



The Effectiveness of Positive Psychology To Achieve Well Being in College Students

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Abstract. The study of mental health is hotly discussed at the moment, this is due to the increasing public awareness of the importance of maintaining mental health. Especially in achieving well-being, students try to achieve well-being so that their lives are better. The field of psychology has undergone significant development, at the beginning of the 21st century the scientific field of positive psychology emerged, the psychological field of science focuses on utilising the positive side in humans to achieve mental health. This study aims to see the effectiveness of positive psychology to improve well-being in college students. This research method uses the Systematic Literature Review (SLR) method using the PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) flow and uses the PICO (Population, Intervention, Comparison / Control, Outcome) method to extract data from the results of the studies reviewed. The inclusion criteria of this research are peer reviewed studies, relevant studies, English or Indonesian language, published in the last 10 years, journals or scientific articles, focus on higher education, students, implementation of positive psychology, realising well-being, diploma and undergraduate education levels. The exclusions were country-specific, for all ages, not only positive psychology or well-being, absence of reported research data, grey literature (unofficial blogs or unproven assumptions). The study population was 15 journals that fulfilled the criteria. The results showed that positive psychology interventions were effective in improving students' well-being, although the level of effectiveness varied. So that positive psychology interventions are recommended to be used in improving student well-being.

Keywords: Positive Psychology, Well-being, College Students, Higher Education.

1 Introduction

Positive psychology is a branch of psychology that focuses on helping individuals to achieve happiness, promote positive emotions, always be grateful, be generous to forgive others, be wise in making decisions. Unlike traditional psychology, which focuses

on helping individuals overcome psychological problems, positive psychology emphasises the value and strength of individuals in order to develop properly. This field puts forward scientific studies that individuals or groups can develop quickly when they are able to optimise their strengths and virtues, with the ultimate goal of achieving well-being in building positive emotions, achieving happiness, and having good relationships with people around them [19].

European universities, such as those in the UK, are also highly committed to inclusivity in higher education. [6,7,8]. Institutions such as the University of Edinburgh and University College London are implementing more proactive policies [9,10]. These include providing disability service centers that provide comprehensive support, both academically and socially. The university seeks to minimize disparities in access to education by providing specially designed courses, assistive learning equipment, and training for teaching staff. [11,12]. This holistic approach to inclusive education governance allows students with physical motor impairments to develop their academic potential without being limited by physical conditions. [13,14]. It also provides an important example for universities in other countries to create an inclusive system.

The positive psychology approach is a theory in optimising human potential, this approach does not depart from human mental disorders that are helped to be normal again, but this approach departs from normal conditions in humans towards a healthier mentality and even to a prosperous and happy stage [10]. This approach appears to respond to the lack of attention and research on the positive aspects that exist in humans themselves [18]. Positive psychology is interesting to study because this approach does not require individuals to change their values but how to optimise what the individual already has [20]. Optimising these strengths and values will help individuals to achieve well-being in their lives.

Well-being is defined as an individual's overall condition related to physical, emotional, social, and psychological well-being. Well-being is defined as meeting and controlling individual needs, achieving happiness, developing and growing properly, and being able to optimise one's potential. Well-being is not only understood as positive emotions, but as something that develops in every aspect of human life [7]. well-being integrates hedonic well-being (feeling good) which is a better feeling in running life and eudaemonic well-being (functioning well) is a well-developed individual as it should be, so that well-being does not only refer to affective indicators (happiness and emotional balance) [1].

The implementation of positive psychology approaches to achieve well-being in humans has begun since this approach emerged in the early 2000s, but the scope of application of the approach is still limited to education as a whole, not specific to what level of education and what aspects are measured, implementation in the world of work, only certain countries. Meanwhile, the implementation of positive psychology approaches to help students achieve well-being does not yet exist, even though from studies related to the use of positive psychology interventions to influence other variables, the average results have a positive effect. Therefore, research is needed to examine the effectiveness of the implementation of positive psychology to help students achieve well-being in their lives. This is also in line with previous research recommendations that there is a need for research to see the long-term impact of positive psychology interventions,

evaluate the effectiveness of positive psychology so that it can help individuals who have difficulty achieving well-being, especially in students who have various types of problems, and expand the number of countries that are research subjects [3].

