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Medha Ghosh April 6th, 2020

# Overcoming Obstacles: A Qualitative Study on Educators' Perceptions of Student Resilience for the SEE Learning Program

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Bachelor of Arts, Global Public Health
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Thesis Committee Chair: Elizabeth Walker, MAT, MPH, PhD

An abstract of
A thesis submitted to the Faculty of the
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## Abstract

Overcoming Obstacles: A Qualitative Study on Educators' Perceptions of Student Resilience for the SEE Learning Program

By Medha Ghosh

Over the last several decades, an increasing number of evidence-based social and emotional learning (SEL) programs have been implemented throughout the world in kindergarten to high school classrooms. One program in particular, the Social, Emotional, and Ethical (SEE) Learning Program, has sought to expand on the SEL framework through the addition of components not often found in SEL. A unique component that the SEE Learning program has included in its approach to SEL is the incorporation of resilience skills based on recent advancements in trauma research and trauma-informed care.

This present study examined how educators who have not received SEE Learning training understand resilience and identify how resilience is cultivated in their students. A social ecological theoretical framework was utilized to assess how students' resilience is cultivated. Qualitative methods of data collection were used in the form of in-depth, one-on-one interviews with kindergarten to middle school educators in the Atlanta, Georgia area.

Upon analysis of the qualitative data, results were organized under four domains: (1) educators' definition of resilience, (2) educators' perceptions of student challenges, (3) educators' identification of student resilience skills, and (4) types of support educators feel students need for resilience cultivation. Overall, educators understanding of resilience aligned with the SEE Learning program's definition of resilience. Educators also noted the important role parents have in student's resilience cultivation. Several recommendations for the SEE Learning Program emerged. The public health field should consider conducting further research on how resilience can serve as a protective factor in children and what the long-term effects of resilience cultivation in individuals are.

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## Chapter 1: Introduction

There is a growing body of literature that recognizes the importance of fostering children's noncognitive skills alongside cognitive skills to increase their chances of developing into healthy adults (Carneiro, 2007; Jones, Greenberg, Crowley, 2015). Cognitive skills comprise the ability to execute mental tasks of understanding, remembering, reasoning, and problem solving, whereas noncognitive skills can be broadly explained as personality traits or "patterns of thoughts, feelings and behavior" (Bernstein et al., 2007; Borghans et al., 2007). These include aspects such as emotion regulation, empathy, self-regulation, and resilience to adversity (Kautz et al., 2014). While classifying competencies of child development into corresponding cognitive and noncognitive groupings may be convenient, it "oversimplifies the complexity of skills and the role of cognition" (Jones, Greenberg, & Crowley, 2015). Though cognitive and noncognitive skills may develop differently through a person's lifetime, they have a symbiotic relationship with one another (Bjorklund-Young, 2016).

Throughout childhood, the school serves as a central place for people to become familiar with the act of socializing and collaborating with others. For children to successfully engage with their core academic subjects, there is increasing agreement by educators, policymakers, and the general public that children must also be able to effectively work with others from various backgrounds (Greenberg et al., 2003). For this to occur, there is a need for children to foster noncognitive skills such as empathy, conflict resolution, and decision-making (Durlak, Weissberg, Dymnicki, Taylor, & Schellinger, 2011). In response to these needs, a growing number of evidence-based social and emotional learning (SEL) programs have been implemented throughout the world in K-12 classrooms over the last several decades. These programs, when effectively implemented, are shown to improve children's overall wellbeing by

positively impacting their social-emotional, behavioral, and academic outcomes (Durlak et al., 2011; McCormick, Cappella**,** O'Connor, & McClowry, 2015).

In 1994, the term SEL was the focal point of discussion in a meeting at the Fetzer Institute with a group of researchers, practitioners, and child advocates involved in a wide scope of youth development efforts (Cherniss, Extein, Goleman, & Weissberg, 2006). Participants of the meeting then established the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) with the goal of instituting evidence-based SEL programs from preschool to high school education settings (Durlak, Domitrovich, Weissberg, & Gullotta, 2015). The five main competencies that shape SEL, as identified by CASEL, are: (1) self-awareness, (2) self-management, (3) social awareness, (4) relationships skills, and (5) responsible decision-making (Durlak et al., 2015). Through these competencies, SEL seeks to have children "understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions" (CASEL, 2012, p. 9). While the application of SEL can vary from setting to setting, these components are generally understood to be at the core (Hoffman, D.M, 2009). Within the last twenty years, thousands of schools in the United States, as well as in other countries, have implemented programs that promote in some capacity the development of SEL in their students (Greenberg, Domitrovich, Weissberg, & Durlak, 2018).

One program in particular, the Social, Emotional, and Ethical (SEE) Learning Program, has sought to expand on the SEL framework through the addition of components not often found in SEL (Center for Contemplative Science and Compassion-Based Ethics (CCSCBE), 2019). The SEE Learning Program began in 1998 as an academic collaboration between Emory University and the Dalai Lama in the joint pursuit to deliver an educational program that seeks to

take an “universal, non-sectarian, and science-based approach” to SEL cultivation in K-12 students (Emory University, 2018). A unique component that the SEE Learning program has added in its approach to SEL is the incorporation of resilience skills based on recent advancements in trauma research and trauma-informed care, to “provide a way for educators and students to explore emotions, self-regulation, and reflective practices in the safest and most effective way” (CCSCBE, 2019, p. 30). Whether children have faced significant adversities or not, building resilience has been shown to prepare them not just for adversity, but for daily challenges that they may face (Bagdi & Vacca, 2005).

Over the past 20 years, there has been significant progress in understanding the lifetime effects of childhood trauma (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2016). Traumatic childhood experiences include abuse, exposure to violence, natural disasters, and poverty (CCSCBE, 2019). Research shows that childhood traumas are correlated with the development of dysfunctional neural circuits, impaired behavioral functioning, and mental disorders (Groger et al., 2016). In essence, the brain can be imprinted with functional ‘scars’ from early life traumas that significantly impact a person’s memory, learning, and capacity for emotional control (Groger et al., 2016). Research has shown that both physical and psychological resilience may help individuals who have experienced childhood traumas to survive and thrive (Grabbe & Miller-Karas, 2017).

