



## A Survey of Student Wellbeing in Zimbabwean Tertiary Colleges

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The well-being of students is an essential element influencing both academic achievement and personal growth, yet it is an area that has not received sufficient attention in Zimbabwean tertiary institutions. This paper outlines the results of a survey carried out in various tertiary colleges in Zimbabwe, focusing on aspects of student well-being such as mental health, social connectedness, academic satisfaction, and financial stability. The investigation utilizes a mixed-methods strategy, integrating numerical data gathered from structured questionnaires alongside qualitative insights derived from focus group discussions. The findings underscore notable difficulties encountered by students, including financial strain, restricted availability of mental health services, and academic demands, while also recognizing supportive elements such as peer connections and involvement with institutions. The study culminates in suggestions for decision-makers and educators aimed at improving student well-being via focused interventions and robust institutional support frameworks.

**Keywords:** Student Well-Being; Tertiary Education; Zimbabwe; Mental Health; Academic Performance**Introduction**

The well-being of students is a complex concept that includes emotional, social, academic, and physical aspects, all of which are essential for comprehensive development and achieving academic success [7]. In recent years, there has been a growing acknowledgment of the significance of well-being within educational environments, as it plays a crucial role in enhancing students' capacity to succeed both academically and in their personal lives. Well-being encompasses more than just the lack of stress or mental health problems; it includes the existence of positive conditions like life satisfaction, resilience, and a sense of purpose [3]. For tertiary students, well-being holds significant importance as they manage the shift to adulthood, face academic challenges, and often deal with financial independence.

The scholarly aspect of well-being encompasses students' contentment with their educational surroundings, involvement with their studies, and their assessment of academic achievement [7]. Social well-being encompasses peer relationships, a sense of belonging, and institutional connectedness [2]. Mental and emotional well-being encompasses psychological states including stress, anxiety, and depression, along with coping mechanisms and emotional resilience [1]. Finally, financial well-being pertains to students' capacity to fulfil basic necessities, cover tuition costs, and navigate economic pressures, particularly in environments with limited resources [6].

Across the globe, higher education institutions are starting to incorporate well-being frameworks into their policies and support systems. For example, organizations in affluent nations frequently offer counselling services, peer support initiatives, and financial assistance to alleviate stressors [2]. Findings from these environments emphasize the importance of institutional support in mitigating mental health challenges and promoting academic persistence. Nonetheless, the relevance of these models in low-resource settings is still insufficiently examined, especially in situations where ongoing economic instability heightens student challenges.

Students in low- and middle-income countries encounter distinct obstacles, including insufficient infrastructure, restricted access to mental health services, and economic instability [1]. For instance, investigations in Sub-Saharan Africa have recorded the effects of financial difficulties on dropout rates and academic achievement [6]. In light of these challenges, it is important to recognize that protective factors, including robust familial and peer networks, frequently serve a crucial function in fostering resilience [4].

The tertiary education sector in Zimbabwe functions amidst significant socio-economic difficulties, characterized by hyperinflation, currency instability, and elevated unemployment rates [9]. The broader systemic challenges impact students directly, with nu-

merous individuals facing difficulties in covering tuition, housing, and essential needs. The absence of strong institutional support structures exacerbates these challenges, forcing students to depend on unofficial coping strategies.

The current body of work regarding higher education in Zimbabwe has mainly concentrated on issues of access and quality, while student well-being has received comparatively little focus [5]. Existing studies indicate that financial stress is a significant issue; however, the relationship between economic hardship and other aspects of well-being—like mental health and social connectedness—has not been thoroughly explored. This gap is problematic because understanding these dynamics is essential for designing effective interventions.

This study seeks to address this gap by conducting a comprehensive assessment of student well-being across multiple tertiary colleges in Zimbabwe. Employing a mixed-methods approach, it examines the academic, social, emotional, and financial dimensions of well-being, drawing on both quantitative surveys and qualitative focus group discussions. The study is grounded in the Student Well-Being Model (SWBM) [7], which provides a framework for analysing these interconnected domains.

By looking at three related goals, the study seeks to investigate the condition of student well-being in Zimbabwean tertiary institutions. It first aims to evaluate the state of affairs influencing the mental, emotional, and social wellbeing of students in various institutions. Second, it looks into the main stressors that affect students' experiences, like academic pressure and financial instability, as well as the facilitators, like peer support and institutional involvement. Lastly, the study aims to produce evidence-based suggestions that can help educators and policymakers create focused interventions to support and improve student well-being across the tertiary education system.

