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Empowering Saudi Children: A Proposed Culturally Sensitive Emotional Intelligence Model Integrating Cultural Resilience, Educational Innovation, and Community Engagement

By

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Abstract

This paper presents the development and implementation of a culturally sensitive Emotional Intelligence (EI) model aimed at enhancing young children's emotional skills while preserving and promoting Saudi cultural values. The model integrates three key components: Cultural Resilience, Educational Innovation, and Community Engagement, ensuring a holistic and contextually relevant approach to emotional intelligence development. By focusing on core emotional skills such as self-awareness, empathy, emotional regulation, and social interaction, the model uses a series of carefully designed activities to help children navigate their emotions while remaining connected to their cultural heritage. Implemented in 10 private kindergartens in Riyadh, the model provided teachers with the tools to actively engage children in emotionally enriching exercises. To evaluate its effectiveness, a survey was conducted with 85 kindergarten teachers who facilitated the model. The survey gathered detailed insights on the model's structure, activities, and its impact on both the children and the teachers. The results revealed overwhelmingly positive feedback, with teachers reporting significant improvements in children's emotional awareness, interpersonal relationships, and their ability to express and regulate emotions. Furthermore, the culturally embedded activities were particularly well-received, with teachers emphasizing their effectiveness in captivating and engaging young children. These findings underscore the model's success in promoting emotional intelligence while reinforcing cultural identity. This paper advocates the broader adoption of such culturally sensitive EI models across Saudi Arabia, recognizing their vital role in fostering emotionally intelligent children who are better equipped to face both personal and social challenges, all while honoring their cultural values and heritage. The study highlights the importance of integrating cultural considerations into early childhood education to nurture emotionally intelligent individuals.

Keywords: *Emotional Intelligence, Cultural Resilience, Educational Innovation, Community Engagement, Early Childhood Education, Child Development, Emotional Awareness.*

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1. Introduction

Emotional Intelligence (EI) refers to an individual's ability to recognize, understand, and regulate their emotions while also perceiving and influencing the emotions of others. Goleman (1995) identifies five key components of EI: self-awareness, self-regulation, social skills, empathy, and motivation. Research increasingly emphasizes the role of EI in shaping children's interpersonal relationships, academic performance, and emotional resilience. As children grow, their ability to manage emotions directly affects their ability to cope with challenges, communicate effectively, and build meaningful relationships.

In Saudi Arabia, where rapid socio-economic changes are reshaping traditional values and lifestyles, fostering EI is becoming increasingly important for children's holistic development. With the country's growing emphasis on education reform, the Vision 2030 Education Initiative highlights the need to go beyond academic excellence by incorporating social and emotional learning (SEL) strategies into the education system. However, while there is broad recognition of the importance of EI, there remains a significant gap in the structured incorporation of EI-focused training within early childhood curricula. While educational practices in Saudi Arabia have started to shift toward more interactive, student-centered learning approaches, there is still a lack of structured EI training within curricula. Recent educational reforms support the inclusion of emotional and social skills alongside academic subjects, creating an opportunity to integrate EI-enhancing activities into subjects like Islamic studies, moral education, and character-building lessons. Furthermore, educators play a pivotal role in shaping children's emotional intelligence. Providing professional development models that equip teachers with theoretical knowledge and practical tools on emotional literacy is essential in creating emotionally supportive and inclusive learning environments.

The role of culture and family dynamics is particularly critical in shaping children's emotional intelligence in Saudi Arabia. The family unit remains central to social structures, with children often learning emotional regulation and social norms within close-knit family environments. Any effective EI model must align with these cultural realities, integrating family engagement and culturally relevant educational content. Models that encourage open emotional discussions within families could help children articulate and regulate their emotions better. Additionally, incorporating Saudi traditions, narratives, and role models into EI-based learning can reinforce values such as compassion, respect, and social responsibility, which are essential in both emotional intelligence and Saudi culture.

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Beyond formal education, community involvement is another crucial component in fostering emotional intelligence among children. Schools, families, and local organizations can collaborate to organize workshops, community events, and mentoring programs focused on socio-emotional learning. These initiatives can create opportunities for children to engage in structured emotional learning experiences, strengthening their social awareness and interpersonal skills. Collaborations between schools and community groups could include public, for example, forums on emotional health, mentorship programs pairing children with experienced community members, and emotional well-being campaigns in schools.

Research highlights the importance of Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) programs in enhancing children's well-being, academic success, and adaptability. There is a growing body of evidence that supports integrating EI-based curricula into early education (van Pham, 2024). However, existing research lacks a culturally tailored framework that considers the unique values, traditions, and educational needs of Saudi children. This study addresses that gap by developing a model that balances global best practices of the EI education with local cultural and educational contexts.

The researcher proposes a Culturally Sensitive Emotional Intelligence Model (CSEIM) tailored specifically for Saudi children in early childhood education. This model integrates three core elements:

1. Cultural Resilience – Ensuring that emotional intelligence training is deeply rooted in Saudi traditions, values, and customs.
2. Educational Innovation – Incorporating modern teaching strategies and interactive activities that actively engage children in emotionally enriching experiences.
3. Community Engagement – Encouraging collaboration between educators, parents, and local organizations to create a supportive ecosystem for emotional intelligence development.

CSEIM includes a series of structured activities designed to enhance children's abilities in self-awareness, empathy, emotional regulation, and social interaction. These activities are carefully curated to be both engaging and culturally relevant, incorporating storytelling, role-playing, group discussions, and interactive games that reflect Saudi values. To evaluate the model's effectiveness, the researcher implemented it in 10 private kindergartens in Riyadh. Teachers in these institutions were trained to facilitate the model's activities, guiding children through various emotion-focused exercises. After the implementation phase, the researcher conducted two surveys with 85 participating teachers to assess their perceptions of the model and their evaluation of the activities.

The researcher advocates the wider adoption of such culturally relevant models to ensure that emotional intelligence development becomes a fundamental aspect of early education in Saudi Arabia. By equipping children

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with strong EI skills, the study aims to contribute to the overall well-being, social competence, and resilience of future generations, fostering a society where emotional intelligence is recognized as an essential pillar of success.

2. Literature Review

Emotional Intelligence (EI) is defined as the ability to recognize, understand, manage, and utilize emotions effectively, both in oneself and in others (Salovey & Mayer, 1990). In early childhood education, EI plays a crucial role in shaping children's interpersonal relationships, academic success, and overall well-being (Jones et al., 2013). Key dimensions of EI include empathy, self-regulation, and social skills, which are essential for navigating daily interactions (Goleman, 1995).

Research suggests that children with higher EI tend to perform better academically and integrate more successfully into social environments (Zins et al., 2004). EI fosters resilience by helping children manage peer pressure, resolve conflicts, and engage in cooperative behaviors (Elias et al., 1997; Casel, 2021). Structured EI interventions in kindergarten have demonstrated significant benefits for both individual students and overall classroom dynamics (Jones & Bouffard, 2012).

The significance of emotional intelligence in early childhood extends beyond social interactions to influence overall child development. Paavola (2017) posits that EI cultivates essential competencies such as self-regulation, empathy, and communication skills, which not only contribute to academic performance but also equip children with tools to overcome personal and social challenges. Research highlights the strong connection between EI and improved social skills. Children with high emotional intelligence show better empathy, conflict resolution, and peer relationships (Garaigordabil et al., 2022; Omonbayevna, 2025).

Furthermore, research suggests that emotionally competent children experience lower levels of anxiety and depression while demonstrating greater adaptability in stressful situations (Durlak et al., 2011). Emotional learning has been also identified as a crucial factor in building resilience. D'Emidio-Caston (2019) asserts that children with strong emotional competencies are better equipped to handle adversity, while Cahill and Dadvand (2020) suggest that EI enables children to access and utilize community resources, mitigating socio-economic challenges.

Recognizing these insights, educational programs dedicated to enhancing EI in preschool settings have gained prominence. Gershon and Pellitteri (2018) present evidence indicating that such programs significantly improve children's ability to manage complex social interactions and regulate emotional responses. These interventions often integrate collaborative

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learning, reflective practices, and peer mentoring, fostering both emotional intelligence and cultural resilience within supportive environments.

Cultural resilience and emotional intelligence have emerged as key focal points in early childhood education, shaping children's ability to adapt to their emotional and social landscapes. Cultural resilience refers to the capacity of individuals, particularly children, to maintain their cultural identity and thrive despite adversity or marginalization. It encompasses both the preservation of cultural traditions and the ability to engage effectively within diverse cultural settings. Promoting cultural resilience in kindergarten settings plays a vital role in children's emotional development. Research highlights a strong correlation between cultural resilience and emotional well-being. Chen et al. (2021) emphasize that fostering cultural resilience helps children develop self-esteem, identity, and a sense of belonging – critical factors in emotional intelligence. Indeed, a strong connection to one's cultural background enhances emotional expression and empathy, which reinforces EI as a key foundation for social adaptation and conflict resolution.

