

Research Paper

Understanding Psychological Well-Being in Early Childhood: Theoretical Views and Cultural Impact

Dr. Silony Chirag¹, Dr. Lovely Sabarwal^{2*}

ABSTRACT

Psychological well-being (PWB) plays an important role in shaping children's mental health, academic performance, emotional development, and social interactions during early and middle childhood. Although growing attention has been given to children's well-being, several existing theoretical frameworks and assessment methods have been adapted from models originally developed for adults and adolescents. This review examines major perspectives on children's psychological well-being, including hedonic and eudaimonic approaches, Ryff's Six-Factor Model, Seligman's PERMA framework, Bronfenbrenner's Bioecological Systems Theory, Attachment Theory, and Self-Determination Theory. In addition, it considers emerging child-focused approaches, particularly the Holistic Well-Being Model for Children. The review also investigated the various factors associated with psychological well-being across individual, relational, and environmental settings. Individual factors include temperament and the ability to regulate emotions and behavior, while relational factors involve parenting practices, attachment patterns, and friendships. Environmental factors cover the quality of early childhood education, school settings, and socioeconomic conditions. Furthermore, the review considers cultural influences, particularly differences in parenting practices, cultural values, and children's understanding of well-being across different societies. It also highlights concerns regarding the suitability of assessment tools developed from adult-centered and Western-based perspectives when evaluating children from diverse cultural backgrounds. Overall, existing research indicates that children's psychological well-being is a multifaceted concept shaped by developmental, family-related, social, environmental, and cultural factors. Therefore, gaining a complete understanding of psychological well-being (PWB) requires the integration of different theoretical approaches, along with assessment tools that are suitable for children's developmental stages, cover multiple dimensions, and are sensitive to cultural differences.

Keywords: *Psychological well-being, young children, Ryff's model, PERMA, ecological systems theory, attachment, culture, individualism-collectivism*

Psychological well-being (PWB) involves more than simply being free from mental illness. It includes positive psychological functioning, having a sense of purpose, developing secure relationships, and being able to manage the everyday challenges of

¹Assistant Professor, MAM College, Jammu

²Assistant Professor, MAM College, Jammu

*Corresponding Author

Received: September 30, 2026; Revision Received: October 08, 2026; Accepted: October 12, 2026

life (Ryff, 1989). Nevertheless, much of the existing research on well-being has relied on theoretical models and assessment methods designed for adults, which have often been applied to young children and adolescents without sufficient adaptation (Navidmanesh et al., 2025). Guhn et al. (2012) emphasized that important aspects such as emotional regulation, attachment patterns, self-concept, and social competence develop during the early years and continue to influence individuals throughout adolescence and adulthood. This highlights a significant gap in current research. Therefore, understanding how psychological well-being is experienced by young children, the factors that influence it, and the ways it is interpreted across different cultural settings is important for researchers, educators, clinicians, and policymakers.

This paper focuses on three main objectives. First, it examines the major theoretical models used to understand psychological well-being and considers how suitable these models are for young children. Second, it reviews and organizes existing research on the factors associated with children's psychological well-being, including individual, relational, and contextual factors. Third, by examining cross-national studies that compare individualistic and collectivistic cultures, it explores the role of culture in shaping childhood well-being and influencing how it is measured. Finally, the review discusses the implications of these findings for theory, assessment, and practice.

Theoretical Perspectives on Psychological Well-Being in Children

Hedonic and Eudaimonic Perspectives on Well-Being

Research on well-being has traditionally followed two closely connected but different approaches (Navidmanesh et al., 2025). The hedonic approach, linked to Diener's (1984) idea of subjective well-being, views well-being through life satisfaction, positive emotions, and a lower presence of negative emotions. In comparison, the eudaimonic approach focuses on meaning in life, personal development, and achieving one's potential, with its origins in Aristotle's theory of virtue (Ryff, 2013). Diener's model mainly considers well-being as a person's subjective and short-term evaluation of their experiences, while eudaimonic scholars such as Ryff suggest that lasting well-being comes from continued personal growth, having a sense of purpose, and functioning positively, rather than simply experiencing temporary pleasant emotions (Diener et al., 1999). This difference is especially important when studying children because hedonic aspects, such as happiness and immediate mood, are easier for young children to experience, observe, and communicate. On the other hand, eudaimonic aspects, including purpose, independence, and self-realization, require cognitive abilities such as thinking about the future and reflecting on oneself, which develop gradually throughout childhood (Navidmanesh et al., 2025).