By placing international frameworks within Zimbabwe's distinct socioeconomic context, this study adds to the larger conversation on student well-being. It highlights possible leverage points for intervention and offers empirical data on the difficulties faced by students in environments with limited resources. The study also emphasizes the value of comprehensive support networks that take into account social connectedness, mental health, financial stability, and academic needs.

The results provide insight into these problems and can guide future research, institutional procedures, and policy choices that promote student achievement and well-being in Zimbabwe and

comparable settings. The ultimate objective is to promote a more resilient and encouraging higher education system that allows students to succeed in spite of structural obstacles.

Literature Review

A complex concept, student well-being has drawn more and more attention in international studies of higher education. Academic, social, emotional, and financial well-being are some of its many facets, and each is essential to students' overall growth and academic achievement [7]. In order to give a thorough grasp of these dimensions, their connections, and their applicability to the context of tertiary education in Zimbabwe, this section builds on the body of existing literature.

According to [7], students perceived academic performance, involvement in their coursework, and satisfaction with their learning environment are all components of academic well-being. According to research, students who have high academic well-being are more likely to be persistent, motivated, and successful [2]. The calibre of instruction, the accessibility of resources, and the degree to which coursework corresponds with students' interests and professional aspirations are important determinants of academic well-being. Institutions in high-income nations frequently use academic advising, mentorship programs, and active learning techniques to improve this aspect [2]. Nonetheless, issues like packed classrooms, antiquated resources, and restricted access to technology can seriously impair academic wellbeing in environments with limited resources, like Zimbabwe [5]. Furthermore, students' general well-being may be further jeopardized by stress and burnout brought on by the pressure to perform well academically, which is frequently made worse by competitive environments [1].

Another crucial component is social well-being, which includes connections with peers, a feeling of community, and institutional ties [2]. Strong social networks are especially crucial during the transition to tertiary education because they offer emotional support, lessen feelings of loneliness, and promote resilience [8]. Research from high-income nations emphasizes how inclusive campus policies, student organizations, and extracurricular activities can foster social well-being [2]. However, students in low-resource environments frequently encounter obstacles like substandard housing, a lack of social spaces, and cultural stigmas that can prevent them from forming networks of support [6]. Despite these obstacles, studies conducted in Sub-Saharan Africa have demonstrated that community and family ties frequently act as crucial protective factors, assisting students in overcoming both personal and academic obstacles [4].

Psychological states like stress, anxiety, and depression, as well as coping strategies and emotional resilience, are all components of mental and emotional well-being [1]. With studies showing high rates of anxiety, depression, and suicidal thoughts, the prevalence of mental health problems among university students is a growing global concern [1]. To address these issues, universities in high-income nations usually provide crisis intervention programs, mental health awareness campaigns, and counselling services [2]. However, mental health resources are frequently limited in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs), and students may be discouraged from seeking help due to cultural stigmas [1]. For example, students in Zimbabwe are forced to rely on unofficial support networks due to a shortage of mental health professionals and insufficient funding for mental health services [9]. As students struggle with uncertainty about their futures, the nation's economic instability makes mental health issues even worse [6].

The ability of students to pay for tuition, meet basic needs, and cope with financial stressors is referred to as financial well-being [6]. Financial hardship is a major concern for tertiary students in many LMICs, which frequently results in lower academic performance and dropout rates [6]. Students have found it especially challenging to obtain funding for their education due to Zimbabwe's economic crisis, which is marked by hyperinflation and currency instability [9]. Many students depend on loans, family support, or part-time work, which can cause them to lose focus on their studies and become more stressed [5]. A vicious cycle that compromises general well-being is created when financial stress is connected to worse mental health outcomes [1].

**Interconnections and contextual factors**

The components of well-being are intricately linked. For instance, mental health problems brought on by financial stress can harm social interactions and academic achievement [7]. Strong social support, on the other hand, can lessen the negative effects of academic and financial stressors, underscoring the significance of comprehensive interventions [4]. These connections are further complicated in Zimbabwe by the socioeconomic environment. Due to the absence of formal support networks, students frequently turn to unofficial networks and their own fortitude to get through difficult times [5]. This emphasizes the necessity of context-specific and culturally appropriate frameworks for well-being that take into account the particular difficulties faced by students in Zimbabwe.

