

Positive Psychology in Schools with Focus on Adolescent Well-Being

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Abstract

Mental health issues among students are increasingly prevalent, creating significant challenges for both educational institutions and the healthcare system, which is becoming increasingly overwhelmed by the demand for support. According to a WHO report in 2023, one in seven 10-19-year-olds is suffering from a mental disorder like depression and anxiety which accounts for 13% of the global burden of disease in this age group. With rising levels of anxiety, depression, and other mental health disorders, it has become crucial for schools to implement comprehensive programs and interventions designed to address these concerns effectively. Teachers, paraprofessionals, and school administrators play a vital role in creating an environment conducive to mental well-being. They need to be equipped with the tools and resources necessary to identify and support students facing mental health challenges. This may include professional development training, access to mental health professionals, and integrating wellness programs into the school curriculum. Positive psychology offers a hopeful and innovative approach considering these challenges. Among many strength spotting, positive affect, meaning in life, mindfulness, gratitude, hope, and passion are a few effective positive psychology approaches. This branch of psychology emphasizes the importance of developmental strengths and virtues that help individuals and communities' flourish. Rather than solely focusing on mental illness, positive psychology promotes the idea that individuals can enhance their well-being by cultivating positive emotions, fostering strong relationships, and engaging in meaningful activities. Schools can play a pivotal role in promoting mental health by fostering an environment where students can explore their strengths, develop resilience, and find joy in learning. This approach supports those struggling with mental health issues and enhances the overall educational experience for all students. Ultimately, implementing strategies rooted in positive psychology can lead to healthier, happier, and more engaged learners who are better equipped for academic and personal success. This paper examines current and past research in positive psychology

within literature and provides suggestions for school personnel to implement it in their educational systems.

Keywords

Positive Psychology, Well-Being, Adolescents, School, Teacher

1. Introduction

The present population of young people is 1.8 billion, comprising one-quarter of the world population (Sawyer et al., 2018; WHO, 2021). Their age ranges between 10 - 24 and is currently the largest in history. Adolescents (aged 10 - 19 years) can be a powerful agent of personal change and community development, so focusing on adolescent health is pertinent to meeting global health targets (Margot, 2018; Viner et al., 2012). Personal, school, family, and community factors affect adolescents' overall health. The age of onset of puberty has decreased, and the age at which mature social roles are achieved is rising amidst the huge impact of social media (Sawyer et al., 2012). This generation is navigating adolescence in a manner distinct from previous generations and encountering unprecedented health and well-being challenges. Various factors have contributed to this shift, including socioeconomic development, decreased mortality rates, increased migration, the disintegration of family units, a rise in terrorism, and the pervasive influence of social media (Cataldo et al., 2021). Especially in the last two decades, social media and smartphone usage have affected the lives of children and teenagers. On the one hand, it has offered tremendous potential in allowing self-expression of personality, and on the other hand, it has shown the risk of negative consequences of excessive online social platform usage, like the blurring of lines between offline and virtual life and the concept of digital identity posing risks for enhanced vulnerability towards mental health issues (Cataldo et al., 2021; Lieberman & Schroeder, 2020). These elements have collectively led to a notable increase in psychological issues among adolescents. Hence, there is an increasing demand to focus on adolescent mental health issues (Das et al., 2016; Gunnell et al., 2018).

This paper offers future directions to school mental health wellbeing teams to support students' mental, emotional, behavioral, and social well-being. It advocates positive psychology in schools, confidently arguing its many benefits for enhancing students' well-being. In doing so, there is an attempt to put forward a working "Positive Psychology Life-skills" curriculum triangular model (PPL model).

2. Literature Review

The WHO defines an adolescent as any person between ages 10 and 19, and this age range falls within the WHO's definition of young people, which refers to individuals between ages 10 and 24 (Margot, 2018; Sawyer et al., 2018; WHO, 2021).