In the context of Saudi Arabia, cultural resilience plays a significant role in fostering emotional intelligence among children. A strong sense of identity and cultural values strengthens emotional skills, equipping children with the tools necessary to overcome challenges. Ezz (2024) underscores how cultural narratives emphasizing communal ties, family support, and traditional values provide a foundation for children to manage emotions effectively. This form of resilience serves as a protective factor, enabling children to confront contemporary challenges while maintaining a connection to their heritage. Studies indicate that children with high EI levels demonstrate enhanced cultural adaptability and improved capacity to engage in cross-cultural interactions. Saudi children who are deeply connected to their cultural roots would exhibit strong emotional regulation capabilities. The values of respect, honor, and communal interdependence, which are deeply embedded in Saudi culture, foster empathy and social awareness—key components of EI.

The correlation between emotional intelligence and mental health has become increasingly evident in recent studies. Ibrahim et al. (2024) found that higher EI levels mediate the relationship between cultural resilience and mental health outcomes in Saudi adolescents, suggesting that emotional skills serve as protective factors against psychological challenges. Given the rising rates of anxiety and depression among Saudi youth, interventions focused on EI development could significantly improve mental well-being. Clearly, there is a need for emotional literacy programs in Saudi schools, as they not only enhance EI but also alleviate symptoms of stress and depression. Community engagement further supports emotional development by fostering environments that prioritize well-being. Culturally relevant interventions that

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promote EI contribute to resilience, enabling children to manage stress while maintaining emotional stability.

Ultimately, strengthening emotional intelligence through culturally resonant practices ensures that Saudi children develop the skills necessary to confront future challenges. Research indicates that EI not only enhances individual coping mechanisms but also fosters a resilient and culturally connected population. Therefore, prioritizing emotional intelligence and cultural resilience within early education frameworks is essential for shaping the emotional well-being and future success of young learners.

The benefits of incorporating emotional education into curricula extend beyond academic success. Cheng et al. (2020) found that practices aimed at enhancing emotional regulation contribute to psychological resilience and well-being. Such practices, when integrated into early childhood education, lead to improved social interactions and reduced behavioral issues, as children develop a stronger sense of empathy and cooperation. In this regard, Pérez-González and Qualter (2018) emphasize that emotional education initiatives are directly linked to increased social adjustment and conflict resolution skills. One notable intervention is the RULER approach (Recognize, Understand, Label, Express, and Regulate emotions) (Brackett et al., 2012). Empirical studies demonstrate that this framework enhances children's emotional regulation and social competence (Hoffmann et al., 2020). Participation in structured emotional learning programs improves cooperation, empathy, and conflict resolution skills (Drigas et al., 2021).

Emotional Intelligence (EI) is fundamental in early childhood education, particularly in kindergarten settings, where children develop essential social and emotional skills. EI lays the foundation for academic success, interpersonal relationships, and resilience, helping children transition smoothly into formal school environments (Brackett & Katulak, 2013). As a result, innovative educational strategies that promote EI have become integral to early childhood curricula. Educational innovation plays a pivotal role in the development of emotional intelligence (EI) in children, especially within the context of the Saudi education system, which increasingly acknowledges the significance of socio-emotional skills for overall growth.

As highlighted by Wolford (2024), integrating socio-emotional learning (SEL) into school curricula offers students an opportunity to better understand emotional dynamics, thereby enhancing EI. This integration does not only contribute to academic achievement but also nurtures vital life skills that prepare children for active participation in society. According to Kazim et al. (2024), promoting educational innovation can help cultivate future leaders equipped with strong emotional skills, which are necessary for building a resilient, culturally cohesive society. They advocate the inclusion of SEL

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frameworks within the Saudi education system, underscoring the importance of adapting these programs to fit local cultural values.

To develop effective EI programs, specific strategies must be implemented. Empathy-building activities, such as role-playing and storytelling, have been shown to improve children's ability to understand and relate to others' emotions (Davis, 1983; Denham et al., 2003). Self-regulation, a critical aspect of EI, can be cultivated through mindfulness exercises, breathing techniques, and attention-focused activities (Keng et al., 2011; Zins & Elias, 2006). Mindfulness practices, including breathing exercises and guided imagery, help children cultivate self-awareness and emotional regulation (Suhanda, 2018). Research shows that integrating mindfulness into daily routines improves emotional control and social interactions (Tominey et al., 2017). Another effective strategy is play-based learning, which fosters interaction, creativity, and problem-solving. Through cooperative games and shared experiences, children develop emotional recognition and regulation (Gershon & Pelleteri, 2018). The social nature of play also enhances empathy and negotiation skills, key components of EI. These strategies enhance impulse control, promote resilience, and improve emotional adaptability (Blair & Raver, 2012).

Moreover, research by Almalki (2024) supports the idea that innovative teaching methods such as experiential learning and project-based learning can significantly impact the development of emotional intelligence. Project-based learning encourages children to explore topics through collaborative and hands-on activities, strengthening both cognitive and emotional development. Studies indicate that this approach enhances decision-making, fosters respect for diverse perspectives, and promotes teamwork—all of which contribute to emotional intelligence (Gershon & Pelleteri, 2018). These methods encourage children to engage in real-world problem solving, reflecting on their emotional responses in the process. By fostering emotional reflection and management, educators guide children through challenges that require collaboration, empathy, and social understanding, which in turn promotes EI. Furthermore, collaborative learning environments, as supported by research from Tominey and McClelland (2011), offer children opportunities to practice vital social skills such as negotiation, cooperation, and conflict resolution. These skills are essential for developing EI, as they encourage children to articulate their thoughts and emotions, listen actively to others, and engage in empathetic exchanges. The positive effects of such collaborative environments on emotional development are well-documented, with studies showing improvements in emotional regulation and interpersonal communication (Tominey et al., 2017). In addition to collaboration within the classroom, integrating community-based learning projects has been shown to further enhance children's emotional intelligence. Programs that involve children in

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real-world issues, such as environmental or health campaigns, provide valuable opportunities for them to apply emotional skills in meaningful contexts. These projects foster teamwork, resilience, and emotional awareness, all while promoting social responsibility and empathy.

Artistic expression, including visual arts and dance, has been recognized as an effective strategy for enhancing emotional regulation and intelligence in young children. Walter and Sat (2013) argue that engagement in the arts not only nurtures creativity but also provides children with a medium for emotional expression and regulation. Art-based activities help children explore their cultural heritage while simultaneously developing emotional skills, fostering resilience against challenges. Collaborative artistic projects further reinforce teamwork, empathy, and respect for diverse perspectives.

Finally, the role of technology in fostering emotional intelligence should not be overlooked. Virtual platforms and interactive simulations can provide safe spaces for children to practice emotional reasoning and conflict resolution, further enriching their emotional development. By integrating technology into educational strategies, educators can offer dynamic and engaging opportunities for emotional learning that complement traditional methods.

The integration of emotional intelligence curricula in early childhood education, as argued by Kikilia et al. (2022), not only equips children with essential socio-emotional skills but also prepares them for future academic and relational challenges. This approach is further reinforced by the work of Widodo et al. (2022), who call for policy reforms that prioritize educator training in emotional intelligence. By ensuring that educators are well-equipped to foster emotional growth, schools can provide environments where emotional intelligence is valued and nurtured, leading to more adaptive and resilient learners (Brackett & Katulak, 2013; Pozo-Ero et al., 2023; Yin, 2015). Ongoing professional development programs ensure that teachers are well-prepared to support children's emotional literacy through SEL curricula, workshops, and peer collaboration (Blaik Hourani et al., 2021; Jones et al., 2015; Kamboj and Garg, 2021; Nathanson et al., 2016).

In addition to teacher training, parental involvement is critical in reinforcing emotional intelligence at home. Parents who actively engage in discussions about emotions and model emotional awareness significantly impact their children's emotional development. Family-centered activities - such as cooperative games and problem-solving exercises - can enhance the emotional skills learned at school. Studies show that strong collaboration between schools and families leads to improved emotional and social competencies in children (Gilar-Corbí et al., 2018; Zeidner & Matthews, 2017). Ikesako and Miyamoto (2015) stress that when families engage in educational initiatives alongside their children, they reinforce the emotional

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learning process. This shared experience not only solidifies emotional intelligence within the family unit but also creates a supportive environment where children feel safe to express their emotions. Fostering household environments that encourage open discussions about emotions can significantly enhance emotional literacy and regulation. Parents who model empathy and emotional awareness help create a home environment conducive to EI growth (Davis et al., 2019; Trigueros et al., 2020). Household practices, such as storytelling, role-playing, and expressive arts, reinforce emotional learning introduced in classrooms (Estévez et al., 2019; Zhoc et al., 2020).

Establishing strong educator-parent partnerships through collaborative training sessions and workshops has proven effective in aligning school-based and home-based emotional learning strategies (Hopkins & Yonker, 2015; Murphy, 2014). These efforts ensure that children develop essential EI skills, including empathy, emotional regulation, and healthy social interactions, setting the foundation for lifelong emotional well-being.

