
CONTEMPORARY EDUCATION IN AUSTRALIA: WELLBEING EDUCATION AT BALCOMBE GRAMMAR SCHOOL MOUNT MARTHA VICTORIA

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Abstract:

Australian schools paid a great attention to the students' wellbeing at school. This study aimed to explain wellbeing education in Australia with Balcombe Grammar School as a sample of the study. This research was qualitative research using descriptive method. The primary data had been collected through interview, documentation, and observation at Balcombe Grammar School (BGS) Mount Martha, Victoria in 2017. The data had been analyzed using Miles and Huberman framework. The result showed that wellbeing education in Australia was instructed by the Australian Government, organized by the school, and helped by independent institutions named KidsMatter, MindMatters, and CASEL. Balcombe Grammar School had some programs on wellbeing education, such as the golden time, circle time, faith and wellbeing classes, pastoral care classes, and health classes. These programs were not only conducted as part of BGS curriculum but also integrated into the teaching instruction in all of the subjects and daily life at school.

Abstrak:

Sekolah-sekolah di Australia telah memberikan perhatian yang cukup besar terhadap pendidikan *wellbeing* para siswa. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menjelaskan pendidikan *wellbeing* di Australia dengan mengambil Balcombe Grammar School sebagai sampel penelitian. Penelitian ini merupakan penelitian kualitatif dengan menggunakan metode deskriptif. Pengumpulan data dilaksanakan dengan metode wawancara, dokumentasi, dan observasi di Balcombe Grammar School (BGS) Mount Martha, Victoria pada tahun 2017. Data dianalisis dengan model analisis Miles dan Huberman. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa pendidikan *wellbeing* di Australia diatur oleh Pemerintah Federal Australia, dijalankan oleh masing-masing sekolah, dan dibantu oleh lembaga independen yang bernama KidsMatter, MindMatters, dan CASEL. Balcombe Grammar School memiliki beberapa program dalam mengembangkan pendidikan *wellbeing* di sekolah, misalnya *golden time*, *circle time*, *faith and wellbeing classes*, *pastoral care classes*, dan *health classes*. Program-program tersebut tidak berjalan secara parsial melainkan terintegrasi di kelas dalam pelajaran lain serta dalam kehidupan keseharian selama jam sekolah berlangsung.

Keywords:

Contemporary Education, Australia, Wellbeing, Balcombe Grammar School

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INTRODUCTION

Education is instruction or training by which people (generally young) learn to develop and use their mental, moral, and physical power. In the long term, education is the process of adding knowledge, skills, and value to improve self-quality of life. Self-creativity is needed to be a provision of life for students (Harris-Hart, 2010). Australia is disposed for presenting an educational system that supports, succeeds, and humanizes human beings (Savage, Sellar, & Gorur, 2013; Vass, 2015). In other words, the educational process should be able to make students to build their ways, become real human beings, build character, and assimilate their ideas (Safitri, 2016).

These education purposes are related to positive psychology aims, especially wellbeing. The field of positive psychology at the subjective level is about valued subjective experiences in the past, in the present, and the future. Some aspects in the past are wellbeing, contentment, and satisfaction. In the present, they are flow and happiness, and the future aspects are hope and optimism. At the individual level, it is about positive individual traits: the capacity for love and vocation, courage, interpersonal skill, aesthetic sensibility, perseverance, forgiveness, originality, future mindedness, spirituality, high talent, and wisdom. At the group level, it is about the civic virtues and the institution that move individuals toward better citizenship: responsibility, nurturance, altruism, civility, moderation, tolerance, and work ethic (Seligman, 2010).

For getting the best education, schools in rich countries promote wellbeing at school. Wellbeing is about quality of life. It makes students be able to participate in the decision-making influencing their school life, be educated by getting better learning strategic, be good in a relationship, and solve their problem well (UNICEF, 2013). Wellbeing education is important to achieve a good life and happiness of students' life (Michalos, 2017). The schools should not only train students' intellectuality, but also the students' wellbeing.

