

## Extended Abstract

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## Research paper

### **The Effectiveness Of Positive Thinking Training On Academic Motivation And Academic Self-Efficacy Of Khoy City 12th-Grade Students During The Covid-19 Pandemic**

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## Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic necessitated widespread educational adaptations, including the closure of universities and schools, the implementation of social distancing measures, and the adoption of various virtual learning methods. These strategies were critical in mitigating disease transmission while ensuring the continuity of educational processes ([Dastani, 2020](#)). However, the pandemic also posed significant challenges for learners worldwide, disrupting their academic progress ([Ranjar Kouchaksaraei et al., 2021](#)). Academic motivation is a key factor in students' learning experiences, influenced by multiple elements and fluctuating across various educational contexts. Identifying the underlying causes of motivation and addressing factors that hinder it is essential for fostering student success ([Sheybani Far, 2021](#)). Furthermore, research has established academic self-efficacy as a fundamental determinant of educational achievement and transition to higher learning. Numerous elements contribute to enhancing students' motivation and self-efficacy, with evidence suggesting that positive thinking is among the effective approaches for mitigating psychological challenges in students ([Sadat and Vahedi, 2019](#)). Positive thinking involves cultivating an optimistic outlook, reframing negative perceptions, and adopting a balanced approach to evaluating events, ultimately fostering resilience and a constructive perspective ([Karimi Azari et al., 2021](#)). Various studies underscore the significance of positive thinking in promoting academic motivation and achievement ([Ebrahimi et al., 2021](#)). Adolescence represents a developmental stage marked by significant physical, psychological, and social changes, during which individuals encounter novel challenges requiring adaptive responses ([Tabrizi et al., 2021](#)). Consequently, integrating positive thinking training into adolescent education is crucial, equipping students with essential skills to navigate critical situations effectively.

## Method

This study employed a quasi-experimental pretest-posttest design with a follow-up phase, incorporating a control group. Initially, both the experimental and control groups underwent pretesting under identical conditions. Subsequently, the experimental group received positive thinking training based on [Quilliam's \(2008\)](#) over eight sessions, whereas the control group did not receive any intervention. Upon completion of the training, both groups participated in a post-test assessment. The study's target population comprised all twelfth-grade students in Khoy city (N=846) during the 1400-1401 academic year. Using purposive sampling, a total of 80 students were selected and evenly assigned to the control (n=40) and experimental (n=40) groups. Data collection instruments included Academic Motivation

Questionnaire ([Harter's, 1981](#)) and Academic Self-Efficacy Questionnaire ([Jinks and Morgan, 1999](#)).

## Results

The findings, as presented in the table below, indicate that positive thinking training significantly impacts the combined variables of academic motivation and self-efficacy ( $F=910.76$ ,  $P<0.001$ ). Additionally, the eta coefficient suggests that 49% of the variance observed between the experimental and control groups is attributable to the interaction of the dependent variables. Moreover, the interaction between the group and measurement stages exhibited a statistically significant effect on both academic motivation and self-efficacy ( $F=939.93$ ,  $P<0.01$ ). These results underscore the substantial influence of the intervention.

**Table 1. MANCOVA test results for between-group and interaction effects**

Effect	Index	Value	F	Hypothesis	Error	P	Eta	OP
Period	Wilks Lambda	0/252	76/910	4	310	0/001	<b>0/498</b>	1
Group*Period	Wilks Lambda	0/207	93/039	4	310	0/001	<b>0/546</b>	1

## Discussion and Conclusion

The results demonstrate that positive thinking training effectively enhances students' academic motivation and self-efficacy, aligning with prior research ([Omidi and Rasouli 2019](#)). This finding can be understood through the lens of [Deci and Ryan\(2008\)](#) self-determination theory, which posits that intrinsic motivation is driven by enjoyment. Given that positive thinking techniques emphasize deriving satisfaction from the learning process itself, mastering these skills fosters increased motivation in both academic and professional settings. Similarly, [Bagheri Charook et al.\(2019\)](#) found positive thinking to be a significant factor in strengthening academic self-efficacy. This observation can be contextualized within [Bandura's social cognitive theory\(1986\)](#), which underscores the reciprocal interactions among behavior, environmental influences, and individual cognitive, emotional, and biological factors. Bandura asserts that individuals' beliefs regarding their self-efficacy constitute a core aspect of their self-awareness. Thus, positive thinking training enhances cognitive and emotional resilience, which, when combined with behavioral and environmental interactions, contributes to heightened self-efficacy. Nonetheless, the study has some limitations. Given that data collection relied on self-reported questionnaires, response biases and unconscious distortions may have influenced the findings. Additionally, the study focused exclusively on twelfth-grade students, limiting the generalizability of the results to other educational levels. Furthermore, due to pandemic-related constraints, convenience sampling was employed, restricting the broader applicability of the conclusions. Future research should consider incorporating qualitative methods such as interviews and observations to validate findings across diverse student populations. Additionally, integrating positive thinking strategies into school curricula, especially during crises and remote learning conditions, may further support students' psychological well-being.

## Ethical Considerations

### Ethical Code

This research was approved by the Vice Chancellor for Research and Graduate Studies, Faculty of Humanities, Islamic Azad University, Khoy Branch.

### Financial Support

No financial support was received for this study.

### Authors Contributions

Azra Momeni: Conducted research, implemented training, performed statistical analysis, and authored the manuscript as part of her master's thesis. Dr. Ali Zeinali: Supervised the study and reviewed the manuscript.

### Conflicts of Interest

No conflicts of interest were reported

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