


Teachers' socioemotional skills and competences: An umbrella review

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<https://dx.doi.org/10.5209/rced.100387>

Received: January 2025 • Evaluated: March 2025 • Accepted: April 2025

ENG Abstract: An indicator of the importance of teachers' socio-emotional skills and competencies (SEC) is reflected in the volume of both primary and secondary research published on the subject. Using the umbrella review or overview technique, this paper summarizes the current state of knowledge and evidence available to date, with the aim of informing future research and educational practice. To achieve this, 13 review articles were synthesized, identified across the databases EBSCO, Dialnet, Scopus, Web of Science, and Google Scholar. The quantitative synthesis encompasses 350 primary studies involving nearly 84,000 teachers, either in training or in practice, across all educational levels, spanning five continents over the last three decades. The qualitative synthesis reveals that research on this topic is conceptually heterogeneous, highlighting that SEC impact teachers' well-being and effectiveness. Consequently, a clear implication for improvement involves incorporating social-emotional learning (SEL) into initial teacher training programs. Additionally, a list of the main instruments used to measure SECs in the synthesized research is provided, along with methodological recommendations to enhance research and educational practice on this topic.

Keywords: Teacher qualifications, Social abilities, Educational research, Well-being, State of the art review

ES Habilidades y competencias socioemocionales de los docentes: Una meta-revisión

Resumen: Un indicador de la importancia de las habilidades y competencias socioemocionales (CSE) del profesorado está en el número de investigaciones tanto primarias como secundarias que se han publicado sobre el tema. Mediante la técnica de meta-revisión (revisión de revisiones o revisión paraguas), este artículo resume el estado de la cuestión y la evidencia encontrada hasta el momento para informar la investigación futura y la práctica educativa. Se seleccionan 13 revisiones identificadas en EBSCO, Dialnet, Scopus, Web of Science y Google Scholar. Con la síntesis cuantitativa realizada, se abarcan 350 estudios primarios en los que participan casi 84000 docentes, en formación o en ejercicio, de todos los niveles educativos, en los cinco continentes y durante las últimas tres décadas. La síntesis cualitativa refleja que la investigación sobre el tema es heterogénea conceptualmente, destacando que las CSE afectan al bienestar y la eficacia de los docentes, por lo que una clara implicación para la mejora apunta a trabajar el aprendizaje socioemocional (SEL) ya desde los programas de formación inicial. Se incluye además un listado de los principales instrumentos utilizados para la medida de las habilidades y CSE en la investigación sintetizada y se aportan recomendaciones metodológicas para una investigación y una práctica educativa más eficientes sobre el tema.

Palabras clave: Competencias del docente, Habilidades sociales, Investigación educativa, Bienestar, Estado de la cuestión.

Sumario: Introduction. Method. Search strategy. Study selection. Coding and synthesis of the results. Results. Identification of studies. Description of the studies. Quantitative synthesis. Qualitative synthesis. Conclusions. References. References of the studies included in the meta-review.

Cómo citar: Sánchez-Munilla, M.; García-Domingo, B.; García-Pérez, D. and Asensio-Muñoz, I. (2026). Teachers' socioemotional skills and competences: An umbrella review. *Revista Complutense de Educación*, 37(2), 333-359. <https://dx.doi.org/10.5209/rced.100387>

Introduction

In the socio-emotional field, the difference between skills and competencies is very subtle (García-Domingo & Pérez-Bonet, 2024). According to Delgado-Villalobos and López-Riquelme (2022), skills are capacities that allow people to self-regulate their emotional responses. Generally, they are learned informally, and they affect people's daily life, in the familiar and local contexts. In contrast, socio-emotional competencies (SEC) involve these skills but also encompass institutional and organizational relationships, including those we use in schools, and they have a component learned through education and formal experiences. These competencies receive different names depending on the discipline of study, so they may be found in the literature as non-cognitive skills, soft skills, citizenship skills, or 21st-century competencies; in any case, they are considered essential for work success and social progress today (Delgado-Villalobos & López-Riquelme, 2022). Their relevance assigns them a fundamental role among the generic competencies that students at all levels of current educational systems must develop (Álvarez & Asensio-Muñoz, 2020).

From the teachers' perspective, the study of skills and SEC becomes relevant for research insofar as, at least from a theoretical standpoint, they seem to intervene in the development of professional identity, in the reduction of teacher burnout, as well as in shaping students' SEC and their motivation and academic performance, among other aspects (Extremera et al., 2019; Martínez-Saura et al., 2024; Merchán & González, 2016; Sologuren et al., 2022).

Given the importance of the topic, existing primary and secondary research is very extensive, creating a complex landscape that justifies the need to produce a synthesis that helps to define the state of the art, in order to improve the efficiency of future research and support more successful educational practices (Camilli et al., 2020). This work seeks to contribute to this through an umbrella review, so far not carried out on this topic, with the following objectives:

1. To quantitatively describe the research conducted on socio-emotional competencies, considering variables such as: year of publication, publication journal and its impact, number of studies included, temporal and geographical scope, study type, protocols used, methodological quality, and samples of the studies reviewed.
2. To qualitatively synthesize which socio-emotional competencies of teachers are the main objects of interest for research, how they are measured, and for what purpose.

