



*Research Paper*

## Designing a School-Based Positive Educational Package and its effectiveness on subjective well-being Sixth Grade Elementary Students

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### Abstract

**Aim:** The purpose of this study was to develop a school-based positive education package and its effectiveness on subjective well-being of sixth grade elementary students. The research method was qualitative-quantitative. First, with the descriptive-analytical method and mixed synthesis research approach, the content validity index for the whole educational package was 0.86, which indicates the appropriate face and content validity. Then, two classes (n= 59) of sixth grade male elementary school students in District 1 of Tehran were selected in a multi-stage random manner and randomly assigned to the experimental group (n= 28) and the control group (n= 30). The quantitative method was quasi-experimental with a pre-test-post-test design with a control group using the Renshaw Subjective Well-Being Questionnaire (2014). The results of analysis of covariance showed that the scores of subjective well-being in the experimental group were higher than the control group. Therefore, positive school-based education has a positive effect on students' subjective well-being ( $P < 0.001$ ).

**Keywords:** Educational package, positive education, school-based, subjective well-being, elementary students.

## **Introduction**

The purpose of this study was to develop a school-based positive education package and determine its effectiveness on the subjective well-being of sixth grade elementary students. The school environment is composed of cognitive, physical and social environment (Marsh, 2004), but current schools pay more attention to the environmental and sometimes physical aspects. One of the problems of schools, along with their other problems, is their industrial form and structure, their mechanical attitude towards students, their indifference to personal experience, and their emphasis on the usefulness of tools and things out of reach. Providing a suitable educational environment for children requires the development of practical and useful educational programs (Mehrmohammadi, et al, 2010).

The traditional education approach seeks to create a single environment and look at individual education, while modern education is trying to build a broad environment and social education of knowledge learners (Fetsco, et al, 2005).

Positive psychology approach by changing the paradigm of schools from a traditional perspective that deals with academic problems such as interpersonal problems, dropouts and dropouts; Pays attention to newer attitudes and attention to positive behavioral potentials of students including abilities, human virtues, happiness, moral qualities, behavior and positive thoughts (Shoshani, et al, 2016; Shankland, et al, 2017; Seligman, et al, 2006). The effectiveness of positive psychology interventions has been confirmed in various researches (Badri, et al, 2019; Shoshani, et al, 2017; Dokri, et al, 2014; Waters, 2011).

Positive school-based education includes evidence-based programs that improve students' well-being and school-level mental health (Matthew, et al, 2015; Ferguson, 2018; Blake, 2019; White, et al, 2018; Robinson, 2020).

The three main hypotheses in this study are: 1. A school-based positive education package can be designed for sixth grade elementary students. 2- The designed training package has a suitable validity for implementation. 3- The educational package has a significant effect on students' subjective well-being.

## **Methodology**

The research questions are: 1. Can a school-based positive education training package be designed for sixth grade elementary students? 2- Is the designed training package suitable for implementation? 2- Does the educational package have a significant effect on students' mental well-being?

First, to explain the conceptual framework of empowerment based on positive school-based education and also to design and develop an educational package, a descriptive-analytical method with a synthetic

research approach of mixed synthesis research was used. After reviewing and modifying the program, it was designed and compiled and in order to validate it, the face and content validity method was used. In face validity, semi-structured interviews with subject matter experts were used. In order to determine the content validity ratio (CVR) of the educational package, the Lawshe method was used to convert qualitative judgment into quantity by 14 experts. In determining the effectiveness depending on mental well-being, the present study was a quasi-experimental study with a pretest-posttest design with a control group. The statistical population was the sixth grade elementary school students in District 1 of Tehran in the academic year of 2019-2020. The sample size consisted of 50 people (28 experimental group and 31 control group) who were selected by multi-stage random sampling. First, one of the 22 districts of Tehran was selected as an education district, and then, from the list of boys' primary schools, two schools were selected.

