



Status of Psychological Well-Being for Academic Members of Physical Education and Sports Science at The Universities of Baghdad and Mustansiriyah

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DOI:

[https://doi.org/10.37359/JOPE.V38\(SpecialIssue\)2026.2435](https://doi.org/10.37359/JOPE.V38(SpecialIssue)2026.2435)

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Article history: Received 16/February/2026; Accepted 18/March/2026; Available online 28/October/2026

Abstract

This study aimed to assess the psychological well-being of academic staff in physical education and sports sciences at the Universities of Baghdad and Mustansiriyah. A descriptive survey method was employed involving 206 academics randomly selected from a population of 560 representing 36.786% of the target population. Participants were recruited from the Colleges of Physical Education and Sports Sciences at the University of Baghdad including the Al-Jadriya campus and the College for Women the College of Physical Education and Sports Science at Mustansiriyah University and the Department of Physical Education and Sports Science at the College of Basic Education at Mustansiriyah University during the 2025/2026 academic year. Data were collected using the Warda (2026) psychological well-being scale and analyzed using SPSS. The findings indicated that the scale was appropriate for assessing psychological well-being among academic staff in the target institutions. Furthermore the participants demonstrated an adequate level of psychological well-being although differences were observed across its dimensions. Self-acceptance ranked highest whereas environmental mastery ranked lowest. The study recommends conducting regular psychological assessments using the adopted scale and integrating psychological well-being programs into continuing education courses within physical education and sports sciences colleges and departments. Such initiatives may help strengthen academics self-efficacy, promote psychological well-being and support a healthier academic working environment .

Keywords: Psychological well-being, Physical Education and Sports Science academics.

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Introduction

Psychological well-being is One of the main factors that ensures an academic's ability to perform their roles efficiently and effectively. It goes beyond the absence of stress to a deeper level encompassing self-satisfaction, the ability to adapt to the changing demands of professional life, the establishment of positive social relationships, and the achievement of meaningful personal and professional goals. Thus, psychological well-being becomes an essential element in supporting academic and research performance, enhancing an academic's ability for innovation, planning, stress tolerance, and functioning effectively in dynamic and vibrant environments. “The individual spends most of his free time thinking about changing his beliefs in order to reach a better state and position, this thinking must be realistic and based on studying the requirements of change and the possibility of achieving it on the ground, as excessive, uncalculated thinking leads him to illogicality” (Al-Sharif 2023, 218), The academic who constantly changes his beliefs towards what enables him to raise the level of each of these dimensions that Reeve emphasized in her theoretical model will help to increase his productivity, which benefits all formations of colleges and departments of physical education and sports science, especially what students receive from these academic role models. Dealing with students requires that the teaching academic does not suffer from psychological and behavioral problems, in order to motivate them and elevate them in achieving the desired goals in the educational process and its particularity in physical education and sports science. The more attention in the psychological aspects of the teaching academic, the more this is reflected in the availability of a productive generation, in accordance with the views of Albert Bandura in his social theory of modeling and imitation, who is the one who came up with the determinants of self-efficacy under the current research.

“Psychology science borrowed the biological concept of adaptation to refer to the individual’s attempt to adapt to the psychological and social conditions, which constantly require him to make adjustments between himself and them. Thus, self-efficacy is the set of reactions by which the individual modifies his psychological structure or behavior to respond to limited environmental conditions or a new experience. It is also a continuous interactive process if life continues, resulting from a set of interactions between the individual’s motives and desires and attempts to satisfy them. This process results in a change that the individual makes in himself and in his environment, and this change is clearly evident in behavior.” (Departe 2019, 36).

Academics represent the fundamental pillars of the university system, and the focus of development and knowledge renewal in it, especially in the colleges of physical education and sports sciences, which combine theoretical education and practical training, and require a high level of competence, psychological readiness, and human interaction in this university environment. Their continuous university tasks



increase in light of the rapid transformations of institutional quality requirements, the rise in its standards, scientific competition, and the expansion of academic tasks such as teaching, scientific research, supervision, evaluation, community service, and others.