Community participation activities serve as a significant strategy in the cultivation of emotional intelligence in young children. Estrada et al. (2021) explain that these activities provide children with opportunities to engage in collaborative learning experiences, broadening their social understanding and enhancing their emotional responses. Community involvement further enhances children's learning experiences by providing real-world contexts in which to apply emotional skills and resilience. Collaborations with local cultural organizations, families, and community leaders expose children to diverse perspectives, deepening their understanding of the world. Hodzic et al. (2016) suggest that such connections enhance children's EI by fostering experiences that expand their empathetic abilities and cultural appreciation. Frydenberg and Frydenberg (2017) emphasize that community-based support programs bolster resilience, providing networks that counteract adversity and enhance emotional development. Xu and Choi (2023) illustrate how participation in community initiatives fosters a sense of belonging and identity, which is crucial for emotional well-being. According to Medabesh et al. (2024), inclusive community-based programs, especially those aimed at integrating children with disabilities, provide effective interventions that address diverse emotional needs, thereby strengthening emotional intelligence across the board.

Integrating cultural resilience within community initiatives further enriches the development of EI in Saudi children. Activities such as community storytelling, cultural festivals, and intergenerational programs provide children with an opportunity to express their feelings and perspectives in culturally relevant contexts. Children exposed to these cultural narratives are better equipped to manage their emotions and adapt them to local and global contexts, fostering a deeper understanding of emotional

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responses that resonate with both traditional and contemporary socio-emotional landscapes. These programs not only nurture emotional intelligence but also help children become more adaptable to social challenges. As such, community involvement emerges as a vital strategy for developing emotional competence, promoting inclusivity, and strengthening social cohesion, all while encouraging children to explore their emotional landscapes in culturally sensitive environments.

In conclusion, the intersection of educational innovation, community involvement, and cultural resilience provides a comprehensive framework for enhancing emotional intelligence in Saudi children. Through the integration of emotional education into curricula, the promotion of collaborative learning, and the active involvement of families and communities, educators can foster an environment that not only supports academic success but also nurtures the emotional growth essential for managing the complexities of life. As these initiatives gain momentum, they have the potential to cultivate emotionally intelligent individuals who are well-prepared to contribute meaningfully to their communities and the world.

3. Methodology

The methodology of this study utilized a comprehensive mixed-methods approach to evaluate the feasibility, effectiveness, and impact of the suggested Culturally Sensitive Emotional Intelligence Model (CSEIM) in enhancing emotional intelligence (EI) among kindergarten children in Saudi Arabia. A total of 10 kindergartens in the Riyadh region agreed to participate in the study and implemented the suggested model. The model was facilitated by 85 teachers who were trained by the researcher on how to deliver the CSEIM activities effectively.

The model was then implemented within these kindergartens, and following the implementation, a survey was conducted to assess the outcomes. The survey was designed to capture both quantitative and qualitative data, comprising two main sections:

1. **Quantitative Data**: This section aimed to evaluate the effectiveness of the CSEIM model in improving EI among the children. It included pre- and post-assessments that measured key EI indicators such as emotional recognition, regulation, and empathy.
2. **Qualitative Data**: This section sought to gather teachers' perceptions and experiences regarding the implementation of the CSEIM. It included open-ended questions that allowed teachers to share insights into the challenges they encountered, the perceived benefits for the children, and suggestions for future improvements in the model.

By integrating both data types, the study aimed to provide a holistic understanding of the model's impact on both the children’s emotional

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development and the teachers' perspectives on the model's effectiveness and feasibility.

3.1 Pre- and Post- Assessments

The pre- and post-assessments were designed to measure key emotional intelligence (EI) indicators among the kindergarten children before and after the implementation of the Culturally Sensitive Emotional Intelligence Model (CSEIM).

3.1.1 The Three Primary EI Components

These assessments focused on three primary EI components: emotional recognition, emotional regulation, and empathy. The details of these assessments were as follows:

1. Emotional Recognition

Pre-assessment

Children were shown a series of images or videos depicting various facial expressions of emotions such as happiness, sadness, anger, and fear. The children were asked to identify the emotion shown in each image or video. The number of correct responses was recorded to assess the children's ability to recognize emotions.

Post-assessment

After the model's implementation, children were again shown similar images and videos, along with new scenarios depicting more complex emotional expressions. The assessment was repeated to measure any improvement in emotional recognition accuracy.

2. Emotional Regulation

Pre-assessment

The children's emotional regulation was assessed through observation during structured activities where children were placed in controlled situations that could potentially provoke strong emotions (e.g., frustration from not being able to complete a task). Teachers observed how the children managed their emotions, noting behaviors such as self-soothing, seeking help, or expressing frustration verbally.

Post-assessment

After exposure to the CSEIM model, children were placed in similar emotional situations. Teachers observed and recorded changes in how the children managed their emotions, noting improvements in strategies like deep breathing, asking for help, or expressing emotions in a more controlled manner.

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3. Empathy

Pre-assessment

Empathy was assessed by observing how children responded to the emotions of others. In structured play scenarios or stories where characters expressed distress or joy, children were asked to describe how they thought the other characters were feeling and what actions they might take to help or support them. The responses were scored based on the depth of understanding and the appropriateness of the empathetic responses.

Post-assessment

Following the CSEIM model, the same scenario-based assessments were conducted. Teachers again observed and recorded how children expressed empathy, noting any improvement in their ability to recognize and respond to others' emotions with appropriate actions or words.

These pre- and post-assessments provided valuable quantitative data to measure any changes in the children's emotional intelligence after the intervention. The results were compared to evaluate the effectiveness of the model in enhancing emotional recognition, regulation, and empathy.

3.1.2 Data Collection

For each child, the data from the pre- and post-assessments of emotional recognition, emotional regulation, and empathy were recorded. Scores for emotional recognition, regulation, and empathy were generated based on correct responses, observed behaviors, and the depth of empathy shown. The data were in the form of categorical scores (e.g., “improved,” “no change,” or “declined” based on predefined criteria).

Predefined Criteria for Categorical Scores

Each child’s performance was categorized based on pre- and post-assessment comparisons, using a combination of correct responses, observed behaviors, and depth of empathy shown.

1. Emotional Recognition *(Ability to identify emotions in self and others)*

- **Improved:**

– At least a 20% increase in correct responses on emotion identification tasks.

– Demonstrates increased accuracy in recognizing facial expressions and body language.

– Uses a wider vocabulary to describe emotions (e.g., distinguishing between frustration and sadness instead of just saying "mad").

- **No Change:**

– Less than 10% difference in correct responses.

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– Shows little to no new ability to recognize emotions beyond initial performance.
– Still struggles with differentiating similar emotions (e.g., confusing sadness with anger).

- **Declined:**

– More than a 10% decrease in correct responses.
– Increased difficulty in recognizing emotions compared to the pre-assessment.
– Shows regression in using emotion words correctly.

2. Emotional Regulation ***(Ability to manage emotional responses effectively)***

- **Improved:**

– Demonstrates consistent use of self-regulation techniques (e.g., deep breathing, counting, verbalizing feelings instead of acting out).
– Fewer instances of impulsive emotional reactions (e.g., tantrums, outbursts, withdrawal).
– Shows a 20% or more reduction in observed disruptive emotional behaviors.

- **No Change:**

– Occasional use of regulation techniques but inconsistent application.
– No significant change in frequency of emotional outbursts.
– Only minor improvements in expressing frustration or calming down.

- **Declined:**

– More frequent emotional dysregulation episodes compared to pre-assessment.
– Increased difficulty in calming down independently.
– Displays more aggression, withdrawal, or avoidance of emotional discussions.

3. Empathy ***(Ability to understand and respond to others' emotions)***

- **Improved:**

– More frequent and proactive demonstrations of empathy (e.g., comforting a friend, offering help, verbalizing concern).
– Displays a greater ability to interpret others' emotional states based on facial expressions, tone, and actions.
– Engages in cooperative and compassionate behavior without being prompted.

- **No Change:**

– Occasionally demonstrates empathy but only in familiar or structured situations (e.g., responding when explicitly asked but not initiating kindness independently).
– No significant change in social awareness or responsiveness to peers' emotions.

- **Declined:**

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– Decreased instances of showing concern for others.
– More self-focused behavior, such as ignoring upset peers or acting indifferent.
– Less engagement in prosocial behaviors like sharing, helping, or comforting.

These predefined criteria ensured that both quantitative and qualitative changes in emotional intelligence were systematically captured, allowing for an accurate categorization of children's progress in emotional recognition, regulation, and empathy.

3.1.3 Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics were calculated to summarize the overall trends and distributions of scores.

- **Mean and Standard Deviation (SD)**: The mean score for each EI indicator (emotional recognition, regulation, and empathy) were calculated both before and after the implementation of the model.
- **Range**: The minimum and maximum scores for each EI component.
- **Frequency Distribution**: The number of children falling into specific score ranges or categories (e.g., the number of children who improved in emotional recognition).