In light of the function of resilience to act as a protective factor against trauma, several trauma treatments models have been developed to explore this connection. The Trauma Resiliency Model (TRM) was developed to take a mind-body approach and focus on the biological basis of trauma (Grabbe & Miller-Karas, 2017). The developers of TRM recognized that the ability to track sensations of wellbeing was transformative for survivors of complex and

longstanding trauma (Grabbe & Miller-Karas, 2017). While TRM was created to train clinicians and other professionals assisting children and adults dealing with trauma, the Community Resiliency Model (CRM) is designed to train community members to help both themselves and others in their social network. The goal of the CRM is to support individuals of all ages to better understand their nervous systems and to be able to read sensations associated with their own wellbeing, which the CRM calls the "Resilient Zone" (Grabbe & Miller-Karas, 2017).

The SEE Learning program's trauma-informed approach and use of a strengths-based resilience lens is based on the aforementioned CRM (CCSCBE, 2019). The program strives to be applicable to all students, including those who have suffered trauma, by focusing on the strengths of individual students. Particularly for students who have experienced trauma, the program seeks to help them develop a sense of control and competence. This is directly addressed in the second chapter of the program titled "Building Resilience." The individual skills that consist of building resilience in the SEE Learning curriculum are designed to help students to help students explore the important role their bodies play in their well-being and cultivation of body-awareness (CCSCBE, 2019). The SEE Learning program defines resilience as:

> "The ability to respond in a productive way to challenges, stress, threats, and unexpected surprises, which might otherwise destabilize a person. Resilience in SEE Learning can be cultivated on an individual level, an interpersonal level (supportive relationships), a structural level (policies and institutions that promote well-being and resilience), and a cultural level (values, beliefs and practices that promote resilience)" (CCSCBE, 2019, p. 5)

While the program's approach to resilience is guided by current research on strengths and resilience approaches, it is important to understand how educators are already understanding resilience and identifying it in their students. SEE Learning's expectation is that educators who are trained in the program will deliver the program's curriculum to their students. It is crucial to understand how educators who have yet to receive SEE Learning are making sense of the

concept of resilience in their classroom, to explore the alignment between their perceptions of their students' resilience and the SEE Learning approach. This study seeks to understand how those educators who have not received SEE Learning training understand resilience and identify how resilience is cultivated in their students.

### *Theoretical Framework*

For the purposes of this study, a theoretical approach provides guidance on understanding how students' resilience is cultivated. The SEE Learning program recognizes that resilience can be cultivated on the individual, interpersonal, social, and cultural level (CCSCBE, 2019). This conceptualization of resilience closely aligns with the Social Ecological Model (SEM) of health that recognizes health to be impacted by interactions at the individual, the interpersonal, the group/community, and the social, physical, and political environments (Glanz, Rimer, & Viswanath, 2015).

Through the SEM framework, students' resilience is understood to be cultivated at four levels of society: (1) intrapersonal level, which consists of the individual student and their knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors; (2) interpersonal level, which consists of personal relationships such as caregivers and friends; (3) community level, which consists of spaces in which social relationships occur such as schools and neighborhoods; and (4) societal level, which consists of the larger system in which economic and social policies are created (World Health Organization, 2011). The current study incorporates a SEM of resilience in the analysis of the qualitative data collected with a focus on the intrapersonal, interpersonal, and community level factors that impact children's ability to cultivate and maintain resilience (Ungar, 2013).

In addition to a theoretical framework, this study will integrate knowledge from the literature on resilience in the context of child development. This is described in detail in the following section.

# Chapter 2: Literature Review

As literature has increasingly shown the importance of fostering children's social and emotional learning skills, a growing number of social and emotional learning programs have been implemented in schools throughout the United States and in countries all over the world. One social and emotional learning program in particular, the SEE Learning program, has adopted a trauma-informed lens through the inclusion of resilience cultivation in its teachings of social and emotional skills to children. This section will provide an overview of the literature pertaining to the importance of social and emotional skills, resilience cultivation, and social and emotional learning programs for child development. It will also include an overview of the SEE Learning program and the purpose of the current study.

## *Social and Emotional Skills*

The interaction of abilities that have traditionally been separated into cognitive and noncognitive categories have been shown to facilitate children's success in the educational system and beyond (Duckworth & Schoon, 2010, Kautz et al., 2014). The desire to achieve, in school or elsewhere, is shown to be strongly influenced by the social and emotional skills that encompass both cognitive and noncognitive abilities (Jones, Greenberg, & Crowley, 2015). These social and emotional skills consist both of intrapersonal skills, such as self-control and emotion regulation, and interpersonal skills, such as communication and perspective taking (Domitrovich, Durlak, Staley, & Weissberg, 2017). Strong interpersonal skills are essential for children to navigate social exchanges, both in and out of the classroom. The positive social exchanges that children with developed interpersonal skills are more likely to have with adults and with their peers assist them in gaining the social support necessary to accomplish their goals (Jones, Greenberg, & Crowley, 2015). In line with this connection to achievement, research has

also shown that the cultivation of social and emotional skills can reap lifelong benefits in terms of better outcomes as adults in areas such as economic stability and overall health (Zins et al., 2007; Moffitt et al., 2011).

It is vital to acknowledge that the social and physical environments children grow up in have just as much, if not more, of an impact on their short-term and long-term health as biological and genetic factors. Marginalization due to socio-economic status, exposure to trauma, and other adversities children may face throughout their upbringing can have significant effects on their development and lifelong wellbeing (Maggi, Irwin, Siddiqi, & Hertzman, 2010; Moore, McDonald, Carlon, & O'Rourke, 2015). Spencer, Raman, O'Hare, & Tamburlini (2019) suggest four categories of actions to improve the social and physical environments, and general inequity, that many children are exposed to. These four categories are: strengthening individuals, strengthening communities, ameliorating working and living conditions, and advocating for healthy macroeconomic policies. The categories of strengthening individuals and communities are where the development of children's social and emotional skills can serve as a protective factor and play a significant role (Bagdi & Vacca, 2005). The cultivation and maintenance of the social-emotional skill that is resilience in particular has been shown to significantly benefit both individuals and communities in interpreting and coping effectively with adverse experiences (Bagdi & Vacca, 2005).

### *Trauma and Resilience*

Research has indicated that the experience of childhood trauma resulting from adversities such as poverty and exposure to mental or physical abuse can have significant lifetime effects (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2016; Groger et al., 2016). The impact of trauma can extend to practically all systems of the human body, from continuous biological changes in

the neurotransmitter and neuroendocrine systems to areas of the brain linked to mood regulation (Nemeroff, 2016). Such biological effects of trauma can have significant effects on a person's memory, learning, and emotional control abilities (Groger et al., 2016). Despite such findings, there is strong evidence that individuals with biological, physical, and psychological resilience may be able to survive and thrive through even the most severe experiences of childhood trauma (Grabbe & Miller-Karas, 2017).

