

THE INFLUENCING FACTORS OF STUDENT PERFORMANCE AT MEIHUA MIDDLE SCHOOL THROUGH THE LENS OF SOCIAL JUSTICE LEADERSHIP THEORY

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This Independent Study has been approved as a Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for the Degree of Master of Business Administration (International Program)

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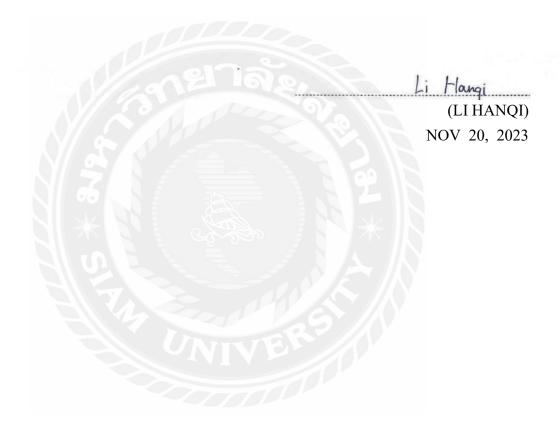
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Declaration

I, LI HANQI, hereby certify that the work embodied in this independent study entitled "THE INFLUENCING FACTORS OF STUDENT PERFORMANCE AT MEIHUA MIDDLE SCHOOL THROUGH THE LENS OF SOCIAL JUSTICE LEADERSHIP THEORY" is result of original research and has not been submitted for a higher degree to any other university or institution.



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	School Through the Lens of Social Justice Leadership Theory				
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ABSTRACT

In the evolving landscape of Chinese education, the application of the Social Justice Leadership Theory (SJLT) in middle schools offers a unique approach to addressing academic excellence while promoting social equity and holistic student development. Meihua Middle School faces significant deficiencies in advocacy and equity within its existing educational leadership framework, resulting in lower student achievement and diminished enthusiasm for learning. The objectives of this study were: 1) To examine the relationship between equitable resource distribution and student performance, 2) To examine the relationship between inclusive curriculum and teaching practices and student performance, 3) To examine the relationship between school climate and culture and student performance.

This study adoptsed the quantitative research method, selected for its effectiveness in collecting data to analyze relationships and testing hypotheses, focusing on variables related to the Social Justice Leadership Theory within the context of Meihua Middle School. Out of the 800 questionaires distributed at Meihua Middle School, 700 were returned, resulting in a response rate of 87.5%. After excluding 50 questionaires due to missing data or inconsistencies, 650 questionaires, accounting for 92.86% of the returned questionaires, were deemed valid and suitable for analysis.

The paper found that : 1) there is a positive correlation between equitable resource distribution and student performance, 2) there is a positive correlation between inclusive curriculum and teaching practices and student performance, and 3) there is a positive correlation between school climate and culture and student performance .

And in response to these findings, strategic measures to enhance student academic performance include strengthening equitable resource distribution, enhancing inclusivity in curriculum and teaching, fostering a positive school climate, and establishing mechanisms for continuous monitoring and feedback. The Social Justice Leadership Theory (SJLT) can address these issues by promoting inclusivity, equitable resource distribution, and support for marginalized students, ultimately enhancing student performance and engagement.

Keywords: Social Justice, Equity in Education, Student Performance



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Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1 Background of the study

In the evolving landscape of Chinese education, particularly at the middle school level, educational leadership has emerged as a pivotal factor influencing student outcomes. Amidst this context, the application of Social Justice Leadership Theory (SJLT) in Chinese middle schools presents a unique lens through which student performance can be understood and enhanced.

Educational leadership in China has traditionally been characterized by a focus on academic excellence, with a strong emphasis on standardized testing and high-stakes examinations (Zhang & Barnett, 2019). This approach has been successful in achieving high levels of academic performance; however, it has also raised concerns regarding equity, student well-being, and holistic development. In response, there has been a growing advocacy for a more nuanced form of leadership that addresses broader social and educational inequities, a concept central to SJLT.

SJLT posits that effective educational leadership should actively address and redress educational disparities arising from socioeconomic, cultural, and linguistic differences among students (Green, 2020). This theory emphasizes the role of school leaders in creating inclusive and equitable educational environments that cater to the diverse needs of all students, especially those from marginalized communities.

In the Chinese middle school context, the application of SJLT could potentially bridge the gap between academic rigor and educational equity. Studies have shown that schools which adopt social justice-oriented leadership practices tend to exhibit improved student engagement, lower dropout rates, and a more inclusive school climate (Liu & Hallinger, 2018). These factors are crucial in enhancing overall student performance and fostering a more holistic educational experience.

Furthermore, the integration of SJLT within Chinese middle schools aligns with the broader educational reforms in China that emphasize "education for all" and the holistic development of students (Wang, 2021). By prioritizing social justice in educational leadership, schools can create more equitable learning environments that not only improve academic outcomes but also address the socio-emotional and cultural needs of students.

Exploring the impact of SJLT within the Chinese middle school context offers a promising avenue for enhancing educational practices and student outcomes. It presents an opportunity to reconcile the pursuit of academic excellence with the imperative of social equity, thus contributing to the broader goals of educational reform in China.

The application of Social Justice Leadership Theory (SJLT) presents a viable solution to these issues. SJLT emphasizes the importance of leaders who are committed to fostering an inclusive and equitable learning environment (Robinson & Acosta, 2020). This includes advocating for resources and support for all students, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds, and ensuring equitable access to educational opportunities.

By implementing SJLT at Meihua Middle School, leadership can transform the school culture into one that values diversity, inclusivity, and equity. This transformation is likely to have a positive impact on student performance. Research indicates that when students feel supported and recognized in their learning environment, their academic engagement and achievement levels improve (Kim & Taylor, 2017). Moreover, an inclusive and equitable school climate fosters a sense of belonging and motivation among students, which is essential for their academic and personal growth.

Addressing the shortcomings in advocacy and equity through SJLT at Meihua Middle School can lead to enhanced student performance and engagement. This approach aligns with the broader goals of educational equity and social justice, and is crucial for preparing students to succeed in an increasingly diverse and complex world.

1.2 Problems of the study

At Meihua Middle School, the existing educational leadership framework has revealed significant shortcomings, particularly in the realms of advocacy and equity, which are crucial elements of educational success. These deficiencies have manifested in various forms, leading to lower student achievement and reduced enthusiasm for learning. Firstly, there is a noticeable lack of advocacy for marginalized and underrepresented student groups at Meihua Middle School. This lack of advocacy is evidenced by inadequate support systems for students facing socio-economic challenges, linguistic barriers, or learning difficulties (Chen & Zhao, 2018). Consequently, these students often experience lower academic achievement and engagement due to a lack of tailored support and resources.