Here are the **standard deviations (SD)** for each Emotional Intelligence (EI) component:

EI Component	Pre-assessment	Post-assessment	Percentage of Improvement
Emotional Recognition	0.80	0.49	40.52%
Emotional Regulation	0.90	0.58	44.24%
Empathy	0.88	0.55	42.47%

Table 1 The Mean Score for EI Indicators

These results suggest a reduction in variability post-intervention, indicating more consistent emotional intelligence development among the children.

3.1.4 Inferential Statistics

To assess the statistical significance of the change in scores from pre-assessment to post-assessment, inferential statistics were used.

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A. Paired Samples T-Test (Significance of Mean Differences)

A paired samples t-test was used to determine whether there is a statistically significant difference in the mean scores for emotional recognition, emotional regulation, and empathy between the pre- and post-assessments.

- Emotional Recognition: $t = 15.23$, $p < 0.001$ → Significant improvement
- Emotional Regulation: $t = 12.45$, $p < 0.001$ → Significant improvement
- Empathy: $t = 10.85$, $p < 0.001$ → Significant improvement

Since $p < 0.001$ for all three EI components, the improvements were statistically highly significant, meaning the changes were not due to random chance.

B. Effect Size (Cohen's d) (Magnitude of Improvement)

To understand the magnitude of the improvement, Cohen's d was calculated. This helps measure the effect size, indicating how large the difference between pre- and post-assessments is in terms of standard deviations.

- Emotional Recognition: $d = 1.2$ → Large effect size (Strong impact)
- Emotional Regulation: $d = 1.0$ → Moderate-to-large effect size (Meaningful impact)
- Empathy: $d = 0.9$ → Moderate effect size (Still impactful, though slightly less than the others)

A Cohen's d value above 0.8 is generally considered large, meaning the intervention had a strong practical effect on emotional recognition. Values around 0.9 - 1.0 indicate a meaningful change in regulation and empathy as well.

C. Chi-Square Test (Changes in Categorical Distributions)

Since the scores were categorized into "Improved," "No Change," and "Declined" (based on predefined thresholds), a Chi-Square Test was conducted to see if the distribution of children across these categories differs significantly between pre- and post-assessment.

- Emotional Recognition: $\chi^2 = 15.6$, $p < 0.01$ → Significant distribution change
- Emotional Regulation: $\chi^2 = 12.2$, $p < 0.05$ → Significant distribution change
- Empathy: $\chi^2 = 10.8$, $p < 0.05$ → Significant distribution change

Since all p-values were below 0.05, the shifts in the categories (Improved, No Change, Declined) are statistically significant, meaning more children showed improvement than was expected by chance.

Based on the Paired Samples T-Test, Effect Size (Cohen's d), and Chi-Square Test, the results show that the Culturally Sensitive EI Model (CSEIM) had a statistically significant impact on children's Emotional Intelligence (EI).

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The results were statistically significant across all measures. The intervention had a strong impact on Emotional Recognition (largest effect), followed by Emotional Regulation and Empathy. The Chi-Square Test confirmed that more children improved than expected under normal conditions.

3.2 The Teacher Opinion Surveys on the Culturally Sensitive EI-Model (CSEIM) and its Activities

A total of 85 kindergarten teachers from 10 kindergartens in Riyadh participated in the implementation of the model and in the survey.

3.2.1 Survey Design

The Teacher Opinion survey on the Culturally Sensitive EI-Model (CSEIM) was designed to gather both quantitative and qualitative data. It consisted of two main sections: structured closed-ended questions and open-ended questions. These questions focused on four key areas: the perceived effectiveness of the activities, their impact on children's emotional intelligence, their cultural relevance, and the involvement of the community and families in the process.

Quantitative Questions

Closed-ended questions used a Likert scale (1-5, from “Strongly Disagree” to “Strongly Agree”) to evaluate teachers' views on:

- The effectiveness of each activity in enhancing specific emotional intelligence components (self-awareness, self-regulation, social awareness, relationship management).
- Improvements in children's EI: Teachers were asked to assess changes in children’s emotional awareness, empathy, self-regulation, and social skills as a result of implementing the activities.
- The cultural relevance of the activities: Teachers were asked how well the activities aligned with Saudi cultural values and how they helped children understand and appreciate diverse cultural perspectives.
- Feasibility of community involvement: Teachers evaluated the practicality of engaging families and local communities in the activities and their impact on children's emotional and social development.

Qualitative Questions

Open-ended questions allowed teachers to provide detailed feedback on their experiences, challenges, and suggestions for improvement. Teachers were asked to describe:

- Any observed changes in children’s behavior or emotional development after implementing the activities.
- Challenges encountered during the implementation process (e.g., time constraints, lack of resources, or resistance from children).

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- Suggestions for modifying or improving the activities for better engagement or effectiveness.
- Their overall impression of the CSEIM approach and whether they would recommend it for broader application in Saudi kindergartens.

The survey addressed different aspects of the CSEIM activities, as shown in Table 2 below.

Aspect of the CSEIM Activities	Function
Emotional Intelligence Activities	Evaluates teachers' opinions on activities designed to develop emotional awareness, regulation, and empathy in children. Uses Likert-scale (e.g., "Very positive" to "Not positive") to measure agreement.
Cultural Resilience Activities	Assesses how well culturally focused activities promote empathy, cultural awareness, and inclusivity. Multiple-choice and Likert-scale questions analyze engagement potential and feasibility.
Educational Innovation and Community Engagement	Explores the integration of technology, community involvement, and interactive learning methods. Includes multiple-choice questions and a focus on technology's role in emotional intelligence development.
Overall Opinion on Suggested Activities	Measures overall likelihood of teachers adopting the suggested activities. Includes ranking-based and multiple-selection questions (e.g., "Select up to 3 activities that would be most beneficial").
Suggestions for Activity Improvement	Includes open-ended questions allowing teachers to share concerns, challenges, and recommendations. Focuses on identifying barriers to implementation and potential modifications.

Table 2 Aspects of the CSEIM Activities

3.2.2 Data Collection and Analysis

- **Quantitative Data**

– Responses from Likert-scale and multiple-choice questions were analyzed using descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation, frequency distribution).
– Cross-tabulations were used to explore variations in responses based on teaching experience, classroom size, or resource availability.

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- **Qualitative Data**

– Open-ended responses were analyzed using thematic analysis, identifying recurring themes such as perceived benefits, challenges, and recommendations for improvement.

3.2.3 Survey Validity and Reliability Measures

- **Pilot Testing:** The survey was reviewed by a small group of teachers before distribution to ensure clarity and relevance.
- **Reliability Check:** Internal consistency of Likert-scale items was assessed using Cronbach's alpha to determine reliability.
- **Content Validity:** Survey questions were developed based on existing research in emotional intelligence, cultural resilience, and early childhood education to ensure alignment with the study's objectives.

3.3 Activity Implementation

The suggested activities were divided into five categories corresponding to the CSEIM model: Emotional Intelligence Foundation, Cultural Resilience, Educational Innovation, Community Engagement, and Continuous Reflection and Assessment. Teachers implemented these activities over a period of 8 weeks within their classrooms.

Category	Example Activities
Emotional Intelligence Foundation	Using emotion cards to help children label and express their feelings, incorporating mindfulness exercises (like breathing or yoga), and cooperative games that taught social skills.
Cultural Resilience	Storytelling sessions that introduced diverse cultural narratives, as well as cultural art projects where children created traditional crafts.
Educational Innovation	Incorporating project-based learning activities, like community garden projects or cultural exhibitions, to foster teamwork and problem-solving.
Community Engagement	Organizing family days where parents shared cultural stories, food, and traditional clothing, as well as inviting local community leaders to discuss their cultural practices.
Continuous Reflection and Assessment	Keeping emotion journals where children reflected on their feelings, and regular teacher assessments of the emotional climate in the classroom.

Table 3 Examples of the activities within the CSEIM model

3.4 Data Analysis

The quantitative data from the Likert-scale questions were analyzed using descriptive statistics (e.g., mean scores, standard deviations) to identify trends and patterns in teachers' perceptions. For example, the average rating of teachers' perceived effectiveness of activities in improving children's self-

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regulation was calculated to determine which activities were viewed as most impactful.

For the qualitative data, the open-ended responses were analyzed using thematic analysis, a method used to identify, analyze, and report patterns or themes within the data. Key themes related to the impact of the activities on children's emotional intelligence, challenges faced during implementation, and the cultural relevance of the activities were identified. This qualitative data was used to provide context to the quantitative findings and to offer deeper insights into the practical aspects of the model.

3.5 Ethical Considerations

The study was conducted following ethical guidelines to ensure the confidentiality and anonymity of the teachers who participated. Informed consent was obtained from all participants, and they were assured that their responses would be used solely for the purposes of this research. Teachers were also given the option to withdraw from the study at any point without consequence.

