

Can Social and Emotional Learning Competencies Protect Teachers?

Longitudinal Associations Between Social and Emotional Learning Competencies and Teacher Victimization Among Chinese Teachers

Presenter: Chun Chen, Ph.D.

Co-Authors: Chunyan Yang², Jin Hyung Lim³, Yijing Zhang², Zhaojun Teng⁴

² Chinese University of Hong Kong, Shenzhen; ² University of Maryland, College Park;

³ University of California, Berkeley; ⁴ Southwest University, China

Teacher Victimization in China

Rising Incidents, Limited Attention

- Over 1/3 of Chinese teachers have experienced some forms of aggression in the past year (Yang et al., 2023)
- Driven by academic pressures and performance-related conflict
- Shifts in teacher-parent power dynamics in recent years



Teacher Victimization: Definition and A Path Forward

Definition: perceived threats or actual experiences of violence by teachers in schools (Espelage et al., 2013).

Social and emotional learning (SEL): effective for bullying prevention for students, but how about teachers? (Chen et al., 2024; Yang et al., 2020; Zhang & Chen, 2023)

Question: What's the relationship between teacher victimization and their SEL competencies?



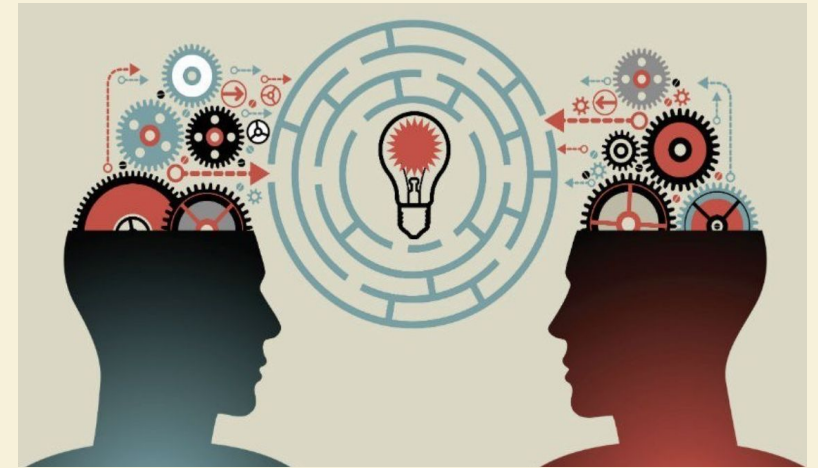
Association between TV and Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) Competencies

Teacher victimization → SEL Competencies

- **Theory:** Attribution Theory (Weiner 1986a,b): Teachers may blame their own SEC for TV.

SEL Competencies → Teacher Victimization

- **Theory:** Learned Helplessness theory (Maier & Seligman, 1976): Repeated TV can lead to passivity and self-blame.
- **Empirical evidence:** High SEL → better regulation, conflict resolution, and fewer victimization experiences (Zych et al., 2019).



Research Gaps

- Most studies are cross-sectional.
- Limited research to hear Chinese teachers' voices with unique challenges (e.g., longer working hours, blurred line between work and life).
- Need to understand causal relationships and directionality between Teacher SEC and TV and differentiate between trait and state.



Main Research Questions

- **Do Stronger SEL competencies help protect teachers from victimization?**
- **Do experiencing victimization diminish their social and emotional competencies over time?**

Approaches:

1. Examine bidirectional associations between teachers' SEC and TV.
2. Distinguish between-person (trait) vs. within-person (state) effects using RI-CLPM.



Methods

Design: 5-wave longitudinal study (2018–2020, 6 months apart).

Participants: 643 Chinese teachers (Mage = 35.7; 68.5% Female).

Measures:

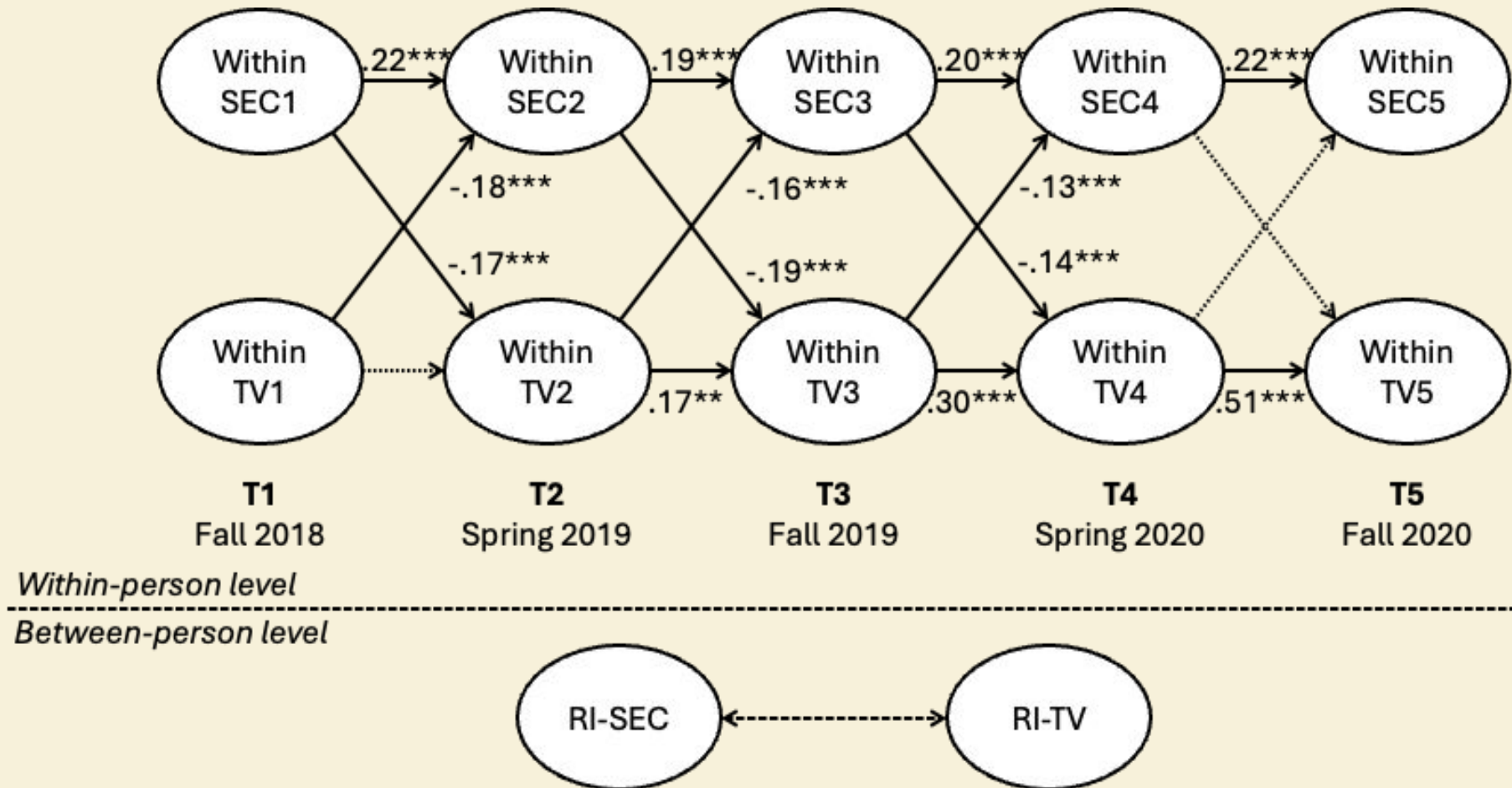
- Chinese version of Delaware Social and Emotional Competencies Scale (SECs)—Teacher/Staff (Bear et al., 2016)
- Multidimensional Teacher Victimization Scale (MTVS; Yang et al., 2019)

Covariates: years of teaching at T1, school level (middle and high school), gender, and ethnicity (Han = 0, minority = 1).

Data analysis: Random Intercept Cross-Lagged Panel Model (RI-CLPM)



Results: Longitudinal Associations Between SEC and TV



Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Dotted lines indicate statistically non-significant paths ($p > .05$).



Take-Away Summaries

- Reciprocal relationships between TV and SEC.
- No significant cross-lagged effects during T4–T5.
 - Due to COVID disruption.
- No significant between-person association between SEC and TV.
 - within-person change over time matters.



Discussion

- SEC and TV influence each other over time.
- SEC has a state trait. It can change within individual. Individual changes in SEC matter.
- Raise awareness on TV.
- Impacts of COVID-19 disrupted protective mechanisms.



Limitations & Future Directions

- Generalizability across schools and cultures?
- Stories behind?
- Any key environmental factors (e.g., school climate)?



Some Future and Ongoing Projects: Empowering Teachers Through SEL Practice

Teachers as SEL Participants, Not Just Implementers

- SEL training for teachers should include personal engagement, not just delivery methods.
- Teachers are encouraged to practice SEL strategies during training to enhance job satisfaction and social and emotional awareness.
- Personal SEL experience helps teachers understand its value and apply it more meaningfully in classrooms.



