

Prospective Teachers' Views on the Impact of Competitive Educational Practices on Students

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ABSTRACT

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This study aims to determine “prospective teachers’ perspectives on the impact of competitive practices in formal basic education on students”. Bearing a descriptive qualitative nature, this research utilizes the phenomenology design among qualitative research methods. The research study group consists of 205 fourth-year students attending Gazi University, Gazi Faculty of Education during the 2021-2022 academic year spring semester. The study’s data were collected through an interview form created by the researcher. The research data were analyzed using the interpretative phenomenological analysis method, grouped by observation frequency and percentage distributions, and interpreted based on the relevant literature. According to the study’s findings, prospective teachers believe that competitive practices in education negatively affect students in terms of stress, blame, tension, hostility, ruthlessness, anxiety, pressure, exclusion, and violence. Ending such practices to protect students from the negative impacts of competitive practices in formal basic education can be recommended. Additionally, awareness among prospective teachers and teachers can be supported by including courses or topics related to competitive educational philosophy in teacher training and in-service training curricula.

Eğitimdeki Yarışmacı Uygulamaların Öğrenciler Üzerindeki Etkisine İlişkin Öğretmen Adaylarının Görüşleri

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Bu çalışmanın amacı, “örgün temel eğitimdeki yarışmacı uygulamaların öğrenciler üzerindeki etkisine ilişkin öğretmen adaylarının görüşleri”ni belirlemektir. Betimsel bir nitelik taşıyan araştırmada, nitel araştırma yöntemlerinden fenomenoloji deseni kullanılmıştır. Araştırmanın çalışma grubu, 2021-2022 öğretim yılı bahar döneminde Gazi Üniversitesi, Gazi Eğitim Fakültesinde öğrenim gören 205 dördüncü sınıf öğrencisinden oluşmaktadır. Araştırmanın verileri, araştırmacı tarafından oluşturulan görüş formu yardımıyla toplanmıştır. Araştırma verileri, gözlem sıklığı ve yüzdesel dağılımlara gruplandırılarak, yorumlayıcı fenomenolojik analiz yöntemiyle çözümlenmiş ve ilgili alanyazına dayalı olarak yorumlanmıştır. Araştırma sonuçlarına göre öğretmen adayları, eğitimdeki yarışmacı uygulamaların öğrencileri; stres, suçlama, gerginlik, düşmanlık, acımasızlık, kaygı, baskı, dışlanma, şiddet konularında daha çok olumsuz etkilediği görüşünde olduğu belirlenmiştir. Öğrencileri örgün temel eğitimdeki yarışmacı uygulamaların olumsuz etkisinden korumak için yarışmacı uygulamalara son verilmesi önerilebilir. Ayrıca, öğretmen yetiştirme ve hizmetiçi eğitimi öğretim programlarına yarışmacı eğitim anlayışına ilişkin ders veya konular eklenerek öğretmen adaylarının ve öğretmenlerin bilinçlenmesi desteklenebilir.

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INTRODUCTION

Although rivalry is commonly used instead of competition in everyday language and various disciplines, this study employs the term competition, its Turkish equivalent. In the current Turkish dictionary (Turkish Language Association [TLA], n.d.), competition is defined as the act of competing, contest, rivalry, striving to be superior to others, effort to gain superiority, contention among those pursuing the same goal, and the act of competing to demonstrate excellence in knowledge, skill, beauty, sports, and the like.

In their assessment of the psychology of competition, Garcia, Tor, and Elliot (2021) emphasized that competition primarily relates to individuals' subjective feelings, perceptions, motivations, intentions, and behaviors. Robbins and Judge (2007) define competition as a phenomenon arising because one party in contention desires to satisfy their own wishes, regardless of the impact on the other party. The term 'competition', used for activities occurring between two or more individuals, groups, organizations, institutions, powers, establishments, businesses, or systems, is frequently utilized in fields encompassing biology, sports, economics, business administration, environmental science, and the arts.

The concept of competition is also defined as the struggle for survival, explained by the conceptualization of natural selection (Darwin, 2017), used to explain evolution as a biological principle. However, Kropotkin (2001) states that Darwin's later works show a sense of solidarity and cooperation within the same species and that cooperation is a dominant phenomenon in nature and is essential for the survival and development of the species. Axelrod's (1984) answer to how cooperation and solidarity arise and stabilize supports this idea.

