Role of Applied Components of Positive Psychology on Teachers' Mental Health and Students' Academic Achievement from the Perspective of School Principals

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ABSTRACT

Aims Positive psychology is a new psychology branch that focuses on positive traits leading to freshness, greater concentration, and individuals' satisfaction. This study aimed to extract positivist psychology components and assess the effect of positivist content and theme on school education and improve teachers' and students' psychological capital.

Materials & Methods In this hybrid (qualitative-quantitative) research, the first positivist components and themes were extracted from Seligman's point of view using open coding, axial coding, selective coding steps, and a network of positive themes were drawn. Then, to assess the effect of positive psychological components and themes on teachers' competencies and their mental health and students' personal and academic abilities, the opinions of 80 high school principals in Isfahan were evaluated using a researcher-made questionnaire. Data were analyzed by comparison of means and sample t-test using SPSS 19 software.

Findings 104 basic and five organizing themes were extracted from the texts of the Positive Psychology book written by Seligman; positive emotion empowerment, fascination (flow), positive relationships, meaning (goal), and achievement (success). Also, from the perspective of principals, positivist components and themes had a positive and above-average effect on improving teachers' positive mental characteristics, teachers' mental health and efficiency, teachers' organizational behavior and interactions, and improving teachers' abilities and students' overall progress ($p<0.0001$).

Conclusion ducational-counseling intervention programs to increase social support can increase women's adjustment after divorce. Positive psychology has practical and useful components and themes to enhance teachers' abilities and mental health and can be taught by teachers in various curricula.

Keywords Positive Psychology; Thematic Analysis; Mental Health; School Teachers; Achievement

CITATION LINKS

[1] The effectiveness of positivism training on the enhancement of hope with emphasis ... [2] Positivity pays off: Clients' perspectives on positive compared with traditional ... [3] The role of positive psychology in improving employees' performance and organizational ... [4] The effects of positive group intervention on school ... [5] Flourish: A visionary new understanding ... [6] Authentic happiness: Using the new positive psychology to realize your ... [7] Toward a focus on positive psychology in school ... [8] Subjective well-being: The science of happiness and a proposal ... [9] Positive psychology: An ... [10] Positive psychology interventions: A meta-analysis ... [11] Positive psychology at school: A school-based ... [12] The components of positive psychology in the stories ... [13] Exploring the intellectual structure of positive ... [14] Designing a management model for networking ... [15] Using thematic analysis in ... [16] Thematic networks: An analytic tool for ... [17] Learned optimism: How to change your mind ... [18] What you can change and what you ... [19] Learned optimism: how to change your ... [20] Learned helplessness theory and positive ... [21] Character strengths and virtues: A handbook ...

Introduction

Positive psychology is one of the newest psychology branches that focuses on the human success [1]. Positive psychology studies and examines things that contribute to the growth and development of individuals and communities and individuals' optimal functioning [2]. The importance of positive psychology and its practical implications dates back to the late 1990s. Although Abraham Maslow in 1951 emphasized positive psychological concepts such as well-being and how to improve one's mental state, Martin Seligman, as the father of positivist psychology, eventually succeeded in bringing together researchers, philosophers, and scientists' thoughts of the past and linked them together. Seligman stated that people's satisfaction has three aspects: a pleasant life, a good life, and a meaningful life [3]. There seem to be three aspects to life satisfaction in different spaces and places, and since school after the home is the most important place where students live and play an important role in shaping the values, norms, and social opportunities of individuals, as well as agreement. It is generally believed that schools are large social environments where the highest student learning rate occurs [4] and that positivity should be considered in schools. Seligman states that well-being, which is the goal of positive psychology, should be taught in schools if possible because it is a way to increase life satisfaction and help with better learning and creative thinking [5]. Therefore, to teach positive psychology in schools and improve teachers' mental health, its texts and content should be carefully reviewed and analyzed. What is useful for educating students and teachers emphasizes the positive aspect of their thinking and behavior and leads to skills development adaptation. Happiness, optimism, self-confidence, personal and organizational knowledge, and such positive characteristics can be extracted from human resources and teachers.

