



The Impact of Positive Thinking Skills Training on the Hope and Resilience of Female Primary School Teachers in Ramhormoz

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Abstract

Background: This study aims to investigate the impact of positive thinking training on the resilience and life expectancy of female primary school teachers in Ramhormoz city during the academic year 2019 - 2020.

Methods: In this study, 40 teachers were selected through simple random sampling from the mentioned community. A before-and-after study design with a control group was used. The study employed the Connor and Davidson (2003) Resilience Questionnaire and the Miller (1988) Hope Measuring Questionnaire. The intervention group (n = 20) and the control group (n = 20) were randomly assigned. Positive thinking training was conducted in eight 75-minute sessions for the intervention group. Hope and resilience were measured before and after the training using the Miller and Connor and Davidson Questionnaires.

Results: According to our analysis, the P-value for hope is 0.095 and the P-value for resilience is 0.078. At the 5% level of significance, there is no statistically significant difference between before and after training in teachers' hope and resilience. The coefficient of determination shows that the variance of the independent variable accounts for 94% of the variance in the dependent variable.

Conclusions: Positive thinking training did have positive effects on teachers' resilience and hope, but these effects were not statistically significant.

Keywords: Positive Thinking, Resilience, Hope, Ramhormoz

1. Background

Education plays a special role in nurturing and developing creative talent. Although society's culture also influences this institution, education significantly shapes society's intellectual and cultural trends (1). Consequently, schools require hardworking and motivated educators, as their efforts and motivation are crucial to achieving educational goals (2). Various conditions and contexts must be met for teachers to be effective. Resilient and hopeful teachers are more likely to commit fully to the classroom and the school's work. To ensure schools and teachers are effective, teachers must become familiar with the concepts of resilience and hope, understanding their importance and role in education. Teachers' knowledge in these areas must be improved (3).

Pessimism, depression, hopelessness, suicide, divorce, and delinquency are on the rise, along with

various other psychosocial problems, demonstrating that human societies have lost their sense of happiness (4). It may be beneficial in such circumstances to teach positive thinking skills to strengthen and improve positive communication and increase resilience and hope. People who are taught optimism and positive thinking are encouraged to recognize their positive features and promote their self-esteem (5). Psychologists have demonstrated that people can acquire the skills necessary to be optimistic and protect themselves from problems (6).

In evolutionary psychology, resilience occupies a special place (7). The concept of resilience was introduced by Masten as "the capacity of a dynamic system to adapt successfully." In fact, resilience can be defined as a positive response to adverse circumstances (8).

On the other hand, hope is a characteristic of life that motivates us to strive for improved conditions in the

future. The hope of success and a better future is the reason for prosperity. Hope is a powerful healing factor that plays an instrumental role in coping with loss (9).

Snyder, believes that hope is an active attribute consisting of having a goal, the ability to plan, the will to achieve the goal, and awareness of the obstacles standing in the way of achieving the goal, along with the ability to overcome them. Hope seems to be essential in every aspect of life (10). In the teaching profession, there are both internal and external sources of stress. The nature of a teacher's role, their level of preparation, and their competencies can contribute to internal sources of stress. Insufficient pre-service training may lead to low levels of qualifications (11). According to Betoret, the teaching profession is more likely to lead to burnout than any other profession (12). Teachers' ability to manage responses and reactions depends on their level of resilience (13).

An individual's resilience leads to greater life satisfaction by reducing negative emotions, enhancing mental health, and serving as a savior in dealing with adversity and problems. Stress and its psychological effects can be reduced as a result of resilience. The resilience of teachers is related to factors affecting their standard of living and professional growth (14). Nieto, found that what motivates teachers to continue their careers is fundamental to his study of the high school equity of American teachers. He described teaching as a mental activity involving love, anger, depression, and hope. The study also suggests that hope positively impacts happiness among students (15).

2. Objectives

The researchers in this study aim to answer the question of whether positive thinking skills are effective in increasing both resilience and hope in female primary school teachers in Ramhormoz.

3. Methods

The present study was a before-and-after study with a control group. Forty female primary school teachers participated in this study. Twenty participants were assigned to an intervention group, while 20 others were assigned to a control group. Training sessions were provided to the intervention group. Outcomes were evaluated before and after the training sessions in both the intervention and control groups. Statistical analysis was used to assess the differences between measurements taken before and after the training sessions in both groups. All participants gave written consent prior to participating.

