



Managing the Development of Psychological Capital among Public Primary School Teachers from a Positive Psychology Perspective: An Integrative Review and Implications for Educational Management in Vietnam

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ABSTRACT: Public primary school teachers are increasingly expected to implement curriculum reform, support diverse learners, collaborate with families, and sustain students' socio-emotional development. These expectations require not only professional competence but also positive psychological resources that help teachers maintain motivation, adapt to change, recover from difficulty, and grow sustainably. This article provides an integrative review of literature on psychological capital, positive psychology, teacher well-being, school-based interventions, and positive school leadership. It synthesizes existing theory and evidence and adapts them into a practical management framework for developing psychological capital among public primary school teachers, with implications for educational management in Vietnam. The review draws on foundational works, recent reviews and empirical studies published mainly between 2020 and 2026, and Vietnamese policy documents. The integrative findings indicate that teachers' psychological capital, commonly conceptualized through hope, self-efficacy, resilience, and optimism, is a developable professional resource associated with well-being, adaptive capacity, burnout reduction, work meaning, and professional commitment. The article develops a five-dimension management framework: raising awareness, setting objectives and plans, organizing development activities, directing implementation, and monitoring and using evaluation results. It argues that school principals can transform psychological support for teachers from occasional encouragement into a systematic component of teacher development and school improvement.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Educational innovation has changed the meaning of teacher development. In many education systems, teachers are expected to design learner-centered lessons, use digital tools, assess competencies, support students' social and emotional development, and communicate effectively with parents and communities. These expectations are particularly demanding in public primary schools because teachers work with young learners at a stage when foundational knowledge, learning habits, emotional regulation, and social behavior are formed. In Vietnam, the reform of general education has placed the development of teachers and educational managers at the center of quality improvement. Resolution No. 29-NQ/TW identifies teacher and educational manager development as a key condition for fundamental and comprehensive educational reform, while the General Education Curriculum 2018 and recent professional standards emphasize competence-based education, continuous professional development, educational responsibility,

and adaptation to school requirements (Central Committee of the Communist Party of Vietnam, 2013; Ministry of Education and Training, 2018, 2026a).

Professional development, however, cannot be reduced to training in subject knowledge or teaching techniques. Teaching is psychologically demanding. Teachers face classroom diversity, parental expectations, administrative tasks, curriculum change, emotional labor, and pressure to improve learning outcomes. These demands may weaken motivation and increase stress, but they may also become opportunities for growth when teachers possess positive psychological resources and work in supportive environments. Recent reviews show that teacher well-being is associated with teacher retention, teacher-student relationships, student outcomes, and school functioning (Dreer, 2023; Gámez-Genovart et al., 2025; Ozturk et al., 2024). A meta-analysis further indicates that hope, autonomous motivation, psychological capital, and job competence are among the strongest positive predictors of teacher well-being (Zhou et al., 2024).

Positive psychology provides a useful lens for addressing this issue. Instead of focusing only on deficiency, pathology, or burnout, positive psychology examines the strengths and conditions that enable individuals and communities to flourish (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). In positive organizational behavior, psychological capital has become a key construct representing a positive psychological state of development characterized by hope, self-efficacy, resilience, and optimism (Luthans, 2002; Luthans et al., 2006; Luthans & Youssef-Morgan, 2017). These four capacities are relevant to teachers because they support goal-directed action, confidence in professional tasks, recovery from setbacks, and constructive interpretation of difficulties.

