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## **PARENTS' PERSPECTIVE ABOUT STUDENTS' SCHOOL WELL-BEING**

**Nurul Hidayah**

*Universitas Ahmad Dahlan  
nurul.hidayah@psy.uad.ac.id*

### **Abstract**

Students' school well-being needs to be improved because it affects mental health and the learning output. The role of school residents in supporting the students' school well-being is very important, including the support of parents. This study aims to find out the understanding of parents about their children's school well-being in order to provide appropriate treatment in increasing their children's school well-being. The research was an applied research involving 71 parents of students from 2 private junior high schools in Sleman district of Yogyakarta. Data collection using focused group discussion (FGD) and FGD guidelines as research instrument. Data were analyzed using content analysis. The result of the research indicated that based on the parents' perspective, their childrens feel that they are not well-being psychologically in school, it can be seen from the psychological barriers in interacting with teachers, the lack of care and involvement to the social environment outside the learning process, the lack of acceptance and sense of belonging to the school, and the lack of students involvement in school policies decision making. In supporting the improvement of students' school well-being, parents have not understood the important aspects of school well-being. They also have not found the best way to treat their children's problem, and they have no sensitivity to the student's stress experiences.

**Keywords:** parent, school well-being, student

### **INTRODUCTION**

School well-being is important because schools have a great influence on adolescent development. Students spend most of their time, in five or six days each week at school. School well-being has a positive effect on learning process and learning outcome. Students who are satisfied in school will develop positive attitudes toward the learning process and learning achievement. School well-being also allows students to develop coping strategies against environmental bad influences (Jarvela, 2011).

There is a decrease in school satisfaction with age. This phenomenon is influenced by students' perceptions of their academic ability. Research shows that students' perceptions about academic competence decline as they progress in school (Eccles, Wigfield, & Schiefele, in Broussard, 2002). Schunk & Pajares (Broussard, 2002) describes this decline through a variety of factors, including greater levels of competition, decreasing of teacher attention to individual student development, and stress associated with school transitions. These findings suggest that it is very important to manage school well-being in adolescents.

Research on well-being in schools, shows that students with high well-being will show increased academic achievement and decreased behavioral problems, such as ditching, drug use, delinquency, smoking behavior (Suldo & Huebner, 2004) and dropout rates (Stroup and Robbins, in Okkun, et al,

1990). Thus the low tendency of well-being students is reflected from the academic, psychological and social problems encountered in adolescents.

Preliminary research by Hidayah (2013) on factors affecting the satisfaction of junior high school students in Bantul district of Yogyakarta shows that based on the categorization of school satisfaction, 41.56% of the study sample is categorized as having medium school satisfaction and 26.7% are categorized as having low satisfaction. Further research in 2014 shows that as many as 35% of students have low categorized school satisfaction (Hidayah, 2014).

Assessment of students' needs on well-being can be obtained comprehensively from students, teachers, and parents. Information from parents is necessary to help identification of students' well-being issues from a parent's perspective to improve school well-being. This research is focused on parent's perspective on student well-being.

Schools that are able to develop students well-being are termed well-being schools. Duckett, Kagan, and Sixsmith (2010) review that the concept of a well-being school begins with the idea that if schoolchildren feel happy and comfortable in school, they will actualize their potential. A well-being school is a school that makes health and social behavior as factors supporting the effective learning process that is capable of promoting long-term health outcomes (UK Department of Health, in Duckett et al., 2010). In general, well-being schools are described as

schools in which there is mutual respect among school members, schools that minimize conflict to achieve balanced conditions, uphold justice, and attach great importance to hard work for social and personal outcomes (Duckett, et al., 2010).

