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Effectiveness of Digital Storytelling on Students' Emotional Aspects and Social Aspects An Experimental Study

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***Abstract*—The development of emotional and Social Aspects is an important part of students' overall education. Students need to understand their own emotions, recognise the feelings of others and develop positive relationships in their everyday lives. However, classroom teaching often gives greater attention to academic achievement, while opportunities for developing emotional and social competencies may receive less attention. Digital storytelling is a learner-centred teaching approach that combines stories, images, narration, sound and digital media. It may provide meaningful opportunities for students to understand emotions, explore different perspectives and reflect on social situations. The present study, entitled Effectiveness of Digital Storytelling on Students' Emotional Aspects and Social Aspects: An Experimental Study in Selected Schools, aims to examine the effectiveness of digital storytelling in developing students' Emotional Aspects and Social Aspects. The study was conducted with 325 students from six selected schools, comprising 149 students in the control group and 176 students in the experimental group. A pre-test and post-test experimental approach was used to examine changes in both variables. The findings indicated substantial improvement in the post-test scores of the experimental group compared with the control group. The preliminary analyses also revealed significant relationships between pre-test and post-test scores and a strong positive correlation between post-test Emotional Aspects and Social Aspects scores. The study highlights the potential of digital storytelling as an innovative teaching approach for supporting students' emotional and social development.**

***Index Terms*—Digital Storytelling, Emotional Aspects, Social Aspects, Social-Emotional Learning, Experimental Study, School Students, Innovative Pedagogy**

I. INTRODUCTION

Education is not limited to the development of knowledge and academic skills. It also plays an important role in developing students' emotions, attitudes, values and social behaviour. Students interact with different people and face various situations in their daily lives. They need to

understand their own feelings, express emotions appropriately, recognise the feelings of others and develop positive relationships. These abilities contribute to their personal development, classroom adjustment and social participation. Therefore, emotional and social development should be considered an important part of school education.

Emotional Aspects refers to the ability to identify, understand and recognise one's own emotions and to understand how these emotions influence thoughts and behaviour. It also involves recognising emotional changes and expressing feelings in an appropriate manner. The concept is closely connected with emotional intelligence. Mayer et al. (2004) explained emotional intelligence as the ability to recognise emotions, use emotional information in thinking, understand emotions and regulate them effectively. Goleman (1995) also highlighted the importance of emotional competencies in everyday life, relationships and personal development. These perspectives suggest that students should be provided with opportunities to understand their emotions rather than merely being expected to control their behaviour.

Social Aspects is another important competency in the development of students. It refers to the ability to understand the feelings, needs and perspectives of other people. It includes empathy, respect for diversity, sensitivity towards social situations and concern for others. According to the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL, n.d.), Social Aspects involves understanding different perspectives, showing empathy and compassion, and recognising the social and cultural conditions that influence people's behaviour. Students with developed Social Aspects are more likely to understand the difficulties of others, respect individual differences and participate positively in group activities. Emotional Aspects and Social Aspects are therefore closely connected, as understanding one's own emotions can support the understanding of other people's feelings.

The importance of these competencies is also recognised through the concept of Social and Emotional Learning (SEL). Social and emotional learning provides a framework for developing the knowledge, attitudes and skills required to understand emotions, maintain relationships and make responsible decisions. Durlak et al. (2011), in their meta-analysis of 213 school-based programmes involving more than 270,000 students, reported positive improvements in students' social and emotional skills, attitudes, behaviour and academic performance. Similarly, Taylor et al. (2017) found that the positive effects of school-based social and emotional learning programmes could continue beyond the immediate intervention period. Domitrovich et al. (2017) also emphasised that social-emotional competence is important for students' positive adjustment, healthy development and reduction of behavioural risks. These findings indicate that schools need to provide planned learning experiences for the development of emotional and social competencies.