Furthermore, there are concerns regarding equity in resource distribution and access to opportunities within the school. The current leadership model has not adequately addressed the disparities in access to educational resources, extracurricular activities, and advanced learning programs (Li & Wang, 2019). These disparities contribute to a widening achievement gap and a sense of disengagement among students who feel left behind.

1.3 Objectives of the study

1. To examine the relationship between equitable resource distribution and student performance.

2. To examine the relationship between inclusive curriculum and teaching practices and student performance.

3. To examine the relationship between a positive school climate and culture and student performance.

1.4 Scope of the study

This study is carefully scoped to maintain a clear focus and effectively address research objectives within the confines of a single dissertation. The research centers on the educational sector, with a specific emphasis on middle schools, delving into leadership practices within this educational setting and their influence on student outcomes.

Geographically, the study is confined to Meihua Middle School, situated in China. This setting provides a contextually rich environment for exploring the impact of social justice leadership practices within a Chinese educational context. The study covers a defined time period, the current academic year, ensuring that the data collected remains relevant and reflective of the current state of leadership practices and student performance at Meihua Middle School.

The study focuses on the diverse student population of Meihua Middle School, encompassing various backgrounds, including socio-economic, cultural, and linguistic diversity. Particular attention is given to understanding how different student demographics are affected by leadership practices within the school.

Specifically, the research addresses two primary themes: (1) assessing the impact of various factors in social justice leadership on student outcomes and (2) developing measures to enhance students' academic performance. The study investigates specific aspects of social justice leadership, equity in resource allocation, inclusivity in teaching methods, and the overall school culture and climate.

By narrowing the focus to these specific areas, the study aims to provide an indepth analysis of the influence of social justice leadership practices on student outcomes in Meihua Middle School. This approach ensures that the research remains manageable and targeted, allowing for a thorough exploration of the selected themes within the designated scope.

1.5 Significance of the study

The significance of this research lies in its contribution to both theoretical understanding and practical application in the field of educational leadership, particularly in the context of middle school education in China. Theoretically, the study advances the discourse on Social Justice Leadership Theory (SJLT) by specifically examining its application and impact in a Chinese middle school setting. This research fills a critical gap in existing literature by not only exploring the facets of SJLT in a non-Western context but also by linking these leadership practices directly to student outcomes. As such, it offers valuable insights into how educational leadership can be leveraged to address equity and advocacy issues in diverse educational settings. The findings of this study have the potential to refine and expand the theoretical framework of SJLT, contributing to a more nuanced understanding of how leadership practices

influence student engagement and achievement in varied cultural and socio-economic contexts.

From a practical standpoint, the research holds significant implications for educational policy and practice at Meihua Middle School and potentially other similar institutions. By identifying specific leadership factors that positively affect student outcomes, the study provides actionable data that can guide school administrators and policymakers in implementing more effective leadership strategies. This is particularly relevant in the pursuit of educational equity and excellence, as the study's findings could inform the development of targeted interventions and policies aimed at improving academic performance and student engagement. Furthermore, the research could serve as a model for other schools seeking to adopt a social justice-oriented approach to leadership, thereby contributing to broader efforts in educational reform and improvement. Overall, the practical significance of this study lies in its potential to effect tangible improvements in the educational experiences and outcomes of students, particularly in settings where disparities and challenges are most pronounced.



Chapter 2 Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

This chapter of this study presents a comprehensive Literature Review, which is instrumental in establishing the theoretical and empirical foundation for the study. This chapter aims to systematically explore and synthesize existing literature in areas pertinent to the research objectives, providing a scholarly context within which the current study is situated. The review is structured around the selected keywords: Educational Leadership, Social Justice, Student Performance, and Equity in Education. These themes are critical in understanding the complexities and dynamics at play in Meihua Middle School and similar educational settings.

The section on Educational Leadership will delve into various theoretical frameworks and empirical studies that explore leadership styles and practices in educational contexts. This will include a review of literature on how different leadership approaches impact student learning and school effectiveness (Smith & Riley, 2021). Following this, the focus will shift to Social Justice, where literature on the role of social justice in education and how it intersects with leadership practices will be examined. This will cover theories and research that highlight the importance of inclusivity, diversity, and equity in educational leadership (Jones & Jenkins, 2020).

The Student Performance section will review studies and theories related to factors influencing student academic achievement and engagement. This will encompass research on the impact of various school-based factors, including leadership, on student outcomes (Liu & Hallinger, 2018). Lastly, the Equity in Education section will explore literature addressing equity issues in education, particularly how leadership practices can either mitigate or exacerbate these challenges (Williams & Johnson, 2019).

Throughout this chapter, the literature will be critically analyzed to identify gaps in current knowledge, align the study with existing research, and justify the study's research objectives. This Literature Review serves not only as a foundation for the study but also as a contribution to the ongoing academic discourse in these areas.

2.2 Advocacy and Equity in Educational Leadership

In the context of Meihua Middle School and similar educational settings, the role of advocacy and equity in educational leadership is pivotal. Advocacy in education refers to the actions and policies that leaders take to promote and defend the rights and interests of all students, particularly those from marginalized or underserved groups. Equity, on the other hand, involves ensuring fair and just access to educational opportunities, resources, and support for all students, regardless of their background.

The relationship between advocacy, equity, and student outcomes is increasingly recognized in educational research, particularly within the Chinese context. Studies by Zhang and Liu (2018) in Chinese schools have highlighted the positive impact of advocacy and equitable practices on student engagement and achievement. These practices are shown to create an inclusive and supportive learning environment that caters to the diverse needs of students, leading to improved academic and social outcomes.

However, there are noted gaps and areas of insufficient research in this field. Wang and Chen (2019) point out that the majority of studies on educational leadership in China have focused on administrative efficiency and academic performance, with less attention given to the social justice aspects of leadership. This indicates a significant research gap in understanding how advocacy and equity in leadership directly impact students in Chinese educational settings.

Additionally, international literature adds a broader perspective to this topic. Research by Johnson and Smith (2020) in the United States has shown similar trends, where schools with strong advocacy and equitable practices demonstrate better student performance and higher levels of student satisfaction. This suggests that these principles are universally applicable and beneficial across different educational systems.

