

# Cultivating a supportive learning culture in secondary education: Interweaving discipline policies, literacy routines, and student guidance practices

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## ABSTRACT:

**Background:** A supportive learning culture in secondary education is shaped not only by classroom instruction but also by how schools organize discipline, literacy routines, and student guidance in everyday practice. However, detailed accounts of how these elements operate as a coherent system remain limited.

**Aims:** This study examines how a supportive learning culture is cultivated through the interweaving of discipline policies, literacy routines, and structured student guidance practices.

**Methods:** A descriptive qualitative approach was used. Data were collected through direct observations, semi structured interviews with key school stakeholders, and document analysis. The data were interpreted thematically to identify recurring practices and their contributions to students learning and development.

**Result:** The school fostered a supportive learning culture by consistently applying a discipline point system with transparent sanctions and meaningful rewards. This was reinforced by daily literacy routines embedded in the timetable, where students read and produce brief written reflections that are later monitored within relevant lessons. Student guidance was implemented through coordinated roles among homeroom teachers, counseling staff, and the student affairs unit, including routine classroom checks and follow up support when concerns emerged. Co curricular and extracurricular programs further strengthened the culture by providing structured opportunities for participation, responsibility, and talent development.

**Conclusion:** A supportive learning culture can be sustained when discipline, literacy, and guidance practices are aligned and enacted consistently. When these components reinforce one another, schools are better positioned to create an orderly, responsive, and development oriented environment that supports learning engagement and character growth.

**Keyword:** Literacy Routines; Learning Culture; School Discipline; Secondary Education; Student Guidance.

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## INTRODUCTION

A supportive learning culture has increasingly been recognized as a fundamental element in enhancing the quality of secondary education (Lakkala et al., 2021). Schools are no longer perceived solely as institutions for knowledge transmission, but as structured social environments where values, habits, and institutional practices collectively shape students' academic growth and character development (Assa'idi, 2021; Roqib, 2021). In this broader perspective, learning culture reflects how rules, norms, instructional practices, and support systems are consistently enacted within the daily life of the school. The formation of a learning culture does not occur spontaneously; rather, it is constructed through deliberate institutional policies and structured practices (Kucharska, 2021; Taylor et al., 2022). Clearly defined discipline systems, when applied consistently, foster responsibility and behavioral awareness among students. Regular literacy routines contribute to strengthening critical thinking, reflective capacity, and sustained academic engagement. Meanwhile, structured student guidance through homeroom teachers, counseling units, and student affairs offices provides continuous monitoring and support for students' academic and socio-emotional development. Although these elements are often implemented as separate programs, the effectiveness of a supportive learning culture depends on how they operate in coordination. Without alignment, discipline policies may become administrative procedures, literacy routines may turn into formalities, and student guidance may function merely as reactive intervention. Therefore, it is essential to understand how discipline policies, literacy routines, and student guidance practices are interwoven to cultivate an orderly, responsive, and development-oriented learning environment.

School culture has been widely acknowledged as a significant factor influencing students' behavior and academic achievement (Alzoraiki et al., 2024; Gamage et al., 2021). A consistent and well-communicated discipline system contributes not only to behavioral regulation but also to character formation and students' sense of accountability. When discipline is implemented as an educational process rather than a punitive measure, it strengthens students' internal regulation and commitment to shared values. Literacy practices are equally central in building a strong academic climate (Murray, 2022; Suri & Chandra, 2021). Structured and sustained reading and writing routines promote comprehension skills, reflective thinking, and intellectual engagement. When literacy becomes embedded in the daily schedule, it contributes to the development of a stable academic habitus within the school. In addition, coordinated student guidance systems allow for effective monitoring of both academic performance and socio-emotional well-being (Bačová, 2025; George & Babu, 2025). Collaboration among homeroom teachers, counseling staff, and student affairs personnel facilitates early identification of challenges and timely intervention. Collectively, discipline, literacy, and guidance practices represent interconnected components of a supportive learning culture.