In Indonesia, wellbeing education is related to the counseling at school. There was a negative image of counseling among students. Counseling at school has a negative image for students, but together with the intensity of interaction, it has changed positively (Batuadji, Atamimi, & Sanmustari, 2009). Likewise, counseling often stands "independently" does not integrated with school life widely.

In Australia, wellbeing awareness has increased and started to be noticed in education. Although the quality of wellbeing education has not been distributed well (Western & Tomaszewski, 2016), the schools have given great attention to integrating wellbeing with all aspects of school life.

This paper explored wellbeing education in Australia, with Balcombe Grammar School as a sample. The explanation was guided by two questions; (1) How was wellbeing education in Australia? (2) How was wellbeing education at Balcombe Grammar School?

RESEARCH METHOD

This study was qualitative with the descriptive-inferential method. The primary data had been collected by interview, documentation, and observation at Balcombe Grammar School (BGS) Mount Martha, Victoria in 2017. The secondary data came from other books,

journals, and websites related to the topic. The data had been collected by purposive method. Interviews had been conducted with school administrators and students. Observations had been made at BGS during school time. The documentary data had been obtained from BGS books, reports, schedules and websites. The data had been analyzed using the Miles and Huberman framework, consisted of three procedures: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. Data validity test had been conducted by triangulation. These steps were illustrated in Figure 1.

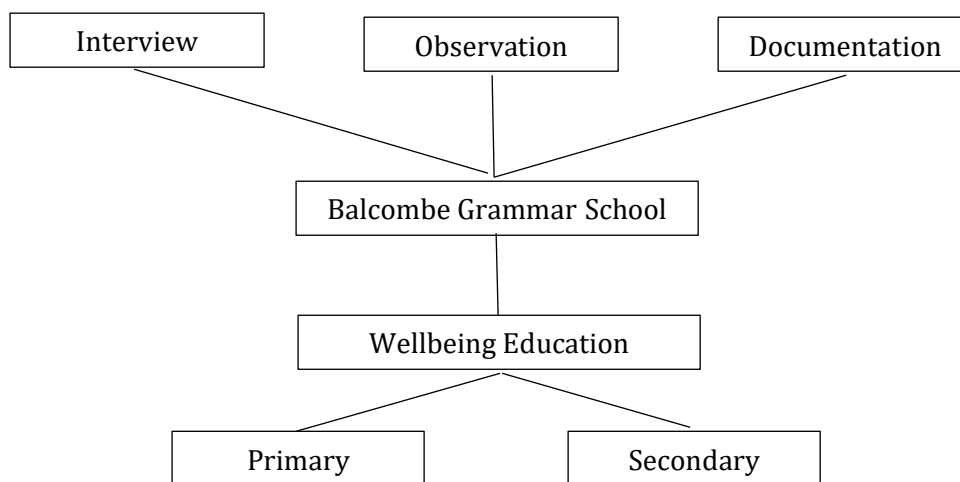


Figure 1. Research Flow

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Education System In Australia

Education System

Australia consists of six states: New South Wales, Queensland, Western Australia, South Australia, Tasmania, and Victoria then two territories: the Northern Territory and the Australian Capital Territory. Australia has three levels of government: federal, state/territorial and local (DFAT, 2016).

The state/territorial and federal authorities are jointly responsible for education. On federal level education is held by the Department of Education and Training and the Department of Industry, Innovation, Science, Research and Tertiary Education. The responsibility for general funding and coordination of education lies with the federal government, whereas the budgeting for individual schools is left to the states/territories (DET, 2016).

National education targets are formulated in joint consultation. In 1995, the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) was introduced for all post-compulsory education (starting at approximately 15 or 16 years of age). The AQF distinguishes between three different education sectors: 1) the Schools Sector, 2) the Vocational Education and Training Sector and 3) the Higher Education Sector. An important goal of the AQF is to facilitate mobility between the various sectors and to promote the recognition of a variety of types of working and learning (EPN, 2015).