Ryff's Comprehensive Model of Psychological Well-Being

Ryff's six-dimensional model, introduced in 1989, continues to be one of the most commonly used frameworks for understanding eudaimonic psychological well-being. It suggests that well-being consists of six key dimensions: self-acceptance, positive relationships with others, autonomy, environmental mastery, purpose in life, and personal growth (Ryff & Keyes, 1995). The model was originally developed and tested using adult participants; however, later research has questioned whether its structure works equally well among adolescents. For example, Wong et al. (2018), in a large study of adolescents from mainland China, reported that the six-factor model showed only a marginally acceptable fit. They also found strong relationships between several dimensions, particularly environmental mastery, personal growth, and purpose in life, which was consistent with earlier concerns

about the construct validity of the model among adults (Springer & Hauser, 2006). Applying Ryff's model to children requires further developmental adjustments. Navidmanesh et al. (2025) suggest that the six dimensions should be understood according to children's developmental stage. For instance, environmental mastery in young children can be understood through simple everyday choices, such as deciding how to use their playtime. Similarly, autonomy may be shown through making small independent choices rather than through the ability to resist social influence. Purpose in life may also appear through children's ideas or dreams about their future instead of clearly defined long-term goals. Overall, this highlights an important point: psychological concepts developed and tested with adults cannot be directly applied to children without considering their developmental differences.

Seligman's PERMA Model

Seligman's (2011) PERMA model, which developed from his earlier theory of authentic happiness (Seligman, 2002), identifies five key elements of flourishing: Positive Emotion, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning, and Accomplishment. Unlike Ryff's model, PERMA specifically emphasizes engagement, including experiences of flow, and treats social relationships as a separate aspect of flourishing rather than combining them into one relational dimension (Navidmanesh et al., 2025). Several aspects of PERMA can be easily applied to early childhood. Positive emotion can be seen through children's everyday feelings and expressions, engagement can be observed when children become deeply involved in play, and relationships are reflected in their connections with caregivers and peers. Meaning and accomplishment, similar to Ryff's concepts of purpose in life and personal growth, require greater cognitive development and generally become clearer as children grow older. The PERMA framework has also had a significant influence in education through "positive education" approaches, which incorporate engagement, relationships, and a sense of achievement into classroom activities and learning practices (Seligman et al., 2009)

Bronfenbrenner's Bioecological Systems Theory

While Ryff's and Seligman's models focus mainly on the internal aspects of psychological well-being, Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological systems theory, later developed further into the bioecological model by Bronfenbrenner and Morris (2006), focuses on the different environmental systems that surround and influence a child's development and well-being. The microsystem refers to the child's immediate surroundings and relationships, including family, friends, peers, and preschool or school. The mesosystem describes the interactions between these different settings, such as communication and cooperation between parents and teachers. The exosystem involves environments that do not directly include the child but can still influence their life, such as a parent's workplace. The macrosystem includes broader cultural values, social beliefs, laws, and norms, while the chronosystem considers changes that occur over time, including important life transitions and historical circumstances. Bronfenbrenner's theory is especially useful when examining children's well-being because it highlights that well-being is not simply an internal or individual condition. Instead, it develops through ongoing, two-way interactions between the child and the different layers of their surrounding environment. This includes the wider cultural environment represented by the macrosystem, which is discussed later in this paper (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006)

Attachment Theory

Attachment theory provides a developmental explanation of how early relationships can influence a child's ability to regulate emotions and develop social trust, which are important foundations for psychological well-being later in life (Bowlby, 1969/1982). The theory suggests that infants and young children form internal ideas about relationships based on how consistently and sensitively their caregivers respond to them. When children receive responsive and supportive care, they are more likely to develop a secure attachment. This security is reflected in their confidence to explore their surroundings while also feeling comfortable seeking support when they are upset or distressed (Ainsworth et al., 1978). Children with secure attachments generally demonstrate better emotional regulation, stronger social skills, and a more positive view of themselves. These characteristics are also important elements of psychological well-being in Ryff's (1989) model and related approaches. Therefore, attachment theory complements the models proposed by Ryff and Bronfenbrenner by explaining the specific relational process through which caregiver sensitivity and responsiveness within the family microsystem can influence a child's internal psychological development.