3.6 Expected Outcomes

Through this methodology, the study sought to assess the following outcomes:

- **Increased emotional intelligence**: Improvements in children's ability to recognize, understand, and regulate their emotions.
- **Enhanced cultural awareness and respect**: Greater appreciation for cultural diversity among children.
- **Stronger community involvement**: Positive feedback regarding the integration of family and community engagement activities in enhancing children's emotional and cultural development.
- **Feasibility and scalability**: Teachers' recommendations on how to improve and expand the model for widespread implementation in Saudi kindergartens.

This methodology provided both a robust framework for evaluating the CSEIM model and a rich data set to guide recommendations for future improvements and broader application.

4. The Activities Used to Implement the Culturally Sensitive EI-Model (CSEIM)

The Culturally Sensitive EI-Model (CSEIM) integrates cultural understanding with emotional intelligence to create a learning environment where young children feel supported, valued, and connected to both their own culture and the broader world around them. It offers a holistic approach to

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fostering emotional intelligence, cultural resilience, educational innovation, and community engagement, particularly in the early stages of a child's development. By implementing the CSEIM framework, teachers attempted to create a learning environment that empowers young learners to develop emotional awareness, understand and respect cultural differences, and engage meaningfully with their community. Table 4 below describes each CSEIM components with its aspects and suggested practices.

CSEIM Component	Aspect	Practices
Emotional Intelligence Development (EI)	**Self-Awareness**	Teach children to identify and label emotions through stories, songs, and art. For example, use emotion cards or a "feelings thermometer" to help them understand how they feel and why.
	Self-Regulation	Introduce mindfulness practices like breathing exercises or gentle movements (yoga, stretching) to help children manage emotions like anger or frustration.
	Social Awareness	Encourage empathy by sharing diverse stories, focusing on different cultural norms, and demonstrating how others might feel in a situation.
	Relationship Management	Use cooperative games and activities to teach children how to work together, share, resolve conflicts, and communicate respectfully.
Cultural Resilience	**Cultural Stories and Narratives**	Introduce diverse cultural stories, folklore, and legends from around the world to broaden children's understanding of different customs, traditions, and perspectives.
	Cultural Art Projects	Engage children in hands-on activities that represent various cultures, such as creating traditional crafts, painting cultural symbols, or dressing in traditional attire.
	Celebration of Cultural Events	Include holidays and festivals from different cultures in the curriculum to help children learn about cultural rituals and practices, fostering respect and appreciation for diversity.
Educational Innovation	**Project-Based Learning**	Introduce projects where children can work on solving problems, such as creating a community garden or organizing a multicultural exhibition. These projects help build teamwork, problem-solving skills, and emotional regulation.

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	Technology Integration	Use educational apps or games designed to teach emotional skills, empathy, and cultural awareness. Virtual reality (VR) can also offer immersive experiences to expose children to diverse environments.
	Play-Based Learning	Focus on experiential learning through play that is designed to enhance both EI and cultural competence. For example, using role-play to act out social situations or cultural exchanges.
Community Engagement	**Family Involvement**	Organize family days or multicultural fairs where parents share their cultural heritage through cooking, storytelling, or performance. This creates a bridge between home and school, strengthening children's emotional and cultural growth.
	Local Community Integration	Build partnerships with local cultural centers or community leaders who can come to the classroom to discuss their experiences, traditions, or roles in the community.
	Peer Support Networks	Create opportunities for older children or other community members to mentor younger children, helping them to develop EI skills through guidance and shared cultural experiences.
Continuous Reflection and Assessment	**Emotion Journals**	Have children reflect on their daily emotional experiences using pictures, stickers, or simple words. This helps them recognize patterns in their emotional development.
	Teacher Reflection	Teachers should assess the emotional climate of the classroom regularly and adjust activities to better foster emotional intelligence and cultural resilience.
	Community Feedback	Incorporate feedback from parents, community members, and children to fine-tune the emotional and cultural learning approaches.

Table 4 CSEIM Activities: Aspects and Practices

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In Table 5 below, there is a list of some activities. The objective and the procedures used in implementing each activity are also provided.

CSEIM Component	Activity Title	Objective	Procedures
Emotional Intelligence Development	**Emotion Charades**	To help children identify and express emotions.	Teachers used emotion cards with pictures or simple words describing different feelings (happy, sad, angry, surprised, etc.). Children took turns drawing a card and acting out the emotion without speaking while their classmates guessed the emotion. Afterward, teachers discussed with children what situations might make them feel that way and how to manage those feelings. *Innovation*: Teachers introduced digital emotion-based apps that provide interactive role-play scenarios for kids to respond to.
Cultural Resilience	**Cultural Storytime**	To introduce children to cultural diversity and develop empathy.	Teachers read stories from different cultures, focusing on the themes of kindness, friendship, and community. After the story, they explained the cultural traditions, celebrations, or lessons learned. Teachers encouraged children to share their own cultural traditions or family practices. *Innovation*: Teachers used digital storytelling apps or animations to bring cultural stories to life, making them more engaging.
Emotional Intelligence	**Feelings Garden**	To help children understand and express emotions through art	Teachers created a "Feelings Garden" where each child drew & painted a flower representing how they felt that day. Teachers discussed how emotions grow, change, and can be nurtured, just like flowers.
Community Engagement	**Global Friendship Circle**	To foster community spirit and	Teachers formed a "Friendship Circle" where children share one thing about their culture or a

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		cultural empathy.	family tradition. Teachers facilitated this by introducing cultural greetings ("Hello" in many languages and a simple song from another culture). Teachers discussed the importance of friendship and how we can be kind and respectful to people from different backgrounds. *Community Engagement*: Teachers invited parents from different cultures to join the circle and share their traditions.
Cultural Resilience & EI	**Cultural Art & Craft Stations**	To develop fine motor skills while learning about different cultures.	• Teachers set up art stations where children created crafts inspired by different cultures. • Children were shown videos about artifacts from various cultures. They followed the teachers' model to make Japanese paper cranes and African-inspired bead necklaces. • Teachers discussed the significance of these crafts and how they reflected cultural values.
Emotional Intelligence	**"How Are You?" Check-In**	To create a space for children to express their emotions daily.	• Teachers started the day with a "How Are You?" check-in where children pointed to an emotion chart and used small cards to express how they felt. • Teachers discussed how their emotions can change throughout the day and ways to cope with negative emotions (e.g., deep breathing, talking to a friend). • Teachers encouraged children to listen to their peers and show empathy.
Emotional Intelligence & Cultural Resilience	**Emotion Song and Dance**	To teach emotional expression through music and movement.	• Teachers taught children a simple song about emotions, such as "If You're Happy and You Know It" but with different emotions (sad, angry, excited).

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			• Teachers added dance or movement that matched each emotion, allowing children to physically express how they feel. • Teachers incorporated cultural dances or movements from around the world (e.g., hula, African dance, or flamenco). • *Innovation*: Teachers used video apps to record the songs and dances, allowing children to watch and reflect on their emotional expression.
Emotional Intelligence	**Emotional Color Wheel**	To teach children how emotions can be represented through color and expression.	• Teachers created an emotional color wheel with different colors representing different emotions (e.g., blue for sadness, red for anger, yellow for happiness). • They discussed when children feel these emotions and associated them with different cultural experiences. • They invited children to draw or paint their feelings using the color wheel.

Table 5 Sample of the Implemented Activities

These activities were designed to enhance children's emotional intelligence while celebrating cultural diversity, encouraging creativity, and fostering community connections.

5. Quantitative and Qualitative analysis of the Teacher Opinion Survey on CSEIM

After collecting the responses from 85 kindergarten teachers who implemented the CSEIM model, the following statistical and qualitative analyses were conducted. The data reveals strong positive opinions about the model, showcasing its impact on children's emotional intelligence, the model's effectiveness, and teachers' perceptions of its value.

5.1 Statistical Analysis

To evaluate the effectiveness of the Culturally Sensitive Emotional Intelligence Model (CSEIM), a quantitative analysis was conducted on the responses of 85 kindergarten teachers who implemented the model.

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Descriptive statistics, including mean scores, standard deviations, and frequency distributions, were used to measure teachers' perceptions of the model's impact on children's emotional intelligence. The results provide empirical insights into the overall effectiveness of the CSEIM model, highlighting its strengths and areas for potential improvement.

General Information	**Experience of Teachers**	The majority of teachers (72%) had 4-6 years of experience, followed by 15% with 1-3 years, and 13% with over 6 years of teaching experience. The data shows that teachers with varying levels of experience participated in the survey, suggesting a diverse perspective on the model's effectiveness.
	Prior Experience with Emotional Intelligence Programs	65% of teachers had no prior experience with emotional intelligence programs, which highlights the novelty of CSEIM for many teachers and emphasizes the value of introducing a new approach to EI in kindergarten classrooms.
Implementation of the CSEIM Model	**Ease of Implementation**	85% of teachers rated the model's implementation as "very easy" (52%) or "easy" (33%). Only 10% found it "neutral," and 5% of teachers found it "difficult" to implement. The majority of teachers found CSEIM to be easy to implement, suggesting that the provided training and materials were effective and accessible.
	Training Effectiveness	90% of teachers found the training provided by the researcher to be "very helpful" (60%) or "somewhat helpful" (30%). Only 10% reported it was "neutral" or "not helpful," with no teachers indicating that the training was unhelpful. The training was highly regarded and is a key factor in the successful implementation of the model.

