



Promoting Teachers' Health and Emotional Balance; An Intervention Study on Positive Emotions and Anger Management



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ABSTRACT

Aims The current study aimed to investigate the impact of an educational intervention focusing on positive emotions and anger management on fostering positive emotions, mitigating negative emotions and anger, enhancing emotional regulation, and improving the mental and physical health of teachers.

Materials & Methods The current research employed a quasi-experimental design with pre-test, post-test, and a two-month follow-up. The statistical population comprised 420 elementary school teachers in the 5th district of Isfahan City in 2021, from which 40 individuals were selected as participants using convenience sampling. They were then divided into two groups; one receiving training on cultivating positive emotions and managing anger, and a control group. Participation was voluntary. Data was collected using a 50-item scale assessing positive and negative emotions, anger management, emotional regulation, mental health, and physical health of teachers. Data analysis was conducted using univariate analysis of variance. A follow-up test to assess the intervention's impact on fostering positive emotions and anger management was conducted after two months.

Findings The educational intervention on positive emotions and anger management improved mental health, emotion regulation, and physical health, increased the level of positive emotions, and decreased the level of negative emotions of teachers.

Conclusion Implementing training focused on cultivating positive emotions and managing anger, rooted in the principles of positive psychology, enhances and boosts emotional regulation, as well as the mental and physical well-being of teachers.

Keywords Emotions; Anger; Health; Mental Health; Teachers

CITATION LINKS

[1] The effect of Fredrickson's positive emotion training program on emotion regulation of students ... [2] Autonomic nervous system activity during positive emotions: A ... [3] Reducing contrast avoidance in GAD by savoring positive emotions: Outcome ... [4] Positive psychology: A personal ... [5] Positive education: Positive psychology and classroom ... [6] Psychological maltreatment predicts decreases in social wellbeing through resilience in college students: A conditional process ... [7] Positive affect and the complex dynamics of ... [8] Understanding subjective well-being: Perspectives ... [9] Well-being, part 2: Theories ... [10] The relationship between health literacy and marital satisfaction and quality of life ... [11] Positive cognitive behavior therapy in the treatment of depression: A randomized order within-subject comparison with traditional ... [12] To analyze thrill, define extreme ... [13] Navigating women's low desire: Sexual growth and destiny ... [14] Therapist's guide to positive psychological ... [15] Positive psychology: The science of happiness, health, strength and ... [16] Anger management: A practical guide for ... [17] The effectiveness of anger management skills training on reduction of aggression ... [18] Special initiative for mental health (2019-2023): Universal health ... [19] Mental health promotion in public health: Perspectives and strategies ... [20] Positive psychology in practice: Promoting human flourishing in work, health, education, ... [21] Teachers' affects and their approaches to ... [22] Teachers' perception of the consequences of violence and violence prevention strategies in schools: A ... [23] Evaluation of trait anger elementary school teachers in ... [24] Exploring the impact of teacher emotions on their approaches to teaching: A structural equation ... [25] Profiles of teaching practices and reading skills at the first and third grade in Finland ... [26] The mediational pathway among academic emotions, self-regulated learning, and academic motivation with academic achievement of ... [27] The role of academic emotions in the relationship between perceived academic control and ... [28] Influence of teacher-and-peer support on positive academic emotions in EFL learning: The mediating role ...

Introduction

Positive emotions play a vital role in managing negative emotional experiences in our daily lives [1-3], serving as a foundational aspect of positive psychology [4]. They are central to theories of genuine happiness and overall well-being [5, 6]. The realm of positive emotions includes happiness, interest, satisfaction, love, and resilience in the face of challenges [7-9], significantly influencing cognitive exploration, intellectual capacity, attention span, creativity, and empathy [10]. Traditionally, research has predominantly concentrated on negative emotions, emphasizing their perceived beneficial impact [11]. Nonetheless, nurturing positive emotions brings benefits such as enhanced parenting, increased longevity, and improved partner selection [12, 13].