Since the late 1900s, there has been a dramatic increase in mental disorders among children and adolescents (Bitsko et al., 2022; Calp, 2020; Costello et al., 2003; Lewinsohn et al., 1993). As per the World Health Organization (WHO) report in 2021, the prevalence of mental disorders among young people below 18 years is 8% - 20% (APA, 2022). Moreover, it is seen that many mental health issues that commonly emerge during adolescence persist into adulthood (Bitsko et al., 2022; Das et al., 2016; Vecchia, Costa, & Lau, 2019). Mental health is critical among adolescents (Bitsko et al., 2022; WHO, 2021; APA, 2022; Margot, 2018). The number accounts for 13% of the global disease burden in this age group (APA, 2022; Bitsko et al., 2022; WHO, 2021, 2023). Mental disorders mainly constitute emotional disorders (anxiety and depression), estimating 3.6% of 10 - 14-year-olds and 4.6% of 15 - 19-year-olds experience an anxiety disorder and 1.1% of adolescents aged 10 - 14 years, and 2.8% of 15 - 19-year-olds experience depression. Moreover, there are behavioral disorders (attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and conduct disorder), estimating 3.1% of 10 - 14-year-olds and 2.4% of 15 - 19-year-olds suffer from ADHD and 3.6% of 10 - 14-year-olds and 2.4% of 15 - 19-year-olds. The increasing suicide rate among this age group is hugely concerning as suicide is the fourth leading cause of death among 15 - 29-year-olds (WHO, 2021, 2023). Other issues are low feelings of self-worth, identity, gender conflict, low exam performance, friendship issues, appearance complexes, gaming addictions, and illicit drug use (Das et al., 2016).

It was long ago recognized that the health sector cannot alone meet the burgeoning mental health needs of children; hence, there has been an ongoing call for collaborative mental health programs in the community and at schools (Anderson et al., 2022). To assist the public health system in fulfilling this burgeoning and alarming need, in the last two decades, schools have moved towards achieving the goal of a health education system wherein student well-being and academic output are supported hand in hand (Shelemy et al., 2019). In the last few decades, as the level of investment in children's mental health services has been increasingly taken seriously, schools have been recognized as ideal locations for children to access help (Heinrich et al., 2023). In addition to providing academic skills, schools offer support to promote well-being among children. Also seen as an added benefit is that the school mental health services reduce barriers such as time, transportation, cost, and stigmatization (Heinrich et al., 2023; Lowry et al., 2021, 2022).

Hence, promoting children and teenagers' psychological well-being and access to mental health care is critical (APA, 2022; Bitsko et al., 2022; WHO, 2021, 2023), and schools play a crucial part in fulfilling this need. Since this same period, i.e., late 1900, Positive psychology has come forward in understanding the youth dynamics involving overall well-being and positive mental health outcomes (Carr et al., 2021; Jayashree et al., 2013; Lee Duckworth et al., 2005). This has led to constant studies, investigations, and explorations into positive school-based prevention and intervention programs to reduce mental illness and increase well-being

in school children.

2.1. Why Should Well-Being/Positive Psychology Be Taught in Schools?

If things are compared, everything is better now than fifty years ago. People are spending more, houses are bigger, there are more cars, and people have better clothes (Easterbrook, 2003). However, anxiety and depression have increased (WHO, 2023; APA, 2022). The average Italian, Dane and Mexican are more satisfied with life than fifty years ago. Still, the average American, Australian, and Japanese are no longer satisfied with life as they were 50 years ago, and the average Briton or German is less satisfied (Inglehart et al., 2008). There is no significant increase in the happiness quotient. Also seen is that being happy is not ecological, biological, or genetic. Being happy is subjective and can be taught (Carr et al., 2021; Hendriks et al., 2020; Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000; Seligman, 2019; Seligman et al., 2009; Smith, 2016). Schools are valued as conducive grounds for teaching wellbeing as children spend almost 30 - 35 hours or more per week in schools (Hofferth & Sandberg, 2001). They spend a lot of time interacting with teachers, which can be a vehicle for promoting well-being programs. It is also seen that parents and educationists view the building of character and the development of responsible citizens as an important aspect of schooling that is integral to well-being (Cohen, 2006).