### *Resilience*

As there is no singular, universal concept of resilience, the definition of resilience varies between disciplines and within disciplines themselves (Noltemeyer & Bush, 2013; Hart et al., 2016). In Hart et al.'s (2016) review of the research on resilience, the most frequent element in definitions used by academic authors involved the understanding that resilience presumes adversity and coincides with it. Adversity is associated with both acute and chronic experiences that have the capability of producing disadvantageous consequences by interrupting regular functioning (Riley & Masten, 2005). How resilience precisely relates to adversity, and what types of adversity are considered, is where definitions diverge.

To understand the literature on resilience, it is beneficial to look at the "four waves" of resilience research development as observed by Masten (2007). The first wave of this research was prompted by observations of children who were surprisingly successful in education settings despite disadvantageous conditions (Masten, 2007). This wave focused on the neurobiological aspects of resilience and identify characteristics in individuals that appeared to be correlates of resilience (Murphy, 1962). Hart et al. (2016) notes that due to the first wave of findings on resilience that promoted a view of resilience as solely internal, the individual is then burdened with the responsibility of compensating for their adverse circumstances. The second wave of

research sought to understand the relationships between correlates of resilience. Researchers focused on identifying both the risk and protective factors that mediated and moderated advantageous outcomes (Gunnar, 2006; Masten, 2007). Therefore, this wave began to shift from focus exclusively on the individual to considering environmental factors such as children's caregivers, neighborhoods, schools, and other institutions within their communities that may impact their resilience (Hart et al., 2016). While much of the first and second waves of research was focused on theorizing resilience and the factors that influence it, the third wave centered putting these findings from previous waves into practice through developing and piloting interventions that attempted to ameliorate outcomes for people facing various adversities (Masten, 2007; Hart et al., 2016). These mediators revealed the significance of context and culture in determining meaningful outcomes, as well as the multifaceted nature of resilience (Ungar, 2004; Hart et al., 2016). The research showed that the presentation of resilience can look different from person to person and from circumstance to circumstance, as there is a wide range of advertises that people experience (Ungar, 2004). Thus, "a focus on wider context and culture encourages a more systemic understanding of resilience in which the individual and his or her environment interact to produce, and construct, outcomes" (Hart et al., 2016). Despite this wave's efforts to apply the previous wave's findings through interventions, there was a lack of research done in schools to understand the influence that resilience has on child development.

This leads to the fourth wave of resilience exploration in which the research is steadily growing and is claimed to be in ascendance (Maston, 2001; Hart et al., 2016). This rise in influence is primarily due to the fourth wave's integration and building off, and integration of, the findings from the previous three waves, while simultaneously applying more comprehensive approaches to the research to allow for a deeper cognizance of the complex, multifaceted nature

of resilience, in which it is understood as a process rather than a firm personality trait (Rutter, 2012; Southwick et al., 2014). The fourth wave of research has shifted from the previously dominant individual focus to a more multi-level perspective through a social ecological understanding of resilience (Bronfenbenner, 1977; Ungar, 2004). A social ecological framework to approaching the study of resilience puts a greater emphasis on the role of the social and physical environments associated with positive child developmental outcomes when children face adversities (Ungar, 2011). Through Ungar's multi-level research of resilience cultivation in children in more than a dozen countries it was shown that:

> "In the context of exposure to significant adversity, resilience is both the capacity of individuals to navigate their way to the psychological, social, cultural, and physical resources that sustain their well-being, and their capacity individually and collectively to negotiate for these resources to be provided and experienced in culturally meaningful ways" (Ungar, 2008, p. 225).

Thus, while the individual does play a role in cultivating resilience, a collective role is crucial.

In the social ecological model, the collective influence on individual's resilience can be categorized by microsystem, mesosystem, and exosystem levels of human and environmental interactions (Bronfenbenner, 1977; Ungar, 2011). The microsystem level of interactions that have the first impact on the developmental characteristics closely associated with resilience in children consists of their family members, peers, and educators that they are most consistently and directly in contact with (Ungar, 2011). Some of the developmental characteristics that have been identified as influential to the development of resilience and are shaped by microsystem interactions are self-esteem, ability to problem solve, attribution style, and temperament (Bronfenbenner, 1977). The mesosystem level consists of the interactions between microsystems, and regulates the types of developmentally supportive resources accessible that are accessible to children and that impact their ability to be resilient (Ungar, 2011). The

exosystem level of interactions considers the institutional environments that children's caregivers interact with and through which resources and policies are produced and disturbed (Ungar, 2011). While there is a growing understanding that resilience is cultivated through various social networks, there is still limited research, especially qualitative research, in this area of study (Bronfenbenner, 1977; Ungar, 2011). The school, in particular, is an institutional environment that incorporates all the aforementioned levels of interactions, yet has not been the focus of resilience studies until very recently. The current literature indicates a substantial need to understand how the social-emotional skill of resilience is expressed and cultivated by students in the classroom setting. As this study on resilience is situated within a social-emotional learning program, it is important to first understand the history and current literature on the effectiveness of social-emotional learning programs.

### *Social-Emotional Learning Programs*

The social and emotional learning (SEL) term garnered significant attention in 1994 when a group of researchers, practitioners, and child advocates involved in a range of youth development work came together for a meeting at the Fetzer Institute (Cherniss, Extein, Goleman, & Weissberg, 2006). Through their efforts, the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) was created with the purpose of instituting evidence-based SEL programs in education institutions ranging from preschool to high school (Durlak, Domitrovich, Weissberg, & Gullotta, 2015). The five competencies identified by CASEL as central to SEL are self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making (Durlak et al., 2015). The wide range of terms and definitions that align with SEL and reflect these five competencies can be organized into the domains of intrapersonal and interpersonal social-emotional skills (Durlak, Domitrovich, Weissberg, &

Gullotta, 2015). Intrapersonal social-emotional skills (such as coping tactics, emotion regulation, and self-control) are those that are considered necessary for effectual global functioning as an individual, while interpersonal skills (such as perspective taking, communication, and social problem solving) are those that are necessary for constructive interactions with others (Durlak, Domitrovich, Weissberg, & Gullotta, 2015).

