

Abstract

Restorative practices have emerged as a transformative approach within various domains, particularly education, aiming to nurture constructive relationships, address conflicts, and foster community. This research delves into the multifaceted world of restorative practices in educational settings, exploring their impact on school climate, conflict resolution, social and emotional learning, and broader implications for equity and justice in the classroom. This study looks to see if restorative practices affect the culture and climate of a school or district. It looks at how students describe a classroom that uses these practices. Feelings and reactions of students were also looked at of students who participate in these practices.

This study aims to comprehensively examine the application of restorative practices in educational settings and assess their impact on various aspects of the school environment. By exploring the principles and methodologies inherent to restorative practices, this research aims to elucidate their significance in promoting positive school climates, effective conflict resolution, social and emotional learning, and cultivating equity and justice in schools.

The context of the inquiry into restorative practices lies within the educational landscape, where traditional discipline and conflict resolution approaches are increasingly being challenged. Schools worldwide recognize the need to shift from punitive measures to more restorative, relationship-centered methods. The study reveals that implementing restorative practices in schools significantly impacts the school climate. Students and staff reported feeling safer, more valued, and a greater sense of belonging within the school community.

When restorative practices are consistently applied, the research findings demonstrate a noticeable reduction in disciplinary incidents, such as suspensions and expulsions. This reduction indicates the potential of restorative approaches to improve student behavior and mitigate disruptive incidents. The study highlights that restorative practices align with and promote social and emotional learning (SEL) competencies among students.

This research offers recommendations related to the implementation of restorative practices. Schools should implement a robust system for monitoring and evaluating the ongoing application of restorative practices, tracking their impact on disciplinary incidents, school climate, and student outcomes.