dream a Dream to implement the Happiness Curriculum, along with orientation sessions, peer circles, and reflective practices that focus on mindfulness, empathy, relationship-building, and emotional awareness in in-service teacher training. Maharashtra's efforts, led by SCERT Maharashtra in partnership with TISS and UNICEF, include DISHA workshops and emotional first-aid training, emphasizing teacher motivation, communication, empathy, and stress management. Uttar Pradesh, working with SCERT UP, Room to Read, and Peepul Foundation, integrates SEL into foundational literacy programs under the NIPUN Bharat mission, using mentoring and DIKSHA platform modules to enhance emotional regulation, classroom environment, and student well-being. Similarly, Karnataka's DSERT and Dream a Dream Foundation employ experiential methods such as theatre and storytelling to foster emotional resilience, empathy, and creative expression. Tamil Nadu combines in-service and pre-service approaches via SCERT and the Tamil Nadu Teachers Platform (TNTP), offering e-courses and electives that promote child-centered pedagogy and socio-emotional development. Rajasthan's collaboration between RCScE, UNICEF, and the Piramal Foundation emphasizes mental health awareness and counselling through campaigns like Aao Baat Karein. West Bengal's SCERT embeds SEL in classroom management via the Shikshashree modules, focusing on emotional literacy and peer interaction, while Kerala's Department of General Education and University of Kerala incorporate SEL electives in B.Ed. programs, with a particular focus on inclusive classrooms and emotional diversity. Together, these state-led initiatives highlight a multi-faceted integration of SEL into teacher education, addressing emotional competencies critical for holistic student development (Table 1).

Several best practices have emerged in the integration of Social Emotional Learning (SEL) into teacher training across Indian states. One notable approach is the development of dedicated SEL curricula, such as Delhi's Happiness Curriculum and Karnataka's Life Skills Program, which provide structured modules for teachers and students alike. Many states have forged strategic partnerships with NGOs and academic institutions, including Dream a Dream, TISS, and the Piramal Foundation, to enhance content quality and delivery. Training methods have become more experiential, with activities like storytelling, theatre, and role-playing—particularly in Delhi and Karnataka—promoting deeper engagement and skill retention. The use of digital platforms, such as DIKSHA in Uttar Pradesh and TNTP in Tamil Nadu, has significantly expanded the reach and accessibility of SEL content. Additionally, several states have integrated SEL into foundational learning missions like NIPUN Bharat, ensuring that emotional development is aligned with early literacy and numeracy goals. These practices collectively represent a holistic and scalable approach to embedding SEL in teacher education. (Table 2)

Table 1: Integration of SEL in Teacher Training Across Selected Indian States

State	Implementing Body	Training Type	Mode of Integration	SEL Focus Areas
<b>Delhi</b>	SCERT Delhi, Labhya Foundation, Dream a Dream	In-Service	Happiness Curriculum, orientation sessions, peer circles, reflective practices	Mindfulness, empathy, relationship-building, emotional awareness
<b>Maharashtra</b>	SCERT Maharashtra, TISS, UNICEF	In-Service	DISHA workshops, emotional first-aid training, reflective journaling	Teacher motivation, communication, empathy, stress management
<b>Uttar Pradesh</b>	SCERT UP, Room to Read, Peepul Foundation	In-Service	FLN (NIPUN Bharat), Shikshak Samvad mentoring, DIKSHA platform modules	Emotional regulation, classroom environment, student well-being

<b>Karnataka</b>	DSERT Karnataka, Dream a Dream Foundation	In-Service	Life Skills Education Program, experiential learning through theatre, role-play, storytelling	Emotional resilience, empathy, creative expression, self-awareness
<b>Tamil Nadu</b>	SCERT, Tamil Nadu Teachers Platform (TNTP)	In-Service + Pre-Service	TNTP e-courses, Ennum Ezhuthum foundational learning, B.Ed. electives	Child-centered pedagogy, socio-emotional development, inclusive practices
<b>Rajasthan</b>	RCSCE, UNICEF, Piramal Foundation	In-Service	Aao Baat Karein campaign, mental health and emotional literacy modules	Mental health, classroom safety, basic counseling, student empathy
<b>West Bengal</b>	SCERT West Bengal	In-Service	Shikshashree modules, integration with classroom management practices	Emotional literacy, peer interaction, reward-based reinforcement systems
<b>Kerala</b>	Department of General Education, University of Kerala	Pre-Service	B.Ed. programs with SEL electives, focus on inclusive emotional development	SEL in special education, inclusive classrooms, emotional diversity