There are important studies and evaluations on the individual and social effects of the competition phenomenon, which is also used in different ways in the field of education. Analyzing the relationship between competition in education and social structure in detail, Butera, Swiatkowski, and Dompnier (2021) reveal how the dominant ideologies, values, and norms in society—such as neoliberalism, meritocracy, the free market, employment, and production—are transferred to education. Monbiot (2016) argues that neoliberalism sees competition as a defining feature of human relations. Hargreaves (1982) argues that the capitalist education system promotes individualism and competition rather than social solidarity and shared values, noting that educational norms oppose cooperative learning and encourage individuals to try and beat each other instead of social solidarity. Inglis (2004) argues that the main weakness of the British education system is its competitive nature and emphasizes that this is incompatible with the ideal of a good society. This finding can be shown as an essential example of how competition in education encompasses educational systems. However, the meaning attributed to the concept of competition may differ historically or periodically and may be understood differently from society to society. For example, Morgan (2010), who encountered a state of non-competition in a narrative about the lives of Aboriginal people, describes her experience as follows:

“... I suggested that they line up in a line and start running fast so that I could describe one of our races, and I told them that the fastest runner would be the winner. The tribespeople looked at me with their beautiful black eyes wide open, and one of them said, but if one person wins, all the others lose. What fun is that? Games are for fun. Why do you subject people to such an experience and try to make one person believe he is the real winner? It is really difficult for us to understand, but can your people accept it?”

Explaining this situation with the concept of ubuntu, Langa (2007) defines ubuntu as a universal human value that is used as a remedy against greed, cruelty, injustice, and violence caused by neoliberalism; a person who believes in ubuntu is open and positive towards others, does not feel threatened when others are good and talented, has self-confidence that comes from knowing that they are part of a larger whole, and feels humiliated when others are humiliated, degraded, brutalized, or

crushed.

In the related literature (Blanchard, 1989; Clifford, Cleary & Walster, 1972; Clinkenbeard, 1989; Crombag, 1966; Cropper, 1998; Deutsch, 1949; Gibson, Kincade & Frasier, 2013; Hwang & Chang, 2016; Johnson & Johnson, 1989:2009; Johnson, Johnson & Scott, 1978; Kohn, 1986; Lam & Seaton, 2016; Merino, Molina, Organero & Kloos, 2014; Ökmen, Şahin, Boyacı & Kılıç, 2019; Roweton, 1982; Tjosvold & Johnson, 2000; Ural, 2004, 2006, 2016), there are different studies on the competition. In these studies, competition was evaluated in relation to education as well as in general. The studies that consider competition in relation to education (Ames & Ames, 1981; Ames, 1984; Bergin, 1995; Blanchard, 1989; Butera, Swiatkowski & Dompnier, 2021; Cantador & Conde, 2010; Lam, Yim, Law & Cheung, 2001; Nelson & Dawson, 2017; Rhodes & Brickman, 2011; Stapesl & Koomen, 2005; Vallerand, Gauvin & Halliwell, 1986) have reached important findings regarding the effects of competition. Verhoeff (1997) noted that there is no consensus among educational theorists as to whether competitive desires should be encouraged or restricted within two groups: The ones who argue that education should transmit culture since competition is part of culture and institutional competition should be incorporated into education to help children become accustomed to it later in life; the ones who view competition as opposed to cooperation and therefore a destructive element in culture that should be restricted. Blanchard (1989) reviewed the literature on competitive behaviors in children: the socialization process of competitiveness, evolutionary foundations, early developmental processes, the relationship between competition and aggression, gender differences, competition and cooperation, anthropological perspectives, the effects of competition, assimilated values, stress, and anxiety. They stated that competitive behavior has many types, has a multifactorial basis, has a complex interrelationship with other developmental phenomena, is closely related to stress, and can be a positive developmental feature in terms of success when applied in a balanced way, but excessive or inappropriate competition can also be harmful. Nelson and Dawson's (2017) studies also show that competitive environments lead to the formation of negative emotions such as fear of rejection, constant need for approval, overly competitive attitudes, feeling worthless, stress, anxiety, and depression. Kohn (1986) reviewed the empirical research on whether competition is better than collaboration in many fields such as education, sports, performing arts, and psychology and concluded that competition generally leads to less creativity, lower performance, and less satisfaction. Similarly, Johnson and Johnson (2009), in a review of studies on the effects of competition-based learning, individual learning, and cooperative learning on achievement, concluded that cooperative learning leads to more positive results than individual and competition-based learning in areas such as forming high-level logic, generating new ideas and solutions, and transferring knowledge learned in one situation to other areas. Deutsch (1949) stated that cooperative relationships show a number of positive characteristics, such as more effective communication and coordination, open and friendly attitudes, a sense of reciprocity, and a desire to increase the power of the other, while competitive processes tend to lead to adverse effects such as impeded communication, an inability to coordinate activities, suspicion, a lack of self-confidence, and a desire to reduce the power of the other and dominate them. Telser (1987) argues that an efficient economic equilibrium depends on an optimal combination of cooperation and competition. In the face of all these effects of competition, everyone, especially educational scientists, needs to be sensitive to the issue of competition in education, taking into account English's (2004) warning that there is a struggle for survival in an ever-more competitive world. The natural co-existence of cooperation and competition needs to be grasped and understood through sociological imagination—what Mills (1979) calls human diversity, including the individual diversity of existence.

