The Perpetuation of a School Culture that Doesn't Support Collaboration on the Learning Opportunity Gap between Students

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ABSTRACT – This study examines the influence of a school culture that does not support collaboration on the learning opportunity gap between students with different social and academic backgrounds. A school culture that prioritizes individual competition and does not encourage cooperation between students has the potential to exacerbate inequalities in learning. In such an environment, students from weaker social or academic backgrounds often do not get an equal opportunity to interact and learn together with more fortunate students. As a result, they become isolated and lose opportunities to improve their academic understanding, which further widens the gap in academic achievement. This research highlights the importance of creating a culture that supports collaboration in the classroom, which can provide greater opportunities for all students, including those who are marginalized, to learn together and share knowledge with each other. Collaboration between students is the key to reducing this inequality and improving the overall quality of learning. Schools need to adopt a more inclusive approach, one that prioritizes collaboration and cooperation among students to facilitate more equitable and equitable learning opportunities. In addition, it is important for teachers to be involved in training on how to support collaborative learning in the classroom.

Keywords: School culture, collaboration, learning opportunity gaps, social background, learning, individual competition, inclusiveness.

A. INTRODUCTION

School culture has an important role in shaping the pattern of interaction between students, teachers, and staff. An open, inclusive, and supportive school culture can create an environment that supports cooperation and collaboration in the classroom. Conversely, a rigid, hierarchical, or competitive school culture tends to hinder collaborative learning that should improve students' social, communication, and cooperation skills. Interactions between students that are affected by school culture can influence the level of their involvement in joint learning activities, and ultimately have an impact on their academic outcomes and social development (Djazilan & Darmawan, 2022).

School culture at various levels can directly affect the effectiveness of collaborative learning in the classroom. For example, schools with a culture that emphasizes individuality or competition tend to produce students who focus more on personal achievement than on group achievement. Conversely, schools with a culture that encourages collaboration and openness will enable students to develop the skills of working in teams, sharing ideas, and solving problems together (Darmawan, 2010). Factors such as school leadership style, teaching policies, and the values embraced by the school community have a direct impact on the quality of students' collaborative interactions in the classroom (Wahyudi et al., 2018).

One of the main problems often faced in collaborative learning in the classroom is the mismatch between the school culture and the desired collaborative approach. A school culture dominated by hierarchical structures and a focus on individual achievement can hinder the formation of an atmosphere that supports cooperation between students. In many schools, values that emphasize personal competition and individual-based evaluation are more often applied than collaboration in groups (Johnson & Johnson, 2017). This causes students to be less accustomed to sharing ideas, listening to other people's perspectives, and working together to complete tasks (Karina et al., 2018).

Collaborative learning, which should be a tool to improve students' social and academic skills, is hampered by an unsupportive culture.

In addition, a less supportive school culture can affect student engagement in collaborative activities. Students from different backgrounds, both in terms of culture and academic ability, often feel isolated or find it difficult to collaborate (Deal & Peterson, 2016). In schools with a less inclusive culture, students from minority groups or those with special needs may feel unappreciated or even rejected by their classmates (Gorski, 2017). This can exacerbate the gap in collaborative abilities, where only certain groups of students have the opportunity to engage in collaborative learning effectively (Slavin, 2015).

In many cases, the understanding of the importance of collaboration in the classroom is not always internalized by teachers or school management. Although some schools strive to implement collaborative learning methods, the existing culture does not always support maximum implementation (Andayani & Darmawan, 2004). Teachers who are accustomed to a more conventional teaching approach or focus on strict classroom control often find it difficult to implement collaborative methods effectively (Kaplan & Owings, 2013). This can hinder the creation of a learning environment that supports interaction between students and develops their social skills. These limitations not only affect students' social skills, but also hinder the development of critical thinking and problemsolving skills that are indispensable in 21st century learning (Hattie, 2009).