### Challenges and Policy Implications for Government Led Social Emotional Learning (SEL) Initiatives

Despite growing recognition of the importance of Social Emotional Learning (SEL) in education, its integration into teacher education in India faces several significant challenges. One major hurdle is the lack of a uniform, centralized policy framework for SEL, which leads to inconsistent implementation across states. While some states have pioneered SEL initiatives, many others still treat it as a peripheral component rather than a core element of teacher training. Additionally, the pre-service training curricula, such as B.Ed. and D.El.Ed. programs, largely lack mandatory SEL modules, resulting in many new teachers entering classrooms without adequate preparation in socio-emotional competencies. In-service training programs are often overloaded with academic content and syllabus-related demands, leaving little time or emphasis for SEL-focused pedagogies. Furthermore, many teacher trainers and resource persons at the district and block levels have limited exposure to SEL theories and experiential methodologies, which undermines the quality and impact of training sessions. Finally, the absence of systematic mechanisms to assess and measure the effectiveness of SEL integration in classrooms further complicates efforts to refine and scale these initiatives.

To address these challenges, several key policy implications emerge. First and foremost, there is a pressing need to institutionalize SEL within the national and state-level teacher education frameworks, including the National Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education (NCF-TE) and guidelines issued by the National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE). Making SEL a mandatory part of pre-service training curricula across all teacher education institutions will ensure that incoming teachers possess foundational socio-emotional skills. Additionally, the development of standardized yet culturally adaptable SEL training modules at the national level can provide a cohesive structure while allowing flexibility to address local contexts and needs. Strengthening the capacity of master trainers, DIET faculty, and other teacher educators through certified SEL pedagogy programs will enhance the quality of training delivery. Lastly, integrating SEL-related indicators within teacher appraisal systems and classroom observations, especially under schemes like Samagra Shiksha, can promote accountability and continuous improvement in SEL practices. So overcoming the existing gaps in policy and practice is essential for embedding SEL meaningfully in Indian education. This requires coordinated efforts from policymakers, teacher education institutions, and implementing agencies to prioritize SEL as a core dimension of teacher competence. By doing so, India can cultivate a generation of teachers better equipped to foster emotionally intelligent, empathetic, and resilient learners, thereby supporting holistic child development and improving overall educational outcomes.

## NGO-Led and Non-State Models

Several NGOs in India are playing a pivotal role in integrating Social Emotional Learning (SEL) into teacher training across various states. Dream a Dream operates in Delhi, Karnataka, and Maharashtra, offering in-service and some pre-service training through workshops, role-plays, and mentoring, with a focus on emotional resilience, empathy, and self-awareness. Room to Read, active in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, embeds SEL within foundational literacy programs, using classroom mentoring and DIKSHA-based modules to promote emotional regulation and student engagement. Pratham Education Foundation trains teachers in life skills and SEL as part of its remedial education initiatives across multiple states, emphasizing stress management and motivation. In Rajasthan and Maharashtra, the Piramal Foundation conducts mental health campaigns and incorporates SEL into teacher capacity-building workshops, targeting emotional and mental health literacy. Teach For India integrates SEL into both pre-service and in-service training of fellows in states like Maharashtra and Karnataka, focusing on self-management and responsible decision-making through reflective practices and peer support. Lastly, the Peepul Foundation supports SEL delivery in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar through digital content, teacher workshops, and community engagement, aiming to foster emotional awareness and well-being. These initiatives demonstrate the diverse and impactful ways NGOs contribute to strengthening SEL in Indian teacher education (Table 2).