For example, the concept of "optimism" that entered the field of psychology with Seligman's research and his theory of learned helplessness, or the concept of prosperity that was introduced in Seligman's research as the goal of positive psychology and his new understanding of happiness and well-being, were introduced before by Seligman in the Original Happiness book in 2002. Happiness can be divided into three elements: positive emotion, fascination, and meaning, Seligman wrote. Nevertheless, his theory changed over time, and human beings' well-being and prosperity were introduced and added to his previous theories. The concept of inner happiness was also introduced as another component of positivist psychology, derived from Seligman's original happiness theory. New research shows that a steady increase in happiness is possible, and this new movement, Positive Psychology, shows people how to live their lives to the highest level of happiness possible.

Other concepts of positivist psychology have been more or less introduced, studied, or taught by researchers; However, it seems that in schools, these very valuable concepts that can lead to the discovery of talents, abilities, and virtues in human society and schools among teachers and students, do not receive much attention and teachers are not familiar with them and have not been able to improve mental health and promote Use their career and transfer it for their student's academic progress. Even Seligman states that positivism teachings in schools are designed to 1- help students recognize their unique personality strengths and 2- increase their use of these strengths in their daily lives [5]. However, this issue has not been fully introduced and studied in Iranian schools, and especially principals in education have not been able to use all the components of positive psychology and use them to improve the mental health of teachers and students; For example, schools (principals and executives) do not pay attention to personal characteristics, strengths, and virtues of teachers and students, lack of training to overcome stress and stress, lower expectations from others, literacy and self-control, positive direction and hope are some of the cases, which should be considered. Summary: What students face in school now and in the future and what teachers need to improve their mental, practical, and situational well-being and mental health is not available.

Many pieces of research have been done in the field of positivism and positivism education but in terms of the subject and discussion of the present article, i.e., the content analysis of positivist psychology textbooks written by Seligman, extracting and drawing a network of positivist themes, identifying the priority components of positivist psychology in providing peace of mind and mental health. No background was found on the transfer of students' mental health and all-around progress, especially their academic achievement.

Huebner and Gilman in 2003 analyzed the content of approximately 100,000 abstracts published in the field of psychology since 1887 in special issues of the American Journal of Psychology (January 2000, March 2001), Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology (Spring 2000), American Journal of Mental Retardation (September 2000) as well as specialized journals such as Social Index Research and the Journal of Happiness Studies. In this analysis, approximately 90% of psychology-related summaries (e.g., anxiety and depression) were reviewed, while the remaining articles were devoted to positive aspects of mental health (such as courage, life satisfaction, and altruism) [6, 7]. The results of this study, which analyzed the views of researchers who were increasingly involved in the study of constructive human traits such as self-

control, hope, and life satisfaction [8-10], showed that although some experts have recognized the potential contribution, the conceptualization of positive psychology in school psychology, research findings and implications for school-age children have remained largely inconclusive; If the practical applications of positive psychology can be used to promote the emotional well-being of children and adolescents and the importance of understanding the interaction between children and adolescents and their various environmental contexts can be emphasized.

In a 2013 paper reviewing the effectiveness of positive psychological interventions for the general public and individuals with specific mental health problems, Boller *et al*. Described the literature of 40 articles using manual analysis. In these articles, there were a total of 6139 participants for whom positive psychological interventions were performed. These interventions that can be considered a complementary strategy in promoting and treating mental health included self-help interventions, group training, and individual therapy [11]. The results of this meta-analysis showed that positive psychological interventions could be effective in enhancing mental well-being and psychological well-being as well as reducing depressive symptoms. High-quality studies in diverse (clinical) populations are needed to strengthen the basic evidence for positivist psychological interventions. In 2019, Kor *et al*. examined the impact of positive personal traits on improving employee performance and organizational productivity. Unlike traditional psychology, which seeks to treat mental illness, this study identified three positive traits, including optimism, well-being, personal strength, and a "process" and a "framework" that reflected the relationships between positive psychological traits and employee performance, and organizational productivity was obtained. The framework of the hypotheses was drawn. Data collected from the organization's employees showed that positive psychological concepts and positive personality traits such as optimism, well-being, and personal strength in the workplace increase employee performance and organizational productivity [3].