Moreover, increasing depression and happiness are two reasons to teach well-being in schools and a third important reason that well-being enhances learning. An increase in positive feelings/well-being is likely to fulfill the traditional goal of education: an increase in learning. It is seen that a positive mood produces broader attention (Fredrickson & Branigan, 2005; Lomas & Ivtzan, 2016), more creative thinking (Pressman & Cohen, 2005), and more holistic thinking (Ashby et al., 1999).

Within the framework of positive psychology, among many, there have been a few encouraging findings and interventions when used to produce desirable effects.

- 1) Self-discipline is twice a good predictor of high school success than IQ (Lee Duckworth et al., 2005; Lomas & Ivtzan, 2016).
- 2) Happy teenagers earn substantially more income fifteen years later than less happy teenagers (Carr et al., 2021).
- 3) Factors like positive emotions, gratitude, hope, character strength, and goal setting are linked to high feelings of subjective well-being among children and adolescents (Fredrickson & Losada, 2005; Seligman et al., 2009).
- 4) Writing a gratitude diary and counting one's blessings daily can help make day-to-day life easy and pleasant (Carr et al., 2021; Emmons & McCullough, 2003).
- 5) Positive adolescent behavior is associated with midlife wellbeing, high social interaction and engagement and few emotional difficulties (Hendriks et al., 2020;

Richards & Huppert, 2011).

6) In the last few years, many positive psychology-based school-based programs have been employed that have produced positive effects, like “celebrating strengths”, “bounce back”, “positive coaching”, and “teacher-coach” (Hendriks et al., 2020; Shoshani & Steinmetz, 2013).

On the other hand, there has been ongoing criticism about positive education in schools. A few raised concerns are the character-building values taught by schools/teachers might be different from family values, students’ time will be wasted that can be spent on academic learning, and parents’ money will be wasted, which can be utilized in other academic coaching. Nevertheless, the growing evidence strongly suggests that wellness produces positive results among children and adolescents, and with children spending so much time in schools, it should be taught in schools. In summary, positive well-being programs in schools can: 1) promote skills and strengths that can prevent mental illness; 2) show measurable improvements in students’ happiness; 3) facilitate learning and improve academic achievement. So, with this understanding and conclusion, this paper further delves into positive psychology.

2.2. Define Positive Psychology and Its History

“Positive psychology is the scientific study of positive experiences, positive individual traits, and the institutions that facilitate their development” (Seligman, 2019; Lee Duckworth et al., 2005). This field is concerned with all individuals’ well-being and optimal functioning (Seligman, 2019). There is stress on strengths and a life full of meaning and purpose. Before World War II, Psychology’s mission was to understand and treat mental illness. After the war, there were lots of changes in the Psychology mission, along with mental illness, mental wellness took center stage (Lopez & Snyder, 2015). Positive Psychology (PP) was born in 1998-2000, and it was the work of two psychologists—Martin Selinger and Csikszentmihalyi. The years 2000-2012 saw early progress in positive psychology. In 2012, Martin Selinger, “Father of positive psychology”, proposed a significant PERMA MODEL that put forward the five pillars of well-being—positive emotions, engagement, relationships, meaning, and accomplishment (Goodman et al., 2018). From 2008 to 2018, positive psychology application was studied in many areas, starting from psychology as its influence spread to psychiatry, neuroscience, health, business, and education (Seligman, 2019). Among many other theories, the following five strength-based interventions in positive psychology were put forward- Strength-based cognitive behavioral therapy, Positive psychotherapy for depression, Mindfulness-based therapy, Acceptance, and commitment therapy, and Compassion-focused therapy. The last few years have seen their efficacy and increasing use in clinical and non-clinical areas.