NGO-led Social Emotional Learning (SEL) initiatives in India showcase a range of best practices that enhance teacher training and classroom implementation. A key strength lies in the contextualization of SEL content, with organizations like Dream a Dream and Room to Read tailoring their materials to reflect local cultural and socio-economic contexts, ensuring relevance and relatability. Experiential and reflective training methods—including storytelling, role-plays, and teacher reflection groups—are widely used to foster deeper understanding and personal connection among educators. NGOs such as Peepul Foundation and Room to Read also effectively leverage digital tools to provide ongoing support and scale SEL training through accessible platforms. Furthermore, these organizations strategically integrate SEL with foundational literacy and academic objectives, aligning emotional development with cognitive outcomes, especially in early education contexts. An additional noteworthy practice is community and parental engagement, where NGOs conduct awareness and sensitization efforts to extend SEL support beyond school walls, thereby creating a holistic ecosystem for students' emotional and social growth.

Table 2: NGO-Led SEL Integration in Teacher Training Programs in India

NGO / Organization	States Covered	Training Type	Mode of Integration	SEL Focus Areas
<b>Dream a Dream</b>	Delhi, Karnataka, Maharashtra	In-Service + Some Pre-Service	Workshops, experiential learning, role-plays, reflection circles, teacher mentoring	Emotional resilience, empathy, communication skills, self-awareness
<b>Room to Read</b>	Uttar Pradesh, Bihar	In-Service	FLN (Foundational Literacy and Numeracy) integrated SEL modules, classroom mentoring, DIKSHA platform	Emotional regulation, classroom environment, student engagement
<b>Pratham Education Foundation</b>	Multiple states (Delhi, UP, MP)	In-Service	Training of teachers on life skills and SEL within remedial education programs	Stress management, motivation, relationship-building
<b>Piramal Foundation</b>	Rajasthan, Maharashtra	In-Service	Mental health awareness campaigns, SEL training modules embedded in teacher capacity-building workshops	Mental health literacy, emotional literacy, classroom safety



<b>Teach For India (TFI)</b>	Maharashtra, Delhi, Karnataka	In-Service + Pre-Service	Teacher fellow training, workshops on SEL strategies, reflective practice, peer support networks	Social awareness, self-management, responsible decision-making
<b>Peepul Foundation</b>	Uttar Pradesh, Bihar	In-Service	Use of digital platforms for SEL content, regular teacher workshops, community engagement	Emotional awareness, peer interaction, student well-being

### Challenges, and Policy Implications from NGO-Led SEL Initiatives

NGO-led SEL initiatives in India, while impactful, face several significant challenges that hinder their long-term effectiveness and scalability. Many programs are project-based, making it difficult to sustain and replicate them at a large scale without ongoing funding and institutional support. There is often a lack of alignment with government frameworks, which limits the seamless integration of NGO-driven modules into official in-service or pre-service teacher training. Additionally, the shortage of trained facilitators and high turnover rates among trainers can disrupt continuity and the quality of implementation. Monitoring and impact assessment also remain weak points, as few programs employ systematic tools to evaluate behavioural or academic changes resulting from SEL interventions. Furthermore, resource constraints, such as limited funding and inadequate infrastructure, restrict the frequency and reach of high-quality training. To address these challenges, several policy implications emerge: forging formal partnerships between NGOs and state education bodies like SCERTs and DIETs can help institutionalize effective SEL practices. Providing multi-year funding to proven models will enhance sustainability, while joint capacity-building efforts can expand the pool of competent SEL trainers. Establishing standardized evaluation frameworks will ensure consistent measurement of outcomes, and aligning NGO efforts with national missions like Samagra Shiksha and NIPUN Bharat can amplify their systemic impact across the education landscape.

### Private and Blended Models

A number of diverse private organizations are adopting innovative approaches to embed social-emotional learning within teacher education and school systems. For instance, **Adhyayan Foundation** operates pan-India and emphasizes emotional safety and leadership through school audits and reflective tools for teachers. Similarly, **iTeach Schools** in Maharashtra implement a whole-school SEL approach, combining mentorship and emotional intelligence training to strengthen classroom culture and teacher resilience. Leveraging digital tools, **The Teacher App** provides nationwide access to mobile-based SEL-integrated professional development, focusing on mindfulness and inclusivity. Blended learning models like **Tata Trusts' CLIX** integrate SEL into digital pedagogy in states such as Rajasthan and Mizoram, encouraging emotional expression and responsible digital behavior. Meanwhile, **Simple Education Foundation (SEF)** in Delhi and Uttarakhand supports teachers with SEL-aligned lesson planning and coaching, enhancing empathy and collaboration in classrooms. Finally, **Kaivalya Education Foundation (KEF)** merges SEL with school leadership and community engagement through its Gandhi Fellowship model, emphasizing self-reflection and social responsibility. These models collectively demonstrate the potential of private and blended strategies to scale SEL practices across varied educational contexts in India (Table 3).

