

Optimism Mediates the Association Between Flow Experience and Psychological Well-Being: A Systematic Review of Recent Evidence

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Abstract

Flow and optimism are found to be both independently associated with psychological well-being. However, there hasn't been a thorough analysis of optimism's mediating function in this relationship. To conduct a thorough analysis of peer-reviewed research on optimism's role as a mediator between flow and psychological health in adults between the ages of 18 and 65. PRISMA 2020 guidelines were adhered to in this systematic review. To find studies published between 2015 and 2025, six databases were searched: PsycINFO, Scopus, PubMed, Google Scholar, ScienceDirect, and ERIC. The following criteria must be met for inclusion: statistical mediation analysis of optimism between flow and well-being, adult samples, empirical research, and English language proficiency. To evaluate quality, the Mixed Methods Appraisal Tool (MMAT) was employed. Nine studies satisfied the requirements for inclusion. Research indicates that optimism mediates the relationship to some extent, particularly when it comes to stress, academic motivation, and job satisfaction. However, generalizability is constrained by measurement and design heterogeneity. Flow and psychological health are significantly mediated by optimism. Implications for interventions, both theoretical and practical, are examined. It is advised to conduct more longitudinal and cross-cultural research.

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