

## Systematic Review Analysis: Well-Being Factors in the Elderly

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### Abstract

Well-being in the elderly is a multidimensional condition that is influenced by various main factors, such as social relationships, economic stability, physical and mental health, spirituality, and a supportive environment. This study aims to explore and analyze the factors that influence elderly well-being through a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) approach. The results showed that social relationships stood out as the most significant factor in improving elderly well-being. Positive social support from family, friends and community has been shown to have a major impact on psychological well-being, helping older adults reduce emotional distress, and improving happiness and quality of life. In addition, economic stability through good financial planning, regular physical activity and spirituality-based approaches also play an important role. Interventions such as reminiscence therapy and adaptive coping strategies can maintain the mental health of the elderly in facing the challenges of aging. This study concludes that the well-being of the elderly can be improved through a holistic approach involving social, economic, health, spirituality, and environmental aspects.

**Keywords:** Elderly Wellbeing, Mental Health, Systematic Literature Review

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### Introduction

Old age is the final stage in the process of human life development. In this phase, individuals experience various changes, both in biological and motor functions, vision and thinking abilities, motivation and emotional life, as well as in social relationships and involvement with the community (Karmiyati et al., 2020). Well-being in the elderly refers to a state in which elderly individuals are able to live their lives free from stress and psychological pressure, and achieve optimal levels of happiness. This condition plays an important role in preventing mental disorders such as depression, while contributing to improving their overall quality of life.

Good psychological, social, and environmental support are key to creating this well-being, so that the elderly can enjoy a more meaningful and productive life. In psychology studies, psychological well-being in the elderly is an important indicator that reflects an individual's ability to live a meaningful, balanced, and adaptive life to changes that occur in old age, Carol Ryff's theory which consists of six main aspects, namely self-acceptance, namely the ability to accept conditions and the past, positive relationships, namely supportive social involvement, autonomy, namely the ability to make independent decisions, environmental mastery, namely adaptation to change, life goals, namely reflecting a sense of meaning and direction in life, personal growth, namely openness to new experiences (Bhardwaj & Nayal, 2024)

The Indonesian government has passed Law Number 13 of 1998 concerning the welfare of the elderly, which aims to guarantee the rights of the elderly and provide respect and appreciation for their contributions to society. This law emphasizes the importance of providing a variety of

comprehensive services, such as access to quality health services, opportunities to continue participating in the world of work, relevant education for the elderly, and social protection to ensure their well-being. This policy reflects the state's commitment to creating an inclusive and supportive environment for elderly individuals so that they can live their lives with dignity and security (Mustofa & Rinawati, 2020).

In the context of Indonesian demographics, since 2024 BPS data shows that Indonesian population data has entered the elderly population with data of around 12% of the total population consisting of the elderly, with an elderly dependency ratio reaching 17.8%. This data shows that most of the elderly in Indonesia are women, live in urban areas, and are included in the young elderly group aged between 60 and 69 years, in terms of education more than 60% of the elderly have only graduated or not graduated from elementary school, while in social protection around 2% of the elderly only receive non-contributory social program benefits and 12% receive contribution or employment programs.

This data shows that the welfare of the elderly is still relatively low, with data showing that the elderly are still dependent on family members and have limited access to social security (Directorate of People's Welfare Statistics., 2024). Limited access to social security and basic services has a direct impact on physical health, such as malnutrition and economic dependence. Psychologically, the elderly who live in limitations often experience feelings of worthlessness, stress, depression, and loss of meaning in life. Low levels of education, the dominance of elderly women in urban areas, and minimal social protection recorded in 2024 BPS data further strengthen this vulnerability.