Self-Determination Theory

Self-determination theory, developed by Deci and Ryan (1985) and further discussed by Ryan and Deci (2000), suggests that psychological well-being is influenced by the fulfillment of three basic psychological needs: autonomy, competence, and relatedness. Autonomy involves having a sense of choice and feeling that one's actions are personally meaningful, while competence refers to feeling capable and effective when dealing with the surrounding environment. Relatedness involves feeling connected to, valued by, and cared for by other people. This theory shares similarities with Ryff's concepts of autonomy and environmental mastery, as well as the relationships aspect of PERMA. However, its focus on intrinsic motivation makes it particularly relevant to understanding children's well-being in areas such as play, learning, and early education. Children tend to participate more actively when they can make their own choices and when activities are appropriate for their developing abilities (Navidmanesh et al., 2025).

Toward Integrative, Child-Specific Models

Since no single model developed from adult experiences can completely explain the lived experience of childhood, recent research has increasingly focused on developing integrated frameworks specifically for children. Nastasi and Borja's (2016) conceptual model, based on Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory, describes children's psychological well-being as being influenced by both individual and cultural factors. Individual factors include culturally valued competencies, personal vulnerabilities, and personal resources, while cultural factors include socio-cultural stressors, resources, norms, and socialization practices. In this approach, culture is incorporated directly into the understanding of well-being rather than being viewed simply as an outside factor that influences it. Most recently, Navidmanesh et al. (2025) brought together hedonic, eudaimonic, PERMA, and ecological perspectives to develop the Holistic Well-Being Model for Children (HWMC). The model identifies fourteen dimensions of children's well-being. Along with traditional psychological dimensions such as self-acceptance, personal growth, purpose in life, environmental mastery, autonomy, positive relationships, positive emotion, and engagement, it also includes family economic well-being, ethical and "wonder" well-being, physical well-being, social well-being, environmental well-being, and educational engagement. This model reflects a wider shift in research toward developing

multidimensional and culturally sensitive frameworks based on children's own experiences, rather than simply applying adult-based models to childhood (Navidmanesh et al., 2025).

Factors Associated with Psychological Well-Being in Young Children

Research has identified a wide range of factors that are related to children's psychological well-being. These factors include individual characteristics, close personal relationships, and the broader environments in which children grow and develop. In line with Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological perspective, these factors influence one another and operate across different levels rather than functioning separately.

Family Relationships and Parenting

Family functioning is consistently considered one of the most important factors associated with children's psychological well-being (Navidmanesh et al., 2025). Parenting that is warm, emotionally supportive, and consistent is linked to greater emotional security and life satisfaction in children. In contrast, frequent family conflict, harsh disciplinary practices, and inconsistent caregiving are associated with difficulties in children's adjustment. Research conducted across different countries through the Parenting Across Cultures project has found that parental warmth is a strong and consistent predictor of fewer externalizing problems among children from diverse cultural backgrounds, although the level of warmth and the values associated with it can differ across cultures (Gorla et al., 2024). These findings suggest that parenting practices such as warmth and responsiveness may provide important support for children's well-being across cultures, while the way these practices are expressed and understood can vary depending on the cultural.

Attachment security and Emotional regulation

Research based on attachment theory has found that secure attachment between parents and children is associated with better emotional regulation, higher self-esteem, and healthier relationships with peers during early and middle childhood (Kerns et al., 2001). Children who have a reliable and consistent attachment figure are generally better able to cope with distress and feel more confident when facing unfamiliar situations. These abilities can support the development of autonomy and environmental mastery, which are important dimensions in Ryff's (1989) model of psychological well-being. Therefore, attachment can be understood as an important link between family relationships, which form part of the child's microsystem in Bronfenbrenner's framework, and the child's internal and relatively stable aspects of well-being.