The main criticisms of positive psychology (PP) are that the main proponents of positive psychology, like happiness and life satisfaction, are not new, as existential-humanistic schools have already spoken about it. The PP theories are less

empirical/tested evidence-based than any other school of psychology. The criticisms and limitations are only a few, and with increasing research, the scope of positive psychology in all areas of life is advancing. In the following section, the proposed positive psychology-based school program is discussed.

2.3. “Positive Psychology Life-Skill” Curriculum Triangular Model in Schools

Life skills are important in adolescent development (Shek et al., 2020). Life skills education in schools is a novel idea that is taught to students via games, stories, worksheets, and other programs. To define life skills—they are adaptive and positive behavior that can enable an individual to deal effectively with everyday life’s demands, stresses, and challenges (Hendriks et al., 2020; Srikala & Kishore, 2010; Shek et al., 2020). Conducted an “Adolescent life skills” study on 2474 students from 20 Hong Kong local secondary schools in grades 7 to 12. A few of the several observations were 93% of students responded that Hongkong students need to learn like skills, 90% of students perceived that life skill knowledge is important, 87% of students regarded moral character as more valuable than academic skills, and 96.9% of teachers reported that life skills are important to teach in schools.

3. Theoretical Framework

The development of the proposed PPL curriculum is theoretically derived and supported by two models in positive psychology. First is Martin Selinger’s wellbeing model, which states that wellbeing constitutes five domains—positive emotions, engagement, relationships, meaning, and accomplishment (PERMA). People are happy when they do well in the above five domains (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000; Seligman, 2019). The second model is the mutual support model of character strengths and mindfulness. As per this model, certain character strengths like curiosity facilitate mindfulness, and people with these character strengths will move on to the path of mindfulness meditation more eagerly than others and the other way around (Pang & Ruch, 2019).

3.1. The Goal

To develop and implement a positive psychology-based “Positive Psychology Life-skill” curriculum in school.

3.2. Conceptualization

In this paper, so far, the following has been argued—school is an important place to take care of children’s wellbeing, positive psychology is proven to be especially useful in education, well-being can be understood well vis a vis Martin Seligman’s PERMA model, life skills are important (Goodman et al., 2018). They can be taught, and positive psychology character strengths are valuable and can be acquired via certain processes and skills. For example, it’s evidentially seen that with skills like mindfulness, students can learn character strengths easily and vice versa

(Pang & Ruch, 2019). Based upon the above arguments and derived from the chosen theoretical framework, a positive psychology life-skill curriculum triangular model (PPL curriculum) is proposed. This curriculum will imbibe positive psychology interventions, life skills, and character strengths as three important pillars of the school's well-being program. It's proposed that all three mutually feed each other and support each other, which is equally important for all students' well-being (Figure 1).

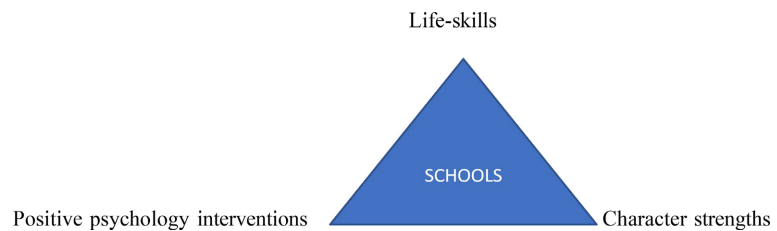


Figure 1. Positive psychology life-skill curriculum triangular model.

3.3. Focus of the Curriculum

There are three major goals of the PPL curriculum: 1) To develop character strengths; 2) To enhance mental well-being and happiness; 3) To achieve high educational goals. The curriculum targets strengths (like courage, wisdom, and kindness) mentioned in the VIA classification (Peterson, 2004). The students are helped to identify their signature character strengths and encouraged to use them in daily life. The tools for achieving this are a VIA youth survey (Peterson, 2004), strength spotting and coaching (Biswas-Diener, 2010), and training to use signature strengths in new ways (Niemic, 2014).