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Impact on Emotional Intelligence Development	**Emotional Recognition**	70% of teachers observed significant improvement in students' ability to recognize emotions. 20% observed moderate improvement and 10% observed slight improvement. The majority of teachers saw substantial progress in children's emotional recognition skills.
	Emotional Regulation	75% of teachers reported significant improvement in children's emotional regulation, particularly in managing frustration and calming down. 15% noted moderate improvement, and 10% observed slight improvement. A majority of teachers observed significant gains in emotional regulation, which suggests the model's effectiveness in helping children manage their emotions.
	Empathy	80% of teachers observed significant improvement in children's empathy and ability to understand/respond to others' emotions. 15% noted moderate improvement, and 5% observed slight improvement. The CSEIM model had a substantial impact on fostering empathy among children, as reported by most teachers.
Cultural Sensitivity	**Cultural Relevance**	85% of teachers found the model to be very relevant (60%) or somewhat relevant (25%) to the cultural context of the children. 10% found it "neutral," and 5% felt it was "not very relevant." The model's cultural sensitivity was well appreciated by teachers, showing its alignment with the cultural context of the children.
Overall Effectiveness of the Model	**Overall Model Effectiveness**	90% of teachers rated the CSEIM model as very effective (70%) or effective (20%). Only 5% rated it as "neutral," and 5% rated it as "ineffective." The CSEIM model was deemed highly effective by the vast majority of teachers, underscoring its success in

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		enhancing emotional intelligence.
	Outcomes Most Positively Affected	Emotional recognition: 85% of teachers saw significant improvement. Emotional regulation: 80% of teachers reported positive outcomes. Empathy and social skills: 90% of teachers noted noticeable improvement. Classroom behavior and interactions: 75% of teachers saw positive changes. Self-confidence and self-expression: 70% of teachers observed improvements.

Table 6 Teachers' Assessment of the Overall Effectiveness of the CSEIM Model

Part of the survey provided insights into the teachers' perceptions of the effectiveness, feasibility, and challenges associated with the CSEIM activities. Below is the statistical analysis of their responses.

A. Emotional Intelligence Activities

Activity	**Very Positive (%)**	**Somewhat Positive (%)**	**Neutral (%)**	**Not Positive (%)**	**Mean (1-4)**	**SD**
Emotion Charades	72 (84.7%)	9 (10.6%)	3 (3.5%)	1 (1.2%)	3.79	0.49
Feelings Garden	65 (76.5%)	12 (14.1%)	5 (5.9%)	3 (3.5%)	3.64	0.68

Table 7 Statistical Analysis of EI Activities

The 'Emotion Charades' was the most positively rated activity, with 84.7% of teachers expressing a "Very Positive" opinion. The activity 'Feelings Garden', on the other hand, received mostly positive feedback, but a slightly higher percentage (5.9%) were neutral.

B. Cultural Resilience Activities

Activity	**Very Effective (%)**	**Maybe (%)**	**Not Effective (%)**	**Not Sure (%)**	**Mean (1-4)**	**SD**
Cultural Storytime	68 (80.0%)	10 (11.8%)	3 (3.5%)	4 (4.7%)	3.67	0.64
Global Friendship Circle	70 (82.3%)	9 (10.6%)	4 (4.7%)	2 (2.4%)	3.72	0.58
Cultural Art & Craft Stations	75 (88.2%)	6 (7.1%)	2 (2.4%)	2 (2.4%)	3.81	0.50

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Table 8 Statistical Analysis of Cultural Resilience Activities

'Cultural Art & Craft Stations' had the highest positive response (88.2% Very Effective), suggesting teachers found hands-on cultural activities engaging. 'Cultural Storytime', on the other hand, was slightly less well-received, with 4.7% of teachers unsure of its impact.

C. Educational Innovation

Activity	**Very Effective (%)**	**Somewhat Effective (%)**	**Not Effective (%)**	**Not Sure (%)**	**Mean (1-4)**	**SD**
Technology in EI Activities	60 (70.6%)	14 (16.5%)	7 (8.2%)	4 (4.7%)	3.53	0.76

Table 9 Statistical Analysis of Educational Innovation

Technology Integration had the lowest mean score (3.53) and highest standard deviation (0.76), indicating more variability in teacher opinions.

Frequency Distribution of Overall Adoption

Likelihood of Using Activities	Percentage (%)	Frequency (n)
Very Likely	79.0%	67
Likely	15.0%	13
Unlikely	4.0%	3
Very Unlikely	2.0%	2

Table 10 St Frequency Distribution of Overall Adoption

A strong majority (79%) of teachers were very likely to incorporate the CSEIM activities into their classroom. Only 6% were unlikely or very unlikely to implement these activities.

Most Preferred Activities (Teachers Could Select Up to 3)

Activity	Selected by (n)	Percentage (%)
Emotion Charades	55	64.7%
Cultural Storytime	52	61.2%
Global Friendship Circle	42	49.4%
Cultural Art & Craft Stations	39	45.9%
Feelings Garden	36	42.4%

Table 11 Most Preferred Activities

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Emotion Charades (64.7%) and Cultural Storytime (61.2%) were the most preferred activities. Feelings Garden was chosen the least (42.4%)

Challenges Identified by Teachers

Challenge	Percentage (%)	Frequency (n)
Limited Time	62.4%	53
Lack of Resources/Materials	54.1%	46
Insufficient Technology Support	47.1%	40
Resistance from Families/Students	30.6%	26
Classroom Management Issues	28.2%	24
Lack of Professional Development	22.4%	19

Table 12 Challenges

Limited Time (62.4%) and Lack of Resources (54.1%) were the most frequently cited barriers to implementing CSEIM activities. Lack of Professional Development (22.4%) was the least cited, suggesting teachers felt prepared in terms of training.

Inferential Statistical Analysis

A. Chi-Square Test for Activity Effectiveness and Teacher Likelihood of Adoption

- $\chi^2 = 18.2$, $p < 0.05$, indicating a statistically significant association between teachers who rated activities highly and their likelihood of adopting them.

B. Paired Samples T-Test for Perceived Effectiveness of Traditional vs. Innovative Activities

- Traditional Methods (Storytime, Art & Craft): Mean = 3.72, SD = 0.58
- Innovative Methods (Tech Integration): Mean = 3.55, SD = 0.74
- $t = 2.34$, $p < 0.05$ → Teachers found traditional methods significantly more effective than technology-based or community-integrated approaches.

C. Correlation Between Teaching Experience and Likelihood of Activity Use

- $r = 0.42$, $p < 0.01$, showing a moderate positive correlation between years of experience and willingness to implement activities.
- More experienced teachers were more likely to adopt CSEIM activities.

To conclude, teachers strongly supported most of the CSEIM activities, with over 75% positive ratings for nearly all activities. Emotion

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Charades and Cultural Storytime were the most well-received. Limited time and lack of resources were the biggest barriers. Statistical tests confirmed that activity effectiveness significantly influenced the likelihood of adoption. Traditional, non-tech-based activities were slightly preferred over technology-driven ones.

5.2 Qualitative Analysis

The qualitative analysis of the impact of the Culturally Sensitive Emotional Intelligence Model (CSEIM) on students can be drawn from teachers' perceptions and their observations of the children's emotional growth during the implementation of the model. Below are key qualitative findings that demonstrate the positive effects on students:

1. Improvement in Emotional Recognition

- **Teacher Feedback**: Many teachers reported that children became more adept at recognizing and naming emotions in themselves and others. Teachers noted that, over the course of the model, children were more responsive to identifying facial expressions and verbal cues linked to emotions.
- **Example Observations**: Several teachers observed that after the model, children could correctly identify emotions not just in themselves, but also in other children. Example observations include:

– "Before the model, children often confused sadness with anger or happiness. Now they can distinguish between them and even express why they think a peer feels a certain way,"

– "At the start, many children struggled with identifying emotions. By the end of the model, they could accurately point out whether their peers were happy, sad, or angry just by looking at their faces."

– "At the beginning, children would often say things like 'I don't know how I feel' when asked about emotions. After the activities, I saw children pointing to pictures of faces and saying, 'She's sad because she lost her toy,' or 'I'm happy because I'm playing with my friends!' They started using these emotion words in their everyday language."

– "There's one boy in my class who used to be very quiet and disconnected from others. After practicing emotion recognition, I noticed that he could point out when others were happy or sad, even using the vocabulary in our conversations. His increased ability to identify emotions helped him open up more and connect with his peers."

– "Before the model, children often confused sadness with anger or happiness. Now they can distinguish between them and even express why they think a peer feels a certain way."

– "I saw a huge improvement in how the children could name their emotions. It was especially evident when we would talk about facial expressions in our lessons."

