



## **A study on Effectiveness of positive thinking intervention on reduction of Students' mental health and its component during online classes at undergraduate level**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The purpose of the present study is to examine the effectiveness of positive-thinking skills on reduction of academic burnout, mental health and self-efficacy of undergraduate study of BSSS college, Bhopal Among the undergraduate students of BSSS College, two classes were selected through cluster sampling and by administering self-reported Questionnaire on 40 students who are divided into two groups as experimental and control groups (each group consists of 20 students). Positive-thinking teaching was executed for the experimental group for ten sessions, and the control group was on the expectation list. Data were analysed using analysis of descriptive statistics like mean and standard deviation. Findings indicate that teaching positive-thinking has been effective in the reduction of academic burnout, mental health and self-efficacy.

**Keywords:** Positive-Thinking, Academic Burnout, mental health and self-efficacy

### **Introduction**

Positive thinking is divided into three intertwined subdivisions: internal cognition, faith, and influential personal relationships. Internal Cognition: is a burning desire, or internal fire, that must be ignited from within for a person to be inspired, which in turn leads a person to act on

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a thought. The driven internal thought process leads to external action. Having a purpose which rules you and drives your thought process daily; your internal cognition, keeps you focused on a goal. With a goal comes purpose, which has gone into greater depth. Faith is plain and simple positive thinking based on a spiritual foundation. Positive thinkers have faith in the way the world works and also have faith that everything in life happens for a reason. Positive thinkers know they have a purpose and meaning on Earth, and they were put on Earth for a purpose. Positive thinkers know there is opportunity in every situation because there is purpose for every situation, which will help them get closer to their larger purpose in life. In that context, a positive thinker has trust in nature, the ticking of the world, or one's God, and they have been given a purpose that will help them achieve that purpose throughout life, without actually physically seeing evidence. Influential personal relationships can be divided into three subdivisions, which consist of a relationship with oneself, one's God, and one's family. "Close, supportive, committed relationships also mark happy lives (Myers 2000, p 330)." The relationship with oneself, with one's God, and with one's family shows a person that one has other people, or beings, helping one through life. People are not holding the weight of the world on their shoulders, but in fact, always have other to guide and support them. Positive relationships with meaningful people and beings help to give meaning and purpose to life (Kirkegaard-Weston, n.d.)

Positive thinking training is suggested to be used as an effective strategy for increasing the quality of life of parents with ill children (Sadeghloo et al., 2019), training in positive thinking skills be conducted as a regular program at associations and organizations, which support Multiple sclerosis (MS) patients to promote the levels of quality of life and emotion regulation among these patients (Nikmanesh & Mirkazehi, 2020). Another study examined the effectiveness of positive thinking training on self-efficacy and emotion regulation in men with hemophilia (Beiranvand et al., 2019). One study concluded that there is difference in anxiety levels in experimental group before and after treatment. After getting positive thinking treatment, the anxiety of students was seen to be lower than before (Machmudati & Rachmy Diana, 2017). Self-assertiveness is the ability to stand up for " "one's rights and express " "one's thoughts, feelings, and beliefs in an appropriate and direct manner. Adolescence is an important time to establish the social position of individuals. The effect of positive thinking showed that optimism is an essential factor in coping with difficult life events and assisting teenagers to deal with their negative thoughts and promoting their self-assertiveness (Hamidi et al., 2020). According to the results of a study, positive thinking training can increase psychological well-being and Quality of Life (QOL) in the elderly (Safari & Akbari, 2018). Regarding acceptability, Counseling and Guidance indicated that the different strategies and references to real life were the most interesting parts of the intervention. (Bekhet, 2017).

