

# A Systematic literature Review on Psychological well-being

**Dr. Ambica Kumari<sup>1</sup>, Ms. Kiran Thapa<sup>2</sup>**

<sup>1,2</sup>Asstt. Professor, Department of Psychology, Govt. College of Education, Jammu

## Abstract

Psychological well-being refers to a complex and multi-dimensional concept that captures an individual's overall sense of happiness, emotional and mental health, and satisfaction with life. It involves several important elements such as experiencing positive emotions, having a sense of independence, maintaining healthy relationships, experiencing minimal negative emotions, finding meaning and purpose in life, achieving life satisfaction, and continuing personal development. Researchers have proposed various definitions of psychological well-being, with ongoing discussions around its scope and meaning. According to the World Health Organization, it is described as a mental state where individuals can fulfill their potential, handle everyday stress, and work efficiently. Psychological well-being plays a vital role in promoting overall health and happiness, and it is associated with enhanced mental and physical health, along with a longer lifespan. This study seeks to understand the theoretical aspects of psychological well-being and to examine previous research carried out in this domain

**Keywords:** Definitions, Dimensions, Components, and measures of psychological well-being.

## Introduction

Psychological well-being is increasingly recognized as a key element of overall health, going beyond just the absence of mental illness. It includes positive emotions, a sense of purpose, and the ability to handle life's challenges. According to the World Health Organization (2004), mental well-being is when individuals acknowledge their strengths, manage daily stress, and contribute meaningfully to society. As global attention on mental health grows, psychological well-being has become a central focus in both clinical practice and research. It is a crucial aspect of a person's emotional and mental health, influencing happiness, life satisfaction, and a sense of purpose. Though there is no single, universally accepted definition, researchers agree that psychological well-being involves multiple dimensions, such as positive relationships, personal growth, self-esteem, and a sense of control over one's life. Key elements of psychological well-being include life satisfaction, positive emotions, low negative emotions, autonomy, meaningful relationships, purpose in life, and personal growth. These aspects are interconnected and can impact each other, improving overall well-being. High levels of psychological well-being lead to greater positive emotions, more engagement in meaningful activities, and stronger, more satisfying relationships.

Psychological well-being is an essential aspect of emotional and mental health that requires ongoing attention. Individuals can enhance their well-being by engaging in activities that foster personal development, nurturing positive relationships, and finding purpose in life. If challenges arise, seeking

help from mental health professionals is important. Taking a comprehensive approach to mental and emotional health helps individuals improve their overall well-being and lead fulfilling lives. This literature review aims to synthesize current knowledge about psychological well-being, including its theoretical foundations, primary components, and key measurement tools, while exploring research that connects well-being to health, behavior, and quality of life.

### **Methodology**

A systematic search was performed across various academic databases such as PsycINFO, Scopus, PubMed, and Google Scholar. Keywords like “psychological well-being,” “mental health,” “life satisfaction,” “eudaimonia,” and “Ryff’s model” were employed. The inclusion criteria focused on peer-reviewed studies published between 2000 and 2025 that explored psychological well-being in relation to emotional, cognitive, and social functioning. The studies were organized based on their theoretical framework, research methods, and findings related to the components, benefits, and measurements of psychological well-being.

### **Theoretical Background**

Two primary perspectives dominate the discussion on psychological well-being: the hedonic and eudaimonic approaches. The hedonic view, proposed by Diener (1984), centers on subjective well-being, which includes life satisfaction, positive emotions, and the absence of negative feelings. In contrast, the eudaimonic approach, articulated by Ryff (1989), focuses on psychological functioning and personal fulfillment. Ryff’s model highlights six key dimensions:

- Autonomy
- Environmental mastery
- Personal growth
- Positive relationships with others
- Purpose in life
- Self-acceptance

Both models are widely recognized and increasingly integrated into contemporary psychological research.

### **Components and Measures**

Psychological well-being encompasses both emotional and functional aspects, which include:

- Positive emotions (e.g., joy, contentment)
- Life purpose
- Autonomy and control
- Resilience to stress
- Social connectedness
- Low levels of anxiety and depression

### **Commonly used assessment tools include:**

Ryff’s Scales of Psychological Well-Being (Ryff, 1989)

Satisfaction With Life Scale (SWLS) (Diener et al., 1985)

The Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale (WEMWBS) (Tennant et al., 2007)

Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS) (Watson et al., 1988)

These scales are well-validated across diverse populations and are frequently applied in both clinical and research settings.