While previous studies have examined discipline systems, literacy programs, and student mentoring independently, limited research has explored how these components function as an integrated institutional framework within a single school setting. Much of the existing literature isolates one dominant variable without analyzing how multiple institutional practices reinforce each other in everyday school life. Furthermore, in-depth qualitative accounts describing how such practices are enacted, coordinated, and sustained at the school level remain insufficient (Holst, 2023; Weiss et al., 2021). This limitation suggests the need for a more integrative perspective in understanding how supportive learning cultures are cultivated in secondary education.

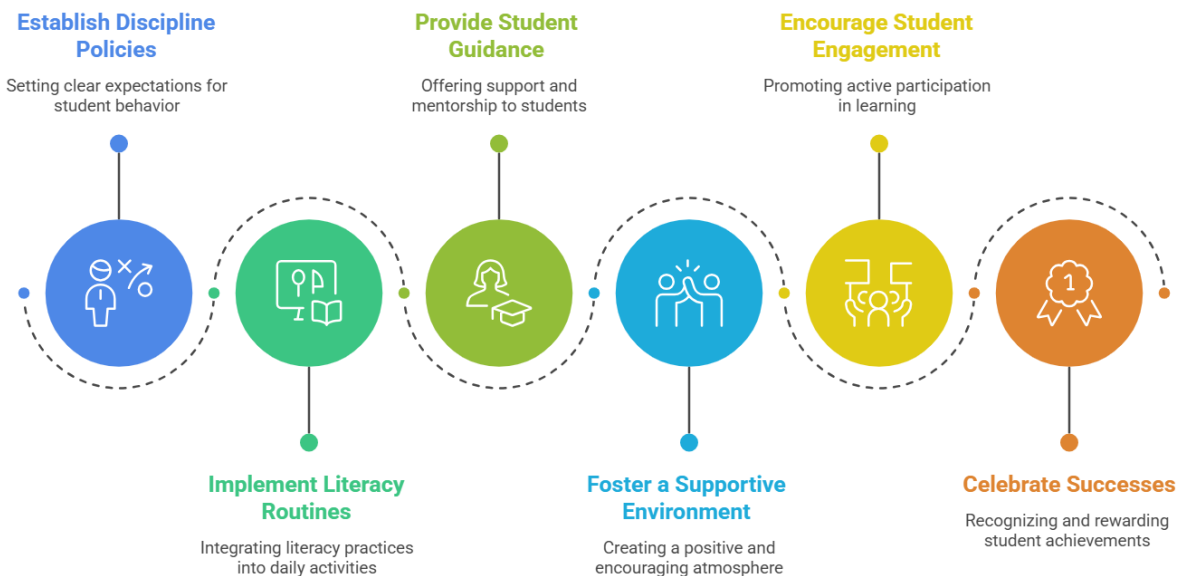
This study is grounded in the assumption that a supportive learning culture emerges through the dynamic interaction of discipline policies, literacy routines, and student guidance practices. Rather than treating these elements as isolated strategies, the study positions them as mutually reinforcing mechanisms that shape the institutional climate. By examining how these practices are implemented and interconnected in daily school routines, this research seeks to contribute a more comprehensive understanding of how supportive learning cultures are developed and maintained in secondary education settings.

This study aims to explore how a supportive learning culture is cultivated in secondary education through the interweaving of discipline policies, literacy routines, and structured student guidance practices. Specifically, it seeks to describe how these institutional components are implemented and coordinated in everyday school contexts and how their interaction contributes to the creation of an orderly, responsive, and development-oriented learning environment.

## METHOD

### Research Design

This research adopted a qualitative descriptive approach to gain a contextual understanding of how a supportive learning culture is developed within a secondary school setting. Rather than testing predetermined variables, the study sought to explore everyday institutional practices and how they interact in shaping students' academic and behavioral development. The qualitative design enabled an in-depth examination of school routines, policy implementation, and interpersonal dynamics as they naturally occurred. To provide direction for the inquiry, the study was guided by an analytical structure focusing on three interconnected domains: discipline policies, literacy routines, and student guidance practices. These domains were examined in relation to their broader influence on student engagement, school climate, and recognition of achievement. The framework did not function as a rigid model but as a lens to organize observation and interpretation.