This research is why it is important to do, because the development of a positive psychology approach is predicted to help students achieve well-being in their lives. Well-being is important for students to achieve, because when students are already in the well-being stage, it will help optimise their potential, focus on their strengths and virtues, so that they can study according to their respective fields of expertise optimally. Moreover, students sometimes have difficulty in achieving well-being, becoming students are very vulnerable to stress, despair, low self-esteem, and even depression due to heavy course loads. Therefore, research is needed to help students achieve well-being with a positive psychology approach.

The purpose of this research is to summarise the findings of previous research, case studies, experiences, etc., so as to obtain a comprehensive new perspective on the implementation of positive psychology. In addition, this study was conducted to see how effective the implementation of positive psychology is to help students achieve well-being, what factors influence, and what are the opportunities for the development of positive psychology interventions. So that this study can be an additional reference for knowledge that can be used by professionals such as counsellors, psychologists, lecturers, etc. around the world in order to help students achieve well-being.

2 Method

This study uses the Systematic Literature Review (SLR) method using the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) protocol flow to collect, classify, analyse, and interpret the findings of relevant scientific studies related to the search for relevant studies in the Google Scholar database, ERIC, PsycINFO, Science Direct, PubMed, and Publish or Perish with the keywords ‘Positive Psychology’, ‘Positive Psychology’, ‘Well-being’, ‘Positive Psychology and Well-being’, and ‘The Effectiveness of Positive Psychology to Achieve Well Being in College Students’.

2.1 Inclusion criteria

Inclusion criteria in the literature search (1) peer reviewed studies, (2) relevant studies, (3) Indonesian or English language, (4) published from 2015 to 2024 (last 10 years), (5) journals or scientific articles, (6) higher education, (7) students, (8) implementation of positive psychology, (9) realising well-being, (10) education level of diploma three and diploma and undergraduate. More specifically, the research subjects did not differentiate between female or male gender, country of origin, and based on research results and professional expert experience. Studies with larger samples of adolescents and early adults will be maintained to obtain in-depth and comprehensive results. In addition to the positive psychology intervention approach, the implementation of positive psychology, the development of positive psychology, strategies to achieve well-being, and the factors that influence well-being are maintained. Research that measures the

results of positive psychology interventions before and after the intervention, experimental research, survey research, development research, research without control groups will also be included in the literature to be synthesised, in support of the achievement or not of well-being in college students.

2.2 Exclusion criteria

The exclusion criteria were (1) country specific, (2) all ages, (3) absence of positive psychology or well-being, (4) absence of reported research data, (5) grey literature (such as unofficial blog posts or unproven assumptions). The screening process was performed using an Excel programme, which was then adjusted to the criteria of each group of articles found.

In accordance with the inclusion criteria of this study, data extraction used the PICO method (Population, Intervention, Comparison/Control, Outcome) by attaching an Excel sheet, with categories; author, year of publication, population and sample, characteristics (age), intervention, comparison (control group), and the results obtained in implementing positive psychology to achieve well-being in college students. Furthermore, the dimensions are divided using the PERMA method (Positive emotions, engagement, relationships, meaning, and accomplishment). By grouping based on the PERMA dimensions, it will help in analysing based on the aspects of positive psychology and knowing how effective it is in achieving well-being in students.

3 Result and Discussion

3.1 Identification of Appropriate Research

Based on the initial search in the data base using keywords, 32,461 articles were obtained, then 57 articles were found to be the same so that 32,404 articles remained, after which the researchers filtered the titles and summaries, only 57 articles were found to meet the inclusion criteria, most of the articles were eliminated due to irrelevant variables (not specific to positive psychology interventions or well-being achievement), studies not discussing students or universities, and inappropriate content and form (in the form of papers, conference results, reviews, language not published in English and Indonesian, or incorrect references). The next stage 57 articles were rechecked for titles, abstracts, completeness of data to be extracted, whether or not there was a full text file, and whether or not they included quantitative research methods. This resulted in 42 articles that did not fulfil these criteria, due to inappropriate population characteristics, absence of positive psychology interventions, irrelevant studies or theories, lack of complete data, and qualitative research). After a final review of the results of the articles obtained in the data base search, 15 articles were obtained that fulfilled the criteria set for this study.

