NURTURING BELONGINGNESS

Strengthening Socio-emotional Connectedness

Preeti Vivek Mishra

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(Deemed to be University)

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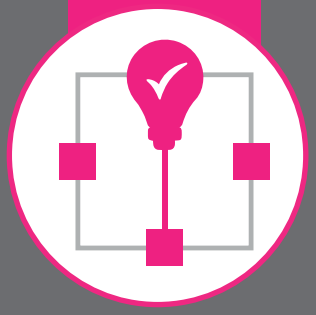
SECTION I



Theoretical Underpinnings

5.0 A Word to the School Leaders…

Humans must be understood holistically, the same holds true for organizations. The thinking student does not exist independent of the feeling student, the rational teacher is not free from the humane influences of the emotional teacher. Similarly, an academically stimulating organization cannot not be a socio-emotionally engaging and connected organization. If so then, any discussions on creation of conducive learning environments in schools mandate a prior understanding of inter alia the social-emotional world of all stakeholders concerned. The present module seeks to bolster this understanding by drawing upon the concept of school belongingness. While, there exists enough empirical evidence to press the case for nurturing belongingness in schools for its conspicuous benefits on improving student learning outcomes and grade performances, it is further encouraging that school belongingness also has a significant positive impact on physical and mental wellbeing, socio-emotional adjustment, motivation and pro-social adaptive behaviors. Given that belongingness has been long considered a universal need by psychologists, a clear oversight in the research literature on school belongingness has been its sole preoccupation with students' connectedness to schools to the exclusion of other stakeholders.

The present module is a step towards rectification of this omission. It aims to enable school leaders to bring all stakeholders together in planning for nurturing a sense of belongingness towards one's school in all stakeholders.As school leaders motivated by a whole school approach and as active shapers of a school's overall culture and ethos, it is our responsibility to expand the concept to ensure that belongingness is experienced by all stakeholders, at all times. This module is an attempt at capacity building for the same.

5.1 Objectives

1. To introduce the concept of belongingness.
2. To enable school principals to operationalize the concept of 'belongingness' in behavioral terms for their own school context.
3. To enable school heads to reflect on the existing practices and processes and identify gaps in their respective schools in light of the concept of school belongingness.
4. To support school heads in drawing a plan of action to nurture belongingness among all stakeholders of their school.

5.2 Concept Box

1. **Belongingness:** Defined variously by various theorists, belongingness is acknowledged as a universal need influencing human behavior, emotion, and thought substantially. Various conceptualizations stress such aspects as the feeling of being related, being loved and cared for, experiencing personal identification and social identity etc.
2. **Strong relationships:** A strong relationship is based on *an emotional or affective evaluation* and is deemed affectively pleasant.
3. **Stable relationships:** A stable relationship is based on the notion of sustainability. It indicates a sense of temporal continuity and a confidence in the longevity of the relationship.
4. **School Belongingness (SB):** the extent to which one feels personally accepted, respected, included, and supported by others in the school social environment.
5. **Adult support**- implying positive regard from parents, teachers and other adults in the child's environment.
6. **Positive peer group**: a peer group which supports pro-social behaviors.
7. **Commitment to education**: implies students' perception of positive worth of education and of adults seen as committed to the education of such child.
8. **Conducive school environment**: implying an environment which is physically and emotionally safe and secure, physically clean and hygienic and psycho-social, positive and supportive.

5.3 What Exactly is Belongingness?

At an introductory level, belongingness can be translated simply as experiencing a sense of belonging. The everyday experience of belongingness varies widely in terms of its object i.e. who does one feel belongingness towards. To illustrate, one can feel belongingness towards other individuals like a family member, a friend, spouse etc. Belongingness can be experienced towards groups of people with common shared grounds like a sports team that one is part of, web-based communities, hobby groups etc. It can also be experienced in relation to organizations and institutions like one's ex-school, college, religious

organizations, social or political outfits and workplaces like school. Finally, belongingness can also be experienced for entities that one may not have directly been part of, classic example being fan communities of sports teams, music bands etc.

The above cited illustrations of belongingness span informal as well as formal domains of one's life. The pervasiveness of this experience across domains points to the much-emphasized universality of the need to belong. Baumeister and Leary (1995) explain belongingness as a powerful, fundamental, and extremely pervasive need for forming and maintaining strong and stable relationships. Several theorists including the likes of Urie Bronfenbrenner, Abraham Maslow and Alfred Adler have underlined that belongingness is a universal need and it exerts a profound impact on not only human behaviors but also one's growth as a person.

Exploring belongingness in everyday settings can be helpful in conceptualising it at an organizational level and subsequently inform our efforts towards promoting it in our schools.

We begin by understanding belongingness with Baumeister and Leary's (1995) discussion on it being a need to develop and maintain strong and stable relationships.

5.4 Understanding Strong and Stable relationships

This conceptualisation primarily concerns interpersonal relationships or relationships between individuals and precludes indirect associations like those experienced by fans for their celebrity idols. In other words, the term relationship here indicates an expectation of mutuality. Given that schools too are characterized by networks of human relationships which are expected to be mutual, the conceptualization of strong and stable relationships is a useful one to work with. A closer look at the phrase reveals that it has two focal concerns: strong relationship and stable relationship.

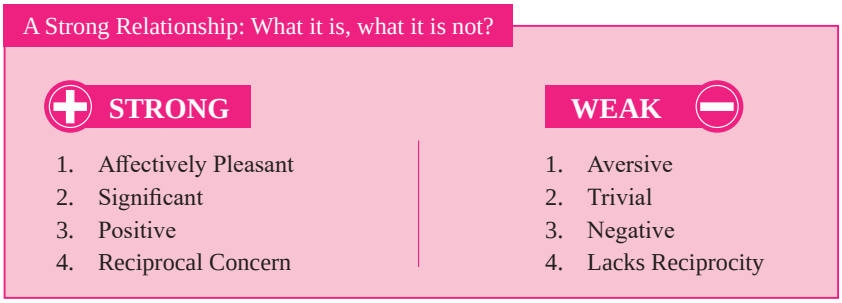
A strong relationship is based on an emotional or affective evaluation. It arises significant feelings of being cared for, being valued, loving and being loved for in turn. In other words, strong relationships are affectively pleasant.

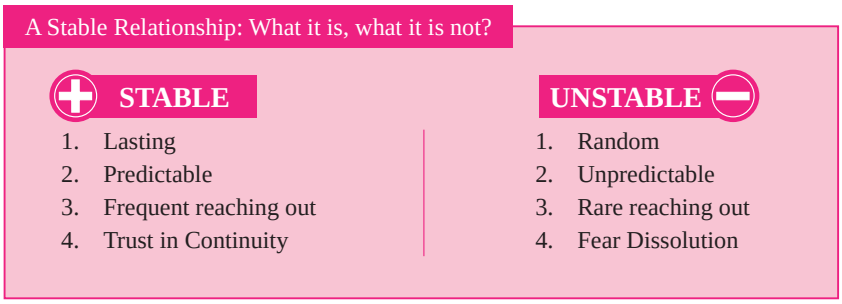
A stable relationship is based on the notion of sustainability. Thus, stability indicates a sense of temporal continuity and a confidence in the longevity of the relationship.

While it may be theoretically helpful to try and analyze the defining features of a strong and a stable relationship separately, it is advisable to consider that in real life scenarios the strength and stability of a relationship goes hand in hand. While it may be possible

to experience strong relationships without an element of stability over long run, it is near impossible to expect a relationship to be stable overtime without it having an element of positive affect denoting strength of the relationship.

While thinking of schools it is advisable to see strength and stability as two sides of the same coin as all stakeholders of a school be it students, their parents, teachers or school leadership have prolonged associations with each other and school as an organization. To continue our efforts of understanding strong and stable relationships in greater details, a diagrammatic representation of these twin focus follows:





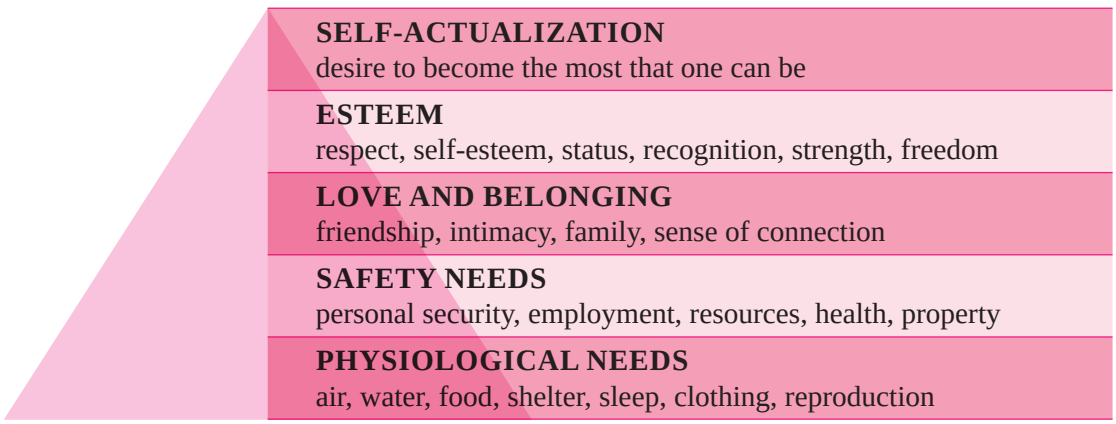
5.5 Belongingness as a Universal Need: Maslow and Lieberman

There exists a consensus on universality of belongingness as a need. This consensus has far reaching implications for what we do and how we do it in schools. Therefore, an understanding of the concept and dynamics of a need and implications arising from it are a prerequisite in our efforts to nurture belongingness in schools.

