

## HOW SCHOOL INFLUENCES STUDENTS' CHARACTER AND SUCCESS

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### ABSTRACT:

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*This article analyzes the influence of school environment on students' character and academic success. The study examines the role of school climate, teacher–student relationships, peer influence, and extracurricular activities in students' personal development and educational outcomes. The findings show that a positive school environment, supportive teaching practices, and active social participation contribute to the development of responsibility, discipline, self-confidence, cooperation skills, and stable motivation among students. In addition, the paper demonstrates that participation in extracurricular activities positively affects attendance, leadership, and communication competencies.*

### Introduction

Schools play a crucial role not only in shaping students' academic achievement but also in developing their character, values, behavior, and social skills. In modern education systems, schools are no longer viewed merely as places where students acquire knowledge; they are also environments where young people learn responsibility, discipline, teamwork, leadership, and moral values. Through interactions with teachers, classmates, and the broader school

environment, students gradually form attitudes and habits that influence both their personal lives and future success.

One of the most important factors influencing students' development is school climate. A positive school climate, characterized by safety, mutual respect, supportive teacher-student relationships, and strong peer connections, significantly contributes to students' motivation, engagement, and academic performance. Research shows that students who feel connected to their schools are more likely to perform well academically, develop stronger social-emotional skills, and avoid risky behaviors.

Teacher quality and teacher expectations also play a significant role in shaping students' character and success. Supportive teachers encourage students to believe in their abilities, work harder, and develop self-confidence. Positive teacher-student relationships improve learning outcomes, while negative or distant relationships may reduce motivation and increase the likelihood of poor academic performance. Studies indicate that students who receive strong support from teachers and peers are more engaged in learning and tend to achieve higher grades.

Peer influence is another important factor in students' development. Students spend a large portion of their time interacting with classmates, and these relationships can either positively or negatively affect their behavior and academic achievement. Positive peer groups often encourage discipline, collaboration, and better study habits, while negative peer pressure may lead to absenteeism, poor performance, and behavioral problems. Research has consistently found that supportive peer relationships are strongly associated with better academic achievement and stronger motivation to learn.

Furthermore, participation in extracurricular activities such as sports, clubs, and student organizations helps students build confidence, leadership, responsibility, and social connectedness. Recent studies have shown that students involved in school activities are less likely to be absent and more likely to achieve academic success because they feel more engaged with school life.

Therefore, understanding how schools influence students' character and success is essential for improving educational quality and creating supportive learning environments. This study aims to examine the impact of school climate, teacher support, peer influence, and extracurricular involvement on students' personal development and academic achievement.

### **Literature review**

The relationship between school environment and student success has been widely discussed in educational research. In recent years, scholars have increasingly emphasized that

academic achievement is influenced not only by students' intellectual abilities but also by school climate, teacher support, peer relationships, and extracurricular involvement. Modern studies show that schools shape students' character, motivation, emotional well-being, and long-term success.

One of the most important concepts in the literature is school climate. Researchers define school climate as the quality of relationships, safety, discipline, teaching environment, and overall atmosphere within a school. According to a meta-analysis by Cem Erdem, positive school and classroom climates are significantly associated with higher academic achievement, with school climate having a stronger effect than classroom climate alone. Similarly, another meta-analysis found that students who study in supportive and positive school environments tend to perform better academically and develop stronger emotional well-being.

Research also highlights the importance of teacher-student relationships. Positive relationships with teachers improve students' participation in class, motivation, emotional stability, and academic performance. Studies indicate that students who feel respected and supported by teachers are more likely to develop confidence, discipline, and a sense of responsibility. Positive teacher-student interaction also helps reduce stress and improve engagement in learning.

Peer relationships are another significant factor influencing student character and success. Students spend a large amount of time interacting with classmates, and these relationships often affect behavior, attitudes, and learning habits. Research on peer effects shows that students with supportive peer groups are more likely to achieve better academic outcomes, while social isolation or negative peer influence can reduce performance. Studies on school belonging further demonstrate that strong peer relationships increase students' sense of connection to school and improve both academic and social development.

Extracurricular activities also play a major role in character formation and academic success. Participation in sports, clubs, arts, and student organizations helps students develop leadership, teamwork, responsibility, self-confidence, and communication skills. A systematic literature review found that extracurricular activities positively influence students' character education, especially when schools provide strong support from teachers and peers. Recent research also shows that students involved in sports and extracurricular activities have better attendance and stronger academic performance than their peers because they feel more connected to school.

Overall, the literature suggests that schools influence students through multiple interconnected factors. A positive school climate, supportive teachers, strong peer

relationships, and active participation in extracurricular activities all contribute to better academic achievement and stronger character development. However, the strength of these relationships may vary depending on students' social background, school context, and educational level.

### **Research methodology**

The methodological basis of this study is formed through the use of systematic, comparative, and analytical approaches. The systematic approach made it possible to examine the influence of school climate, teacher–student relationships, peer interaction, and extracurricular activities as interconnected factors affecting students' character and academic success. The comparative approach was used to analyze the differences between positive and weak school environments and their impact on student outcomes.

