

## Students' well-being development in the classroom: a mixed-method study

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### ABSTRACT

Students' well-being is a fundamental goal in education. The school has a strategic role in developing students' well-being. This study elaborates on teachers' classroom activities to develop students' well-being. The research employed a mixed-method sequential explanatory approach. There were 1,100 students from 11 junior high schools in East Java Province, Indonesia, provided quantitative data. Four teachers provided qualitative data. Descriptive and regression analysis techniques were used for analyzing quantitative data, while thematic analysis was used for analyzing qualitative data. The results show that the hypothesis is accepted. It means that classroom climate affects students' well-being. The findings also showed four teacher strategies for developing students' well-being, namely: creating harmonious relationships with students, developing student potential, helping students with difficulties, and creating rules to make students comfortable being in school. The ability of teachers to manage learning in the classroom affects the high level of students' well-being. The results have implications for the development of students' well-being through positive teachers teaching.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

As educational institutions, schools are strategic agents in developing potential students, but nevertheless, schools have also contributed to psychological pressure on students. For example, assigned homework has been a factor that burdens students [1], [2]. Furthermore, teacher challenges in implementing learning methods have decreased student motivation [3], [4]. Lastly, ongoing bullying in school has made students reluctant to attend class [5], [6]. These three conditions indicate that students' psychological problems are influenced by classroom practice. In other words, schools have a strategic role in developing students' well-being.

Studies on the role of schools in developing psychological well-being can be grouped into two categories. First, studies focus on the learning process in the classroom in developing well-being [7], [8]. Second, studies focus on creating a harmonious environment and social interaction among school members, both interactions between teachers and students [9], [10], and between students and students [11], [12]. Both approaches emphasize the importance of school climate in developing student well-being. The paper elaborates a study that emphasizes the first study approach by examining the effect of school climate, especially classroom practice on students' well-being with an explanatory sequential models approach.

School climate can be divided into two categories: classroom practice and school atmosphere. Classroom practice refers to the interactions and practices within the classroom, including teacher-student relationships, instructional practices, and classroom management [13]. Positive classroom practices is creating a supportive and inclusive learning environment, engaging in effective instructional practices, and providing emotional support, have been linked to improved student well-being and academic outcomes [14]. School atmosphere refers to the overall feel and culture of the school, including the relationships between staff and students, school policies, and the physical environment [15]. A positive school atmosphere with a sense of safety, inclusivity, and belonging has been associated with higher student engagement and academic achievement [16]. Both classroom practice and school atmosphere are important aspects of the school climate that contribute to student well-being and academic success. In conclusion, schools should prioritize creating a positive and supportive school climate by promoting positive classroom practices and fostering a constructive school atmosphere.

Classroom practice is the implementation of educational, research, and engineering theories in the classroom to improve learning and student engagement. The six key elements of classroom practice include rules, student engagement, teacher support, encouragement, classroom management, and positive teaching [13]. The theory of classroom climate is based on the belief that the classroom is not only a place to teach and learn but also a place for students to explore, create, and develop. This theory suggests that teachers should use an inquiry-based approach to teaching, encourage students to ask questions, engage in meaningful dialogue, and explore their ideas [17]. In addition, teachers should create a safe and supportive learning environment, encourage collaboration among others, and strive to differentiate instruction to meet the needs of all students.

Positive classroom practices, such as effective classroom management, promoting student autonomy, and providing emotional support, are associated with increased student engagement and academic achievement. The research found that positive classroom practices have been shown to promote student well-being by fostering a supportive learning environment [18], [19]. Positive teacher-student relationships, a critical component of positive teaching, are linked to students' improved social and emotional well-being [9]. Positive teaching practices can also help students develop important social-emotional skills, such as self-regulation and problem-solving, that contribute to their overall well-being. A study found that a positive school climate, which includes positive teaching practices, can promote student well-being by reducing bullying, improving academic engagement, and increasing feelings of safety and connectedness [20], [21]. In conclusion, positive teaching practices are vital in promoting student well-being by fostering a supportive and inclusive learning environment, building positive teacher-student relationships, and promoting the development of essential social-emotional skills. Teachers should prioritize positive teaching practices in their instructional approaches to create a positive and enriching learning experience for their students.