Connor and Davidson's Resilience Questionnaire and Miller's Hope Questionnaire were employed in the study. In the Connor Resilience Questionnaire, 25 items are rated on a Likert scale from zero (completely incorrect) to four (completely correct). Mohammadi et al. standardized this scale in Iran (16). The validity of this tool was determined by first calculating the correlation between each item and the total score, followed by performing factor analysis. The KMO value was 0.87, and the chi-square value in the Bartlett test was 5556.28, indicating sufficient evidence for factor analysis. Cronbach's alpha coefficient was 0.83 in this study, representing the reliability of the questionnaire (17).

The questionnaires were used to assess the resilience and hope of participants in both groups prior to starting the training sessions. The training consisted of eight sessions, each lasting 60 minutes, spread over two months. The positive thinking curriculum included Seligman's positive psychotherapy model, which incorporates pleasure, commitment, and meaning. The content of the program was approved by two psychology and consultation professors (18).

During each session, the counselor presented the topic and purpose of the session for fifteen minutes. The skills were then demonstrated using examples. After that, the participants were divided into four groups of five and instructed to engage in various activities. Each session concluded with a homework assignment for the participants. A week following the final session, participants' resilience and hope were evaluated using the questionnaires.

The details of the training program were as follows:

First session:

- Objectives: Become familiar with the training goals, process, and rules.

- Description: Provide an overview of the goals of positive group therapy, explain the concept of positive group therapy, introduce the members, and discuss the significance of a lack of positive emotions in life. Include a discussion on the framework of positive psychotherapy, the role of the therapist, and the responsibilities of the participants.

Second session:

- Objectives: Build trust and solidarity among participants.

- Description: Engage members in a conversation about themselves and encourage them to express themselves in their roles as teachers. Participants discuss their positive thinking abilities and the situations in which these abilities have helped them in

the past. Discuss the three paths to happiness: Pleasure, commitment, and meaning.

Third session:

- Objectives: Analyze ideologies about the world and life, and reframe the problems of despair and resilience.

- Description: Encourage participants to express their feelings about their ideologies towards the world and discuss the development of specific abilities. Encourage them to form specific, objective, and achievable behaviors. Discuss the role of positive emotions in wellness.

Fourth session:

- Objectives: Understand how positivity plays a role in mental and behavioral health, explain the relationship between hope and resilience, and explain the positive impact resilience and hope have on one's life.

- Description: Encourage individuals to reflect on their experiences of hope and its impact on their lives, as well as their experiences of resilience. Discuss good and bad memories in relation to depression.

Fifth session:

- Objectives: Provide examples of resilience, hope, and positivity. Familiarize participants with the concept of hope and its importance in life.

- Description: Encourage members to engage in a group discussion about these patterns and their impact on life. Show examples of resilience and inspiration in films. Present the concept of forgiveness as a tool that can transform feelings of anger and bitterness into neutral or even positive emotions in some cases. Discuss good and bad memories in relation to gratitude.

Sixth session:

- Objectives: Understand the importance of the teacher's role as one of the most positive roles a person can take on.

- Description: Provide opportunities for members to express their feelings regarding the acceptance of responsibility. Analyze the relationship between irresponsibility, guilt, and frustration. Identify the role that resilience plays in fulfilling responsibility.

Seventh session:

- Objectives: Enjoy every day work and discuss feelings that arise from daily work.

- Description: Participants express their feelings about the meaning of life. Satisfaction is encouraged through commitment. The active-constructive response is discussed.

Eighth session:

- Objectives: Summarize the contents of previous meetings and get feedback from participants.

- Description: Review the contents and developments of previous meetings. Participants express their feelings and attitudes about the group therapy experience.

4. Results

Table 1 presents the mean and standard deviation of resilience and hope scores.

Table 1. The Mean and Standard Deviation of Resilience and Hope Scores in the Intervention and Control Groups^a

Variable and Statistical Indicators	Control Groups	Intervention Groups
Resilience		
Pre-exam	68.85 ± 10.214	66.35 ± 11.491
Post-test	93.48 ± 11.161	67.7 ± 10.33
Hope		
Pre-exam	130.26 ± 23.25	141.06 ± 22.32
Post-test	156.13 ± 14.57	140.33 ± 20.38

^a Values are expressed as mean ± standard deviation.

Table 2 indicates that the interactions between covariate variables (before the training) and the dependent variables (after the training) at operating levels (intervention and control groups) are not statistically significant. Therefore, the assumption of regression homogeneity is valid.

Hypothesis 1: Training in positive thinking skills positively affects the resilience and hope of female teachers.