Although the implementation of SEL can differ depending on the setting, the five competencies of SEL as outlined by CASEL are largely acknowledged to be at the center of such programs (Hoffman, 2009). Generally speaking, the SEL programs that have appeared in the last decade focus on students' emotional processes, interpersonal skills, and social problem-solving capabilities in classroom-based settings (Jones & Bouffard, 2012). Often, SEL programs are incorporated into school settings through one weekly half-hour or hour-long lessons (Jones & Bouffard, 2012). The primary deliverers of such SEL programs are educators from preschool to high school institutions (Schonert-Reichl, 2017). Over the past twenty years, thousands of schools in the United States and in other countries throughout the world have incorporated SEL programs into their curricula (Greenberg, Domitrovich, Weissberg, & Durlak, 2018).

As the number of SEL programs steadily increases, several studies have sought to understand both the short-term and long-term impact of such programs on participants. In a meta-analysis conducted by Taylor, Oberle, Durlak, & Weissberg (2017), 82 school-based SEL programs involving over 97,000 kindergarten to high school students were examined to understand the follow-up effects of SEL programs. Follow-up outcomes were collected from six months to 18 years after students were exposed to interventions. Regardless of students' race, socio-economic background and school location, SEL participants were shown to have better outcomes than control participants in indicators of wellbeing, social-emotional skills, and

attitudes (Taylor, Oberle, Durlak, & Weissberg, 2017). At follow-up, social-emotional skill development was shown to be the strongest predictor of wellbeing (Taylor, Oberle, Durlak, & Weissberg, 2017).

In another meta-analysis that focused on 213 SEL programs from kindergarten to 12th grade, the findings also emphasized positive impacts of SEL interventions (Durlak et al., 2011). In comparison to controls, students who participated in the SEL programs exhibited considerably better behavior, attitudes, emotional skills, and academic performances (Durlak et al., 2011). Specifically, SEL participants showed an 11-percentile-point gain in academic achievement (Durlak et al., 2011). It was identified that the most effective SEL programs of the 213 analyzed incorporated active methods of learning, emphasize adequate time on skill development, had clear learning objectives, and used a sequenced step-by-step instruction approach (Durlak et al., 2011).

### *Social, Emotional, and Ethical (SEE) Learning Program*

The Social, Emotional, and Ethical (SEE) Learning program is an international social-emotional education program established in 1998 at Emory University in partnership with the Dalai Lama. Its main purpose is to promote social, emotional, and ethical learning in kindergarten through high school (K-12) classrooms around the world. The program is based on the SEE Learning framework that builds on the work of SEL investigators and implementers, and it aims to take a holistic approach to education and promote both greater "emotional literacy" and "ethical literacy" in students.

The SEE Learning program is unique amongst SEL programs as it has built on the pioneering work done by the SEL community through the additional inclusion of components not commonly found in SEL programs. One central component that the SEE Learning program

has added to its approach towards SEL is the incorporation of a strengths-based resilience lens, meaning that the program strives to be applicable for all students, including those who have suffered trauma, by focusing on the strengths of individual students. The SEE Learning program's trauma-informed approach and use of a strengths-based resilience lens is based on the Community Resiliency Model (CRM). This trauma treatment model was developed to account for the way resilience can act as a protective factor against trauma (Grabbe & Miller-Karas, 2017). The CRM centers the biological basis of trauma and takes a mind-body approach to trauma treatment (Grabbe & Miller-Karas, 2017). The main purpose of the CRM is to support individuals of all ages become more knowledgeable of their nervous system and have the ability to track sensations linked to their own wellbeing, which the CRM identifies as the "Resilient Zone" (Grabbe & Miller-Karas, 2017). The SEE Learning program incorporates the CRM and the cultivation of resilience skills through one of the seven chapters of the program, titled "Building Resilience." The individual skills that build resilience in the SEE Learning curriculum are designed to help students cultivate a sense of control and competence through developing body-awareness.

***Purpose***

The purpose of the current study is to understand how kindergarten to middle school educators in the Atlanta, Georgia area, who have not received SEE Learning training, understand resilience and identify how resilience is cultivated in their students. The information from this research will help inform the SEE Learning program staff in preparing educators in Atlanta to implement the curriculum across public, private, and charter schools. The study will also contribute to the limited research on how student resilience is understood and cultivated in the classroom.

# Chapter 3: Methods

## *Introduction*

This qualitative research project is part of a larger mixed-method investigation through the Emory Center for Contemplative Science and Compassion-Based Ethics to understand how educators understand core aspects of the SEE Learning program with the ultimate intention of developing scales to measure the central competencies of the program. The Emory faculty member leading this project is Dr. Tyralynn Frazier.

This study utilized qualitative, in-depth, one-on-one interviews to better understand educators' perceptions of student resilience. This methodology allowed researchers to assess how educators' perspectives of student resilience aligned with the SEE Learning's definition and approaches to student resilience cultivation.

## *Study Sample and Recruitment*

The target population for this study was kindergarten to middle school educators at any educational institution in the Atlanta, Georgia area. This population was chosen in order to better understand how teachers who had not yet been trained in SEE Learning perceived the core aspects of the curriculum. The inclusion criteria for this study were as follows: (1) kindergarten through middle school (8th grade) educator teaching in metropolitan Atlanta or its surrounding suburbs; (2) above the age of 18; (3) with no prior exposure to the SEE Learning program. The study staff contacted educators who had previously participated in the SEE Learning program to recruit other educators for the study. The recruiters were educators at private, public, and charter schools in the Atlanta area. Potential study participants were contacted by recruiters in person or through e-mail correspondence. Study participants received a $25 gift card as compensation for their participation.

The study's sample includes interviews with seventeen educators. Sixteen of the study participants identified as female and one identified as male. Ten of the participants identified as white and seven identified as black. The participants ranged in age from 27 to 51 years. Ten participants are currently elementary school educators and seven are middle school educators. Ten of the educators currently teach at private schools and seven of the educators teach at either public or charter schools.

### *In-Depth Interview Guide*

A semi-structured interview script guided the in-depth, one-on-one interviews. The interview guide was informed by semi-structured focus groups conducted during the summer of 2019 with camp teachers who were implementing the SEE Learning program with the children of mothers who had experienced domestic violence and were housed at the Women's Resource Center. During the focus groups, camp teachers were asked about their perspectives on the core concepts in the SEE Learning program and more broadly about their experiences with applying the SEE Learning program in the summer camp. From these semi-structured focus groups, key domains of inquiry were identified that informed the current guide.