3.4. Interventions

Substantial research has shown that youth participating in positive interventions have experienced greater well-being (Carr et al., 2021; Hendriks et al., 2020). A few interventions that have shown great positive effects are Mighty Me, Circle of Friends, Gratitude Intervention, Writing good things about yourself, and Drawing the Best Picture of yourself (Shoshani & Steinmetz, 2013; Smith, 2016; Srikala & Kishore, 2010). The interventions mentioned below will find a place in the proposed PPL curriculum.

Strength-based counseling (Richards & Huppert, 2011): This is achieved with the help of the school well-being team, including the counselor, the school nurse, and pastoral members. They will adopt a strength-based model while treating mental health issues among adolescents. This initiative will primarily focus on motivational interviewing (Csillik, 2013) as its foundational component, complemented by a positive psychological assessment utilizing the Values in Action Inventory of Character Strengths (Peterson, 2004). Effective behavioral change will be facilitated through the elicitation of positive narratives, the provision of affirmative feedback, the practice of active listening, engagement in active-constructive responding, the application of positive reframing, the identification of exceptions,

the exploration of potential solutions, and the reinforcement of individual character strengths. To address challenges associated with depression and familial pessimism, positive cognitive behavioral therapy will also be employed.

Integrating mindfulness and building character strengths (Niemic et al., 2012): Mindfulness refers to aligning one's heart and mind inwardly to cultivate an awareness of the present moment (Kabat-Zinn, 2014). This practice can be achieved through various exercises, including the mindful consumption of food, body scanning, mindful yoga, the breathing space exercise, and applications in mindful communication, active listening, walking, driving, and consumption behaviors. Empirical evidence suggests that the cultivation of mindfulness contributes to the development of character strengths and that these elements can mutually reinforce one another.

Positive Psychology Exercises: In the field of positive psychology, the cultivation of flow and resilience is of paramount importance. The following exercises are designed to empower school children in the development of these essential attributes (Carr et al., 2021; Hendriks et al., 2020):

- 1) Controlling Mind Wandering: Implement meditation practices to effectively enhance focus and manage wandering thoughts.
- 2) Courage: Encourage students to confront and engage with their negative emotions, thereby fostering bravery.
- 3) Enthusiasm: Utilize mindfulness meditation to promote a sense of zest and vitality in daily life.
- 4) Perspective Taking: Work on self-awareness by guiding children to understand and detach themselves from their thoughts, emotions, and physical sensations.
- 5) Humility and Humor: Encourage the development of humility and the ability to find humor in various situations through perspective-taking exercises.
- 6) Character Strengths Oriented Towards Others: Promote virtues such as love, forgiveness, fairness, and kindness by initially directing these qualities towards oneself and subsequently extending them to others.

Additional valuable exercises may include practicing forgiveness, engaging in gratitude activities, maintaining a family journal, and participating in altruistic endeavors.

4. Processes

The PPL curriculum will be imparted in half a year and applied to middle school. This is done with evidential findings that pre-adolescence i.e., middle school, is an evolving stage of formation of self-concepts. Any processes and interventions at this stage will help to bring lifelong positive changes more effectively than later when self-concept is more concrete (Marsh, 1990). In the beginning, all students will be subjected to VIA strength character strength analysis and mental well-being measurement. Also, school grades, self-reports, and interviews with teachers/parents will form part of the measurement process. Every student will have a

“well-being record” of all the above. The above-mentioned processes will be intertwined in the school’s curriculum. At the end of six months, the same measurements will be implemented to notice the outcome.

4.1. Delivering a 45-Minute Session Once a Week for 16 - 20 Sessions

Most lessons incorporate engaging activities to enhance students’ understanding and personal growth. Each session will begin with a meditation to help students cultivate focus and presence, followed by yoga and mindfulness exercises that promote physical well-being and mental clarity (Saxena et al., 2020; Waters, 2015).