Despite the numerous benefits linked to positive emotions, there is a prevalent tendency, even among experts in negative emotions, to underestimate the value of positive emotions. In contrast, positive psychology theory asserts that positive emotions are as crucial as negative emotions for our survival and ability to flourish in life [14]. However, positive psychology also acknowledges the significant biological diversity of negative emotions and traits. Ideally, individuals should aim to occupy the most beneficial position within the spectrum of their anxiety, depression, or anger. By doing so, individuals can develop the necessary skills to navigate effectively through difficult situations [15].

Anger, often arising from unmet needs, represents a multifaceted emotional response with possible constructive qualities. Alongside depression, it is categorized as a negative emotion that is not inherently harmful but rather unpleasant in nature [16]. Usually sparked by perceived injustices, anger progresses from initial discomfort to a complete emotional state. Enhancing life skills, coping strategies, communication abilities, and psychosocial skills can lead to effective anger management and an overall enhancement in quality of life [17]. The traditional view of mental health juxtaposed with illness emphasized holistic well-being encompassing physical, mental, and social aspects to prevent the recurrence of diseases [18]. Presently, the World Health Organization advocates for achieving optimal mental well-being standards, with positive psychology playing a crucial role in promoting health [19]. Positive psychology, according to Seligman, strives to nurture attributes that foster individual and social resilience, growth, and well-being. Physical activity significantly contributes to individual and community survival and flourishing, preventing mental disorders, enhancing positive emotions, and mitigating negative experiences [20]. Given the profound influence of surroundings on emotions, particularly anger, among educators, addressing negative emotions while fostering positive ones

becomes imperative. This research aimed to explore emotions and anger management within this context, followed by a review of related studies.

Several studies have shed light on the role of emotions in educational settings. Sevaari and Farzaadi [21] demonstrated that positive emotions facilitate the development of flexible educational approaches, contrasting with the weakening effects associated with negative emotions. Their findings highlighted a positive correlation between positive emotions and educational methodologies. Moreover, love emerged as a predictor for the adoption of student-centered educational approaches, while both positive and negative emotions were indicators of knowledge transfer approaches and student-teacher interactions. Yarigholi *et al.* [22] investigated the consequences of violence within school settings, outlining solutions that encompass educational institutions, teachers, students, and societal norms. Their study highlighted the adverse effects of anger on teaching efficacy, underscoring the crucial significance of social interactions and communication style in academic achievements and psychological health.

Yousefi *et al.* [23] examined anger within the context of primary school teachers, shedding light on its prevalence and substantial effects on educators. The research underscored the vital role of anger regulation and management within educational environments. Chen [24] discussed the influence of teacher emotions on instructional strategies, noting positive emotions as catalysts for student-centered approaches and negative emotions for teacher-centered methods. Tang *et al.* [25] further supported these findings, suggesting that prioritizing positive emotions can facilitate the transition toward student-centered teaching.

Valinasab and Zeinali [26] revealed a positive relationship between positive academic emotions and students' self-directed learning and motivation, contrasting with the negative association of negative academic emotions. You and Kang [27] highlighted the role of emotions in regulating learning, with students' emotional regulation influencing their learning approach and vice versa. Additionally, Xie and Guo [28] investigated the mediating role of mindfulness in fostering positive academic emotions during English as a foreign language (EFL) learning. Their study proposed that teacher and peer support, combined with mindfulness practices, play a significant role in cultivating positive academic emotions.

The current research aimed to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions designed to improve positive emotions and anger management abilities in teachers, specifically examining their influence on the physical and mental wellness of educators. The research comprised two main phases; initially, evaluating the physical and mental health of teachers, followed by providing training in fostering positive

emotions and managing anger, and then, reevaluating the physical and mental well-being of teachers to assess the impact of these interventions.

Materials and Methods

This quasi-experimental study adopted included pre-test, post-test, and follow-up evaluations. The follow-up assessment occurred one month after the completion of the intervention sessions for the experimental group. The statistical population of the study consisted of primary school teachers in District 5 of Isfahan City in 2021. A convenience sampling approach was utilized for participant recruitment. Teachers who indicated interest in attending the anger management workshop and demonstrated a mix of negative and positive emotions were allocated to either the control or experimental groups. Each group comprised 20 individuals, resulting in a total of 40 participants. The inclusion criteria for teachers in the sample group involved voluntary participation, questionnaire completion, and attendance in the training sessions where interventions focusing on managing negative emotions and anger, as well as promoting positive emotions, were delivered. Exclusion criteria included failure to complete the questionnaire and missing more than one training session.