In a 2014 study by Shoshani and Steinmetz to increase the mental health and empowerment of all teaching staff and students at a middle school, 537 seventh- to ninth-grade students who participated in a one-year intervention program were compared to 501 students at the Demographic Control School. In this recurrent measurement plan, which was implemented over two years, changes before and after the test in psychological symptoms and distress and targeted well-being factors were examined. The results showed that general anxiety, anxiety, and depressive symptoms were reduced among the participants. Instead, the intervention boosted self-esteem, self-efficacy, and optimism and reduced interpersonal sensitivity symptoms. The results also showed the potential benefits of positive psychological interventions to promote school children's mental health and pointed to the basic need for welfare education as part of the school curriculum [11]. According to Asfenia *et al*., The components of positive psychology in the stories of the spiritual Masnavi are so numerous and numerous that not all of them can be introduced in a short article. Therefore only four of them have been selected as the most important and comprehensive components: Hope and optimism are optimism and positive thinking, gratitude, and meaning in life. This study showed that meditation and semantics in the stories of Masnavi Manavi cause the flourishing and development of inner abilities and the acquisition of virtues in adolescents. In this article, an attempt was made to show that extracting the components of positive psychology from the heart of Masnavi stories and using them in educating adolescents can be very effective in their growth and dynamism and building their social personality. Values and norms such as hope, positive thinking, meaning in life, gratitude, etc., shape adolescents' personality as future members of society and make their personality strong; therefore, it will be effective in shaping the personality and correct and principled education of adolescence [12].

In a study aimed at discovering the internal structure of positive psychological studies, Momeni *et al*. Used scientometric techniques, particularly the co-theological method of lexical analysis, to discover the internal structure and thematic relationships of positive psychological studies. For this purpose, 1086 articles in positive psychology indexed in the Scopus database were reviewed from 2000 to 2012. The extraction of thematically related words from the titles, abstracts, and keywords of articles and applying text mining and root-finding methods were performed using an omnipotent matrix with dimensions of 43×43. This study showed that among the seven optimal clusters produced, cluster 2 with ten words and cluster 4 with nine words are known as the main clusters, and cluster 5 has the highest number of main topics among the selected concepts, which shows in the internal structure. Positive psychology is related to the concepts of power and positive psychology, person, structure, adults with the concepts of support and role, hope, optimization, emotions, education, development, change, and impact [13].

The present study aimed to extract useful and practical themes and components of positive psychology from the text and content of Seligman's books to be taught and used in school and evaluate the effectiveness of these components from principals' perspectives.

Materials and Methods

Considering that in this study, the situational framework of analyzing positivist themes and extracting the applied components of positivist psychology was considered; first, the desired components and themes were extracted from Seligman's positivist texts and books and then the school principals' views on priority, importance, and The superiority of the extracted positivist themes and components regarding the mental health needs of principals and teachers was discussed. Therefore, this research method was a qualitative-quantitative case study, so that in addition to the case study of subject analysis as the main method and analysis of the network of themes to organize and display research, the views of school principals were assessed using a questionnaire.

Content analysis can be well used to identify patterns in qualitative data. Content format analysis and theme network analysis are also commonly used tools in content analysis [14]. Using the method of content analysis and forming a network of themes [15, 16], after counting the basic, organizing, and comprehensive themes, the relationship between the themes in the form of a network of themes was shown. Texts and concepts of the books "Positive Psychological Inner Happiness in the Service of Lasting Pleasure" [6], "Learned Optimism: How to Change Your Mindset and Life" [17], "What You Can and Can Not Change" [18], "The Prosperity of Positive Psychology (A New Understanding of the Theory of Happiness and Welfare)" [5], "From Pessimism to Optimism: How to Transform Our Minds and Lives" [19], "Learned Theory of Helplessness and Positive Psychology" [20] And "Virtues and Capabilities of Personality (Handbook and Classification)" [21], were considered as research search resources for content and theme analysis.

First, to manually search for topics, the text of all the books was typed in Word software, and then using NVivo10 software, the initial coding (open coding) was done, then the data, i.e., the same sentences that contained the code, were categorized as axial coding. The codes collected during open coding were 481 codes, of which 385 codes were significant. In the axial coding stage, 104 codes were considered the axis, and the rest of the codes were merged or modified with similar codes. Then, from the main themes, the main codes were selected (optional coding), and a network of themes was drawn for teachers to use in teaching.

A structured questionnaire was designed and provided to assess school principals' views on the usefulness and effectiveness of the extracted components and themes of positive psychology in teachers' mental health and its teachability in school and then transfer positive concepts and components to students. Experienced principals of secondary schools in Isfahan in 2009-2010 were selected by simple random sampling.