In addition to these practices, lessons will include in-depth discussions centered around character strengths, allowing students to explore and identify their own traits. Each class will also feature an interactive in-class activity that encourages collaboration and critical thinking, accompanied by a thoughtfully designed worksheet to reinforce the day’s concepts. Role-playing scenarios will allow students to practice applying what they’ve learned in real-life situations, fostering empathy and communication skills. Homework assignments will encourage further reflection and application of the lessons outside of class. Group discussions will be an integral part of each lesson, facilitating the sharing of personal experiences and insights (Saxena et al., 2020; Waters, 2015). Self-disclosure activities will encourage students to connect the material to their lives meaningfully. Finally, students will be prompted to engage in follow-up journal reflections, allowing them to synthesize their learning and track their personal growth throughout the course.

4.2. Psychodramas in Front of Whole/School Assemblies

This initiative is founded on the principle that addressing and overcoming obstacles is crucial in developing individual strengths and building resilience. Each week, a small group of 5 to 6 students will collaboratively engage in a role-play exercise highlighting a specific challenge commonly encountered by students in their academic or social lives. These role-plays will be meticulously crafted to depict realistic scenarios, allowing participants to immerse themselves in their peers’ experiences (Chen et al., 2023; Sudha, 2019). Following each performance, the group will present their work to a larger audience, which may include other students, teachers, and school staff. This presentation aims to create a meaningful connection between the audience and the challenges illustrated, fostering a deeper understanding of the emotions and struggles involved. Moreover, this format will provide a valuable opportunity for the performers and the audience to reflect on their experiences. Participants will be encouraged to share their thoughts and feelings about the role-play, facilitating open discussions that promote empathy, problem-solving, and personal growth (Chen et al., 2023; Sudha, 2019). By confronting these challenges together, the group aims to empower students to navigate their own obstacles, ultimately enhancing their resilience and capacity for

growth in the face of adversity.

4.3. Other Processes

To effectively build character strengths, various complementary processes will be introduced. These may include inviting motivational speakers to share their experiences and insights, which can inspire and empower individuals. Additionally, bibliotherapy will encourage participants to explore literature that fosters personal growth and resilience. Furthermore, we will promote programs such as peer mentoring, where individuals can support one another in their personal and professional development. Shadowing opportunities within the community will allow participants to gain firsthand experience and insights into different roles and responsibilities, enriching their understanding of various fields (Carr et al., 2021; Hendriks et al., 2020). Lastly, active involvement in community service projects will be encouraged, as these experiences enhance character strengths and foster a deep connection to the present moment and the community at large. Through these diverse initiatives, we aim to cultivate a well-rounded approach to character development.

5. Framework for Assessments

The effective implementation of the curriculum is essential and will be accompanied by a series of comprehensive assessments aimed at evaluating the effectiveness of the interventions put in place. These assessments will help us gather valuable data on student progress and learning outcomes. To achieve this, we will employ a variety of measurement instruments within the PPL curriculum, which may include standardized tests, formative assessments, observational checklists, and feedback surveys. The first two will be used to assess the qualitative effect of interventions, whereas the last two can be used before and after the intervention measurement. Each of these tools will provide insights into how well the curriculum meets its objectives and how it can be refined for better results.

1) The Character Strengths Measure (VIA Scale), as proposed by Christopher Peterson and Martin Seligman, will assess students' pre-existing strengths in areas such as courage, humanity, justice, bravery, curiosity, and forgiveness. This assessment aims to build upon these strengths (Peterson, 2004).

2) The Marsh Wellbeing Profile (WB-Pro medium version) will evaluate well-being in aspects like emotional stability, optimism, positive relationships, prosocial behavior, and self-esteem (Marsh, Huppert, Donald, Horwood, & Sahdra, 2020).

3). School reports will be used to measure academic achievement.

4) Socio-demographic data will be gathered through self-reports, interviews, and observations from teachers, peers, and parents.