Well-being in the elderly is influenced by various interrelated and mutually reinforcing factors. One dominant factor is positive social relationships, including community involvement, family support, and meaningful social interactions. Socially active older adults tend to have lower stress levels and higher life satisfaction. In addition, meaningful activities such as participation in group therapy or community activities can increase self-confidence, self-efficacy, and personal independence, all of which contribute to improved psychological well-being. Positive emotions also play an important role, where older adults who are involved in psychological approaches that strengthen optimism, gratitude, and purpose in life show significant improvements in mental well-being and reduced symptoms of depression and anxiety.

Adaptive coping factors, especially the ability to manage stress and emotional distress through approaches such as mindfulness or counseling, have been shown to increase the psychological resilience of older adults in facing various challenges. (Moye, 2023) No less important is the aspect of spirituality, including the search for the meaning of life and a religious approach, which can strengthen emotional regulation and provide a sense of calm and hope in living old age. Overall, the well-being of the elderly can be significantly improved through interventions that combine social, psychological, emotional, and spiritual elements.

Support from the surrounding environment, both in physical and emotional forms, as well as access to cognitively and emotionally stimulating activities, are important foundations in creating a more meaningful and prosperous life for the elderly. Well-being in the elderly includes various important aspects that affect their quality of life. These aspects include adequate economic stability, freedom to make life choices, good physical health conditions, and a decent and supportive living environment. Although there is no standard definition of well-being, in general it is related to an individual's ability to live life with dignity and feel that their life is going well.

Social, economic, and health factors play a significant role in shaping this experience of well-being, which affects the elderly's views on their quality of life. In addition, well-being also involves positive social interactions, access to health services, and the ability to remain active and involved in meaningful activities (Khongboon et al., 2017). The well-being of the elderly is an important issue that is influenced by various factors, such as physical activity, socio-economic conditions, and health perceptions. Physical activity has been shown to improve emotional well-being and reduce depressive symptoms, while the well-being paradox suggests that older adults often report good emotional well-being despite physical limitations and economic challenges.

Other factors, such as education, income, and environmental conditions, also play a role, although their impacts are not always immediately apparent on physical or emotional functioning (Wright et al., 2015). Psychological well-being refers to an individual's positive view of themselves and others, ability to make decisions independently, control their behavior, adapt their environment to suit their needs, and seek to understand and develop their potential. In older adults, psychological well-being can decline due to changes that occur with aging, often making them more dependent on others.

The family, as the closest social institution, has an important role as a source of social support that can ensure that the elderly are well cared for. However, the busyness of family members with their respective activities often results in a lack of attention to the needs of the elderly (Liu et al., 2019). Elderly people in households can sometimes cause feelings of guilt, disharmony, or isolation from family or friends, especially if the relationship between family members is not well established. This condition can also be a burden for children who act as primary caregivers (Kurniawan & Susilarini, 2021). Elderly people who tend to withdraw from social life and are not active in the community are more susceptible to loneliness and alienation, so support from those around them is very important (López et al., 2022).

In addition, elderly people with health problems often need help from others, and if these needs are not met, they are at risk of neglect (Iparraguirre, 2016). Several studies have revealed the welfare of the elderly, (Liu et al., 2019) this study concluded that social involvement has a significant positive effect on the mental health of the elderly. Active participation in social activities has been shown to be related to a decrease in the level of psychological distress. In addition, this study identified factors such as age, education level, marital status, and differences between urban and rural areas as determinants that influence the level of psychological distress in the elderly.

Based on the previous description, the welfare of the elderly includes various interconnected dimensions of life, including physical, mental, social, and economic aspects, which together affect their quality of life. Elderly people who receive social support, access to health, and a supportive environment tend to have better levels of well-being. Conversely, those who experience social isolation or lack of family attention are at risk of experiencing a decline in mental and physical conditions. The aging process often brings additional challenges, such as increased dependence on others and limitations in social activities.

However, involvement in the community and good social relationships have been shown to support mental health and reduce psychological distress in the elderly. In addition, factors such as education level, cultural background, and living conditions also affect their well-being. Therefore, the policies designed need to be holistic, not only ensuring that basic needs are met, but also creating opportunities for the elderly to remain productive, socially active, and live

meaningful lives. Further research with cross-cultural and regional approaches can provide new insights to strengthen strategies for improving the welfare of the elderly in various contexts.