This study's interview guide was designed to explore teachers' attitudes, knowledge, and beliefs around social and emotional development in students. It included questions about their exposure to and understanding of social and emotional learning programs as well as fundamental SEE Learning concepts such as resilience, compassion, and kindness. The guide was reviewed by both SEE Learning programmers and study staff to ensure the key concepts were being properly assessed. This was primarily done by assessing the most current SEE Learning program documents to ensure that the interview guide reflected the literature. The guide was also revised

during the interview process through the use of observation notes that identified if and when clarification was needed for interview questions.

### *Procedures*

A total of 17 interviews, ranging in length from 29 to 60 minutes, were conducted from September 2019 to January 2020 by three interviewers trained in qualitative methods. Interviews were primarily conducted in person in classrooms at the four schools in which the participants teach. The four schools consisted of a private school in metropolitan Atlanta, GA serving students from pre-kindergarten through 12th grade; a private school in the suburbs of Atlanta serving students from pre-kindergarten through 6th grade; a public school in metropolitan Atlanta, serving kindergarten through 8th-grade students; and a charter school also in metropolitan Atlanta, serving kindergarten through 8th-grade students. An additional three interviews were conducted and recorded through Zoom Video Conferencing to accommodate participants' availability.

Before the start of each interview, participants provided oral informed consent to participate in the study. Each participant was provided an explanation of the purpose of the interview and assured that they could voluntarily refuse to answer questions or terminate the interview at any time. Consent was also obtained from participants to record the interview. Brief notes were written during and after each interview to document initial thoughts, ideas, and evaluations of the interview questions.

### *Analysis*

Interviews were analyzed by thematically analyzing transcripts. The audio recordings of the interviews were transcribed verbatim by four researchers. All transcripts were de-identified by the researchers to protect the privacy of participants and maintain confidentiality. All project

materials were stored on a secured drive in compliance with IRB regulations. Recordings were deleted once transcriptions were completed. Transcripts were uploaded into MAXQDA® 2018 software to organize, code, and analyze the data.

Codes were developed through inductive and deductive processes in order to understand how educators' perceptions of student resilience aligned with the SEE Learning program's definition and approaches to student resilience cultivation. Inductive codes were created based on what was found in the data as noted in qualitative theory (Hennink et al., 2011). Deductive codes were created through the theoretical applications of the SEM.

The transcripts were coded using the MAXQDA qualitative software. Prior to the application of codes phase, the primary researcher read through the transcripts in their entirety. The codes were then applied to three transcripts by the primary researcher and an assistant coder and assessed for intercoder reliability. In this process, the codes were refined and textual data was segmented and coded according to the refined definitions developed for each code. Any inconsistences or changes to a code and its definition were documented with memos within the software. The coded texts were then systematically reviewed by the head coder and memos were was used to highlight areas of the text in need of additional codes and revision. After finalizing the codebook, the head coder independently coded all 17 transcripts.

In order to allow for comparisons between different types of schools, the researcher created different document groups within MAXQDA. Each group consisted of interviews from the same school, which was noted as either a private or public/charter school. Patterns and themes were analyzed and compared across participants and schools. The researcher compared the relevant text associated with each code of relevance, described the primary concept within each, and grouped these concepts into major themes that fell under four domains. The analysis

focuses on these four domains: (1) educators' definition of resilience, (2) educators' perceptions of student challenges, (3) educators' identification of student resilience skills, and (4) types of support educators feel students need for resilience cultivation. Within these domains, both deductive and inductive themes emerged from the analysis.

### *Ethical considerations*

This study included human subjects and their personal information, so IRB approval was required. Protocol and research instruments were submitted to Emory's IRB, and the study was approved by the Institutional Review Board of Emory University in the United States (IRB000109277). All participants in the study were informed about the purpose and scope of the study prior to agreeing to participate and were instructed that they could end their participation at any time. Participants were also notified all interviews would be recorded and their information would remain confidential.

## Chapter 4: Results

The purpose of conducting this qualitative study was to understand how kindergarten to middle school educators who have not received SEE Learning training understand resilience and identify how resilience, as defined in the SEE Learning program, is cultivated in their students. A total of seventeen semi-structured, in-depth interviews were individually conducted with kindergarten to middle school educators in the Atlanta area. Ten of the educators currently teach at private schools and seven of the educators teach at public or charter schools. Sixteen of the educators identify as women and one of the educators identifies as a man.

Upon analysis of the qualitative data, results were organized into four domains. The first domain, "Definitions of Resilience", provides insight into how educators understand resilience for themselves, as well as whether or not their understandings of resilience align with the SEE Learning definition of resilience. The second domain, "Educators' Perceptions of Challenges for Students", explores the obstacles educators perceive their students to be experiencing, for which they would need to cultivate resilience for. The third domain, "Student Resilience Skills", consists of the skills educators feel that their students already have or will need to develop to be resilient. The final domain, "Types of Support Needed for Student Resilience Cultivation", explores the types of support educators recognize as necessary for their students to be able to foster their resilience. These domains are highlighted in Table 1.