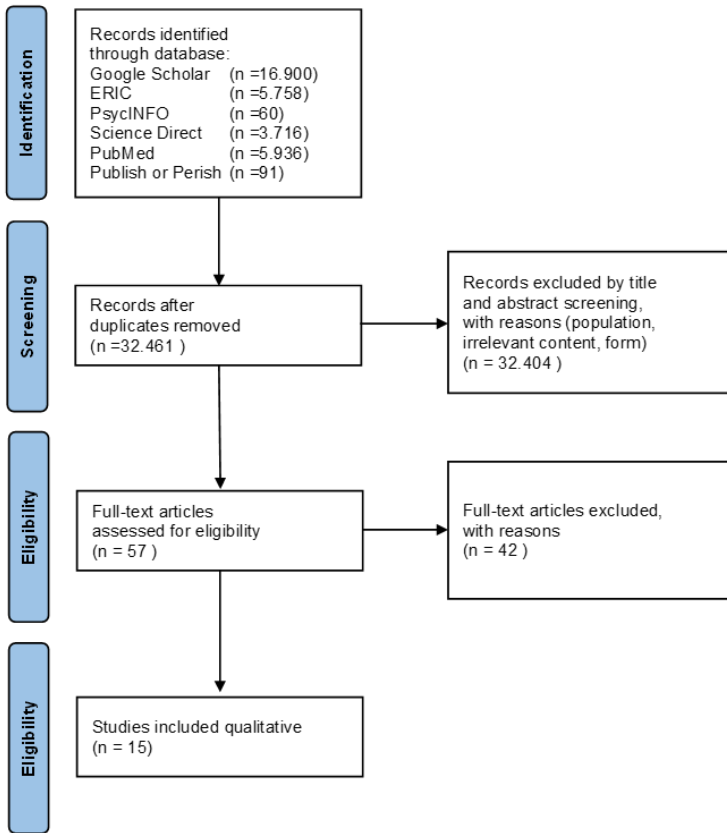


Fig. 1. PRISMA flow diagram

3.2 Findings on the Impact of Positive Psychology Intervention to Improve Student Well-Being

In presenting the findings, the PICO method is used to see the results of each study from the interventions provided. In this section, the population in each study is written, followed by an explanation of what intervention was used, information on whether there was a control group or not, a description of the study (purpose, design, instrument, explanation of the intervention), and the PERMA components contained in the positive psychology intervention. For a more comprehensive understanding and easier explanation, the results of the impact of positive psychology interventions on improving student well-being are explained using the PERMA model, so that it can be seen which parts are affected or not affected.

Table 1. Overview of Positive Psychology Interventions to Improve Student Well Being

Study	Popula- tion/ Sample (N; Age)	Intervention/Program	Description	PP Com- ponent (PERMA)
Yurayat & Sec-chaliao, 2021. [22].	n=24, college students	Online Positive Psychology (OPP)	This study aims to compare the experimental group with the control group	Positive Emotion, Engagement, Meaning
Temel & Tekin, 2023. [21].	n=236, college students aged 21 years.	Positive perceptions and Social well-being	This study was conducted to determine the relationship between positive perceptions and the level of social welfare	Positive Emotion, Engagement,
Drewery, et al., 2019. [8].	n=74, college students aged 17-25 years	a positive psychology based writing task & a toolkit with materials and information about coping with stress.	This study was to test the feasibility and efficacy of the intervention. The study consisted of three conditions, and the sample was randomised to determine which condition was accepted.	Positive Emotions
Cunha, et al., 2019. [6]	n=1337, college students whose average age is 18	Positive Psychology and Gratitude Interventions	This study was conducted to assess the effect of gratitude intervention.	Positive Emotion, Meaning
Kotera, et al., 2022. [14].	n=145, college students aged 18-52 years.	Positive Psychology	Research was conducted to examine the relationship between mental wellbeing and positive psychology constructs	Engagement, Meaning
Lambert, et al., 2021. [15].	n=120, college students 17-60 years	Positive Psychology Intervention	This study was conducted to see whether the prioritisation of college students' well-being affects cultural change.	Positive Emotions, Meaning
Parkinson, et al., 2023. [17].	n=169, college students 16-25 years.	Positive Psychology Intervention	The purpose of this study was to examine the contribution of positive psychology related to gratitude, optimism, hope, self-compassion, self-efficacy, and emotion regulation to individuals with chronic conditions. The sample had criteria of being	Positive Emotions, Meaning