Four questions were asked in plain language in the survey: 1) Many of the positive intellectual characteristics of teachers are influenced by the components and themes of positive psychology; 2) positive themes may affect the mental health and performance of teachers. 3) Organizational behavior and teacher interactions are influenced by positivist components and themes, and 4) Positive content, components, and themes develop teachers' competencies and students' personal and academic competencies. These questions are based on a five-point Likert scale; "Very Low" (score 1), "Low" (score 2), "Somewhat" (score 3), "High" (score 4), and "Very High" (score 5). It should be noted that all expressions were designed for spectrum, and there were no negative expressions in them. Also, the questionnaire's reliability was assessed using Cronbach's alpha coefficient, which was equal to 0.912. Content validity (CVR) of each item of the questionnaire was reviewed by psychologists and senior managers of the educational organization, which they approved.

The obtained data were analyzed using a one-sample t-test using SPSS 19 software.
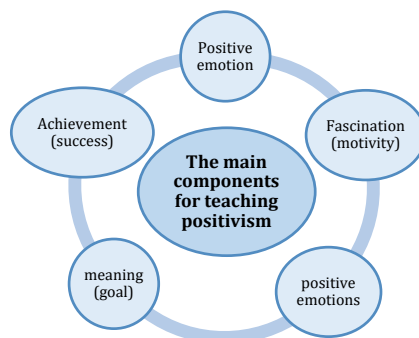
Findings

Finally, 104 basic and five organizing themes, including empowerment of positive emotion, fascination (flow), positive relationships, meaning (goal), and achievement (success), were extracted from the texts of positive psychology books written by Seligman (Table 1).

In continue, Seligman's main components for student positivity, which were positive emotions, positive relationships, meaning (goal), and achievement (success), and the basic themes and themes of Seligman's positivist psychology texts, were modeled using NVivo10 software (Figures 1 and 2).

The role of the extracted components and themes was evaluated positively from the perspective of school principals; From the perspective of principals, educational components, and themes of positive psychology had a positive and above-average effect on improving the positive intellectual characteristics of teachers (with emphasis on components of productivity, self-esteem and anger control), mental health and efficiency of teachers, organizational behavior and teacher interactions (emphasizing the themes of empathy, positive and constructive interactions, trust and self-efficacy) and improving the personal abilities of teachers and all-round progress of students (p<0.0001; Table 2).

Table 1) Basic themes and organizer of positivist psychology

1- Empowering positive emotion	Promote good feeling and life satisfaction Promoting optimism Develop love in life Promote positive excitement, positive growth, and development Improve feelings of empathy and empathy Improve self-control Learn how to be slow (slow and careful) Motivation and passion Learn to be patient Artistic and aesthetic understanding Anger management and control Promoting Clevenger's thinking versus critical thinking Conscious judgment Development of control of rapid emotional impulses
2- Fascination (flow)	Hardness compatibility Sport Fun and games Creativity and creative thinking Tolerating Continence Being slow
3- Positive relationships	Fascination and ecstasy in life and play Clearing and creative thinking Love to learn Physical activity Appreciation and appreciation Generosity the trust Positive relationships and flexibility, and justice Group activity and teamwork Active and constructive reaction Integrity
4- Meaning (goal)	Optimistic To love and be loved Willpower and perseverance Forgiveness Curiosity, inquiry Ability to solve problems Courage Timing and time management Scientific and professional advice, advice and guidance God-given transcendence and blessings Hope Foresight and discretion
5- Achievement (success)	Control and strengthen thinking The tendency to positive thinking Self-efficacy and self-efficacy Self-control Willpower and perseverance Provide creative solutions and holistic thinking Job satisfaction and productivity Observance of personal hygiene, health, and optimism Mental speed and speed of doing things Anger control Success and achieve goals social intelligence Personal intelligence Emotional Intelligence

Figure 1) Mapping the main themes of positivist components (optional coding)

Curiosity, problem solving ability

Courage

Timing and time management

Forgiveness

Advice, advice and guidance

Willpower and perseverance

Hope

To love and be loved

God Almighty and Grace

Optimism

Foresight and good judgment

meaning (goal)

Creativity and creative thinking

Compatibility with hardness and resilience

Self-control and being slow

Fun and games

Fascination and ecstasy in life and play

exercise

Physical activity

Holistic and creative thinking

Hardnesscompatib ility

Love to learn

Fascination (flow)