### Methods

This study uses a systematic literature review method, which aims to systematically identify, evaluate, and analyze all relevant evidence related to a particular research question. The systematic literature review process begins with formulating a specific research question, followed by establishing inclusion and exclusion criteria based on the type of study, population, intervention, and outcomes measured. Relevant studies are found through a thorough search of various databases and other sources. Data from selected studies are then analyzed and synthesized to provide comprehensive and replicable conclusions (Counsell, 1997). In line with this (Nata et al., 2024) explains that the systematic review method is used to systematically review the literature by following the steps that have been set. This process includes identifying, reviewing, evaluating, and interpreting various relevant studies.

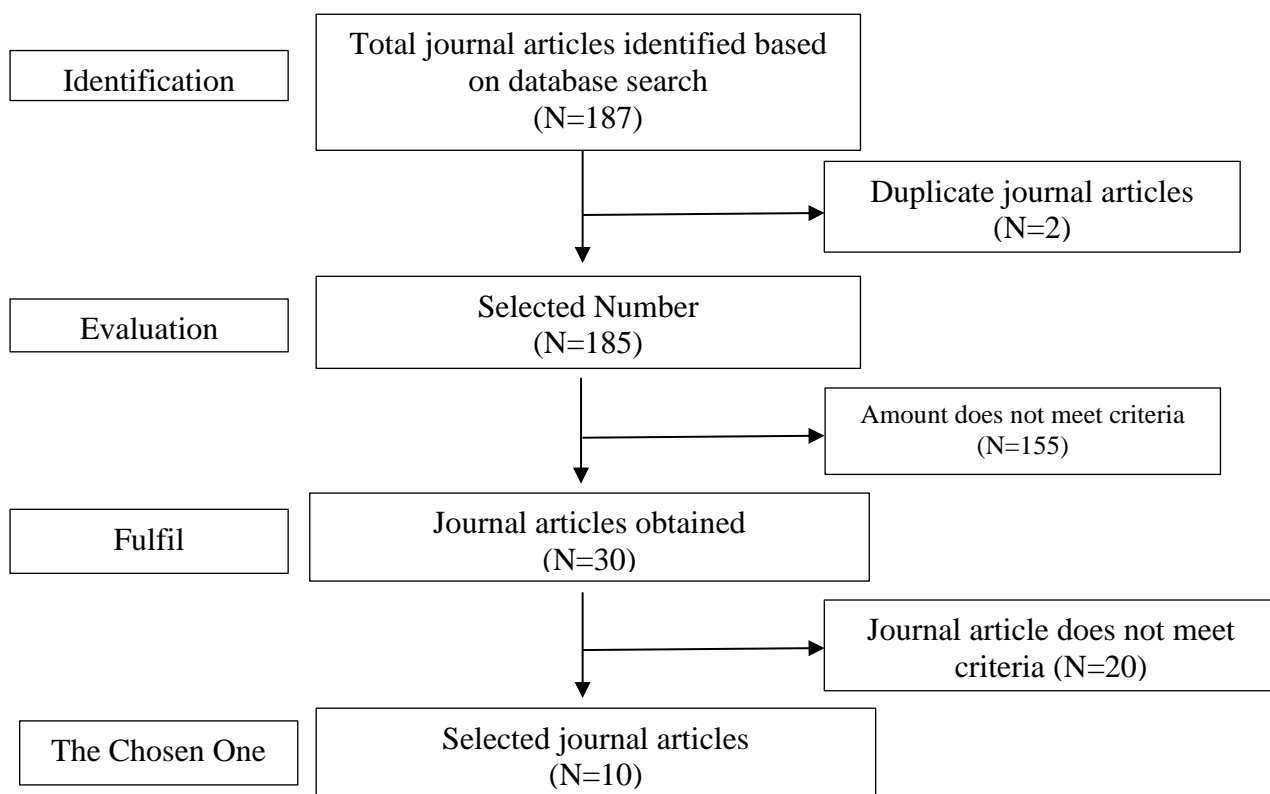


Figure 1. Prism Graph For Journal Article Selection Flow

The initial stage begins with determining a specific topic and designing a clear and focused research question. Next, researchers search for relevant literature through sources such as academic journals, conference articles, and online databases such as pubmed, google scholar, and scopus. In this study, a literature search was conducted for the period 2019 to 2024 using the keywords "well-being" and "elderly". The selected articles met the inclusion criteria, namely those published in the last 10 years, then those using methods other than systematic reviews and finally those specifically discussing the welfare factors of the elderly. The initial screening process was carried out based on the title and abstract, then continued with a

duplication check using the rayyan tool. After eliminating duplication, the remaining journals were examined as a whole. Of the total 187 articles found, 10 articles were identified as relevant and further analyzed to provide an in-depth understanding of welfare in the elderly.

## Results and Discussion

Table 1. Results of studies related to welfare in the elderly

No	Authors	Year	Subjects	Research Findings
1	Viguer, Paz; Satorres, Encarna; Fortuna, Flor B.; Meléndez, Juan C.	2017	• Subjects: 160 older adults• Intervention group: 80• Control group: 80	Reminiscence intervention is effective in improving well-being among older adults.
2	Evans, N.; Boyd, H.; Harris, N.; Noonan, K.; Ingram, T.; Jarvis, A.; Ridgers, J.; Cheston, R.	2020	• Sample: 1,829 older adults• Intervention & control groups across 31 studies	Reminiscence-based interventions significantly reduce depression symptoms and increase life satisfaction. This approach is an effective non-pharmacological method to improve psychological well-being in cognitively healthy older adults.
