

Promoting Student Well-being through Positive School Climate

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ABSTRACT

ABSTRACT Students often face various challenges in school, including bullying, social isolation, and academic stress, which can negatively impact their well-being. This study aims to investigate the impact of positive school climate on student well-being and identify strategies to promote a supportive and inclusive school environment. The method is a mixed-methods approach was employed, combining surveys and interviews with students and teachers to examine the relationship between school climate and student well-being. The results show that a positive school climate is significantly associated with improved student well-being, including increased feelings of safety, belonging, and motivation. Effective strategies for promoting positive school climate include social-emotional learning programs, teacher-student relationship building, and bullying prevention initiatives. By fostering a positive school climate, schools can play a critical role in promoting student well-being and supporting their academic success and lifelong development.

Keywords: Well-being, Positive school climate

6 Introduction

In recent years, the importance of student well-being has gained significant attention in educational research and policy. Well-being encompasses various dimensions, including emotional, social, and psychological health. A positive school climate, characterized by a supportive and nurturing environment, is essential for promoting this well-being. School climate plays a key role in the development of students and strongly influences their further educational and career paths. Classical psychological theories and concepts in the cognitive domain emphasise the need to meet basic deficits, including safety and a sense of belonging, before higher cognitive processes, such as learning, can be effectively initiated (Eysenck and Groome, 2015). A safe, inclusive and inspiring school climate meets these basic needs and enables students to focus on their learning and their educational, professional and personal development (Wulan and Sanjaya, 2022).

The school environment, which encompasses the physical, mental and social aspects of school functioning, plays a key role in supporting students' learning and development (Higgins et al., 2005; Thapa et al., 2013; Martinsone et al., 2023). A positive and nurturing school climate and a supportive and stimulating learning environment are key factors that contribute to creating a positive school climate for students (Syahril and Hadiyanto, 2018). School climate influences the success of the learning process, that is, academic achievement, the development of extracurricular interests, and the attitudes and behaviours of the students themselves. Creating and maintaining a stimulating learning environment, e.g. through group and individual support, setting developmental goals or being open to creativity and innovation, is essential for better learning (Higgins et al., 2005; Afzal et al., 2023). In addition to their educational and

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developmental value, these factors contribute to an optimal educational climate that promotes personal safety and reduces violence and risky behavior (Thapa et al., 2013).

"The Importance of School Climate in Promoting Student Well-Being" by Cohen and Sandy (2018) highlights the crucial role of school climate in fostering positive student well-being. A positive school climate, characterized by safety, belonging, and relational trust, significantly impacts student outcomes, including academic achievement, engagement, and mental health. Conversely, a negative school climate can negatively affect these aspects, potentially leading to decreased engagement, academic struggles, and mental health challenges. This article aims to examine the relationship between school climate and student well-being, highlighting effective strategies for creating a positive atmosphere in educational settings.

Here, the writer would like to present a theoretical and conceptual framework that places school climate at the centre of the factors influencing student development in the context of the challenges of the future labour market. Climate (sometimes referred to in the literature as "school atmosphere") has been identified as one of the key factors in determining students' subsequent attitudes and behaviours in the context of their future careers. Our research shows, it is this aspect that varies most between schools within the same education system.

7 Research Methods

This study aims to investigate the impact of positive school climate on student well-being and identify strategies to promote a supportive and inclusive school environment. The objective of this article is to present school climate as a pivotal factor influencing the comprehensive development of students and to emphasise the role of climate in the context of their prospective professional career. The article seeks to situate the empirical findings within a broader theoretical context, integrating psychological, sociological and educational perspectives in order to gain a deeper understanding of the ways in which various aspects of school climate can influence the process of student development. Furthermore, the article aims to demonstrate the practical implications of school climate for educational strategies and policies, suggesting potential improvements for enhancing the effectiveness of the education system.

The objective of the research is to empirically identify the relationship between school climate and the development of the skills and competencies required by students for future professional work. The research project is concerned with the analysis of the influence of selected pedagogical factors, such as teacher support and classroom atmosphere, on the development of students' attitudes and career aspirations. Furthermore, the research aims to identify differences in perceptions of school climate between students attending different types of schools, thus providing a more profound understanding of the impact of school structure and organisation on students' experiences.