Well-being School Program is developed from the school well-being model as follows:

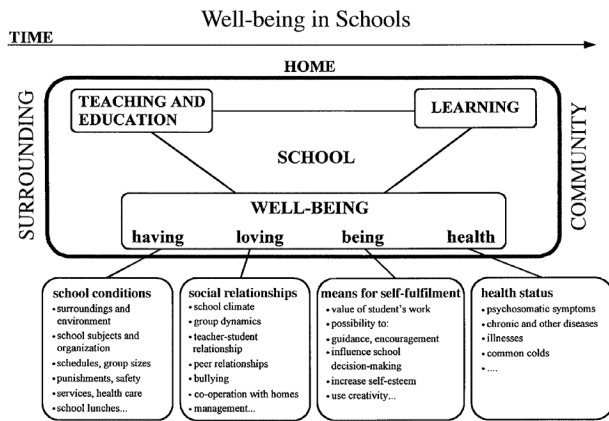


Figure 1. School Well-being Model (Konu and Rimpela, 2002).

The School Well-Being Model is based on Allardt’s well-being school model (Konu and Rimpela, 2002). The School Well-being Model provides indicators of well-being school with the fulfillment of basic needs of students include four dimensions: school condition (having), social relationship (loving), mean selffullfiment (being), and health status. Mean self-fullfiment includes the possibility of students to learn according to their capacity and resources. Health status views students from signs and symptoms of diseases and illness (Konu & Rimpela, 2002).

The well-being condition according to this model is the achievement of the indicators shown from the following table:

Table 1. Well-being Indicators

No	Well-being Condition	Objective Indicators	Subjective Indicators
1	Having (ful-fill-ment of physical needs)	Objective mea-surement of the living standard and adequate physical environment conditions	Satisfied versus dissatisfaction, feeling of satis-faction versus subjective dissatisfaction with life
2	Loving (so-cial needs)	Objective mea-sure-ment of interperso-nal/ social relations	Happy versus unhappy, sub-jective feelings about social relations

No	Well-being Condition	Objective Indicators	Subjective Indicators
3	Being (the need for personal growth)	Measurement of relation with society and nature	A subjective feeling about personal growth versus alienation

(Allardt, in Konu and Rimpela, 2002)

Social relationships (loving) include the social environment in learning, the relationships between teachers and students, relationships between school friends, school relationships with home (parents), school policy, and school organizational atmosphere. Good relationships and a conducive school atmosphere will increase a person’s capacity in his or her social environment and will improve school well-being.

School self-fulfillment (being) is a sense of togetherness as a member of the school community who has an active role and participation in school life. School community involvement in school policy making, and the attention of schools toward students to achieve learning objectives is key to creating a healthy, well-being condition in schools. Health status (health status) is a disease or illness conditions in the school community. Healthy conditions both physical and mental are important tools to achieve a healthy and well-being school condition.

The school climate theory with an ecological perspective explains that in developing a school climate it is necessary to consider the contextual effects of school ecology, such as the involvement of all school residents as well as supportive leadership (Gregory, Henry, and Schoeny, 2007). In the context of well-being in schools, school climate factors represent a number of factors above, for example the relationship factor among school members, including parent-child and parent-teacher.

According to Marshall (2004) parental involvement is necessary in support of a good school climate. Cooperation between students, families, and educators in contributing and developing school vision achievement is important (National School Climate, <http://www.schoolclimate.org>). This study aims to find out the understanding of parents about their children’s school well - being in order to provide appropriate treatment in their growing childrens’ school well-being.

**RESEARCH METHOD**

This study is an evaluative research with qualitative approach. One of the objectives of evaluative research is to contribute in understanding

the psychological process, so that evaluative research in this study aims to understand the psychological process of students' well-being in school.

The study sites are two private junior secondary schools in Sleman District (hereinafter referred to as Site 1 and Site 2). Data collection using focus group discussion (FGD) method. The instrument used for conducting FGDs are FGD guide. The FGD guide are organized based on the School Well-being Model (Konu and Rimpela, 2002). All questions to the FGD participants are unstructured and open-ended questions, allowing participants to answer from various dimensions of questions using the questions: 'what', 'who', 'where', 'when', 'how', and 'why'. Instrument validation is done through expert judgement, involving two educational psychologists.

