

The Impact of Dog-Assisted Wellbeing Intervention on Student Motivation and Affective Engagement in the Primary and Secondary School Setting

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Abstract : This project currently under development is centered around current learning processes, including a thorough literature review and ongoing practical experiences gained as a deputy head in a school. These daily experiences with students engaging in animal-assisted interventions and the school therapy dog form a strong base for this research. The primary objective of this research is to comprehensively explore the impact of dog-assisted well-being interventions on student motivation and affective engagement within primary and secondary school settings. The educational domain currently encounters a significant challenge due to the lack of substantial research in this area. Despite the perceived positive outcomes of such interventions being acknowledged and shared in various settings, the evidence supporting their effectiveness in an educational context remains limited. This study aims to bridge the gap in the research and shed light on the potential benefits of dog-assisted well-being interventions in promoting student motivation and affective engagement. The significance of this topic recognizes that education is not solely confined to academic achievement but encompasses the overall well-being and emotional development of students. Over recent years, there has been a growing interest in animal-assisted interventions, particularly in healthcare settings. This interest has extended to the educational context. While the effectiveness of these interventions in these areas has been explored in other fields, the educational sector lacks comprehensive research in this regard. Through a systematic and thorough research methodology, this study seeks to contribute valuable empirical data to the field, providing evidence to support informed decision-making regarding the implementation of dog-assisted well-being interventions in schools. This research will utilize a mixed-methods design, combining qualitative and quantitative measures to assess the research objectives. The quantitative phase will include surveys and standardized scales to measure student motivation and affective engagement, while the qualitative phase will involve interviews and observations to gain in-depth insights from students, teachers, and other stakeholders. The findings will contribute evidence-based insights, best practices, and practical guidelines for schools seeking to incorporate dog-assisted interventions, ultimately enhancing student well-being and improving educational outcomes.

Keywords : therapy dog, wellbeing, engagement, motivation, AAI, intervention, school

Conference Title : ICAAT 2024 : International Conference on Animal Assisted Therapy

Conference Location : London, United Kingdom

Conference Dates : September 19-20, 2024