"I feel I have personally learned a lot through this process, particularly about gratitude."



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Thank you for listening! Questions?

Dr. Chun Chen

chenchun@cuhk.edu.cn

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Results:

Table 1

Model Fit Statistics

	χ^2 (df, p)	CFI	TLI	RMSEA [90%CI]	SRMR	Δ CFI	Comparison
M1	88.276 (61, .013)	.968	.951	.037 [.019, .052]	.032	-	-
M2	151.637 (67, < .001)	.916	.881	.057 [.044, .070]	.048	-.052	M1
M3	90.879 (64, .015)	.969	.954	.036 [.018, .050]	.032	.001	M1
M4	105.031 (70, .004)	.959	.944	.039 [.024, .053]	.035	-.010	M3
M5	95.339 (68, .016)	.970	.958	.034 [.016, .049]	.034	.001	M3
M6	99.087 (72, .019)	.970	.961	.033 [.015, .047]	.034	< .001	M5

Note. M1 = baseline model without any constraints, M2 = constrained all the autoregressive coefficients over time based on M1, M3 = unconstrained TV's autoregressive coefficients based on M2, M4 = constrained all the cross-lagged effects over time based on M3, M5 = unconstrained the cross-lagged effects from T4 to T5 based on M4, M6 = constrained all the covariances over time based on M5



Results:

Table 2

Parameter Estimates of the RI-CLPM

Parameter	B	SE	β	<i>z</i>	<i>p</i>
Autoregressive Paths^a					
T1 SEC → T2 SEC	.211	.041	.217	5.173	< .001
T2 SEC → T3 SEC	.211	.041	.192	5.173	< .001
T3 SEC → T4 SEC	.211	.041	.202	5.173	< .001
T4 SEC → T5 SEC	.211	.041	.220	5.173	< .001
T1 TV → T2 TV	.028	.061	.028	.460	.646
T2 TV → T3 TV	.142	.052	.171	2.730	.006
T3 TV → T4 TV	.437	.090	.298	4.837	< .001
T4 TV → T5 TV	.544	.054	.507	10.068	< .001
Cross-lagged Paths^b					
T1 SEC → T2 TV	-.213	.049	-.165	-4.366	< .001
T2 SEC → T3 TV	-.213	.049	-.192	-4.366	< .001
T3 SEC → T4 TV	-.213	.049	-.144	-4.366	< .001
T4 SEC → T5 TV	-.009	.086	-.006	-.107	.915
T1 TV → T2 SEC	-.130	.029	-.176	-4.448	< .001
T2 TV → T3 SEC	-.130	.029	-.157	-4.448	< .001
T3 TV → T4 SEC	-.130	.029	-.125	-4.448	< .001
T4 TV → T5 SEC	-.034	.041	-.051	-.842	.400



Results:

Correlations^c

T1 SEC ↔ TV	-.020	.004	-.129	-4.658	< .001
T2 SEC ↔ TV	-.020	.004	-.143	-4.658	< .001
T3 SEC ↔ TV	-.020	.004	-.159	-4.658	< .001
T4 SEC ↔ TV	-.020	.004	-.106	-4.658	< .001
T5 SEC ↔ TV	-.020	.004	-.111	-4.658	< .001

Intercept-Intercept Correlations

RI-SEC ↔ RI-TV	-.009	.006	-.180	-1.461	.144
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RI-SEC Regression Coefficients

Years of Teaching	.002	.002	.066	1.279	.201
Gender (Female)	-.005	.033	-.008	-.153	.878
Ethnicity (Minority)	.056	.097	.029	.581	.561
School Level (Middle)	-.032	.038	-.047	-.830	.407
School Level (High)	-.059	.035	-.100	-1.709	.087

RI-TV Regression Coefficients

Years of Teaching	.001	.001	.062	.840	.401
Gender (Female)	-.117	.029	-.298	-3.972	< .001
Ethnicity (Minority)	-.097	.086	-.080	-1.120	.264
School Level (Middle)	.076	.034	.182	2.264	.024
School Level (High)	.032	.030	.086	1.041	.298

Note. SEC = social and emotional learning competencies; TV = teacher victimization; T1–T5 = Time 1–Time 5; RI = random intercepts.

^aconstrained the autoregressive paths of SEC to be equal across times.

^bconstrained the cross-lagged paths to be equal across times except for those from T4 to T5.

^cconstrained the within-wave correlations to be equal across times.