Method

We carried out an umbrella review (López-López et al., 2022), with a mixed perspective (Anguera, 2023), so we included different types of reviews that synthesize different primary studies made using diverse methodological approaches.

By observing the PRISMA protocol guidelines (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) (Page et al., 2021), our aim was to answer these review questions:

1. What characterizes the review studies in which the SEC of pre-service and in-service teachers are investigated, and what level of representativeness do they achieve?
2. For what purposes have teachers' SEC been studied in the literature, which ones are most frequently addressed, how are they measured, and to what extent are they related to other relevant educational variables?

Search strategy

The literature search was conducted between September and October 2023 across the following databases: EBSCO, Dialnet, Scopus, Web of Science, and Google Scholar. No temporal limits were applied. The search strategy was adapted to the specifications of each database, incorporating methodological filters where available (e.g., "study type: review" in Web of Science) or embedding them directly in the search string by restricting title searches to "review OR meta-anal*".

Additionally, the following terms were included in the title and abstract search: "Social-Emotional Competence OR Emotional Competence* OR Emotional Intelligence OR Social-Emotional Ability* OR Social-Emotional Skill* AND Teach* OR Professor*".

For searches conducted in Spanish, the search string was: *revisión OR meta-anál OR metanál** (title search), *Competencia* Socioemocional* OR Competencia* Emocional* OR Inteligencia Emocional OR Habilidad* Socioemocional* AND Docencia OR Docente* OR Profesor* OR maestr** (title and abstract search).

Study selection

All articles retrieved from the databases were exported to the Hubmeta software in a project shared by the research team. The tool was first used to identify and remove duplicate records. Subsequently, a screening of titles and abstracts was conducted, applying labels to include or exclude studies according to the following inclusion criteria: language (English or Spanish), sample type (pre-service or in-service teachers at different educational stages), study type (secondary research such as meta-analyses, systematic reviews, or other methodologically structured review studies), and content focus (topics related to socio-emotional competencies). The main exclusion criterion was the removal of works which, despite containing the term “review” in the title, abstract, or keywords, were found—after full-text assessment—not to constitute secondary research.

Next, each of the four team members reviewed 25% of the studies identified during the initial title-and-abstract screening phase ($n = 41$) and subsequently 25% of the studies that progressed to full-text screening ($n = 12$). Inter-rater agreement, calculated using Hubmeta, yielded Kappa values of 0.73 and 0.63 respectively, indicating substantial agreement (Cohen, 1960). The results section includes the PRISMA-adapted flow diagram (Page et al., 2021) (Figure 1), which concludes with the selection of the 13 review studies whose references are listed at the end, numbered accordingly.

Coding and synthesis of the results

Once the 13 studies had been selected, data were extracted into an Excel file containing the fields required to address the review questions: article identification (assigned number, authorship, reference, DOI, year, journal name and its impact), contextual information (authors' institutions and countries, publication language, countries of the primary studies), methodological aspects (type of study, review protocol, protocol quality, time frame and number of studies included, total sample size and sample type -pre-service or in-service teachers and educational stage-), and content-related variables (objectives, socio-emotional competencies included, theoretical and operational frameworks -measurement instruments- and other related variables). Given the dual nature of the data, we carried out the synthesis quantitatively, using descriptive statistics, and qualitatively, through content analysis.

Quality assessment of the selected reviews was conducted using the checklist proposed by the Joanna Briggs Institute (JBI) for systematic reviews and research syntheses (Aromataris et al., 2020). Two team members independently completed the checklist for the 13 publications. The results were then discussed among all four team members, reaching consensus on any discrepancies.