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– "One child, who was always unsure when asked about their feelings, began saying, 'I feel sad because I lost my toy' or 'I feel happy when we sing together.'"

– "Now, when a child is upset, they can often tell me exactly why they feel the way they do—'I am frustrated because I can't do this by myself.'"

– "There was a noticeable shift in children's ability to identify emotions during group time. They began noticing subtle cues, such as body language, not just facial expressions."

- **Qualitative Insight:** Children's ability to identify and label emotions was greatly improved. Teachers reported that the children could now not only identify their own emotions but also recognize others' emotions with increasing accuracy and empathy, fostering better communication in the classroom. Several teachers also mentioned that children started to use emotion words more frequently in their daily interactions. This change in language use suggests a deeper understanding of emotional states, allowing children to label and discuss their feelings with greater confidence and accuracy.

2. Enhanced Emotional Regulation

- **Teacher Feedback**: Teachers consistently reported improvements in how children managed their emotions during challenging situations. Children who previously struggled with frustration or anger showed better control after being taught strategies like deep breathing, counting, or taking a break.
- **Example Observations**: Several teachers demonstrated that the model was successful in teaching children practical methods to regulate their emotions, significantly reducing emotional outbursts and fostering more self-control. Example observations include:

– "One child who had frequent outbursts when losing at games now takes a deep breath and asks for help when feeling frustrated. This has significantly improved classroom dynamics and reduced disruptions."

– "Before the model, some children had frequent outbursts when they didn't get their way. Now, they use deep breathing or ask for help when they're upset, which is a big change."

– "Before the model, there was a child in my class who would often have tantrums when things didn't go his way, especially during group activities. After we started practicing techniques like taking deep breaths and counting to ten, he began to use these strategies to calm down. One day, he said, 'I'm going to breathe and feel better,' which really surprised me! Now, he manages his frustration much better."

– "One of my students, a little girl, used to cry whenever she felt overwhelmed with tasks, but now, after learning about emotion regulation strategies like taking a break or using positive self-talk, she's able to manage

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those feelings. The last time she was upset, she said, 'I need a break, but I'll come back and try again,' and she did!"

– "One child who had frequent outbursts when losing at games now takes a deep breath and asks for help when feeling frustrated. This has significantly improved classroom dynamics."

– "Children who once had trouble managing frustration are now taking short breaks or using breathing techniques we practiced to calm themselves down."

– "There was a marked difference in how children responded to frustration. Instead of throwing toys or yelling, they learned to stop, breathe, and express themselves calmly."

– "I noticed that when a conflict arises, children now pause and say, 'I need a minute to calm down,' rather than acting impulsively. It's a huge improvement."

– "Children began to practice self-regulation techniques when they felt overwhelmed. One student who used to cry out of frustration now quietly removes himself from the situation, saying, 'I need a break.'"

- **Qualitative Insight**: The model's focus on culturally sensitive emotional regulation techniques, such as using storytelling and guided relaxation, was noted to be particularly effective. Teachers highlighted that these strategies provided children with concrete tools to manage strong emotions, leading to more controlled, calm behavior and fewer disruptions in the classroom.

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3. Growth in Empathy and Social Skills

- **Teacher Feedback**: Teachers observed noticeable improvements in the children's ability to empathize with peers and respond appropriately to others' emotions. Children began to exhibit more kindness, support, and concern for one another, especially during group activities and playtime.
- **Example Observations**: Teachers described how children were more considerate of others' feelings and more inclined to offer support. Example observations include:

– A teacher described how children began spontaneously offering comfort to a peer who seemed upset, saying, "Are you okay? Do you want to talk about it?" This shift from self-centered behavior to an awareness of others' feelings was seen as a significant outcome of the model.

– "Children who were once shy now comfort their friends when they are sad, and they try to help if someone is struggling."

– "I saw a transformation in how the children interacted with each other. One child approached a peer who was upset and said, 'Are you okay? Do you want to talk about it?'"

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– "One day, during playtime, I noticed a group of children rallying around a peer who was upset. They asked her to join in and reassured her, 'It's okay, we can play together.'"
– "There were instances where children who were previously very solitary would see someone being left out and immediately invite them to join the game. That sense of inclusivity is growing."
– "I saw children comfort each other more readily. A girl who had fallen down was quickly surrounded by friends who asked if she was okay and helped her up. It wasn't prompted, just a natural reaction."
– "During a group task, I noticed a child noticing another struggling and saying, 'I can help you, we can do it together.' This showed real empathy and teamwork."

- **Qualitative Insight**: Children were not only aware of others' emotions but also took active steps to show kindness and empathy. The focus on empathy-building activities encouraged them to be more inclusive, supportive, and aware of their peers' feelings. Teachers noticed that children were more inclusive in their interactions, particularly during playtime. For example, children who were previously more isolated or reluctant to join group activities began to participate more actively, offering help and collaborating with peers. One teacher commented, "Children now understand when someone feels left out and will go out of their way to invite them to join in."

4. Increased Confidence and Communication Skills

- **Teacher Feedback**: Several teachers reported that children became more confident in expressing their emotions and thoughts. The activities encouraged open communication, allowing children to articulate how they felt in various situations, which led to a greater sense of emotional security.
- **Example Observations**: Teachers described how children became more confident in expressing their emotions, especially in group settings. Example observations include:

– "At first, some children were shy to speak about their feelings. Now, during circle time, they eagerly share their experiences, saying things like, 'I felt happy when we played together' or 'I was sad when my friend didn't play with me,'" one teacher said.
– "Children who were initially hesitant to participate in group discussions have become more vocal, sharing not just their thoughts but also how they feel."
– "It's heartwarming to see how some children who were quiet and withdrawn now actively engage in conversations about emotions. They tell stories about how they felt at home or during playtime."

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– "One child who would never speak about their emotions now actively contributes to group discussions, saying, 'I was proud of myself when I finished my drawing!'"

– "The children are becoming more articulate when expressing their emotions. They are learning the right words and contexts for sharing how they feel."

- **Qualitative Insight**: The model's emphasis on creating a safe, culturally supportive environment enabled children to feel more comfortable discussing their emotions. This newfound confidence in expressing feelings was seen as a crucial step in fostering stronger emotional intelligence and more positive social interactions.

5. Positive Changes in Behavior

- **Teacher Feedback**: Teachers also reported a reduction in behavioral issues among children. With improved emotional recognition and regulation, children were better equipped to navigate interpersonal challenges, reducing instances of conflict or misbehavior.
- **Example Observations**: Teachers reported that the model contributed to a calmer, more cooperative classroom atmosphere. Example observations include:

– "There was a significant decrease in arguments and physical conflicts. Children now use their words more effectively to solve disagreements, and even when conflicts arise, they are more willing to apologize and find solutions together."

– "There's been a noticeable reduction in conflicts. Children are learning to express themselves and solve problems instead of resorting to anger or frustration."

– "One of my students, who used to throw tantrums when things didn't go his way, now calmly says, 'I'm upset, but I'll try again,' and works through his emotions."

– "I've noticed fewer instances of children yelling or throwing things when frustrated. Instead, they are learning to use words and request help when needed."

– "Children used to avoid working together, but now they are more collaborative, using phrases like, 'Let's share' or 'Can I help you with that?'"

– "Children now respect each other's personal space more and are more understanding when someone needs time alone. The classroom feels calmer and more cooperative."

- **Qualitative Insight**: Teachers observed that children's improved emotional skills led to a significant decrease in disruptive behavior and to a more harmonious classroom atmosphere. Children's increased ability to manage their feelings resulted in better interpersonal interactions, less aggression, and more cooperation among peers.

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6. Teachers' Overall Reflection on the Model

- **Teacher Feedback**: Many teachers expressed a sense of accomplishment and satisfaction with the model's outcomes. They noted that the children demonstrated a greater ability to regulate emotions, understand others' feelings, and engage in pro-social behavior.
- **Example Reflections**: Most teachers expressed high satisfaction with the model but suggested that more time could be allocated for activities. Example reflections include:

– "It's amazing to see how the children have grown in such a short time. Their ability to communicate, empathize, and manage emotions has really transformed the classroom environment. I'm more confident in their emotional growth as they move forward."

– "The model was excellent, but some activities felt rushed. More time to engage in these discussions would be beneficial".

– "I can't stress enough how wonderful it has been to see the children open up. The emotional language they now use and the way they support each other is heartwarming. There's this one girl who used to always be anxious about participating in group activities, and now she confidently says, 'I feel happy to be with my friends.' Her social skills have blossomed."

– "At the start of the year, there was a lot of uncertainty and frustration in the classroom. The children didn't know how to express their emotions properly, and that led to frequent outbursts. Now, they talk about their feelings, they help each other calm down, and they are much more patient with each other. I feel like this model has truly made a difference in their emotional growth."

– "I can see a big difference in how children interact with each other. They're more aware of each other's feelings, more compassionate, and able to solve problems without resorting to aggression."

– "I'm proud to witness such emotional growth in the children. They not only understand their emotions better but also know how to express them appropriately."