Peer Relationships and Social Competence

As children enter preschool and the early years of school, relationships with peers become an increasingly significant source of both emotional support and social difficulties (Nickerson & Nagle, 2005). Positive and mutually supportive friendships are linked to better social well-being, higher self-esteem, and smoother adjustment to school. In contrast, experiences such as peer rejection and bullying are associated with increased anxiety, feelings of loneliness, and lower life satisfaction. Along with ongoing support from parents, trust and mutual respect within peer relationships help strengthen children's sense of positive relationships with others, which is an important dimension included in both Ryff's model and the PERMA framework (Navidmanesh et al., 2025)

Preschool and School Environment

The quality of early childhood education and the school environment is also an important factor related to children's psychological well-being. Positive relationships between teachers

and children, particularly those based on warmth and responsiveness, have been associated with better academic performance and classroom behavior. This supports Bronfenbrenner's focus on the importance of the microsystem and mesosystem in child development (Lippard et al., 2018, as cited in child development literature on ecological systems theory). Educational programs that encourage collaboration between families and schools, such as Head Start in the United States, demonstrate how stronger connections between the home and school environments can contribute to children's overall development (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006). In addition, educational engagement has been suggested as a separate dimension of children's well-being, similar to the role of occupational well-being in adults (Navidmanesh et al., 2025).

Family economic conditions influence children's psychological well-being

Family economic conditions influence children's psychological well-being in both direct and indirect ways. Directly, they affect children's access to nutritious food, healthcare, and secure housing. Indirectly, financial difficulties can increase parental stress and affect the quality of care and parenting that families are able to provide (Navidmanesh et al., 2025). Long-term exposure to stress associated with poverty has been connected to difficulties in children's stress-regulation processes and cognitive development (Evans & Schamberg, 2009). International survey studies have also found that material deprivation is related to lower levels of life satisfaction among children. This relationship is partly associated with limited opportunities for social interaction and a weaker sense of safety (Jiang et al., as cited in international well-being survey literature). These findings suggest that family economic security should be considered a separate contextual factor related to psychological well-being, rather than being understood only through the quality of parenting.

Temperament and Individual Differences

Children's innate characteristics, including temperament, play an important role in influencing their psychological well-being over time. Temperamental traits such as negative affectivity, surgency, and effortful control vary across different cultural settings. For instance, comparative research involving toddlers from Chile, Poland, South Korea, and the United States identified significant cultural differences in negative affectivity and effortful control. These variations may be influenced by both biological factors and culturally shaped socialization practices (Gartstein et al., as cited in cross-cultural temperament literature). Effortful control is particularly important because it contributes to the self-regulation skills needed for environmental mastery and autonomy, two dimensions included in Ryff's model. This suggests that children's individual temperamental differences interact with family environments and cultural contexts to influence their psychological well-being.

Children's Participation and Feeling Heard

A recently recognized factor related to children's psychological well-being is their perception that adults listen to their opinions and value their perspectives. Based on data from over 22,000 children across 18 countries involved in the International Survey of Children's Well-Being, Jiang and Song (2024) reported that children who felt sufficiently heard by adults generally experienced higher life satisfaction. This relationship was partly explained by their sense of safety. Similarly, Corominas et al. (2020) highlighted the importance of feeling heard and spending enjoyable time with family in relation to subjective well-being. Together, these findings draw attention to children's participation and ability to express their views as important, yet often overlooked, factors in psychological well-being. These aspects are closely connected to the dimensions of positive relationships and autonomy emphasized in the frameworks developed by Ryff and Deci and Ryan.