The study aims to elaborate on the activities of teachers and students in developing the well-being of students in the classroom. In line with this goal, study objectives are formulated as: first, describe students' perceptions of classroom climate and their well-being level. Second, the study examines the effect of classroom practice on students' well-being. Finally, propose strategies for developing students' well-being by creating a conducive classroom climate. These three objectives are expected to make academic contributions to the role of schools in developing students' well-being.

The article builds on the assumption that the school environment has a strategic role in developing students' well-being. In line with that, the hypothesis was proposed that the classroom climate affects the students' well-being. The more conducive the learning practice in the classroom, the higher the students' psychological well-being level. The results of testing the hypothesis are further elaborated in depth by analyzing qualitative data obtained from teachers.

## **2. RESEARCH METHOD**

### **2.1. Research design**

The two-stage study used a mixed-method sequential explanatory approach. It was based on the consideration that the purpose of this study was to test the effect of classroom climate on students' well-being. In the first stage, quantitative data on classroom climate and well-being were obtained from students through psychological scales. For this stage, theoretical testing was performed on the effect of classroom climate on well-being. In the second stage, qualitative data were obtained from teachers through interviews to determine what they think about the strategy for developing well-being in schools. The results obtained in the second stage explain the results in the first stage.

### **2.2. Research subjects**

Research data was obtained from students and teachers. Quantitative data were acquired from 1,110 students from 11 junior high schools in East Java Province, Indonesia. The selection of subjects was performed randomly. Students were asked to provide a statement of willingness to be a subject. Qualitative data were

obtained from four teachers from four schools. The selection of informants was performed purposively. Qualitative data focused on the teachers' activities in developing student well-being in the classroom.

### 2.3. Data collections

Data collection methods were conducted through scales and interviews. The multidimensional school climate questionnaire and the student subjective well-being questionnaire were used in research data collection. The multidimensional school climate questionnaire (classroom practice dimension) consists of 27 items that reveal six indicators: positive teaching, teacher support, encouragement, rules, student engagement, and classroom management. This scale has been validated and has a satisfactory level of reliability [13], [22]. The student subjective well-being questionnaire consists of 16 items that can uncover four indicators: joy in learning, school connectedness, academic purposes, and academic efficacy [23], [24]. The choice of these two scales was made because they can be used on student participants and have proven to be reliable. The interviews were performed. Four teachers were interviewed to discuss the promotion of student well-being in schools.

### 2.4. Data analysis

Quantitative data from the scale were analyzed using descriptive and regression analysis techniques, while the qualitative data obtained through interviews were analyzed thematically. Analysis tested theoretical models using regression analysis to examine how classroom practices affect student well-being. Testing was carried out contemporaneously and partially. Thematic analysis was used to classify the subjects. Answers according to the themes arising from the statements of the informant provided. Table 1 explains that this study involved teachers and students as research subjects. Data on students was obtained through a questionnaire. The results were analyzed through descriptive analysis and regression analysis. Data on the teachers were obtained through interviews. The results were analyzed through thematic analysis.

Table 1. Summary of research methods

No	Subject	Data collections	Data analysis
1	Student	Multidimensional school climate questionnaire Student subjective well-being questionnaire	Descriptive and regression analysis
2	Teacher	Interviews	Thematic analysis

## 3. RESULTS

### 3.1. The result of descriptive analysis

The data in this section describes the two variables tested based on the demographic conditions of the subject. The demographics, include gender, grade, and age as shown in Table 2. The table explains that the highest mean in the well-being variable is female, first-class, and 12-year-old subjects, while in the classroom practice, the highest variables mean is female, second-grade, and 13-year-old subjects. Nevertheless, mean scores based on demographics do not vary significantly. Furthermore, the results of descriptive analysis on both variables are presented in Table 3.