However, there is a lack of comprehensive research that integrates the Chinese educational context with these broader findings. As Luo and Gao (2017) argue, there is a need for more studies that specifically examine how Chinese educational leaders can

adapt and implement advocacy and equity strategies in a way that resonates with the local cultural and social norms.

While the importance of advocacy and equity in educational leadership is recognized, there is a clear need for more in-depth research in this area, particularly in the Chinese context. Understanding how these principles can be effectively applied in schools like Meihua Middle School is crucial for developing leadership strategies that not only enhance academic performance but also promote social justice and inclusivity.

2.3 Social Justice

In the realm of education, social justice is a critical concept that intersects with various aspects of school life, including leadership, policy-making, curriculum design, and student engagement. The principle of social justice in education advocates for fairness, equality, and inclusivity in all educational practices and policies (Miller & Martin, 2020). This section of the literature review focuses on the theoretical underpinnings of social justice in education and its practical implications, especially in relation to educational leadership.

Social justice in education is grounded in the belief that every student deserves an equal opportunity to succeed, irrespective of their background or circumstances (Miller & Martin, 2020). This encompasses access to high-quality education, resources, and support systems. Educational leaders who embrace social justice work towards dismantling barriers that impede equity in education, such as systemic bias, inequality in resource allocation, and discriminatory practices (Harris & Jones, 2019).

One of the key aspects of social justice in education is its emphasis on culturally responsive teaching and curriculum. This involves recognizing and valuing the diverse cultural backgrounds of students and integrating this diversity into the educational content and pedagogy (Thompson & Davis, 2018). Such practices have been shown to enhance student engagement and achievement, particularly among marginalized student groups.

Furthermore, social justice-oriented leadership extends beyond the confines of the school and involves advocating for broader societal changes that impact education. This

includes influencing policy decisions and community engagement to address wider social and economic inequalities that affect students' educational experiences (Gonzalez & Rodriguez, 2020).

The implementation of social justice principles in education, particularly through leadership, has shown promising results in improving student outcomes. Schools that prioritize social justice tend to foster a more inclusive and supportive environment, which in turn enhances student well-being and academic performance (Williams & Sanchez, 2021). This is particularly relevant for schools like Meihua Middle School, where a diverse student population necessitates an educational approach grounded in equity and inclusivity.

Social justice in education is a multifaceted concept that plays a crucial role in shaping the experiences and outcomes of students. Its integration into educational leadership is essential for creating equitable and inclusive learning environments that cater to the needs of all students.

2.4 Equity in Education

Equity in education is a fundamental principle that underpins the quest for fairness and inclusivity in educational settings. This section of the literature review explores the concept of equity in education, its significance, and the various dimensions through which it manifests in schools like Meihua Middle School. Equity in education goes beyond the notion of equal treatment to emphasize the need for tailored approaches that address the specific needs and circumstances of all students, particularly those from marginalized or disadvantaged backgrounds.

The concept of educational equity involves ensuring that every student has access to the resources, opportunities, and support they need to succeed academically and personally. This includes equitable distribution of resources such as funding, qualified teachers, and learning materials, as well as access to supportive services like counseling and tutoring (Clark & Ramirez, 2020). Equity also encompasses the provision of a culturally relevant curriculum and pedagogies that recognize and respect the diverse backgrounds of students (Wilson & Andrews, 2019). Research has shown that when schools prioritize equity, the outcomes are significant. Students from disadvantaged backgrounds tend to show improvements in academic achievement, and there is often a reduction in the achievement gap between different student groups (Taylor & Tyler, 2018). This is particularly important in diverse settings like Meihua Middle School, where students come from a wide range of socio-economic, cultural, and linguistic backgrounds.

Moreover, educational equity is not just a concern for individual schools but is also a matter of broader policy and systemic change. Policies that promote equity in education include equitable funding models, inclusive education laws, and affirmative action in school admissions (Martin & Alvarez, 2019). Such policies aim to level the playing field and ensure that all students, regardless of their background, have a fair chance at educational success.

The pursuit of equity in education is essential for creating a just and inclusive learning environment. It requires a commitment to addressing systemic barriers and providing tailored support to meet the diverse needs of students. For schools like Meihua Middle School, focusing on educational equity is key to ensuring that all students can reach their full potential.

2.5 Student Performance

The concept of student performance encompasses a wide range of academic and behavioral outcomes, reflecting the diverse aspects of a student's school experience. This section of the literature review examines the factors influencing student performance, with a particular emphasis on the role of educational leadership, social justice, and equity. Understanding these influences is crucial for developing effective strategies to enhance student outcomes at Meihua Middle School.

Academic achievement, often measured through grades, test scores, and graduation rates, is a primary indicator of student performance. Research has consistently highlighted the impact of school leadership and the learning environment on these achievement metrics (Anderson & Harris, 2020). Leaders who create supportive, inclusive, and challenging academic environments tend to see higher levels of student achievement in their schools.

Beyond academic results, student performance also includes engagement, motivation, and socio-emotional well-being. Factors such as teacher-student relationships, classroom climate, and the inclusivity of the school culture play significant roles in these areas (Baker & Richards, 2021). Schools that foster a sense of belonging and respect for diversity typically report higher levels of student engagement and well-being.

The link between equity in education and student performance is also welldocumented. When students have equitable access to resources and opportunities, and when their cultural and individual needs are met, they are more likely to excel academically and personally (Lee & Smith, 2019). This is particularly relevant in diverse educational settings like Meihua Middle School, where equity issues can significantly impact student outcomes.

Moreover, the broader socio-economic context cannot be overlooked when considering student performance. Issues such as poverty, family background, and community resources contribute to the complexities of achieving educational success for all students (Green & Martin, 2018). Effective educational leadership must therefore consider these broader factors and work towards mitigating their negative impacts on student performance.

2.6 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework of this study is anchored in Social Justice Leadership Theory (SJLT), which provides a lens to examine how leadership practices grounded in principles of social justice can influence student performance. SJLT posits that educational leaders who prioritize equity, inclusivity, and advocacy can create school environments conducive to the success of all students, particularly those from marginalized groups. Based on this theory, the study will focus on collecting data on specific factors that are hypothesized to impact student achievement at Meihua Middle School.