**Figure 1.** Analytical Orientation of Supportive Learning Culture

The figure illustrates how institutional mechanisms are conceptually positioned in relation to one another to support the cultivation of a structured and responsive learning environment.

### **Participant**

The research was conducted in a public secondary school in Indonesia. Participants were selected intentionally based on their involvement in implementing school policies and daily routines associated with learning culture. They included the principal, curriculum coordinator, student affairs coordinator, counseling teacher, subject teachers, administrative personnel, and several Grade 10 students. These individuals were chosen because they directly contributed to the enforcement of discipline systems, the organization of literacy activities, and the coordination of student guidance. Their perspectives provided insight into both policy formulation and practical enactment.

### **Instrument**

Data were collected through three primary techniques: direct observation, semi-structured interviews, and document review. Observations were carried out to examine classroom practices, literacy sessions, discipline enforcement procedures, and student guidance activities. Semi-structured interviews allowed participants to explain how policies were implemented, coordinated, and sustained. Relevant documents, including school regulations, discipline records, literacy schedules, and guidance reports, were reviewed to corroborate and enrich field data.

### **Data Analysis**

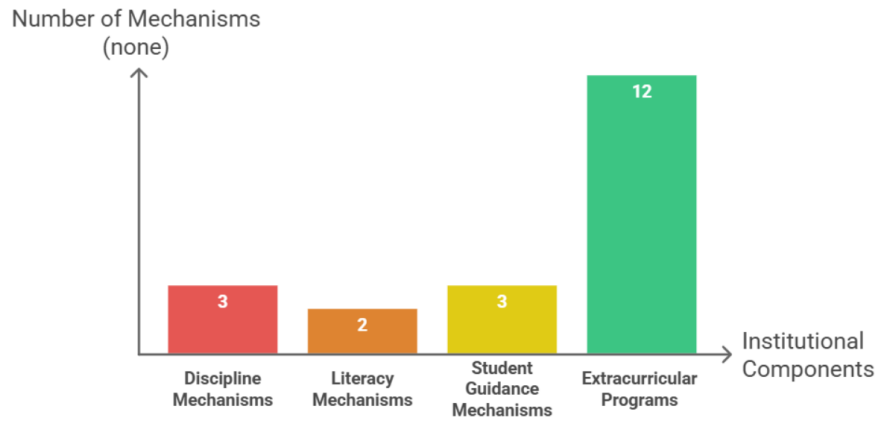
The analysis followed a thematic procedure. Field notes, interview transcripts, and documentary evidence were systematically organized and examined to identify recurring patterns related to discipline, literacy, and student guidance practices. Coding was conducted iteratively, allowing themes to emerge while remaining attentive to the analytical orientation outlined in Figure 1. Triangulation across data sources was applied to enhance credibility and ensure that interpretations were grounded in multiple forms of evidence. The analysis focused not only on individual practices but also on how these practices intersected in cultivating a coherent and supportive learning culture.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Result**

The findings suggest that the supportive learning culture observed in this secondary school is not constructed through isolated programs, but through institutional practices that gradually form a coherent pattern in everyday school life. Rather than emerging spontaneously, the learning culture appears to be shaped by routines, regulations, and coordinated roles that consistently frame how students behave, learn, and receive support. Across observations and interviews, three domains repeatedly surfaced as central pillars: discipline policies, literacy routines, and student guidance practices. Extracurricular activities, although not positioned as a core structural pillar, function as reinforcing elements that extend the influence of these domains beyond classroom instruction.

To provide an overview of how these institutional practices are distributed, Figure 2 presents the number of mechanisms identified within each domain.



