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Editorial

How Does Well-Being in School Matter?

Effects, Influencing Factors, and Promotion

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In the year 2000, the field of positive psychology was created and over the last years, research on well-being in schools has received growing attention. This is in line with an increase in overall research on subjective well-being documented by Diener et al. (2018), who identified over 1,700 publications from 1999 to 2018.

The articles included in this topical issue “How Does Well-Being in School Matter? Effects, Influencing Factors, and Promotion” demonstrate the topicality of well-being research in the school context. For decades, empirical research in school and instruction has been dominated by a cognitive perspective, mainly focusing on student learning and achievement. Along with the studies on the importance of academic success, it became increasingly evident that not only cognitive aspects but also motivation and emotions play a key role in supporting the learning and development of young people. For example, it was found that some forms of motivation, such as intrinsic motivation, are beneficial for learning and that positive emotions such as learning enjoyment can support learning outcomes (e.g., Pinxten et al., 2013). However, it was also shown that positive emotions in school decrease over school trajectories while mental health issues and test anxiety remain prevalent for students or even increase, which calls for a developmental perspective on well-being in school.

It is important to acknowledge that teachers are the most influential in-school factor contributing to student socio-emotional and educational outcomes and that student and teacher well-being might be related (e.g., Singh et al., 2013). Although many teachers report being passionate about their profession, evidence indicates that the teaching profession is consistently associated with stress and burnout as well as increasing attrition rates (e.g., Madigan & Kim, 2021). What is particularly disquieting is that low teacher well-being may aggravate the mental health of their students. Therefore, it seems essential *how* both teachers and students feel in school. Schools are witnessing the problems that students and teachers face as they seem to be inherent in the educational system and triggered by the

educational environment. Thus, how to promote well-being in school seems crucial for research and practice alike and needs to be discussed considering the socio-ecological environment.

The seven articles in this special issue present research from four different countries (Austria, Australia, Germany, and Switzerland) and give a detailed insight into students’ and teachers’ life in school. Both, variable- and person-centered approaches are represented. All articles are based on the idea of well-being as a multi-dimensional construct that consists of positive and negative dimensions. Well-being is not reduced to a single emotion nor the presence of a single factor such as satisfaction or the absence of negative experiences or complaints. Instead, all presented studies contribute to a complex understanding of well-being in school, including positive and negative factors, while covering a wide range of school-related issues.

The first four articles are dedicated to student well-being. In the first article, Julia Holzer, Selma Korlat, Sarah Bürger, Christiane Spiel, and Barbara Schober (2022) apply latent profile analyses to differentiate four well-being profiles in cross-sectional data of Austrian students in secondary education. They find that students who express higher school-related well-being and connectedness also show higher academic achievement and self-esteem scores.

In the second article, Julia Morinaj and Tina Hascher (2022) investigate the interplay of well-being and student achievement. In their longitudinal quantitative study, they followed Swiss students over three years in secondary education and found out that prior achievement predicted the positive dimensions of well-being, such as enjoyment in school, while there was no reciprocal association and no association with negative dimensions of well-being such as worries about school.

In the third article, Stefan Markus, Svenja Rieser, and Susanne Schwab (2022) focus on primary school students’ well-being. This two-wave longitudinal study points to the importance of a gender-specific view in analyzing the associations of primary students’ relationships with teachers

and peers with dimensions of student well-being and discrete emotions such as enjoyment or boredom.

In the fourth article, Rebekka Tavakoli, Ronja Müller, Enya Jeske, Nina Schäfbuch, and Bernhard Schmitz (2022) report an online training program that aimed at enhancing secondary school students' well-being. Based on the art-of-living approach, they confirm the effectiveness of cognitive as well as combined cognitive and body-focused training.

The next three articles address facets and phases of teacher well-being. In the fifth article, Anna Hartl, Doris Holzberger, Julia Hugo, Kristin Wolf, and Mareike Kunter (2022) aim to understand German preservice teachers' demands and resources. This mixed-method study with three measurement points reveals the role of the university environment to be relevant for preservice teachers' well-being.

In the sixth article, Susan Beltman, Tina Hascher, and Caroline Mansfield (2022) present a qualitative study to understand Australian teachers' well-being during the COVID-19 pandemic. They identify the constraints and enablers that teachers experienced and how they used a variety of strategies to maintain or restore their well-being.

In the seventh article, Ludwig Bilz, Saskia M. Fischer, Anne-Cathrin Hoppe-Herfurth, and Nancy John (2022) shed light on the association between German teacher and student well-being and the mediating role of perceived teacher support. German data from the "Health-Behavior in School-aged Children" – Study (HBSC) show the relationship of between teacher emotional exhaustion with student health complaints and teacher psychological well-being and student satisfaction mediated by student perceived teacher support.

Each of the seven articles contributes to a better understanding of the role of well-being in school. They demonstrate the necessity of a deeper look at the construct of well-being and its interrelatedness to cognitive, motivational, and emotional factors. The findings encourage further research on well-being in school, as much more scientific knowledge is necessary to inform theory and practice. We express our deepest gratitude to all the authors for contributing to this special issue and to our anonymous reviewers, who did an amazing job enhancing the quality of the articles.

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