“An individual can engage in self-regulation when confronted with thoughts that confuse his behavior with the group to which he belongs, and he uses internal dynamics. Thus, self-development is necessary to increase the ability to confront without psychological pressures.” (Akram 2024, 93)

"Since the connections between an individual's feelings and beliefs lead to the manifestation of the dominant trait due to the reciprocal determinism in influencing his behavior, this is reflected positively on self-efficacy and the tendency towards high self-confidence." (Ahrens 2018, 804)

"Information diversifying about events and matching it with reality gives the individual confidence in his actions and protects him from destructive criticism of his talents and aspirations in achieving his goals." (Yassin 2021, 96)

The research problem also focused on the fact that academic members in colleges of physical education and sports science face increasing professional and psychological challenges that require a high level of adaptation and personal effectiveness in academic expansion and the requirements of quality and accreditation. Psychological well-being is one of the essential psychological phenomena that contribute to the academic's ability to do his tasks efficiently. However, studies in the Iraqi university environment especially in the sports specialization — are still limited in analyzing the nature of the relationship between these psychological phenomena among academics. Accordingly, the research problem is defined in the following two questions:

What is the reality and details of psychological well-being among academic members in the Colleges of Physical Education and Sports Sciences at the Universities of Baghdad and Mustansiriyah?

The research aims to identify the reality of psychological well-being among academic members in the Colleges of Physical Education and Sports Sciences at the Universities of Baghdad and Mustansiriyah.

Materials and Methods

Procedure

Researchers adopted the descriptive research method, which is defined as "the study of phenomena as they exist in reality, without the researcher intervening to influence their nature, using a methodology based on measurement and surveying within a specific timeframe, to describe these phenomena in an unbiased, numerical language." (Al-Saleh 2024, 181) Furthermore, the specific nature of the current research problem necessitated the adoption of the survey method within the descriptive

approach, which is defined as "the method that employs quantitative and qualitative description to determine the level of variables, by studying their phenomena as they exist, without the researcher intervening to influence this level." (Al-Shafi'i 2024, 109)

Researchers limited with the selection of the study population based on observations derived from the research problem and described its boundaries. They were represented by the academic members affiliated with the Colleges of Physical Education and Sports Sciences at the University of Baghdad (Al-Jadriya campus and Colleges of Physical Education and Sports Sciences for women), the College of Physical Education and Sports Sciences at Al-Mustansiriya University, and the Department of Physical Education and Sports Sciences at the College of Basic Education at Al-Mustansiriya University, for the academic year (2025/2026). They engaged in teaching in these colleges and departments, with a total number of (560) academics, who continued their official duties within the time period of the current research procedures and according to their latest records dated (22-30/12/2025). researchers directed their study of this community for the following reasons:

- Because its members are included in the psychological phenomenon as described in the current research problem.
- Because they are part of readily available communities, facilitating communication with them due to their consistent presence.
- Because they fulfill the research objectives and its various methodological procedures.

Ten academics, representing 1.786% of their original population, were selected for the pilot sample. This number was determined through a randomly simple stratified sampling method with equal numbers of participants from the colleges and department. The methodological procedure for this sample consisted of pilot testing the scale without any statistical analysis of the collected data.

A main study sample selected for the scale, 206 academics, representing 36.786% of their original population. This number was determined through a stratified sampling method from all strata of the total sample, using proportional representation from the colleges and department. The methodological procedure for this sample involved finding solutions to the current research problem and achieving the desired objectives of this research.

To measure psychological well-being, the two researchers adopted the (Warda 2026) scale, which adopted the (Reef 201) model in its construction, specifically for this sample. It underwent several statistical treatments to ensure its acceptance, and no more than (6) months had passed since its developed. It contains (30) items with a positive orientation only, with a total score ranging between (30-150) degrees, with a hypothetical mean of (90), as shown in the details of its structure in Table (1)

Table 1. shows the structure of the psychological well-being scale for academic members of the College of Physical Education and Sports Sciences

scale dimensions	number of items	Response options	Scoring key	Score Range (Min-Max)	hypothetical mean
Autonomy	5	Always applies,	5	25-5	15
Self-Acceptance	5	often applies,		25-5	15
Rational	5	sometimes	4	25-5	15
Optimism		applies,		25-5	15
Positive Relations with Others	5	rarely applies,	3	25-5	15
Environmental	5	does not apply	2	25-5	15
Adaptation					
Personal Maturity	5		1	25-5	15
Total	30	5	5	150-30	90

The scale includes (6) answer instructions

The researchers conducted a pilot study with a sample of (10) academics from Sunday, January 4, 2026, to Sunday, January 11, 2026, encountering no significant obstacles. Subsequently, the psychological well-being scale was administered to a sample of (206) academics, with the assistance of a support team. This main survey involved direct, group, and individual measurement of the academics at the Colleges of Physical Education and Sports Sciences at the University of Baghdad (Al-Jadriya and women campuses), the College of Physical Education and Sports Sciences at Al-Mustansiriya University, and the Department of Physical Education and Sports Sciences at the College of Basic Education at Al-Mustansiriya University. This survey continued from Sunday, February 2, 2026, to Monday, February 16, 2026, adhering to established measurement procedures and documentation. The scale resulting scores were tabulated, by adopting the mechanism of transcribing the items of the psychometric scale using the weighted five-point scoring key for those five-point alternatives adopted in this research, then collecting the scoring scores for each of the dimensions of the scale, and the total score for it, and transcribing the scores of each academic who answered the scale into paper forms specific to each scale, separately from each other, and then storing them in the computer for statistical processing, as the research results were processed automatically using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version (V28), to process the data by finding each of the following values:

- 1 .Percentage.
- 2 .Arithmetic mean.
- 3 .Standard deviation.
- 4 .One-sample t-test.