The states and territories all have their department of education that is responsible for government-funded primary and secondary schools. The education departments formulate their policy concerning school organization, curricula (including approval), student/teacher assessment, certificates, distance education, special education, admission of international students and allocation of resources and project coordination (EPN, 2015).

Primary and Secondary Education

State government determines the duration of primary and secondary school. Pupils go to primary school last 5 or 6 and follow either seven or six years depending on the states (Safitri, 2017). They have to complete their 12 years for primary and secondary school. Secondary school is divided into two stages: secondary school finish in Year 10, and senior secondary school in Year 11 and Year 12 (OECD, 2013).

The academic year for education in Australia consists of two school terms, started in January/February, ended in November/December. Pupils can choose the subjects they want. They must take at least six subjects per school term with the core subjects as follow: English, Mathematics, Physics, Social Studies, the Environment, foreign language, technology, and creative subjects. After Year 10 (junior secondary), the students will be awarded a certificate after passing the final examination with different assessment system among states/territories (EPN, 2015).

At senior secondary school (Year 11 and Year 12), students can take a vocationally-oriented or pre-university curriculum-based on their intentions. In this stage, students will determine their chances for admission to higher education. Senior secondary is crucial in choosing students future depend on their ambition and talent. Final grades are determined by both school examination and state examination. At the end of this stage, students receive a certificate used for attaining university education (OECD, 2013).

Wellbeing Education: Positive Psychology At School

Definition of Wellbeing

Positive psychology is an umbrella of theories and research about wellbeing, happiness, and satisfaction, introduced by Martin E. P. Seligman. Strengths of character and positive experiences such as satisfying life are among the central concerns of positive psychology. Character strengths can be defined as positive traits reflected in thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. It has criteria: appreciation of beauty and excellence, bravery, citizenship (social responsibility, loyalty, teamwork), creativity (originality, ingenuity), curiosity (interest, novelty-seeking, openness to experience), fairness (treating all people the same according to notions of fairness and justice), gratitude, hope (optimism, future-mindedness, future orientation), humor (playfulness), integrity (authenticity, honesty), judgment (open-mindedness, critical thinking), kindness (generosity, nurturance, care, compassion, altruistic love), leadership, love (valuing close relations with others), love of learning (mastering new skills), modesty and humility, persistence (perseverance, industriousness), perspective (wisdom), prudence, self-regulation (self-control), social

intelligence (emotional intelligence, personal intelligence), spirituality (religiousness, faith, purpose), and zest (vitality, enthusiasm, vigor, energy) (Park, Peterson, Seligman, 2004). Until the mid-20th century, psychology has been about what is wrong with life: suicide, depression, schizophrenia, and all the brick walls that can fall on people. Then, he argued that people not only can be learned by his/her negative side but also by the positive side. In this framework, psychology is just as concerned with strength as it is with weakness. It is just as interested in building what makes life worth living as it is with repairing pathology. Positive psychology aims to develop interventions that build the enabling conditions of life, not just interventions that decrease misery (Seligman, 2010).

Wellbeing is more than the absence of physical or psychological illness. In very broad terms, wellbeing can be described as the quality of a person's life (NSW, 2015). Wellbeing is a state in which it is possible for a human being to satisfy his/her basic needs (Seligman, 2010). The Government Office for Science Foresight Report on Mental Capital and Wellbeing suggests that wellbeing is a dynamic state enhanced when people can fulfill their personal and social goals and achieve a sense of purpose in society. Wellbeing emerges from how people interact with the world around them at different points in their lives (Statham & Chase, 2010). In Nordic language, the word "welfare" also stands for wellbeing, and that is covers aspects both of level of living and quality of life (Allardt, 1976). The elements of wellbeing are a positive emotion, engagement, relationships, meaning in life, and accomplishment (PERMA) (Seligman, 2010).