The research tool was the Student Mental Well-Being Questionnaire (SSWQ), which was developed by Renshaw in 2014 and has 16 items. The validity coefficient of this tool by the developers using Cronbach's alpha method for the whole test is 0.86 and each of the subscales includes: communication with the school 0.72, enjoyment of learning 0.74, educational goals 0.72 and academic efficiency 0.78 was obtained (Renshaw, et al, 2014).

## Results

The research findings based on different stages of synthesis are presented as follows. First, to identify first-hand sources, articles, books, and related documents, limited to the past three decades, were collected using databases and written resource storage centers. Finally, the main themes of the training package and the time required for teaching are derived from written sources such as the Gilant Garmar model of schools (Norrish, et al, 2011), positivism and positivism (Quilliam, 2003; Baratisedeh, et al, 2011), Positive psychology techniques (Magyar-Moei, 2009) and internal and external articles and research projects. The overall content validity index was estimated to be 0.86.

In the quantitative part, the collected data were analyzed by SPSS software version 21 using statistical tests. To test the research hypothesis (school-based positive education training package affects the levels of mental well-being including relationship with school, enjoyment of learning, educational goals and academic effectiveness), first the hypotheses of parametric statistics and analysis of covariance were examined. Due to the observance

of the basic assumptions of analysis of covariance, including the homogeneity of regression slopes and the homogeneity of interactive effects, multivariate analysis of covariance (MANCOVA) and univariate analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) were used to test the research hypothesis.

To investigate whether the school-based positive education model has a significant effect on the combination of school communication scores, learning pleasure, educational goals and academic efficiency in elementary students or not, Hotelling T statistic ( $p < 0.001$ ,  $F = 31.29$ ,  $T_{Hotelling} = 3.19$ ) showed that there is a significant difference between the groups in relation to school, learning pleasure, educational goals and academic efficiency.

**Table 1.** The results of univariate analysis of covariance to investigate the effect of school-based positive education package on school relationship, learning pleasure, educational goals and academic effectiveness

Variable	Sources Change	Total squares	Degrees of freedom	Average squares	F	The significance level	ETA coefficient	Test power
school relationship	Meth	65.16 56.45	1 53	65.16 3.29	19. 78	0.0001	0.27	0.99
	Error							
learning pleasure	Meth	56.45 96.15	1 53	56.45 1.81	31. 11	0.0001	0.37	1
	Error							
educational goals	Meth	46.77 2.48	1 53	46.77 2.48	18. 81	0.0001	0.26	0.98
	Error							
academic effectiveness	Meth	20.12 100.26	1 53	20.12 1.89	10. 63	0.002	0.16	0.89
	Error							

The results in Table 1 show that the school-based positive education package focuses on relationship with the school ( $P < 0.0001$ ,  $F = 19.78$ ), learning pleasure ( $P < 0.0001$ ,  $F = 31.11$ ), educational goals ( $P < 0.0001$ ,  $F = 18.81$ ) and academic efficiency ( $P < 0.002$ ,  $F = 10.63$ ) have a significant effect. So the answer to the research question is yes. The results also show that positive school-based education can explain %27 of changes in school communication, %37 of changes in learning pleasure, %26 of changes in educational goals, and %16 of changes in academic efficiency.

## Discussion and conclusion

Extracted themes, self-awareness, cognition of thoughts, feelings and behavior; Self-confidence, optimism and self-esteem; Thinking positive; The importance of emotions and positive thoughts in education; Resilience and problem-solving methods; Hope, appreciation and gratitude; Purposefulness and having meaning in life; Empathy and forgiveness; Social responsibility and positive interpersonal communication; Cultivation of moral values, secretarial abilities and immersion. The results showed that the school-based positive education package has a positive and significant effect on students' mental well-being. The variables of degree, gender and geographical location have been controlled in this study, so care should be taken in generalizing the results.

Considering the validity of the positive education package, it is suggested that school counselors, while paying attention to students' psychological issues, also take action to recognize their psychological abilities. It is better to teach the concepts of positive psychology to both students and parents.

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