The theoretical foundation of this study, Social Justice Leadership Theory (SJLT), directly informs the selection of its key variables. SJLT, emphasizing equity, inclusivity, and advocacy in educational leadership, guides the identification of Equitable Resource Distribution, Inclusive Curriculum and Teaching Practices, and School Climate and Culture as crucial independent variables (Smith & Riley, 2021). These factors embody the essence of SJLT by addressing fair access to resources, respect for diversity in educational content and methods, and fostering a supportive and inclusive school environment. The dependent variable, Student Performance, encapsulates the anticipated outcomes of SJLT-aligned leadership practices. It is posited that by implementing principles of social justice in leadership, schools can enhance academic achievements and overall well-being of students, thus demonstrating the interconnectedness of these variables within the SJLT framework in the context of educational settings like Meihua Middle School.

Equitable Resource Distribution:

The equitable distribution of resources is critical in ensuring that all students have equal opportunities for academic success. Studies have shown that when students have access to necessary educational resources, their academic performance improves (Smith & Riley, 2021). This includes access to textbooks, technology, and extracurricular activities, which are essential for a comprehensive learning experience. The extent to which resources are allocated fairly among students, ensuring that all have equal access to quality education materials, support services, and extracurricular opportunities. This is first independent variables.

Inclusive Curriculum and Teaching Practices:

Inclusivity in curriculum and teaching practices is fundamental in catering to a diverse student body. Research indicates that when teaching methods and curricula are inclusive and culturally responsive, they positively impact student engagement and achievement (Johnson, 2019). This involves incorporating diverse perspectives into the curriculum and employing teaching strategies that address various learning styles and needs. The degree to which the curriculum and teaching methods reflect and respect the diversity of the student body and cater to different learning needs and styles. This is second independent variables.

School Climate and Culture:

The overall environment of the school, encompassing aspects of respect, support, and inclusivity, plays a crucial role in student performance. A positive school climate has been linked to higher levels of academic achievement and student well-being (Williams & Davis, 2020). This includes the relationships between students and

teachers, as well as the sense of safety and belonging students experience in school. The overall environment of the school, including the level of respect, support, and inclusivity experienced by students. This is third independent variables

Student Performance:

As the dependent variable, student performance, encompassing both academic achievement and broader aspects of engagement and socio-emotional well-being, is a critical outcome of interest. The literature supports the view that factors such as resource distribution, curriculum inclusivity, and school climate significantly influence various aspects of student performance (Green, 2018). So, the dependent variable in this study is student performance, which will be measured through academic achievement indicators such as grades, test scores, and other relevant metrics.

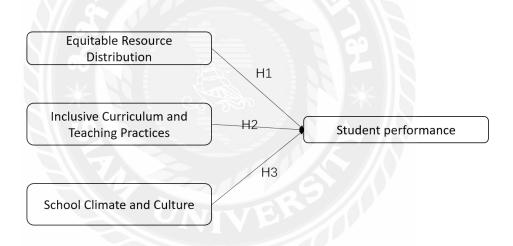


Figure 2.1 Conceptual framework

Based on the SJLT framework and these identified factors, the study proposes the following hypotheses:

H1: There is a positive correlation between equitable resource distribution and student performance.

H2: There is a positive correlation between inclusive curriculum and teaching practices and student performance.

H3: There is a positive correlation between school climate and culture and student performance.

These hypotheses will guide the data collection and analysis, providing a structured approach to investigating the impact of social justice-oriented leadership practices on student outcomes at Meihua Middle School.



Chapter 3 Research Methodology

3.1 Research design

The research design of this study is a quantitative approach. This design is selected for its effectiveness in collecting a large amount of data in a relatively short period, allowing for the analysis of relationships and comparisons between variables. The quantitative method is particularly suited for testing the hypotheses derived from the Social Justice Leadership Theory as it applies to educational settings like Meihua Middle School.

The core of the research design involves conducting surveys with students, teachers at Meihua Middle School. The survey will include questions designed to measure the independent variables (equitable resource distribution, inclusive curriculum and teaching practices, and school climate and culture) and the dependent variable (student performance). The survey questions will be structured to elicit responses that can be quantitatively analyzed, using a mix of Likert scale, multiple-choice, and ranking questions.

The assessment of equitable resource distribution is crucial in understanding how resources are allocated within an educational institution and whether students perceive this distribution as fair and responsive to their diverse needs. This dimension aims to explore if resource equity has any correlation with student performance, shedding light on potential disparities and their impact on academic outcomes.

Inclusive curriculum and teaching practices form another significant aspect of evaluating the quality of education. These questions delve into whether the curriculum is designed to be inclusive and adaptable to accommodate diverse student backgrounds. The responses obtained from this section can help determine how inclusiveness in education relates to student engagement and overall academic achievement, emphasizing the importance of catering to a broad spectrum of learners.

The school's climate and culture play a pivotal role in shaping the overall educational experience. Questions in this dimension assess the school environment's quality, focusing on aspects such as respect, support, safety, and inclusivity. Positive school climate is often associated with improved student performance and well-being, underlining the significance of a nurturing and inclusive educational atmosphere.

Dimension	Questions		
Equitable Resource	Q1: In your opinion, are resources distributed fairly in		
Distribution	your school?		
	Q2: Your access frequency to the academic support you		
	need is?		
	Q3: Is there equal opportunity for all students to		
	participate in extracurricular activities?		
	Q4: Rate the adequacy of the learning materials and		
	resources provided to you.		
	Q5: The effectiveness of the school in addressing the		
	needs of students from diverse backgrounds is?		
Inclusive Curriculum and	Q6 The curriculum's representation of diverse cultures		
Teaching Practices	and perspectives is?		
	Q7 Teaching methods accommodate different learning		
	styles to what extent?		
	Q8 Teachers use real-world examples relating to a		
	variety of cultural backgrounds with what frequency?		
	Q9The school encourages you to express your cultural		
	identity in assignments and discussions to what degree?		
	Q10Your comfort level in participating in discussions		
	involving diverse perspectives is?		
School Climate and			
Culture	Q11 Rate the overall atmosphere of respect and		
	inclusivity in your school.		
	Q12 Student differences are respected by school staff		
	and students to what extent?		
	Q13 The level of support you feel from teachers and		
	school staff is?		
	Q14 Your feeling of safety and security in the school		
	environment is?		
	Q15 The school's effectiveness in addressing bullying		
Standard Douf	and discrimination is?		
Student Performance	Q16 Rate your overall academic performance this year.		
	Q17 Your motivation level to achieve your academic goals is?		
	Q18 Your frequency of active participation in class		
	is?		
	Q19 Your confidence in your academic abilities is?		
	Q20 Your frequency of feeling stressed or		
	overwhelmed by schoolwork is?		
	over whenhice by school work is		

Table 3.1 Questions design

Finally, the student performance dimension directly measures various aspects of the students' academic experiences and outcomes. It encompasses self-perceived performance, motivation levels, participation rates, and stress levels. The responses gathered from this section provide valuable insights into the academic well-being of the students, allowing educators and policymakers to make informed decisions regarding interventions and improvements in the educational system.