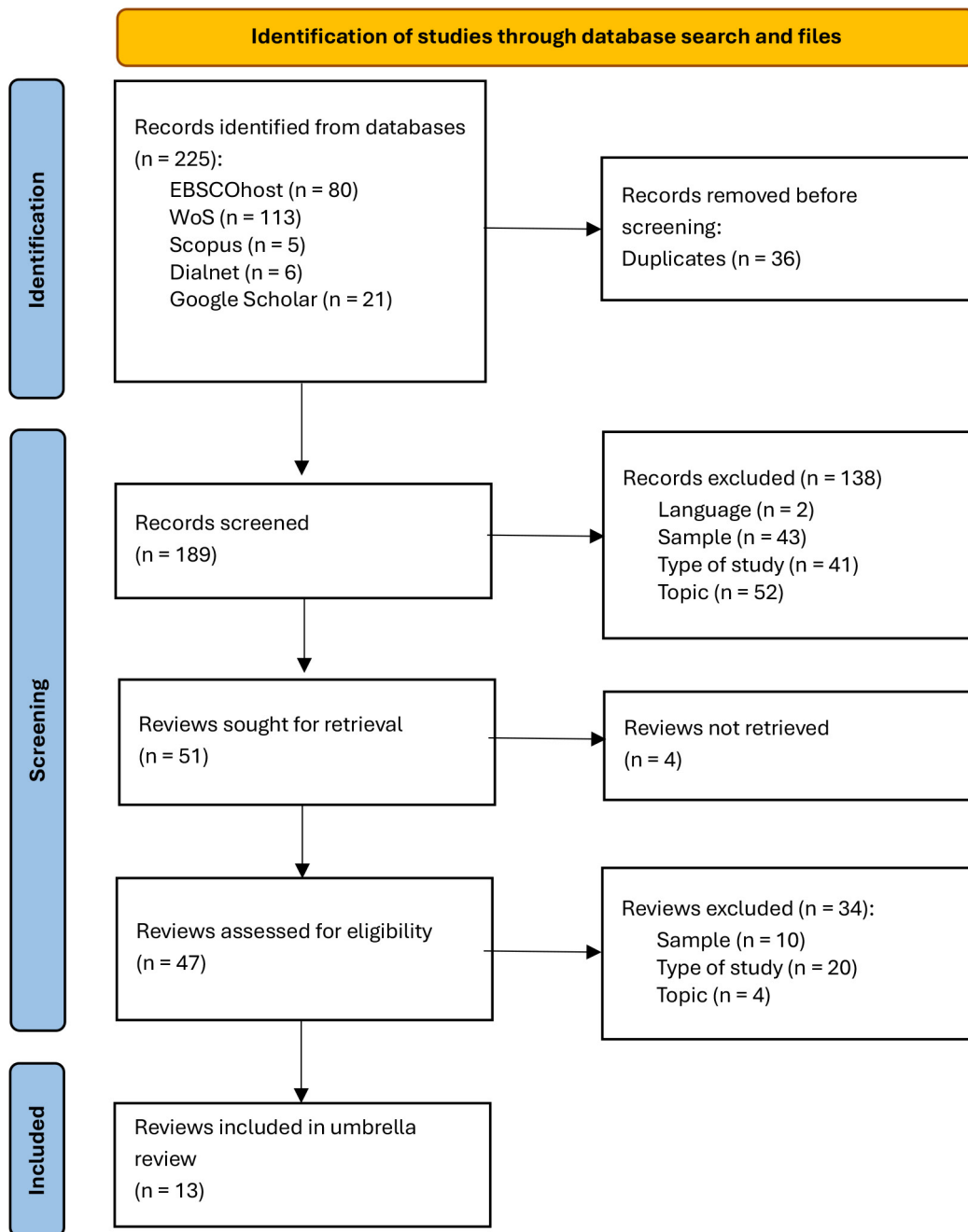
As this is an umbrella review and due to the large number of primary studies repeated across different reviews, a second Excel file was created to record the list of primary studies included in the 13 review studies. This file compiled, for each primary study, the reference of the review in which it appeared, along with the country, year, and total sample of teachers included (for reviews 1, 2, 5, 9, and 10 it was necessary to directly consult the primary studies to retrieve this information).

Results

Identification of studies

Figure 1 shows the flow diagram following the updated PRISMA protocol (Page et al., 2021). Initially, 225 reviews were identified, of which 36 were removed because they were duplicates. From the remaining 189 records, 142 were excluded during the title and abstract screening for failing to meet one or more inclusion criteria (language, sample type, study type, or topic) or due to lack of fulltext access. Following fulltext assessment, 34 reviews were excluded, primarily because the study type did not align with the established criteria, although mismatches in sample or topic were also observed. Finally, 13 studies were included in this umbrella review.

Figure 1. PRISMA flow diagram



Description of the studies

In Table 1 we present a summary of the general characteristics of the 13 selected documents.

Table 1. Summary of the main characteristics of the studies

ID	Year	Type of study	Review protocol	k	n	Educational stage	Authors' country	Language
1	2022	SR	PRISMA	41	4999	ECE, PE, SE	Germany	English
2	2019	NRS	NA	41	NA	NA	Colombia	Spanish, French, English, Italian
3	2022	SR	PRISMA	25	NC	ECE, PE, SE, HE	Peru	Spanish
4	2021	BR	NA	29	11218	NA	UK, Russia & Australia	English
5	2021	SR	PRISMA	15	3206	PE, SE	Chile	Spanish, English, Portuguese
6	2017	SR	NA	13	3113	PE, SE	Spain	Spanish, English

ID	Year	Type of study	Review protocol	k	n	Educational stage	Authors' country	Language
7	2023	SR	PRISMA	38	22675	ECE, PE, SE	Australia	English
8	2021	SR +MA**	PRISMA	43**	3004	ECE, PE	Portugal	Spanish, English
9	2019	SR	PRISMA	36	9732	ECE, PE, SE, HE	Spain	Spanish, English
10	2018	SR	PRISMA	50	15832	ECE, PE, SE, HE	Spain	Spanish, English
11	2020	ScR	Arksey & O'Malley (2005)	24	5827	NA	Australia	English
12	2022	SR	PRISMA and SALSA	14	4819	ECE, PE, SE, HE, SpE	Spain	Spanish, English
13	2022	RMA***	NA	42***	5665	PE, SE, HE	China	English

Note. *k* = number of studies; *n* = total number of participants in the studies; SR = Systematic review; MA = Metanalysis; BR = Bibliographic Review; NRS = Narrative review structured in 3 phases; ScR = Scoping review; NA = Not available; ECE = Early Childhood Education; PE = Primary Education; SE = Secondary Education; HE = Higher Education; SpE = Special Education.

* In study 4, the authors carried out a bibliometric analysis that includes 862 studies; only the 29 that were selected for a deeper review have been considered in this synthesis.

** In study 8 the systematic review covers 43 documents with 39 interventions; 27 of them were eligible for the metanalysis.

*** 24 out of 42 primary studies reviewed refer to relationships between emotional intelligence and other variables, while 18 summarize the relationships between self-efficacy and burnout.

