



Psychological well-being among Working Women: A Systematic Review

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Abstract

Working adult women face multiple role demands that may affect their psychological well-being. This systematic review aims to examine factors influencing Psychological well-being among working women using a systematic literature review (SLR) approach guided by PRISMA. The literature search identified 302 articles, which were screened to obtain 21 eligible studies. The findings indicate that Psychological well-being is influenced by individual factors (self-compassion and resilience), work-related factors (workload, job satisfaction, and organizational support), as well as social and contextual factors (social support, work-life balance, and changes in work systems). This finding confirms that the Psychological well-being of working women is a multidimensional construct that is influenced by the interaction of internal and external factors, thus requiring an integrative approach in efforts to improve psychological well-being.

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Introduction

Psychological well-being (PWB) is one of the most important constructs in psychology, describing an individual's ability to function optimally and live a meaningful life. Psychological well-being is not merely characterized by the absence of psychological disorders but also encompasses positive dimensions such as self-acceptance, autonomy, environmental mastery, positive interpersonal relationships, purpose in life, and personal growth. This concept emphasizes that psychological well-

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being does not simply reflect a condition free from mental health problems; rather, it represents an individual's capacity to grow, adapt, and maintain psychological functioning while facing the dynamics of modern life. From the perspective of eudaimonic well-being, psychological well-being is understood as a process of self-actualization and an individual's ability to live a valuable and meaningful life in accordance with their potential (Ryff & Singer, 2019). In the context of modern life, characterized by increasing social, economic, and occupational demands, psychological well-being has become a crucial indicator in assessing overall quality of life because it is closely associated with mental health, life satisfaction, adaptability, and the quality of social relationships (Diener et al., 2020).

In the workplace context, psychological well-being plays a vital role because working conditions can influence individual well-being both directly and indirectly through job demands, emotional pressures, and the availability of psychological and organizational resources. Individuals with high psychological well-being tend to demonstrate better performance, more adaptive coping abilities, healthier interpersonal relationships, higher levels of work engagement, and greater resilience in dealing with workplace stressors. Conversely, low psychological well-being is associated with increased work stress, emotional exhaustion, burnout, reduced job satisfaction, and a higher risk of mental health disorders (Hatun & Kurtça, 2023; Meyer et al., 2022). Recent studies have also shown that psychological well-being is significantly related to work productivity, organizational commitment, and career sustainability. Consequently, psychological well-being is no longer viewed solely as a personal issue but also as an essential aspect of modern organizational sustainability (Sari & Nugroho, 2024).

Psychological well-being is not only related to individuals' internal conditions but is also influenced by interactions with their social environment and broader life contexts. In modern workplaces, psychological well-being is affected by various factors, including organizational culture, interpersonal relationships, work-life balance, social support, work flexibility, and evolving socioeconomic conditions. This indicates that psychological well-being is multidimensional and cannot be separated from social, occupational, and interpersonal contexts experienced in daily life. Therefore, a comprehensive approach is required to understand how these factors interact in shaping individual psychological well-being, particularly among working women who face more complex role demands than other worker groups (Ağanoğlu et al., 2023).

In recent years, psychological well-being among working women has gained increasing attention due to the growing participation of women in various professional sectors. Although women's involvement in the workforce continues to increase, they are still expected to simultaneously fulfill domestic and caregiving responsibilities. This situation makes working women more vulnerable to role conflict, emotional strain, and psychological fatigue due to the dual demands they experience concurrently. Women are not only expected to be productive and competitive in the workplace but are also expected to manage family and social responsibilities effectively. This phenomenon, known as the double burden, is one of the primary factors affecting the psychological well-being of working women (Wen et al., 2024).

These complex role demands make working women more susceptible to work-family conflict, emotional exhaustion, and psychological distress than men. Previous research has demonstrated that work-family conflict is associated with increased burnout, psychological stress, and reduced psychological well-being among working women due to simultaneous work and family demands (Allen et al., 2000). Furthermore, women are more likely to experience emotional labor, which, when sustained over time, can increase emotional exhaustion and diminish psychological well-being, particularly in occupations requiring intensive emotional regulation (Grandey, 2003). These findings

indicate that the experience of psychological well-being among working women has unique dynamics and is influenced by both structural and psychological factors.