6. Outcome

Implementing the PPL curriculum is projected to bring about significant im-

provements in various areas of student well-being and academic performance. Specifically, it aims to enhance overall school achievement by fostering a more engaging and supportive learning environment. Furthermore, the curriculum is designed to boost students' happiness and satisfaction with their school experience. In addition to these benefits, the PPL curriculum is expected to play a crucial role in alleviating symptoms associated with general stress, anxiety, and depression. By incorporating strategies that promote emotional regulation and resilience, students are likely to experience a reduction in these mental health challenges. Moreover, the positive impacts of the PPL curriculum will extend beyond academic success and emotional well-being. Through targeted interventions, students will likely see an increase in self-esteem, which can empower them to take on challenges with confidence. Additionally, enhancements in self-efficacy will enable students to believe in their ability to achieve goals, while a focus on optimism will help them maintain a positive outlook even in the face of obstacles. Finally, the curriculum's practices aim to decrease interpersonal sensitivity, causing students to feel more comfortable in social interactions and improving their overall relationships with peers. In summary, the PPL curriculum is anticipated to improve students' lives holistically by nurturing their academic skills and emotional health.

7. Limitations

This curriculum presents several significant limitations and challenges that must be addressed to ensure its success and acceptance. The first challenge is the potential backlash from parents, teachers, and the broader community. Many stakeholders may feel that resources—both time and financial—are being wasted on the development of so-called soft skills. They might argue that these resources could be more effectively utilized for academic growth, which is often prioritized in traditional educational settings. The second challenge involves delivering the core interventions, which will be facilitated by teacher facilitators and counselors who have been trained by professional experts in mindfulness and meditation practices. However, there is a concern that the program's fidelity may be compromised during implementation. Variability in how the training is applied by different facilitators could affect the overall effectiveness of the curriculum and its intended outcomes.

To mitigate these limitations, it is crucial to establish and maintain a continuous line of communication between the school and parents. This communication can help educate parents about the long-term benefits of integrating soft skills into the curriculum, such as improved emotional intelligence, better interpersonal relationships, and enhanced overall well-being for students, which can ultimately support their academic success as well. Additionally, it is essential to ensure that the training facilitators are not only well-versed in their areas of expertise but also accredited by recognized professional organizations. This approach will help instill confidence in parents and the community, assuring them that the program is being delivered by knowledgeable professionals who can effectively teach these

important skills. By addressing these concerns proactively, the program can garner greater support from all stakeholders involved.

8. Cultural Considerations

Well-being is intricately connected to an individual's values and cultural background. It is essential for professionals, particularly those in fields like psychology, social work, and healthcare, to recognize and appreciate these differences. Understanding the cultural context allows for a more personalized approach that considers how social environments influence individual experiences and perspectives on well-being. The following research outlines significant cultural nuances that impact perceptions of well-being:

1) Individualistic vs. Collectivistic Cultures: Research has shown that in individualistic cultures, such as those found in many Western societies, well-being is often linked to material success and wealth accumulation. Individuals tend to derive happiness from personal achievements and self-sufficiency. In contrast, collectivistic cultures, which emphasize community and group harmony, prioritize relational satisfaction and social interconnectedness as key components of well-being (Diener, Diener, & Diener, 1995).

2) Differences in Goal Achievement: Studies reveal that happiness in European American cultures is significantly influenced by achieving independent goals, such as personal career advancements or self-improvement milestones. Conversely, East Asian cultures derive happiness from recognizing the group's contributions and valuing collective achievements. This highlights the importance of interdependence and mutual support in cultures prioritizing communal bonds over individual pursuits (Oishi & Diener, 2016).

3) Cultural Characterizations: The American culture is often described as independent, emphasizing individual rights and personal fulfillment. In contrast, Japanese culture is identified as collectivistic, placing importance on group cohesion and social responsibility (Steger, Kawabata, Shimai, & Otake, 2008). Notably, research has found that while individuals in the U.S. frequently seek and celebrate meaning through personal accomplishments and achievements, those in Japan are more inclined to engage in a quest for meaning, often reflecting on life's purpose and their role within their community. Furthermore, social norms are generally more predictable and clearly defined in collectivistic cultures, which can provide a sense of stability and belonging (Steger et al., 2008).