Evaluation of the weight of evidence of each study

The reviews included were published between 2017 and 2023 across 12 different journals (30.77% before 2020 and 69.23% from 2020 onwards). One review (8.33%) lacks recognized impact indices; among the remaining reviews, six are indexed in the Journal Citation Report (JCR) (50%; 2 in Q1, 3 in Q2, and 1 in Q3), six in the Journal Citation Indicator (JCI) (50%; 1 in Q1, 3 in Q2, and 2 in Q3), and nine in SCImago Journal Rank (SJR) (75%; 3 in Q1 and 6 in Q2).

Regarding the methodological quality, the weight of evidence is higher in six of the synthesized reviews, which meet more than 70% of the quality indicators (1, 5, 7, 8, 11, and 13), and lower in two reviews, which meet fewer than 40% of the indicators (2 and 3). Table 2 presents the results of the methodological quality assessment of the synthesized review studies, using the JBI checklist for systematic reviews.

Table 2. Evaluation of the quality of the reviews included

	Analysed Studies												
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1 Is the review question (or objective*) clearly and explicitly stated?	Y	Y	N	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N
2 Were the inclusion criteria appropriate for the review question?	Y	NC	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
3 Was the search strategy appropriate?	Y	NC	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
4 Were the sources and resources used to search for studies adequate?	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
5 Were the criteria for appraising studies appropriate?	Y	N	N	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	N	N	Y	N	Y
6 Was critical appraisal conducted by two or more reviewers independently?	Y	N	N	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N	N
7 Were there methods to minimize errors in data extraction?	Y	N	N	N	Y	N	NC	Y	N	N	N	N	Y
8 Were the methods used to combine studies appropriate?	Y	NC	NC	Y	Y	NC	Y	Y	N	N	Y	N	Y
9 Was the likelihood of publication bias assessed?	NC	N	N	N	N	N	Y	Y	N	N	NA	N	Y
10 Were recommendations for policy and/or practice supported by the reported data?	Y	NC	NC	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y
11 Were the specific directives for new research appropriate?	Y	NC	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y

Note. Y: YES; N: No; NC: Not clear; NA: Not applicable. *According to PRISMA (Page et al., 2020), it is adequate when the review question or objective is explicitly stated.

Quantitative synthesis

The authors of the 13 studies are affiliated with 20 academic institutions located across nine countries. As shown in Table 1, Spain ($n = 4$) and Australia ($n = 3$) stand out, although researchers from other European, American, and Asian countries are also represented. English is the predominant language (used in twelve reviews), followed by Spanish, which appears in eight.

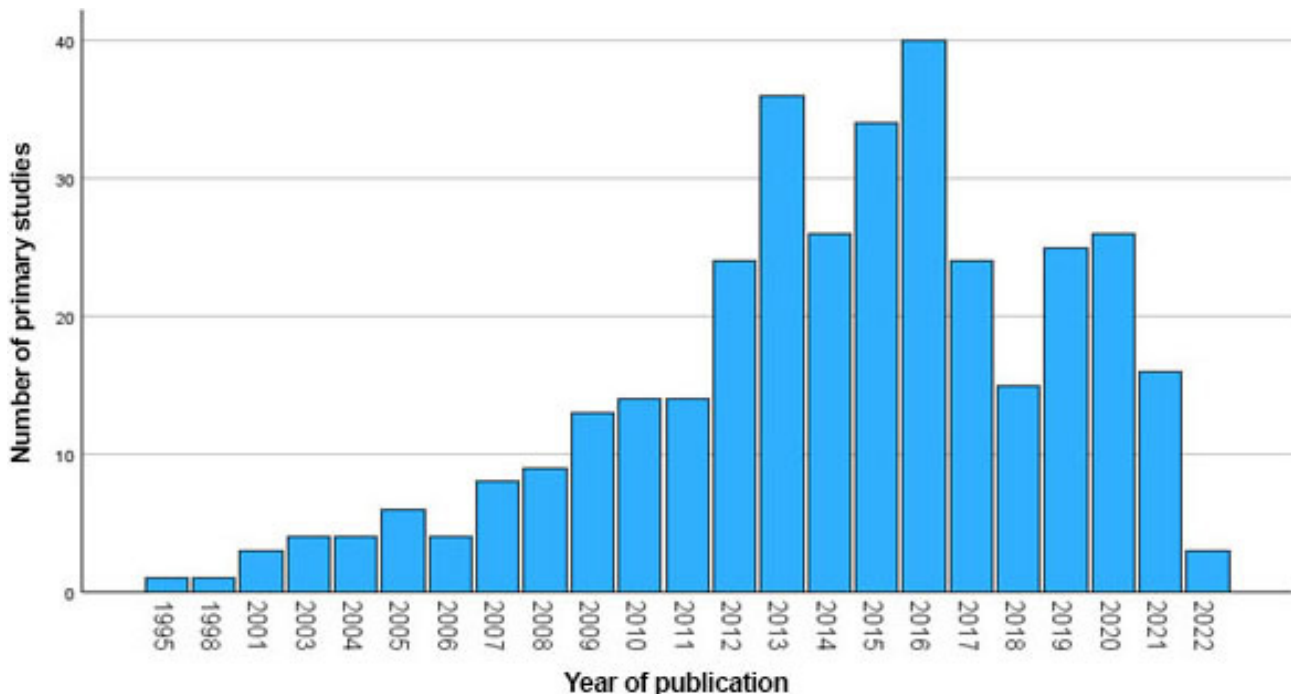
Methodologically, the sample includes eight simple systematic reviews (1, 3, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, and 12), one systematic review with meta-analysis (8), one meta-analytic review (13), one scoping review (11), one narrative review (2), and one bibliometric analysis with an in-depth review limited to high-impact studies (4). Regarding protocols, PRISMA is the most used, applied in eight reviews (1, 3, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, and 12). Review 12 additionally employs the SALSA framework, *Search, Appraisal, Synthesis, Analysis* (Grant & Booth, 2009); review 11 follows the methodological guidelines of Arksey & O'Malley (2005), and three reviews do not specify the protocol used (2, 4, and 6).