Although there is a wealth of research on student well-being worldwide, relatively little of it has examined low-resource en-

vironments, especially in Sub-Saharan Africa [1]. The literature currently available on tertiary education in Zimbabwe has mostly focused on quality and access, paying little attention to students' overall wellbeing [5]. By placing global well-being frameworks within Zimbabwe's socioeconomic context and offering empirical data on the obstacles and protective factors pertinent to this setting, this study seeks to close this gap.

The foundation of this research is the Student Well-Being Model (SWBM) [7], which offers a thorough framework for examining the financial, social, emotional, and academic facets of well-being. The SWBM places a strong emphasis on how these dimensions interact dynamically as well as how institutional and environmental factors influence students' experiences. The study aims to produce insights that can guide focused interventions and policies by applying this model to the Zimbabwean context.

The enlarged literature review emphasizes how complex student well-being is and how urgently more research is needed in understudied areas like Zimbabwe. This study advances our knowledge of the obstacles and possibilities for improving student well-being in environments with limited resources by looking at the academic, social, emotional, and financial aspects of well-being. The results will guide suggestions for educators and policymakers who want to build a more resilient and encouraging higher education system in Zimbabwe.

**Methodology**

In order to thoroughly evaluate the various facets of student well-being in Zimbabwean tertiary institutions, this study used a mixed-methods research design. A comprehensive understanding of the obstacles and protective factors affecting student well-being is made possible by the combination of quantitative and qualitative approaches, which offer both statistical breadth and contextual depth. While the qualitative phase used focus groups to delve deeper into students lived experiences, the quantitative phase used structured surveys to measure well-being indicators across a large sample. This two-pronged strategy is in line with the Student Well-Being Model (SWBM) [7], which highlights how academic, social, emotional, and financial aspects are all interrelated.

Key indicators of student well-being across four domains were evaluated using Likert-scale items in the survey instrument, which was adapted from the SWBM. Using validated measures like the Depression Anxiety Stress Scales (DASS-21), questions focusing on stress, anxiety and depression symptoms, and coping strategies were used to assess mental and emotional well-being [1]. Partici-

pants’ assessments of their learning environment, self-perceived academic performance, and the demands of their academic workload were used to gauge their academic well-being. Items that evaluated peer relationships, sense of belonging, and participation in extracurricular activities were used to investigate social well-being. Finally, questions about students’ capacity to pay for tuition and essential living expenses as well as how much financial stress impacted their academic performance were used to gauge financial well-being.

To make sure it was clear, relevant, and culturally appropriate, 50 students participated in a pilot study of the survey. Pilot feedback resulted in minor wording changes and the addition of stressors that are specific to the local context for instance currency instability. Five tertiary colleges in Zimbabwe were chosen to represent both urban and rural environments, and surveys were distributed both in-person and electronically. There were 500 students who took part, and 85% of them responded. In order to account for seasonal variations in stress (such as exam periods), data collection took place over a period of three months. To guarantee representation across disciplines (STEM, humanities, vocational), gender, and academic year, stratified random sampling was employed. The participants’ ages ranged from 18 to 25, which is representative of Zimbabwe’s typical tertiary student population.

During the qualitative phase, semi-structured Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were conducted with 30 students, organized into six groups of five, to explore themes emerging from the prior survey. Held in private spaces on campus, each session lasted between 60 and 90 minutes and was audio-recorded with participants’ consent before being transcribed for analysis. An interview guide comprising open-ended questions—such as how financial challenges affect students’ daily lives and academic performance, what coping strategies they employ to manage stress, and how institutional support influences their well-being—was used to facilitate discussion. Probing questions were incorporated to delve deeper into emerging themes, including aspects like family support.

Purposively selected from the survey respondents, FGD participants represented a range of viewpoints like high/low stress levels, varying financial backgrounds. Rich, nuanced data was thus guaranteed. SPSS was used to analyze survey data that were quantitative in nature. Indicators of well-being were compiled using descriptive statistics (means, frequencies). Disparities by gen-

der, discipline, and institution were investigated using inferential statistics (t-tests, ANOVA). Relationships between financial stress and mental health were investigated using correlation analyses. In contrast, thematic analysis was used to examine the transcripts for qualitative analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Initial codes were created inductively for example “peer support,” “financial instability” and categorized into themes (e.g., for instance “economic barriers to well-being”). Data organization and visualization were facilitated by NVivo software. Validity was increased by triangulating survey results.