Abraham Maslow's (1943, 1968) conceptualizations on hierarchy of needs is among the most potent theorizations which help us decode belongingness as a need. It is pertinent to note that in addition to explaining the influence of needs on human survival, maintenance and growth, Maslow's conceptualization is also crucial to our understanding

of belongingness as he himself identifies belongingness as one of the five fundamental motivational needs governing human existence. The needs are arranged as (i) physiological needs, (ii) safety and security needs, (iii) love and belongingness needs, (iv) esteem needs and finally (v) self-actualization need. According to Maslow, any need is known to exert significant influences on the thought, emotions and actions of human beings. Maslow posits that these needs drive our everyday existence thereby implying that humans spent a huge amount of time and effort in satisfying these needs. Maslow's hierarchy of needs is depicted by a pyramidical structure with five distinct levels of needs arranged such that the need at the lowest level exerts the maximum influence on human thought, emotion and action. This conceptualization is referred to as a hierarchy on two accounts: firstly, it implies that a lower level need is more fundamental to an organism's survival then a need placed at a higher level. Secondly it implies that one only advances to a higher-level need once the need(s) at the previous levels are substantially met. As long as a need is not met with sustainably or is in continuous danger of being undermined or thwarted one continues to experience deprivation with regards to that need. It is only when a lower level need is significantly satiated that one can move on to the next higher level of need. Further, in the event of a lower level need being thwarted even after one has moved to a higher level after an initial period of satiation of such lower level need,one reverts back with immediate effect to the earlier level of deprivation vis-à-vis the lower level need so thwarted.

Abraham Maslow's Hierarchy of Motivational Needs (Hopper, 2021)



A key point to note with reference to needs is that their thwarting can have severe physical, social and psychological costs. In other words, a need which is thwarted for a considerable period of time may result in jeopardizing one's sense of psychological wellbeing and adversely affect one's mental health.

Coming specifically to love and belongingness as a need, Maslow (1943) notes that,

> "If both the physiological and the safety needs are fairly well gratified, then there will emerge the love and affection and belongingness needs, and the whole cycle already described will repeat itself with this new center. Now the person will feel keenly, as never before, the absence of friends, or a sweetheart, or a wife, or children. He will hunger for affectionate relations with people in general, namely, for a place in his group, and he will strive with great intensity to achieve this goal." (p.380-81)

Lack of Belongingness : Physical, Cognitive and Socio-emotional Costs

- Reduced Intellectual Achievement
- Lower IQ Test Performance
- Reuced Motivation Levels
- Reduced Perseverance on Tasks
- Lower Self-Control.
- Activation of Negative Stereotypes
- Lower Self-Esteem,
- A More Negative Worldview,
- Continued Perception of Subjection to Rejection
- Attitudinal Intolerance

- Compromised
- Compromised Immune Functioning
- Fragile Physical Health.
- Increased Vulnerability to Illnesses
- Reduced Life Expectancy

- Heightened Mistrust
- Decreased Life Satisfaction
- Frequent Stress
- Reduced Coping Skills
- Sense of Isolation
- Alientation
- Depression
- Anxiety
- Suicidal Tendencies
- Lack of Empathy
- Lower Levels of Acceptance of Self and Others

Maslow goes on to note the continual societal undermining of these relational needs and how this thwarting results in mental illnesses of varying severity. He comments, "In our society the thwarting of these needs is the most commonly found core in cases of maladjustment and more severe psychopathology." Maslow's conceptualisation underlines the need of mutuality in belongingness in that while it does comprise of need to love and care, it also entails the need to feel loved and cared for, in return. Accordingly, a one-way relationship may cause as much psychological distress as no relational existence at all. It is good to recall here that the theme of reciprocity was also stressed by Baumeister and Leary's conceptualisation around strong relationships discussed in previous sections.

It is also important to note that when the need to belong is not met, it has very concrete physical, cognitive and socio-emotional costs (see figure on previous page). Physically, lack of belongingness is known to result in compromised immune functioning, fragile physical health, reduced life expectancy and increased vulnerability to illnesses. Lack of belongingness is further known to result in several cognitive costs such as experiencing low self-esteem, reduced intellectual achievement, reduced motivation levels, low levels of perseverance on tasks, relatively frequent activation of negative stereotypes and so forth. The socio-emotional costs of lack of belongings are equally severe and have been pointed out by theorists like Maslow. Typically, a lack of belongingness results in feelings of alienation, decreased life satisfaction, increased vulnerability to stress and mental illnesses. A lack of social scaffold also results in reduced resilience, less than optimal coping mechanisms and in dire cases, feelings of anxiety, depression and suicidal tendencies.

While Maslow's theorization has established the universality of belongingness as a need, it has faced criticism on grounds of the relative positioning of belongingness as less crucial to human survival and less impactful then physiological and safety-security needs. Recent research on human brains using fMRI scans by social cognitive neuroscientist Matthew Lieberman(2013) and colleagues have proven beyond reasonable doubt that human brains are primarily wired to prioritize human connectedness. This has an evolutionary logic as the need to belong and be connected is more crucial to survival of humans. Thus, unlike what Maslow would have us believe belongingness needs are more fundamental and impactful than even physiological and safety needs. Commenting on how Maslow had it wrong, Lieberman writes:

> "What all mammalian infants, from tree shrews to human babies, really need from the moment of birth is a caregiver who is committed to making sure that the infant's biological needs are met. If this is true, then Maslow had it wrong. To get it right, we have to move social needs to the bottom of his pyramid. Food, water, and shelterare

not the most basic needs for an infant. Instead, being socially connected and cared for is paramount. Without social support, infants will never survive to become adults who can provide for themselves. Being socially connected is a need with a capital N." (p. 43).

Taken together Maslow and Lieberman's perspectives shed light on several key lessons that will be foundational to our efforts towards nurturing belongingness in schools. These are

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1. As belongingness is a universal need, all stakeholders will be experiencing it.
2. To satiate this need, an element of reciprocity and mutuality needs to be built into the school's socio-emotional ethos for each of the stakeholders.
3. Very often different stakeholders' inability to perform to expected standards (for eg. On esteem as well as self-actualizing levels) may be attributable to a deprivation at the level of belongingness and thus can be remedied accordingly.
4. Addressing belongingness needs is a crucial component of a school's efforts towards promoting mental health and wellbeing.
5. So, schools cannot afford to look at belongingness as an add-on or good to have element. It needs to be weaved into schools' ethos, culture and everyday practices.

5.6 School Belongingness: Towards a Context-specific Understanding of Belongingness

While understanding belongingness as a need is a useful point to start with psychologists have undertaken significant research and study of the concept with reference to school contexts to arrive at a more nuanced understanding of the concept of school belongingness. Whereas a consensus on nomenclature eludes us resulting in such varied terminologies as school connectedness, school bonding, school attachments, school orientation and so forth, there is a consensus on the positive effects of a sense of relationship with school. Now most definitions of school belongingness have tended to focus on students (Wingspread Declaration, 2004; Center for Diesease Control and Prevention (CDCP), 2009. The cornerstone of such conceptualizations is the recognition that schools are social organizations wherein scores of individuals segregated as teachers and students interact with common shared purpose of teaching-learning ascribed to them. This preoccupation

with students is evident when Libbey (2007) notes that school belongingness can be said to exist when students "feel close to, a part of, and happy at school; feel that teachers care about students and treat them fairly; get along with teachers and other students, and feel safe at school" (p. 52). One of the most popular definitions of School belongingness reads '*the extent to which students feel personally accepted, respected, included, and supported by others in the school social environment'*. (Goodenow 1993, p.80).

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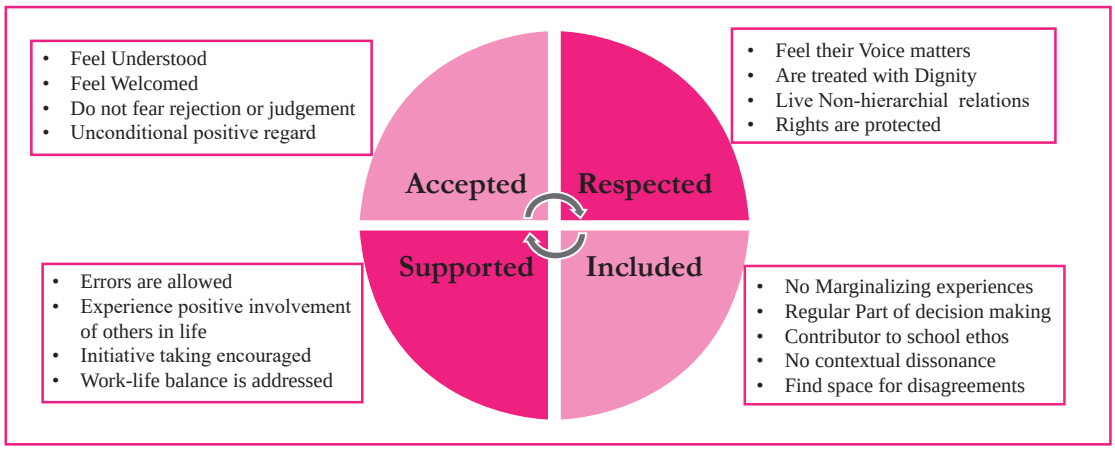
Despite the overwhelming concern of research on school belongingness being with students, one is exhorted to take a broader view of school belongingness to understand and apply the concept to all stakeholders concerned including teachers, support staff, school leadership, parents wherever applicable and the larger community.

While one moves forward to understanding school belongingness, it is imperative to press an exhortation on broadening the conceptualisation of school belongingness to all stakeholders (see Pause and Ponder box on left.)

Goodenow's definition has four key phrases, feeling accepted, feeling respected, feeling included and feeling supported each of whichstands for a fundamental component of feeling belonged while also overlapping and being dependent on other components. Accordingly, all 4 components need to be weaved into planning for fostering belongingness in schools. The following diagram gives some indicative characteristics of each.