The importance of observing the impact of school culture on collaborative learning stems from the fact that collaboration skills are highly needed in today's professional and social life. With the increasingly demanding world of work requiring teamwork skills, it is important to ensure that the education system, especially at the school level, prepares students to collaborate effectively (Akmal et al., 2015). A school culture that supports collaborative learning can help students develop communication, problem-solving, and teamwork skills, which will greatly benefit them in their future careers (Darder, 2015). Without the appropriate cultural support, collaborative learning can be ineffective and can even exacerbate unequal opportunities among students with different social and academic backgrounds (Olson, 2009). Therefore, it is important for schools to create an environment that supports collaborative learning, so that each student can develop their full potential.

In addition, observing the role of school culture in collaborative learning is also important for creating a more inclusive and equitable learning environment. An inclusive school culture can provide greater opportunities for all students, without exception, to develop in a supportive and respectful environment that impacts students' active participation in learning, improving their social skills, This is particularly relevant given the increasingly diverse student populations in schools around the world. By understanding and evaluating the impact of school culture on collaboration, we can identify areas for improvement, both in terms of policy and teaching practices, to create a climate that is conducive for all students.

The purpose of this study is to identify how school culture and climate affect the effectiveness of collaborative learning in the classroom, with a focus on student engagement and the quality of interaction between students. This study aims to explore the factors that influence the dynamics of collaboration in the classroom setting, as well as how the existing school culture can enhance or hinder students' ability to work together.

This study also aims to understand the impact of a school culture that does not support collaboration on the learning opportunity gap between students with different social and academic backgrounds. By examining these differences, this study seeks to provide insights into how school teaching policies and practices can contribute to the creation of a more inclusive and equitable learning environment for all students.

B. METHOD

This study uses a literature review approach to analyze the impact of school culture on collaborative learning in the classroom. This approach was chosen because it allows researchers to explore various theories, models, and previous research results related to this topic without the need to collect new empirical data. The literature review provides broader insights into the role of school culture and climate in influencing the learning process and interaction between students. In addition, this approach facilitates researchers to evaluate relevant previous research using existing data to provide a more in-depth analysis of this topic (Booth et al., 2016).

To examine the influence of school culture on collaboration in the classroom, this literature study will examine the literature that discusses the relationship between organizational culture in schools and the implementation of collaborative learning strategies. The researcher will look for articles that focus on cultural factors such as school leadership, teaching policies, and social norms applied in the school environment. In addition, literature that examines the influence of school culture on student involvement in collaborative activities and diversity among students will also be analyzed to provide a more comprehensive understanding (Senge, 2000; Day, 2014).

As part of this literature study, the researcher will also discuss various collaborative learning models and the challenges that arise when the school culture does not support cooperation between students. Models applied in previous research, such as Cooperative Learning (Johnson & Johnson, 1999), will be evaluated for their success in supporting collaboration. The researcher will analyze existing evidence on how the influence of school culture can enhance or hinder the application of these models. Research that focuses on the effectiveness of collaboration in schools with different cultures will provide useful insights into the influence of culture on learning outcomes.

As a final step in this literature study, researchers will assess the implications of school culture for learning opportunity gaps among students with different social and academic backgrounds. The literature that discusses inequality in education and how it can be exacerbated by non-inclusive school cultures will be explored (Gorski, 2008). This analysis aims to explore how inequalities within the education system can prevent students from having equal access to learning experiences, as well as how a culture that supports collaboration can improve these inequalities. Thus, this literature study is expected to provide useful insights for creating a more inclusive school environment and effectively supporting collaborative learning.

C. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Influence of School Culture and Climate on the Effectiveness of Collaborative Learning in the Classroom

School culture and climate play an important role in determining the effectiveness of collaborative learning in the classroom.