The study adhered to rigorous ethical standards to safeguard participant well-being and data integrity. Prior to participation, individuals were thoroughly informed about the study’s objectives, the voluntary nature of their involvement, and the measures in place to ensure confidentiality. Written consent was subsequently obtained from all participants. To uphold anonymity, survey responses were fully anonymized and focus group discussion (FGD) participants were identified using pseudonyms. All collected data were stored securely, with access restricted to the designated research team to maintain confidentiality. Furthermore, any students who exhibited signs of severe distress during the study were promptly referred to campus health services or local NGOs for appropriate support.

Numerous restrictions on the study might have affected its conclusions. Despite the use of stratified sampling, sampling bias was introduced because rural colleges were underrepresented because of accessibility issues. Concerns regarding social desirability bias were also raised by the use of self-reported data, particularly in focus group discussions where participants might have modified their answers to fit perceived expectations. Lastly, the research’s cross-sectional design makes it difficult to draw conclusions about causality, underscoring the necessity of longitudinal studies to gain a deeper understanding of the dynamics over time.

The research team acknowledged potential biases in interpreting financial stress and reflected on their roles as Zimbabwean scholars. Balanced analysis was ensured through frequent debriefing sessions. Through the combination of quantifiable trends and compelling narratives, this rigorous methodology offered a thorough understanding of student well-being in Zimbabwe. As explained in the discussion and recommendations sections, the results highlight the necessity of context-specific interventions.

Findings

The study’s findings reveal profound insights into the multifaceted challenges and resilience strategies of Zimbabwean tertiary students, contextualized within the academic, social, emotional, and financial dimensions of well-being. Below, the quantitative and qualitative results are expanded with deeper analysis, illustrative quotes, and sub-themes to enrich the discussion.

Mental and emotional well-being

The survey highlighted alarming levels of psychological distress among students. Sixty-five percent (65%) reported high stress levels, with 40% exhibiting symptoms consistent with anxiety or depression, as measured by the DASS-21 scale. Disaggregated data showed gender disparities: female students reported higher stress (72%) compared to male students (58%), potentially linked to societal expectations and caregiving burdens. Year of study also influenced outcomes, with final-year students experiencing heightened anxiety (50%) due to job-market uncertainties and academic pressures.

Academic well-being

Academic pressures emerged as a dominant stressor, with 70% of students identifying workload demands as a major challenge. STEM students reported higher stress (75%) than humanities peers (65%), correlating with rigorous curricula and limited resources (e.g., outdated lab equipment). Paradoxically, 55% expressed satisfaction with their chosen field, suggesting that passion for their disciplines coexisted with systemic barriers.

Financial well-being

Economic instability was pervasive: 80% struggled to afford tuition, while 68% faced food insecurity. Financial stress correlated strongly with mental health ( $r = 0.62, p < 0.01$ ), echoing global studies ([1] *et al.* 2018). Rural students were disproportionately affected, with 85% reporting financial hardship compared to 75% of urban peers, reflecting geographic inequities in resource distribution.

Social well-being

Despite challenges, 60% cited peer support as a critical buffer. Participation in clubs or religious groups was associated with 20% lower stress levels, underscoring the protective role of community. However, 30% of international students reported isolation, highlighting gaps in inclusive campus policies.

- Qualitative Insights- Voices from the Ground
- Financial Instability as a multidimensional barrier

Focus group discussions (FGDs) revealed how financial strain permeated all aspects of student life.

Academic participation

Students described skipping classes to work part-time jobs. One participant lamented, “I can’t afford textbooks, so I rely on notes from friends. It feels like I’m always behind.” (Male, Year 2, Rural College).

Social exclusion

Financial constraints limited engagement in extracurricular activities. A student shared, “Even joining a soccer team requires money for transport and kits. I stay in my dorm instead.” (Female, Year 3, Urban College).

Health sacrifices

Prioritizing tuition over basic needs was common. “I eat one meal a day to save for exam fees,” admitted a vocational student (Male, Year 1).

Sub-themes

Coping Mechanisms

Students employed adaptive strategies, such as:  
Informal Networks  
Pooling resources (e.g., shared groceries and textbooks).