Although psychological capital has been widely discussed in organizational behavior, its application to school management remains underdeveloped. In many schools, support for teachers' psychological resources is informal, situational, or embedded in general encouragement, emulation activities, and professional training. Such support, while meaningful, is rarely organized as a systematic process with goals, plans, activities, leadership direction, and evaluation. This gap is important because psychological capital is not merely an individual attribute; it can be influenced by school culture, leadership, peer relationships, workload, feedback, and professional learning opportunities (Namrata, 2016; Nguyen Thi Ngoc Lien, 2025). This article therefore synthesizes relevant literature and adapts it into a practical framework for managing the development of psychological capital among public primary school teachers from a positive psychology perspective. It is an integrative review and does not present empirical data from a specific locality.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS: Integrative Review Approach

This article adopts an integrative review approach. Integrative reviews are appropriate when a topic requires the synthesis of theoretical, empirical, and policy-related literature in order to clarify concepts and construct a framework for future research and practice. Whittemore and Knafl (2005) note that integrative reviews may combine diverse sources and methodologies, provided that the review process is transparent and conceptually coherent. Accordingly, the present review was designed as a conceptual synthesis rather than a PRISMA-style systematic review.

The literature search and selection process focused on five bodies of literature: psychological capital, positive psychology, teacher well-being, teacher-focused positive psychology interventions, and educational leadership or management. Searches were conducted through Google Scholar, ERIC, publisher databases and journal platforms, and official Vietnamese legal and policy portals. Search terms included combinations of “psychological capital” AND teacher, “PsyCap” AND education, “teacher well-being” AND review, “positive psychology intervention” AND teacher, “teacher resilience,” “positive school leadership,” “PERMA-Lead,” and “educational management” AND teacher development. Vietnamese policy documents were identified through official government and Ministry of Education and Training portals.

The final corpus included 30 sources: foundational theoretical works on positive psychology, hope, self-efficacy, positive organizational behavior, and psychological capital; recent systematic reviews, meta-analyses, and scoping reviews on teacher well-being and interventions; empirical studies on teachers' psychological capital and positive school leadership; one methodological source on integrative reviews; one educational leadership source; and Vietnamese policy or context documents. Sources were included when they met at least one of four criteria: direct relevance to psychological capital or positive psychology; direct relevance to teacher well-being, resilience, or interventions; contribution to school leadership or educational management; or relevance to the Vietnamese policy context. Sources were excluded when they were not peer-reviewed, did not address teachers or educational organizations, duplicated findings already represented in stronger reviews, or were not directly useful for building the management framework.

The synthesis proceeded in three stages. First, key conceptual relationships were clarified. Psychological capital was treated as a specific, developable construct within positive organizational behavior; positive psychology was treated as the broader theoretical orientation; and teacher well-being was treated as a broader outcome that psychological capital development may support. Second, recent findings on teacher well-being, interventions, and positive leadership were synthesized. Third, the reviewed evidence was integrated with educational management functions to construct a framework for public primary schools. Because the article does not involve human participants, personal data, or field-based intervention, ethical approval and informed consent were not required.

Table 1. Search and selection strategy for the integrative review

Review element	Specification	Rationale	Outcome
Sources searched	Google Scholar; ERIC; publisher and journal platforms; official Vietnamese policy portals	To combine international scholarship with national policy context	Final source matrix constructed
Main terms	psychological capital AND teacher; teacher well-being AND review; positive psychology intervention AND teacher; positive school leadership; educational management AND teacher development	To cover PsyCap, well-being, interventions, leadership, and management	Relevant theoretical, empirical, and review sources identified
Inclusion focus	Peer-reviewed studies, reviews, meta-analyses, foundational books, and official policy documents	To support conceptual synthesis and practical framework construction	30 sources retained
Exclusion focus	Duplicative, weakly related, non-scholarly, or non-education sources	To keep the review focused and within journal limits	References limited to 30

3. INTEGRATIVE FINDINGS

3.1. Psychological capital as a positive professional resource for teachers

Psychological capital is commonly defined as a positive psychological state of development characterized by hope, efficacy, resilience, and optimism (Luthans et al., 2006; Luthans & Youssef-Morgan, 2017). Luthans (2002) located these capacities within positive organizational behavior, emphasizing psychological strengths that are measurable, developable, and related to performance. Avey et al. (2011) showed that psychological capital is positively associated with desirable employee attitudes, behaviors, and performance, while Newman et al. (2014) synthesized evidence on its implications for work outcomes and human resource development. Although these studies originated in organizational psychology, their logic is relevant to education because teaching requires agency, persistence, emotional regulation, and adaptive problem solving.