Study	Popula- tion/ Sample (N; Age)	Intervention/Program	Description	PP Com- ponent (PERMA)
			Australian, aged 16-25 years, and currently experiencing mental illness.	
Chilver & Gatt, 2021. [5].	n=326, College students in their first year	Positive Psychology Intervention	The study was conducted with six weeks of intervention, and then re-checked at seven weeks after the intervention.	Positive Emotions, Meaning
Chakhssi, et al., 2018. [4]	n=30, college students 18 years and above	Positive Psychology Intervention	This study was conducted to see the effectiveness of PPI in clinical conditions.	Positive Emotion
Eryilmaz, 2015. [9].	n=72, college students aged 19-21 years.	Positive Psychology Intervention in Class	This study aims to determine the effectiveness of teaching methods based on improved well-being and engagement-enhancing activities.	Engagement, Meaning
Alkhatib, 2020. [2].	n=350, college students aged 18-36 years.	Psychology Well-being Intervention	This study aims to examine the relationship between psychological well-being, self-efficacy, and positive thinking among college students.	Positive Emotions, Relationship, Meaning
Kardas, et al., 2019. [13].	n=510, college students aged 17-30 years.	Gratitude, Hope, Optimism and Life Satisfaction	This study was conducted to determine the level of prediction of psychological well-being with variables of gratitude, hope, optimism, and life satisfaction.	Positive Psychology, Relationship, Meaning.
Jin, et al., 2022. [12].	n=120, college students	Positive Psychology Intervention and standard treatment	The study was conducted to evaluate the effectiveness and mechanism of PPI on psychological capital, psychological distress, and life satisfaction.	Positive Psychology, Meaning, Relationship.
Luo, 2022. [16].	n=43, college students	Psychology well-being intervention from perspective positive psychology	The study was conducted to look at the factors that affect the men-	Meaning

Study	Popula- tion/ Sample (N; Age)	Intervention/Program	Description	PP Com- ponent (PERMA)
			tal health of college students who are in the lower middle economy, in terms of psychological well-being..	
Hendriks, et al., 2018. [11].	n=28, college students 18 years and above	Positive Psychology Intervention	This study was conducted to examine the effectiveness of positive psychology interventions in non-Western countries.	Positive Emotion

The positive psychology interventions used in the 15 studies reviewed have a variety of differences ranging from materials, duration of intervention, differences in population age, intervention targets, research year, and environment. However, there are similarities in the interventions used, namely positive psychology interventions, in college students, and seeking an increase in well-being in college students. Some studies conducted comparisons in the control group, control group designs with two types, namely, by providing other interventions such as Chilver & Gatt's [5] research or by not providing interventions at all such as Yurayat & Seechalio's [22]. research. In the PERMA component, there are many differences between each study. Of the 15 studies, the Positive Emotions component appears the most, namely in 13 studies, followed by Meaning which is found in 11 studies, Engagement with 5 studies, Relationships are found in 3 studies, for Achievement / Accomplishment has not been found in these studies.

The duration of the intervention of each study varies, some conducted a single measurement to determine the impact of the intervention given, some also conducted a double check of the impact of the intervention by giving a certain time lag. In addition, the age of the population of each study varies, but overall the population is aged 16-60 years. The year of the study differed from one another, with three studies in 2022, 2021, and 2019, two studies in 2023 & 2018, and one study in 2020 & 2015. The research environment is different from one another, some are in developed countries and some are in developing countries, the distribution of research places varies, some are in metropolitan cities and in small town areas or even the population is settled in rural areas. These different factors are also a concern in this study, whether or not they affect the impact of the intervention.

