

Antecedents of Psychological Well-Being in Adolescents: a Systematic Literature Review

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ABSTRACT

Adolescent psychological well-being is a critical issue influenced by the complex interaction of various factors. This systematic review aims to identify and map key antecedents affecting adolescent psychological well-being based on current literature. The PRISMA method was applied through a search of electronic databases including Google Scholar, APA PsycNET, Springer, and Elsevier. Of the identified articles, 11 met the inclusion criteria after a rigorous selection process. The analysis revealed various antecedents that can be classified into protective and risk factors. Social support emerged as the most dominant antecedent, followed by self-esteem and resilience, which play a significant role in improving adolescent psychological well-being. Meanwhile, key risk factors identified included stress, bullying experiences, and poor social relationships, which were consistently associated with decreased psychological well-being. These findings underscore the importance of a multidimensional approach to intervention efforts, where strengthening protective factors must be implemented simultaneously with mitigating risk factors. Effective interventions should integrate the adolescent's family, school, and social contexts to support optimal psychological well-being.

Keywords: Psychological Well-being, Adolescents, Antecedents

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INTRODUCTION

Adolescent mental health has become a global issue of growing concern over the past two decades (Lee & Kim, 2021; Rahman et al., 2022). Adolescence is a crucial stage of development because it is a time of rapid biological, emotional, and social change (Hidayat & Putra, 2020). It is also a period of identity formation, personal values, and future direction (Sari et al., 2021). However, adolescence is also a period of vulnerability to various psychological problems due to academic pressure, social conflict, and changes in the family environment (Lestari & Santosa, 2020; Yulia & Widodo, 2023). According to a report by the World Health Organization (WHO, 2021), approximately 14% of adolescents worldwide experience mental disorders, particularly those related to depression, anxiety, and behavioral disorders (Kurniawan & Yanti, 2022). This condition not only hinders the learning process and social interaction but can also reduce productivity and even increase the risk of deviant behavior and suicide (Fahmi & Hidayat, 2022). Therefore, research on psychological well-being is important as an effort to understand and improve adolescent mental health (Sutanto et al., 2021).

The modern era has brought rapid social, technological, and cultural changes, which have had a significant impact on the lives of adolescents (Andika et al., 2020; Greenfield, 2019). At this stage of development, adolescents seek to establish their identity, build social relationships, and meet increasingly complex academic demands. These changes bring many benefits, such as easy access to information and broadened horizons, but they also give rise to various psychological pressures that can affect adolescents' psychological well-being (Santrock, 2021).

Psychological well-being is a condition in which individuals are able to accept themselves positively, establish healthy social relationships, have meaningful life goals, and face life's challenges adaptively (Ryff, 1989). Individuals with high psychological well-being tend to be happier, more confident, more productive, and better able to deal with stress positively. Conversely, individuals with low psychological well-being often experience prolonged stress, depression, loss of meaning in life, and tend to withdraw from their social environment (Keyes, 2002).

The development of technology and digital media is one of the factors that influence the psychological well-being of adolescents. Social media, for example, has become the main means for adolescents to communicate, express themselves, and build social networks. However, various studies show that excessive exposure to social media can reduce psychological well-being, particularly through phenomena such as social comparison, pressure to present an ideal self-image, and the emergence of cyberbullying (Vannucci & Ohannessian, 2019). Data from We Are Social (2024) shows that more than 98% of Indonesian adolescents use social media for at least 3 hours per day—a figure that reflects the high level of digital interaction in this age group.

Various studies have also found that the psychological well-being of adolescents is influenced by the quality of interpersonal relationships, especially with parents and peers. Adolescents who do not receive sufficient emotional support from their families tend to experience difficulties in regulating their emotions, low self-esteem, and an increased risk of psychological problems such as anxiety and depression (Steinberg, 2020). A stressful school environment, such as academic demands or disharmonious relationships, adds to the complexity of the psychological problems experienced by adolescents.

The developmental psychology perspective also emphasizes that adolescence is a crucial period in the formation of self-identity. Erikson (1968) explains that adolescents' failure to build a stable identity can lead to role confusion and decreased psychological well-being. On the other hand, Bronfenbrenner (1979), through his ecological theory of development, explains that adolescents' psychological well-being is not determined by internal factors alone but also by environmental systems such as family, school, community, and broader culture.