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Mental health and mental illness are often given a low priority, despite growing evidence of the burden of disease and costs to the economy. Improving mental health and reducing mental illness will improve quality of life, public health and productivity, the education of positive thinking can decrease the mental ill-health and increase positive thinking. In primary health care there is some evidence that preventive interventions with groups at high risk of psychological diseases symptom can prevent episodes of ill-health (Chinaveh & Tabatabaee, 2017) and positive thinking skills training on student's happiness (Mohammadi & Bani Adam, 2013). The increased use of the internet, especially for social networking activities has brought new risks and negative impacts on their academic performance. Academic self-efficacy was discovered to be a significant factor in determining a student's academic performance (Adeniyi et al., 2016). Self-Efficacy and self-regulated learning greatly influenced the students' academic performance, proving that there is a positive correlation between self-efficacy, self-regulation and learning achievement. It has also proved that students with high self-efficacy are better prepared to choose tasks that are hard and challenging to comprehend (Agustiani et al., 2016). Self-Efficacy also determines the subject-wise relationship like Mathematics and English (Dullas, 2010). Self-Efficacy reduces speaking anxiety and provides a supportive learning environment which will help create a well and stress-reduced environment for learning (Kyong-hyon Pyo, 2018). Social persuasion and emotional arousal are a source of self-efficacy and improve the student's performance in every era (Loo & Choy, 2013). Problem solving and self-efficacy was a predictor of student motivation and performance (Ramos Salazar & Hayward, 2018). Self-Efficacy positively predicts language proficiency and achievement (Wang et al., 2018). After going through the literature the importance of the area was realised and the need for more research was felt. The present paper is an attempt in this direction

### **Method and Measures**

The method of this research is an experiment with a scheme of pretest-posttest with a control group. The statistical population of the present research includes all first year undergraduates of BSSS college in the academic year 2020-2021. Sampling method is cluster sampling. A self-reported questionnaire was administered. 40 individuals were selected randomly, and were divided randomly into experimental and control groups (the number of subjects in each group was 20). The experimental group was trained for 10 sessions 2 hour per session for positive thinking teachings, while no intervention was given to the control group. After the teaching, a post-test was administered for both groups.

The self-reported questionnaire included ten items and two factors on 5-point Likert scale. The Cronbach alpha for the questionnaire was calculated as 0.78 for the whole test.

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## Result and Findings

Group wise statistical description of variables and indices was collected. The means and standard deviation on academic burnout and its component is given in table 1.

**Table 1: Descriptive information of the level of academic burnout and its component based on separate stage of measuring in groups**

Variables	Groups		Number	Mean	SD
Academic burnout	Experimental Group	Pre-Test	20	35.50	7.95
		Post-Test	20	26.40	6.79
	Control Group	Pre-Test	20	28	6
		Post-Test	20	30	7
Academic Mental Health	Experimental Group	Pre-Test	20	12	3
		Post-Test	20	14	4
	Control Group	Pre-Test	20	11	7
		Post-Test	20	12	3
Academic self-efficacy	Experimental Group	Pre-Test	20	5	2
		Post-Test	20	7	2
	Control Group	Pre-Test	20	5	2
		Post-Test	20	6	2

Descriptive information of the rate of academic burnout and its components has been presented in table 1 separately as pre-test and post-test in experimental and control groups. As we can see, the mean scores of experimental group at post-test is less than the mean scores of pre-test in all components of academic burnout. Therefore, it can be concluded that the use of teaching the positive thinking to participants in experimental group has had beneficial effects on students’ academic burnout, mental health and self-efficacy.

## Discussion and Conclusion

The purpose of the present study has been to examine the effectiveness of positive-thinking skills on the reduction of students’ academic burnout, mental health and self-efficacy. Findings show that teaching positive thinking has been effective in the reduction of students’ academic burnout, mental health and self-efficacy.

Due to the negative surroundings students are more affected by negative thinking. They become close to targets with negative emotions, have dual sensation, and instead of success, focus on failure. Since the present research showed that teaching positive thinking is effective in the reduction of academic burnout and its component, so it is recommended that therapists and school consultants utilize these teachings (pieces of training) to reduce students’ academic burnout, mental health and self-efficacy. As the studied population of the present

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research were undergraduate students, so it is suggested the future researchers conduct a similar study on post-graduate students in order for the results can be generalized.

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