This research involved FGD facilitators and observers. FGDs are held in classrooms, mosques, and libraries. With a circular formation, there are groups who sit in the floor and some are wearing a desk chair. FGD implementation took place smoothly approximately takes 1.5 hours per session. Further FGD results are tabulated and content analysis is performed.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

### **Research Findings in Site 1**

Based on the parent's perspective on school well-being students, in the dimension of having, school well-being has been achieved on aspects of comfortable and roomy physical environment, religious-social environment, and appropriate class size; while in the aspects of class/school cleanliness has not reached well-being status, in the aspects of learning facilities (condition benches and tables) are less well maintained, less rest time, and insufficient UKS (school health service).

In the loving dimension, school well-being has been achieved in the aspects of school policy and school organizational atmosphere, whereas in the safety aspects from bullying and violence have not reached the conditions of prosperity. In the dimension of being, school well-being has been achieved in aspects of student involvement in the organization, opportunities for students to improve their knowledge through extracurricular activities, competitions, and student exchanges; parental participation in decision-making; and emphasis on special abilities. In the dimension of health status, the health condition of school citizens is generally well; there are only a few students who exhibit psychosomatic symptoms or who have a history of asthma/allergy.

Aspects of school well-being that have been found but still need to be improved are aspects of

school conditions sepecially on security, freedom from noise, ventilation and lighting in the classroom, wide space, preparation of lesson schedules that need to pay attention to student conditions, implementation of sanctions, canteen optimization, guidance and counseling teachers, the quality of teacher-student relationships, including discriminative treatment from teacher, lack of teachers as role models, and cases of bullying or clique among students.

Based on the findings shows that parents have not understood the important aspects of students' well-being, such as lesson schedules and the importance of the role of guidance and counseling teachers. Parents do not yet have a sensitivity to the pressures that students experience (eg students who are victims of bullying their older siblings). There are psychological barriers such as the reluctance of students to deal with administrative staff, lack of students' concerns and student engagement to the social environment outside the learning process, for example about school relationships with external stakeholders. This phenomenon may also be due to lack of socialization from the school.

### **Research Findings in Site 2**

Based on the perspective of parents, in the dimension of having, the well-being of the school has been achieved in the aspects of curriculum development and administration services to the students, while in the aspects of physical facilities have not achieved well-being conditions, such as classroom/building is still inadequate and separate (especially the safety of students' belongings and school inventory items), environmental hygiene (especially toilet hygiene), noise, poorly maintained school inventory, class size is not up to standard, and unavailability of canteens/guarantees lunch.

In the loving dimension, school well-being has been achieved in aspects of intercultural relationships although there are still cases of fights, school-defined policies, and the organization's atmosphere in schools. In the dimension of being, school well-being has been achieved in aspects of student participation in school decision-making; opportunities to improve students' knowledge and creativity through extracurricular activities, student competitions or student exchanges; provision of skills training; and coaching students with problems; while conditions that have not reached well-being status is the existence of bullying/violence and the existence of cliques outside the class that disturb other students. In the health status dimension has reached well-being condition, there are only a small number of students and teachers who show symptoms of somatization.

Aspects of school well-being that have emerged but still need to be improved are the level of student comfort associated with the physical environment, such as some ventilation space and lighting is still inadequate, however there is an increase in physical facilities of the school though gradually. Curriculum preparation is good, but its application for students still feels hard especially in terms of adjustment to curriculum change. The setting of the lesson schedule and the duration of the rest period need to consider the condition of the student. Implementation of regulations/sanctions is still considered unfair by students. The obstacles to the delivery of information from the school to parents also found. The utilization of school health service (UKS) space and the role of guidance and counseling teachers is also not optimal.

Based on the research findings, it appears that students' awareness of school relationships with parents, school relationships with external stakeholders (social institutions, surrounding communities, and health systems) needs to be increased through intensive socialization. Parents' sensitivity to the existence of gangs disturbing students needs to be improved. Student involvement in school organizations needs to be improved not only to the formal extent. Awareness of teachers to be role models students still need to be improved.