5 .Total scale score = Number of items in the scale × Highest weighted item alternative.

6. Total dimension score = Number of items in the selected dimension × Highest weighted item alternative.

Sum of alternative weights

7. Hypothetical mean = $\frac{\text{Sum of alternative weights}}{\text{Number of alternatives}} \times \text{Number of items.}$

Results

Table 2. shows the statistical of the psychological well-being scale for the academics sample compared to the scale hypothetical mean value

unit	items	total	hypothetical mean	mean	SD	Mean deference	(t)	(Sig)
degree	30	150	90	110.77	10.458	20.77	28.507	0.000

significant: (Sig) > (0.05) at a degree of freedom of (205), and a significance level of (0.05).

Table (2) shows that the mean of the psychological well-being scale for the academic sample is bigger than its hypothetical mean, and that this statistical difference for a (t-test) for a single sample between these two means was significant in favor of the arithmetic mean. For the purpose of accuracy and to avoid speculation in attributing the reasons for the appearance of this overall result for the scale, the researcher presents the results of each of its dimensions in detail in comparison with the hypothetical mean for each of them, as shown by the results of Table (3)

Table 3. shows the results of the psychological well-being scale dimensions for the academic sample compared to the hypothetical mean for each dimension

Scale dimension	items	Dimension degree	hypothetical mean	mean	SD	Mean deference	(t)	(Sig)	Order
Independence	5	25	15	17.33	2.433	2.33	13.772	0.000	fifth

Self-acceptance	5	25	15	22.19	1.595	7.19	64.688	0.000	first
Logical optimism	5	25	15	18.4	1.772	3.4	27.531	0.000	third
positive relationships	5	25	15	17.48	2.247	2.48	15.811	0.000	Forth
Adapting	5	25	15	15.91	2.17	0.91	6.004	0.000	Sixth
Maturity	5	25	15	19.47	1.029	4.47	62.264	0.000	Second

significant: (Sig) > (0.05) at degrees of freedom (205), significance level (0.05), unit of measurement (degrees)

Discussion

A review of the overall score results for the psychological well-being scale of the academic sample, as presented in Table (2) in the aforementioned presentation, reveals that psychological well-being demonstrated a level exceeding the hypothetical mean of the scale applied to the academic sample, indicating a higher probability of the arithmetic mean. However, a review of the results in Table (3) in the aforementioned presentation reveals a variation in the availability of each dimension of this measurement, again indicating a higher probability of the arithmetic mean. The researchers attribute the emergence of these results and the higher scores in the self-acceptance dimension to the fact that the academic sample consistently felt satisfied with themselves, possessing sound mental health qualities. They consistently felt at peace with themselves through their evaluation of their behavior in completing their university tasks. They consistently expressed confidence in their ability to fulfill the requirements of their duties within the university environment. They consistently felt they possessed love and tolerance to support their positive character traits. Furthermore, they sometimes felt desired and welcomed within the university environment. The results of adapting to the environment show that they are drawn towards the need to increase the level of changing their beliefs about their confidence in the decisions they make to raise the level of the reality of the university environment. They also need to link the pleasant experiences in the university environment, as well as increase their beliefs towards scientific organizational justice, and that achieving of goals comes with continuous effort in the university environment, so that they can face the stressful situations in the university environment with ease. They possess the personal maturity that supports their psychological health in feeling psychological well-being, which was supported by logical optimism, as they do not overdo unrealistic expectations with what they possess of capabilities that qualify them to continue their professional work and excel in it. They need to raise the level of independence by granting them more powers

and freedom of detail in their various executive tasks in practical and theoretical teaching and scientific research, as well as the tasks of the various committees whose work was assigned to them, and the continuous courses and their requirements. With these strengths and weaknesses, their results showed that they enjoy psychological well-being at a level that exceeded the hypothetical average of its scale, which is required for the academic in physical education and sports sciences.