**Table 1: Four Identified Domains of Kindergarten to Middle Educators' Understanding of Students' Resilience**

| Domain | Definition/Characteristics | Example Quote(s) |
|---|---|---|
| **Definitions of Resilience** | • How the educator defines the concept of resilience<br>• Main aspects of educator-defined resilience:<br>o "Obstacles" or "challenges" are necessary for resilience<br>o the ability to "troubleshoot", "overcome", and/or "bounce back" from these challenges is what makes a person resilient | • "When you have a challenge, personally or professionally, not just stepping away from it. Not that there's any shame in stepping away sometimes, but always going back and saying what can I do to make this better? …Just like having that reflective piece to make sure you keep moving forward." (Karen, Public School)<br>• Oh, resilience, like that stick-to-it-ness, right? It's the being able to stick in there and overcome obstacles when it seemed like there's no way, um, for you to come out of it on the winning end. So, to me, and it- it takes grit, like you...again, you gotta sit in that. You've got to sit in it, you gotta sit in the struggle. (Kourtney, Private School) |
| **Educators' Perceptions of Challenges for Students** | • Most common challenge educators recognized in students was the ability to identify and manage their emotions<br>• Several private school educators felt a challenge for their students was not experiencing enough challenges | • "I have another student that gets upset really easy and when he makes this other student upset, [the other student] tries so hard to keep it together but he loses it and just gets angry." (Holly, Private School)<br>• "But that child came in just constantly on edge. You have him like freaking out and going under tables and throwing things and running. Like his whole world was fight or flight." (Madaline, Private School) |
| **Student Resilience Skills** | • Common skills educators identified students need for resilience:<br>o Ability to listen to others' perspectives<br>o Communicate emotions with peers and educators<br>o Self-awareness<br>o Ability to resolve conflicts with peers<br>• Several private school educators felt students need to learn to solve issues on their own | • "They need to know how to communicate effectively, using their words, how they feel, and how someone made them feel and why. So, understanding…okay I feel this way but then also going deeper and saying why you probably feel this way because of what someone did and communicating with them the problem. So, yeah, communication, self-awareness, and awareness of others, and empathy." (Jasmine, Public School)<br>• "The parents can't just always be calling and saying I don't want that kid near my kid anymore. And it's like no, let's have these kids learn how to resolve their issues and talk and work things out on the playground...It's like let's resolve this issue and figure out how to solve it, not just say mom calls the principle and they have to be separated." "(Antoinette, Private School) |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Types of Support Needed for Student Resilience Cultivation** | • All educators felt that they had a role in students' resilience cultivation<br>• Educators' knowledge of students impacted their ability to support students' resilience cultivation<br>• Parents have a role in supporting students' resilience cultivation | • "First of all, I think this starts with establishing- I can't say enough about establishing a relationship with children, with students. Because usually if you establish a relationship with students and you understand what's going on with them, you understand their backstory- because everybody has a story." (Kourtney, Private School)<br>• "I would say also...communicating with families at home is huge…I feel like just working as a team to support that child and not necessarily calling home to get them in trouble." (Madaline, Private School) |

### *Definitions of Resilience*

The majority of educators were able to provide their own definition of resilience. The nature of the relationship between educators' concepts of resilience was interpreted as two-fold: (1) "obstacles" or "challenges" are necessary for resilience and (2) the ability to "troubleshoot", "overcome", and/or "bounce back" from these challenges is what makes a person resilient. Generally, educators' understandings of resilience were aligned with the SEE Learning definition of resilience. This SEE Learning program defines resilience as "the ability to respond in a productive way to challenges, stress, threats, and unexpected surprises that might otherwise destabilize a person." When asked, "How would you define the word resilience?", the language used in educator responses was wide-ranging and included phrases such as: (1) "Simply put, never giving up." (2) "The ability to do hard things." (3) "Fight back, push back." These perceptions of resilience lack the element of "responding in a productive way" that is central in the SEE Learning definition. However, one educator included an example of responding to a problem in a productive way by stating,

> When you have a challenge, personally or professionally, not just stepping away from it. Not that there's any shame in stepping away sometimes, but always going back and saying what can I do to make this better? …Just like having that reflective piece to make sure you keep moving forward.

In this quote, the educator identifies that there are certain steps required to show resilience, in this case, having the ability to reflect and respond to the challenge. Overall, educators identified that the ability to recuperate from a challenge is needed for people to be resilient which is in concordance with the SEE Learning definition of resilience.

### *Educators' Perceptions of Challenges for Students*

As challenges were identified as a crucial aspect of resilience by both educators and the SEE Learning program, it is important to understand what general challenges educators perceive their students to be navigating. The most common challenge educators recognized in their students was their ability to identify and manage their emotions. Educators provided a variety of examples of how this challenge manifests in their students. One educator noted a student who "…came in just constantly on edge…freaking out and going under tables and throwing things and running. Like his whole world was fight or flight." Another educator mentioned, "I have another student that gets upset really easy and when he makes this other student upset, [the other student] tries so hard to keep it together but he loses it and just gets angry." This example shows how a student's personal obstacle, managing their emotions, can impact another student's ability to do so as well, thus, influencing both of their resilience capabilities. Several educators identified that this difficulty managing emotions showed up in their students as either "shutting down" or having an "outburst". An educator added that, "…they can't recognize when they're getting frustrated and worked up soon enough to figure out how to calm themselves." While these particular challenges regarding emotion recognition and regulation tend to be intrapersonal in nature, they are affected by, and affect, the student's peers and educators and thus become a challenge for them as well.

While managing emotions was overall the most common challenge educators perceived their students to have, there was a unique student challenge acknowledged by several of the private school educators that highlighted how the types of challenges students face are influenced by socio-economic factors. One private school educator noted that,

> A lot of our families come from...you know, upper-middle class or upper-class families, and to be quite honest, they just...haven't really had to...exercise [resiliency], you know, they just haven't really had those obstacles in life that will require them to even understand or know how to do that, or to build any resiliency.

This educator recognizes that, due to the economic privilege many of the students are accustomed to, their challenge is that they do not experience many challenges that they must learn to respond productively to so that they can be resilient. Another private school educator mentioned that,

> And at the end of the day, you're not gonna be successful if you've never overcome adversity, and you're never gonna be successful if you're not held accountable. And I think that if there's one thing, not from the school, but something I wish- if I had magic wand and I could make better, it's to take those parents and go, “You’re ruining your child right now". Um, because the successful kids are the ones who overcome adversity and, um, deal with adversity and are not going to jump off a cliff the second something bad happens in their life.

This educator perceives that the students’ parents can be a major challenge for the students as they prevent the students from being able to struggle through an obstacle and learn from it. This type of challenge identified by private school educators, which is influenced by the students’ parents and their financial circumstances was not identified by any of the charter or public school educators. Many of the private school educators felt that, due the abundance of resources and protection students receive from their parents, they were not being exposed to challenges and thus were not building the skills necessary to respond productively to challenges.

***Student Resilience Skills***

As the other core aspect of resilience, in accordance to the SEE Learning definition, is the ability to respond productively to challenges, educators were asked about the skills students need in order to respond productively to challenges with other students. Their responses ranged widely. Some of the skills most commonly mentioned were being able to listen to others' perspectives, communicating their emotions with peers and educators, having self-awareness, and being able to resolve conflicts with peers. While these skills were typically mentioned as distinctive from each other, educators also showed them to be interconnected, and needed as a whole to be able to respond productively to obstacles. One educator connected these different skills together as necessary for resilience:

> They need to know how to communicate effectively, using their words, how they feel, and how someone made them feel and why. So, understanding…okay I feel this way but then also going deeper and saying why you probably feel this way because of what someone did and communicating with them the problem. So, yeah, communication, self-awareness, and awareness of others, and empathy.