In the present educational environment, teachers are expected to adopt teaching approaches that support the overall development of students. Traditional classroom practices generally depend on explanation, textbooks, questioning and written exercises. These methods are useful for developing subject knowledge, but students may also need learning experiences that help them understand real-life situations, emotions and social relationships. Stories have long been used as a

means of sharing experiences, values and social messages. Through stories, learners can observe different characters, understand their feelings and reflect on the consequences of their actions. When stories are connected with digital technology, they can provide additional opportunities for meaningful learning.

Digital storytelling is an educational approach in which stories are presented through a combination of digital resources such as images, narration, text, music, sound and video. Robin (2008) described digital storytelling as a useful educational technology that can engage teachers and students in meaningful teaching-learning activities. It provides opportunities to communicate ideas through different media and connect technology with classroom pedagogy. Lambert (2013) explained that digital storytelling is not simply the use of technology to present information; it also involves personal expression, meaningful narration and the sharing of human experiences. Ohler (2013) similarly highlighted the educational value of combining storytelling, creativity and digital media to support students' learning and communication skills.

Digital storytelling can make classroom learning more meaningful because students do not only receive information; they can also observe, interpret and reflect on the situations presented in a story. The combination of pictures, narration, characters and events may help learners understand experiences that are different from their own. Hull and Katz (2006) demonstrated how digital storytelling can provide opportunities for individuals to express personal experiences and develop their sense of identity and agency. Sadik (2008) also examined digital storytelling as a technology-integrated approach to student learning and reported its potential to support engagement in authentic learning activities. These studies indicate that digital storytelling can be used beyond the presentation of academic content and may also support reflection, communication and personal expression.

One important educational feature of digital storytelling is its potential to develop emotional understanding. When students watch or create stories involving happiness, sadness, fear, anger, kindness, conflict or cooperation, they get opportunities to identify different emotions and understand the reasons behind them. For example, a story about a child facing rejection by classmates may encourage students to think about loneliness, disappointment and the importance of supportive behaviour. Similarly, a story about helping a person in difficulty may help students understand kindness, compassion and responsibility. Such activities can encourage learners to connect emotional experiences presented in stories with situations in their own lives. The use of digital media may further support this process by combining visual and auditory information with meaningful situations.

Digital storytelling may also contribute to the development of Social Aspects by presenting situations involving friendship, cooperation, family relationships, social differences, inclusion and community life. When students observe characters from different social and cultural backgrounds, they may develop opportunities to consider different points of view. They can discuss why a character behaved in a particular way, how another person might feel and what could be done to solve a problem. Such activities may encourage empathy and respect for others. Yu et al. (2021), in their study of an immersive digital story intervention with nursing students, found a significant

immediate improvement in empathy in the intervention group compared with the control group. Although the participants were not school students, the study provides relevant evidence of the possible connection between digital storytelling and empathic understanding.

The educational value of digital storytelling also depends on the way it is planned and implemented. Simply showing a video or digital presentation does not necessarily develop emotional or social competencies. The stories should be selected according to learners' age, experiences and educational needs. Teachers need to encourage students to observe the situations carefully, identify the emotions of the characters, discuss social issues and reflect on possible solutions. Students may also be involved in preparing their own digital stories, selecting suitable pictures, writing narration and presenting their experiences. Such participation can provide opportunities for creative expression, communication and reflection. Robin (2008) and Ohler (2013) emphasised the importance of meaningful integration of digital media with teaching objectives rather than using technology only for presentation.

The relationship between Emotional Aspects and Social Aspects is also important in the present context. A student who can identify personal emotions may be better prepared to understand how emotions influence interactions with others. Similarly, understanding the feelings and experiences of other people may encourage students to reflect on their own attitudes and behaviour. Both competencies contribute to positive relationships, cooperation and a supportive classroom environment. The SEL framework developed by CASEL identifies self-awareness and Social Aspects as two important and interconnected areas of social-emotional competence (CASEL, n.d.). The findings of Durlak et al. (2011) and Taylor et al. (2017) further support the importance of providing structured opportunities for the development of these competencies in schools.