Allardt divides the needs into three categories: having, loving, and being. Having refers to material conditions and impersonal needs from a wide perspective. Loving stands for the needs to relate to other people and to form social identifies. Being denotes the needs for personal growth such as integration into society and living in harmony with nature. Allardt states that health is often seen as the central element of wellbeing and that it is a resource that affects the other parts of wellbeing. These categories are measured based on both objective and subjective indicators (O'Brien, 2008).

Table 1. Allardt's Indicators of Wellbeing

Aspects	Objective Indicators	Subjective Indicators
Having (material and impersonal needs)	Objective measures of level of living and environmental condition	Dissatisfaction-satisfaction, subjective feeling of dissatisfaction-satisfaction with living conditions
Loving (social needs)	Objective measures of relationship to other people	Unhappiness-happiness, subjective feeling about social relations
Being (needs for personal growth)	Objective measures of people's relation to (a) society and (b) nature	Subjective feeling of alienation- personal growth

School Wellbeing

Student wellbeing has become a key part of the global education agenda since the mid-90s (Waters, 2016). Konu & Rimpelä (2002) develop the model of school wellbeing. The concept has been divided into four categories: school condition (having), social relationship (loving), means for self-fulfillment in school (being), and health status. Unlike Allardt, Konu and Rimpelä separate “health status” as one of four categories—Allardt places it as part of “having” (Allardt, 1976). For them, health is a personal state although affected by an external condition.

First, school condition (having), it includes the physical condition of a school: environment or inside the school. Besides that, it deals with the learning environment, that includes curriculum, grouping, schedules, and punishment. Another aspect is service for students such as lunches, health care, trustee, and counseling.

Second, social relationship (loving) is the social learning environment, student-teacher relationship, school mates relationship, group dynamic, bullying, cooperation between school and parents, decision making in school and the atmosphere of school organization. Good relationship and atmosphere will flourish a person’s resources in society, then improve achievements in school.

Third, means for self-fulfillment in school (being). For Allardt, “being” refers to each person being respected as a valuable part of society. People need to have possibilities for influencing the key elements of their life as well as active leisure time. Getting a meaningful life and enjoyment is essential for self-fulfillment. For the school context, “being” can be described as how the school offers means for self-fulfillment. Each student can be seen as an equal member of the school community. It should be possible for each student to participate in the decision-making influencing her/his school life. A student has to get the same opportunities for improving knowledge and skills emphasizing the student’s interest fields. Respects from parents, teachers, and peers are fundamental for getting a meaningful study.

Fourth, health status is seen as the absence of disease and illness. Diseases are abnormalities occurred in part of people’s body, while illness is feeling experienced by people. Health status comprises physical and mental symptoms (Konu & Rimpelä, 2002).

These domains consist of cognitive, emotional, social, physical and spiritual wellbeing. Cognitive wellbeing is associated with achievement and success. It includes how information is processed and judgments are made. It is also informed by motivation and persistence to achieve. Cognitive wellbeing is important for attaining knowledge and experiencing positive learning. Emotional wellbeing relates to self-awareness and emotional regulation. It includes how well we cope and is often reflected by the level of a person’s resilience. Emotional wellbeing is in part informed by our capacity for self-reflection. Social wellbeing includes the extent to which we experience positive relationships and connectedness to others. It is important for pro-social behavior and our empathy towards others. Physical wellbeing is associated with the extent to which we feel physically safe and healthy. It includes nutrition, preventative health care, physical activity, and physical safety and security. Physical wellbeing enables positive health

outcomes. Spiritual wellbeing relates to our sense of meaning and purpose. It can include our connection to culture, religion or community and includes the beliefs, values, and ethics we hold (NSW, 2015).

Løhre, Lydersen, & Vatten (2010) said that school wellbeing for a student can be identified using some aspects. Those are academic problems, disturbing work, bothered in class, loneliness, victimization, school work enjoyment, necessary academic help, school work satisfaction, supportive peers, and supportive teacher. Teachers and the school atmosphere is the most important factor to improve school wellbeing.