Table 2. Demographic subject (N=1,110)

Demographic	N	%	Well-being		Classroom practice		
			Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
Gender	Male	555	50	60.27	8.41	100.78	12.33
	Female	555	50	60.69	8.39	103.91	12.13
Grade	The first grade	309	27.8	62.10	8.33	104.92	10.97
	Second grade	345	31.1	60.46	8.13	102.00	12.72
	Third grade	456	41.1	59.40	8.49	99.80	12.01
Age	12 years old	189	17	61.89	7.93	104.55	10.62
	13 years old	273	24.6	61.06	8.55	103.61	12.06
	14 years old	399	35.9	60.00	8.39	100.20	12.71
	15 years old	249	22.4	59.55	8.47	100.80	11.79

### 3.2. The result of the regression analysis

The results of simultaneous regression analysis showed the value of  $R=0.286$   $p<.001$ . These results mean that classroom activity significantly affects student well-being. Furthermore, the results of a partial regression analysis of six types of class activities showed that four types of class activities affected student well-being. The four types of classroom practice are positive learning, student support, encouragement, and rules. Additional data are shown in Table 4. The table shows positive teaching is the most dominant factor

influencing student well-being. Three other influential factors are rules, encouragement, and teacher support. The remaining factors whose influence is not significant are student involvement and classroom management.

Table 3. The result of descriptive analysis (N=1,110)

Variables	Mean	SD	Minimum	Maximum
Classroom practice	101.91	12.13	55	157
1. Positive teaching	20.36	3.03	5	25
2. Teacher support	14.34	2.91	4	20
3. Encouragement	12.11	2.04	5	15
4. Rules	27.98	4.02	7	35
5. Student involvement	14.19	3.27	4	20
6. Class management	12.91	3.71	4	20
Well-being	60.71	6.93	32	78
1. Joy of learning	15.25	2.57	4	18
2. School connectedness	15.59	2.53	7	20
3. Educational purposes	14.81	2.73	4	20
4. Academic efficacy	15.08	2.37	4	20

Table 4. Classroom practice on well-being

Variables	Unstandardized coefficient		Standardized coefficient
	$\beta$	Std. Error	$\beta$
Positive teaching	.334	.092	.146**
Rule	.139	.059	.081*
Encouragement	.273	.125	.080*
Teacher support	.179	.084	.075*
Student involvement	-.052	.083	-.022 <sup>ns</sup>
Class management	-.072	.056	-.038 <sup>ns</sup>

Level of significance \*\*=.001, \*=.005, <sup>ns</sup>=no significant

### 3.3. Development of students' well-being

This section describes the outline data on the results of interviews with four teachers related to the development of students' well-being in the classroom. The full data is shown in Table 5. The table explains that the teacher's four strategies for developing student well-being in school are creating harmonious relationships with students, developing student potential, helping students' difficulties, and creating rules that allow students to feel comfortable being in school. These four strategies explain the results of a regression analysis of the influence of classroom climate on students' well-being.

Table 5. Development of students' well-being according to teachers

Subject	Statements	Coding
Teacher 1	As a teacher, I used to build an atmosphere of familiarity with students so that they have an openness, honesty, friendly, responsible, and polite attitude and feel comfortable when studying in class.	Creating harmonious
Teacher 2	I pay attention to students' interests and try to help develop their interests and potential. I encourage something that catches students' attention both in and outside the classroom.	Developing students' potential
Teacher 3	I apply discipline to students in performing their duties and responsibilities, but I also help students if they encounter difficulties regarding learning or daily activities. I also apologize to students if they make a mistake. I also gave an example of how to maintain public facilities in schools.	Helping students
Teacher 4	I reward students for their achievements. I also give punishments of an educational nature as a consequence when students violate school rules.	Enforcing school rules