Despite the growing use of digital technology in education, its application for developing students' emotional and social competencies requires further investigation. Much of the discussion on digital storytelling in education has focused on literacy, communication, creativity, student engagement and subject learning (Robin, 2008; Sadik, 2008; Ohler, 2013). Research has also examined its relationship with identity development and personal expression (Hull & Katz, 2006). However, the direct contribution of digital storytelling to both Emotional Aspects and Social Aspects among school students deserves further empirical attention. The existing literature on social-emotional learning establishes the importance of these competencies, while research on digital storytelling suggests that narrative-based digital experiences may provide useful learning opportunities. Bringing these two areas together offers a meaningful direction for educational research.

In the Indian school context, students come from different family, cultural, linguistic and social backgrounds. Their classroom experiences are influenced by their relationships with family members, teachers, classmates and the wider community. Therefore, developing the ability to understand emotions and respect the feelings and perspectives of others is an important educational need. Digital storytelling can be used to present situations related to everyday life, friendship, cooperation, family relationships, social responsibility, inclusion and respect for diversity. With suitable teacher guidance, these stories may provide opportunities for students to discuss their experiences and develop a better understanding of themselves and others.

In view of these considerations, the present study was undertaken to examine the effectiveness of digital storytelling on students' Emotional Aspects and Social Aspects. The study attempts to determine whether digital storytelling can provide a useful teaching-learning experience for improving these two important dimensions of students' development. It also examines the relationship between Emotional Aspects and Social Aspects after the intervention. The findings are expected to contribute to the understanding of innovative pedagogical practices that may support the emotional and social development of school students.

II. OBJECTIVES

1. To study the level of Emotional Aspects among students before and after the implementation of Digital Storytelling.
2. To study the level of Social Aspects among students before and after the implementation of Digital Storytelling.
3. To examine the effectiveness of Digital Storytelling in enhancing students' Emotional Aspects.
4. To examine the effectiveness of Digital Storytelling in enhancing students' Social Aspects.
5. To examine the relationship between students' Emotional Aspects and Social Aspects after the implementation of Digital Storytelling.

III. HYPOTHESES

The following null hypotheses are formulated in accordance with the research objectives.
H_{01}: There is no significant difference between the post-test scores of the Control and Experimental Groups in Emotional Aspects after controlling for their pre-test scores.
H_{02}: There is no significant difference between the post-test scores of the Control and Experimental Groups in Social Aspects after controlling for their pre-test scores.
H_{03}: There is no significant relationship between students' Emotional Aspects and Social Aspects post-test scores.

IV. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Method
The present study was conducted to examine the effectiveness of digital storytelling in developing Emotional Aspects and Social Aspects among school students. For this purpose, the researcher adopted the experimental method of research. The experimental method was considered suitable because the study aimed to examine the changes in students' emotional and Social Aspects after providing a planned teaching intervention through digital storytelling.
A pre-test and post-test control group design was used for the study. Students were divided into two groups: an experimental group and a control group. The experimental group received teaching through digital storytelling, whereas the control group was taught through the regular teaching

approach. Both groups were assessed before and after the intervention to identify changes in their Emotional Aspects and Social Aspects scores.

The pre-test scores helped the researcher understand the initial level of awareness among students, while the post-test scores provided information about their performance after the teaching process. By comparing the results of both groups, the researcher attempted to determine the effectiveness of digital storytelling as a teaching approach.

Table-1 Structure of the experimental research design

Groups	Pre-test	Treatment	Post-test
Experimental Group	O_1	X (Digital Storytelling)	O_2
Control Group	O_1	C (Regular Teaching)	O_2

O_1 represents the pre-test, O_2 represents the post-test, X represents the digital storytelling intervention, and C represents regular teaching.