In Turkey, the grading and differentiation of schools at the basic education level and the conditioning of transitions between grades reveal the competitive character of the education system. In addition, the problematic structure of the higher education subsystem and the practices related to the transition to higher education have shaped the basic education subsystem through a competitive education approach (Ural, 2004, 2006, 2016). The competitive nature of the Turkish education system is

clearly seen in the 739 exams taken during the formal education process, from primary school to university (Education and Science Laborers Union [ESWU] 2008). The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (United Nations [UN], n.d.), which guarantees the right to education, leaves the initiative regarding the duration, type, and structure of the school(s) to be included in the basic education process to the state authorities—the government. This understanding, which was also reflected in Turkey, paved the way for the emergence of different school durations, types, and structures with educational policies in line with the ideology adopted by the governments. In 2012, with a legal regulation (İlköğretim ve Eğitim Kanunu ile Bazı Kanunlarda Değişiklik Yapılmasına Dair Kanun [Law on Amendments to the Primary Education and Education Law and Some Laws], 2012), the 8-year compulsory uninterrupted education introduced in 1997 was extended to 12 years and transformed into an interrupted structure. This structure, which is still in effect today, consists of four years of primary, middle, and high school education and reflects the school system in Turkey. This arrangement, which re-graded uninterrupted primary education (elementary school, middle school, or high school) and interrupted it, has also created results supporting the education system's competitive character. In Turkey, which has an education system with high inequalities between schools (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD], 2023) and a high number of school types, the competitive understanding of education has become deeply rooted in the rapidly increasing commercial-private schooling (Ural, 2016) in parallel with the marketization of education. In the Turkish education system, from when compulsory education was not part of the education system until today, a culture of open and implicit competition has been created for high school entrance and university entrance. These competitive educational practices have created a shadow education system consisting of courses, study centers, tuition centers, and other similar elements in and out of schools. The social and individual consequences of this process have been the subject of research in various aspects. Competitive practices that permeate every level of the education system like discrimination, hurt, humiliation, exclusion, abuse, exploitation, insecurity, miscommunication, falsification, misleading, focusing on the negative, excessive control, psychological and physiological violence, glorifying academic success, supporting elitist education, making public education defective, increase in exams, the understanding of one-way evaluation of the individual have led to consequences such as inhibition of self-development, social isolation, deprivation, distancing from altruistic behavior, restriction of freedoms, threat to child welfare, alienation, decrease in curiosity and imagination, and inhibition of creativity (Ural, 2004, 2006, 2016). In this process, the teacher's attitude, the education system's main component, towards competitive practices in education is an important determinant. In fact, the attitude of the teacher, who is limited to the role of a passive transmitter technician teacher (Aronowitz & Giroux, 1985; Giroux & McLaren, 1986; Giroux, 1991; Kumaravadivelu, 2003; Ural, 2020, 2021), in banker education (Freire, 1991), systems structured based on traditional mainstream education understanding are even more important. In schools, which Althusser (2003) characterized as the ideological apparatus of the state, one way to confront the definition of the teacher by the government (Ural, 2003) is for the teacher to protect students from the harmful effects of competitive practices in education. This research is vital in determining prospective teachers' positions on this issue. The fact that prospective teachers have observed and been exposed to competitive education practices at every stage of the formal education process and that they will be involved in the practice as teachers in their professional lives makes their views on this issue crucial. This study aims to determine prospective teachers' views on the effects of competitive practices on students in formal basic education.