The issue of psychological well-being among working women has become even more relevant in the post-COVID-19 era, where changes in work systems such as remote working, hybrid working, flexible work arrangements, and digital work environments have transformed the interaction between personal and professional life. Although flexible work arrangements provide women with greater autonomy in managing their time, several studies have shown that such arrangements may also increase work overload, emotional exhaustion, and blurred boundaries between personal and professional domains, especially for women with caregiving and domestic responsibilities (Ağanoğlu et al., 2023; Chung et al., 2021). Women working from home often experience increased multitasking, reduced psychological recovery time, and greater work-family interference due to the absence of clear boundaries between work and household domains. These findings suggest that work flexibility does not always positively impact the psychological well-being of working women.

In addition to work-related factors, psychological well-being among working women is also influenced by individual factors such as resilience, self-compassion, emotion regulation, and coping abilities. Self-compassion enables individuals to cope with pressure, failure, and personal limitations through more adaptive emotional acceptance while reducing excessive self-criticism. Meanwhile, resilience allows individuals to endure and adapt to stressful and uncertain work situations (Hatun & Kurtça, 2023). Self-compassion contributes to enhanced psychological well-being by helping individuals approach stress and failure with greater self-acceptance (Neff, 2003). Therefore, internal psychological resources are important determinants of working women's ability to maintain psychological well-being.

Recent studies have shown that workplace and social environmental factors significantly influence the psychological well-being of working women. Organizational support, workplace inclusion, leadership quality, work-life balance, psychological safety, and social support have been identified as protective factors that enhance psychological well-being (Abolnasser et al., 2023; Gadermann et al., 2023). Women working in supportive environments tend to experience lower stress levels, higher job satisfaction, and better adaptability to workplace pressures. Conversely, burnout, workplace isolation, workplace bullying, job insecurity, and work-family conflict are associated with increased psychological distress and decreased psychological well-being among female employees (Grant et al., 2021; Zulkifli & Hamzah, 2024). Recent evidence has even indicated that workplace bullying and toxic work environments can significantly increase the risk of mental health problems and reduce the quality of life among working women (Rahmawati et al., 2025).

Moreover, psychological well-being among working women is influenced by a sense of belonging and the quality of interpersonal relationships. Emotional support from family members, supervisors, colleagues, and social networks has been shown to enhance psychological well-being by fostering feelings of acceptance, security, and social significance. Women who perceive high levels of social support tend to exhibit better emotional adjustment, lower anxiety levels, and greater life satisfaction (Haim-Litevsky et al., 2023). Within organizational settings, workplace inclusion and family-supportive supervision play crucial roles in helping women manage role conflicts and work-related pressures, thereby enabling them to maintain optimal psychological well-being (Sari, 2024).

Another issue affecting the psychological well-being of working women is workplace inequality and persistent gender-based expectations within modern work environments. Recent studies indicate that women continue to face gender discrimination, limited promotion opportunities, wage inequality, unequal workload distribution, and insufficient organizational recognition of their contributions, all of which negatively affect psychological well-being and job satisfaction (Shah, 2025). Additionally, women

are more vulnerable to stereotype threat and social pressures to conform to certain gender norms in the workplace, which may increase psychological stress and reduce self-perceived competence. Consequently, women-friendly workplace policies, flexible work arrangements, family-supportive supervision, and mental health interventions have become increasingly important in supporting the psychological well-being of working women in contemporary work settings.

Although research on psychological well-being among working women has expanded rapidly, most previous studies have focused on specific factors in isolation, such as burnout, work-life balance, organizational support, or resilience. Research that comprehensively integrates individual, occupational, social, and contextual factors, particularly using recent empirical evidence from the post-pandemic era, remains relatively limited. Furthermore, prior studies have predominantly emphasized the negative consequences of work demands rather than exploring adaptive mechanisms and protective factors that help women maintain psychological well-being in modern work contexts. This systematic literature review offers novelty by integrating individual, occupational, social, and contextual factors into a holistic synthesis framework using recent empirical literature from the post-pandemic period. Thus, this review not only identifies risk factors affecting psychological well-being but also explains how interactions among these factors shape the multidimensional dynamics of psychological well-being among working women.

