
Preface

This handbook culminates a multiyear project devoted to better understanding psychological well-being across the world's cultures and from the perspective of children and adolescents whose voices are often neglected in the research literature. The work represents the efforts of 30 research partners from across the globe who volunteered their time and energy to enhance our knowledge of children's psychological well-being. The project, *Promoting Psychological Well-Being Globally*, was initiated at an annual conference of the International School Psychology Association (ISPA) by a group of interested researchers and practitioners from different countries. Collectively, this group echoed the challenge posed by leading experts that we explore psychological constructs from an *emic* (insider) perspective rather than continuing to rely on the *etic* (outsider/expert) view of scholars who represent the views of 5 % of the world's population (Arnett, 2008). With this goal in mind, the group ventured into an ethnographic qualitative study of the domain of psychological well-being to develop culturally informed concepts and definitions. From a small group of school and educational psychologists who met at ISPA, the project grew to encompass partners from 14 sites in 12 countries. This group of 30 research partners engaged more than 800 children and adolescents through focus group discussions and individual depictions of stress and support within their social ecologies (using *ecomaps*). Although the study also included the perspectives of important socializing agents—parents, teachers, school administrators and support staff, other health/mental providers—this book represents primarily the voices of children and adolescents, voices that are seldom heard in scholarly literature. We hope this book not only informs the thinking of mental health professionals and educators but also illustrates a process for representing the voices of children and adolescents in our efforts to improve their lives.

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