Four Elements of School Belongingness (Goodenow, 1993)



A detailed survey of the literature on belongingness in general and school belongingness in particular led St-Amand, Girard and Smith (2017) to identify belongingness as a *process*

comprising both *personal identification and social identity*.Thetwo key phrases of this statement require further elaboration w.r.t schools. Firstly, when looked at as a *process* one recognizes that development of a sense of belonging requires investment of time as well as effort. This is a key point for school leaders to consider. In other words, nurturing belongingness in any or all of the stakeholders has to be a conscious, concerted and continuous endeavor. Secondly, in terms of the components of school belongingness, whereas personal identification implies an affective connectedness, the development of social identity adds the dimension of having a relational existence which transcends an individual's solitary motives and motivations and thus can propel them to collective action wherever required. Thus, nurturing school belongingness would require creating conducive conditions for both fostering a sense of relatedness at the personal level and encouraging a collective identity and purpose. Further analysis of these twin ideas leads one to an identification of four defining attributes of belongingness which have been recurrent throughout literature on school belongingness as follows (St-Amand et al, 2017, p.109):

Four Defining Attributes of School Belongingness

Attribute 1: Positive Emotions
- feeling of attachment, intimacy, usefulness and support, and
- a sense of pride

Attribute 2: Positive Relations
- accompanied by encouragement and support
- involves communication of acceptance, respect and warmth

Attribute 3: Energy and Intitiative
- characterised by meaningful involvement within a group
- It is reflected in initiative taking, active participation, excitement owning responsibility

Attribute 3: Harmonization
- adapt and adjust by changing personal aspects to align with any situations or people that one feels belongingness for

5.7 School Belongingness Benefits: A Summative Account

Just as belongingness in general leads to several positive outcomes across various domains of life, school belongingness too is known to positively and substantially impact the experience of life in school. Given that most researches have focused on students' sense of belongingness, the evidences too are lopsided towards its benefits for students. It is

then pertinent to note that one can safely presume based on the literature surveyed earlier on belongingness in general, that adults who are stakeholders in schools too would be benefitting if the efforts at nurturing a belonging ethos in school address their concerns too.

The research evidence overwhelmingly supports numerous benefits of school belongingness on students' academic, motivational, physical and socio-emotional life. Korpershoek et al.(2020) state that school belongingness is a prerequisite for overall school functioning. They further assert that the positive impacts of school belongingness do not vary with grade level thereby implying that they remain crucial for students throughout their schooling years.

School belongingness is known to improve overall school motivation. It reduces student attrition and delinquency, it reduces dropout rates, increase the degree and quality of school engagement, improves classroom behavior and participation levels, stimulates students' intent or desire to learn, increases both expectancy of success and students' valuation of the merit or benefits of school work and students' self-evaluation of the work undertaken by them. It is known to increase self-reported effort, has a positive effect on academic achievement as measured by school grades across domains and increases participation in academic as well as co-curricular activities.

On the physical front, school belongingness is known to prevent instances of eating disorders, indulgence in substance abuse, erratic work schedules, physical withdrawal, isolation and self-confinement, and promotes involvement in physical activity within school hours.

On the socio-emotional and moral front, school belongingness is known to boost self-esteem, encourage prosocial behaviours and formation of positive social relations, reduce incidences of law-breaking, use of weaponry in school, school-based violence, early sexual initiation, school vandalism, instances of bullying and theft, avert suicidal ideation and attempts. School belongingness provides buffers against emotional distress and depression and alienation. Overall, it can be said that school belongingness is known to foster positive mental health, which is the central theme of the next module in line. i.e. Module 6

5.8 Nurturing Belongingness in Schools

Nurturing belongingness in schools requires a two fold focus: firstly, one needs to actively identify certain cultures, practices and processes which may be hindering or thwarting

school belongingness like punitive disciplinary regimes. Secondly, one needs to design proactive interventions which are conducive to creating an ethos of belongingness for one and all like democratic decision-making processes. It is to this end that our discussion is now geared. We begin by exploring the theme of what thwarts school belongingness full stop

(a) What Thwarts Belongingness in Schools?

As noted elsewhere, a comprehensive approach to school belongingness is missing in literature in terms of researche, theorizations and ideation around it being preoccupied with students. When and if teachers and school leaders find a mention in this otherwise expansive body of work, it is in the roles of adults capable of nurturing belongingness in students. A discussion on addressing the need for belonging of adult stakeholders is grossly missing from the literature. Accordingly, an understanding of what thwarts school belongingness for stakeholders other than students needs to be carefully constructed from the context under consideration. An attempt towards this was made in the preparatory stages of this module wherein a focused discussion with over ---school teachers and ---school heads from a residential school set up was conducted to explore experiences of lack of sense of belongingness among adult stakeholders. It is to be noted that a lack of belongingness emerged as a recurrent theme in teachers' sharing.

Teacher's Narratives of Lack of Belongingness

- Experiencing trust deficit with HoS, colleagues and students,
- Limitations on genuine connectedness imposed by a hierarchical structure and functioning of school,
- Instances of frequent staff discord and lack of harmony,
- Head of school's biases and favouritism,
- Lack of human resources and resultant work pressures jeopardizing work life-balance,
- Systemic apathy towards delivering family support structures for teachers living on-campus,
- A punitive culture of issuing memos in wake of less than mandated result achievement,
- Curbs on creating teacher unions etc.

Several reasons were identified as contributing to teachers experiencing a lack of belongingness, these included:

Reasons for Experiencing a Lack of Belongingness

- Overemphasis on academic results resulting in excessive pressure
- Harsh disciplinary ethos of schools
- Students being subjected to constant surveillance,
- Teacher-student relationships being distant and emotion-deficient
- A perception of not being trusted by teachers and other adults in school,
- Experiences of home school discontinuity due to ethnic, caste, linguistic and religious background of students.

The discussion also highlighted reasons for a less than optimal sense of belonging among students. These reasons mirrored what literature on school belongingness notes:

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Stakeholder brainstorming sessions

- ☑ An anonymous letter-box
- ☑ Self-designed rating scales
- ☑ Open-ended questionnaires
- ☑ Graffitti corners
- ☑ Monthly sharing routines

Addressing these concerns depends on an accurate identification of causal factors causal factors relevant to a particular school context. While standardized tools on assessing levels of school belongingness may be available (an example being Carol Goodenow's 18 item PSSM), their focus expectedly remains the students. As a result, it falls upon the school leadership to devise continuous and reliable ways to self-assess levels of belongingness for different stakeholders and identify the factors which may be thwarting it for each group.

(b) What Promotes School Belongingness?

The CDCP (2009) in its report on promoting school connectedness among students identified 4 factors which were found to positively promote school belongingness. These pointers can be informative and facilitate further ideation on school belongingness for all. These factors are:

- **Adult Support**- implying positive regard from parents, teachers and other adults in the child's environment.
- **Belonging to a Positive Peer Group**: imply keeping company with a peer group which supports pro-social behaviors.
- **Commitment to Education**: implies students' perception of positive worth of education and adults seen as committed to the education of such child.
- **School Environment**: implying an environment which is physically and emotionally safe and secure, physically clean and hygienic and psychosocial positive and supportive.

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A PEDAGOGY OF BELONGING

A PoB is one wherein all involved in educational interactions are mindful of the need to shape positive social dynamics.Strategies include but are not limited to:

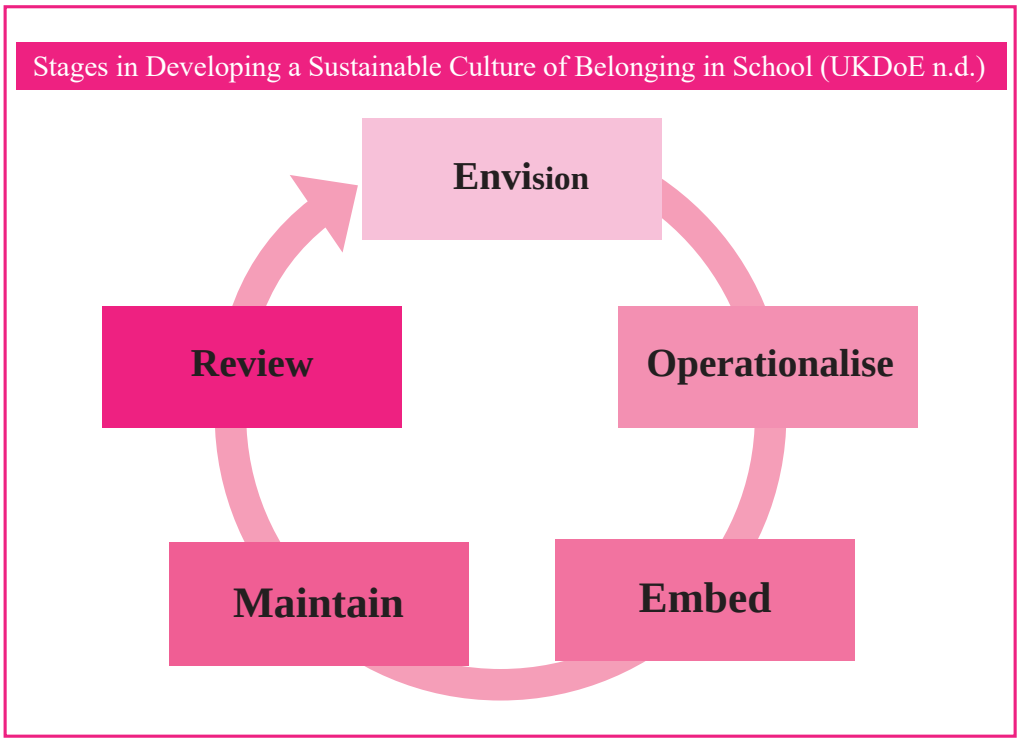
- ☑ creating a trusting climate
- ☑ considering students' needs
- ☑ knowing students' names,
- ☑ listening to students,
- ☑ using humor, and
- ☑ encouraging discussion around roles & rules.

In addition to the factors identified by the CDCP report a survey of literature on factors promoting school belongingness among students highlight several related points. Some of these are as follows:

- Positive, sustaining and reciprocal social relationships among various stakeholders
- A school ethos which has mechanisms of support and care embedded into it.
- An inclusive ethos balanced with exclusiveness with regard to recognition of unique talents and contributions
- Accountability and transparency in the delegation of decision making
- A culture of collaborative, cooperative and collective learning
- Clarity of roles and responsibilities
- Encouragement of autonomy
- The acceptance of emotion and vulnerability,
- Celebration of difference.
- Democratic and dignity promoting interactions

5.9 Nurturing a Sustainable Culture of Belongingness

Nurturing a sustainable culture of belongingness is an activity that requires elaborate planning, monitoring and review efforts. Given that the core concern is belongingness, the efforts cannot not be collective, inclusive, democratic and dialogic. Keeping this fundamental spirit in mind, the journey towards nurturing a the sustainable culture must traverse five clear steps. The same have been elaborated in the ensuing section.