3	Pappens, M.; Vandenbossche, E.; Van den Bergh, O.; Van Diest, I.	2015	• Participants: 103 older adults (85% women)	Positive psychology group intervention improves well-being, life satisfaction, social well-being, and significantly reduces depression and anxiety. The "Lighten Up!" program is effective for enhancing psychological well-being in community-dwelling older adults.
4	Boone, A. E.; Wolf, T. J.; Engsberg, J. R.	2019	• 70 older adults, average age 85	Group occupational therapy significantly improves emotional well-being, self-efficacy, and personal independence. Group therapy is more effective than individual therapy in these domains.
5	Durgante, H.; Dell'Aglio, D. D.	2019	• Participants: 99 retirees• Intervention group: 65• Control group: 34	Multicomponent positive psychology intervention (6 sessions: optimism, empathy, life satisfaction, etc.) showed significant reductions in depression, anxiety, and stress. Small effects on life satisfaction and resilience; moderate to large effects on stress, depression, and anxiety. The "Programa Vem Ser" is effective in improving mental health indicators

				and well-being among Brazilian retirees.
6	Moye, J., PhD	2023	• Participants: 62 older adults	Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) improves coping with stress. Significant improvements were seen in stress coping, mindfulness skills use, depression reduction, emotion regulation, and sleep problems. Effects were greater in the intervention group than the control group.
7	Toledano-González, A.; Labajos Manzanares, T.; Romero-Ayuso, D. M.	2018	• 70 nursing home residents	Group occupational therapy led to significant improvements in psychological well-being, self-efficacy, and independence. Notable differences between groups in self-efficacy, emotional well-being, and personal independence scores.
8	Setyawati, J. I.; Ratnasari, Y.	2020	• 133 older adults aged >60 years	Comprehensive intervention evaluated using SAS, SDS, UCLA Loneliness Scale, and MUNSH at weeks 4, 8, 12, and 1-year follow-up. Results showed significant reductions in anxiety, depression, and loneliness scores compared to the control group.
9	Lee, E. K.-P.; Wong, B.; Sun, W.	2021	• Participants: 60 older adults with depression	Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) showed significantly greater improvements in the intervention group for depression, emotion regulation, and sleep quality. This is an effective non-pharmacological approach for improving psychological well-being in older adults with depression.
10	Wulanningsih, M.; Wibhowo, C.; Rahayu, E.	2022	• Participants: 8 older women (aged 60–72)	Logotherapy intervention significantly reduced anxiety (mild category), proving the effectiveness of this program in reducing anxiety in older adults with chronic conditions.