Collaborative learning, which emphasizes cooperation between students in groups to achieve common goals, is strongly influenced by the atmosphere and values applied in the school environment (Johnson & Johnson, 2009). A culture that supports cooperation, open communication, and mutual respect allows students to feel more comfortable interacting with each other (Gorski, 2017). Conversely, a climate full of competition or a lack of mutual trust can prevent students from actively participating in collaborative activities.

Student engagement in collaborative learning depends heavily on the support provided by the school culture. When schools create an environment that supports positive interaction, student engagement in discussion and group work increases (Yanti & Darmawan, 2016; Mardikaningsih & Darmawan, 2021). A school culture that supports collaboration can encourage students to take the initiative to complete tasks together, share knowledge, and value the views and contributions of classmates. Conversely, if the school culture emphasizes individual competition, students may feel isolated or lack the opportunity to collaborate effectively (Wentzel, 2010). Therefore, an inclusive and supportive climate is essential to increase engagement in collaborative learning.

On the other hand, the quality of interaction between students in collaborative learning is also influenced by the school culture and climate. In cultures that value cooperation and inclusiveness, students tend to have more constructive and positive interactions (Muhammad, 2009). They feel valued and safe to express their opinions and participate in group discussions (Darmawan, 2015; Karina et al., 2012). This improves the quality of collaboration and strengthens learning outcomes. On the other hand, if the school climate does not support healthy relationships between students, for example through discrimination or bullying, the interactions that occur in groups will tend to be negative and unproductive (Parker & Haselton, 2005). This condition can be detrimental not only to the individual development of students, but also to the achievement of collaborative learning objectives.

A school culture that supports collaborative learning is also closely related to the quality of learning that students obtain. When students feel involved and have a positive relationship in a group, they tend to be more motivated to learn

and more effective in achieving academic goals (Darmawan, 2007). This is related to the theory of social motivation, which states that students who feel valued and accepted in a group will have a higher intrinsic motivation to participate in learning (Deci & Ryan, 2008). Thus, creating a culture that prioritizes cooperation between students can contribute to improving learning outcomes and social skills that are important for their development.

In practice, a school culture that supports collaborative learning requires the implementation of policies and strategies that encourage openness, mutual respect, and cooperation. For example, teachers can form heterogeneous working groups to ensure that students from different backgrounds work together in one group. Policies like this can reduce social inequalities and enable students to learn from each other's diverse experiences and perspectives. Research by Johnson and Johnson (2009) shows that students who work in groups supported by a collaborative culture have better social skills and are able to solve problems more effectively.

However, creating a school culture that supports collaborative learning is not easy. Many schools face challenges in shaping an inclusive environment that supports collaboration. Factors such as student diversity, differences in cultural backgrounds, and school policies that focus more on individual achievement can hinder efforts to create a collaborative atmosphere. Therefore, schools need to develop strategies to build trust among students, create social norms that support collaboration, and involve all parties, including teachers and parents, to create a culture that supports cooperation.

To ensure that collaborative learning can be implemented effectively, it is important for schools to evaluate and understand the impact of the existing culture and climate. Several previous studies have shown that a school culture that supports collaboration not only increases student engagement, but also improves their academic outcomes (Parker & Haselton, 2005). Therefore, further research on the relationship between school culture and collaborative learning is needed to identify best practices and address existing challenges. This research can also provide important insights for teachers and education policymakers to create an environment that supports more effective and inclusive learning.

The Impact of a School Culture that Doesn't Support Collaboration on the Learning Opportunity Gap Between Students

A school culture that does not support collaboration can have a significant negative impact on students' learning opportunities, especially those from different social and academic backgrounds. When schools prioritize individual competition or ignore the importance of cooperation between students, this can lead to limited interaction between students with diverse backgrounds, both in terms of academic and social abilities (Olson, 2009). As a result, students from more marginalized or disadvantaged groups may not have equal opportunities to participate in beneficial learning activities, thus exacerbating inequalities in their academic achievement (Vygotsky, 1978).