## Findings

The review of research consistently shows that high psychological well-being is linked to:

Lower levels of depression and anxiety (Keyes, 2002) Better physical health, including improved cardiovascular and immune function (Steptoe et al., 2015) Enhanced academic and work performance (Diener et al., 2017) Stronger social connections and community engagement. Additionally, interventions such as mindfulness-based therapies, physical activity, and gratitude journaling have been shown to improve well-being across various age groups and cultural contexts (Chiesa & Serretti, 2009; Lyubomirsky et al., 2005).

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE ON PSYCHOLOGICAL WELLBEING

Psychological well-being (PWB) is a broad and complex concept that encompasses an individual's overall experience of positive emotions, life satisfaction, and a sense of purpose. Research on psychological well-being has been ongoing for many years, aiming to better understand the factors that contribute to its development and upkeep. One of the earliest influential models was proposed by Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi (2000), who defined it as a combination of two key dimensions: positive emotions and engagement in meaningful activities. According to this model, individuals who experience frequent positive emotions and actively engage in activities that are personally meaningful are likely to have higher levels of psychological well-being.

Other researchers have expanded on this model by adding additional dimensions such as positive relationships (Diener et al., 2010), personal growth (Linley & Joseph, 2004), and a sense of purpose (Ryff, 1989), all of which are crucial for psychological well-being. These dimensions are often incorporated into studies on the topic.

Research has shown that both individual traits and environmental factors influence psychological well-being. For example, personality traits like openness and conscientiousness are linked to higher well-being (Costa & McCrae, 1980). Moreover, environmental factors such as access to green spaces and social support have been found to positively affect well-being (Oishi & Diener, 2001).

Mindfulness practices, such as meditation and yoga, have been shown to improve psychological well-being by enhancing mood, reducing stress, and promoting overall well-being (Brown & Ryan, 2003). Cognitive-behavioral therapies (CBT) are also effective in boosting well-being, particularly for individuals with anxiety or depression (Cuijpers et al., 2013).

Physical activity is another factor that contributes positively to psychological well-being. Exercise has been linked to reduced stress, improved mood, and increased self-esteem (Lancaster & Strath, 2013). It has also proven effective in treating depression, with its benefits comparable to those of medication and psychotherapy (Babyak et al., 2000).

Additionally, numerous studies have examined various factors related to PWB and its sub-dimensions, such as productivity-related personal goals (McAdams & St. Aubin, 1992), altruism (Batson & Powell, 2003), autonomy (Sheldon & Niemiec, 2006), self-compassion (Neff et al., 2007; Zessin et al., 2015), job demand control (Häusser et al., 2010), social support (Walen & Lachman, 2000), leadership (Arnold

et al., 2007), and the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic (De Kock et al., 2021; Heshmati et al., 2022). These factors, among others, are all important in understanding PWB.

In conclusion, the research on psychological well-being is vast and continues to grow. It is clear that psychological well-being is influenced by a variety of individual and environmental factors, and interventions like mindfulness practices, CBT, and physical activity can enhance well-being. However, further research is needed to fully understand the nature of psychological well-being and the most effective strategies for promoting it.

## Conclusion and Discussions

The literature highlights the complexity and depth of psychological well-being as a concept. While earlier models focused primarily on subjective happiness, more recent studies have expanded to include broader existential and interpersonal aspects. The integration of hedonic (pleasure-oriented) and eudaimonic (purpose-oriented) theories offers a more comprehensive understanding of human flourishing. However, challenges persist in this area. Many studies still rely on self-report surveys, which can be biased. Additionally, there is a lack of cross-cultural perspectives, and longitudinal research remains scarce. Future research should aim to include more diverse populations and enhance the accuracy of well-being measurements by using mixed-methods and longitudinal approaches. Psychological well-being is an essential indicator of both mental and physical health, involving a wide range of emotional, cognitive, and social factors. By combining theoretical frameworks with empirical findings, this review emphasizes its multidimensional nature and its relevance throughout life. Ongoing research into its causes and effects will help create more effective interventions to promote better mental health and life satisfaction for individuals and communities.

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