Based on the foregoing discussion, this study aims to conduct a systematic literature review to identify and analyze various factors influencing psychological well-being among employed adult women. This review is expected to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the dynamics of psychological well-being among working women within the context of modern workplaces and to serve as a foundation for developing psychological interventions and organizational policies that are more responsive to the psychological well-being needs of working women.

Methods

A literature search was conducted using the Publish or Perish application with the Google Scholar database, using the keywords psychological well-being or PWB and working women or employed women. The initial literature search resulted in 302 articles obtained from the Google Scholar database through the Publish or Perish application. Next, the search results from Publish or Perish were reviewed and selected using the Rayyan platform by following the selection process based on the PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) guidelines. Inclusion criteria included: (1) empirical research articles or reviews published in reputable scientific journals; (2) focus on psychological well-being or psychological well-being; (3) involve a working adult population with a significant proportion of women or gender-based discussions; and (4) articles available in full text. Exclusion criteria included non-empirical articles (opinions, editorials), subjects not specifically women and not workers, undergraduate theses and dissertations, duplicate publications, review articles, and articles not directly relevant to the context of working adult women. The selection process was conducted through several stages, namely initial identification, title and abstract screening, and full-text review. Articles that passed the final selection were then analyzed narratively and thematically to identify patterns of findings and key contributions. The literature of 302 articles went through the stage of eliminating duplication of 102 articles, leaving 200 articles that were then selected based on title and abstract, resulting in the elimination of 58 articles. Next, a total of 142 articles were analyzed in the full-text stage, and 121 articles were eliminated because they did not meet the inclusion criteria. Thus, 21 articles were obtained for inclusion in the systematic literature review analysis. The flow chart of journal selection using the PRISMA method can be seen in Figure 1.