In terms of participants, six reviews focus on in-service teachers (46.15%), one on pre-service teachers (7.7%), and five on combined samples that also include students (38.46%), while one review (3) does not specify this point. All educational stages are represented, from early childhood education to university, including one study on special education teachers (12) and another on second-language teachers (13). More specifically, considering only articles that specify the educational stage ($n = 8$), early childhood education appears in 75% of cases ($n = 6$), primary education in 100% ($n = 8$), secondary education in 87.5% ($n = 7$), and higher education in 37.5% ($n = 3$).

The total number of participants included in the various primary studies analyzed across the 13 review articles exceeds 90000 before removing duplicates, noting that data were not available for the studies included in reviews 2 and 3. This corresponds to an average of 8190 participants per review (min. 3004; max. 22675) with a standard deviation of 6251. Across the 13 reviews, between 13 and 50 primary studies were analyzed, with a mean of 31.308 and a standard deviation of 12.168. It should be noted that review 4 incorporates 862 studies, but only 29 are examined in depth, and this is the figure used in this synthesis. The total number of primary studies included is 388, which, after removing duplicates, is reduced to 350. Accordingly, the corrected total sample size for this meta-review is 83,836 participants (it should be noted that primary studies consisting of theoretical articles or samples including students were assigned a sample size of 0).

As shown in Figure 2, this meta-review encompasses primary studies published mainly between 1995 and 2022, with a notable increase from 2012 onwards.

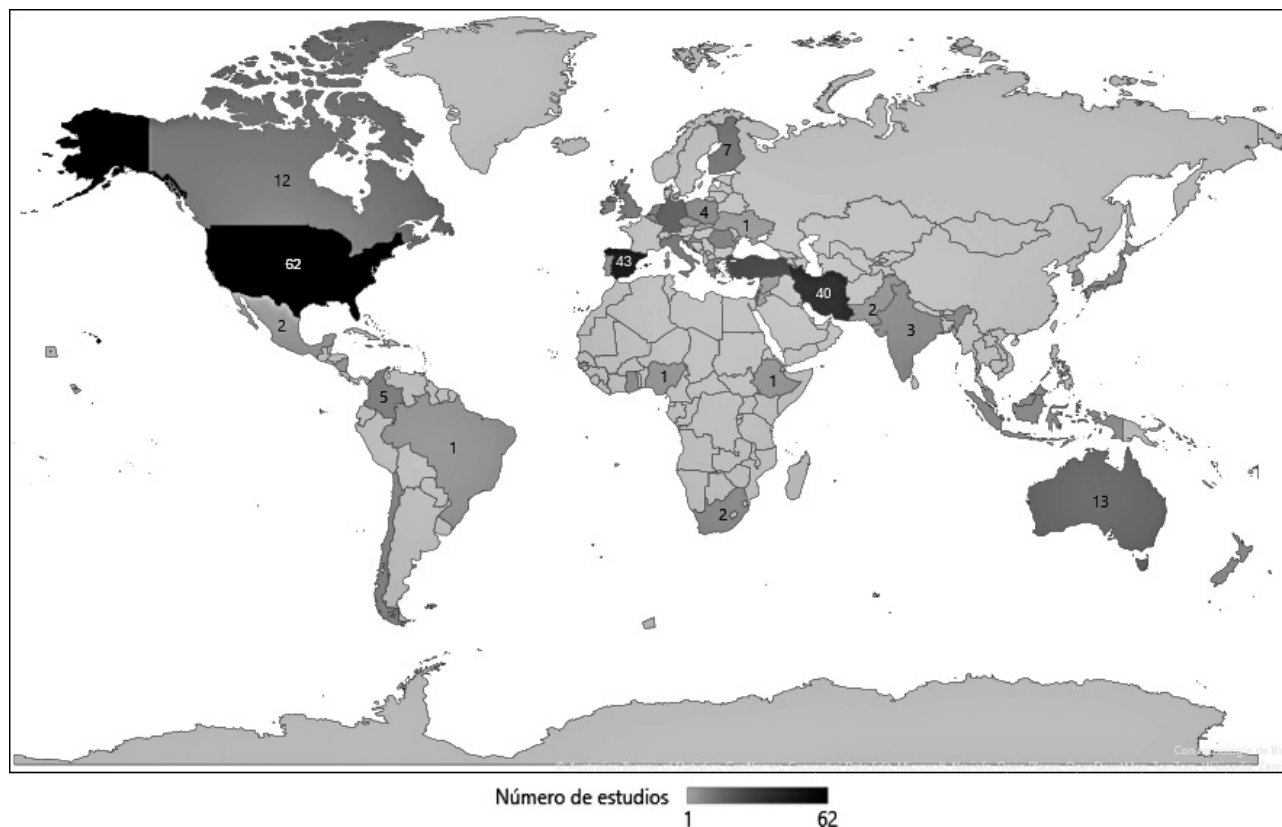
Figure 2. Chronological coverage of the umbrella review



On average, the temporal span covered is 15 years, with review (7) standing out for covering 22 years, and the bibliometric study (4) for covering 29.