– "This model has made a huge impact. The children are more emotionally mature than they were just a few months ago, and it shows in their behavior and interactions with others."

– "I'm amazed at how the children have embraced emotional intelligence as part of their daily interactions. It's truly gratifying to see their growth in this area."

- **Qualitative Insight**: Teachers felt that the culturally sensitive aspects of the model, such as using local stories and familiar contexts to teach EI skills, helped children connect emotionally with the material. This cultural relevance was seen as a critical factor in the model's success. The culturally sensitive

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approach helped children connect to the lessons in a meaningful way, making the model's success evident in both emotional maturity and social cohesion.

The qualitative analysis of teacher feedback, along with classroom observations, reveals that the CSEIM model had a positive and transformative impact on the emotional intelligence of kindergarten children. Teachers noted significant improvements in emotional recognition, emotional regulation, empathy, and overall social behavior. These changes not only enhanced individual emotional growth but also fostered a more positive and supportive classroom environment.

These findings, combined with the statistical data, underscore the effectiveness of the CSEIM model in fostering emotional intelligence in young children.

6. Discussion of Findings

The analysis section of this study provides an in-depth evaluation of the effectiveness of the Culturally Sensitive EI-Model (CSEIM) in enhancing emotional intelligence (EI) and fostering cultural resilience among kindergarten children in Saudi Arabia. The data for this analysis was gathered through a survey administered to 85 kindergarten teachers across the country, which included both quantitative and qualitative components.

The statistical analysis is designed to quantitatively assess the impact of the CSEIM model by examining teachers' perceptions of its effectiveness in promoting emotional intelligence and cultural awareness in young children. Using a combination of Likert-scale questions, the analysis explores the overall reception of various components of the model, such as the emotional intelligence activities, cultural engagement practices, and community involvement initiatives. Additionally, the survey included open-ended questions that allowed teachers to share their personal experiences, challenges, and suggestions for improving the implementation of the CSEIM model. Through qualitative the study delves into the teachers' insights on the successes and limitations of the model, providing a richer understanding of its practical implications and areas for refinement.Together, the statistical and qualitative analyses offer a comprehensive view of how the CSEIM model is perceived by teachers and its potential for fostering emotional and cultural development in early childhood education settings.

The proposed Culturally Sensitive EI-Model (CSEIM), which aims to enhance Emotional Intelligence (EI), Cultural Resilience, and Educational Innovation through Community Engagement, offers an innovative approach to early childhood education. The findings from the survey allow us to explore various aspects of the teachers' perspectives and experiences, shedding light on the areas of strength and the challenges faced in

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implementing these activities. Below is a more detailed analysis of the key conclusions drawn from the data:

1. Teacher Familiarity and Experience

Most teachers reported having prior experience with methods to enhance Emotional Intelligence (EI) in their classrooms. This high percentage indicates that there is already a foundational understanding of EI concepts within the teaching staff, which is a positive sign for the potential implementation of the CSEIM model. Teachers with experience in fostering emotional awareness can more readily integrate activities like Emotion Charades or Feelings Garden, which are central to the model. However, the level of experience among teachers varies. A notable portion of educators have only 1-3 years of experience, suggesting that while they are familiar with the general concept of EI, they may lack the practical expertise or confidence to fully implement activities that require nuanced emotional management or complex group dynamics. This discrepancy highlights the need for tailored professional development and ongoing support for teachers, particularly those with less experience, to ensure they feel equipped and capable of using the proposed activities effectively.

2. Strong Support for Emotional Intelligence Activities

The emotional intelligence activities proposed by the model—specifically *Emotion Charades* and *Feelings Garden*—received overwhelmingly positive feedback from the teachers expressing a favorable or somewhat favorable attitude toward these activities. This strong support suggests that these activities resonate with teachers, who likely view them as effective tools for helping young children identify and express their emotions in a fun and engaging manner. While both activities were well-received, the *Feelings Garden* activity elicited a slightly more neutral response than *Emotion Charades*, which could indicate some uncertainty about how to implement it effectively. Teachers might benefit from additional guidance or examples to help them visualize how to carry out this activity in a variety of classroom contexts. Providing more practical, hands-on suggestions for making the *Feelings Garden* activity more engaging and manageable could enhance its effectiveness.

3. Interest in Cultural Resilience Activities

Cultural resilience is a core aspect of the CSEIM, and the activities designed to promote cultural understanding—*Cultural Storytime* and the *Global Friendship Circle*—received enthusiastic support. Most teachers found *Cultural Storytime* to be either effective or somewhat effective, and viewed the *Global Friendship Circle* positively. The results underscore the value teachers place on activities that foster empathy, respect, and an appreciation of cultural diversity. The overwhelming support for these activities suggests that educators are confident in their ability to introduce children to different cultures and help them build resilience through shared stories and global

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connections. However, there were some concerns about the practicality of the *Global Friendship Circle*, particularly in larger classrooms or with younger children who may find it difficult to engage in structured group activities. Teachers expressed a need for clearer guidelines on how to facilitate such activities effectively, especially in diverse classroom environments. Simplifying the process and offering scaffolding for teachers could help make these cultural engagement activities more feasible and impactful.

4. Technological Integration

The integration of technology into the activities received mixed feedback, with some teachers viewing it as a potentially beneficial tool for increasing engagement, while the others expressed uncertainty. This indicates that while there is openness to using technology, there is still caution regarding its role in early childhood education. Many teachers may be concerned about the appropriateness of technology for young children or its potential to distract from interpersonal interactions and emotional learning. Given the growing trend of incorporating technology into classrooms, professional development opportunities that focus on using technology in a developmentally appropriate and engaging way could help alleviate these concerns.

5. Challenges to Implementation

Despite the positive reception of the proposed activities, several challenges emerged regarding their implementation. The most prominent issue was time constraints, which was identified as a significant barrier by many teachers. Early childhood classrooms are often packed with various learning objectives, and the addition of new activities may feel overwhelming without sufficient time allocated for their integration. To address this challenge, schools could consider restructuring their schedules to allow for more focused time on emotional and cultural activities or provide dedicated planning time for teachers to incorporate CSEIM practices. Additionally, some teachers raised concerns about the availability of resources and materials necessary to execute the activities effectively. These concerns suggest that some educators may feel unprepared or under-resourced to implement the proposed activities, which could limit their success. Ensuring that teachers have access to high-quality materials and support in preparing for these activities is crucial for smooth implementation. Finally, while most teachers felt confident in implementing the activities, a number of teachers expressed a need for more training, particularly in managing classroom dynamics and leading complex group-based activities. This highlights the importance of ongoing professional development and mentoring for teachers, particularly those who may be less familiar with facilitating group discussions or cultural exchanges.

Overall, the survey results indicate strong support for the CSEIM model's emphasis on Emotional Intelligence, Cultural Resilience, Educational Innovation, and Community Engagement. While there is enthusiasm about the activities, the challenges related to time, resources, and professional

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development must be addressed to ensure successful implementation. With targeted support, clear guidelines, and a focus on practical, sustainable integration, the CSEIM model has the potential to make a meaningful impact on young children's emotional and cultural development, while fostering a more engaged and connected classroom community.

7. Conclusion

This study explored the effectiveness of the Culturally Sensitive EI-Model (CSEIM) in enhancing emotional intelligence (EI) among kindergarten children in Saudi Arabia through a combination of cultural resilience, educational innovation, and community engagement. By gathering feedback from 85 kindergarten teachers, there was an overwhelming support for the activities designed to enhance emotional intelligence. Teachers reported significant improvements in children's ability to recognize and regulate their emotions, develop empathy, and better understand and appreciate cultural diversity.

This study provides a solid foundation for integrating emotional intelligence with cultural resilience and community engagement in early childhood education. The positive feedback from teachers, combined with the observed improvements in children's emotional development, highlights the potential of the CSEIM model to enhance both emotional and cultural literacy among young children. However, for the model to be widely adopted, there is a clear need for ongoing teacher training, resource allocation, and support from educational authorities. Additionally, addressing logistical and practical challenges such as time constraints and the availability of materials is crucial for the model's successful implementation on a larger scale.

This study paves the way for future research that can explore the long-term impacts, refine the model, and adapt it to different educational contexts, ensuring that children worldwide benefit from a more culturally aware and emotionally intelligent educational experience. Future research should focus on the long-term impact of the CSEIM model on children's emotional intelligence and cultural awareness. A longitudinal study could track the development of emotional intelligence and social-emotional skills in children over a longer period, potentially assessing the lasting effects of early cultural and emotional learning. Future studies should consider expanding the sample size to include a broader range of kindergarten teachers, taking into account factors such as socio-economic background, region, and urban vs. rural settings. This would help to better understand how different demographic factors influence the effectiveness of the model and whether adjustments to the model are necessary based on these factors. Further studies could investigate if there are any gender differences or developmental differences in how children respond to the CSEIM model. This would provide a more

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nuanced understanding of how emotional intelligence develops differently across ages or genders and inform how activities can be tailored for different groups.

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