Cultural Influences on children's psychological well-being

Culture plays an important role in shaping children's psychological well-being rather than simply serving as a background factor. It influences parents' expectations and goals for their children, the behaviors viewed as appropriate or adaptive, and the ways concepts such as autonomy and relatedness are understood (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006; Nastasi & Borja, 2016). This section explores cultural influences through three main areas: the relationship between individualism, collectivism, and parenting; cross-cultural patterns in children's subjective well-being; and the methodological challenges that cultural differences create for psychological theories and measurement

Individualism, Collectivism, and Parenting objectives

The individualism–collectivism framework is widely used to explain cultural differences in child-rearing practices (Greenfield & Suzuki, 2000, as cited in cross-cultural developmental literature). In general, individualistic cultures place greater importance on independence, self-expression, and individual success, while collectivistic cultures prioritize interdependence, family responsibilities, and social harmony. In a study conducted across nine countries involving families with 10-year-old children, Gorla et al. (2024) reported that mothers from more collectivistic cultures and fathers from less individualistic cultures demonstrated parental warmth more frequently. The study also found that higher levels of collectivism at the cultural level were linked to fewer externalizing problems in children, whereas greater individualism was associated with more difficulties in child adjustment. These results suggest that individualism and collectivism should not be viewed as simply more or less beneficial. Instead, each cultural orientation reflects a different combination of parenting practices and child outcomes. Moreover, the meaning and effects of the same parenting behavior, such as encouraging autonomy, may vary according to the cultural values within which it occurs (Gorla et al., 2024).

Cross-cultural differences in Children's Subjective Well-Being

Large-scale international surveys based on children's own experiences provide additional evidence that cultural factors influence how well-being develops. Jiang and Song (2024) found that collectivism moderated the relationship between feeling heard by adults, perceived safety, and life satisfaction. This suggests that the psychological benefits of being listened to may differ across cultural settings. Similarly, comparative studies of adults' subjective well-being indicate that positive emotion norms—the cultural expectations that shape how positive emotions are expressed and valued—may help explain why people from individualistic, European-heritage backgrounds often report higher subjective well-being than individuals from collectivistic East Asian backgrounds, even when their objective living conditions are similar (Chen et al., as cited in cross-cultural subjective well-being literature). Since children begin learning these cultural expectations about emotional expression and evaluation from an early age, comparable cultural influences on childhood well-being are possible. However, direct developmental research supporting this connection is still limited.

Attachment and Temperament in different cultural Contexts

Cultural differences can also be observed in areas that were previously considered largely independent of culture. Although the fundamental basis of attachment, including the need to seek a secure base, appears to be universal among humans (Bowlby, 1969/1982), the caregiving practices that support attachment security and the behaviors used to express it differ across cultures. These differences are influenced by cultural expectations surrounding independence and interdependence (Nastasi & Borja, 2016). Similarly, cross-cultural

research on temperament indicates that characteristics such as negative affectivity and effortful control vary systematically among cultural groups. These variations have been linked to broader East–West differences as well as the individualism–collectivism framework (Gartstein et al., as cited in cross-cultural temperament literature). Overall, these findings indicate that even processes considered biological or broadly universal are shaped and understood through cultural perspectives. This supports Bronfenbrenner’s view that the macrosystem influences all the inner levels of a child’s ecological environment.

Methodological and Measurement issues

A common concern in existing research is that assessment tools developed and validated using Western populations, adults, or adolescents may not be directly suitable for young children from diverse cultural backgrounds. For instance, Ryff’s Scales of Psychological Well-Being have demonstrated inconsistent factor structures even among Chinese adolescents (Wong et al., 2018). Similarly, Navidmanesh et al. (2025) suggest that many current measures of children’s well-being address only some of the dimensions that are important in children’s lives. They emphasize the need for culturally inclusive and age-appropriate items that avoid abstract wording, negatively phrased statements, and assumptions centered on adults to ensure accurate cross-cultural assessment. Initiatives such as the Middle Years Development Instrument (Guhn et al., 2012) and the International Survey of Children’s Well-Being (Jiang & Song, 2024) contribute toward developing multidimensional, child-reported, and internationally validated measures. However, research in this area still depends considerably on reports provided by adults or parents, which may not fully represent children’s personal experiences and perspectives (Navidmanesh et al., 2025).