Geographically, some reviews are more focused on specific regions such as Latin America (3), the United States (1, 8), and Asia (4), while the remaining ones include research from a broader range of countries. Using the information on the country of origin of each individual article included in the consulted reviews, Figure 3 was produced. It shows that the most represented countries are the United States ($n = 62$; 17.7%), Spain ($n = 43$; 12.3%), and Iran ($n = 40$; 11.4%), followed by Turkey (7.4%), China (6.9%), Germany (4.3%), Israel (4%), Australia (3.7%), and Canada (3.4%).

Figure 3. Map of the distribution of the primary studies



Note. Map generated with Microsoft Excel (Bing Maps) with data sourced from: Australian Bureau of Statistics; GeoNames; Geospatial Data Edit; Microsoft; Navingo; Open Places; OpenStreetMap (© OpenStreetMap contributors, ODbL); TomTom; Wikipedia; Zenrin.

Qualitative synthesis

In Table 3, a summary of the main objectives and contents of the synthesized secondary research is presented.

Table 3. Summary of the information collected to answer the second review question

ID	Objective	SEC included	Other variables	Found relationship	Theoretical model
1	To determine the results and methodological approaches of the research relating SEC and effective teaching	Empathy (separated in components)	Student outcomes and quality of the interaction teacher-student	NO	Heuristic approach based in the prosocial classroom model (Jennings & Greenberg, 2009)
2	To understand the link between SEC and several variables	Emotions	Educational processes and practices and personal and professional teacher development	YES	Different models that converge in the consideration of emotions as complex and multidimensional processes
3	To classify and analyze scientific articles on SEC of teachers from different educational stages	Emotions, emotional intelligence (EI) and various SEC (leadership, conflict management, empathy, etc.)	Classroom climate, work stress, burnout, personal well-being, etc.	NA	It is based on different definitions of emotional competence
4	Mapping Asian literature on emotions in learning, teaching, and leadership	Emotions, EI, and CSE such as empathy, social support, emotional regulation, social skills, and emotional labor	Subjective well-being, burnout, stress, gender, academic involvement, life satisfaction, academic performance, etc.	NA	NS

ID	Objective	SEC included	Other variables	Found relationship	Theoretical model
5	Review the theoretical foundations of SEC in teachers to define the concept and identify instruments and means to promote them	Emotions, EI and other SEC (self-management, self-awareness, responsible decision-making, relationship skills, social awareness, etc.)	NS	NA	Process of emotional regulation by Gross (1998); EI models by Mayer & Salovey (1997) and Bar-On (1997); Prosocial classroom model by Jennings & Greenberg (2009); Model of socio-emotional learning CASEL (2013)
6	Relating EI and burnout in in-service teachers	EI	Burnout, general mood	YES	EI as a skill and as a trait
7	Investigate the factors that affect the occupational well-being of teachers	Socioemotional Intelligence	Personal skills, professional relationships, and teacher well-being	YES	Job demands-resources model.
8	To analyze the theoretical foundations of Socio-emotional learning, its empirical indicators, and its effectiveness for practicing teachers	SEC (Self-knowledge, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills and responsible decision-making).	Teacher well-being, psychological stress, classroom climate, physical stress, and instructional practices	YES	Multiple and heterogeneous
9	Analyzing the relationship between emotional intelligence (EI) and burnout in teachers' job performance	EI (emotional regulation, emotional expression, use of emotions)	Burnout	YES	EI as a skill and as a trait
10	Relating emotional intelligence to teacher training and job performance	EI	Student relations and job satisfaction	YES	EI as a skill and as a trait
11	Identifying gaps in the literature on IE to inform initial teacher training	EI	Self-efficacy, academic results, and teaching performance	NA	Salovey & Mayer (1990)
12	Review the relationship between EI and commitment in the teacher's professional performance	EI	Teacher's work commitment	YES	EI as a skill and as a trait and Job demands-resources model.
13	To synthesize the studies on the relationship between emotional intelligence, self-efficacy, and burnout	EI	Self-efficacy and burnout	YES	EI as a skill and as a trait

Note. SEC = Socio-emotional competence; EI = Emotional Intelligence; NS = Not specified; NA = Not applicable because it is not an objective of the study

Review 1, which has a high weight of evidence, is the only one focusing on the role of teacher empathy as a SEC with three components (cognitive, affective, and composite) in relation to various outcomes such as emotional and instructional support, classroom management, and the cognitive and psychosocial results achieved by students at different educational stages. The review is grounded in a theoretical model positing the relevance of teachers' socio-emotional competence for these variables; however, after applying various measurement instruments (mainly self-report tools, summarized in Table 4), the number of studies in which no clear relationships were found is greater.