With increasing academic pressure, socio-cultural changes, and massive technological penetration, adolescents are at risk of experiencing a decline in psychological well-being. Phenomena such as *fear of missing out (FoMO)*, gadget addiction, and the inability to manage stress are the main triggers for the decline in psychological well-being in adolescents today (Przybylski et al., 2013). In addition, emotional development challenges such as mood instability, uncertainty about the future, and pressure to conform to social demands can significantly affect adolescents' psychological functioning.

The antecedents of psychological well-being in adolescents can come from various aspects, such as personal factors (self-esteem, emotional regulation), family factors (parental support, parenting styles), school factors (supportive school climate), and digital factors (social media use and digital security). These antecedents are not static; they change over the course of life experiences, emotional development, and adolescents' interactions with their environment. This condition highlights the importance of deeply understanding the factors that influence adolescent psychological well-being in order to design targeted interventions.

The increasing prevalence of psychological problems among adolescents underscores the need for in-depth studies on the antecedents and consequences of psychological well-being. Research on this topic not only contributes to scientific understanding of adolescent development but also has practical implications for education, mental health, and public policy. Efforts to strengthen adolescent psychological well-being need to be carried out collaboratively, involving families, schools, communities, and a healthy digital environment. By comprehensively understanding the dynamics of adolescent psychological well-being, it is hoped that intervention and prevention strategies can be carried out effectively and sustainably to support healthy and adaptive adolescent development.

METHOD

This study consists of several stages, including: the first stage is planning the review, where the researcher identifies the objectives and develops a plan; the second stage is conducting the review, where the researcher searches for journals, selects journals, and assesses the criteria of the required journals; and the third stage is reporting the research results. In the planning stage, the researcher formulated research questions using the SPIDER formula (Sample, Phenomenon of Interest, Design, Evaluation, Research Type). The research question in this review was, “What are the antecedents of psychological well-being in adolescents?” Next, in the second stage, the researcher determined the keywords and designed a protocol for searching relevant journals.

The keywords used by the author were derived from the research question and developed into more in-depth search terms. In this study, the keywords were “psychological well-being and adolescents.” These keywords were used to search for articles using the Publish or Perish 8 search application with Google Scholar and to search for international journals sourced from the PubMed, Sagepub, ResearchGate, Scopus, Elsevier, and ScienceDirect databases. The next step taken by the researcher was to check for journal duplication with the help of Rayyan software. Next, the researcher filtered all journals that had passed the duplication check.

In conducting this systematic review, the author established comprehensive inclusion and exclusion criteria to ensure that relevant, comprehensive, and high-quality journals were included in the analysis stage. The application of these criteria is important to ensure that the systematic review truly reflects the antecedents and consequences of phubbing partners. The inclusion criteria established cover several aspects, including: (1) The journal explicitly discusses the antecedents of psychological well-being, either as the main focus or as part of a broader analysis, (2) the subjects of this systematic review are adolescents, (3) the types of research included include quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods to capture more studies that are in line with the topic discussed, (4) Journals written in English will be included to open access to reputable and standardized international journals, and (5) the journals used must have been published within the last 5 years, between 2020 and 2025. On the other hand, the author determined exclusion criteria to filter journals that were not in line with the systematic review topic, including: (1) journals that did not directly discuss the antecedents of psychological well-being, (2) journals not written in English, (3) non-journal articles such as reports, books, proceedings, and popular articles that lacked clarity in their content context.