Population of the Study

The population of the present study consisted of school students studying in upper primary schools of Gujarat

V. SAMPLE AND SAMPLING TECHNIQUE

Researcher used stratified random sampling for the selecting the school of urban and rural area for the experiment and cluster sampling for the experiment. The sample of the present study consisted of 325 students selected from six schools. The students were divided into two groups in each schools an experimental group consisting of 176 students and a control group consisting of 149 students. The experimental group participated in the digital storytelling programme, while the control group continued with the regular teaching approach.

The distribution of students according to the research groups is presented in Table 1.

Table 2 Distribution of Students According to Experimental and Control Groups

Research Group	Number of Students	Percentage
Experimental Group	176	54.15
Control Group	149	45.85
Total	325	100.00

The sample included students from all six selected schools. The inclusion of students from different schools provided an opportunity to examine the intervention in more than one school setting.

VI. RESEARCH TOOLS

For collecting the required information, the researcher used tools related to the two major variables of the study: Emotional Aspects and Social Aspects. These tools were used to assess students' awareness levels before and after the implementation of digital storytelling.

The research tools were administered to both experimental and control groups at two stages: before the intervention and after the intervention.

1. Emotional Aspects Tool

The Emotional Aspects Tool was used to assess students' ability to identify, understand and recognise their own emotions. It focused on students' understanding of different emotional experiences and their ability to recognise feelings in various situations. The tool was administered before and after the intervention to identify changes in students' Emotional Aspects. There are 15 situational items in the tool.

2. Social Aspects Tool

The Social Aspects Tool was used to assess students' understanding of other people's feelings, needs and perspectives. It focused on aspects such as empathy, respect for others, sensitivity towards social situations and understanding of interpersonal relationships. The tool was administered to both groups during the pre-test and post-test stages. There are 15 situational items in the tool.

3. Digital Storytelling Intervention

Digital storytelling was used as the instructional intervention for the experimental group. It involved the presentation of stories through a combination of digital resources such as pictures, narration, text, audio and video. The stories were selected or developed with the purpose of creating learning situations related to emotional and social experiences.

The digital stories included situations that encouraged students to identify emotions, understand the feelings of others, reflect on social relationships and think about appropriate responses to different situations. The teacher facilitated discussions and encouraged students to express their views after watching the stories. Researcher has prepared 11 Digital Stories for the intervention.

VII. DATA COLLECTION PROCESS

The data collection process was carried out in a systematic manner. The researcher first obtained the necessary permission from the concerned school authorities to conduct the study. The purpose of the research was explained to the concerned teachers and students, and the required arrangements were made for administering the tools and implementing the intervention.

The data collection process was completed in the following stages.

Stage 1: Selection of Schools and Students

Six schools were selected for conducting the study. A total of 325 students were included in the research. They were divided into an experimental group of 176 students and a control group of 149 students. Necessary arrangements were made with the respective schools for conducting the pre-test, intervention and post-test.

Stage 2: Administration of Pre-test

Before introducing the digital storytelling programme, the Emotional Aspects Tool and Social Aspects Tool were administered to both groups. The purpose of the pre-test was to identify the initial level of emotional and Social Aspects among the students. The responses obtained from the students were recorded and scored according to the prescribed scoring procedure.

Stage 3: Implementation of Digital Storytelling Programme

After completing the pre-test, the researcher implemented the digital storytelling programme with the experimental group. Digital stories were presented using suitable digital materials, including images, narration, text, audio and video. The stories were related to emotional experiences, social relationships, empathy, cooperation, respect and other situations connected with students' everyday lives.

The control group was taught through the regular teaching approach without the digital storytelling intervention during the study period. This arrangement helped the researcher compare the learning outcomes of the two groups.

Stage 4: Administration of Post-test

After completing the intervention, the Emotional Aspects Tool and Social Aspects Tool were administered again to both the experimental and control groups. The same tools were used to measure the changes in students' awareness levels. The post-test scores were recorded and arranged systematically for further statistical analysis.