Table 3: Private and Blended Models of SEL Integration in India

Organization / Institution	States / Reach	Training Type	Mode of Integration	SEL Focus Areas
<b>Adhyayan Foundation</b>	Pan-India (especially urban private schools)	In-Service	School leadership training, teacher rubrics, reflective SEL audit frameworks	Emotional safety, leadership, student-teacher relationship
<b>iTeach Schools</b>	Maharashtra (Pune)	In-Service + Pre-Service	Whole-school SEL approach, mentorship for new teachers, emotional	Self-awareness, classroom culture, resilience

			intelligence training	
<b>The Teacher App</b>	Pan-India (digital)	Pre-Service + In-Service (Online)	SEL-integrated teacher professional development courses via mobile app	Mindfulness, empathy, inclusive classroom practices
<b>Tata Trusts – Connected Learning Initiative (CLIX)</b>	Rajasthan, Mizoram, Telangana	Blended (Online + Offline)	SEL in digital pedagogy courses, reflective learning tools, life skills modules	Decision-making, emotional expression, digital citizenship
<b>Simple Education Foundation (SEF)</b>	Delhi, Uttarakhand	In-Service	Teacher coaching, school transformation through SEL-integrated lesson planning	Emotional regulation, empathy, collaboration
<b>Kaivalya Education Foundation (KEF)</b>	Gujarat, Rajasthan	In-Service + Leadership Training	Gandhi Fellowship support, SEL modules in school transformation and leadership	Self-reflection, community engagement, social responsibility

### Challenges, and Policy Implications for Private and Blended Models

Private and blended models of SEL implementation in India face several challenges that can affect their sustainability and scalability. First, many such initiatives rely heavily on technology and digital platforms, which may exclude schools or teachers in regions with limited internet access or digital literacy. Second, these models often depend on fee-based or philanthropic funding, making long-term financial sustainability uncertain. Third, integrating SEL meaningfully into existing curricula can be difficult due to rigid academic schedules and resistance from educators unfamiliar with SEL concepts. Additionally, ensuring consistent quality and fidelity across diverse geographic and socio-economic contexts poses a significant challenge. Finally, there is often a lack of robust monitoring and evaluation frameworks to assess the impact of blended SEL programs on teacher practices and student outcomes. To address these challenges, policy frameworks need to encourage stronger public-private partnerships that facilitate resource sharing, capacity building, and wider access to SEL programs, especially in underserved areas. Government support through subsidies or grants can help scale successful private and blended SEL initiatives sustainably. Policymakers should promote the integration of SEL competencies within national teacher education curricula and accreditation standards to standardize quality and relevance. Encouraging the development of digital infrastructure and teacher training in ed-tech tools will enhance the effectiveness of blended learning models. Furthermore, establishing unified evaluation metrics and data-sharing protocols will support evidence-based decision-making and continuous improvement of SEL programs across sectors. These measures will help harness the strengths of private and blended models to complement government efforts in creating emotionally resilient and socially competent educators.