In this example, the educator identifies that both the challenges and the skills needed to be resilient are centered around the cultivation of relationships with others. Another educator noted that she felt that students who had larger friend circles would be more resilient and, thus, skills that allow for strong relationship building were necessary for responding to challenges productively. She stated,

> I think the ones that might show more resilience are normally the ones who have a really good support system around them, like have a lot of friends around them and are kind of, you know, into more of the social scene. So, I can normally tell if they're not connected to the classroom environment as a whole or are showing like really strong social ties with other students, I can normally say that they will respond to, you know, a negative, um, influencer in a different way than those who are, you know, into like larger higher- um social circles I guess.

As mentioned in the previous section, there were differences in the identification of resilience cultivation skills between private school educators and public and charter school educators. A

private school educator noted that the students need to be able to not just rely on their parents to navigate problems. He stated that,

> The parents can't just always be calling and saying I don't want that kid near my kid anymore. And it's like no, let's have these kids learn how to resolve their issues and talk and work things out on the playground. I mean it wasn't physical. They're not in any kind of physical danger. It's just someone says this one is cheating, and someone says no. It's like let's resolve this issue and figure out how to solve it, not just say mom calls the principle and they have to be separated.

This private school educator recognized that a student's parents can hinder the cultivation of the resilience skill of problem solving.

***Types of Support Needed for Student Resilience Cultivation***

All of the educators felt that it was, at least somewhat, the educator's role to help their students develop skills for resilience cultivation. The educators discussed in some capacity how it was important that they know their students in order to help them cultivate resilience. The type of information that educators felt they needed to understand about their students ranged from knowing the students' families to knowing the students' typical behaviors in the classroom. For some educators, it was crucial that they had a good rapport with their students so that they could have a better understanding of what their students were going through outside the classroom, particularly in their lives at home. Several educators noted the importance of strong communication and building relationships with the students, so that they were more familiar with signs both of resilience and of struggling to be resilient. This allowed educators to better understand individual students' challenges with being resilient, as well as their individual ways of being resilient.

For other educators, the idea of knowing the student was more focused on having knowledge of their students' strengths and/or weaknesses in the classroom, rather than knowledge of their lives outside the classroom. In this aspect, several educators discussed how

knowing the strengths with which a student come into the classroom helps them support the student in navigating obstacles they may come across. This is a direct way that the educators' relationship with their students can support students' cultivation of resilience. Having knowledge of the students' weaknesses, whether those weaknesses were related to building relationships with other students in the classroom or succeeding in their academic studies, felt vital for the educators so that they could support the students in navigating their weaknesses. One educator noted the benefit of knowing the student as a whole:

> First of all, I think this starts with establishing- I can't say enough about establishing a relationship with children, with students. Because usually if you establish a relationship with students and you understand what's going on with them, you understand their backstory- because everybody has a story. Everyone has a backstory. So, what is making this child- That's my question. What is making this child difficult? What is making them want to exhibit defiant behavior? What's making them want to make everyone laugh and be the class clown, like there's a reason for that. Is it just attention-seeking behavior, is it, you know, what is it?

Educators also extensively discussed the role of parents on students' resilience cultivation. What is unique about this theme is that educators primarily provided examples of ways students' parents hinder their resilience cultivation. The highlighting of ways students' parents provide challenges to the students' resilience offers insight into what is needed and not needed from parents to support students' resilience cultivation. There was variation in what educators perceived as challenging about students' parents depending on which school the educator taught at. Two educators who taught at a private school spoke similarly about how parents were challenging for their students. They felt that the parents would not allow their children to face obstacles in their studies, and that the parents did not see the importance of failing in order to understand how to deal with problems and eventually succeed. These two private school educators felt it was important for the students to struggle in the school environment in order to productively deal with challenges or, in other words, be resilient. This

perception of students' challenges in relation to their parents differed from that of an educator at a charter school made up of students who had less economic stability and who faced significantly more adversity than those at the private school. This charter school educator provided the example of a student who was facing the challenge of her parents separating and did not have the proper support to cope with this stressor:

> But, his adversities or the things that he was trying to overcome in that moment, as I look back on it, was having to push through the emotions of having his parents separating and then being in a new school and trying to fit in. '

For other educators, it was their own personal challenges with students' parents that hindered their ability to support the students' resilience cultivation. Three of these educators spoke about similar challenges with students' parents. One educator felt that parents were not always "on the same page" as educators in terms of what is best for their children and felt it hindered the children from succeeding in school. A similar frustration was expressed by another educator who did not always agree on the decisions being made by the parents to help the child do well.

On the other hand, other educators directly stressed the importance of parental support in the cultivation of their students' resilience. One educator felt that the student's parents' trusting them was needed for educators to support their students' resilience cultivation. Another educator at the same school felt that he did have strong communication and working relationships with his students' parents, which helped him create a safe space to help his students succeed.

# Chapter 5: Discussion

## *Summary of Findings*

The present study provides insight into how kindergarten to middle school educators who have not received SEE Learning training understand resilience and identify how resilience, as defined in the SEE Learning program, is cultivated in their students. In-depth interviews were conducted with seventeen kindergarten to middle school educators who had not yet been exposed to the SEE Learning program. The central themes that were deduced from in-depth interviews should inform the SEE Learning program in the training of educators to deliver the program to students, as well as future public health research in an effort to understand the role of resilience for the overall wellbeing of children. The findings of this study are summarized below.

Overall, educators used similar language as the SEE Learning program's to define resilience, and their understanding of resilience aligned with the SEE Learning program's definition. The majority of educators understood resilience as the ability to overcome challenges or obstacles. While this is generally complementary to the SEE Learning program's definition of resilience, there was a lack of recognition by educators of the component of responding to challenges in a *productive* way. This missing piece in educators' definitions of resilience suggests that there is a need for educators to better understand how the ability to overcome challenges should have an overall beneficial impact on their students. Simply being able to overcome challenges may end up having harmful effects on students' wellbeing.

The most common challenge educators recognized in their students was their ability to identify and manage their emotions. This student challenge was identified by educators across types of schools and grade levels. There was a unique student challenge of not having enough of challenges due to socio-economic privileges observed by several of the private school educators.