## Discussion

This research findings can be compared with the well-being school models of Konu and Rimpela (2002). In the dimension of having, which are the measurements of living standards and adequate physical environment conditions, in line with the findings of this study that facilities and a supportive physical environment are one of the ideal conditions of school which makes students feel satisfied. FGD results show that the dimension of having students feel less comfortable, less satisfied, less secure, feel burden/stress due to school conditions are so far from ideal. This finding is similar with the results of research conducted by Prasetyo (2009) in SMP 24 Malang that the condition of school perceived by most of the students is noise condition (61,9%) and dust (73,3%).

The loving dimension includes the social environment in learning, the relationships between teachers and students, relationships between school friends, school relationships with home (parents), school policy, and school organizational atmosphere. FGD results show that in the dimension of loving students feel less satisfied on aspects of relationship with teachers, find it difficult to adapt to curriculum changes and feel the injustice in the application of school regulations. The existence of stress tendencies

experienced by students may be sourced from student dissatisfaction with teachers and learning process. Murray and Harvey (2010) found a strong relationship between social, emotional, and academic experiences in schools with a quality relationship between students and teachers.

The dimension of being includes the involvement of the school community in making school policies and the attention of the school to the students to achieve the learning objectives. FGD results show that in the dimension of being students feel not yet involved and not optimal. Wang and Holcombe (2010) emphasized the importance of student engagement (school engagement) on student academic achievement. Student involvement includes student participation in school activities, the sensitivity of school identification, and the use of self-regulatory strategies. On the contrary, the involvement of teachers and parents in the policy defined by the perceived school has been optimal.

In the aspect of health status shows that students and teachers feel quite satisfied with his health condition. Prasetyo's research results show findings that perceived health status several times a month is difficulty sleeping (23.9%) and headache (36.8%), for other symptoms such as tiredness and weakness of 42.1%.

Another important finding is the tendency of students to deviate religious norms in the form of masturbation and courtship. Indeed, according to the stage of development of junior high school students in early adolescence, along with the emergence of signs of primary and secondary sex then adolescents begin to develop new thoughts and emerging interest in the opposite sex (Sarwono, 2006). But if the adolescent self-control less feared can lead to promiscuity. Bullying and the existence of clique (gang) are also the cases that make some students feel uncomfortable in school. This finding is in line with the FGD results that there is a tendency of verbal, physical, and sexual violence, either by a friend or teacher. This finding is also similar with the results of a survey conducted by CPMH Faculty of Psychology UGM towards high school and vocational high school students in four major cities in Central Java and East Java that found high rates of cases of violence in schools ([www.cpmh.psikologi.ugm.ac.id/accessible](http://www.cpmh.psikologi.ugm.ac.id/accessible) February 27, 2013).

Overall, based on a parent's perspective, students are not psychologically well-being in school. This finding is in line with the results of a survey conducted by CPMH Faculty of Psychology UGM that 40 percent of students admitted feeling uncomfortable and dissatisfied with the condition of their school social environment ([www.cpmh.psikologi.ugm.ac.id/accessible](http://www.cpmh.psikologi.ugm.ac.id/accessible) February 27, 2013).

## CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

The result of the research is mainly about the misperception of parents about the important aspects of school well-being. They have not found the best way to treat their children's problems, and they have no sensitivity to the student's stress experiences.

The another findings indicate that: (1) there are psychological barriers of students in interacting with teachers/ employees, (2) there are some lacks of awareness and involvement of students on the social environment outside the learning process, (3) there are some lacks of lack of acceptance and sense of belonging among the students, and (4) there is a lack of socialization about school policy towards students.

It is suggested that the school will follow up the assessment of parents so that the well-being of students increases and will have an impact on improving the quality of teaching and learning activities, especially on aspects of school conditions, the quality of teacher-student relationships, student involvement in school policy making, and socialization about school policies to students. It is important to give psychoeducation for parents about the importance of students psychological well-being followed by the formulation of appropriate action plan. Parents support group can be arranged to explore family factors that indirectly affect the psychological well-being of the students.

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