### Whole-School and Institutional Models

Some progressive institutions are embedding SEL into their teacher development and school culture. Several progressive schools and educational institutions across India have adopted whole-school models to integrate Social Emotional Learning (SEL) into their core teaching and learning frameworks. Riverside School in Ahmedabad leads with a comprehensive SEL approach involving teacher evaluations, lesson planning, and extensive staff training focused on empathy and active listening. Aga Khan Education Services, operating in states like Maharashtra and Gujarat, embeds SEL into teacher professional learning communities and curriculum planning, while also engaging parents to extend SEL beyond the classroom. Mirambika Free Progress School in New Delhi follows Sri Aurobindo's integral education philosophy, promoting inner awareness and peace through reflective practices. In Heritage Xperiential Learning School, Gurugram, SEL is infused into project-based learning and advisory sessions that emphasize collaboration and ethical thinking. Shishuvan School in Mumbai uses integrated arts and dialogue circles to encourage empathy and community building, while Sarla Birla Academy in Bengaluru provides structured SEL modules that include mindfulness and leadership development. These institutions exemplify how SEL can be deeply rooted within the ethos and daily practices of schools to foster emotionally intelligent educators and learners (Table 4).

Table 4: Whole-School and Institutional Models of SEL Integration

Institution	Location / Reach	Integration Strategy	Key SEL Focus Areas
Riverside School	Ahmedabad, Gujarat	Whole-school SEL model; SEL in lesson plans and teacher evaluations; staff SEL training	Empathy, active listening, student voice
Aga Khan Education Services	Maharashtra, Gujarat, others	SEL in teacher learning communities, curriculum planning, and school reviews	Emotional well-being, collaboration, parental inclusion
Mirambika Free Progress School	New Delhi	Integral education model inspired by Sri Aurobindo; SEL through reflective practice	Inner awareness, peace education, empathy
Heritage Xperiential Learning School	Gurugram, Haryana	Project-based learning with SEL integration in daily routines and advisory periods	Self-awareness, collaboration, ethical decision-making
Shishuvan School	Mumbai, Maharashtra	SEL through integrated arts, dialogue circles, and cooperative learning	Expression, empathy, community building
Sarla Birla Academy	Bengaluru, Karnataka	Structured SEL sessions, mindfulness programs, life-skills and value education	Emotional regulation, resilience, leadership

### Challenges and Policy Implications for Whole School and Institutional Model

Whole-school and institutional models of SEL integration face several challenges that can hinder their widespread adoption and effectiveness. One major challenge is the significant investment of time, effort, and resources required to train all staff members comprehensively and consistently maintain SEL practices across the entire school culture. Resistance to change among some educators and administrators, due to entrenched traditional teaching methods or lack of understanding of SEL benefits, can slow implementation. Furthermore, integrating SEL deeply into curricula, teacher evaluations, and school policies demands continuous leadership commitment, which may fluctuate due to administrative changes. Measuring the impact of SEL on school climate, teacher performance, and student outcomes is often complex and lacks standardized tools, making it difficult to justify ongoing investment. Additionally, scaling these models beyond progressive or well-resourced schools to diverse, underprivileged contexts remains a critical challenge. To support whole-school and institutional SEL models, policies must promote sustained leadership development and mandate SEL competencies as part of school accreditation and teacher appraisal systems. Providing dedicated funding and resources for comprehensive staff training, curriculum redesign, and SEL-focused school climate initiatives is essential. Policymakers should encourage the creation of standardized frameworks for assessing SEL integration and its outcomes at school and district levels. Integrating SEL within national education missions and schemes can ensure broader systemic support and alignment. Furthermore, policies should foster community and parental involvement as integral parts of the whole-school approach, enhancing reinforcement of SEL skills beyond classrooms. Emphasizing equity by supporting implementation in marginalized and rural schools will help make SEL accessible and impactful for all students and educators nationwide.

### Integration into Pre-Service Teacher Education

Although the integration of Social Emotional Learning (SEL) into pre-service teacher education is not yet widespread across India, some institutions have begun incorporating SEL-related modules to prepare future educators better. For instance, IGNOU's B.Ed. program includes important components focusing on learner psychology and emotional development, providing a foundational understanding of students' emotional needs. Similarly, premier institutions like TISS Mumbai and Jamia Millia Islamia offer elective courses that emphasize inclusive and reflective pedagogy with embedded SEL content, allowing pre-service teachers to engage deeply with social and emotional competencies. At the policy level, the National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) has recognized the importance of SEL by proposing its inclusion in the Integrated Teacher Education Program (ITEP), signalling a systemic move towards embedding emotional and social skill development within teacher training curricula. These emerging efforts reflect a growing awareness of the critical role SEL plays in equipping teachers to foster emotionally supportive and socially responsive classrooms.