Entrepreneurship  
Selling snacks or offering tutoring services.

Mental health resource gaps

FGDs underscored institutional neglect:  
Stigma and silence: “Counseling? We don’t have that here. You just pray or endure,” said a humanities student (Female, Year 4).

Staff shortages  
One urban college had a single psychologist for 5,000 students, leading to waitlists exceeding three months.

Sub-themes:  
Student-led solutions  
Peer mentoring initiatives emerged organically. “We check on each other during exams. Sometimes, just talking helps,” noted a participant (Male, Year 2).



Resilience through community ties

Familial and peer support was a recurring lifeline:  
Family sacrifices  
“My mother sells vegetables to pay my fees. I can’t fail her,”  
shared a tearful student (Female, Year 3).

Cultural strengths  
Collective problem-solving (e.g., “Mukando” groups rotating financial aid) mirrored traditional Ubuntu values.

The data revealed a layering of intersecting vulnerabilities that disproportionately affected certain student groups. Female students in STEM disciplines were particularly strained by the dual pressures of gender and financial bias, with 25% contemplating dropping out due to family tendencies to prioritize male education. Meanwhile, rural students experienced a significant academic setback, marked by an average 15% lag in performance (GPA below 2.5), a disparity largely attributed to infrastructural challenges such as unreliable electricity and limited internet connectivity, which hindered their ability to conduct research and keep pace academically.

Table 1: Stressors by Discipline.

	Discipline	Stress	Financial hardship
1.	STEM	75	82
2.	Humanities	65	78
3.	Vocational	68	85

Only 30% of participants reported having dependable internet data, even though 90% of them owned smartphones. This underscores the ongoing digital divide that exacerbates educational disparities. A culturally grounded resilience that is frequently disregarded in Western-centric psychological models is revealed by the interesting finding that 40% of respondents cited religious coping—relying on faith—as their main stress-reduction tactic.

Table 2: Protective Factors.

	Factor	% reporting benefit	Example quote
1.	Peer support	60	My roommate kept me going
2.	Family support	45	My dad’s letters give me hope
3.	Campus clubs	35	Debate club is my escape

The results highlight the necessity of changing policies to support integrated support centers, which combine academic advising, counseling, and financial aid into unified, easily accessible areas. In order to reduce obstacles to participation and connectivity, they also demand that digital equity funds be used to offer rural learners subsidized data bundles. The study also emphasizes the significance of culturally relevant strategies, like incorporating Ubuntu values into peer-led wellness programs. This enlarged analysis provides a basis for well-founded, context-sensitive interventions by elevating student perspectives and quantifying systemic issues. Future studies should look at these proposals’ long-term effects, especially how they might strengthen institutional-community partnerships.

Discussions

The study’s conclusions provide a clear picture of the intricate relationships that exist between Zimbabwean tertiary students’ academic, social, emotional, and financial well-being. The combination of the quantitative and qualitative data points to structural issues that are ingrained in the socioeconomic structure of the nation. The most common stressor was found to be financial instability, which has an impact on students’ academic performance and mental health in addition to their capacity to meet basic needs. This supports international research from other low-resource contexts, where students’ success is severely hampered by economic precarity [6]. But in Zimbabwe, there are particular aggravating factors like currency instability and hyperinflation that make financial stress worse in ways that are rarely observed in more stable economies [9].

Another important finding is the crisis in student mental health. A larger disregard for mental health support in higher education is reflected in the high prevalence of stress, anxiety, and depression symptoms, especially among female and final-year students. Although comparable patterns have been observed worldwide [1], these difficulties are exacerbated in Zimbabwe by the lack of mental health specialists and cultural stigmas. Although helpful, informal coping strategies like peer support and religious faith cannot take the place of professional intervention, as the qualitative data shows. This emphasizes how urgently accessible and culturally sensitive institutional mental health services are needed.

Students’ stress is exacerbated by academic pressures, especially in STEM fields. The conundrum of high job satisfaction and significant systemic obstacles (such as out-of-date materials and

excessive workloads) implies that students are enthusiastic about learning but are hampered by institutional shortcomings. This result is consistent with research from other LMICs, where academic potential is frequently hampered by resource limitations [5]. The intersectional nature of these issues is further highlighted by the gendered disparities in STEM, where female students are subjected to additional financial and social pressures.