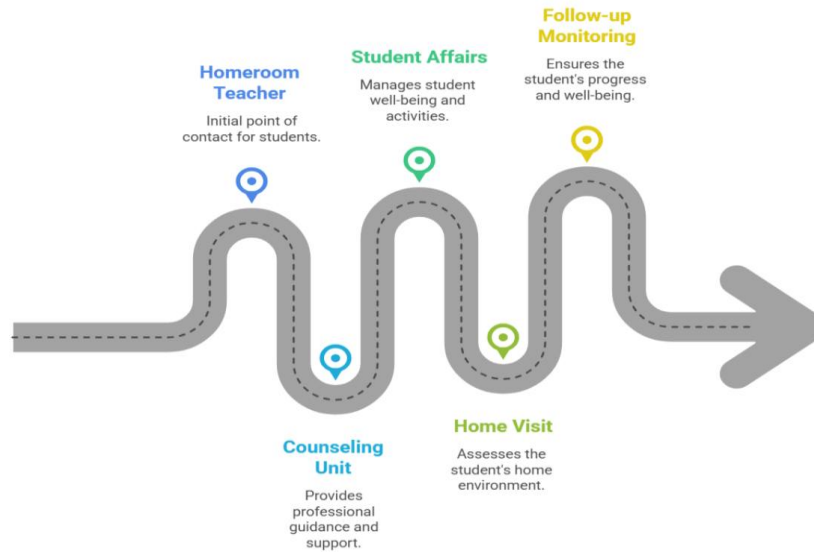
**Figure 2.** Distribution of Institutional Mechanisms Supporting Learning Culture

The figure does not imply statistical dominance but reflects the presence of structured practices identified through thematic analysis. Discipline policies and student guidance practices demonstrate comparable structural breadth, while literacy routines, though fewer in mechanism, are implemented with notable consistency. The presence of twelve extracurricular programs further indicates that the school's learning culture extends into structured student engagement beyond formal academic settings.

The discipline system forms the structural entry point into this culture. School regulations are clearly documented and visible within classrooms, signaling that expectations are neither implicit nor negotiable. The point-based violation system introduces a graduated framework in which minor infractions carry lower scores and serious violations may reach one hundred points. This tiered structure establishes predictability in consequence. However, discipline is not framed solely as correction. Recognition mechanisms for positive conduct or academic achievement complement the sanction system, creating a balance between regulation and affirmation. In practice, this balance appears to sustain order without fostering an overly punitive atmosphere.

While discipline provides behavioral structure, literacy routines anchor the academic dimension of the learning culture. Daily reading sessions take place before formal lessons begin, positioning literacy as the opening rhythm of the school day. Students are not only required to read but also to produce brief written reflections, which are monitored by teachers. Over time, this repetition transforms reading and writing into habitual practices rather than occasional tasks. Although the number of literacy mechanisms identified is smaller, their regular enactment suggests depth of implementation. The stability of this routine contributes to academic persistence and shared intellectual engagement.

The third domain, student guidance practices, reveals how institutional coordination sustains the broader system. Monitoring begins at the classroom level, where homeroom teachers observe attendance patterns, classroom participation, and behavioral indicators. When concerns are identified, cases are referred to the counseling unit for further assessment. In situations requiring deeper contextual understanding, home visits are conducted. Student affairs personnel coordinate follow-up measures and ensure continuity of supervision. This process is visualized in Figure 3.



**Figure 3.** Coordinated Student Guidance Process Identified Through Qualitative Analysis

The diagram illustrates that student guidance unfolds as a sequence rather than a single intervention. Responsibility shifts deliberately from one institutional actor to another, preventing gaps in monitoring. This coordinated structure reduces fragmentation and allows concerns to be addressed before they escalate. In this way, guidance operates not only as remediation but as preventive care within the institutional framework.

To synthesize these findings, Table 2 summarizes the domains and their functional orientations.

**Table 2.** Institutional Components and Functional Orientation

Domain	Identified Practices	Primary Function
Discipline Policies	Written regulations; point-based system; recognition mechanism	Establishing accountability and stability
Literacy Routines	Daily reading sessions; written reflection monitoring	Cultivating academic persistence
Student Guidance Practices	Classroom monitoring; 206ounseling referral; home visit; follow-up	Ensuring preventive and coordinated support
Extracurricular Programs	Twelve structured student activity programs	Extending engagement and skill development

The synthesis presented in Table 2 clarifies that each domain contributes a distinct yet interrelated function within the school environment. Discipline establishes behavioral stability, literacy fosters sustained intellectual engagement, and guidance ensures continuous oversight and support. Extracurricular programs complement these structures by broadening participation and enabling students to develop competencies beyond the classroom. Taken together, these institutional elements form an interconnected configuration rather than separate initiatives. The learning culture observed in this school therefore emerges from the steady alignment of regulation, routine, and relational support.