Students from different social and academic backgrounds often have diverse experiences, skills, and ways of learning (Muhammad, 2009). In a school culture that does not support collaboration, these students may feel isolated or undervalued, which prevents them from developing the social and academic skills necessary for education (Topping, 2005). The inability to work together in groups can make it difficult for disadvantaged students to absorb material or improve necessary skills, because they cannot learn from more experienced classmates or have broader knowledge (Deal & Peterson, 2016).

In addition, a culture that does not support collaboration also has the potential to create tension between students from different social backgrounds. Students from low-income families or those with limited access to educational resources may feel less capable or not have an equal position in the group, which ultimately affects group dynamics (Gibson, 2006). This can exacerbate the learning opportunity gap, as these disadvantaged students are unable to access the same opportunities to discuss, share ideas, and collaborate with more affluent or better-resourced students.

It is important to note that a school culture that prioritizes collaboration and active student involvement in group activities can be an important factor in minimizing learning opportunity gaps between students from different social backgrounds (Gorski, 2017). When schools create an environment that supports cooperation, students can help each

other understand the subject matter, overcome the difficulties they face, and enrich their learning experience (Slavin, 1995). On the other hand, a more competitive culture can make disadvantaged students feel marginalized, which can further exacerbate differences in learning outcomes (Kaplan & Owings, 2013).

The role of the teacher becomes very crucial. Teachers who are able to create an inclusive classroom atmosphere and support collaboration can reduce the learning opportunity gap by providing space for students to learn from each other and share knowledge. In addition, by promoting collaborative learning, students from weaker social backgrounds can get support from more experienced classmates or those with better resources so that they are not left behind in the learning process (Johnson & Johnson, 2009). Teachers act as facilitators who enhance positive relationships between students and create an environment that encourages collaboration. Without a strong culture of collaboration, these opportunities for mutual support will be very limited. Therefore, teachers have a central role in shaping a culture that supports collaboration to ensure that all students have equal opportunities in the learning process.

However, the main challenge to creating a culture that supports collaboration is how to change the more competitive and individualistic mindset that exists in many schools. In many education systems, success is often measured by individual achievement, not group achievement. This can make students feel isolated and reluctant to work together. Therefore, it is important for educators and school leaders to understand the importance of creating an environment that supports collaboration as the key to reducing learning opportunity gaps among students (Topping, 2005).

In conclusion, a school culture that does not support collaboration can exacerbate the learning opportunity gap between students with different social and academic backgrounds. Therefore, it is important for schools to develop and maintain a culture that supports cooperation in the classroom. This step can help facilitate equal opportunities for all students to learn together, grow, and reach their academic potential. Schools that can create an inclusive and collaborative learning environment will help reduce social and academic inequalities in society.

D. CONCLUSIONS

A school culture that does not support collaboration can exacerbate the learning opportunity gap between students with different social and academic backgrounds. When school cultures tend to prioritize individual competition and do not create space for interaction between diverse students, students who have limited resources or academic skills are more likely to be isolated. This prevents them from developing through collaborative learning, which should be an opportunity to improve their understanding and skills. Without collaborative support, these students may fall further behind in their academic achievement, exacerbating social inequalities within the school environment.

Despite these challenges, IEIs have the potential to transform into more relevant and competitive educational institutions. However, this transformation requires a well-planned, innovative and sustainable strategic approach to address the various issues at hand.

For this reason, it is important for schools to design and maintain a culture that is inclusive and supports collaboration. Teachers have a key role to play in creating a learning environment that encourages cooperation between students, which in turn can reduce gaps in learning opportunities. By promoting the values of cooperation, schools can help students share knowledge and experience with each other, which is important for those who are less fortunate or come from a weaker social background. Therefore, it is recommended that schools focus more on fostering a collaborative culture that can reduce social distance between students, boost confidence, and improve the overall quality of learning. Training and development programs for teachers on the application of collaborative learning methods also need to be strengthened to achieve this goal more effectively.

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