3.3 Key Methods or Outcomes of the Reviewed Studies

Referring to the purpose of providing positive psychology interventions, almost all (13 studies) studies chose to use a pretest and post test research design to determine the impact of the intervention, the rest (2 studies) compared the impact of the intervention with the impact on the control group. Data collection also uses a variety of instruments,

such as using the Psychological Well-being Scale, the Positive Perspective Scale and the Social Well-being Scale of college students, asking research respondents to write a gratitude list, and online cross sectional.

Table 2. Methodological Characteristics, Measurement of Intervention Impact, and Research Outcomes

Study	PP Component (PERMA)	Key Methods/ Outcomes Measures	Outcome Summary (PERMA Model)
Yurayat & Se-chaliao, 2021. [22].	Positive Emotion, Engagement, Meaning	Measurement using the Psychological Well-being Scale developed by Ryff's psychology well-being concept, consisting of six components, 50 items, with a Likert scale.	The OPP intervention was effective in improving the well-being of college students (positive emotions, engagement, and meaningfulness). Pre-test and post-test means were significantly different at the 0.05 level.
Temel & Tekin, 2023. [21].	Positive Emotion, Engagement,	In the measurement using the positive perception scale and the social well-being scale college students who were quarantined during Covid-19.	There is a positive and meaningful relationship between positive perceptions and well-being of college students.
Drewery, et al., 2019. [8]	Positive Emotions	Measurements were taken before and after the intervention (one week)	There is an increase in emotional well-being after the intervention.
Cunha, et al., 2019. [6].	Positive Emotion, Meaning	This was measured by assigning intervention participants to write a gratitude list for 14 days, with descriptions of the events they were grateful for.	There was a significant impact after the positive psychology intervention on well-being and mental health. The intervention increased the positive effects of happiness and life satisfaction and decreased the negative effects and symptoms of depression.
Kotera, et al., 2022. [14].	Engagement, Meaning	Measurement is done by considering Relationship with engagement, Motivation, Resilience and Self-Compassion.	The results of the study indicate the importance of positive psychology in college students to improve well-being.
Lambert, et al., 2021. [15].	Positive Emotions, Meaning	The programme was conducted for six weeks to see the impact of the intervention.	There is an increase in the experience of positive emotions, which will support the achievement of well-being in college students, and there is no negative impact on culture.
Parkinson, et al., 2023. [17].	Positive Emotions, Meaning	Data were collected using a cross-sectional online survey design. The sample was individuals living with mental illness. Assessment was made by looking at the	The results indicate that individual positive psychology contributes differently to the well-being and distress of individuals in chronic conditions. Optimism

Study	PP Component (PERMA)	Key Methods/ Outcomes Measures	Outcome Summary (PERMA Model)
		results of participants' reports in the online survey.	accounts for the unique differences between these outcomes, suggesting an improvement in overall mental health.
Chilver & Gatt, 2021. [5]	Positive Emotions, Meaning	Data collection was conducted in stages, with three stages. The data analysed was the data of participants who attended the programme until completion, so that it could be analysed comprehensively.	The findings of this study indicate that positive psychology interventions are effective in improving well-being and reducing symptoms of distress.
Chakhssi, et al., 2018. [4]	Positive Emotion	This study used Hedge's adjusted to calculate the effect of positive psychology intervention, in data collection using random effect model.	Findings show that positive psychology interventions in the clinical field can improve well-being, not only that these interventions can reduce distress in individuals who experience clinical disorders.
Eryilmaz, 2015. [9]	Engagement, Meaning	Measurement by looking at pretest, post-test, and follow-up results. Collection using positive and negative affect scales, engagement scales, academic achievement tests.	Findings from the study indicated that students' subjective well-being, engagement, learning, and academic achievement could be improved by teaching methods with positive psychology interventions.
Alkhatib, 2020. [2]	Positive Emotions, Relationship, Meaning	The measurement used three questionnaires, consisting of two questionnaires given by the researcher, and one questionnaire given by Radi & Metib (2017).	The results showed a positive relationship between self-efficacy and positive thinking. The treatment given is able to have a positive effect on the dependent variable in the study.
Kardas, et al., 2019. [13].	Positive Psychology, Relationship, Meaning.	Measurement is done by comparing each variable with the level of well-being of college students.	The results of the study show that each variable is able to improve the well-being of college students, starting from the greatest in the gratitude variable, followed by the next variables.
Jin, et al., 2022. [12].	Positive Psychology, Meaning, Relationship.	Measurement by comparing the results of the instrument group and the control group.	Positive psychology is effective in improving psychological capital, psychological distress, and life satisfaction.
Luo, 2022. [16].	Meaning	Measured using the SCL-90 psychological well-being scale by selecting an optimised BP algorithm, data were collected using a questionnaire.	The result of this study is that mindfulness and rumination play a role in the level of well-being of college students, college students who are able to implement