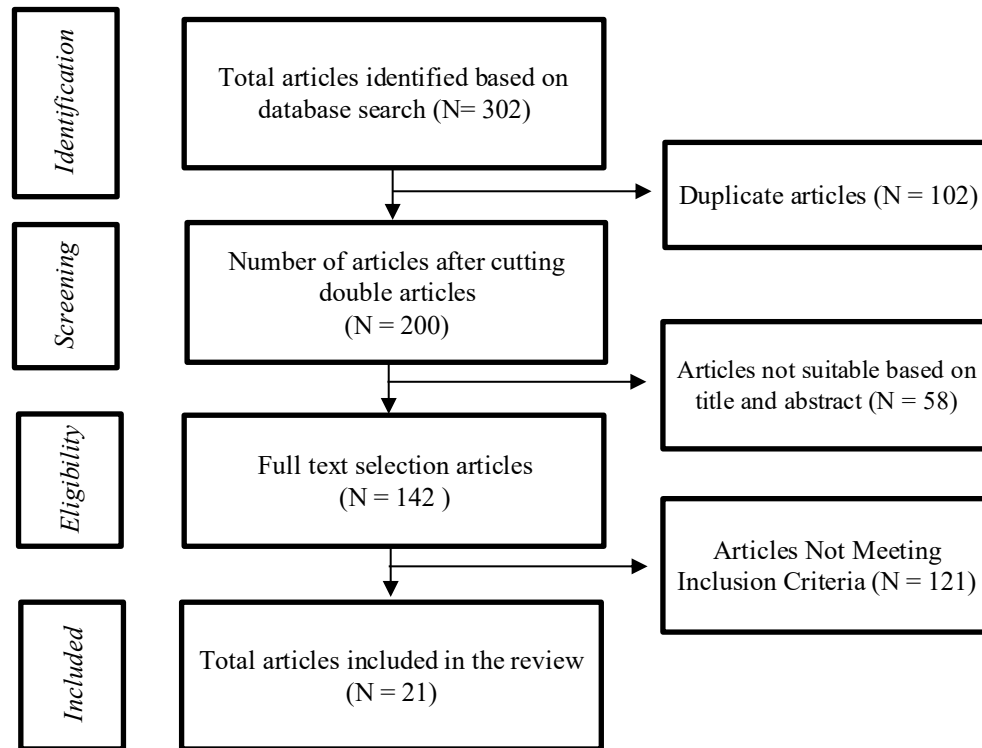


Figure 1. PRISMA Journal Selection Flowchart

Results and Discussions

Table 1. List of Psychological Well-Being Variables in Working Adult Women

No.	Author(s) (Year)	Subject	Method	Main Variables	Key Findings
1	Gadermann et al. (2023)	Female teachers	Quantitative	Organizational support, PWB	Organizational support is positively associated with psychological well-being.
2	Wollast et al. (2023)	Female PhD students	Quantitative	Supervisor support, distress	Supervisor support reduces levels of psychological distress.
3	Hatun & Kurtça (2023)	Adult workers	Quantitative	Self-compassion, resilience	Self-compassion and resilience act as protective factors for psychological well-being.
4	Abolnasser et al. (2023)	Hotel employees	Quantitative	Leadership, engagement	Leadership enhances psychological well-being.

5	Kimbu et al. (2021)	Tourism workers	Mixed Methods	Job loss, well-being	Job loss contributes to a decline in psychological well-being.
6	Haim-Litevsky et al. (2023)	Working adults	Survey	Belonging, PWB	Sense of belonging improves psychological well-being.
7	Samper-Pardo et al. (2023)	Adult women	Survey	Social support	Social support enhances psychological well-being.
8	Yue et al. (2023)	Working adults	Survey	Media exposure	Media exposure has a negative effect on psychological well-being.
9	Pan et al. (2023)	Adult learners	Survey	Affective support	Affective support has a positive effect on psychological well-being.
10	Greenhaus & Allen (2020)	Working women	Quantitative	Work-family conflict	Work-family conflict reduces psychological well-being.
11	Bakker & Demerouti (2019)	Employees	Quantitative	Job demands-resources	Job resources contribute positively to psychological well-being.
12	Ryff & Singer (2019)	Adults	Survey	PWB dimensions	Validation of the psychological well-being model.
13	Noor (2019)	Working mothers	Survey	Role conflict	Role conflict increases stress levels.
14	Kossek et al. (2021)	Working women	Quantitative	Flexibility, well-being	Work flexibility supports psychological well-being.
15	Chung et al. (2021)	Female employees	Survey	Remote work	Remote work has varying effects on psychological well-being.
16	Shockley et al. (2021)	Working mothers	Quantitative	Work-family issues	Burnout levels increase.
17	Meyer et al. (2022)	Female workers	Survey	Inclusion	Workplace inclusion improves psychological well-being.
18	Hobfoll et al. (2020)	Working adults	Survey	Stress, resources	Resources protect psychological well-being

					from the effects of stress.
19	Grant et al. (2021)	Remote workers	Quantitative	Isolation	Isolation negatively affects psychological well-being.
20	Diener et al. (2020)	Adults	Survey	Life satisfaction	Life satisfaction is positively correlated with psychological well-being.
21	Wang et al. (2021)	Working women	Survey	Burnout	Burnout negatively affects psychological well-being.

The findings reviewed in this systematic literature review can be categorized into four major themes influencing psychological well-being among working women: occupational factors, individual factors, social factors, and contextual or environmental factors. Among these themes, occupational factors emerged as the most dominant across the reviewed studies, particularly workload, burnout, work-family conflict, and organizational support. Meanwhile, individual factors such as resilience and self-compassion function as protective factors that help individuals mitigate the negative effects of job-related stress and role conflict. These findings indicate that the psychological well-being of working women is shaped by a complex interaction between external demands and individuals' internal psychological capacities.

The results of the systematic literature review summarized in Table 1 demonstrate that psychological well-being among employed adult women is influenced by dynamic relationships among individual, occupational, social, and contextual factors that interact with one another. The majority of studies included in this review identified occupational factors as the primary determinants directly affecting the psychological well-being of working women, while social factors function as protective factors or psychological buffers that help reduce the negative impact of stress. Meanwhile, individual factors such as resilience, self-compassion, and emotion regulation serve as internal mechanisms that determine how individuals respond to the pressures they face. This pattern suggests that the psychological well-being of working women is formed through a dynamic relationship between external demands and individuals' internal capacities to manage those demands (Hatun & Kurtça, 2023; Wen et al., 2024).