UNESCO divide school wellbeing into three categories: people, process, and place. The first category refers to friendships and relationships in the school community; positive teacher attitudes and attributes; positive and collaborative values and practices; respect for diversity and differences; teacher working condition and wellbeing; teacher skill and competencies. The second category, process, included reasonable and fair workload; teamwork and collaborative spirit; fun and engaging teaching and learning approaches; learner freedom, creativity and engagement; sense of achievement and accomplishment; extracurricular activities and school events; learning as a team between students and teachers; useful and relevant learning content; and stress management. The third category, place, refers to the warm and friendly learning environment; secure from bullying; open and green learning and playing spaces; school vision and leadership; positive discipline; good health, sanitation, and nutrition; and democratic school management (UNESCO, 2016).

School Wellbeing in Australia

Programme of International Student Assessment (PISA)—a test of more than 500,000 15-year-olds across 76 countries—shows Australian students have had a decline in both academic performance and school wellbeing (school belonging and engagement) in the past decade (Russo, Lewis, Joyce, Crockett & Luchters, 2015). Currently, around 25 percent of young Australians report experiencing symptoms of mental illness. Suicide is a leading cause of death in Australian youth, and 50 percent of all youth illness is mental illness (Waters, 2016; Gray & Hackling, 2009).

Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD) School run wellbeing in Victorian school based on eight principles. First, maximize access and inclusion. It means that quality of services for all, with extra effort directed to ensure education, health, and wellbeing services are accessible to, and inclusive of, the most vulnerable and disadvantaged. Second, focus on outcomes: health, learning, development and wellbeing outcomes are the focus when designing, delivering, evaluating and improving education, health, and wellbeing services. Third, evidence-informed and reflective practice: current and relevant evidence known to be effective in improving outcomes informs policy-making and professional practice. Research and evaluation are undertaken to generate evidence and enable effective and reflective practice. Fourth, holistic approach: collaboration between services and multidisciplinary professional practice is pursued to meet the needs of children, young people and families, and their health, wellbeing, and learning goals. Fifth, person-centered and family sensitive

practice. People are seen in the context of their families and environment and are supported and empowered to lead and sustain healthy lives. Sixth, partnerships with families and communities: partnerships are forged with children, young people, families, and communities, who are seen as partners in the creation of healthy environments and good health and wellbeing. Seventh, cultural competence: effort is made to understand and effectively communicate with people across cultures and to recognize one's world view. A cultural connection is recognized as playing an integral part in healthy development and wellbeing. Eight, commitment to excellence: high expectations are held for every child and young person. Professionals continually assess their work practices to find opportunities for improvement (DEECD, 2014).

Australia has "the third person" looked after wellbeing at school: Kidsmatter for foundation and primary school, Mind Matter for junior secondary and CASEL (Collaborative, for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning) for senior secondary school. They provide professionals who can help school promoting wellbeing at school. Coaching teachers and staffs in wellbeing division are their jobs. They also provide online resources, spotlights on topics relevant to schools, face-to-face events, webinars and support that can be accessed at their websites valid source specified (KidsMatters, 2017; MindMatters, 2017; CASEL, 2017).

Wellbeing Education at Balcombe Grammar School

Wellbeing is a strong component of Australian education. Wellbeing is central to build a strong culture and community. It is a holistic view of health and wellbeing across the education system and this is most like because it is considered essential for effective students' learning. They believe that student wellbeing influenced students' learning quality and their ability to decide on the school or their life.

At Balcombe Grammar School (BGS), wellbeing education revolves around teaching of health, physical, sexual and mental health. Wellbeing education is given in the structured programs as part of the curriculum but also integrated with teaching instruction and daily life at school. Wellbeing approach at BGS is based on the following four beliefs, 1) everyone has the right to be safe, 2) everyone has the right to be treated in a caring and friendly manner, 3) everyone has the right to learn, and 4) everyone has the right to have their property and belongings treated with respect (BGS, 2015a).