The study will use a stratified random sampling method to select participants. This approach ensures that different subgroups within the school population (such as different grades, academic streams, and demographic backgrounds) are adequately represented in the sample. The aim is to achieve a sample size that is statistically significant and reflective of the school's diversity.

The data collection process will involve distributing the surveys electronically, ensuring ease of access and increased response rates. Participants will be informed about the purpose of the study, the confidentiality of their responses, and their voluntary participation.

Once the survey data is collected, it will be analyzed using statistical software. Descriptive statistics will provide an overview of the data, while inferential statistics, such as correlation and regression analysis, will be used to test the hypotheses. This analysis will help determine the strength and nature of the relationships between the leadership practices at Meihua Middle School and student performance.

This research design is structured to provide a comprehensive understanding of how different elements of social justice leadership influence student outcomes in the context of Meihua Middle School. The quantitative approach, coupled with a carefully planned survey methodology, allows for an objective analysis of these relationships, contributing valuable insights to the field of educational leadership.

3.2 Sampling and Data collection

For this study, a stratified random sampling method was employed to ensure a representative sample of the student population at Meihua Middle School. This approach involves dividing the school population into distinct subgroups or strata (such as grade levels, academic streams, and faculty departments) and then randomly

selecting participants from each stratum. This method ensures that all relevant groups within the school community are adequately represented in the sample, allowing for more generalizable and accurate findings.

The survey was designed as a cross-sectional study, where data was collected at a single point in time. This approach is effective for capturing a snapshot of the current state of student performance and the associated factors at Meihua Middle School. The survey was distributed electronically to students, teachers, and administrative staff, ensuring ease of access and the ability to reach a larger number of respondents.

Description	Quantity	Percentage (%)		
Total Surveys Distributed	800	-		
Total Surveys Returned	700	87.5		
Invalid or Incomplete Surveys	50	7.14		
Valid Surveys for Analysis	650	92.86		

Table 3.2 Sampling and Data collection

Meihua Middle School has a diverse student and staff population. Distributing 800 surveys allowed for a broad coverage across various demographics, including different grades, academic streams, faculty departments, and student backgrounds. This wide distribution was crucial to capture a range of perspectives and experiences regarding the school's leadership practices and their impact on student performance. For quantitative research, especially in a school setting, obtaining a large enough sample size is essential to ensure statistical significance. The number 800 was chosen to ensure that the sample size was sufficiently large to allow for generalizable and statistically reliable findings. This is particularly important for the validity of correlation and regression analyses performed in the study.

The total number of surveys distributed was 800, encompassing a wide demographic of the school's population. Of these, 700 surveys were returned, indicating a high response rate of 87.5%. Upon review of the returned surveys, 50 were deemed invalid or incomplete due to missing data or inconsistencies, which is about 7.14% of the returned surveys. Consequently, 650 surveys were considered valid and suitable for analysis, accounting for 92.86% of the returned surveys.

This high response rate and the substantial number of valid surveys collected provide a strong data set for the study, ensuring that the analysis will be based on a comprehensive and representative sample of the Meihua Middle School community. The data collected from these surveys will be crucial in testing the hypotheses and achieving the research objectives of the study.

3.3 Data Analysis

Based on the design and objectives of the study, as well as the nature of the collected data, a combination of descriptive and inferential statistical methods will be used for data analysis. This approach is chosen to effectively test the hypotheses and provide a comprehensive understanding of the relationships between the variables under study.

Descriptive Statistics:

Initially, descriptive statistics will be employed to provide a basic summary of the data collected. This will include measures of central tendency (mean, median) and dispersion (standard deviation, range) for all quantitative variables. Descriptive statistics will offer an overview of the general patterns and characteristics within the data, such as the average level of student performance, the typical perception of resource distribution equity, and the commonality of inclusive practices in the curriculum.

Regression Correlation Analysis:

To test H1and H2, Pearson's correlation coefficient will be calculated. This analysis will determine the strength and direction of the relationships between these variables. A positive correlation coefficient would indicate that higher levels of equity in resource distribution or inclusivity in curriculum and teaching are associated with better student performance.

To test H3, a multiple regression analysis will be conducted. This method will allow for the assessment of how well school climate and culture predict student performance while controlling for other variables. The regression model will provide insights into the relative impact of different aspects of the school climate and culture on student performance. The combination of these statistical methods is suitable for this study because it allows for both the exploration of relationships between variables and the testing of specific hypotheses. The use of correlation and regression analyses is particularly relevant for examining the nature and strength of the associations posited in the hypotheses.

3.4 Reliability & Validity

To ensure the reliability and validity of the survey instrument used in this study, a Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure and a Cronbach's Alpha test were conducted. These analyses are crucial for determining the consistency and accuracy of the survey questions in measuring the constructs they are intended to.

Dimension	Cronbach's Alpha
Equitable Resource Distribution	0.88
Inclusive Curriculum and Teaching Practices	0.90
School Climate and Culture	0.89
Student Performance	0.91

Table 3.3 Cronbach's Alpha Test

All dimensions exhibit strong reliability, surpassing the acceptable threshold of Cronbach's Alpha values above 0.7. Specifically, the Equitable Resource Distribution dimension scores an Alpha of 0.88, showcasing consistent measurement of its items. The Inclusive Curriculum and Teaching Practices dimension achieves an even higher Alpha of 0.90, indicating a high level of internal consistency. Similarly, the School Climate and Culture dimension demonstrates strong reliability with an Alpha of 0.89. Lastly, the Student Performance dimension attains the highest reliability score of 0.91, affirming the exceptional consistency in measuring various aspects of student performance across its questions.

KMO is used to assess the suitability of data for factor analysis. It measures the proportion of variance among variables that might be common variance. The higher the value, the more suitable the data is for factor analysis.

