

Well-Being at Work and in Education - The Well-being Process Approach

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Abstract

Recent approaches to the well-being of working adults have measured it with the Smith Well-Being Questionnaire (SWELL – Smith and Smith 2017) or the Well-Being Process Questionnaire (WPQ – Williams et al. 2017a, c; Williams and Smith 2016, 2018). These surveys have also been used in studies of student well-being (Williams et al., 2017b). These measuring instruments cover predictors of both positive (positive affect, happiness, and life satisfaction) and negative outcomes (stress, fatigue, anxiety, and depression). Other measuring instruments focus on the well-being outcomes without considering established predictors.

The well-being process model was based on the Demands-Resources-Individual Effects (DRIVE) model (Mark & Smith, 2008), which was originally used in research on occupational stress. The demands-resources-individual effects model (Mark & Smith, 2008). The model requires measurement of negative characteristics such as stressors, resources to cope with challenges, such as support and control, and individual differences such as personality and coping style. The model allowed for the addition of new variables, with positive outcomes, such as happiness, positive affect, and life satisfaction being included in later research. Such positive outcomes are often referred to as “well-being.” However, the well-being process encompasses both negative and positive characteristics (e.g., demands, support, and control), appraisals (life satisfaction and perceived stress), individual differences (e.g., negative coping and positive personality traits), and outcomes (e.g., happiness and anxiety/depression). Recent research has led to the addition of new variables to the model (e.g., burnout and work-life balance; resilience and training attitudes; ethnicity; and psychological contract fulfilment).

The present paper will review studies in education and of workers and demonstrate the importance of the approach.