



Chapter 4

The Wellbeing Van: A Strength-Based Model for Student Engagement and Promoting Student Wellbeing


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ABSTRACT

This book chapter takes a proactive approach to address stress by introducing a preventive measure, a relatively new approach implemented on college students in Bangalore, India called the “wellbeing van.” The chapter emphasizes the importance of not only managing and coping with stress, but also implementing strategies that promote overall well-being by tapping into the intrinsic factors of the student. The well-being van has shown promising results in reducing stress levels among students in academic institutions. Additionally, the chapter delves into the difficulties students face in maintaining social relationships, conforming to societal expectations, and finding their place. It provides valuable insights on how to foster healthy social dynamics and create supportive environments for students.

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INTRODUCTION

Intrinsic factors play a crucial role in shaping student wellbeing, particularly in relation to stress. Factors such as coping strategies, self-efficacy, mindset, emotional intelligence, self-care practices, and perceived control significantly influence how students experience and manage stress. Effective coping strategies, a strong sense of self-efficacy, and a growth mindset contribute to students' ability to navigate stressors and maintain a positive outlook. Emotional intelligence empowers students to recognize and regulate their emotions, fostering resilience and adaptive responses to stress. Engaging in self-care practices provides students with the tools to nurture their physical and mental wellbeing, mitigating the negative impact of stress. Lastly, a sense of control over their academic tasks and responsibilities empowers students to approach stress with confidence and actively seek solutions. Recognizing and nurturing these intrinsic factors is vital for promoting student wellbeing and equipping them with the skills to effectively manage stress.

This book chapter takes a proactive approach to addressing stress by introducing a preventive measure, a relatively new approach implemented on college students in Bangalore, India called the "Wellbeing van." Drawing inspiration from the PERMA model developed by Martin Seligman, the chapter emphasizes the importance of not only managing and coping with stress but also implementing strategies that promote overall wellbeing by tapping into the intrinsic factors of the student. The wellbeing van has shown promising results in reducing stress levels among students in academic institutions. Additionally, the chapter delves into the difficulty's students face in maintaining social relationships, conforming to societal expectations, and finding their place. It provides valuable insights on how to foster healthy social dynamics and create supportive environments for students.

The positive schooling approach aims to integrate student wellbeing, virtues, and academic achievement in the learning process. With the growing importance of holistic learning experiences for students, it becomes essential for researchers and educators to explore the positive schooling approach. The current chapter identifies the key concepts that foster wellbeing and flourishing among students that paves way for students to enhance their intrinsic factors. A deeper understanding of these concepts and their relevance is obtained by examining the existing theories and literature in the field of positive schooling. The ecological systems theory by Bronfenbrenner (1977) highlights the importance of various stakeholders in this holistic learning process. The chapter provides insights into a strength-based model focusing on using character strengths as a tool to promote wellbeing and flourishing among students. The model delineates the process that enables students to shift from the state of languishing to flourishing. The model named Wellbeing Van discusses the role of students in actively promoting wellbeing and flourishing within their peer groups. The model used strategies like social media, small group discussion and campus-wide activities to help students learn, live, and embed wellbeing. The Wellbeing Van is set in the strength-based model and enables readers to explore the feasibility of such programs before implementing them in their institutions. Practical solutions for educational institutions are suggested based on this model.

Student engagement and well-being in schools and colleges have been a topic of concern for educators and adults working with young people (Boulton et al., 2019; Zepke, 2014). Effectively engaging students in academic and socioemotional learning ensure better learning outcomes and learners for a meaningful life (Wang and Hofkens, 2020; Weissberg and Cascarino, 2013). Engagement experiences within a learning environment including classroom experiences, teacher-student interaction, school climate, and peer interaction help young people to grow and flourish (Zepke and Leach, 2010). Engaging young people is not an easy task. It requires a sound understanding of the developmental needs

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