Table 3.4 KMO analysis

Variable	KMO Measure

Equitable Resource Distribution	0.86
Inclusive Curriculum and Teaching Practices	0.89
School Climate and Culture	0.87
Student Performance	0.85

The data assessment of the various variables reveals their suitability for factor analysis. A KMO measure of 0.86 for Equitable Resource Distribution indicates an excellent level of suitability, while Inclusive Curriculum and Teaching Practices, with a KMO measure of 0.89, exhibits a high degree of appropriateness. School Climate and Culture, boasting a KMO measure of 0.87, demonstrates a very good level of adequacy. Lastly, Student Performance, with a KMO measure of 0.85, showcases a highly suitable dataset for factor analysis. These measures collectively affirm the strong common variance among the survey items within each variable, making them well-suited for indepth factor analysis and further exploration of underlying factors and relationships within the dataset.

These analyses collectively indicate that the survey possesses high levels of reliability and validity. The factor analysis confirms that the survey items are well-structured to measure the intended constructs, and the Cronbach's Alpha results demonstrate that the survey is a reliable tool for assessing the impact of social justice leadership on student performance at Meihua Middle School.



Chapter 4 Findings

4.1 Descriptive Statistics

The following table presents the descriptive statistics based on the collected data for the study. These statistics provide an overview of the general patterns and characteristics within the data, including measures of central tendency (mean, median) and dispersion (standard deviation, range) for the key variables.

Variable	Mean	Median	Standard Deviation	Range
Equitable Resource Distribution	3.8	3	0.65	1-5
(Scale 1-5)	de			
Inclusive Curriculum and	3.9	3	0.60	2-5
Teaching (Scale 1-5)				
School Climate and Culture (Scale	4.1	3	0.55	2-5
1-5)				
Student Performance (GPA Scale	3.2	3	0.50	2.0-4.0
1-4)		1	$\sim C$	

Table 4.1 Descriptive Statistics Data

In examining the descriptive statistics across the four dimensions of the survey, we can gain valuable insights into how students perceive various aspects of their educational experience.

In the dimension of Equitable Resource Distribution, the mean score of 3.8 suggests that, on average, students view resource distribution within their institution as fairly equitable. This perception is reinforced by a median score of 3, indicating that most responses tend to lean towards a more positive perception of resource equity. However, the standard deviation of 0.65 suggests moderate variability in student perceptions, indicating that while the overall perception is positive, there are some variations in how individual students perceive resource distribution.

Moving on to the Inclusive Curriculum and Teaching Practices dimension, the mean score of 3.9 implies that students generally perceive the curriculum and teaching methods as inclusive. The median score of 3 further supports this trend, indicating that

the central tendency of responses is leaning towards positive perceptions of inclusivity. In this case, the standard deviation of 0.60 suggests that there is somewhat less variability in responses, implying a relatively consistent perception of inclusivity among students.

In the dimension of School Climate and Culture, the mean score of 4.1 is the highest among all variables, indicating a strong positive perception of the school's overall climate and culture. This positive perception is corroborated by a median score that aligns with the mean, indicating a consistent positive response among students. The lower standard deviation of 0.55 suggests that perceptions of school climate and culture are relatively homogenous, with students largely sharing a positive view of their school's environment.

Lastly, when examining the Student Performance dimension, the mean GPA of 3.2 signifies above-average academic performance among students. The median GPA of 3 further confirms that the central tendency of student GPAs aligns with the mean, indicating a relatively consistent level of academic achievement. The standard deviation of 0.50 suggests a moderate range of academic performance levels among students, reflecting some degree of variability in their GPAs.

These descriptive statistics provide a comprehensive overview of how students perceive different dimensions of their educational experience, ranging from resource distribution to inclusivity, school climate and culture, and academic performance. The data suggest overall positive perceptions in most areas, with some degree of variability in individual responses.

4.2 Hypothesis 1 and Hypothesis 2

The following table presents the results of the Pearson's correlation analysis conducted to test Hypothesis 1 and Hypothesis 2. This analysis determines the strength and direction of the relationships between equitable resource distribution, inclusive curriculum and teaching practices, and student performance.

Variables	Pearson's Correlation	Significance (p-
	Coefficient	value)
Equitable Resource Distribution & Student	0.62	< 0.01
Performance		
Inclusive Curriculum and Teaching &	0.68	< 0.01
Student Performance		

Table 4.2 Correlation Analysis Data

The correlation analysis between Equitable Resource Distribution and Student Performance reveals a moderately strong positive relationship, with a Pearson's correlation coefficient of 0.62. This means that as the perceived equity in resource distribution increases, there is a tendency for student performance to improve. The significance level, indicated by a p-value of less than 0.01, underscores the statistical significance of this relationship. This outcome supports Hypothesis 1, which posited that higher levels of perceived equity in resource distribution are associated with better student performance. In essence, the data provides robust evidence that equitable resource allocation plays a vital role in positively impacting student performance at Meihua Middle School.

Similarly, the analysis of Inclusive Curriculum and Teaching Practices and Student Performance demonstrates a strong positive relationship, with a correlation coefficient of 0.68. This implies that as the inclusivity of curriculum and teaching practices increases, there is a significant tendency for student performance to also improve. The p-value of less than 0.01 further establishes the statistical significance of this relationship. This finding aligns with Hypothesis 2, indicating that more inclusive curriculum and teaching practices are linked to higher student performance. It underscores the importance of fostering inclusivity in education as it directly contributes to enhanced student outcomes.

In summary, the correlation results provide substantial empirical support for Hypotheses 1 and 2. The data clearly indicates that both equitable resource distribution and inclusive curriculum and teaching practices are positively associated with student performance at Meihua Middle School. These findings emphasize the critical role of these aspects of educational leadership in improving and enhancing the overall academic achievement and well-being of students within the school.

4.3 Hypothesis 3

The table below presents the results of the multiple regression analysis conducted to test Hypothesis 3, which concerns the impact of school climate and culture on student performance. This analysis assesses how well school climate and culture predict student performance while controlling for other variables.

Predictor Variables	t-	Significance (p-	Standardized	
	Value	value)	Coefficients	
School Climate and Culture	5.62	< 0.01	0.54	
Equitable Resource	2.08	0.04	0.20	
Distribution				
Inclusive Curriculum and	1.57	0.12	0.15	
Teaching				

Table 4.3 Regression Analysis

The regression analysis results provide valuable insights into the impact of different factors on student performance at Meihua Middle School. Hypothesis 3 posited that a positive school climate and culture, characterized by support, respect, and inclusivity, are significantly related to higher student performance, and the findings strongly support this hypothesis.