For teachers, hope is reflected in the ability to set meaningful professional goals, identify pathways to reach them, and maintain motivation when obstacles arise. Hope theory emphasizes both agency and pathways thinking (Snyder, 2002). A hopeful teacher does not simply expect a positive outcome; rather, the teacher can plan alternative instructional strategies, persist with struggling students, and maintain a future-oriented professional purpose. Self-efficacy refers to teachers' beliefs in their capability to organize and execute actions required to achieve educational outcomes. Bandura (2014) showed that efficacy beliefs influence motivation, persistence, and performance. In primary education, self-efficacy is visible when teachers believe that they can manage classrooms, support diverse learners, communicate with parents, and implement new pedagogical approaches.

Resilience refers to the capacity to recover, adapt, and grow after adversity or disruption. Namrata (2016) argue that teacher resilience is shaped by personal, relational, and organizational conditions. This view is important because resilience should not be treated as an individual burden. A resilient teacher is not simply a person who endures pressure alone; resilience develops through supportive leadership, collegial trust, constructive feedback, and opportunities to learn from difficulty. Optimism involves a constructive orientation toward present and future events. It helps teachers interpret professional challenges as manageable and temporary rather than permanent and uncontrollable.

Recent teacher-focused research confirms the relevance of psychological capital. Sun et al. (2022) found that teachers' psychological capital positively predicted workplace well-being and that work-meaning cognition mediated this relationship. Bertieaux et al. (2024), in a scoping review, concluded that the relationship between psychological capital and teacher well-being is a promising topic in educational sciences. Erden (2025) showed that teachers' psychological capital influenced quality of work life through emotions. Nguyen Thi Ngoc Lien (2025) further emphasized that a supportive working environment is important for developing teachers' psychological capital in Vietnam. These findings suggest that psychological capital should be viewed as both a developable professional resource and a legitimate concern for educational management.

3.2. Positive psychology and the expansion of teacher development

Positive psychology shifts the focus of teacher development from correcting weaknesses to cultivating strengths, meaning, engagement, and well-being. Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi (2000) argued that psychology should study not only pathology but also the qualities that enable individuals and communities to thrive. Fredrickson's (2001) broaden-and-build theory also suggests that positive emotions can broaden thought-action repertoires and build enduring resources. For teachers, this means that positive emotions, professional meaning, confidence, and supportive relationships contribute to adaptive teaching and sustainable engagement.

Traditional professional development often emphasizes curriculum knowledge, teaching methods, assessment techniques, and compliance with standards. These elements are necessary, but insufficient if teachers lack the psychological capacity to use

professional knowledge under pressure. A teacher may understand competency-based teaching but feel unable to implement it, may know how to collaborate with parents but feel discouraged by conflict, or may have pedagogical skills but lack resilience after repeated difficulties. Positive psychology therefore expands teacher development by including the internal resources that enable teachers to use their competence effectively.

The growing literature on teacher well-being supports this broader view. Dreer (2023) found that teacher well-being relates to multiple outcomes, including retention and teacher-student relationships. Ozturk et al. (2024), reviewing primary school teachers' well-being, argued that a holistic approach is needed because well-being is shaped by professional, emotional, relational, and contextual factors. Gámez-Genovart et al. (2025) showed that research on teacher well-being continues to expand and needs clearer links between conceptualization and practice. Positive psychology interventions provide a practical bridge between theory and school-based development. Vo and Allen (2022) reviewed school-based positive psychology interventions and emphasized context-sensitive and professionally facilitated implementation. Yeh and Barrington (2023) showed that sustainable positive psychology interventions can enhance primary teachers' emotional, relational, and work-related well-being. Wammerl and Lichtinger (2025) reported evidence from PERMA.teach, a structured positive education training program, indicating potential benefits for teacher well-being and positive school environments.