The narrative review (2) explores the relationship between teachers' emotions and various dependent variables, without specifying the educational stage under study, the instruments used, or the methodological approach adopted by the reviewed works. Although it is a review with a low weight of evidence, its conclusions highlight the influence of teachers' emotional experiences on variables such as well-being, motivation, performance, and workplace climate, while emphasizing the need to analyze the impact of the social context and the educational environment on the understanding and expression of emotions.

Review 3, which also has a low weight of evidence, adopts a broad overarching objective. Consequently, it analyzes studies in which the assessed SEC vary widely, and only in some cases there is an attempt to link specific SEC with dependent variables. Since the author does not report the instruments used in the selected studies nor their methodological approaches, caution is warranted when considering the general conclusions reached. These conclusions emphasize the importance of explicitly developing the socio-emotional

competencies of future teachers throughout their initial preparation and the need to consider their diverse implications for teaching practice.

In Review 4, which has a medium weight of evidence, the authors aim to conduct a mapping exercise to delineate the state of the art in Asia within the WoS Core Collection. As this is a bibliometric study, the results focus on the general characteristics of publications on the topic that achieve an h-index of 29 (that is, the 29 publications that received 29 or more citations). These 29 h-classics for this field in Asia are those analyzed in greater depth, and most of them focus on the study of teachers' emotions.

Systematic Review 5 begins with a theoretical, historical, and conceptual examination of the construct, offering various definitions of SEC and concluding with recommendations for their development in teachers and for strengthening leadership within educational institutions. The in-depth analysis conducted allows the identification of a wide set of SEC measurement instruments, designed, and validated according to the five theoretical models that currently underpin most studies on SEC, as listed in Table 3. The synthesis of their dimensional structure enables an analysis of the multiple facets associated with teachers' SEC, and the review carries a high weight of evidence.

Review 6 synthesizes 13 studies that assess traditional dimensions of emotional intelligence such as regulation, expression, and use of emotions, employing six different instruments, including both self-report and performance-based measures. With a medium weight of evidence, the review provides evidence of a negative association between teachers' emotional intelligence and burnout dimensions, identifying mechanisms implicated in this relationship, such as social support within the school and the level of occupational stress, among others.

In Review 7, which has a high weight of evidence, SEC are identified among the factors influencing teachers' occupational well-being, alongside personal capacities (such as resilience, autonomy, self-efficacy, and coping strategies), personal responses to workload and working conditions (such as fatigue, exhaustion, unrealistic expectations, stress, bureaucracy, and exclusion from decision-making), and supportive professional relationships with different school stakeholders (students, families, colleagues, and school leaders).

Systematic Review 8 focuses on analyzing 39 SEL interventions, reported across 43 studies, examining their effects on the personal and professional outcomes of in-service early childhood and primary teachers. The review investigates the relationship between emotional competencies (such as self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making) and factors such as teacher well-being and psychological stress. With a high weight of evidence, the review concludes that intervention programs have a positive effect on these variables and a non-significant effect on others, such as classroom climate, physical stress, and instructional practices.

Review 9 shares the same objective as review 6 and it provides an extensive list of measurement instruments, with the Emotional Intelligence Scale (EIS) standing out. With a medium weight of evidence, the review suggests examining relationships with variables such as resilience and physical activity, as well as developing interventions that promote emotional self-regulation, all with the aim of improving teachers' mental well-being.

In Systematic Review 10, using the numerous instruments listed in Table 4, it is concluded, with a medium weight of evidence, that emotional intelligence enhances both self-realization and job satisfaction, thereby improving job performance and reducing problematic mental-health indicators. Based on these findings, the review highlights the need for interventions aimed at increasing teachers' emotional competence, thereby benefiting various aspects of teaching, and learning processes.

In the scoping review 11, which has a high weight of evidence, the emotional intelligence of pre-service teachers is examined. Although the selected primary studies do not analyze relationships as such, emotional intelligence, measured with several instruments, (notably, the EIS again), is addressed alongside variables such as self-efficacy, academic results, and performance. Methodologically, the review calls for greater use of qualitative studies to enable a deeper understanding of emotional intelligence within the context of initial teacher education.

Review 12 synthesizes studies that employ various measurement instruments, among which Wong and Law's Emotional Intelligence Scale (WLEIS, 2002) stands out. The review concludes that there is reasonable evidence of a relationship between emotional intelligence and teacher commitment, supporting the importance of implementing programs that foster the development of emotional intelligence. Such development reduces the effects of stress and role ambiguity on commitment, decreases intentions to leave the profession, and moderates the influence of social support on these intentions.