The first step in designing a sustainable culture of school belongingness is to **envision the culture** itself.

Such envisioning encompasses articulating the standards, values and behaviors deemed conducive to promotion of belongingness for all. The process of envisioning should be collective, democratic and contextual. The participation of various stakeholders should be ensured in this envisioning exercise. Also, the discussions should be non-hierarchical to ensure the democratic spirit. Also, the realities of the school and its stakeholders should inform this envisioning to ensure the vision is owned by those

expected to internalize and live by it. A vision statement can be thought of as a preamble of the belongingness nurturing school. It is thus a collective articulation of the underlying principles that a school community wishes to be guided by. Once a vision is agreed upon, all efforts must be taken to communicate the same to each and every stakeholder.

The second step is to **operationalize the vision** so adopted.

Operationalizing is an analytical exercise which seeks to understand in greater detail what the key phrases of our vision statement mean when elaborated upon. Operationalizing requires detailing what needs to be done to ensure that the vision is continuously reflected in all efforts at all times for all stakeholders. Such operationalizing requires brainstorming on how this vision can be translated and embedded in the various policies, practices and processes of the school in question. It ideates on and identifies pointers and doables on how the vision is to be a part of the formal and informal life of school, as well as the official and hidden curriculum, in so far as possible.

The third step is to **embed the culture as envisioned** into school life.

Embedding is the transactional counterpart of operationalizing the vision. In actuality one may even experience a significant overlap in these two steps. Embedding the operationalized vision requires one to create concrete mechanisms, processes and practices which are reflective of the vision. It is here that our earlier reference to a pedagogy of belonging too becomes relevant. Embedding the vision into policies and practice ensures that every staff and student can relate to it and is aware of how to contribute in sustaining such ethos in tangible terms through their actions. It also provides indicative dos and do nots befitting of belongingness-promoting schools.

The fourth step then is to **maintain the culture** at every single opportunity:

All staff and pupils should consistently maintain through their conduct the agreed standards, values and behaviours identified at the outset. This maintaining is to be supported, highlighted and reinforced. Maintaining the agreed vision is to be a continuous endeavour and requires concerted action, self-monitoring as well as reinforcement mechanisms to ensure that following the vision becomes both intrinsically and extrinsically joyful. Maintaining the culture also mandates regular training, workshops, interactions, lectures, talks, sharing sessions etc. for knowledge and skill upgradation. Leaders can also make searching and sharing of best practices related to promoting belongingness, a regular feature to ensure that all stakeholders

grow, learn and develop individually while contributing to the development of their school as a site they care for.

The final step in this cycle is to **Review the Culture**:

While reviewing chronologically seems the last step, once the efforts towards nurturing belongingness are initiated, review and reflections become an ongoing exercise. Reviews are to be both formative and summative, as in an Annual SB review. One way to look at reviews is that they help us undertake a SWOT analysis. School staff can review what works, and why, what does not and why not, what new opportunities have arisen to further nurture belongingness, what new challenges have arisen, what do the stakeholder groups feel, what do they want to feel, what are the gaps that still exist, what did we overlook and so forth. The belongingness culture should meet the needs of the school community and the review should help identify what are the adjustments required as such.

PAUSE AND PONDER

REVIEWING SB IN THE PANDEMIC

Imagine a school undertaking their annual sb review in 2022.

- ☑ How would the realities of pandemic shape challenges to belongingness in a residential school context? What about non-residential schools
- ☑ How would the vision be reformulated to account for school belongingness in emergencies and crises?

5.10 Summary

The present module has sought to foreground the concept of school belongingness in the larger pursuit of creating conducive learning environments. Whereas there is enough research evidence to establish that school belongingness invariably results in improved learning outcomes, better grade performances and overall improvement in academic attainment for students, the current module is premised on the belief that conducive learning environments define learning broadly such that they address learning needs in academic as well as socio-emotional domains. They address the whole learner and are organizations which address the head and heart, alike. The module takes the stand that school belongingness should be conceptualized keeping in mind the universality of the need to belong. Accordingly, school leaders must adopt a whole school approach to school belongingness. In saying so, one implies that means that not only should all school actors

be a part of school belongingness promoting efforts but these efforts must in turn seek to address the belongingness need of all stakeholders, at all times, through all domains and in all school processes, policies and practices. It is to this end the present module begins by establishing the universality of belongingness as a need and highlight the significant psychosocial and physical costs to be incurred if this need is thwarted. The discussion then proceeds to extend the understanding of belongingness to the school context thereby introducing the concept of School Belongingness. Subsequent discussions cover the meaning of school belongingness, research findings on its impact on overall school functioning, its positive impact across physical cognitive and social emotional domains, the reasons which are known to thwart school belongingness, the factors which promote it and the steps one needs to engage in to develop a sustainable culture which promotes school belongingness for all stakeholders. It is hoped that the module foregrounds belongingness as an essential component of conducive school ethos and no longer remains a mere 'good to have' element.

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SECTION II

Facilitator's Toolkit

A. Blueprint

B. Session Manual and Resources

A. Blueprint

S. No	Session Focus	Focal Points	Group Size	Session/ Activity Title	Materials Required	Time
S1.	Reflecting on experiences of Belonging in personal life.	Ice breaking Documenting frequent bases employed by people for connecting with fellow humans.	Entire Group	S1.A1. Connected Network	Chart Paper, Markers	40 min.
S2.	Reflecting on experiences of Belonging in personal life.	To initiate reflections on belongingness in everyday life through the lifespan.	Groups of 5	S2.A1 I Belong...	Charts, Sketch Pens D1/S2A1-Belongingess world through the lifespan Worksheet.	50 min.
S3.	Understanding Belongingness as a need to form strong and stable relationships	To identify the key features of strong relationships. To identify the key features of stable relationships. To appreciate the mutuality of the two.	Groups of 4	S3.A1 Strong this, Stable that…	D1/S3A1-Strong this, Stable that Worksheet, Sketch Pens, Charts, Markers	30 min

S. No	Session Focus	Focal Points	Group Size	Session/ Activity Title	Materials Required	Time
S4.	Identifying Belongingness as a Need using Abraham Maslow and Lieberman's theorizations	To introduce the concept of belongingness as aneed using Maslow's need hierarchy theory. To highlight primacy of belongingness need using Lieberman's conceptuali-sation	Entire Group	Lecture-Maslow vs Lieberman: What we Know of Belonging ness as a Need.	**Video resource 1:** (**first 7 minutes only**) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y1WdqcONLHY Abraham Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Explained **Video resource 2:** (first 12 minutes only) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-r-ci4iybt8 The Human Need for Belonging-ted talk by Amelia Franck Meyer **Reading D1/S4R1-** Inverting Maslow **Reading D1/S4R2** Maslow, A.H. (1943)	60 min
S5.	Understanding the impact of lack of belongingness on different domains of life.	To identify the impact of lack of belongingness on physical, cognitive and socio-emotional functioning.	Groups of 6	S5.A1-The Costs of Not Belonging	D1/S5A1- Domains of Life Stickers Sheet Chart papers Pens	60 mins

S. No	Session Focus	Focal Points	Group Size	Session/ Activity Title	Materials Required	Time
S6.	Introduction to School Belonging ness-I	To appreciate the impact of school belongingness on various aspects of school life. To understand the concept of school belongingness through identification of its core components and attributes	Entire Group	S6.A1-Lecture on What is School Belongingness?	Aisle Board, Markers D1/S6A1: 4 Attributes of School Belongingness Worksheet	90 mins
	Consolidation and agenda setting…	To provide buffer time to completeany pending activities. To consolidate the day's learning. To engage in doubt solving and, agenda setting for next day	Entire Group	Session Recap and Consolidation	-	30 mins.
Day-2						
S7.	Understanding What Thwarts SB for various stakeholders	To analyze how school belongingness can be thwarted for various stakeholders vis-a vis Goodenow's 4 Components	Groups of 4	S7.A1- What Thwarts Stakeholders' School Belongingness.	D2/S7A1-SB and Stakeholders-Thwarting Worksheet	90 mins

S. No	Session Focus	Focal Points	Group Size	Session/ Activity Title	Materials Required	Time
S8.	Understanding What Promotes SB for various stakeholders	To study the theoretical exposition on factors promoting SB for students. To extend the above understanding in order to identify FB promoting factors for other stakeholders	Groups of 4	S8.A1-What promotes School Belongingness?	D2/S8R1-CDC Reading D2/S8A1-Promoting SB for stakeholders Worksheet	90 mins
S9.	Developing SB measures	To design a self-check inventory for each of the components of SB.	Groups of 4 each, *continued unchanged from previous activity	S9.A1-Measuring SB	D2/S9A1a-Staff Questionnaire D2/S9A1b -Student Questionnaire D2/S9A1c-PSSM Scale.	60 mins
S10.	Towards a Culture of SB	To develop an action plan for nurturing a culture of SB.	Pairing people having some common context.	S10.A1-Developing a Whole School Culture of Belongingness	D2/S10A1- Poster and Action Plan template	90 mins
	The Road Ahead…		30 minutes			

B. Session Manual and Resources

Day and Session	Session Title	Session Resources	
		Type	Title
D1. S1. A1	Connected Network	NA	NA
D1. S2. A1	I Belong!	Worksheet	D1-S2A1- The Belongingness world through the lifespan
D1. S3. A1	Strong this, Stable that…	Worksheet	D1-S3A1- Strong this, Stable that…
D1. S4 A1	Lecture- Maslow vs Lieberman: What we Know of Belongingness as a Need	Reading	D1-S4R1 Inverting Maslow by Matthew Lieberman
D1. S5. A1	The Costs of Not Belonging	Worksheet	D1-S5A1 Domains of Life Sticker Sheet
D1. S6. A1	Lecture on What is School Belongingness? Its Components, attributes and Impacts.	Worksheet	D1-S6A1 4 Attributes of School Belongingness-handout cum Worksheet
D2. S7. A1	What Thwarts Stakeholders' School Belongingness	Worksheet	D1-S7A1 SB and Stakeholders-Thwarting Worksheet
D2. S8. A1	What promotes School Belongingness?	Reading	D2-S8R1 CDC Reading
		Worksheet	D2-S8A1 Promoting SB for stakeholders Worksheet
D2. S9. A1	Measuring School Belongingness	Worksheet	D2-S9A1a UNICEF Staff Questionnaire
		Worksheet	D2-S9A1b Student Questionnaire
		Worksheet	D2-S9A1c PSSM Scale
D2. S10. A1	Developing a Whole School Culture of Belongingness	Handout	D2-S10A1 Action Plan Template

D1.S1.A1

Activity: The Connected Network

Time Required: 40 minutes

Objectives:

- Ice Breaking
- Documenting frequent bases employed by people while connecting with fellow humans.