Data collection

Data collection was done using a 50-item researcher-made questionnaire comprising three subscales of positive emotion and anger management, mental health, and physical health. Respondents rated each item on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from "Completely agree" to "Completely disagree". Scores corresponding to each question within the scales were calculated to derive the overall scores. The reliability coefficients for the components of positive emotions and anger management, mental health, and physical health were 0.90, 0.85, and 0.80, respectively.

The content validity ratio (CVR) was assessed for the three components. Each of the 15 experts, who comprised the specialized panel, was asked to evaluate the necessity of each item using a three-part Likert scale: "item is necessary", "item is useful but not necessary", and "item is not necessary". For an item to be considered valid, it had to be rated as "necessary" by more than 50% of the experts. The values of 0.80, 0.71, and 0.67 were obtained for positive emotions and anger management, mental health, and physical health, respectively. These values exceeded the minimum acceptable content validity of 0.42 (CVR>0.42), indicating that the selected questionnaire items and components are relevant and essential for assessing these constructs among teachers.

Assessments

Teachers were categorized into two experimental and control groups. In the initial assessment, during

the initial session before the commencement of the workshop and training, teachers completed a questionnaire designed by the researcher, focused on assessing indicators related to positive and negative emotions, anger management, self-control, mental well-being, and physical health. Its validity and reliability coefficients were established through expert evaluation. A thorough training program consisting of 12-hour workshops on fostering positive emotions and managing anger, based on the tenets of positive psychology, was conducted for primary school teachers for one month. These workshops not only provided targeted content and solutions aligned with each session's theme but also included assignments and evaluations at the end of each session to solidify the mastery of crucial skills. Additionally, teachers were introduced to pertinent books, including "Anger Management" by Faupel *et al.* [16], at the end of each session. In order to maintain ethical standards, a 12-hour training workshop focusing on handling negative emotions, anger management, and promoting positive emotions was arranged for the control group of teachers.

Table 1. The content of the training workshop on positive emotions and anger management based on a positive psychology approach

Sessions	Title of the session	Description of meetings and assignments
First	Acquaintance with the training workshop on anger and emotion management and expressing goals	Creating motivation to participate in meetings and doing homework/introducing the uses of having positive emotions and anger management and the benefits of using these skills for teachers
Second	Familiarity with positive emotions, negative emotions, how to cultivate positive emotions and happiness	Recognition of positive emotions and methods of creating positive emotions through fleeting pleasures and virtues/introduction of real happiness and happiness and its difference with hedonism, positive emotions, and positive thinking; among the tasks provided are writing solutions to create happiness and measuring the excitement level of the participants
Third	Recognition and development of personal skills	Identifying and developing skills and abilities/ practicing three good things to cultivate positive emotions, teaching social skills and conflict resolution solutions, and teaching good behavior to students
Fourth	Negative emotion management, emotion management, and anger management	Education and familiarization with emotion management and social skills and their application/development of necessary skills and strategies to manage emotions, negative emotions, and anger management/discussion about the definition of anger, understanding, and management of anger, types of anger in life, reactions and coping strategies with negative emotions and anger management/effects of anger/coping methods/set of activities that we should do or not do

In the introduction and familiarization session, a preliminary session was organized for participating teachers to introduce them to the research process. During this session, a concise explanation was provided regarding the purpose and guidelines of the anger management and positive emotions training workshop. Ethical considerations were emphasized, clarifying that participation in the research was voluntary, and participants retained the right to withdraw at any stage. In the training sessions, a series of four 3-hour face-to-face sessions were held weekly for the experimental group participants. These sessions were dedicated to imparting skills for managing negative emotions, particularly anger, and fostering positive emotional states. The acquisition of these skills aimed to enhance the mental and physical well-being of teachers. To validate the content of the training workshop on managing negative emotions, anger, and fostering positive emotions, the opinions of 20 experts were solicited. The CVR for the average of the suggested training content on these topics was found to be 0.93, signifying a high level of content validity.