Social well-being turned out to be a two-edged sword. Peer and family support, on the one hand, reinforced the value of community ties in Zimbabwean culture and acted as essential stress relievers. However, infrastructural and financial constraints hindered students' ability to participate fully in social activities, which exacerbated feelings of loneliness, especially for rural and international students. This dichotomy reflects the larger conflict between systemic neglect and resilience, where students' resourcefulness is continuously put to the test by financial and institutional setbacks.

Unexpected details like the part played by digital inequality and religious coping were also revealed by the study. Despite the widespread use of smartphones, the lack of access to trustworthy data highlights how technological advancements can unintentionally exacerbate inequality. The prevalence of faith as a coping strategy also necessitates a reassessment of Western-centric models of well-being, which frequently ignore resilience tactics unique to a given culture.

Conclusion

A thorough evaluation of student well-being in Zimbabwean tertiary institutions is given by this study, which reveals a landscape characterized by major obstacles as well as resiliency and communal strength. The results highlight the fact that student well-being is a complex concept impacted by interrelated academic, social, emotional, and financial factors rather than a single problem. Systemic failures that require immediate attention are highlighted by the widespread effects of financial instability and gaps in mental health resources. At the same time, interventions can be built on the protective role of cultural resilience, familial ties, and peer support.

With its distinct socioeconomic pressures, Zimbabwe calls for customized solutions that go beyond general frameworks for well-being. The local realities of hyperinflation, infrastructure deficiencies, and cultural stigmas necessitate context-specific strategies, even though international research offers insightful information. By elevating the perspectives of Zimbabwean students and providing empirical data to guide practice and policy, this study fills a significant gap in the literature.

The ultimate objective is to create a system of higher education that develops students' overall wellbeing in addition to producing graduates who are academically capable. In order to address the underlying causes of student stress and strengthen the protective factors that are already present in the student body, legislators, educators, and communities must work together.

Recommendations

To address the challenges identified in this study, the following recommendations are proposed.

Integrated support hubs

Centralized well-being hubs that integrate academic advising, mental health counselling, and financial aid should be established by educational institutions. By giving students a single point of contact, these hubs would lessen the fragmentation of services. For instance, a student who is having trouble paying their tuition might also seek counselling to help them cope with the stress that comes with it. Other LMICs, where resource limitations demand effective service delivery, have found success with this model ([2] et al. 2019).

Mental health infrastructure

Developing mental health services, such as employing qualified counsellors and putting peer support programs in place, must be a top priority for postsecondary institutions. Awareness campaigns run by student advocates could help normalize asking for help because mental health is stigmatized. To address staffing shortages, partnerships with regional or global NGOs may be able to offer financial support and training.

Financial aid reforms

Reducing financial stress requires increasing emergency grants, stipends, and scholarships. The most vulnerable groups, like women in STEM and students in rural areas, should be the focus of policies because they face additional obstacles. Creative solutions could also be investigated, such as income-sharing plans, in which students pay back their tuition after finding work.

Digital equity initiatives

Institutions should offer offline learning materials to students with limited internet access and subsidize data costs in order to close the digital divide. Inequities could be further reduced by expanding library hours and funding computer labs on campus.

Curriculum integration of well-being

Coursework and orientation programs should incorporate well-ness education. Students could gain useful skills from workshops on time management, financial literacy, and stress management. For instance, a required first-year course on resilience-building might incorporate both local coping mechanisms, like Ubuntu principles, and international research.

Community and peer-led programs

Institutions ought to establish peer mentorship programs in order to capitalize on Zimbabwe’s robust communal culture. With institutional support, student-led projects, such as “mukando” groups for financial pooling, could be expanded. Using town halls or newsletters to involve families in well-being programs could also improve networks of outside support.

Policy advocacy

Universities should support national policies that deal with issues like unemployment and currency instability that have an impact on students’ macroeconomic lives. Impact could be increased by working with the Ministry of Higher Education to obtain funds for well-being initiatives.

Longitudinal research

Future research should assess the long-term impacts of interventions and analyse the needs of students in Zimbabwe. Recommendations for tertiary institutions focus on addressing systemic challenges to foster academic, emotional, and social success. Collaboration and commitment are essential to support students effectively, contributing to a generation of resilient graduates. The study emphasizes the need for systemic support, highlighting that while student resilience is valuable, it cannot replace comprehensive educational support.

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