Stage 5: Data Organisation and Analysis

The collected responses were scored and entered into a computer-based data sheet. The data were checked, coded and organised for statistical analysis. The researcher used the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) to analyse the collected information.

VIII. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

The following descriptive results were obtained from the earlier dataset analysis. They help explain the direction and magnitude of the observed improvement.

Table 3 Group-wise pre-test and post-test mean scores

Variable	Group	Pre-test Mean	Post-test Mean	Mean Gain
Emotional Aspects	Control	34.46	36.61	2.15
Emotional Aspects	Experimental	34.73	54.13	19.40
Social Aspects	Control	34.70	36.05	1.35
Social Aspects	Experimental	35.79	56.31	20.52

The descriptive results show that the Experimental Group demonstrated considerably greater improvement than the Control Group in both Emotional Aspects and Social Aspects.

In Emotional Aspects, the Experimental Group recorded a mean gain of 19.40, compared with a gain of 2.15 in the Control Group. Similarly, in Social Aspects, the Experimental Group recorded a mean gain of 20.52, compared with a gain of 1.35 in the Control Group.

IX. HYPOTHESIS TESTING

H_{01} There is no significant difference between the post-test scores of the Control and Experimental Groups in Emotional Aspects after controlling for their pre-test scores.

Table 4 ANCOVA for Emotional Aspects

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F-value	Sig.
Corrected Model	25154.406	2	12577.203	829.271	.000
EA Pre-test	403.036	1	403.036	26.574	.000
Group	24436.059	1	24436.059	1611.179	.000
Error	4883.637	322	15.167	–	–
Corrected Total	30038.043	324	–	–	–

R = .915 (approximately); R^2 = .837; Adjusted R^2 = .836; N = 325.

Interpretation:

The above table presents the results of ANCOVA conducted to examine the effectiveness of Digital Storytelling in enhancing students' Emotional Aspects. The pre-test scores of Emotional Aspects were considered as the covariate, while the post-test scores were considered as the dependent variable. Group membership was considered as the independent variable.

The results indicate that the overall ANCOVA model is statistically significant, $F(2, 322) = 829.271$, $p < .001$. The R^2 value of .837 indicates that approximately 83.7% of the variance in students' Emotional Aspects post-test scores is explained jointly by their pre-test scores and group membership.

The effect of the pre-test scores is statistically significant, $F(1, 322) = 26.574$, $p < .001$, indicating that students' initial Emotional Aspects scores significantly contribute to their post-test scores.

Furthermore, the effect of Group is statistically significant, $F(1, 322) = 1611.179$, $p < .001$. This indicates that a significant difference exists between the post-test Emotional Aspects scores of the Control and Experimental Groups after controlling for their pre-test scores.

The calculated partial eta squared for the Group effect is approximately .834, indicating a very large effect.

Since the significance value for Group is less than .05 ($p < .001$), the null hypothesis H_{01} is rejected. There is a statistically significant difference between the Control and Experimental Groups in Emotional Aspects post-test scores after controlling for pre-test scores. Therefore, the results support the effectiveness of Digital Storytelling in enhancing students' Emotional Aspects.

H_{02} There is no significant difference between the post-test scores of the Control and Experimental Groups in Social Aspects after controlling for their pre-test scores.

Table 5 ANCOVA for Social Aspects

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F-value	Sig.
Corrected Model	33863.609	2	16931.804	752.184	.000
SA Pre-test	743.823	1	743.823	33.044	.000
Group	31074.961	1	31074.961	1380.484	.000
Error	7248.280	322	22.510	–	–
Corrected Total	41111.889	324	–	–	–

$R^2 = .824$; Adjusted $R^2 = .823$; N = 325.