**Discussion**

The findings of this study suggest that a supportive learning culture does not emerge from isolated school programs, but from the steady alignment of institutional practices that frame

everyday interactions (Kezar et al., 2025; Torres, 2022). What becomes visible in this case is not a collection of independent initiatives, but a patterned configuration in which discipline, literacy, and student guidance gradually reinforce one another. The cultivation of learning culture, therefore, appears to be less about introducing new policies and more about ensuring that existing mechanisms operate coherently over time.

The discipline system provides an initial layer of structural stability. Clear rules and a transparent point-based framework establish shared expectations, reducing ambiguity in behavioral standards (Malathi et al., 2025). Yet what distinguishes this system is the deliberate balance between sanction and recognition. By pairing consequences with acknowledgement of positive conduct, the school situates discipline within a formative rather than punitive orientation. This balance likely contributes to students' perception of fairness, which in turn sustains compliance without eroding trust.

Beyond behavioral regulation, literacy routines shape the intellectual character of the school (Riggs & Landrum, 2023). The daily scheduling of reading activities signals that literacy is not supplementary but central to academic life. When students repeatedly engage in reading and short reflective writing, the practice gradually becomes habitual. The significance of this routine lies not only in improving literacy skills, but in establishing a shared academic rhythm (Nitin et al., 2023). Over time, such repetition may normalize sustained attention and reflective thinking as expected features of school participation.

While discipline provides order and literacy nurtures academic engagement, student guidance practices introduce relational continuity into the system (Kundu et al., 2021). The structured coordination among homeroom teachers, counseling staff, and student affairs personnel demonstrates that monitoring is distributed rather than individualized. Responsibility shifts systematically from one role to another, minimizing gaps in supervision. This layered structure reduces the likelihood that emerging concerns remain unnoticed, reinforcing the preventive dimension of student support (Wiedermann et al., 2023).

Examined together, these domains reveal a pattern of interdependence (Ünal & Akgün, 2022). Literacy routines are more sustainable within a predictable and orderly environment. Similarly, disciplinary clarity enhances the effectiveness of guidance interventions by providing a common reference for behavioral expectations. In turn, guidance mechanisms help preserve the integrity of discipline and literacy practices by addressing personal or contextual factors that might otherwise disrupt participation (Welsh, 2024). The supportive learning culture, therefore, is not located within any single domain, but within the interaction among them.

Extracurricular programs further extend this interaction into broader dimensions of school life (Wachsmuth et al., 2023). Although not formally categorized as core pillars, these activities create additional spaces where institutional values are practiced. Participation in clubs and structured activities reinforces responsibility, collaboration, and recognition, echoing the principles embedded in discipline and literacy routines (Marques, 2025). Through these extensions, the learning culture transcends classroom boundaries and becomes embedded in the wider school environment.

What emerges from this case is an understanding of learning culture as an evolving institutional ecology (Ivaldi et al., 2021). Rather than being imposed through a singular reform, it is cultivated through consistent enactment of mutually reinforcing practices. The emphasis on coordination suggests that coherence may be more influential than innovation (Westlund et al.,

2021). Schools seeking improvement may therefore benefit from examining how existing structures relate to one another, rather than focusing exclusively on introducing new initiatives.

In sum, the interweaving of discipline policies, literacy routines, and student guidance practices appears to generate a stable yet responsive educational environment (Kendrick & Early, 2024). Stability arises from predictable structures, while responsiveness is sustained through coordinated relational support. This balance may explain how the school is able to maintain order while simultaneously fostering academic persistence and student development (Yurkofsky & Peurach, 2023). The findings underscore that supportive learning culture is less a product of isolated strategies and more the outcome of sustained institutional alignment.