From the individual perspective, the findings consistently indicate that self-compassion and resilience serve as protective factors contributing to enhanced psychological well-being. Individuals with higher levels of self-compassion tend to be more capable of accepting their limitations, reducing self-criticism, and responding to stressors in a more adaptive manner, thereby maintaining emotional stability. Likewise, resilience enables individuals to endure and continue functioning optimally despite experiencing highly stressful situations such as excessive workload, role conflict, and job uncertainty. These findings suggest that psychological well-being is determined not only by external circumstances but also by individuals' ability to utilize their internal psychological resources. This is consistent with the Conservation of Resources Theory, which posits that individuals possessing stronger psychological resources are better able to maintain psychological well-being under challenging circumstances (Hobfoll et al., 2020). Recent studies have also highlighted the important role of emotion regulation and adaptive

coping in helping working women manage emotional pressures arising from simultaneous occupational and domestic responsibilities (Kim & Park, 2024).

Regarding occupational factors, the review indicates that high workload, burnout, work-family conflict, emotional labor, and job insecurity are negatively associated with the psychological well-being of working women. Working women tend to face greater emotional demands than men due to societal expectations that they continue fulfilling domestic and caregiving responsibilities while managing increasing professional obligations. This situation creates the phenomenon known as the double burden, which contributes to chronic stress, emotional exhaustion, and psychological distress among working women (Wen et al., 2024). Furthermore, women are more vulnerable to emotional labor, defined as the requirement to regulate and display specific emotions while performing their jobs, particularly in service-oriented occupations. Continuous emotional labor may increase emotional exhaustion and reduce psychological well-being, especially in professions requiring intensive emotional regulation (Grandey, 2003).

The findings of this review also reveal that burnout is one of the dominant factors associated with decreased psychological well-being among working women. Burnout is characterized not only by physical and emotional exhaustion but also by reduced work motivation, diminished sense of work meaning, and feelings of inadequacy in meeting job demands. Previous studies have shown that work-family conflict is associated with increased burnout, psychological stress, and decreased psychological well-being among working women due to the simultaneous demands of work and family responsibilities (Allen et al., 2000). Moreover, workplace bullying and unsupportive work environments are linked to increased job stress, emotional exhaustion, and lower psychological well-being among female employees (Nielsen & Einarsen, 2012). These findings indicate that the workplace can serve not only as a source of pressure but also as a significant risk factor for the mental health of working women.

On the other hand, occupational factors can also function as sources of support that enhance psychological well-being among working women. Organizational support, workplace inclusion, leadership quality, family-supportive supervision, and psychological safety have been found to positively influence psychological well-being by fostering emotional security, job satisfaction, and social connectedness in the workplace (Abolnasser et al., 2023; Gadermann et al., 2023). Women working in supportive environments tend to exhibit better coping abilities, lower stress levels, and higher work engagement. Within the framework of the Job Demands-Resources Theory, the availability of job resources such as organizational support and effective leadership can help mitigate the negative effects of job demands on psychological well-being (Bakker & Demerouti, 2019).

This review also highlights work-life balance as an important predictor of psychological well-being among working women in the modern workplace. Women who maintain a balance between their professional and personal lives tend to demonstrate greater emotional stability, lower stress levels, and more optimal psychological functioning (Putri et al., 2024). Conversely, blurred boundaries between work and personal life, particularly in remote and hybrid work arrangements, may increase emotional exhaustion and work overload due to heightened work-family interference. Although flexible work arrangements provide greater autonomy and flexibility, they may also increase multitasking demands, work pressure, and reduced opportunities for psychological recovery among working women (Ağanoğlu et al., 2023).

Although flexible work arrangements are often associated with enhanced autonomy and improved work-life balance, several studies included in this review reported contradictory findings. Flexible work systems may actually increase emotional exhaustion, multitasking, and work-family interference among women who have domestic and caregiving responsibilities. These findings suggest

that the effectiveness of flexible work arrangements is highly dependent on organizational support, family conditions, socioeconomic resources, and the distribution of domestic responsibilities within households.