This distinction is important to note as it shows how challenges and the ability to respond productively to them can look different due to aspects such as economic class and family support. This shows how the challenges that students face are impacted by various levels of the Social Ecological Model (SEM). Not only do students' intrapersonal experiences and interpersonal relationships create challenges, but larger organizational and community factors create different obstacles for them.

A unique student challenge observed by several of the private school educators was of not having enough challenges due to socio-economic privileges. This distinction is important to note, as it shows how challenges and the ability to respond productively to them can look different depending on aspects such as socio-economic class and family support. This specific observation shows how the challenges students face are affected by various levels of the Social Ecological Model (SEM). Not only do students' intrapersonal experiences and interpersonal relationships create challenges, but larger organizational and community factors also create different obstacles for them.

The skills that educators most mentioned that they felt their students needed for resilience cultivation were being able to listen to others' perspectives, communicating their emotions with peers and educators, having self-awareness, and being able to resolve conflicts with peers. All the skills mentioned benefit both the individual student and the individuals that they interact with. The educators' identification of these skills suggest that they do not see students' resilience cultivation as solely an individual activity, but rather one that requires engagement with others and the larger community. These observations demonstrate how the skills that deal with the intrapersonal, interpersonal, and community levels of the SEM are all needed for students to truly cultivate resilience. This finding aligns with the current literature on resilience that

identifies both intrapersonal and interpersonal characteristics as influential to the development of resilience (Bronfenbenner, 1977).

All educators felt, that to some degree, it was their role to help support students' resilience cultivation. Educators expressed that the best way to support their students' resilience cultivation was by getting to know their student. The type of knowledge educators felt would be beneficial to providing support ranged from knowing students' typical behaviors to being familiar with the students' family situation. This provided insight into another crucial type of support identified by educators that is needed for students' resilience cultivation: the support from students' parents. Educator responses varied on what parental support should look like for students. Many educators felt that parents and educators should have a strong line of communication and work together to provide support for the students' resilience cultivation. Several private school educators felt that students' parents should give their children more space to navigate challenges on their own so that they could better develop skills needed for resilience cultivation. Overall, the support of a larger community was revealed to be important for students' resilience cultivation. This finding is in line with the present literature on resilience cultivation that recognizes that the development of resilience in children does not solely occur at the individual level but also through the influence of those around them (Ungar, 2011).

### *Recommendations for the SEE Learning Program*

Information from this study can be used in the planning and implementation of the SEE Learning program in the future. This study sought to understand how educators who have not yet received training in the SEE Learning program perceive resilience in their students, and how those perceptions align with the SEE Learning program's definition and application of resilience. Recommendations are highlighted below.

The SEE Learning program incorporates a holistic, body-mind approach to fostering resilience in students as a way for them to productively respond to challenges. The SEE Learning program should emphasize the essential component of "responding productively" in their understanding of resilience when training educators to deliver the program.

While the SEE Learning program was created to be flexible and modifiable for different teaching environments and educator-student populations, there is still a need to recognize how socio-economic status causes differences in the challenges that students deal with and need to be able to respond productively to.

The resilience skills that the SEE Learning Program delivers come from the Community Resiliency Model (CRM) and consist of skills that use the body's instinctive abilities to navigate stress and enhance wellbeing. These skills focus on students exploring the important role that their bodies, and in particular their nervous systems, have on their happiness and wellbeing, specifically their "Resilient Zone" (CCSBE, 2019). While the SEE Learning program acknowledges that resilience is not just cultivated at the individual level, these resilience skills are individually focused. Many of the skills that educators identified in this study as important to students' resilience cultivation focused on relationship building skills to allow the students to better communicate with their peers and educators. This suggests that the SEE Learning program's "Building Resilience" chapter can include skills that build resilience at the interpersonal level as well. By both focusing on skills that cultivate students' individual and interpersonal resilience, the SEE Learning program will also address the skills that educators feel students need to learn from their classroom experience.

The SEE Learning program is currently focused on training educators to deliver the program to their students. This study identified a need for parents to be engaged in this program as well.

Educators felt that parents play an important role in students' resilience cultivation. Many of the educators also recognized a need for strong communication between the students' parents and themselves so that they could, together, support the students' resilience. Thus, the SEE Learning program should consider making the "Building Resilience" chapter deliverable to parents so that students are supported in resilience cultivation both in the classroom and at home.

### *Implications for the Public Health Field*

The field of public health would benefit from more research on how resilience can serve as a protective factor in children and what the long-term effects of resilience cultivation in individuals are. When considering future studies on resilience, a greater focus on how sociodemographic differences can influence resilience cultivation in individuals is needed. Additionally, there is a need for more research on the role of educators and parents in children's resilience cultivation.

### *Strengths and Limitations*

There are both strengths and weaknesses related to the qualitative methodology of this study. In terms of strengths, the in-depth, one-on-one interviews provided deeper, rich insight into educators' perceptions and understanding of resilience. The flexible nature of qualitative research allowed researchers to further probe participants based on their individual responses in a way that quantitative research does not permit. Additionally, the study had a sample of 17 participants which isan ideal sample size for a qualitative study.

One limitation of this study is the overrepresentation of educators who teach at a very well-resourced private school. Future research should consider in-depth interviews with more educators whose experiences may differ as a result of working at a less privileged school with a more diverse socio-economic student body. The types of challenges that students face may differ

at such schools, which would provide further insight into how resilience is understood and identified when additionally impacted by lack of access to resources.

Another limitation of this study is that the interview itself was not focused solely on the subject of resilience. As this study is embedded in a larger study for the SEE Learning program, educators were asked questions about various topics regarding themes important to the program. Thus, future studies should expand on the topic of resilience to promote a deeper understanding of how educators conceptualize it in regard to their students.

### *Conclusion*

The present study investigated how kindergarten to middle school educators who have not received SEE Learning training understand resilience and identify how resilience is cultivated in their students. It was found that educators' understanding of resilience did, overall, align with the SEE Learning program's definition of resilience. Many of the educators interviewed also noted that the challenges students face, and thus need to cultivate resilience skills for, center around managing and communicating emotions. Overall, educators felt that they do have a role in supporting students' cultivation. The majority of educators believed that the students' parents also have a significant role in the students' resilience cultivation. This study hopes to inform future planning and implementation of the SEE Learning program, as well as to emphasize the important role resilience can have on wellbeing in childhood and beyond.

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