The integration of Social Emotional Learning (SEL) into pre-service teacher education can be effectively achieved through a combination of theoretical and practical strategies. One key approach is the inclusion of dedicated SEL coursework within B.Ed. and other teacher training programs, where pre-service teachers learn the foundational principles of emotional intelligence, self-awareness, and relationship skills. Complementing this, practical field experiences allow these future educators to observe and implement SEL strategies directly in classroom settings, fostering skills like empathy and classroom management. Reflective practices, such as journaling and group discussions, help pre-service teachers develop mindfulness and problem-solving abilities by encouraging them to analyze their emotional responses and teaching experiences critically. Furthermore, SEL can be infused across various pedagogical subjects such as educational psychology and curriculum design, ensuring that emotional and social competencies are embedded within lesson planning and assessment methods. Simulation exercises and role-play offer experiential learning opportunities where pre-service teachers practice conflict resolution and social awareness in controlled scenarios. Equally important is the professional development of teacher educators themselves, who need to model SEL competencies and guide trainees effectively. Collaborative learning through peer support fosters social engagement and leadership skills, while formal assessments of SEL competencies ensure that emotional and interpersonal skills are valued alongside academic knowledge. Together, these integrated strategies can prepare future teachers in India to create emotionally supportive and socially responsive classroom environments (Table 5).

Table 5: Strategies for Integrating Social Emotional Learning (SEL) into Pre-Service Teacher Education Programs in India

Integration Strategy	Description / Implementation	SEL Focus Areas	Examples / Methods
1. Dedicated SEL Coursework	Include mandatory courses on SEL theory, principles, and pedagogy in B.Ed. and teacher training curricula	Emotional intelligence, self-awareness, relationship skills	SEL theory classes, case studies, role-play exercises; IGNOU B.Ed. includes learner psychology and emotional development
2. Practical Field Experiences	Embed SEL-focused practicum in schools where pre-service teachers observe and practice SEL strategies	Classroom management, empathy, social skills	Supervised teaching practice emphasizing SEL methods
3. Reflective Practice and Journaling	Encourage reflective journals and group discussions on emotional challenges and SEL strategies	Self-regulation, mindfulness, problem-solving	Guided reflection prompts, peer feedback sessions; TISS Mumbai and Jamia Millia Islamia offer electives with SEL content
4. Integration in Pedagogical Courses	Infuse SEL concepts into subjects like educational psychology, curriculum design, and assessment	Motivation, emotional regulation, communication	Lesson plan design including SEL objectives
5. Use of Simulation and Role-Play	Simulate classroom scenarios where pre-service teachers practice SEL skills	Conflict resolution, empathy, social awareness	Role-play conflict mediation, peer coaching activities
6. Faculty Development and Training	Train teacher educators to model and teach SEL competently and empathetically	Teacher self-care, emotional competence	Workshops for faculty on SEL facilitation
7. Collaborative Learning and Peer Support	Foster group work and peer mentoring among pre-service teachers to build social skills	Collaboration, social engagement, leadership	Group projects, peer mentoring programs
8. Assessment of SEL Competencies	Include SEL skill evaluation as part of pre-service teacher assessments	Self-management, interpersonal skills	Performance-based assessments, SEL portfolios
9. Policy Framework Inclusion	National regulatory bodies propose SEL integration into teacher education curricula	Emotional and social skill development	NCTE's Integrated Teacher Education Program (ITEP) includes SEL themes