Finally, meta-analysis 13, focused on foreign-language teachers, provides strong evidence of a positive association between emotional intelligence and self-efficacy, and a negative association with burnout. Nine emotional-intelligence measures are reported: ability-based (AES, WLEIS), trait-based (EIS, EQ-i, REIS, SEIS, SSEIT, TEIQue), and unspecified (EIQ)

Table 4. List of instruments and studies where they are cited

Instrument	ID Study
Adult Emotional Development Questionnaire (CDE-A)	9, 10
Amsterdam Emotion Recognition Test (ERT)	1
Assessing Emotions Scale (AES)	10,13

Instrument	ID Study
BarOn Emotional Quotient-Inventory (EQ-i)	1,5,6,9,10,11,13
Emotion Regulation Questionnaire; (ERQ)	5,9,10
Emotional Competence Questionnaire (ECQ)	5,9
Emotional Exhaustion (EE)	9
Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire (EIQ)	9,11,13
Emotional Intelligence Scale (EIS)	6, 10,11,12,13
Emotional maturity questionnaire	11
Emotional Sensitivity Scale (ESE)	9
Inteligencia Emocional Percibida (IEP)	10
International Reactivity Index (IRI)	1,5
Inventario de Inteligencia Emocional de BarOn (ICE)	10
Mayer-Salovey-Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test (MSCEIT)	1,5,6,10,11,12
Perception Scale (2TSEC)	5
Revised Emotional Intelligence Scale (REIS)	13
Schutte Emotional Intelligence Scale (SEIS)	6, 13
Schutte Self-Report Emotional Intelligence Test (SSREIT)	1,5,9,11,13
Social Emotional Teacher Rating Scale (SETRS)	12
Socioemotional competence questionnaire	5
Students' Perceptions of Teacher Social Competence Scale (TSEC)	5
Successful Intelligence Questionnaire (SIQ)	9
Swinburne University Emotional Intelligence Test (SUEIT)	10,11
Test de Empatía Cognitiva y Afectiva (TECA)	10
Test de Inteligencia Emocional (TIE 1.0)	1,10
Test of regulation and understanding of social situations in teaching (TRUST)	5
The Situational Test of Emotional Understanding (STEU)	1
Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire (TEIQue)	10,11,13
Trait Meta-Mood Scale (TMMS)	5,6,9,10
Wong and Law Emotional Intelligence Scale (WLEIS)	1,5,9,10,11,12,13
Yoder's Social and Emotional Skills Questionnaire	5

Conclusions

Although this umbrella review includes only 13 reviews that meet the inclusion criteria, its coverage is broad, as it indirectly analyses a total of 350 primary studies. This means that the total sample from which the conclusions presented here are derived comprises nearly 84,000 participants from all continents. Regarding the temporal dimension, all the included reviews were conducted within the past seven years, although the primary studies they synthesize span more than three decades, indicating that this is a current and enduring topic of interest.

SEC directly affect variables related to teachers' well-being and effectiveness, a conclusion that supports the incorporation of socio-emotional learning (SEL) into both pre-service and in-service teacher-education programs (Díez et al., 2024; Martínez-Saura et al., 2024), particularly when they are combined with the potential of neuroeducation to enhance program effectiveness (Caballero & Llorent, 2022). In addition, the evidence shows a negative relationship between SEC and burnout, an important variable, as it affects not only teaching effectiveness but also the attraction to and retention within the profession (Asensio, 2024). However, regarding the positive effect of teacher empathy in educational contexts, studied particularly in the review by Aldrup et al. (2022), the evidence is not conclusive, which may be associated with interpretative difficulties arising from the diversity of measurement instruments used in the primary studies.

Addressing some conceptual issues, it should be noted that socio-emotional competencies have been studied from different theoretical perspectives. The ability-based model of emotional intelligence, grounded in the work of Salovey and Mayer (1990), and the mixed model of non-cognitive intelligence, which incorporates personality traits in addition to emotional intelligence (Bar-On, 1997, 2006), are particularly prominent. Aligning with the observations of Lozano-Peña et al. (2022), other common models are the social and

emotional competencies model, which includes performance indicators (Boyatzis, 2006) and employs measurement instruments such as the Adult Emotional Development Questionnaire (CDE-A), the prosocial classroom model (Jennings & Greenberg, 2009), and the CASEL model (2013).

This study provides a list of the main instruments used to measure skills and SEC in the synthesized research, with a predominance of self-report tools, complemented by some performance-based measures and more qualitative instruments such as interviews. Each instrument is linked to its underlying theoretical model. Thus, this meta-review includes nearly all the techniques reviewed by Delgado-Villalobos and López-Riquelme (2022) and Bisquerra and López-Cassà (2021), apart from performance or ability-based measures and 360° assessments conducted by external evaluators. The most frequently referenced instruments in the synthesized review studies are the EQ-i, WLEIS, and MSCEIT.

Regarding the review methodology used in the included studies, most lack the use of tools for assessing bias and quality. Consequently, rather than adhering to a systematic-review protocol, they align more closely with the protocol of a scoping review, in which such assessment is not required (Tricco et al., 2018). A potential limitation of the present work therefore lies in the variability in the quality of the included primary and secondary studies, as their biases or methodological shortcomings may be transferred to the results of the umbrella review.

Moreover, there is considerable diversity in both the theoretical approaches and the measurement instruments employed, which may introduce additional challenges when interpreting the available evidence on the role of SEC in education, thereby complicating the extraction of robust conclusions. This highlights the need for further efforts to reach consensus, beginning with the clear delineation of the conceptual definition of this complex construct, the underlying theoretical models, and the tools with the greatest reliability and validity for their operationalization. Only then can the actual effectiveness of SEL and other programs aimed at enhancing teachers' SEC be ensured, an issue that, in turn, represents a promising focus for future systematic reviews or meta-reviews.

Despite the limitations, this work constitutes a solid contribution on which to anchor both future research and decision-making processes regarding more comprehensive teacher-education programs at all educational levels, in which SEC are expected to play an increasingly central role.

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