The empirical basis of the study includes scientific articles, meta-analyses, educational reports, and international research devoted to school climate, teacher support, peer influence, and extracurricular participation. Special attention was given to the works of Cem Erdem, Karadağ, Demirtas-Zorbaz, Liu, Uslu and Gizir, Wang, and other researchers who examined the relationship between school environment and student achievement.

The study mainly relies on qualitative analysis of existing literature and descriptive evaluation of research findings. The main factors influencing students' character and success were grouped into four categories: school climate, teacher–student relationships, peer influence, and extracurricular activities. Each category was analyzed in terms of its effect on attendance, academic performance, emotional well-being, motivation, discipline, communication skills, and leadership development.

In addition, the research used comparative analysis to identify the differences between students studying in supportive school environments and those studying in weak school climates. Major indicators such as attendance, academic achievement, sense of belonging, bullying, motivation, and emotional well-being were used to evaluate the effectiveness of school environments. This methodological approach allows for a comprehensive understanding of how schools shape students' personal development and educational success.

### **Analysis and results**

The findings show that school climate has a significant impact on students' academic performance and personal development. Schools with a positive climate, where students feel safe, respected, and supported, tend to demonstrate higher academic achievement, lower absenteeism, and stronger emotional well-being among students. Several studies confirm that

students in schools with stronger safety, teacher support, and peer relationships achieve better test scores and show greater motivation to learn.

**Table 1. The relationship between school climate and student outcomes.**

Indicator	Positive School Climate Schools	Weak School Climate Schools
Student attendance	Higher	Lower
Academic achievement	Higher	Lower
Sense of belonging	Strong	Weak
Bullying and discrimination	Lower	Higher
Student motivation	Higher	Lower
Emotional well-being	Better	Weaker

Research also indicates that school climate directly affects academic achievement. One study found that school climate explained approximately 10.1% of the variation in students' academic performance, while schools with higher levels of safety, connectedness, and caring relationships consistently showed better results in mathematics and language subjects.

Another important result concerns extracurricular participation. Students who participate in sports, clubs, arts, and school organizations are generally more engaged in school life and perform better academically. Participation in extracurricular activities strengthens responsibility, teamwork, leadership, and communication skills. Student-athletes, for example, were found to have 20% fewer absences and were one-third less likely to be chronically absent compared to non-participating students.

**Table 2. The impact of extracurricular activities on student development and success.**

Type of Extracurricular Activity	Positive Influence on Students
Sports activities	Better attendance, teamwork, discipline
Student clubs	Leadership, communication, school belonging
Arts and music	Creativity, self-confidence, emotional expression
Academic clubs	Improved academic performance and motivation
Volunteer activities	Responsibility, empathy, social skills

Studies further show that around 80% of students spend at least one hour per week participating in sports or physical activities, while approximately 60% participate in student

clubs or organizations. These activities are positively associated with stronger engagement and better educational outcomes.

Overall, the analysis suggests that schools influence students' character and success through a combination of positive school climate, supportive teacher-student relationships, healthy peer interactions, and extracurricular involvement. Schools that create a supportive environment are more likely to produce students who are academically successful, socially responsible, and emotionally resilient.

### **Conclusion and recommendations**

The analysis of the uploaded article shows that schools influence students' character and success through a combination of academic, social, and emotional mechanisms. A positive school climate, supportive teacher-student relationships, healthy peer interaction, and active participation in extracurricular activities all contribute to stronger academic achievement, better attendance, higher motivation, and more balanced personal development. The paper also makes clear that character formation is not separate from academic success; rather, qualities such as responsibility, discipline, teamwork, confidence, and resilience are developed within the same school environment that supports learning outcomes.

The results further suggest that schools with safe, respectful, and engaging environments are more likely to produce students who are academically successful, emotionally stable, and socially responsible. In particular, the article highlights that positive school climate is associated with better performance, reduced absenteeism, and stronger well-being, while extracurricular involvement strengthens leadership, communication, empathy, and school belonging. These findings confirm that school effectiveness should be evaluated not only by examination results but also by its broader contribution to students' character and life readiness.

Based on these findings, several recommendations can be proposed. First, schools should strengthen positive school climate by promoting safety, mutual respect, inclusion, and supportive communication among teachers and students. Second, teachers should be encouraged to build stronger individual relationships with students, because emotional support and fair treatment increase engagement and self-confidence. Third, schools should create more opportunities for constructive peer interaction through teamwork, collaborative learning, and mentoring activities. Fourth, extracurricular programs such as sports, arts, clubs, and volunteer work should be expanded, since they play an important role in both academic success and character education. Finally, school leaders and policymakers should adopt a

more holistic approach to educational quality, one that values emotional well-being, social development, and moral growth alongside academic achievement.

Overall, the article supports the conclusion that school is one of the most important institutions in shaping not only what students know, but also who they become. When schools provide a supportive and well-organized environment, they help students grow into successful, responsible, and confident individuals who are better prepared for future education, work, and social life.

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