Beyond occupational factors, social support and a sense of belonging were also found to play significant roles in enhancing the psychological well-being of working women. Emotional support from family members, partners, supervisors, coworkers, and broader social networks functions as a psychological buffer that reduces the negative effects of stress and work-family conflict. Women who perceive higher levels of social support tend to report lower anxiety, better emotional adjustment, and greater life satisfaction (Samper-Pardo et al., 2023). In addition, a sense of belonging enhances feelings of acceptance, security, and social significance, thereby strengthening psychological well-being among working women (Haim-Litevsky et al., 2023). Within organizational contexts, workplace inclusion and positive interpersonal relationships can help women feel valued and accepted, ultimately improving overall psychological well-being.

In a broader context, environmental factors such as the COVID-19 pandemic, digital workplace transformation, and increased work flexibility demonstrate that psychological well-being is dynamic and highly influenced by environmental conditions. The shift toward digital working environments has significantly transformed women's work experiences. Although remote work offers greater flexibility, it has also increased psychological isolation, emotional fatigue, and work-family interference due to the absence of clear boundaries between occupational and domestic domains (Grant et al., 2021). Furthermore, exposure to negative information, economic uncertainty, and social changes during the post-pandemic period has been associated with increased anxiety and psychological distress among working women (Yue et al., 2023). These findings suggest that contextual factors can function either as risk factors or protective factors depending on how individuals and organizations manage such changes.

This review further demonstrates that workplace inequality and gender-based expectations remain important issues affecting the psychological well-being of working women. Women continue to encounter various forms of gender inequality in the workplace, including limited promotion opportunities and structural barriers commonly referred to as the glass ceiling effect, which may negatively impact psychological well-being and job satisfaction (Cotter et al., 2001). In addition, stereotype threat and social pressures to conform to certain gender norms contribute to increased psychological stress and reduced self-perceived competence among working women. Therefore, women-friendly workplace policies, flexible work arrangements, family-supportive supervision, and mental health interventions have become increasingly important in supporting the psychological well-being of working women in the modern work environment.

Overall, the findings of this review indicate that the psychological well-being of working women results from a complex interaction between internal psychological resources and external conditions, including workplace environments, social support, and contextual dynamics. Individual factors function as internal psychological resources, while occupational, social, and contextual factors constitute the external environment influencing women's experiences of psychological well-being. The interaction among these factors demonstrates that psychological well-being among working women cannot be adequately explained through a single-factor approach but instead requires an integrative, multidimensional, and systemic perspective. Consequently, the development of psychological interventions, organizational policies, and social support systems that are responsive to the needs of working women is essential for enhancing psychological well-being in an increasingly complex modern work environment.

This study has several limitations. Most of the studies analyzed employed quantitative cross-sectional designs, which limit the ability to explain causal relationships among variables in depth. Furthermore, the reviewed studies were conducted across diverse cultural and occupational contexts, requiring caution when generalizing the findings. Differences in research methodologies and measurement instruments used across studies may also have influenced the consistency of findings within this systematic literature review.

Conclusion

Based on the results of a systematic literature review, it can be concluded that the psychological well-being of working adult women is a multidimensional phenomenon influenced by a complex interaction between individual, work-related, social, and contextual factors. Individual factors such as resilience, self-compassion, emotional regulation, and coping skills act as internal psychological resources that help women cope with work pressure and role conflict. Meanwhile, work-related factors such as workload, burnout, work-family conflict, organizational support, workplace inclusion, and leadership quality significantly influence the psychological well-being of working women. Furthermore, social support, a sense of belonging, and the dynamics of the modern work environment, such as remote working and flexible work arrangements, also influence the psychological well-being of working women.

The results of this study indicate that the psychological well-being of working women cannot be understood through a single approach but rather requires an integrative, multidimensional, and contextual approach. Therefore, organizations need to create a more supportive, inclusive, and responsive work environment to the needs of working women through women-friendly workplace policies, mental health support, psychological safety, and a more flexible and balanced work system. In addition, strengthening individual psychological resources such as resilience, self-compassion, and adaptive coping skills is also important to help working women maintain psychological well-being amidst the increasing demands of work and modern life.

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