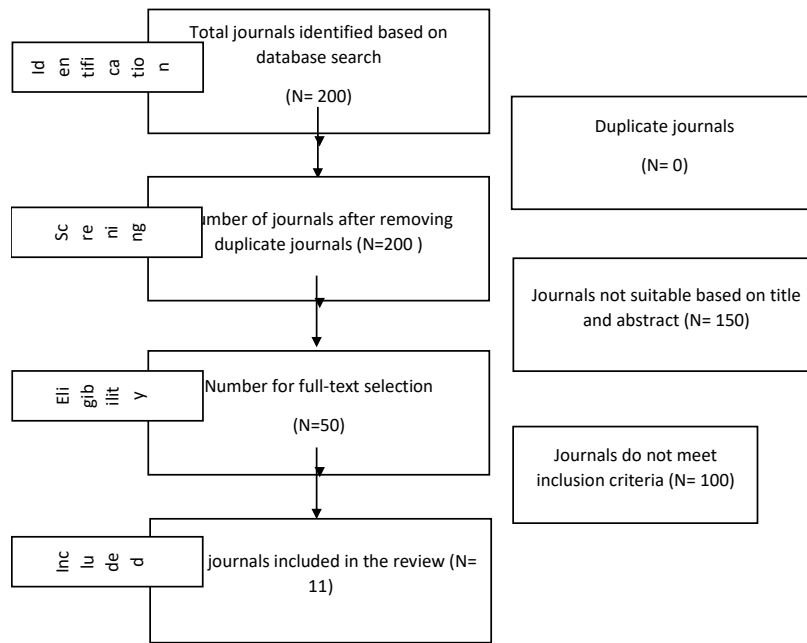


Figure 1. PRISMA Graph for Journal Selection Flow

Table 1. Antecedent

No	Research Title	Researcher	Year	Results	Antecedents
1	Perceived Social Support and Psychological Wellbeing among Nepalese Adolescents: The Mediating Role of Self-Esteem	Anju Poudel, Bishnu Gurung, Gopal Prasad Khanal	2020	Social support indirectly influences psychological well-being through self-esteem. Adolescents with high levels of social support have better self-esteem and higher psychological well-being.	Social support from family, friends, and significant others, Self-esteem, Social environment of adolescents
2	Exploring the relationships between academic burnout and well-being in adolescents: The mediating role of optimism	Pablo Molina Moreno, Maria Del Mar Molero Jurado, and Maria Perez Fuentes	2020	Academic burnout is significantly negatively related to psychological well-being in adolescents.	Academic burnout, particularly its emotional exhaustion and cynicism dimensions, plays a role in reducing adolescents' psychological and social well-being. Conversely, academic efficacy serves as a protective factor positively related to well-being.
3.	Stressful Life Events and Adolescent Well-being: The Role of Parent and Peer Relationships	Grace McMahon, Ann-Marie Creaven, Stephen Gallagher	2020	Stressful life events negatively impact adolescents' psychological well-being. The quality of relationships with parents and peers mediates the	Stressful life events, Quality of relationships with parents, Quality of relationships with peers, Gender differences

No	Research Title	Researcher	Year	Results	Antecedents
				relationship between stress and well-being.	
4.	The mediating Effect Of Resilience on the Relationship between Academic Burnout and Psychological well being of Medical students	Yu,J. & Chae,S	2020	Academic burnout is negatively related to psychological well-being, resilience is positively related to psychological well-being, resilience mediates the relationship between academic burnout and psychological well-being.	Academic burnout (emotional exhaustion, cynicism, inefficacy), Resilience (self-regulation, interpersonal competence, positive attitude), academic year level, gender.
5.	Adolescent–Parent Relationships and Youth Well-Being in Turkey	Ayfer Dost-Gözkan	2022	Parental warmth is positively related, while psychological control is negatively related to adolescent well-being.	Parenting style, parental warmth, autonomy support, psychological control
6.	Psychological Well-Being and Psychosocial Factors in University Students	Morales-Rodríguez, Espigares-López, Brown, Pérez-Mármol	2020	Various psychosocial factors significantly predict dimensions of psychological well-being, including autonomy, positive relationships, and purpose in life.	Anxiety, Empathy, Self-concept, Emotional intelligence
7.	Hubungan Harga Diri dan Stres dengan Psychological Well-Being pada Remaja Panti Asuhan	Sitorus & Maryatmi	2020	Self-esteem is positively related to psychological well-being, and stress is negatively related to psychological well-being.	Self-esteem, stress, psychosocial conditions
8.	School Bullying, Mental Health, and Well-Being in Adolescents.mediating impact of positive Psychological Orientations	Arslan et al.	2020	Bullying has a significant impact on mental health and well-being.	Bullying, positive psychological orientation (mediator)
9.	The Benefits of Mental Health Promotion in School Environments	Dumar et al.	2025	Mental health promotion interventions in schools improve students' emotional well-being.	Mental health programs, school support, learning environment
10.	Sources of Perceived Social Support and Psychological Well-Being	Brunsting et al.	2020	Social support increases sense of belonging and psychological well-being	Social support from peers and lecturers, belongingness, loneliness
11.	Mediating Role of Self-Efficacy in Optimism, PWB, and Resilience	Sabouripour et al.	2021	Self-efficacy mediates the relationship between psychological well-being and resilience	Self-efficacy, optimisme, psychological well-being

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A review of eleven scientific articles shows that psychological well-being in adolescents is influenced by a combination of interacting external and internal factors. Consistently, social support emerges as the most dominant contextual factor in predicting psychological well-being. Support from family, peers, teachers, and significant others is positively associated with psychological well-being, both directly and indirectly through internal psychological mechanisms such as self-esteem and self-compassion (Poudel et al., 2020; Wilson et al., 2020; Brunsting et al., 2020). These findings indicate that the quality of supportive social relationships plays an important role in helping adolescents develop positive self-evaluations and more adaptive emotional regulation.