Group Size: Entire Group

Materials Required: Chart Papers, Marker Pens.

Steps for Facilitation:

1. The facilitator begins the session by earmarking 5 minutes to all members of the group to interact with each other.
2. Subsequently the group members are asked one by one to introduce themselves.
3. While doing so they are also to name any one person from within this group with whom they have felt connected over the last five minutes.
4. The facilitator draws a connection map on the chart wherein she/he writes the name of the first member and draws an arrow connecting the name to the name of the other member so identified by them as a connection.
5. The facilitator also asks the basis on which the first member felt connected to the second member and mentions this basis on the arrow so drawn. Some examples of such bases maybe common language, region, similar family demographics, shared hobbies or interests etc.
6. Once done the facilitator draw up a list of most frequently cited basis for feeling connected to a fellow participant.

Points for Debriefing:

- Why do most workshops begin with a session on icebreaking?
- What accounts for the fact that even the briefest of interactions lead to feelings of preliminary connectedness?

- What accounts for certain bases being more frequent while experiencing connectedness?

Key Takeaways:

- The need for experiencing Connectedness is among the primary motivators of human interactions.
- Experiencing common shared grounds are known to pave way for feelings of connectedness.
- Human interactions are known to be more satisfying when connectedness is built into them.

D1.S2.A1

Activity: I Belong…

Time Required: 50 minutes

Objectives:

- To initiate reflections on belongingness through out the lifespan.

Group Size: Individually

Materials Required: Charts, Sketch pens, Worksheet D1/S1A2-Belongingess world through the lifespan.

Steps for Facilitation:

1. The activity proceeds in two phases.
2. For phase one, the facilitator randomly divides the group into groups of 5 members each.
3. Each group is assigned one of the following ages and stages of life:

S. No.	Stage of life
1.	The Pre-school child.
2.	The Primary School child
3.	The Middle school child
4.	The Adolescent child
5.	The College goer and early job seeker (tentatively aged 20-30)
6.	The Middle-aged adult (tentatively aged 30-45)
7.	Person in late adulthood (tentatively aged 45-60)
8.	Person in old age (aged 60 and above)

4. The facilitator asks each group to imagine themselves to be an individual from the stage assigned to them.
5. With such imagination, the group has to complete the sentence 'I feel a sense of belonging towards …….. because ……'.

6. Facilitator can provide an example like : "I feel a sense of belongingness towards my family because family is the fundamental continuing entity in my life."

7. Each group should be encouraged to complete this sentence as many times as possible imagining a new source of belonginess every time.

8. The facilitator provides charts to each group and asks them to divide the chart into two columns with one column mentioning the key points and the other half depicting the belongingness world of same through a drawing.

9. Each group displays its chart in the room.

10. The facilitator then proceeds to phase two which is to be done individually.

11. All group members are given the D1/S1A2 Worksheet.

12. They are asked to move around to look at the charts displayed by all groups and complete the worksheet given to them based on these charts.

13. The facilitator instructs the group members to add more points to each stage on their own as this worksheet would also be used in later sessions.

14. Debriefing follows.

Points for Debriefing:

- What trends did you notice regarding the circle of belongingness through the lifespan?
- Could you identify certain commonalities between middle school and adolescent children when it comes to belongingness?
- Could the later stages of life give us any insights about what may be important to our teachers in terms of belongingness?

Key Takeaways:

- Belongingness maybe felt towards individuals, groups, institutions etc.
- Under normal course of development, the circle of belongingness continues to expand through the life stage with certain core associations remaining the same.
- Understanding belongingness and its bases in everyday life may be helpful in creating an ethos of belonging in schools as well.

D1.S2.A1: Resource

Worksheet: The Belonginess World through the Lifespan

S. No.	Stage of Life	My Belongingness World includes my…				
1.	The Pre-school child.					
2.	The Primary school child					
3.	The Middle school child					
4.	The Adolescent					
5.	The Young adult (tentatively aged 20-30)					
6.	The Middle-aged adult (tentatively aged 30-45)					
7.	Person in late adulthood (tentatively aged 45-60)					
8.	Person in old age (aged 60 and above)					

D1.S3.A1

Activity: Strong Relationships, Stable Relationships.

Time Required: 30 minutes

Objectives:

- To identify the key features of strong relationships.
- To identify the key features of stable relationships.
- To appreciate the mutuality of the two.

Group Size: Groups of 4 members each

Materials Required: D1/S3A1-Strong this, Stable that … worksheet, sketch pens, charts, marker pens.

Steps for Facilitation:

1. The facilitator divides the group into groups of four members each.
2. Each group is given a copy of the worksheet. The worksheet is to be filled in two phases.
3. For phase one only the columns indicated as 1 and 2 are to be filled. Column 3 will be dealt with in phase two.
4. wherein they have to identify things, concepts or ideas for which the adjectives strong and stable can be used respectively. An example of the same is given in the worksheet to begin with.
5. For each of the objects, ideas so identified, the group has to further identify the characteristics which justify the use of the adjective strong or stable for it. For example, a strong house may imply a house made up of good quality material, or a house which is earthquake resistant and so forth.
6. Once the phase one is completed, the facilitator asks the group to proceed to column 3.
7. For each of the characteristics identified in column 2 the facilitator ask the group members 2 pink weather these characteristics can also apply to human relationships. The group members respond by either putting a wife or yes or in for no against each characteristic.
8. Debriefing follows.

Points for Debriefing:

- What words were commonly used to signify strength?
- What words were commonly used to signify stability?
- Which traits could you identify as translating well to denote strong relationships?
- Which traits could you identify as characterizing stable relationships?
- What is your opinion about the interlinkages or disjunctions in strong and stable relationships i.e. are they same? Are they different? Can a relationship be strong without being stable? Can it be vice versa?

Key Takeaways:

- Strong relationships contain an element of affective evaluation. They evoke pleasant feelings and emotional states.
- Stable relationships denote an expectation of longevity.
- Whereas in most cases strong and stable relationships go hand in hand, there may be instances where a relationship is strong without being stable although vice versa is near improbable.

D1.S3.A1: Resource

Worksheet: Strong this, Stable that...

STRONG			STABLE		
1. Object/Idea	2. Characteristics	3. Y/N	1. Object/ Idea	2. Characteristics	3. Y/N

D1.S4.A1

Activity: Lecture- Maslow vs Lieberman: What we Know of Belongingness as a Need

Time Required: 60 minutes

Objectives:

- To introduce the concept of belongingness as aneed using Maslow's need hierarchy theory.
- To highlight the primacy of belongingness need using Lieberman's conceptualisation.

Group Size: Entire group

Materials Required: Video resource 1, Video resource 2, Reading D1/S4R1-Inverting Maslow, and D1-S4R2-Maslow-Towards a Theory of Motivation (link to be given as reference reading post session https://psychclassics.yorku.ca/Maslow/motivation.html).

Steps for Facilitation:

1. The facilitator is expected to have read both the readings for the session i.e. D1/S4R1-Inverting Maslow, and D1-S4R2-Maslow-Towards a Theory of Motivation in advance.
2. The session is to be conducted in two phases.
3. The first phase comprises of a lecture on Abraham Maslow's need hierarchy based on the reading D1-S4R2 and the video resources provided for the same.
4. The facilitator is expected to follow an interactive pedagogy as the lecture proceeds.
5. Link on Maslow's Theory of Motivation (1943) (https://psychclassics.yorku.ca/Maslow/motivation.htm) is assigned as an extra resource which the participants are expected to read at their leisure to gain better grasp of Maslow's theorization.
6. For the second phase the facilitator distributes the reading 'Inverting Maslow'to all participants and gives them 10 minutes to read it and jot down key points of the same.
7. Debriefing follows.

Points for Debriefing:

- What implications does the recognition of belongingness as a need have for our understanding?
- How does the conceptualisation of belongingness as a need relate to the concept of mental health and well being?
- What role do you see for reciprocity or mutuality in satiation of belongingness as a need?
- While Maslow and Lieberman both see belongingness as a need, they ascribe different importance to it. Who do you agree with and why?
- Does your agreeing with Maslow rather than Liberman, or vice versa have any implication for your approach to nurture belongingness in your school? Elaborate.

Key Takeaways:

- A need implies a considerable expense of thought, emotion and action on its fulfillment.
- A need also implies that thwarting it may lead to detrimental impacts on an individual's wellbeing.
- Belongingness as a need is characterized by mutuality and an absence of mutuality is akin to it being thwarted.
- Whereas the universality of belongingness is accepted by both Maslow and Lieberman, Lieberman's latest research supports the primacy of it as a need and attributes a survival related function to it thus making it even more crucial concern.

Reading: 'Inverting Maslow' by Lieberman

In 1943, Abraham Maslow, a famous New England psychologist, published a paper in a prestigious journal describing a hierarchy of needs in humans. The hierarchy he identified is typically depicted as layers of a pyramid. Maslow suggested that we work our way up the pyramid of needs, satisfying the most basic needs first and then, when those are satisfied, moving up to the next set of needs.

