

# **Reconstructing the Emotional Value of Second-Hand Toys Through Emotional Empowerment: An SEL-Oriented Curriculum Design and Practice Study**

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## **Abstract**

Social-emotional learning (SEL) emphasizes the development of students' emotional awareness, empathy, interpersonal skills, and responsible decision-making in authentic contexts. When connected to real-world social issues, SEL can support students in moving from personal emotional experience toward social participation and action. In contemporary consumer culture, large numbers of toys are left unused or discarded due to rapid consumption and developmental replacement, creating both resource waste and environmental burdens. At the same time, toys also function as important carriers of companionship, memories, and emotional connection. *Against this background, this study takes second-hand toys as an entry point into a real social issue. It employs emotional empowerment to guide students in reinterpreting the value of toys. By incorporating charity sales and public-interest donation, the study further explores how SEL may be translated into social practice.*

This study adopts a design-based practice research approach and targets seventh-grade junior high school students. A curriculum centered on second-hand toys and "Toy Blessing Cards" was developed and implemented. *The curriculum followed a 4R process: Remind (memory recall), Repower (emotional empowerment), Recycle (sharing and charity sale), and Reconnect (social connection).* Students were first guided to recall how toys had accompanied their growth and to identify emotions such as fear, disappointment, anger, loneliness, frustration, and anxiety. They then transformed these personal feelings into communicable content through story writing and blessing

messages, enabling second-hand toys, originally seen as old or discarded objects, to be reinterpreted as carriers of stories, blessings, and companionship. In addition, students worked in groups to set prices for their own second-hand toys, engaged in social interaction through charity sales, and donated the proceeds to social welfare institutions. *In this way, the curriculum extended from the reconstruction of emotional value to social care and public action.*

The study addresses three research questions: (1) How does the curriculum promote students' emotional awareness and emotional connection with toys through toy story writing and blessing card design? (2) How do students develop empathy, care, and interpersonal interaction skills through sharing and understanding others' toy stories and blessings? (3) How do students demonstrate value judgment, responsible decision-making, and social participation through the processes of pricing, charity sale, and donation of second-hand toys? Both qualitative and quantitative data were collected, including the second-hand toys brought by students, Toy Blessing Cards, classroom observation records, and a post-course questionnaire designed according to the *AEIOU framework*. The questionnaire examined students' learning outcomes across *five dimensions: Activities, Environments, Interactions, Objects, and Users*.

This study aims to investigate the effects of the Toy Blessing Card curriculum on students' emotional awareness, reconstruction of emotional value, empathetic interaction, and social participation. It also seeks to construct a 4R curriculum model for second-hand toys that integrates SEL, emotional empowerment, and social practice. Through this model, students begin by understanding their own emotions and connecting with others' feelings, and then *further transform those emotions into concrete actions that respond to social needs, thereby demonstrating social practice initiated through SEL-based emotional empowerment.*

**Keywords:** social-emotional learning; emotional empowerment; second-hand toys; design-based practice research; social practice