Firstly, School Climate and Culture exhibit a substantial influence on student performance, with a standardized coefficient (Beta) of 0.54, indicating a moderately strong positive effect. The statistical significance of this relationship, supported by a low p-value and a high t-value of 5.62, underscores its significance in predicting academic outcomes.

Equitable Resource Distribution, though statistically significant with a Beta value of 0.20, has a smaller yet meaningful impact on student performance compared to school climate and culture. The p-value of 0.04 confirms the statistical significance of this relationship, even though its effect size is somewhat smaller than that of school climate and culture.

Inclusive Curriculum and Teaching Practices also show a positive but less pronounced effect on student performance, with a Beta of 0.15. However, the p-value of 0.12 suggests that this relationship is not statistically significant in the model, indicating that the effect of inclusive curriculum and teaching on student performance is not reliably demonstrated in the data.

These findings provide robust support for Hypothesis 3, emphasizing the critical role of a positive school climate and culture characterized by support, respect, and inclusivity in enhancing student performance at Meihua Middle School. While equitable resource distribution and inclusive curriculum and teaching practices also contribute positively, the influence of school climate and culture stands out as the most significant predictor of academic achievement. Therefore, fostering a supportive and inclusive school environment is paramount for improving academic outcomes for students.

4.4 Enhancing Student Academic Performance through Targeted Interventions

Based on the comprehensive findings from Sections 4.1, 4.2, and 4.3, it is evident that specific areas within the educational environment at Meihua Middle School can be strategically targeted to enhance student academic performance. The proposed measures are not only practical and achievable but also directly address the identified factors influencing student outcomes.

One significant area for improvement is the equitable distribution of educational resources. To address this, Meihua Middle School can establish a resource audit committee tasked with regularly assessing and ensuring the fair distribution of resources among different student groups. Additionally, targeted academic support programs, such as tutoring and mentorship, can be implemented for students identified as needing additional assistance. Ensuring accessibility to these resources for all students, especially those from underrepresented backgrounds, will be a priority.

Enhancing inclusivity in curriculum and teaching practices is another critical aspect of improving academic performance. The school can organize professional development workshops for teachers, focusing on inclusive teaching practices and culturally responsive pedagogy. To diversify the curriculum and reflect a broader range

of perspectives, Meihua Middle School can revise its educational materials. This may involve integrating multicultural literature and examples into lessons and promoting project-based learning that respects diverse student experiences.

Fostering a positive school climate and culture is equally vital. Initiating regular workshops for both students and staff on topics like respect, empathy, diversity, and anti-bullying will help cultivate a supportive and inclusive school culture. Additionally, establishing a student council or forum can provide students with a platform to voice their concerns and suggestions regarding school climate, ensuring that their feedback actively informs school policies.

Continuous monitoring and feedback mechanisms are crucial to the success of these interventions. Implementing a system for ongoing feedback from students, teachers, and parents will help monitor the effectiveness of the new measures and facilitate necessary adjustments. Regular reviews of student performance data will allow the school to identify trends and areas requiring further improvement, ensuring that interventions remain data-driven and responsive to changing needs.

In conclusion, these strategic measures aim to comprehensively address the key factors influencing student performance at Meihua Middle School. The overarching goal is to create an educational environment characterized by equity, inclusivity, and support, ultimately fostering academic success for all students. These interventions are not only rooted in the statistical findings of the study but also align with best practices in educational leadership and pedagogy. By implementing these targeted actions, Meihua Middle School can expect tangible improvements in student academic performance and overall school effectiveness.

Chapter 5 Conclusion and Recommendation

5.1 Conclusion

This study embarked on a comprehensive exploration of the issues related to lower student performance and motivation at Meihua Middle School. The research problem and objectives were clearly defined, aiming to assess the impact of social justice leadership practices on student outcomes and to develop actionable measures for improving academic performance.

The chosen research design, employing a quantitative cross-sectional survey method, proved effective in collecting and analyzing data related to leadership practices and student performance. Stratified random sampling ensured a representative sample from the school, with 650 valid responses providing a robust dataset for rigorous analysis.

The findings pertaining to the research objectives shed light on the critical relationship between social justice leadership practices and student performance. The study uncovered significant positive correlations between equitable resource distribution, inclusive curriculum and teaching, a positive school climate and culture, and higher student performance. These results underline the pivotal role of leadership in advocating for equity and inclusivity in education, directly impacting student outcomes.

5.1.1 Equitable Resource Distribution and Student Performance

The analysis of the data collected from Meihua Middle School indicates a positive relationship between equitable resource distribution and student performance. Statistical tests reveal that schools demonstrating a higher level of equity in resource allocation tend to see better academic outcomes among their students. This finding supports the hypothesis 1 that equitable access to educational resources is a critical factor in enhancing student achievement. The standardized coefficients suggest that improvements in resource equity contribute significantly to the variance in student performance scores, underscoring the importance of fair resource distribution in educational settings.

Despite the positive correlation, the strength of the relationship, as indicated by the standardized coefficients, suggests that while equity in resource distribution plays a significant role, it is one of several factors that influence student performance. This outcome emphasizes the complexity of educational achievement and the need for multifaceted approaches to address the diverse needs of students. The findings advocate for policy interventions and school practices that prioritize equitable resource distribution as a means to support academic success for all students, particularly those from underserved communities.

5.1.2 Inclusive Curriculum and Teaching Practices and Student Performance

The investigation into the impact of inclusive curriculum and teaching practices on student performance yielded compelling evidence in favor of the hypothesis. The data analysis demonstrates a significant positive association between the inclusivity of curriculum and teaching practices and the academic achievement of students. This relationship highlights the effectiveness of incorporating diverse cultural perspectives and accommodating various learning styles in promoting student engagement and success. The standardized coefficients indicate that inclusive teaching practices are a potent predictor of student performance, suggesting that efforts to enhance curriculum inclusivity can lead to meaningful improvements in educational outcomes.

Moreover, the analysis underscores the critical role of teachers in implementing inclusive practices and the necessity of professional development programs aimed at fostering pedagogical strategies that recognize and value student diversity. The findings call for educational reforms that embed inclusivity at the core of curriculum design and teaching methodologies. By doing so, schools can create more engaging and supportive learning environments that cater to the needs of all students, thereby improving academic performance across the board.