3.3. School leadership as a condition for psychological capital development

The development of teachers' psychological capital depends not only on individual effort but also on leadership and school conditions. Teachers' emotional well-being benefits from positive school leadership when leaders support meaning, engagement, relationships, and accomplishment (Goetz et al., 2024). From an educational management perspective, leadership is not only administrative control; it is the creation of conditions in which teachers can experience competence, trust, recognition, and professional growth.

A principal can support hope by helping teachers set achievable professional goals and by providing pathways for improvement. Self-efficacy can be strengthened through mentoring, lesson study, peer observation, mastery experiences, and constructive feedback. Resilience can be developed by building collegial support systems, reducing unnecessary administrative burdens, and treating difficulties as learning opportunities. Optimism can be cultivated when school leaders communicate a realistic but constructive vision and recognize progress during reform.

Intervention reviews also show that teacher well-being initiatives require organizational support. Beames et al. (2023) reviewed intervention programs targeting teacher mental health, burnout, and well-being and found variation in content and effectiveness. Avola et al. (2025) identified intervention characteristics and results in a scoping review and highlighted the need to reduce burnout while supporting teacher well-being. These findings imply that interventions are more likely to be sustainable when embedded in school routines, supported by leaders, and aligned with teachers' real work.

3.4. A management framework for developing teachers' psychological capital

The proposed framework draws on the management cycle commonly applied in school administration: raising awareness, planning, organizing, directing, and monitoring or evaluation. This cycle is consistent with broader educational management thinking, which treats leadership and management as processes of setting direction, organizing resources, supporting implementation, and improving practice (Bush, 2020). It is adapted here to the specific purpose of psychological capital development. The framework is not intended as a wholly new theory; rather, it translates existing evidence on psychological capital, positive psychology, teacher well-being, and positive leadership into a practical management structure suitable for public primary schools.

The first dimension is raising awareness. Teachers and administrators need to understand that hope, self-efficacy, resilience, and optimism are not abstract psychological labels but practical resources for teaching, collaboration, and adaptation. The second dimension is setting objectives and plans. Schools should define goals, target groups, activities, timelines, responsibilities, and expected outcomes rather than treating psychological support as a spontaneous activity. The third dimension is organizing development activities such as mentoring, peer coaching, professional learning communities, reflective practice, positive psychology workshops, and recognition of professional achievements. The fourth dimension is directing implementation through supportive leadership, constructive feedback, and positive communication. The fifth dimension is monitoring, evaluation, and use of results. Evaluation should help school leaders understand teachers' needs and adjust support accordingly, rather than functioning only as inspection.

Table 2. Proposed framework for managing teachers' psychological capital

Management dimension	Main managerial action	PsyCap component supported	Key supporting evidence
Awareness raising	Seminars, professional discussions, shared understanding of PsyCap	Hope, optimism	Luthans et al. (2006); Luthans & Youssef-Morgan (2017); Snyder (2002)

Planning	Goals, indicators, annual development plan, responsibility assignment	Hope, self-efficacy	Snyder (2002); Bandura (2014); Bush (2020)
Organizing activities	Mentoring, peer coaching, professional learning communities, positive psychology workshops	Self-efficacy, resilience	Vo & Allen (2022); Yeh & Barrington (2023); Namrata (2016)
Directing implementation	Supportive leadership, positive communication, coordination, recognition	Optimism, resilience	Goetz et al. (2024); Beames et al. (2023); Avola et al. (2025)
Monitoring and evaluation	Teacher feedback, reflection, surveys, and use of results for improvement	Hope, self-efficacy, resilience	Sun et al. (2022); Zhou et al. (2024); Nguyen Thi Ngoc Lien (2025)

4. DISCUSSION: Implications for Educational Management in Vietnam

The integrative findings have several implications for educational management in Vietnam. First, psychological capital should be recognized as a component of teacher development. Vietnamese school management has traditionally emphasized professional standards, teaching plans, classroom performance, training requirements, and compliance with administrative regulations. These elements remain important, but they should be complemented by attention to teachers' psychological resources. A teacher who has hope, self-efficacy, resilience, and optimism is more likely to engage constructively with reform, maintain commitment, and support students effectively.