METHOD

In this descriptive study, phenomenology design (Creswell, 2013; Merriam, 2009), one of the qualitative research methods, was used. According to Creswell (2013), the phenomenological study defines the common meaning of the experiences of many individuals about a concept or phenomenon. The participants of the study were 205 fourth-grade students studying in thirteen different departments

of Gazi University, Gazi Faculty of Education, in the academic year 2021-2022. The data for the study were collected with the help of a structured opinion form about the effects of competitive practices in education on students. Punch (2005) stated that the main feature of a structured interview is that the questions and response categories are standardized and arranged in a certain order. In the creation of the opinion form used in the study, the process of creating a pool of propositions, structuring them, and evaluating them as suggested by Schwab (1980) was followed. In the creation of the suggestion pool, the relevant literature (Bloom, 1979; Çetinkanat, 2005; Ural, 2012) was reviewed, and 58 qualities and/or areas related to the student's being affected by the competitive practices used in the formal education process were identified. In the second stage, the options for the participants to express their opinions about the effect of the qualification and/or field variables on each other in the opinion form were determined. These options were expressed as follows: the competitive practice in formal basic education does not affect the student, positively affects, negatively affects, and positively-negatively affects. In the last stage, to ensure the validity and reliability of the opinion form, two experts read it in terms of language and expression appropriateness, and their criticisms and suggestions were utilized. After the necessary corrections, the opinion form, which consisted of 52 qualities and areas, was reduced to 45 qualities and areas by presenting it to the evaluations of experts in pedagogy, andragogy, psychology, sociology, guidance, psychological counseling, child development, and social work, which are the academic fields related to the subject. The relevant opinion form was applied by the researcher in the spring semester of 2022, following the permission numbered 2022-246 obtained from the Gazi University Ethics Committee. At this stage, the data were analyzed with descriptive statistics. The frequencies and percentages of the participant opinions expressed for each judgment in the opinion form were determined. With this description, the general distribution of the participant's views on the subject was shown in the frequency table.

The frequency table shows what measurements were observed, the number of repetitions, and how many individuals took which measurements (Aricı, 1998). The research data, grouped according to observation frequency and percentage distributions, were analyzed with the interpretative phenomenological analysis method and interpreted based on the relevant literature. The interpretative phenomenological analysis method is defined as an approach that facilitates a more holistic understanding of the experience through data collected from participants who experience the same phenomenon in a certain context (Larkin, Saw & Flowers, 2018; Moustakas, 1994; Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009; Smith, Jarman & Osborn, 1999; van Manen, 1990). Smith, Fhowers and Larkin (2009) stated that the interpretative phenomenological analysis method, which they defined as a participant-oriented tradition, will be used to analyze the meanings that people attribute to their experiences in the selected subject through what they say or write and draw attention to the necessity of the interpretive participation of the listener or reader—the researcher—in making sense of what is said or written in the application of the method. Therefore, in the application of the interpretative phenomenological analysis method, on the one hand, the researcher makes sense of the participant, and on the other hand, the participant makes sense of the researcher.

FINDINGS / RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The opinions of prospective teachers on the effects of competitive practices in formal basic education on students are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. *Prospective Teachers' Views on the Effects of Competitive Practices in Formal Basic Education on Students*

No	In formal basic education competitive practices,	does not affect.		positively affects.		negatively affects.		positively and negatively affects.	
		f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%

Prospective Teachers' Views on the Impact of Competitive Educational Practices on Students