Positive excitement, positive growth

Restraint and slowness

Patience control of rapid emotional impulses

Sympathy and empathy

Motivation and passion

Artistic and aesthetic understanding

Love In Life

Optimis m

Anger control

Feeling good and satisfied with life

Holistic thinking and conscious judgment

Positive excitement

Empathy and Empathy

Appreciation and appreciation

trust

Generosity

Flexibility and justice

Kindness and helping others

Group activity and teamwork

To love and be loved

Active and constructive reaction

Good mood and smile to others

Integrity

Positive relationships

Provide creative solutions and holistic thinking

Observe personal hygiene, health and optimism

Job satisfaction and productivity

Mental speed and speed of doing things

Willpower and perseverance

Anger control

Self-control, self-efficacy and automation

Success and achieve goals

Control and strengthen thinking and tendency to positive thinking

Social intelligence Personal intelligence Emotional intelligence
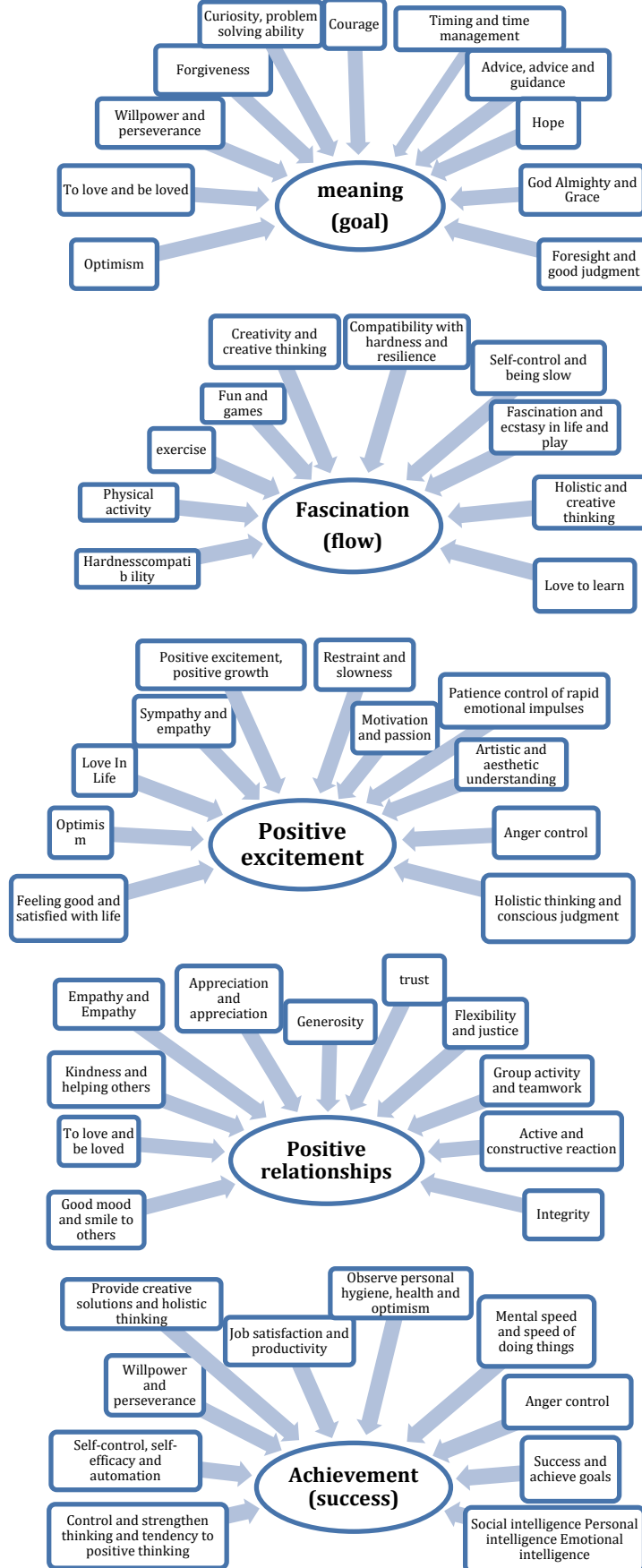
Achievement (success)

Figure 2) Network of positive psychology themes (all topics are related together)

Table 2) Evaluation of the average scores related to the questions evaluating the effectiveness of positive components from the perspective of managers in comparison with the mean value of 3

Variables	Mean	t	99% confidence interval	
			Down Border	Up Border
1- The effect of components and themes of positive psychology on positive intellectual characteristics of teachers	3.31	8.35	0.14	0.23
2- The effect of positive components and themes on the mental health and efficiency of teachers	3.50	9.02	0.13	0.23
3- The effect of positive components and themes on organizational behavior and teacher interactions	3.41	10.15	0.22	0.34
4- The effect of positive-oriented components and themes on the development of teachers ' abilities and students' personal and academic abilities	3.28	7.70	0.07	0.19

The significance level for all cases: $p<0.0001$

Discussion

This study aimed to extract useful and practical topics and components of positive psychology from the text and content of Seligman's books to be taught and used in school and evaluate the effectiveness of these components from principals' perspectives.