## 4. DISCUSSION

The results of this study demonstrate the hypothesis that classroom practice affects student well-being is accepted. Positive teaching is the most dominant factor influencing student well-being. In addition, the factors of assistance, support, and regulations made by teachers are other factors that affect student well-being, while factors of class management and student involvement do not affect the well-being of students. This study also found four teacher strategies in developing students' well-being: teacher skills in creating familiarity with students, helping students with difficulties, and supporting the development of student potential. In other words, the results of this study show that the role of teachers in creating positive learning in the classroom becomes very strategic in students' psychological well-being

Positive teaching is an educational approach that focuses on building positive relationships, fostering positive emotions, and creating positive learning environments [6], [25]. There are three reasons why positive teaching can be a predictor for the development of student well-being. First, it helps create a safe, supportive learning environment where students can feel comfortable taking risks, asking questions, and exploring their

creativity. Second, it encourages students to express themselves without fear of judgment or criticism, allowing them to build self-confidence and resilience. Lastly, positive teaching helps develop a sense of community in the classroom, allowing students to build meaningful relationships with their peers and teachers. This improves student engagement, motivation, and academic performance [26], [27]. These reasons show the importance of using classroom-positive teaching in developing students' well-being.

The research findings stating that positive learning can be a strategy for developing students' psychological well-being in the classroom align with several previous studies. Experimental research on the use of daily learning using a positive approach has been able to develop students' psychological well-being [8], [26]. Other research shows that using a positive learning approach improves students' abilities cognitively and affectively [9], [28]. In this study, evidence of positive learning being able to develop students' psychological well-being was elaborated with the finding of four teacher strategies in carrying out positive learning.

The results of this study reflect that the teacher's inability to teach will lead to a high level of psychological pressure for students. Classroom learning, which should be a means of developing various potential students, creates various psychological problems for students. Students do not want to attend school because they fear the teacher [3], [29]. Students experience anxiety because they have not done the assignments the teacher gave [2], [30]. Students are not motivated to learn because of the monotonous learning methods of teachers [4], [31]. These cases entrust the importance of developing teachers' insights, attitudes, and skills in performing learning in the classroom.

The results have implications for the importance of developing teachers' abilities in managing the learning process in the classroom. There are two types of teacher skills in performing classroom learning. First, the teacher's skills to convey the subject matter (instructional effect); for example, the teacher's skills in teaching mathematics and English [32], [33]. Second, the teacher's skills to design learning to develop various student potentials (nurturant effect). Student well-being is an aspect that teachers must develop through the learning process in the classroom [34], [35]. The results of this study are an elaboration of learning that emphasizes the importance of the role of the teacher in the classroom. In other words, the results have implications for the development of students' well-being through the use of positive teaching by the teachers.

## 5. CONCLUSION

The ability of teachers to manage learning in the classroom affects the high level of students' well-being. Four teacher strategies in implementing positive teaching can be an alternative to developing student welfare. The four strategies are the teacher's ability to create an intimate atmosphere with students, the teacher's ability to help students difficulties, making rules that make students feel comfortable in class, and the teachers skills to support the development of student potential. Studies on the model of developing students' well-being have been performed by many experts, including a development model that focuses on the role of schools in general and a development model that focuses on the role of teachers in classroom learning practices. However, the results provide academic contributions in the form of finding empirical evidence about the urgency of positive learning in developing students' well-being. This study also identified four teaching strategies to enhance the learning process. Thus, the results of this study make an academic contribution to educational psychology, especially the model of developing the students' psychological well-being in the classroom.

This study was conducted on junior and senior high school students using a sequential explanatory mix-method approach. Theoretical testing of the influence of classroom practice on the well-being of students was performed through data obtained from students. In contrast, qualitative data on learning strategies were obtained through data from teachers. Students views in the form of qualitative data on learning strategies that are considered capable of developing students' well-being are not analyzed. Thus, further research should involve students views on the classroom learning process which has the potential to develop their well-being.

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