1	... social bond among students	3	1,44	50	23,92	99	47,37	57	27,27
2	... student's freedom	30	14,35	63	30,14	63	30,14	52	24,88
3	... student's stress	5	2,39	111	53,11	60	28,71	31	14,83
4	... discrimination among students	33	15,79	98	46,89	52	24,88	25	11,96
5	... students blaming each other	21	10,05	103	49,28	48	22,97	34	16,27
6	... tension among students	15	7,18	119	56,94	44	21,05	31	14,83
7	... feeling of hostility in students	37	17,70	111	53,11	32	15,31	28	13,40
8	... feeling of cruelty in students	42	20,10	103	49,28	35	16,75	28	13,40
9	... emotional development of the student	11	5,26	53	25,36	79	37,80	65	31,10
10	... social development of the student	3	1,44	38	18,18	77	36,84	90	43,06
11	... students caring about each other	12	5,74	47	22,49	72	34,45	78	37,32
12	... anxiety in students	11	5,26	108	51,67	59	28,23	31	14,83
13	... pressure on students	13	6,22	126	60,29	43	20,57	27	12,92
14	... feeling of exclusion in students	28	13,40	103	49,28	43	20,57	34	16,27
15	... cooperative behavior in students	3	1,44	46	22,01	62	29,67	98	46,89
16	... communication among students	3	1,44	40	19,14	72	34,45	94	44,98
17	... students' valuing each other	11	5,26	48	22,97	72	34,45	78	37,32
18	... student's self-confidence	2	0,96	42	20,10	78	37,32	85	40,67
19	... inequality among students	34	16,27	79	37,80	61	29,19	35	16,75
20	... sense of solidarity in the student	5	2,39	51	24,40	59	28,23	92	44,02
21	... student's altruistic attitude	17	8,13	55	26,32	65	31,10	71	33,97
22	... student's sense of justice	13	6,22	40	19,14	73	34,93	83	39,71
23	... student's individuality	22	10,53	48	22,97	65	31,10	73	34,93
24	... friendship among students	6	2,87	46	22,01	85	40,67	72	34,45
25	... student's self-development	10	4,78	44	21,05	67	32,06	87	41,63
26	... student's moral development	22	10,53	37	17,70	78	37,32	72	34,45
27	... student's learning	6	2,87	33	15,79	68	32,54	100	47,85
28	... student's self-actualization	12	5,74	41	19,62	59	28,23	97	46,41
29	... student's happiness	7	3,35	36	17,22	100	47,85	66	31,58
30	... student's academic success	8	3,83	22	10,53	98	46,89	80	38,28
31	... student's artistic development	41	19,62	33	15,79	62	29,67	71	33,97
32	... student's aesthetic feelings	47	22,49	33	15,79	58	27,75	71	33,97
33	... student's ability to engage in dialogue	12	5,74	28	13,40	69	33,01	99	47,37
34	... student's tendency towards violence	46	22,01	90	43,06	49	23,44	23	11,00
35	... lying behavior in students	37	17,70	79	37,80	63	30,14	30	14,35
36	... student's effectiveness	19	9,09	40	19,14	59	28,23	89	42,58
37	... student's scientific attitude	18	8,61	35	16,75	62	29,67	92	44,02
38	... student's sense of responsibility	12	5,74	26	12,44	57	27,27	114	54,55
39	... socialization status of the student	16	7,66	39	18,66	57	27,27	97	46,41
40	... student's critical thinking	9	4,31	36	17,22	62	29,67	102	48,80
41	... student's creativity	14	6,70	40	19,14	51	24,40	101	48,33
42	... student's democratic attitude	16	7,66	37	17,70	74	35,41	80	38,28
43	... student's anger management	22	10,53	77	36,84	62	29,67	47	22,49
44	... student's self-expression	12	5,74	33	15,79	65	31,10	99	47,37
45	... student's cognitive development	11	5,26	32	15,31	65	31,10	100	47,85

According to Table 1, the prospective teachers who participated in the study state that the competitive practices in education have a low-level effect on the developmental areas of the students and that they have a positive/negative effect at a high level. These findings show that prospective teachers taking part in the education system have an important sensitivity towards competitive practices in education. These findings are mainly similar to the general results of the studies in the related literature (Deutsch, 1949; Humphreys, 2001; Johnson & Johnson, 2009; Kohn, 1986; Lam, Yim, Law & Cheung, 2001; Nelson & Dawson, 2017; Ökmen, Şahin, Boyacı & Kılıç, 2019; Vallerand, Gauvin & Halliwell, 1986). This similarity suggests that competitive practices and environments in education are concentrated in areas related to negative emotions and states in students, such as:

- fear of rejection,
- need for constant validation,
- feeling worthless,
- stress,

- anxiety,
- less creativity,
- lower success-performance-,
- lower satisfaction,
- blocked communication,
- lower coordination,
- less open and friendly attitudes,
- less sense of reciprocity,
- lack of self-confidence,
- shyness,
- timidity,
- silence,
- addiction,
- aggression,
- closedness to new experiences,
- fear of failure,
- perfectionism,
- less perception of competence,
- less intrinsic motivation,
- desire to dominate and reduce the power of the other,
- less high-level reasoning,
- less likely to generate new ideas and solutions,
- less likely to transfer knowledge learned in one situation to other areas, and
- depression.

