

Toronto District School Board Adult Students: Emotional Well-being by Student Groups

In October 2014, there were 6,172 students registered in the five Toronto District School Board's (TDSB) Adult High Schools. This Adult Student Census Fact Sheet incorporates findings from the Adult Student Census (ASC) survey that was administered to 4,787 students resulting in a response rate of 78%. A total of 4,616 adult students completed the ASC and were linked to the TDSB's School Information Systems; results and percentages reported in this Fact Sheet are based on this group of 4,616 adult students with slight variations in the number of responses for some questions.

The purpose of this Fact Sheet is to identify various student groups who had higher or lower results than the overall ASC population across key variables regarding Emotional Well-being. The student groups shown in the graphs or discussed in the text are *not being compared to each other* but are used to show differences within the ASC population for Emotional Well-being. The groups that are presented in this Fact Sheet have larger differences from the overall ASC results in different categories.

EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING

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The overall results from the ASC population for students with higher or lower levels of Emotional Well-being¹ are reported based on their choices to nine different questions. Overall results showed that 64% had higher levels of Emotional Well-being and 36% had lower levels of Emotional Well-being.

OVERALL EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING AND LANGUAGE GROUPS

Compared to the ASC overall results for higher levels of Emotional Well-being (64%), the two language groups with the highest results were Bengali (72%) and Somali (84%). Across all language groups the percentage of students who experienced lower levels of Emotional Well-being was similar to the overall ASC population at 36%. There were three language groups with somewhat larger differences compared to the overall result for Emotional Well-being (36%): Tibetan (39%), English (42%), and Arabic (42%).

OVERALL EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING AND RACIAL BACKGROUND GROUPS

Compared to the ASC overall results for higher levels of Emotional Well-being (64%), most self-identified Racial Background groups had similar results; South Asian was slightly higher at 67%. Most Racial Background groups showed similar results for lower levels of Emotional Well-being compared to the ASC overall results (36%). One Racial Background group with the lowest level of Emotional Well-being was the group Mixed (47%).

1. Emotional Well-being combines responses from the following nine variables about negative emotions and the frequency that students had felt these emotions: difficulty concentrating, difficulty making decisions, unhappy, stressed or overwhelmed, suicidal, depressed, lack of confidence, unable to balance school work and family, and unable to balance school work with job. The results for overall Emotional Well-being were: 'All the Time/Often/Sometimes' 36% and 'Rarely/Never' 64%. If a student experienced more negative emotions their level of Emotional Well-being would be lower. If a student experienced fewer negative emotions their level of Emotional Well-being would be higher.

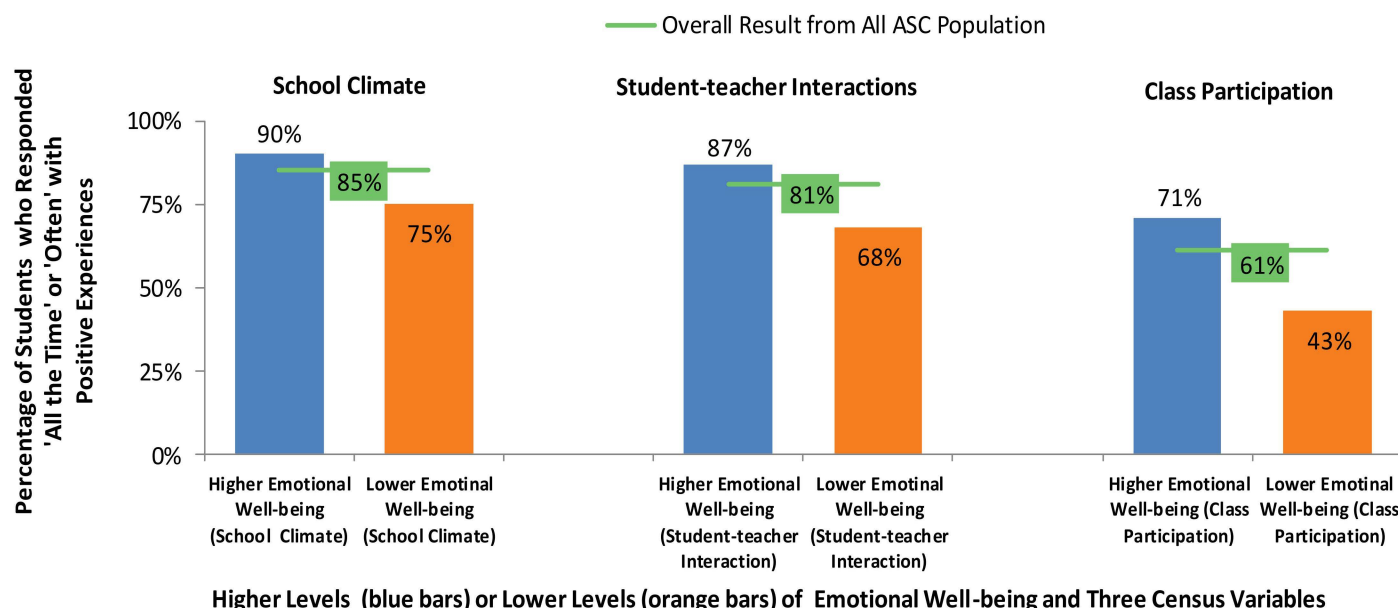


EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING

STUDENTS WITH HIGH AND LOW LEVELS OF EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING

Figure 1 shows that across three key ASC variables (School Climate, Student-teacher Interactions, and Class Participation) students with lower levels of Emotional Well-being (see orange bars in Figure 1) also have lower results in all three of these In-school Experience categories. Students with higher levels of Emotional Well-being are above the ASC overall results in all three categories.

Figure 1: Differences across Key Variables by Higher or Lower Levels of Emotional Well-being



EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING AND STUDENTS' CONFIDENCE LEVEL

Of the approximate 2,400 students with higher Emotional Well-being only 10% stated that they lacked confidence. For students who had lower levels of Emotional Well-being about one third stated that they lacked confidence. This is an important finding because in *Fact Sheet 3: Adult Student Census and In-school Experiences by Student Groups* results showed that students lacking confidence had the lowest results in key In-school Experience variables.

KEY FINDINGS

Around two thirds of Adult students (64%) had higher levels of emotional well-being while around a third (36%) had lower levels. Students from South Asian background, and students speaking Bengali and Somali, were somewhat more likely to have higher levels of Emotional Well-being. Students of Mixed Racial Background and those speaking Tibetan, English, and Arabic were somewhat more likely to have lower levels of Emotional Well-being, as were students recently arrived to Canada and students who lacked self-confidence. Students who had more positive experiences at school (School Climate, Student-teacher Interactions, Class Participation) generally had higher levels of Emotional Well-being.

FURTHER ANALYSIS

Some of the key research questions that will be explored as this project continues include:

- Does the connection between emotional well-being and positive experiences at school extend to positive achievement?
- Why do some newcomers to Canada have lower levels of emotional well-being?
- What are the relationships, if any, between the Adult Student Census findings and post-secondary pathways?