Interpretation:

The above table presents the results of ANCOVA conducted to examine the effectiveness of Digital Storytelling in enhancing students' Social Aspects. The pre-test scores of Social Aspects were considered as the covariate, and the post-test scores were considered as the dependent variable. Group membership was considered as the independent variable.

The results indicate that the overall ANCOVA model is statistically significant, $F(2, 322) = 752.184$, $p < .001$. The R^2 value of .824 indicates that approximately 82.4% of the variance in students' Social Aspects post-test scores is explained jointly by their pre-test scores and group membership.

The effect of the pre-test scores is statistically significant, $F(1, 322) = 33.044$, $p < .001$. This indicates that students' initial Social Aspects scores significantly contribute to their post-test scores.

Furthermore, the effect of Group is statistically significant, $F(1, 322) = 1380.484$, $p < .001$. This indicates that a statistically significant difference exists between the post-test Social Aspects scores of the Control and Experimental Groups after controlling for their pre-test scores.

The calculated partial eta squared for the Group effect is approximately .811, indicating a very large effect.

There is a statistically significant difference between the Control and Experimental Groups in Social Aspects post-test scores after controlling for pre-test scores. Therefore, the findings support the effectiveness of Digital Storytelling in enhancing students' Social Aspects.

H_{03} There is no significant relationship between students' Emotional Aspects and Social Aspects post-test scores.

Table 6 Correlation between Emotional Aspects and Social Aspects

Variables	N	Pearson Correlation (r)	Sig. (2-tailed)
EA Post-test and SA Post-test	325	.884**	.000

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Interpretation:
The above table indicates that the Pearson correlation coefficient between Emotional Aspects and Social Aspects post-test scores is .884, with a sample size of 325 students. The significance value is .000 ($p < .001$), indicating that the relationship is statistically significant at the 0.01 level.
The correlation coefficient of .884 indicates a very strong positive relationship between Emotional Aspects and Social Aspects. This suggests that students who obtained higher scores in Emotional Aspects also tended to obtain higher scores in Social Aspects.
Since the significance value is less than .01 ($p < .001$), the null hypothesis H_{03} is rejected.
So, we can say that There is a statistically significant and very strong positive relationship between students' Emotional Aspects and Social Aspects post-test scores.

X. FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

1. Digital Storytelling was associated with a statistically significant adjusted difference between the Control and Experimental Groups in Emotional Aspects.
2. Digital Storytelling was associated with a statistically significant adjusted difference between the Control and Experimental Groups in Social Aspects.
3. The Experimental Group demonstrated substantially higher descriptive mean gains than the Control Group in both dimensions.
4. Emotional Aspects and Social Aspects were found to have a very strong positive relationship ($r = .884$, $p < .001$).
5. The findings suggest that Digital Storytelling can be a promising pedagogical approach for developing students' social-emotional competencies.

XI. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This interpretation is consistent with Mayer et al. (2004), who explained that emotional intelligence involves the ability to recognise, understand and use emotional information. Similarly, Goleman (1995) emphasised the importance of understanding emotions in personal and social life. Digital storytelling may provide a practical learning context in which students can explore these emotional experiences through meaningful situations.

Robin (2008) described digital storytelling as a useful educational technology for engaging students in meaningful classroom learning. Lambert (2013) also highlighted the role of storytelling in communicating human experiences and encouraging personal expression. These perspectives support the possibility that digital storytelling can be used as a teaching approach to create opportunities for emotional understanding and reflection.

The results also showed greater descriptive improvement in social awareness among students in the experimental group. The findings can be discussed in relation to the social and emotional

learning framework developed by CASEL, which identifies social awareness as an important competency involving empathy, understanding different perspectives and respecting others (Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning [CASEL], n.d.). Durlak et al. (2011), in their meta-analysis of school-based social and emotional learning programmes, reported positive improvements in students' social and emotional skills, attitudes and behaviour. Taylor et al. (2017) also found that the positive effects of such programmes could continue beyond the immediate intervention period.

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