Study	PP Component (PERMA)	Key Methods/ Outcomes Measures	Outcome Summary (PERMA Model)
			mindfulness in their daily activities will tend to be mentally healthier.
Hendriks, et al., 2018. [11].	Positive Emotion	Comparing the findings of previous research on the implementation of positive psychology interventions in non-western countries, the researcher wanted to see why interventions in non-western countries were able to have a greater impact.	The findings of this study, that positive psychology interventions implemented in non-western countries have a moderate effect on subjective well-being ($g=0.48$), and psychological well-being ($g=0.40$), and have an effect on depression ($g=0.62$) and anxiety ($g=0.95$). Therefore, there is a possibility of research bias in the study why non-western countries have a greater impact than western countries.

3.4 Impact of Positive Psychology Intervention in Improving Well-Being of College students

Each study has a different level of impact depending on the content, duration, age, personal condition of the individual, and the research environment. In detail, the results of each study can be seen in Table 3. But overall, positive psychology interventions have a positive impact on improving well being in college students. This can also be seen from the PERMA components, namely positive emotions, involvement or role in society, good relationships with the surrounding environment, and making positive meaning of life.

College students who are able to implement positive psychology interventions correctly and consistently will have a tendency to have healthy mental health, when mental health is healthy, achieving and improving well-being is not difficult. College students will develop for the better, maximise their potential, be independent in life, calm in solving problems. As college students also when able to implement positive psychology will help create a positive environment, support in creating a good learning climate so that the completion of the lecture will be easier, can even become an outstanding individual, and the most important thing is that college students are able to be protected from mental illness.

However, the implementation of positive psychology interventions in improving well-being needs further research in developing methods, duration, and instruments so that the knowledge is more comprehensive, innovative, creative, and renewable. This note is a recommendation for future research on positive psychology interventions in increasing motivation to continue higher education.

Positive psychology intervention is a relatively new approach in the field of psychology, but it has a different perspective from previous conventional approaches. Positive

psychology prioritises optimising the positive side of the human psyche to achieve independence and well-being in life. Currently, this approach is increasingly used to help individuals with mental problems or even as a strategy to prevent problems in human life.

Psychological well-being is currently something that is a top priority in people's lives, especially after Covid-19. People are starting to realise the importance of being healthy, bringing up positive emotions, contributing to daily life, positive relationships, making meaning of life well are the ideals of all individuals, including college students, even humans really hope to be able to achieve all their targets and become individuals who excel and are proud of. In realising it all is not easy, there needs to be effort in achieving it, being able to prepare for challenges, even being able to overcome problems appropriately in order to find the best solution. Therefore, humans need a comprehensive intervention to help achieve a prosperous life.

4 Conclusion

This article brings together research over the past 10 years related to the implementation of positive psychology interventions to support the achievement or enhancement of well-being in college students. This study is one of the most recent and complementary studies related to measuring the impacts of positive psychology implementation with a systematic literature review research method. Overall, the results of the synthesised studies indicate that positive psychology interventions are effective in improving well being in college students, although the level of impact varies. However, this does not mean that researchers can be complacent, there needs to be innovation in the model of providing interventions to clients so that the achievement of well-being can be effectively and efficiently. Especially in college students, because college students are the young generation who become human resources who build nations and countries, when they have problems with low or no well-being in their lives it will have an impact on the progress of the country, therefore it is important to help improve well-being in college students. We realise that research related to positive psychology needs to be improved in quality and quantity, especially in college students, so there is still much that needs to be done.

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