## Roadmap for sustainable and scalable teacher development in SEL in Indian Contexts

To achieve sustainable and scalable teacher development in Social Emotional Learning (SEL), a multi-pronged approach is essential. First, SEL competencies must be embedded firmly within national and state education policies, ensuring that teacher accreditation, recruitment, and performance evaluations include SEL skills. Building strong collaborative partnerships among government bodies, NGOs, academic institutions, and private EdTech companies will help in co-creating contextualized, culturally relevant SEL training materials and digital learning solutions. A comprehensive curriculum that blends SEL theory, pedagogy, and practical application should be integrated into both pre-service and in-service teacher education programs. Capacity building efforts must focus on establishing certified master trainers who can cascade training regionally, coupled with ongoing professional development, mentoring, and peer learning communities for teachers. Experiential and reflective learning strategies, such as role-plays, simulations, and journaling, should be prioritized to deepen teacher engagement, while also including modules that promote teacher well-being and self-care. Leveraging technology is crucial for scalability; digital platforms like DIKSHA and TNTP can facilitate widespread access to SEL content, including mobile-friendly microlearning for low-connectivity areas. Robust monitoring and evaluation systems need to be developed to assess teacher competencies and student outcomes, supported by longitudinal research to continuously improve programs. Finally, community and stakeholder engagement is vital—sensitizing parents and local communities will help reinforce SEL beyond the classroom, while advocacy campaigns can raise awareness and foster demand for sustained SEL integration. Together, these strategic actions can ensure SEL teacher development is both impactful and scalable across diverse Indian educational contexts (Table 6).

Table 6: Roadmap for sustainable and scalable teacher development in SEL

Key Area	Action Steps	Expected Outcome
Policy Integration	Embed SEL competencies in national/state education policies, teacher accreditation, and evaluation systems.	Institutional support and accountability for SEL teaching.
Collaborative Partnerships	Foster collaboration among government, NGOs, academia, and EdTech companies for contextualized SEL resources.	Culturally relevant and widely accessible training content.
Curriculum Integration	Incorporate SEL modules in pre-service and in-service teacher education programs combining theory and practice.	Comprehensive and consistent SEL skill-building for teachers.
Capacity Building	Train certified master trainers; establish mentoring, peer learning, and ongoing professional development.	Quality, sustained, and scalable teacher training delivery.
Experiential Learning	Use role-plays, simulations, reflective journaling, and teacher well-being modules.	Deep engagement and practical mastery of SEL pedagogy.
Technology Use	Leverage digital platforms (e.g., DIKSHA, TNTP) for accessible, flexible, and scalable SEL training.	Expanded reach and continuous learning opportunities.
Monitoring and Evaluation	Develop robust frameworks to assess teacher SEL competencies and student outcomes with ongoing research.	Data-driven program improvements and impact measurement.
Community Engagement	Involve parents and local communities through awareness campaigns and sensitization activities.	Reinforced SEL practices beyond the classroom environment.

## CONCLUSION

The integration of Social Emotional Learning (SEL) into teacher development in India presents a multifaceted landscape characterized by diverse models, each with distinct strengths and limitations. Government-led initiatives, primarily through SCERTs and DIETs, offer broad institutional reach but often lack sustained mentoring and follow-up mechanisms. NGO-led programs provide valuable contextualization, reflective practices, and evidence-based approaches but face challenges related to scale and funding continuity. Online and blended models leverage technology for scalability and flexibility; however, they must address issues like digital access and reduced experiential engagement. Whole-school and institutional models, while highly

sustainable and embedded within school culture, are currently limited mainly to private and alternative educational settings. Meanwhile, pre-service integration of SEL into teacher education holds great promise for future readiness, yet remains uneven and underdeveloped across the country.

To move toward sustainable and scalable SEL teacher development, a strategic roadmap is essential. This roadmap emphasizes embedding SEL within national policies and accreditation systems to ensure systemic accountability and support. Collaborative partnerships between government bodies, NGOs, academic institutions, and EdTech platforms are crucial to co-creating culturally relevant and accessible training content. Strengthening curriculum integration for both pre-service and in-service programs, alongside building master trainer capacity, will enhance the quality and continuity of teacher learning. Experiential and reflective learning methods should be prioritized to foster practical mastery of SEL skills. The use of technology platforms can further expand reach and enable ongoing professional development. Robust monitoring and evaluation frameworks will enable data-driven improvements and demonstrate the impact of SEL interventions. Finally, engaging parents and communities ensures that SEL principles permeate beyond classrooms, fostering holistic student well-being. By leveraging the strengths of existing models and following a coordinated, multi-stakeholder roadmap, India can effectively equip its teachers with SEL pedagogical skills. This will not only improve classroom environments but also contribute to the emotional and social development of students, preparing them to thrive in an increasingly complex and interconnected world.

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