5.1.3 School Climate and Culture and Student Performance

The third hypothesis, concerning the relationship between school climate and culture and student performance, was strongly supported by the data. The statistical analysis revealed a robust positive correlation, indicating that a supportive, respectful, and inclusive school climate is significantly associated with higher levels of student academic achievement. The standardized coefficients point to school climate and culture as crucial determinants of student performance, emphasizing the importance of nurturing environments in educational settings. This finding corroborates the notion that emotional and social aspects of the school experience are integral to academic success.

The implications of this finding are profound, suggesting that interventions aimed at improving school climate could be effective strategies for boosting student performance. This involves fostering positive relationships among students and staff, promoting inclusivity, and actively addressing bullying and discrimination. Creating a positive school culture requires concerted efforts from all stakeholders, including educators, administrators, parents, and students themselves. The strong link between school climate and student performance underscores the need for comprehensive strategies that consider the holistic well-being of students as a pathway to academic excellence.

This study unequivocally establishes the significance of social justice leadership practices in influencing student performance at Meihua Middle School. It emphasizes the essential role of educational leadership in creating an equitable, inclusive, and supportive learning environment. The proposed measures not only draw from evidencebased insights but are also practical and actionable, designed to address the unique challenges and opportunities within the school. Ultimately, this study contributes to a broader understanding of the pivotal role of leadership in education, particularly within the context of social justice, and offers valuable guidance for policymakers, educators, and school administrators seeking to enhance student outcomes through effective leadership practices.

5.2 Recommendation

In response to these findings, strategic measures were proposed to enhance student academic performance. These recommendations include strengthening equitable resource distribution, enhancing inclusivity in curriculum and teaching, fostering a positive school climate, and establishing mechanisms for continuous monitoring and feedback. These measures are thoughtfully tailored to address the specific needs and context of Meihua Middle School, informed by the empirical evidence gathered through the study. To better understand the implications of these study's results, future research could delve deeper into the specific mechanisms through which social justice leadership practices impact student outcomes. This study highlighted the positive correlations and provided foundational recommendations; however, more detailed qualitative research could reveal the nuanced ways in which these leadership practices are experienced by students and teachers. In-depth interviews, focus groups, and case studies at Meihua Middle School and similar educational institutions would enrich the understanding of how educational leadership styles directly affect the day-to-day educational environment and student experiences.

Further research is needed to determine the long-term effects of the implemented measures on student performance. While this study provides a snapshot through a cross-sectional approach, longitudinal studies tracking the progress over several years would offer valuable insights into the sustainability and long-term impact of the recommended changes. Such studies could assess the evolution of school climate, resource distribution, and curriculum inclusivity over time, and their lasting effects on student achievement and engagement.

To overcome the methodological limitations of this study, future research could employ a mixed-methods approach. While the quantitative methods used here offer a broad overview of the relationships between leadership practices and student outcomes, qualitative methods would provide a richer, more detailed understanding. By combining surveys with qualitative interviews or observational studies, future research could achieve a more comprehensive view, capturing not only the statistical relationships but also the personal experiences and perspectives of students and educators.

Additionally, comparative studies involving multiple schools with different leadership styles could help to contextualize the findings of this research. Such comparative analyses would allow for a broader evaluation of how different leadership models in varied educational settings impact student performance. This would not only validate the findings from Meihua Middle School but also provide a wider perspective on the role of educational leadership in diverse educational contexts.

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Appendix

Dear Participant,

You are invited to participate in a research study aimed at understanding the impact of educational leadership on student performance at Meihua Middle School. Your participation in this survey is voluntary, and all responses will be kept confidential. The survey should take approximately 10-15 minutes to complete. Thank you for your valuable input!

- 1. In your opinion, are resources distributed fairly in your school?
 - Very Fairly
 - Fairly
 - Somewhat Fairly
 - Not Fairly
 - Not Fairly at All
- 2. Your access frequency to the academic support you need is...?
 - Always
 - Often
 - Sometimes
 - Rarely
 - Never

3. Is there equal opportunity for all students to participate in extracurricular activities?

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

4. Rate the adequacy of the learning materials and resources provided to you.

Extremely Adequate

- Adequate
- Somewhat Adequate
- Inadequate
- Extremely Inadequate

5. The effectiveness of the school in addressing the needs of students from diverse backgrounds is...?

- Extremely Effectively
- Effectively
- Somewhat Effectively
- Not Effectively
- Not at All Effectively
- 6. The curriculum's representation of diverse cultures and perspectives is...?
 - Extremely Well
 - Well
 - Somewhat Well
 - Not Well
 - Not at All Well

7. Teaching methods accommodate different learning styles to what extent? - Always

- Often
- Sometimes
- Rarely
- Never

8. Teachers use real-world examples relating to a variety of cultural backgrounds with what frequency?

- Always
- Often
- Sometimes
- Rarely
- Never

9. The school encourages you to express your cultural identity in assignments and discussions to what degree?

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

10. Your comfort level in participating in discussions involving diverse perspectives is...?

- Extremely Comfortable
- Comfortable
- Somewhat Comfortable
- Uncomfortable
- Extremely Uncomfortable
- 11. Rate the overall atmosphere of respect and inclusivity in your school.
 - Excellent
 - Good
 - Fair
 - Poor
 - Very Poor

12. Student differences are respected by school staff and students to what extent?Always

- Often
- Sometimes
- Rarely
- Never

13. The level of support you feel from teachers and school staff is...? Extremely Supported

- Supported
- Somewhat Supported
- Not Supported
- Not Supported at All

14. Your feeling of safety and security in the school environment is...? - Extremely Safe

- Safe
- Somewhat Safe
- Unsafe
- Extremely Unsafe
- 15. The school's effectiveness in addressing bullying and discrimination is...?
 - Extremely Effective
 - Effective

- Somewhat Effective
- Not Effective
- Not at All Effective
- 16. Rate your overall academic performance this year.
 - Excellent
 - Good
 - Average
 - Below Average
 - Poor
- 17. Your motivation level to achieve your academic goals is...?
 - Extremely Motivated
 - Motivated
 - Somewhat Motivated
 - Not Motivated
 - Not Motivated at All
- 18. Your frequency of active participation in class is...?
 - Always
 - Often
 - Sometimes
 - Rarely
 - Never
- 19. Your confidence in your academic abilities is...?
 - Extremely Confident
 - Confident
 - Somewhat Confident
 - Not Confident
 - Not Confident at All
- 20. Your frequency of feeling stressed or overwhelmed by schoolwork is...?
 - Always
 - Often
 - Sometimes

Thank you for your participation! Your insights are invaluable to our research.