At the bottom of the pyramid are physiological needs like food, water, and sleep. The next level of the pyramid focuses on our safety needs, such as physical shelter and bodily health. Physiological and safety needs are really fundamental needs with a capital *N*. No one can do without them. The rest of the pyramid consists of nice if you can get them needs, or needs with a small *n*. My son may say he needs another scoop of ice cream, but really he just wants one; he will survive without it (even if he thinks he won't). In Maslow's pyramid, the remaining needs the extra scoops of ice-cream are love, a sense of belonging, and being esteemed. *Self-aactualization* (that is, reaching one's full potential) is the cherry on top.

Ask people what they need to survive, and there is a very strong probability that they will produce answers from the bottom tiers of the pyramid, like food, water, and shelter. Infants need food, water, and shelter too. The difference is that infants have no way of getting these things for themselves. They are absolutely useless when it comes to surviving on their own.

What all mammalian infants, from tree shrews to human babies, really need from the moment of birth is a caregiver who is committed to making sure that the infant's biological needs are met. If this is true, then Maslow had it wrong. To get it right, we have to move social needs to the bottom of his pyramid. Food, water, and shelter are not the most basic needs for an infant. Instead, being socially connected and cared for is paramount. Without social support, infants will never survive to become adults who can provide for themselves. Being socially connected is a need with a capital N. Like the default network in Chapter 2, this restructuring of Maslow's pyramid tells us something critical about who we are. Love and belonging might seem like a convenience we can live without, but our biology is built to thirst for connection because it is linked to our most basic survival needs. As we will see, connection is the first of three adaptations that support our sophisticated sociality, but our need for connection is the bedrock upon which the others are built.

© Lieberman, M. D. (2013). Social: Why our brains are wired to connect. New York: Crown publishers.

D1.S5.A1

Activity: The Costs of Not Belonging!

Time Required: 60 Mins

Objectives:

- To identify the impact of lack of belongingness on physical, cognitive and socio-emotional functioning.

Group Size: Groups of 6 members each

Materials Required: D1/S5A1- Domains of Life Stickers Sheet, chart papers, pens.

Steps for Facilitation:

1. The facilitator divides the participants into groups of 6 members each.
2. Each group is given a chart, and D1/S5A1 sticker sheet.
3. The groups are given the following instructions:
   a. You will be making use of internet search for the present activity.
   b. Each group is given 10 minutes to draw up a list of as many consequences of lack of belongingness on an individual's life as possible.
   c. Once this list is made, the items need to be classified as far as possible under 3 main domains namely, physical , cognitive and socio-emotional. The same is to be jotted down on chart paper and the appropriate stickers from column 1 of the sticker sheet are to be pasted to indicate such column.
   d. Once such list is prepared the remaining stickers namely tick, cross and question mark are to be used as follows:

      Use tick mark: if any of the group members was able to recall any individual who may have experienced such consequence as a result of experience lack of belonginess.

      Use cross mark: if none of the group members were able to recall any individual who may have experienced such consequence as a result of experience lack of belonginess.

Use question mark: if majority of the group members had no idea that an item could result from a lack of belongingness, and

Use the classroom emoji for all the items which the group found to be most relevant to the school context.

4. Once the groups finish their charts, the same are displayed.
5. The groups are given 10 minutes to look at each other's charts.
6. Consolidation lecture and debriefing follows.

Points for Debriefing:

- How do you explain lack of belongingness influencing immune functioning and longevity?
- Which of the findings were most startling for you and why?
- Did any of the findings led your thoughts to a student, a teacher or a staff you may know?
- What do you think should be the next steps for our workshop? Why?

Key Takeaways:

- Lack of belongingness has severe consequences for all domains of life.
- Accordingly, nurturing belonginess in schools can help address several issues pertaining to each of these domains, for all stakeholders.

Worksheet: Domains of life sticker sheets

	✓	X	X	?		
	✓	X	X	?		
	✓	X	X	?		
	✓	X	X	?		
	✓	✓	✓	?		
	✓	✓	✓	?		

D1.S6.A1

Activity: Lecture on What is School Belongingness? Understanding its Components, attributes and Impacts.

Time Required: 90 minutes

Objectives:

- To appreciate the impact of school belongingness on various aspects of school life.
- To understand the concept of school belongingness through identification of its core components and attributes.

Group Size: Entire Group

Materials Required: D1/S6A1 Worksheet, Chart, Markers. Additionally Facilitator may use whatever supporting materials she/he may need for delivering the lecture like self-created PPT.

Steps for Facilitation:

1. The facilitator is expected to have read Amand et al. (2017) and relevant theoretical section of this module before delivering the lecture.
2. It is advised to keep the pedagogy interactive.
3. While discussing the 4 components of Goodenow's definition namely feeling accepted, respected, included and supported, the facilitator is to brainstorm with participants on each of the terms and arrive at as many characteristics for each as possible. The same can be documented on Charts.
4. The facilitator must use brainstorming to stress that the 4 components are overlapping and certain characteristics may fit in more than one component for eg. having a voice and the feeling that one's opinions matter are as much part of being accepted as of being respected and included.
5. The discussion on 4 attributes is to proceed with the help of D1/S6A1 handout cum Worksheet.
6. After discussing the handout (pg. 1of D1/S6A1) , the participants are asked to complete the pg. 2 of the worksheet individually.

Points for Debriefing:

- What gaps did you find in the evidence on benefits of school belongingness?
- How do you related our discussion on belongingness as a need to some of the benefits outlined in the lecture.
- How do you evaluate Goodenow's definition in terms of comprehensiveness? Do you think it omits certain dimensions?
- Keeping our previous discussions on belongingness so far, how would you define school belongingness?

Key Takeaways:

- According to Goodenow, School Belongingness indicates the extent to which students feel personally accepted, respected, included, and supported by others in the school social environment'.
- The conceptualisation of school belongingness has tended to focus on students.
- Like all needs the thwarting of the need for school belongingness too has multiple adverse costs.
- A broad conceptualisation of school belongingness must focus on all stakeholders.
- Finally, nurturing belongingness in schools is a key trait of mental health promoting schools

D1.S6.A1: Resource

Worksheet: Attributes of School Belongingness

Statement 1: Belonging is a Process involving personal identification and social identity

Statement 2: School Belongingness has the following 4 attributes

Attribute 1: Positive Emotions
- feeling of attachment, intimacy, usefulness and support, and
- a sense of pride

Attribute 2: Positive Relations
- accompanied by encouragement and support
- involves communication of acceptance, respect and warmth

Attribute 3: Energy and Intitiative
- characterised by meaningful involvement within a group
- It is reflected in initiative taking, active participation, excitement owning responsibility

Attribute 3: Harmonization
- adapt and adjust by changing personal aspects to align with any situations or people that one feels belongingness for

Attribute	Students	Teachers	Support staff	parents
Positive Emotions				
Positive Relations				
Energy 4 Initiative				
Harmonization				

Day 1: Consolidation

Closing Session

Activity: Session Recap and Consolidation

Time Required: 30 mins

Objectives:

- To consolidate the day and set agenda for the next day

Group Size: Entire Group

Materials Required: None

Steps for Facilitation:

1. Facilitator is free to use this session for any activity deemed relevant including any of the following:

   To provide buffer time to complete any pending activities.

   To consolidate the day's learning.

   To engage in doubt solving

   To set agenda for the next day

2. The session does not require any debriefing.

D2.S7.A1

Activity: What Thwarts Stakeholders School Belongingness

Time Required: 60 mins

Objectives:

- To analyze how school belongingness can be thwarted for various stakeholders for each of the 4 Components stressed by Goodenow.

Group Size: Groups of 4 members each

Materials Required: D2/S7A1-SB and Stakeholders-Thwarting Worksheet

Steps for Facilitation:

1. The facilitator divides the participants into groups of 4 each.
2. Each group is given the D2/S7A1 worksheet
3. Facilitator utilizes first 5 minutes to revise the 4 components of Goodenow's definition as discussed in the preceding session.
4. Each group is to work with any 1 stakeholder group for which they would collectively like to ideate. The facilitator is free to devise any mechanism that they may want to follow for such allocation of stakeholder group vis. chits, random allocation, asking the participants etc.
5. Once an equitable distribution is made, groups are given the following instruction:
    a. You have to complete the worksheet for only the stakeholder group chosen for /by you.
    b. Based on your experiences, you have to identify atleast 3 factors each which threaten each of the 4 components respectively.
6. The facilitator meanwhile puts up 4 different charts in 4 different corners of the workshop space.
7. Each chart is earmarked for any 1 of the 4 stakeholders group vis. students/ teachers/support staff/leadership.Also each chart is divided into 4 column denoting the 4 components. (the pattern is similar to the worksheet)

8. Once the groups complete their worksheets, they are asked to write their points on the common charts such that all points pertaining to each stakeholder group are collated at 1 place.

9. Participants are allowed time to look at the display. Debriefing follows.

Points for Debriefing

- What commonalities, if any did you find across the stakeholder groups w.r.t threats to the 4 components?
- Which factors do you think are specific to a residential school context? Which component do they relate to?
- Based on the data we have generated collectively, what would be your top 3 areas of intervention across stakeholder group such that maximum impact can be achieved with minimal interventions?
- Which stakeholder group did we have least data on, if any? Why do you think it is so?
- How would you address the issue of lack of data in real world setting?

Key Takeaways:

- There are stakeholder specific concerns that need to be taken in cognizance when planning for nurturing belongingness.
- Residential school contexts may present specific challenges w.r.t some or all of the belongingness components.
- An exercise like the one engaged in when done for all stakeholder groups can help identify common areas of intervention which can address belongingness concerns for more than 1 stakeholder group.

Worksheet: SB and Stakeholders-Thwarting

Instructions: For your chosen stakeholder group, complete the matrix by giving 3 examples each of when the component need is not met. For e.g. when students do not feel accepted and so on.