Wellbeing programs in BGS organized by Division of Faith and Wellbeing lead by Natalie Kurelja. They have several programs to increase the students' quality of life. First, Buddies across the School, this is a peer-nurture program, students in the upper level take care of the lower-level students. At the beginning of the year, Year 5 students become older buddies to Foundation students. They are situated in the same block/house to act as a mentor. This relationship between the year levels continues throughout the students' time at the school. Both year levels enjoy their togetherness spending their time to know each other, to learn-teach each other, and to do their hobbies. At the same time, Year 5 students have Year 10 students as their buddies. This allows them to not only be a role model but also give them someone to look up to. As students move to Year 7, they receive their blazer and become leaders. Secondary students have a tutor who monitors

their progress and wellbeing. The house system provides another opportunity for students to belong to a group. The multi-age nature of the house system provides continuity as the students progress through the school (Kurelja, 2017).

Second, Golden Time aims to promote positive relationships and rewards students who consistently make good choices. This program has been implemented once a week on Friday during a pastoral session for 30 minutes. Students can discuss and vote for activity on Monday morning. This special time provided for primary school students (BGS, 2015b).

Third, Circle Time, the students can discuss social and emotional issues, as well as fun and games. Teachers have utilized these sessions to solve whole class issues, individual issues, separate boy and girl's issues, playing games, tackle world issues and general health, faith, and wellbeing topics (BGS, 2015b).

Fourth, Faith and Wellbeing classes. BGS is a Christian school. All students from Foundation to Year 10 have religious education at least once a week. In Year 11 and 12, students can choose to do further VCE studies in religion. Faith teaching is incorporated with the whole students' learning, from learning about the brain, cybersafety, drug and alcohol education, ethics, self-esteem and body image, interfaith education, decision making and risk-taking, anti-bullying, values, friendships, and resilience (Kurelja, 2017).

Fifth, Pastoral Care classes. Religious education, ethics, pastoral care, spiritual formation, and service are, therefore, an important part of the life of the school. All students from Foundation to Year 10 have religious education at least once a week. In Year 11 and 12, the students can choose to do further Victorian Certificate of Education studies in religion. Religious education at Balcombe Grammar school is taught, like all other subjects at Balcombe, in an academically sound, engaging and relevant way. Students learn about the Bible, the Christian faith and tradition and about core Christian values such as love, compassion, forgiveness, honesty, and charity. Students do projects, for example, on social justice, charity, sacraments, prayer, relationships, heroes of faith and the diversity of religions in Australia (BGS, 2016).

Sixth, Health Classes include physical and mental health. It is talking about healthy eating, exercise, fitness, biology, sexuality education, interpersonal skills, etc. Beside teaches about healthy eating, BGS tries to develop a child's food preferences and eating behaviors by serving nutritional food at school (Kurelja, 2017).

Besides these programs, wellbeing education at Balcombe Grammar School also has been integrated into teaching instruction in every subject. Such as strengthening teamwork in the classroom or using peer-teaching a method of instruction. Students, teachers and staffs, and members of the wider school community have a shared understanding of the behaviors, attitudes, and expectations that enhance wellbeing and lead to improve students' outcomes. For comprehensive education, BGS is in partnership with parents and other community members in helping to raise students' wellbeing (Kurelja, 2017).

CONCLUSION

Wellbeing education in Australia is instructed by Government, organized by school, and helped by KidsMatter, MindMatters, and CASEL. Balcombe Grammar School has some programs on wellbeing education, they are the Golden Time, Circle Time, Faith and

Wellbeing classes, Pastoral Care Classes, and Health Classes. These programs are taught and become part of curriculum, but they also integrates wellbeing education into the teaching instruction in other subjects also daily life at school.

The integrated wellbeing education can be adopted by Indonesian schools. Wellbeing education that was usually handled by counseling have to not only stand as a division worked based on students' problems through counseling, but actively educating wellbeing at school in various aspects of students' life during learning instruction, friend-relations time, or incidental events.

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