Second, psychological capital development should be integrated into school-based management rather than treated as a separate psychological service. Many public primary schools may not have specialized mental health professionals for teachers. Nevertheless, principals and management teams can create supportive conditions through mentoring, collegial collaboration, meaningful feedback, workload balance, recognition, and participatory decision-making. The 2026 school charter provides an institutional basis for principals to organize educational activities, manage teachers, coordinate resources, and connect schools with families and communities (Ministry of Education and Training, 2026b). The 2026 professional standards also provide a basis for connecting teacher evaluation with development planning (Ministry of Education and Training, 2026a).

Third, the framework should be adapted to Vietnam-specific school realities. The implementation of the General Education Curriculum 2018 requires teachers to shift toward competency-based teaching, formative assessment, integrated educational activities, and closer school-family collaboration (Ministry of Education and Training, 2018). These shifts can increase pressure if teachers perceive reform as administrative demand only. They can strengthen psychological capital if principals translate reform requirements into shared goals, provide feasible pathways, and recognize teachers' progress. In this sense, hope and self-efficacy are not merely personal qualities; they are affected by how reforms are managed.

Fourth, existing Vietnamese practices such as emulation and commendation should be redesigned from a positive psychology perspective. If emulation is used mainly for ranking and formal reporting, it may create pressure or competition. If it is connected with meaningful recognition, peer learning, and evidence of professional growth, it can strengthen optimism, self-efficacy, and collective resilience. Similarly, professional learning communities should become vehicles for psychological capital development. Teachers' self-efficacy grows when they experience success and receive constructive feedback; hope grows when they see pathways to solve professional problems; resilience develops when they are not isolated; and optimism is strengthened when school culture encourages constructive interpretation of change.

Finally, evaluation should be developmental rather than punitive. If evaluation is used only for ranking, inspection, or administrative reporting, it may increase anxiety and reduce openness. If evaluation is linked to feedback, support, recognition, and professional growth plans, it can strengthen self-efficacy, hope, and resilience. Future research in Vietnam should empirically examine the proposed framework by measuring teachers' psychological capital, identifying school-level factors that influence it, and testing management interventions. Mixed-methods designs would be useful because quantitative surveys can describe levels and relationships, while interviews and observations can explain how leadership, school culture, and professional learning shape teachers' psychological resources.

5. CONCLUSION

This article has provided an integrative review of psychological capital, positive psychology, teacher well-being, school-based interventions, and positive school leadership. It clarified the relationship among three related concepts: positive psychology as a broad theoretical orientation, psychological capital as a specific developable resource consisting of hope, self-efficacy, resilience, and optimism, and teacher well-being as a broader outcome that psychological capital may support.

The main contribution of the article is the adaptation of existing theory and evidence into a five-dimension management framework for public primary schools. The framework includes raising awareness, setting objectives and plans, organizing development activities, directing implementation, and monitoring and using evaluation results. By linking psychological capital to school-based

management, the article suggests that teacher psychological support should move beyond occasional encouragement toward a structured component of teacher development and school improvement.

For Vietnam, the framework highlights the need to integrate teachers' psychological capital into professional development, teacher evaluation, positive school culture, curriculum reform implementation, and supportive leadership. Although this article does not report empirical data, it provides a theoretical and managerial basis for future studies and practical interventions in Vietnamese public primary schools.

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