Thwarted Component of SB	Students/ Teachers/Support Staff/Leadership
I don't feel Accepted when…	
I don't feel Respected when...	
I don't feel Included when…	
I don't feel Supported when..	

D2.S8.A1

Activity: What promotes School Belongingness?

Time Required: 90 mins.

Objectives:

- To study the theoretical exposition on factors promoting school belongingness for students.
- To extend the above understanding in order to identify FB promoting factors for other stakeholders.

Group Size: Groups of 4 members each

Materials Required: D2/S8R1-CDC Reading on promoting SB, D2/S8A1-Promoting SB for stakeholders Worksheet.

Steps for Facilitation:

1. The activity comprises of two phases.
2. In phase one the facilitator provides a short intro to the D2/S8R1 reading and explains the 4SB promoting factors mentioned therein.
3. Then each groups is assigned any 1 stakeholder group from among teachers, students, parents and support staff.
4. The D2/S9A1 worksheet is then given to each group.
5. The worksheet is to be completed using the CDC reading as a reference.
6. This activity requires the participants to transfer and extend their learning from the CDC reading. They need to identify the underlying vision/principles informing each factor and then brainstorm in their group how the same vision can be best translated to other stakeholder groups.
7. As the groups complete their respective worksheet, the facilitator pins 5 charts for consolidating the entire session.
8. These charts are titles as follows:
    a. Chart-1: Divided into 4 columns, it will be used to summarize the underlying Principles of each factor.
    b. Chart-2,3,4, and 5- Practice examples foreach group respectively.

9. These charts need to stay on in the room for subsequent activities too.

10. Once each group completes their worksheet, the groups are asked to read out their completed worksheet.

11. As the groups read it out, a member from the group can be asked to help complete the charts to be used for consolidation.

Points for Debriefing:

- What underlying principles inform factor 1, 2,3 and 4?
- Did you find it difficult to translate any identified principle to another stakeholder group? What may be the reasons behind whatever your answer is?
- What was the process of finalizing any one activity, did discussions on time, resources, finance etc. feature in your deliberation?
- Do your chosen activities require your presence for monitoring? Do they support decentralizing of authority and decision making?
- What can be the limitations of applying research evidence focusing on children to plan belongingness efforts for other stakeholders? How can we best address this limita

Key Takeaways:

- Given the dearth of evidence informed practice on stakeholder belongingness, collective discussions and brainstorming are our most potent source of planning for School belongingness.
- An innovative appropriation of existing research evidence and body of knowledge can also help our planning.
- A robust review and stakeholder feedback mechanism can help us see if and to what extent, if any, is our approach beneficial.

Reading: CDC Reading on Promoting SB

Adult Support

According to research by Blum and colleagues, children and adolescents' beliefs about themselves and their abilities are shaped by the extent to which they perceive that the adults in their lives care about them and are involved in their lives.[3] Children and adolescents who feel supported by important adults in their lives are likely to be more engaged in school and learning.[15] In the school setting, students feel supported and cared for when they see school staff dedicating their time, interest, attention, and emotional support to them.[16] Students need to feel that adults care about them as individuals as well as about their academic achievement.[2] Smaller schools may encourage more personal relationships among students and staff and allow for personalized learning.[17–19] Schools can form schoolswithin-a-school or create multidisciplinary teams of teachers in which a small number of teachers know each student and can ensure that every student has an identified advisor.

Belonging to a Positive Peer Group

Students' health and educational outcomes are influenced by the characteristics of their peers, such as how socially competent peer group members are or whether the peer group supports pro-social behavior (e.g., engaging in school activities, completing homework assignments, helping others).[21] Being part of a stable peer network protects students from being victimized or bullied.[22] However, if the norms in the peer group support socially irresponsible behavior (e.g., bullying, graffiti), students are less likely to be involved in school activities, and their sense of connectedness to school, achievement levels, and health behaviors can suffer.

Strong interpersonal skills enable students to maintain healthy relationships. Students who report feeling most connected to school also report having the most friends at school and having friends from several different social groups that are integrated by race and gender. Conversely, those students who report feeling less connected to school have more friends from outside school than inside or are socially isolated, reporting few friends either inside or outside of school.

Commitment to Education

It is important that both students and adults are committed to learning and are involved in school activities. Students' dedication to their own education is associated with the degree to which they perceive that their peers and important adults in their lives 1) believe school is important and 2) act on those beliefs.[23] Students who are personally invested in school and believe that a good education is important for reaching their life goals spend more time on homework and in school activities and have an increased sense of connectedness to school.[3,18,21,24,25] Students who are engaged in their own education exhibit behavioral traits such as persistence, effort, sustained attention to tasks, and a higher level of preference for challenge and mastery.

School staff who are dedicated to the education of their students build school communities that allow students to develop emotionally, socially, and mentally, as well as academically. Committed adults engage students in learning, foster mutual respect and caring, and meet the personal learning needs of each student.

Connectedness is enhanced by a healthy and safe school environment and a supportive psychosocial climate. A clean and pleasant physical environment (e.g., one free from graffiti) raises expectations for safety and sets the stage for positive, respectful relationships.

The psychosocial climate at school is influenced by such factors as policies related to discipline, opportunities for meaningful student participation, and teachers' classroom management practices. Research indicates that in schools with a harsh and punitive discipline climate, student connectedness is lower.[3,18] A positive school environment, often called school climate, is characterized by caring and supportive interpersonal relationships; opportunities to participate in school activities and decision-making; and shared positive norms, goals, and values.[27,28] One study found that schools with a higher average *sense-of-community score* (i.e., composite of students' perception of caring and supportive interpersonal relationships and their ability to be autonomous

and have influence in the classroom) had significantly lower average student drug use and delinquency. In addition, schools that have higher rates of participation in extracurricular activities during or after school tend to have higher levels of school connectedness.

Good classroom management—including having set routines and guidelines, adequate planning, and fair consequences for misbehaviors-—is critical to establishing a positive school environment and increasing school connectedness. When classrooms are well managed, relationships among students and between teachers and students tend to be more positive, and students are more engaged in learning and in completing homework assignments. Teachers who promote mutual respect in the classroom foster a sense of safety and connectedness by reducing the threat of being embarrassed or teased.

How Can Schools Influence Factors That Increase School Connectedness?

This publication identifies six strategies to increase the extent to which students feel connected to school. These strategies can enhance each of the four factors that influence school connectedness (adult support, belonging to positive peer groups, commitment to education, and school environment). This section describes the strategies, and specific actions under each strategy, that teachers, administrators, other school staff, and parents can implement to enhance school connectedness. Improving students' health and education outcomes by improving connectedness to school is a large undertaking that requires efforts of not only those within school buildings but also people and organizations outside of schools. For example, parents and community organizations can provide support outside of school to enhance activities done within the school, and teacher preparation programs and professional organizations can provide teachers and school administrators with the awareness, knowledge, and skills needed to implement the recommended actions. These efforts to enhance student connectedness to school align well with the Coordinated School Health approach promoted by CDC as well as educational reform efforts, which in part aim to improve the psychosocial environment of schools.

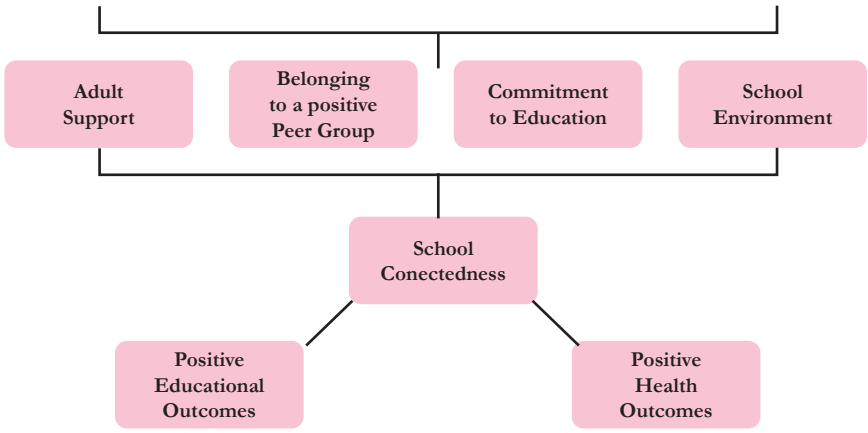
The strategies and action steps that follow are not listed in order of priority and are not intended to be exhaustive lists. Some of the actions are small changes in school processes that can be done in the short term with relative ease, whereas others might be much broader, longer-term goals that require administrative or budgetary changes. Individual schools and school districts should determine which actions are most feasible and appropriate, based on the needs of the school and available resources. Implementation will require a team effort that involves school administrators, teachers, other staff, students, families, and communities. It is important to secure buy-in from these groups and to teach them about

the importance of school connectedness in improving students' health and education outcomes. It also is important to evaluate efforts to increase school connectedness to learn which actions have the greatest impact.

Promoting School Connectedness

Strategies to Increase School Connectedness

1. Create decision-making processes that facilitate student, family, and community engagement; academic achievement; and staff empowerment.
2. Provide education and opportunities to enable families to be actively involved in their children's academic and school life.
3. Provide students with the academic, emotional, and social skills necessary to be actively engaged in school.
4. Use effective classroom management and teaching methods to foster a positive learning environment.
5. Provide professional development and support for teachers and other school staff to enable them to meet the diverse cognitive, emotional, and social needs of children and adolescents.
6. Create trusting and caring relationships that promote open communication among administrators, teachers, staff, students, families, and communities.



D2.S8.R1: Resource

Worksheet: Promoting SB for Stakeholders

Chosen Stakeholder Group: _____

SB Promoting Factor	Underlying principle	How it translates forstakeholder group	Practice eg.1 How to achieve it?	Practice eg 2 How to achieve it?
Adult Support				
Positive Peer Relationships				
Commitment to Education				
School Environment				

D2.S9.A1

Activity: Measuring School Belongingness

Time Required: 60 mins

Objectives:

- To design a self-check inventory for each of the components of SB.

Group Size: Groups of 4 each, continued unchanged from previous activity.