Kohn (1986) argues that, contrary to popular belief, competition is not the basis of human nature and that it poisons relationships and prevents individuals from doing their best, ultimately turning everyone into losers. In order to fully explain the effects of competitive education practices that affect individual and social life so much, the concept of embeddedness (Polanyi, 2016) should be used because the results of competitive education practices are not only related to the subjective well-being of the individual in the school-education process (Ryan & Deci, 2000) but also to the working-life workplaces, which, as Bauman (2018) states, have turned into a particularly intense and fierce competition field. Moreover, given the relationship between education and democratic values (Dewey, 1996; Skovsmose, 1994), the market strategies embedded in competitive educational practices call into question the tendency (Engel, 2000) that by supporting the market reform of education, democratic educational reform will also be supported. The competitive education approach has an effect that leads to social and societal segregation through the inequalities it supports and reproduces (Bourdieu & Passeron, 2015). Wilkins (2012) also draws attention to the concrete relationship between the competitive education approach and neoliberal ideology and identifies that competitive practices in education convey individualist and marketist values. Foucault (2013) points out that contemporary authority wants to keep everyone under surveillance and that the child is individualized by being surrounded by the school. As a result of the meritocratic tendency, the function of education to prepare for life, which is based on the idea of preparing the individual for future tasks, is an important illusion. Dewey (1997) rightly

characterizes this situation as the sacrifice of an individual's current potential for a hypothetical future. Preventing and limiting the childhood and youth period, which should be experienced as an enthusiastic life process with a competitive education approach, can be considered a clear attack on the right to life. However, education is the fundamental tool for establishing, developing, and sustaining a democratic society where solidarity of purpose and action prevails. Therefore, in a participatory democracy, education is charged with raising fully developed individuals capable of controlling and transforming their own lives. Basic education should aim at raising citizens capable of thinking, questioning, understanding, criticizing, and acting in a way that will enable qualified participation in public life. Kohn (1986) attributes the widespread acceptance of competitiveness, which lacks theoretical and empirical support, to the fact that individuals judge themselves in relation to others and feel good when their competitors fail. It is problematic that in the educational process, the individual—the student—is made to feel that they must be the best in every field and subject. Drawing attention to the use of education as a mechanism that creates internalized authority, Spring (1997) defends the free individual against the educated individual. It is possible to reach the mechanical and organic solidarity described by Durkheim (2006) by using cooperative learning (Johnson & Johnson, 2015) and dialogic learning (Freire, 1991) instead of the competitive education approach that is widely used in education.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

According to the research, it was concluded that prospective teachers were of the opinion that competitive practices in education were effective in students' developmental areas. The study shows that the life balance of an individual can be disrupted by increasing competition and rivalry, which is a natural component of a healthy life, above its optimum level. Rather than judging that competition in education is neither completely good nor completely bad, it should be evaluated in relation to its purpose and field of use. This study also shows how the competitive education approach is reproduced through education. Competitive ideologies, values, and norms are explicitly or implicitly transmitted through the dominant educational practices in the education system. In this process, neoliberal and neoconservative ideologies, meritocracy, free-market beliefs and values, and norms, such as productivity and employability are widely adopted. Capitalist education systems—K-12 and higher education—are built on competitive goals, values, and behaviors. This has been achieved by facilitating the dominance of the competitive education approach over the purpose, structure, process, and climate dimensions of education systems. Those who support the competitive education approach argue that the competition exams are open to everyone within the framework of equal opportunity. However, the contest or competition carried out under unequal conditions and circumstances condemns equality of opportunity and remains rhetorical. The relationship between students' exposure to competitive educational practices and their subjective well-being levels can be investigated.

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