

Chapter 6

External Factors Affecting the Well-Being of Students in Higher Education Institutions

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ABSTRACT

Studies have revealed that several factors affect the well-being of students in higher education institutions. The current chapter investigates some of the factors which include sexual harassment, student unrest, role of the family, and institutional environment. The main purpose of this chapter is to explore how the factors affect the well being of learners in higher education institutions. The chapter presents introduction of the study, its background, as well as the external factors affecting well being of students in higher education institutions together with future direction and the conclusion of the study.

INTRODUCTION

Advancing learner well being has become an important Educational agenda globally as a result of its broad benefits (Joing et al., 2020). Consequently, studies show that several learners in Higher Education encounter well being issues like depression and anxiety, psychological and emotional distress and heightened burnout (Baik et al., 2019). Universities are widely acknowledged as institutions where health and well-being can be nurtured to boost academic output, career transitions and enduring desirable health behaviours (Sanci et al. 2022). These Institutions are conscious of the need to assist and advance the health and well-being of learners to enhance opportunities for educational success and readiness to progress to the workforce (Duffy et al., 2019). The current study therefore intends to investigate the external factors affecting well-being of students in Higher Education Institutions by giving the background of the study in the next section.

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BACKGROUND

There is need to acknowledge the physical, societal, emotive and intellectual condition of learners in institutions, since this contributes to their well-being (Anderson & Graham, 2016). Scientists have endeavoured to portray the intricacy of the humanistic and philosophical nature of well being (Hascher & Waber, 2021). Well being is regarded as a condition of having constructive feelings and acquiring the ability realize one's full potential (Simons & Baldwins, 2021). In a study done by Anderson and Graham (2016), well-being was used to refer to mental, physical and social dimensions that need to be balanced, and that learners conceive their well-being as being loved, respected, happy, safe and healthy. Some scholars indicate that there is no common definition of well-being because the context and connotation depends on each individual, community and culture (Agrawal & Sharma, 2021). There are others who believe that there is a common consensus regarding the significance of student well-being despite the fact that a comprehensible definition of 'well- being' has not yet been realized (Douwes, 2023). Universities across the globe are facing a predicament of well-being (Riva et al., 2020). On the whole, school life remains paramount because through it, the learners interact and produce a cultural fusion that originates from the family, territorial, national and institutional influences (Wang et al., 2018). Therefore, there is need to scrutinize external factors which affect well being of students in Higher Education Institutions. The next section gives a general overview regarding external factors affecting well-being of students in Higher Education Institutions.

EXTERNAL FACTORS AFFECTING WELL-BEING OF STUDENTS IN HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

Although University Education is important and lucrative, learners face several challenges and obstacles as they pursue their education (Luescher et al., 2017). Since learners require a positive learning experience (Durisic & Bunijevac, 2017), universities need to support their well-being in order to realize their fundamental aim of offering high quality academic experiences and successful graduation outcomes (Baik et al., 2019). Higher education plays a very important role in enabling the youth to engage in social reconstruction and economic development (Bijaraniya, 2022). Therefore, learners' well-being becomes a critical factor, as well as connection to a myriad of desirable outcomes related to academia and health (Amholt et al., 2020). The well-being of learners has consistently been associated with satisfaction or experiences within Higher Education (Wornast, 2018). Children visualize well-being as favourable experiences in their life (Vujcic et al., 2019). The next section explores four external factors which affect the well being of student in Higher Education Institutions, namely sexual harassment, student unrest, role of the family and institutional environment.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Sexual harassment refers to a collection of behaviours and practices which are sexual in nature like sexual jokes, undesirable sexual advances or utterances, showing pictures or posters representing women, sexual assault or physical contact (Vuckovic et al., 2017). The act is also perceived as behavior in the form of undesirable comments or physical approach in the public space (Suprihatin & Azis, 2020). Sexual ha-

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