According to the present study results, teachers' positive intellectual characteristics, mental health, teacher efficiency, organizational behavior, teacher interactions, and teachers and students' abilities are influenced by positivism components and themes. According to school principals, positivist psychology also emphasizes the attitudes and explanatory styles of teachers and students. Students 'attitudes or explanations about school indicate their academic success or failure. Of course, the teacher's teaching style, positive classroom and school atmosphere, teacher leadership style, school encouragement and punishment, and extracurricular activities all contribute to students' positive or negative attitudes toward school. The teacher's explanatory styles towards the students of a region or class also determine how he communicates with them.

In addition to explanatory styles, important components and themes have been derived from the extraction of positivist psychological texts. Since the extraction of themes tried to select the indigenous components taught in schools, the extracted components included controlling anger, feeling good and life satisfaction, optimism, love in life, empathy and empathy, positive emotion, positive growth and development, and good health. And slowness, motivation and enthusiasm, patience and rapid control of emotional impulses, artistic and aesthetic understanding, holistic thinking and conscious judgment, physical activity, sports, recreation and play, creativity and creative thinking, adaptation to difficulty and productivity, fascination and ecstasy. Life and play, love of learning, cheerfulness and smile to others, loving and being loved, kindness and helping others, appreciation, generosity, trust, positive relationships, flexibility and justice, teamwork and teamwork, active and constructive response, Integrity, Willpower and Perseverance, Forgiveness, Curiosity and Search, Ability to Solve Problems, Courage, Timeliness and Time Management, Scientific and Expert Advice, Advice and Guidance, Hope, God-given Excellence, Foresight

and Discretion, Control and Strengthen Thinking and Tendency Towards positive thinking, self-control, self-efficacy and self-efficacy, will and perseverance, presentation Creative and holistic thinking solutions, job satisfaction and productivity, personal hygiene, health, mental speed and speed of work, anger management, success and achieving goals and social intelligence, can be taught by teachers in curricula, various subjects such as Persian literature Teach history, math, sports, and even parenting activities.

Also, according to a survey of school principals, more emphasis on the components and themes of empathy, positive and constructive interactions, trust, self-efficacy, tolerance, self-esteem and anger management, good feeling and life satisfaction, optimism, love in life, empathy, and empathy, positive emotion, Maturity, and growth was positive. These components can be taught to teachers as part of an in-service training program or in the Teachers 'Council, as they play a role in their mental health and personal and professional development, and can be passed on to students and enhance students' personal and academic abilities.

The results of Huebner and Gilman's research show that although the conceptualization of positive psychology has a potential contribution to school psychology and has been recognized by some experts, the research findings and implications for school-age children remain largely inconclusive [7]. This result is contrary to the present study's result, which considers the components of positive psychology to promote teachers' mental health. The present study results are consistent with the research of Boeller *et al.*, Which shows that mental well-being and psychological well-being are enhanced, as well as the reduction of depressive symptoms due to positive psychological interventions [10]. The results of Shoshani and Steinmetz's research also showed that the potential benefits of positive psychological interventions are based on evidence to promote the mental health of school children and point to the basic need for welfare education as part of the school curriculum [11]. The results of blind and colleagues' research also showed that positive psychological concepts and positive personality traits such as optimism, well-being, and personal strength in the workplace

increase employee performance and organizational productivity [3]. These results are similar to the present study results, which showed that positive psychology components promote the intellectual characteristics of teachers, mental health and efficiency, and the development of their abilities.

It is suggested that students and researchers promote positivism in school and that all school stakeholders consider positivist psychology education as research work because little research has been done in this field, especially in Iran.

Conclusion

Positive psychology has practical and useful components and themes to enhance teachers' abilities and mental health, such as positive emotion, empathy, trust, positive relationships, etc., which can be found in various curricula such as Persian literature, history, sports, and even during activities—fostering to be taught by teachers. Also, school principals' view about the components of positive psychology has led to more and more validation of the components and the extracted content.

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