OVERALL CONCLUSIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

Taken together, the reviewed literature highlights three main conclusions. First, no single theoretical perspective—including Ryff’s six-factor model, Seligman’s PERMA framework, attachment theory, or self-determination theory—can fully explain children’s psychological well-being independently. Each framework provides a specific perspective, while integrative approaches, such as Nastasi and Borja’s (2016) ecological-cultural model and the Holistic Well-Being Model for Children (Navidmanesh et al., 2025), are valuable because they consider internal, relational and environmental influences together. Second, the factors associated with children’s well-being function across interconnected ecological levels. These range from temperament and attachment security to family economic circumstances and school environments, reflecting Bronfenbrenner’s (1979) bioecological model. Therefore, interventions that focus on only one level—for example, parenting programs that overlook financial difficulties or school-based initiatives that exclude family involvement—may have limited effectiveness. Third, culture should not be viewed merely as an additional moderating factor. Instead, it plays a fundamental role in shaping how well-being is expressed, understood, and assessed. The meaning and effects of parenting practices, temperament-related characteristics, and well-being indicators may differ depending on whether they occur within individualistic or collectivistic cultural value systems (Gorla et al., 2024; Jiang & Song, 2024).

Future research should focus on longitudinal and multi-informant studies that incorporate children’s own perspectives. It should also support the development of culturally and developmentally appropriate assessment tools and examine whether ecological, multi-level interventions lead to more lasting improvements in children’s psychological well-being than approaches focused on a single level.

CONCLUSION

Psychological Well-Being in Young Children

Psychological well-being in young children is a multidimensional concept influenced by individual characteristics, close relationships, and interconnected environmental and cultural systems. Established theoretical frameworks, such as Ryff's six-factor model, Seligman's PERMA framework, Bronfenbrenner's bioecological systems theory, attachment theory, and self-determination theory, each contribute to understanding different aspects of well-being. However, these models were primarily developed for adults and therefore require careful developmental adaptation before being applied to children. Research has identified important factors associated with children's well-being, including temperament, attachment, family and peer relationships, school environments, and socioeconomic circumstances. Cross-cultural studies further indicate that individualism, collectivism, and related cultural values influence both the factors that support well-being and how it is expressed. Developing a comprehensive understanding of children's psychological well-being requires continued integration of theoretical perspectives, multidimensional and child-centered assessment tools, and greater consideration of children's own views about what it means to experience well-being.

REFERENCES

- Ainsworth, M. D. S., Blehar, M. C., Waters, E., & Wall, S. (1978). *Patterns of attachment: A psychological study of the strange situation*. Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Bowlby, J. (1982). *Attachment and loss: Vol. 1. Attachment* (2nd ed.). Basic Books. (Original work published 1969)
- Bronfenbrenner, U. (1979). *The ecology of human development: Experiments by nature and design*. Harvard University Press.
- Bronfenbrenner, U., & Morris, P. A. (2006). The bioecological model of human development. In W. Damon & R. M. Lerner (Eds.), *Handbook of child psychology: Vol. 1. Theoretical models of human development* (6th ed., pp. 793–828). Wiley.
- Corominas, M., González-Carrasco, M., & Casas, F. (2020). The importance of feeling adequately heard by adults and enjoying time with family in relation to children's subjective well-being. *Child Indicators Research*, 13(1), 193–214. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12187-019-09680-0>
- Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (1985). *Intrinsic motivation and self-determination in human behavior*. Plenum Press.
- Diener, E. (1984). Subjective well-being. *Psychological Bulletin*, 95(3), 542–575. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-2909.95.3.542>
- Diener, E., Suh, E. M., Lucas, R. E., & Smith, H. L. (1999). Subjective well-being: Three decades of progress. *Psychological Bulletin*, 125(2), 276–302. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-2909.125.2.276>
- Evans, G. W., & Schamberg, M. A. (2009). Childhood poverty, chronic stress, and adult working memory. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 106(16), 6545–6549. <https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.0811910106>
- Gorla, L., Rothenberg, W. A., Lansford, J. E., Yotanyamaneewong, S., Alampay, L. P., Al-Hassan, S. M., Bacchini, D., Bornstein, M. H., Breiner, K., Chang, L., Deater-Deckard, K., Di Giunta, L., Dodge, K. A., Gurdal, S., Junla, D., Oburu, P., Pastorelli, C., Santona, A., Skinner, A. T., ... Uribe Tirado, L. M. (2024). Individualism, collectivism and conformity in nine countries: Relations with parenting and child adjustment. *International Journal of Psychology*, 59(4), 598–610. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ijop.13130>