In addition to social support, internal individual factors also play a significant role in determining the level of psychological well-being in adolescents. Various studies show that self-esteem, resilience, self-efficacy, optimism, and emotional intelligence are positively related to psychological well-being. Adolescents with higher self-esteem and self-efficacy tend to have better adaptive abilities in facing academic and social pressures, enabling them to maintain more optimal psychological balance (Sitorus & Maryatmi, 2020; Sabouripour et al., 2021). Furthermore, resilience was found to act as a mediating variable that can mitigate the negative impact of academic burnout on psychological well-being, particularly in the dimensions of emotional exhaustion and academic cynicism (Yu & Chae, 2020).

On the other hand, the review also identified several risk factors that showed a significant negative correlation with adolescent psychological well-being. Bullying, stressful life events, parental psychological control, and exposure to unrealistic body standards through social media were found to contribute to a decline in psychological well-being. The study by Arslan et al. (2020) shows that bullying is associated with an increase in symptoms of depression and anxiety, as well as a decrease in psychological well-being, both in victims and perpetrators. Similar findings were also shown by McMahan et al. (2020), who found that stressful life events have a negative impact on adolescent psychological well-being, although this effect can be minimized through positive relationships with parents and peers.

Overall, the results of this review confirm that adolescent psychological well-being is a multidimensional construct influenced by the interaction between protective and risk factors. Social support and internal psychological resources serve as key protective factors, while social, academic, and family pressures have the potential to undermine psychological well-being if not balanced with adaptive coping mechanisms.

The findings of this study reinforce the view that psychological well-being is a multidimensional construct that is formed through interactions between the social environment and an individual's psychological capacity. Social support has been proven to be the main foundation in building psychological well-being, in line with the ecological perspective that places family, peers, and school as micro systems that directly influence individual development. Social support not only provides emotional security, but also strengthens positive self-evaluation and emotional regulation abilities.

The role of self-esteem and self-compassion as mediators shows that social support works through the internalization of positive experiences by individuals. Adolescents who feel supported tend to have a more positive view of themselves, are more accepting of themselves, and are more aware and adaptive in dealing with emotional experiences. This mechanism

explains why social support does not always have a direct impact, but often works through complex internal cognitive and affective processes.

Resilience and self-efficacy emerge as important psychological resources in coping with academic pressure and life stress. Individuals with high levels of resilience and self-efficacy are able to maintain psychological well-being even in demanding conditions, such as in the context of higher education and the medical profession. These findings confirm that psychological well-being does not only depend on the absence of stress, but on the individual's ability to adapt effectively to that stress.

Conversely, risk factors such as bullying, parental psychological control, and maladaptive exposure to social media show that chronic negative experiences can significantly erode psychological well-being. Bullying in the school environment is a strong social stressor because it not only affects an individual's emotional state but also damages their sense of security and belonging. Parental psychological control has also been shown to inhibit adolescent autonomy and increase psychological distress, which ultimately reduces well-being.

In the context of the digital age, FoMO and ideal body standards portrayed on social media introduce new forms of psychosocial pressure for adolescents. Constant social comparison encourages negative self-evaluation, lowers self-esteem, and increases the risk of anxiety and depression. These findings indicate that the psychological well-being of adolescents today cannot be separated from the dynamics of digital society, which influence how individuals view themselves and their environment. Overall, the results of this study show that interventions to improve psychological well-being need to be comprehensive, targeting various levels. Strengthening social support in families, schools, and communities needs to be accompanied by the development of individuals' internal capacities through increased self-esteem, resilience, mindfulness, and self-compassion. An integrated approach between external and internal factors is considered more effective in building sustainable psychological well-being.

CONCLUSION

Based on a systematic review of journals, adolescent psychological well-being emerges as a multidimensional construct shaped by intricate interactions between internal factors like self-esteem and resilience—which serve as key psychological pillars for coping with developmental challenges—and external factors, with social support from family, peers, and school playing a dominant role as a foundational antecedent. Adolescents remain vulnerable to risks such as stress, bullying, and social media pressure, which can erode well-being, underscoring the value of an ecological approach that views individuals within mutually influential social systems. This comprehensive framework offers a solid basis for targeted interventions to enhance adolescent mental health across contexts. For future research, longitudinal studies could explore how these antecedents evolve over time in diverse cultural settings, such as Indonesia, to inform culturally tailored prevention programs.

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