Well-being in the elderly is influenced by several interrelated key factors. Positive social relationships, including support from family and community, play a significant role in maintaining the psychological well-being of the elderly. Conversely, social isolation can have a negative impact, increasing the risk of mental disorders such as depression. In addition, economic stability, especially through effective pension fund management, provides a sense of

financial security and supports well-being in old age. Physical and mental health factors are also important aspects, where physical activity has been shown to reduce symptoms of depression and increase happiness.

Aspects of spirituality, such as gratitude and religious awareness, play an important role in improving the psychological well-being of the elderly. In addition, involvement in meaningful activities, both socially and religiously, helps reduce psychological distress and increases life satisfaction. A supportive environment, both physically and socially, is also an important foundation, with elderly people living in good environmental conditions tending to have higher levels of well-being. Reminiscence therapy has been shown to be effective in reducing depression and increasing life satisfaction in the elderly, although its long-term effects require adaptive coping strategies. Finally, family support remains a major factor in improving the well-being of the elderly. Poor family relationships or lack of attention often have a negative impact, while consistent support has a significant positive impact on their quality of life.

Among these factors, social relationships stand out as the most influential factor on the well-being of the elderly. Strong social support, whether from family, friends, or community, provides a deep sense of emotional connectedness and security, which directly improves life satisfaction and mental health in the elderly. Poor social relationships, on the other hand, can quickly affect overall well-being, indicating that social interaction is a key component in creating a meaningful life for the elderly. (Liu et al., 2019) explained that social involvement has a significant positive influence on the mental health of the elderly. Active participation in social activities has been shown to reduce levels of psychological distress, with good family relationships being one of the key factors in improving the psychological well-being of the elderly.

In line with that (López et al., 2022) emphasized the importance of social support from people around the elderly to prevent feelings of loneliness and isolation, especially for the elderly who tend to withdraw from social life. Support from the community and family has been shown to be important in maintaining psychological well-being. The study conducted by (Amelia, 2023) revealed that positive relationships with family and environmental support are important contributors to the well-being of the elderly living in tresna werdha social homes, allowing them to live more meaningful lives. (Osman & Ismail, 2019) emphasized that social participation and a supportive environment are dominant factors influencing the well-being of the elderly, providing important insights for formulating policies that focus on the social interactions of the elderly. Finally, it was emphasized by (Sadoughi & Hesampour, 2020) that perceived social support is closely related to the psychological well-being of the elderly. Good interpersonal relationships are identified as a key element in improving the quality of life of the elderly, especially when combined with spirituality.

## **Conclusion**

Elderly well-being is a multidimensional condition influenced by various main factors, such as social relationships, economic stability, physical and mental health, spirituality, and a supportive environment. Among these factors, social relationships stand out as the most influential element. Positive social support from family, community, and the surrounding environment has been shown to have a significant impact on the psychological well-being of the elderly, helping to reduce emotional distress and increase happiness. Conversely, social isolation can worsen mental conditions, increase the risk of depression, and reduce the quality of life of the elderly. In addition, good physical health factors through physical activity, mature financial management to achieve economic stability, and spirituality and gratitude also play an

important role in improving the well-being of the elderly. Psychological interventions, such as reminiscence therapy and adaptive coping strategies, provide positive results in maintaining mental health and reducing psychological distress. Thus, positive social relationships are the main foundation in building a meaningful and prosperous life for the elderly.

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