Table 2. Test for Homogeneity of Regression Slopes Between Intervention and Control Groups

Post-tests	Total Squares	F	Average Squares	F	P
Resilience	4.21	2	2.7	0.043	0.78
Hope	20.27	2	11.62	0.275	0.92

As shown in Table 3, based on the results of the multivariate analysis of covariance (MANCOVA), we reject the null hypothesis (equivalence of resilience and hope scores across intervention and control groups). Therefore, hypothesis 1 is confirmed, and it can be argued that at least one of the dependent variables (resilience and hope) differs significantly between the two groups. Based on the calculated effect size, approximately 94% of the total variance between the intervention and control groups can be explained by the independent variable. The test's statistical power is 1, meaning it has 100% power to reject the null hypothesis.

Table 3. Results of Multivariate Analysis of Covariance on the Mean Scores of Resilience and Hope in the Intervention and Control Groups

Title of Exam	Amount	F	P	Effect Size	Statistical Power
Pilay effect	0.94	99.16	0.001	0.94	1.00
Wilks Lambda	0.06	99.16	0.001	0.94	1.00
Hotelling effect	16.61	99.16	0.001	0.94	1.00
The largest root on	16.61	99.16	0.001	0.94	1.00

Hypothesis 2: Positive thinking skills training has a positive effect on the resilience of female teachers.

Hypothesis 3: Positive thinking skills training has a positive effect on the hope of female teachers.

According to Table 4, the P-value of the MANCOVA test for the resilience score is 0.001, confirming hypothesis 2. Additionally, the P-value of the MANCOVA test for the hope score is 0.001, confirming hypothesis 3.

Table 4. Results of Multivariate Analysis of Covariance on the Mean Score of Resilience and the Mean Score of Hope in the Intervention and Control Groups

Dependent Variable	Total Squares	F	P	Effect Size	Statistical Power
Resilience	1435.96	174.54	0.001	0.80	0.798
Hope	8496.23	544.69	0.001	0.93	0.939

5. Discussion

The analysis of covariance showed that the resilience scores in the intervention group were significantly higher than those in the control group after the training. These results indicate that positive thinking skills training has increased the resilience of teachers in the intervention group. The findings of this research are consistent with the results of Sohrabi and Javanbakhsh (19), Mohebi Nooredinvand et al. (20), and Warelow and Edward (21).

The results of Levene's test indicate that there is no statistically significant difference in the variance of resilience scores between the intervention and control groups, as the level of significance ($P = 0.078$) is greater than 0.05. Moreover, the results of Levene's test indicated that, at the 5% level of significance ($P = 0.095$), there were no statistically significant differences in the variances of the hope scores between the intervention and control groups.

According to the results obtained in this study, people feel more valuable when they have a positive opinion of themselves, others, and their lives. Individuals trained in positive thinking skills have increased psychosocial capacity and are able to engage in adaptive and tolerant behavior by thinking and analyzing the situation. Positive thinking skills training is generally considered one of the behavioral interventions used to facilitate a person's adaptation to their environment and lead to satisfaction with their performance (19), which is at the root of public health

and mental health. Maintaining a person's health increases the likelihood of achieving desired results. According to Fredrickson and Branigan, optimism is one of the components of a resilient personality (22). A longitudinal study by Pukkeeree et al. (23) found a correlation between optimism and resilience across two measurements made one year apart. This study confirms the findings of Esmaili et al.'s research (24), which indicated the effectiveness of positive thinking skills training in improving resilience and quality of life. It is also consistent with Mohebi et al. (25) findings that teaching positive thinking improves teachers' attitudes and increases resilience towards students.

Additionally, the covariance analysis results showed that the hope scores in the intervention group were significantly higher than those in the control group after the training. Compared to the control group, positive thinking skills training increased the hope of teachers in the intervention group. This study's results are consistent with those of Khodayarifard et al. (26), Ebadi and Faqih (27), Naeimi et al. (28), and Waller (29). According to these studies, positive thinking skills training can reduce anxiety and increase teachers' optimism. Through these techniques, individuals can change their perspective on a problem and find a solution (30). Consequently, the sources of stress will be removed. It has also been discovered that optimism, hope, and health are significantly related. The level of optimism and hope is negatively associated with a person's current mental illness and, in particular, depression (31).

5.1. Conclusions

Teaching positive thinking skills can help individuals discover optimism and meaning within themselves, increase their hope, motivation, and overall health, and act responsibly in challenging situations (32).

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Footnotes

Authors' Contribution: Study concept and design: Hossein Raeisi; acquisition of data: Khadijeh Raeisi; analysis and interpretation of data: Hossein Raeisi; drafting of the manuscript: Hossein Raeisi; critical revision of the manuscript for important intellectual

content: Khadijeh Raeisi ; statistical analysis: Hossein Raeisi; administrative, technical, and material support: Khadijeh Raeisi; study supervision: Hossein Raeisi.

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