### **Implications**

The patterns identified in this study suggest that strengthening a supportive learning culture requires attention to alignment rather than program expansion. The interweaving of discipline policies, literacy routines, and student guidance practices indicates that coherence among institutional domains may be more influential than the introduction of new initiatives. For school leaders, this implies that reviewing how existing systems interact could be more productive than continuously adding reform agendas. When behavioral regulation, academic habit formation, and relational monitoring are coordinated, they appear to reinforce one another in shaping a stable yet responsive environment. The discipline system observed in this case further illustrates that accountability and affirmation need not be positioned in opposition. The pairing of structured consequences with recognition mechanisms suggests that order can be maintained without weakening relational trust. Similarly, the institutionalization of literacy routines demonstrates that consistency plays a critical role in habit formation. Rather than depending on sporadic literacy campaigns, embedding reading and reflective writing into the daily rhythm of school life may gradually cultivate sustained academic engagement. In parallel, the coordinated flow of student guidance underscores the importance of clearly defined roles and structured communication. Preventive support becomes viable when responsibility is distributed but not fragmented.

### **Research contribution**

Building on these implications, the study contributes to ongoing discussions about school culture by foregrounding the relational configuration among institutional practices. While existing research often isolates discipline systems, literacy programs, or mentoring frameworks, this study highlights how these elements function in conjunction within a specific secondary school context. The contribution therefore lies less in proposing a new policy model and more in demonstrating how institutional alignment shapes everyday educational experience. Moreover, by adopting a qualitative approach, the study captures how policies are enacted rather than merely documented. The emphasis on process, coordination, and lived routines provides insight into how cultural stability is sustained in practice. In this sense, the research advances an understanding of supportive learning culture as an evolving institutional ecology grounded in consistent enactment rather than episodic reform.

### **Limitations**

Despite these contributions, certain limitations must be acknowledged. The findings are drawn from a single institutional setting, which means that contextual factors unique to this school may influence the configuration observed. Variations in leadership, community expectations, or student demographics could produce different patterns elsewhere. As such, the conclusions should be interpreted as contextually grounded rather than universally generalizable. In addition, the

qualitative design prioritizes depth over measurement. While the study reveals how discipline, literacy, and guidance practices intersect, it does not quantify their direct impact on academic performance or behavioral outcomes. The absence of longitudinal data also limits the ability to assess whether the observed coherence remains stable over extended periods or shifts in response to policy changes.

### **Suggestions**

Recognizing these limitations opens avenues for further inquiry. Future studies could examine multiple secondary schools to explore whether similar interweaving patterns appear across diverse contexts. Comparative research may illuminate how variations in institutional alignment influence the development of learning culture. Incorporating quantitative indicators alongside qualitative insights could also help clarify the relationship between structural coherence and measurable student outcomes. Longitudinal research would be particularly valuable in understanding how supportive learning cultures evolve over time. Tracking institutional practices across several academic years may reveal whether alignment is sustained, adapted, or disrupted. Additionally, deeper exploration of students' perspectives could enrich understanding of how institutional coordination is experienced at the individual level. Such perspectives may shed light on how discipline, literacy, and guidance practices shape not only behavior and performance but also students' sense of belonging and agency within the school community.

## **CONCLUSION**

This study examined how a supportive learning culture in secondary education is cultivated through the interweaving of discipline policies, literacy routines, and student guidance practices, and it shows that such a culture is built less by stand-alone programs than by the steady alignment of daily institutional work. Discipline policies contribute structural clarity and predictable expectations, literacy routines embed academic engagement as a consistent habit, and coordinated guidance practices provide relational continuity through monitoring and preventive support. Rather than operating as separate initiatives, these elements reinforce one another in shaping an environment that is orderly while remaining responsive to student needs. The evidence from this case suggests that what sustains a supportive learning culture is not the complexity of interventions but the coherence of routines, responsibilities, and follow-up across school actors, enabling schools to maintain academic persistence alongside character development over time.

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## AUTHOR CONTRIBUTION STATEMENT

Wilibaldus Bhoke conceptualized the study, designed the research framework, and led the field investigation, including classroom observations and coordination of interviews. Veronika Lujur contributed to data collection through interviews and documentation, supported the organization of field notes, and assisted in the interpretation of findings. Bonifasius Megu participated in data analysis, contributed to the development of the discussion and conclusion sections, and reviewed the manuscript critically for intellectual content. All authors discussed the results, contributed to the final manuscript, and approved the submitted version.

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