"Psychological well-being is one of the most important indicators of an individual's mental health. It expresses their understanding of reality, and its theories are consistent with Aristotle's ideas on attaining psychological happiness, Maslow's concepts of self-actualization, Newgarten's processes of personality change in adulthood and old age, and Erikson's model of personal growth, which Reeve summarized as the result of healthy psychological responses to understanding life. It is achieved after an individual goes through many experiences and overcomes crises with emotional stability that embodies the strength of their personality." (Marhoon 2023, 152)

Considering that "an individual's self-esteem, self-awareness, self-evaluation and behavior, and awareness of his potential and capabilities, determine his future behavior." (Spring 2019, 19)

"The primary source of an individual's adaptation to a set of beliefs and behaviors is their acceptance of themselves, which leads them to psychological well-being in all of these events." (Mikulincer & Shaver 2015)

Psychological well-being is an emotional component of quality of life that includes acquiring positive experiences and absence of negative experiences, a positive self-assessment, engaging in meaningful activities, and maintaining an optimistic outlook on one's personal life and the world around them. It is also an indicator of an individual's mental health and success in their community (Orosova & Janovska 2016, 184).

Furthermore, "enhancing self-confidence and a sense of personal accomplishment can raise the level of psychological well-being and help in coping with stress more e "A good psychological state makes an individual more capable of transforming negative thoughts into positive ones, as they recall the pleasant events and emotions they experienced during their success in a particular endeavor." (Berter et al. 2016, p. 19) ffectively." (Lappan 2020, 21)

Psychological well-being refers to an individual's ability to identify their personal strengths and work to develop and enhance them by fully utilizing their energies, abilities, and potential. (Oprea & Van 2018, 2)

Furthermore, "positive psychology focused on developing and enhancing self-satisfaction, feelings of well-being, hope, optimism, and present and future happiness,

and its programs focused on developing subjective experiences by moving away from illusory thoughts.” (Al-Afoun 2025, 29)

Furthermore, "the availability of optimism is a healthy state that is selected for individuals who, by nature, are optimistic about the good deeds they perform in their surrounding environment and believe that what you do of good will be rewarded." (Al-Dhaheiri 2016, 2)

Furthermore, “psychological well-being indicates that feeling good doesn't just mean positive emotions like contentment and happiness, but also the presence of affection, trust, care, participation, and the ability to work effectively that is, the individual's ability to establish positive relationships with others, experience a sense of purpose in life, and utilize all their potential.” (Khoury, 2019, p. 17)

Moreover, “an individual's conviction in their opinions, their confidence in the development of their abilities over time, and their possession of good relationships with others grant them psychological well-being and harmony with themselves and others. Multiple role theories have confirmed that psychological well-being is achieved at high levels when multiple roles are played, especially among individuals with diverse or high levels of education, both men and women. These individuals possess a high capacity to manage their lives and environment effectively, have a greater purpose in life, and experience increased positive outcomes such as life satisfaction, happiness, and self-efficacy, while experiencing decreased negative outcomes such as depression, distress, and psychological symptoms. Moreover, increased participation in roles leads to higher positive self-esteem, a greater sense of personal growth, and a decrease in negative impacts for both genders.” (Viejo & Other 2018, 6)

"It is possible to promote positive behaviors and attitudes in the workplace to contribute to active and happy work performance, and to enhance individual success in this work by understanding the situations that individuals face, with the subsequent stages of this psychological diagnosis being the preparation of psychological development programs." (Peláez-Fernández & Other 2020, 2)

Conclusions

1. The Psychological Well-being Scale is suitable and appropriate for directly measuring this psychometric phenomenon among physical education and sports science academics members at the Universities of Baghdad and Mustansiriyyah.
2. Physical education and sports science academics members at the Universities of Baghdad and Mustansiriyyah possess the required level of psychological well-being.
3. Varying levels of psychological well-being are present among physical education and sports science academics members at the Universities of Baghdad and Mustansiriyyah, with self-acceptance being the most prominent and environmental adaptation the least.



Journal of Physical Education

Volume 38 –Special Issue– 2026 Open Access

P-ISSN: 2073-6452 , E-ISSN: 2707-5729

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Recommendations

1. The Iraqi Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research should focus on reducing the burden of additional courses and activities for physical education and sports science academics members at the Universities of Baghdad and Mustansiriyah, as these increase psychological stress and negatively impact their overall well-being.
2. It is essential to increase the frequency of psychological assessments of the well-being of physical education and sports science academics members at the Universities of Baghdad and Mustansiriyah, using a research-based scale.
3. Continuing education courses in the colleges and departments of physical education and sports science at the Universities of Baghdad and Mustansiriyah should incorporate psychological well-being programs, given their positive role in enhancing the self-efficacy of academics' members.



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Journal of Physical Education

Volume 38 –Special Issue– 2026 Open Access

P-ISSN: 2073-6452 , E-ISSN: 2707-5729

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