8 Result and Discussion

1. Understanding School Climate

Definition and Components

The term "school climate" encompasses not only the tangible elements of school climate, such as teaching, activities, staff policies or practices, but also the intangible, emotional and psychological aspects of the educational environment (Cohen et al., 2009; Thapa et al., 2013). It reflects the subtle but multifaceted impact of the educational environment on students' behaviour, engagement and overall wellbeing. In this way, the educational environment stimulates students and influences their development more than the educational process. School climate refers to

the quality and character of school life, encompassing the attitudes, behaviors, and relationships within the school community. Key components of a positive school climate include:

1. **Safety:** Physical and emotional safety are paramount. Students should feel secure in their environment, free from bullying and harassment.
2. **Relationships:** Positive relationships among students, teachers, and staff foster a sense of belonging and community.
3. **Engagement:** Active participation in school activities and a sense of ownership over one's learning contribute to a vibrant school climate.
4. **Inclusivity:** A welcoming environment that respects diversity and promotes equity is essential for all students to thrive.

2. The Impact of School Climate on Student Well-Being

Research indicates a strong correlation between school climate and student well-being. A positive school climate can lead to:

1. **Improved Academic Performance:** Students in supportive environments are more likely to engage in learning and achieve higher academic outcomes.
2. **Enhanced Mental Health:** A nurturing climate reduces stress and anxiety, promoting better mental health among students.
3. **Lower Rates of Behavioral Issues:** Positive relationships and a sense of belonging can decrease instances of bullying and other negative behaviors.

3. Strategies for Promoting a Positive School Climate

1. **Foster Positive Relationships** Encouraging strong relationships among students and staff is crucial. Schools can implement mentorship programs, peer support groups, and team-building activities to strengthen these connections.
2. **Implement Social-Emotional Learning (SEL)** Integrating SEL into the curriculum helps students develop essential skills such as empathy, self-regulation, and conflict resolution. Programs that focus on emotional intelligence can significantly enhance the school climate.
3. **Create a Safe and Inclusive Environment** Establishing clear policies against bullying and discrimination is vital. Schools should promote diversity through cultural awareness programs and ensure that all students feel valued and respected.
4. **Encourage Student Voice and Participation** Involving students in decision-making processes fosters a sense of ownership and responsibility. Schools can create student councils or forums where students can express their opinions and contribute to school policies.
5. **Provide Support Services** Access to counseling and mental health resources is essential for student well-being. Schools should ensure that students have access to trained professionals who can provide support and guidance.

9 Conclusion

This article indicates that teachers' attitudes and behaviour are responsible for the school climate, which is oriented towards the development of pupils' skills and future careers. Our findings are significant in that we obtained these opinions from students in different types of schools. The survey was designed to balance the opinions of students from each type of school, so that no differentiating characteristics of the schools surveyed affected the final outcome of the survey. Consequently, regardless of the location of the school, the environment in which it operates, or its legal or financial status, the students surveyed clearly indicated that it

was the teachers and their attitudes that were responsible for the pro-development climate of the school. In this respect, the type of school and its environment alone are not relevant factors from the perspective of creating a pro-development climate for students. It is evident that school climate is not the sole or most significant factor influencing future career success.

However, theoretical concepts and research results indicate that school climate plays a pivotal role in students' development, particularly in relation to future professional work (Wang and Degol, 2016; Frey and Osborne, 2017). Furthermore, the school climate can stimulate or inhibit this development and thus negatively influence students' attitudes and behaviour now and in the future (Syahril and Hadiyanto, 2018; Wulan and Sanjaya, 2022). The findings of the study indicate that there is a symbiotic relationship between diverse pedagogical practices and the creation of an inspiring school climate. Pupils' perceptions of being encouraged to participate, of teachers' empathic understanding and of receiving positive feedback are significantly correlated with an educational environment that fosters development.

In addition, preparation for future work and teachers' focus on providing work-related skills are strongly associated with students' sense of motivation to develop career aspirations. Promoting student well-being through a positive school climate is not only beneficial for individual students but also enhances the overall educational experience. By prioritizing safety, relationships, engagement, and inclusivity, schools can create an environment where all students can thrive. Implementing the strategies outlined in this paper can lead to significant improvements in student well-being, academic performance, and school culture. As educators and administrators work together to foster a positive school climate, they will contribute to the development of resilient, engaged, and successful students.

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