4) Emotional Experience Variances: The expression and experience of positive emotions can vary greatly based on cultural context. For instance, in American culture, high-arousal emotions like excitement, joy, and enthusiasm are often celebrated and sought after. On the other hand, Chinese culture places a higher value on low arousal emotions such as calmness and contentment. This distinction illustrates how cultural values shape emotional experiences and how individuals express happiness and fulfillment (Tsai, 2016). These findings underscore the complexity of well-being and highlight the necessity for cultural sensitivity in understanding the various factors that contribute to an individual's sense of happiness

and fulfillment.

9. Ethical Foundations

A final consideration concerns the ethical foundation for a model. There needs to be caution against.

Informed Consent

Before launching the curriculum, it is imperative to communicate its objectives to the target population and their parents or guardians. This transparency will help ensure that the participants and their families fully understand the program's benefits and potential challenges. By providing this information in advance, we empower families to make an informed choice about their involvement. Consequently, obtaining informed consent from the participants and/or their parents or guardians is a crucial step that must be completed before the curriculum begins. This consent process should include a detailed explanation of the curriculum, addressing the families' questions or concerns, to foster trust and encourage participation.

Do No Harm

Working with children primarily aims to protect their well-being and ensure we do not inflict psychological, emotional, or social harm. We must not only safeguard their mental health but also foster their overall development by increasing their sensitivity to various situations. Teachers and facilitators should be particularly attentive to the risk-benefit ratio associated with any program or curriculum. This means thoroughly assessing whether the potential risks to the children's well-being outweigh the possible benefits of the proposed activities or interventions. If the risks are greater, it is crucial to reconsider or even abandon the curriculum to prioritize the children's safety.

Facilitators must be acutely aware that any form of contact or intervention with vulnerable groups—including children with existing mental health challenges—can lead to distress or unintended harm. For example, while practices such as mindfulness and meditation can be beneficial, they must be implemented with extreme caution, especially among students who may already be experiencing symptoms of depression or anxiety. It is vital to tailor these interventions to each child's specific needs, ensuring that they are introduced in a supportive manner that promotes healing rather than exacerbating any existing issues. By prioritizing the emotional and psychological well-being of the children, we create a safer and more nurturing environment conducive to their growth and development.

Confidentiality

It is crucial to manage the interviewee's private information carefully to uphold their privacy rights. For example, sensitive details such as their character strengths, personal challenges, and any mental health issues should be treated as confidential and protected from unauthorized access. To safeguard this information, we should employ various coding systems that are deemed appropriate for the context. These coding systems will help anonymize the data and reduce the risk of personal identification. Additionally, it is important to establish a secure protocol

to ensure that all collected information is thoroughly destroyed after a retention period of two years, thereby minimizing any potential privacy risks.

10. Discussion and Future Recommendations

Education should play a crucial role in promoting the holistic development of students, encompassing not only academic achievements but also social, emotional, and psychological growth. One effective approach to achieving this is integrating positive psychology within educational settings. Positive psychology focuses on enhancing individual strengths and well-being, which can help reduce the stigma often associated with seeking help from mental health professionals. When schools frame mental health support as a means of building strengths rather than as a clinical necessity, students may be more open to participating in such programs. Through various positive psychology interventions, we can cultivate a greater awareness among students regarding the value of maintaining a positive mindset. These interventions may include gratitude exercises, mindfulness practices, and strength identification activities designed to boost self-efficacy and resilience. As students engage in these practices, they develop a more robust sense of self and learn to navigate challenges with a constructive attitude, leading to an overall improvement in their outlook on life. Furthermore, while extensive research has demonstrated the successful application of positive psychology in diverse fields—such as healthcare, business, and community development—there remains a considerable opportunity for its further incorporation into the well-being of children and adolescents (Smith, 2016). The landscape for developing more evidence-based practices and interventions to support young people's mental health is vast and filled with optimistic possibilities, promising significant benefits for future generations.

Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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