Materials Required: For Phase-I: Completed Worksheet from Previous session, D2/S9A1a-Staff Questionnaire, D2/S9A1b -Student Questionnaire,Phase-II: D2/S9A1c-PSSM Scale.

Steps for Facilitation:

1. The facilitator conducts this session with groups of four each which continue unchanged from the previous activity.
2. The Facilitator projects and discusses the two worksheets for the current session namely staff questionnaire and student questionnaire and distributes a copy of each to all the groups respectively.
3. The groups are to study the questionnaires as illustrative examples of tools looking to assess certain specific dimensions (in this case: how rights are respected in a school as reported by students and teachers respectively.)
4. The groups are asked to brainstorm and create similar questionnaires on school belongingness for their chosen stakeholder groups.
5. Their questionnaire should comprehensively address all 4 components of school belongingness respectively.
6. Ideally 5-6 items on each component should suffice.
7. This phase should take 40 minutes to complete.
8. After this phase is done, the facilitator projects the PSSM scale. A copy of same is given to all groups too.
9. The groups are now asked to use the last 10 minutes to final shape to their scale. Finalization will include

a. Choosing a name for their scale

b. Specifying its objective

c. Specify instructions if any (for administrator/respondent)

d. Finalization of items to feature in scale in terms of language, appropriateness, coverage, randomization.

Points for Debriefing:

- The tools we used as resources were standardized, ours was not. Would you recommend construction of such tool for your school in absence of standardization? Why or why not?
- Relook at the tool you have created. Do the items seem lopsided towards a certain school space like classroom, or certain relationships like teacher student? Why it may be so?
- Based on your experience, what points would you suggest should one consider when looking to develop a self-assessment tool?
- What can be some other ways to self-assess school belongingness?
- How frequent should such self-assessment be? How would you ensure it is suitably reliable?

Key Takeaways:

- Certain standardized tools like PSSM are already available for assessing school belongingness for students.
- There is a dearth of tools for assessing school belongingness for adult stakeholders.
- As insiders in a situation, we are in a position of advantage to tailor make tools which may investigate our specific realities.
- A multitude of tools can be used to identify the belongingness needs and challenges of different stakeholder groups.
- Self-assessment should be continuous and reliable.

Worksheet: UNICEF Staff Questionnaire

Courtesy : unicef.org.uk/rights-respecting-schools

Tick the box to show how far you agree	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	I'm not sure
1. In general, I am treated with respect by other adults in the school					
2. In general, I am treated with respect by pupils in the school					
3. I feel comfortable talking to pupils about their rights					
4. I enjoy working at this school					
5. In general, pupils are actively engaged in the life of the school					
6. Pupils can influence decisions made in the school					

If you want to make any additional comments, please use the space below

D2.S9.A1b: Resource

Worksheet: Student questionnaire

Courtesy: unicef.org.uk/rights-respecting-schools

Tick the box to show how far you agree	Yes	Sometimes	No	I'm not sure
1. I learn about my rights at school				
2. I enjoy being at school				
3. I feel safe at school				
4. Adults in the school treat me with respect				
5. Other pupils in my class treat me with respect				
6. If I felt unsafe, I could tell an adult at school				
7. My teachers listen to me				
8. I can influence decisions in my school				
9. I know what I need to do to make progress in class				
10. In general, I like the way I am				
11. I can do things to help others in my local community				
12. I can do things to help others around the world				

13. Have you talked about children's rights with any of the following people in the last three months?	Yes	No	Not sure
Your parents or carers			
Your wider family or the people you live with			
Other adults outside the school			
Other children outside the school			
14. Have you shared or posted a story about children's rights on social media in the last three months?			
If you said yes, how many times, roughly?			

Worksheet: PSSM Scale

Goodenow C. (1993). The psychological sense of school membership among adolescents: Scale development and educational correlates. Psychology in the Schools, 30(1), 79-90. doi:10.1002/1520-6807

Psychological Sense of School Membership Scale

Circle the answer for each statement that is most true for you.

1) I feel like a part of my school.	Not at all true 1	2	3	4	Completely true 5
2) People at my school notice when I am good at something.	Not at all true 1	2	3	4	Completely true 5
3) It is hard for people like me to be accepted at my school.	Not at all true 1	2	3	4	Completely true 5
4) Other students in my school take my opinions seriously.	Not at all true 1	2	3	4	Completely true 5
5) Most teachers at my school are interested in me.	Not at all true 1	2	3	4	Completely true 5
6) Sometimes I feel as if I don't belong in my school.	Not at all true 1	2	3	4	Completely true 5
7) There is at least one teacher or adult I can talk to in my school if I have a problem.	Not at all true 1	2	3	4	Completely true 5
8) People at my school are friendly to me.	Not at all true 1	2	3	4	Completely true 5
9) Teachers here are not interested in people like me.	Not at all true 1	2	3	4	Completely true 5
10) I am included in lots of activities at my school.	Not at all true 1	2	3	4	Completely true 5
11) I am treated with as much respect as other students in my school.	Not at all true 1	2	3	4	Completely true 5
12) I feel very different from most other students at my school.	Not at all true 1	2	3	4	Completely true 5
13) I can really be myself at my school.	Not at all true 1	2	3	4	Completely true 5
14) Teachers at my school respect me.	Not at all true 1	2	3	4	Completely true 5
15) People at my school know that I can do good work.	Not at all true 1	2	3	4	Completely true 5

16) I wish I were in a different school.	Not at all true 1	2	3	4	Completely true 5
17) I feel proud to belong to my school.	Not at all true 1	2	3	4	Completely true 5
18) Other students at my school like me the way that I am.	Not at all true 1	2	3	4	Completely true 5

Goodenow, C., 1993

D2.S10.A1

Activity: Developing a Whole School Culture of Belongingness

Time Required: 90 mins

Objectives:

- To develop an action plan for nurturing a culture of SB.

Group Size: At the discretion of facilitator and participants to maximize benefits of planning for similar contexts.

Materials Required: D2/S10A1- Poster and Action Plan template

Steps for Facilitation:

1. The session begins with a lecture on steps in developing school culture.
2. The facilitator explains each of the five stages with illustrative examples.
3. Then the D2/S10A1 Action plan template is distributed and its purpose explained.
4. The session proceeds as a guided activity wherein regular scaffolding and input sharing with different groups is done.
5. At the end of the session, some plans are shared, all displayed and the images of all l can be put on a common digitall platform for all to look at in greater details

Points for Debriefing:

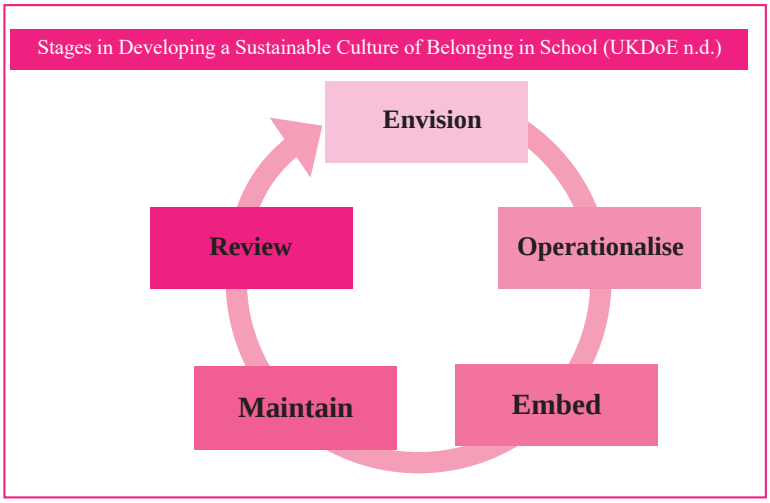
- What are the implications of visualizing this process as a cycle?
- Would you call your plan as taking a whole school approach? Why and Why not?
- What do you see as your role in the collaborative process?
- How and what would be different if teachers were also part of this exercise?
- What about students?
- Did you find any stage as offering limited opportunities for a particular stakeholder group to be involved?
- How will you address this limited participation?
- What are some common phrases that we found across different group's vision statements?

Key Takeaways:

- Nurturing a culture requires sustained, collective efforts.
- The process is best visualized as a cycle wherein each step leads to the next step.
- The exercise is fruitful when done with stakeholders' involvement at all stages.As it is a whole school approach is possible through involvement of all.
- The school leader's role is particularly delicate in an activity essentially requiring democratic, collective and sustained engagement of all.
- The common phrases emanating form our vision can be our starting point for inviting stakeholders to the idea of nurturing belongingness in schools. The vision can be strengthened endlessly, of course!.

D2.S10.A1: Resource

Worksheet: Action Plan Template



I. Our Vision Statement:

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PAUSE AND PONDER

A vision Statement is: a public statement which indicates the school's values purpose and priorities, helps school leaders navigate competing interests while also covering the diversity of educational expectations.

A vision statement should be:

- Authentic
- Created Collectively
- Realistic
- Unambiguous
- Reflect current needs

A vision statement should not be:

- Dated
- Dogmatic
- Gimmicky

II. Operationalizing:

Principles Underlying vision	What can the defining attributes for each principle be	How do they translate for our students	How do they translate for our teachers

III. Embedding: (taking example of any 1 stakeholder group, write one practice/decision for each of the following heads)

You can write NA in column 2 if required.

Egs: Embedding Mechanism	Any Challenge that exists/ you forsee	Your Embedding Strategy
Dissemination		
Resource allotment		
School Schedule		
Policy		
Pedagogy		
Evaluation		
Accountability		

IV. Maintaining: Write some key points around how you will undertake Monitoring, CPD, Capacity Building, Reinforcing etc.

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V. Reviewing:

(Instruction: Create a diagrammatic presentation on your school's Reviewing Mechanism. Try answering questions like: Who reviews, how often, how, against which indicators and any other you would like to incorporate.)

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National Centre for School Leadership
National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration
17- B, Sri Aurobindo Marg, New Delhi-110016 (INDIA)
EPABX Nos: 26565600, 26544800
Fax : 91-011-26853041, 26865180