

A Case Study of Students' Wellbeing in a Post-Secondary School in Malta

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Abstract

This case study, conducted at a Maltese post-secondary school, was guided by Bradburn's Subjective Wellbeing (SWB) theory, which suggests that individuals define wellbeing based on personal experiences. According to SWB theory, wellbeing is influenced by positive factors that evoke positive emotions and negative factors that lead to negative emotions. The study aimed to understand students' perceptions of wellbeing, identify positive and negative factors influencing it, and propose recommendations for improvement within the school. Using a qualitative interpretative approach, the researcher conducted 12 semi-structured interviews with a convenience sample of students, analysing data with the Braun-Clark method. Findings were categorised into three themes: personal factors, social factors, and cognitive factors. The most frequently cited negative factors were workloads, deadlines and examination failure, while the most frequently cited positive factor was teacher support. Students recommended reducing workloads and deadlines, organising sports and extracurricular activities, upgrading gym equipment, and promoting counselling services. In a final reflection, the researcher discusses how teachers, as the highest-rated positive factor at school, could help address the most significant negative factors that are workloads and deadlines, by fostering a growth mindset, promoting resilience through positive psychology, and equipping students with effective coping skills.

Keywords: coping; cognitive; resilience; positive psychology; growth mindset