- Guhn, M., Schonert-Reichl, K. A., Gadermann, A. M., Marriott, D., Pedrini, L., Hymel, S., & Hertzman, C. (2012). Well-being in middle childhood: An assets-based population-level research-to-action project. *Child Indicators Research*, 5, 393–418. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12187-011-9136-9>
- Jiang, C., & Song, H. (2024). Feeling adequately heard by adults, perceived safety and children's life satisfaction: A multinational comparison of individualist and collectivist cultures across 18 countries. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 161, Article 107628. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2024.107628>
- Kerns, K. A., Aspelmeier, J. E., Gentzler, A. L., & Grabill, C. M. (2001). Parent-child attachment and monitoring in middle childhood. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 15(1), 69–81. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0893-3200.15.1.69>
- Nastasi, B. K., & Borja, A. P. (Eds.). (2016). *International handbook of psychological well-being in children and adolescents: Bridging the gaps between theory, research, and practice*. Springer
- Navidmanesh, S., Kadkhodae, M., Ghadirinokabadi, L., & Emamifar, A. (2025). Resolving conceptual and practical gaps in current child well-being models through the holistic well-being model for children. *Discover Psychology*, 5(1), Article 52. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s44202-025-00382>
- Nickerson, A. B., & Nagle, R. J. (2005). Parent and peer attachment in late childhood and early adolescence. *Journal of Early Adolescence*, 25(2), 223–249. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0272431604274174>
- Ryan, R. M., & Deci, E. L. (2000). Intrinsic and extrinsic motivations: Classic definitions and new directions. *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, 25(1), 54–67. <https://doi.org/10.1006/ceps.1999.1020>
- Ryff, C. D. (1989). Happiness is everything, or is it? Explorations on the meaning of psychological well-being. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 57(6), 1069–1081. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.57.6.1069>
- Ryff, C. D. (2013). Psychological well-being revisited: Advances in the science and practice of eudaimonia. *Psychotherapy and Psychosomatics*, 83(1), 10–28. <https://doi.org/10.1159/000353263>
- Ryff, C. D., & Keyes, C. L. M. (1995). The structure of psychological well-being revisited. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 69(4), 719–727. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.69.4.719>
- Seligman, M. E. P. (2002). *Authentic happiness: Using the new positive psychology to realize your potential for lasting fulfillment*. Free Press.
- Seligman, M. E. P. (2011). *Flourish: A visionary new understanding of happiness and well-being*. Free Press.
- Seligman, M. E. P., Ernst, R. M., Gillham, J., Reivich, K., & Linkins, M. (2009). Positive education: Positive psychology and classroom interventions. *Oxford Review of Education*, 35(3), 293–311. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03054980902934563>
- Springer, K. W., & Hauser, R. M. (2006). An assessment of the construct validity of Ryff's scales of psychological well-being: Method, mode, and measurement effects. *Social Science Research*, 35(4), 1080–1102. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ssresearch.2005.07.004>
- Wong, F. K. D., Chang, Y. L., & He, X. S. (2018). Using Ryff's scales of psychological well-being in adolescents in mainland China. *BMC Psychology*, 6, Article 16. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40359-018-0231-6>

Acknowledgment

The author(s) appreciates all those who participated in the study and helped to facilitate the research process.

Conflict of Interest

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

How to cite this article: Silony, C., & Sabarwal, L. (2026). Understanding Psychological Well-Being in Early Childhood: Theoretical Views and Cultural Impact. *International Journal of Indian Psychology*, 14(4), 118-128. DIP:18.01.012.20261404, DOI:10.25215/1404.012