Following the workshop sessions, a post-test was administered to both the experimental and control groups. To assess the stability of the intervention effects, a follow-up assessment was conducted after a two-month interval. The content of this training workshop is detailed in Table 1.

Data analysis

The research data was analyzed using SPSS 24 software. Descriptive statistics such as frequency, mean, and standard deviation were used to describe

the data. Inferential statistics, particularly univariate analysis of variance (ANOVA), were employed to address the research inquiries. Post hoc analysis utilizing Tukey's test was performed in the experimental group throughout the three pre-test, post-test, and follow-up stages.

Findings

The average scores in the control group, during both the pre-test and post-test stages, exhibited minimal change in comparison to the experimental group.

Table 2. Mean scores of the examined components in the experimental and control groups in the pre- and post-test stages

Group	Dimensions	Pre-test	Post-test
Control	Positive emotions and anger management	120.18±16.91	121.35±15.98
	Mental health	16.84±4.01	16.86±4.34
	Physical health	16.34±3.75	16.50±3.38
Experimental	Positive emotions and anger management	123.44±21.65	151.70±20.19
	Mental health	16.74±3.68	22.66±3.32
	Physical health	15.32±3.54	21.98±3.67

Conversely, the experimental group demonstrated noticeable increases in scores in the post-test compared to the pre-test regarding positive emotions and anger management, as well as mental and physical health (Table 2). The data distribution was normal, and the assumptions regarding normality were verified using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk tests.

Table 3. The results of the one-way analysis of variance regarding the effect of positive emotions and anger management training on enhancing evaluated variables

Parameter	Source of changes	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	p-Value
Positive emotions and anger management	Before training	12858.99	1	12858.99	74.06	<0.001
	Group	41280.13	1	41280.13	240.20	<0.001
	Error rate	15093.94	37	175.511		
Mental health	Before training	819.09	1	819.09	164.65	<0.001
	Group	834.18	1	834.18	167.69	<0.001
	Error rate	427.80	37	4.974		
Physical health	Before training	571.02	1	571.02	137.44	<0.001
	Group	977.54	1	977.54	235.29	<0.001
	Error rate	357.29	37	4.155		
Emotion regulation and anger management	Between-group	66544.33	2	3322.17	78.95	<0.001
	Inter-group	61954.36	77	421.45		
	Total	128498.69	79			

To assess the effectiveness of teaching positive emotions and anger management in improving teachers' self-control, mental health, and physical health, univariate ANOVA was employed. Additionally, one-way ANOVA was conducted at three pre-test, post-test, and follow-up stages within the experimental group. Before conducting univariate ANOVA, the assumptions of data normality were examined using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, the homogeneity of variances was assessed by Leven's test, and the homogeneity of regression slopes for univariate ANCOVA was evaluated. The results of these tests indicated that all the variables

followed a normal distribution in both the pre- and post-test stages, meeting one of the critical assumptions for conducting univariate ANOVA.

The research findings were analyzed in three distinct steps. In the first step, the impact of positive psychology training on enhancing positive emotions, anger management, and reducing negative emotions was examined in the pre- and post-test stages using one-way ANOVA. In the second step, the investigation focused on demonstrating the improvement in emotion regulation and mental health among teachers resulting from the positive psychology-based positive emotions and anger management

training. One-way ANOVA was again employed to evaluate this effect. The third step aimed to showcase the enhancement of physical health. Similar to the previous steps, one-way ANOVA was used to investigate the impact on physical health. The outcomes of the first step, involving one-way ANOVA, elucidating the effect of positive emotions and anger management training on enhancing these components, are presented in Table 3.

The results presented in Table 3 demonstrate a significant difference between the experimental and control groups of teachers concerning positive emotions and anger management, with a profound impact observed in the post-test stage ($p < 0.001$). This impact is further elucidated by the substantial eta square value of 0.752, signifying that an impressive 75% of the observed variations in positive emotion and anger management can be ascribed to the implemented intervention, emphasizing instruction in positive psychology principles.

The intervention had a significant impact on emotion regulation and mental health ($p < 0.001$, $F = 167.692$), with a considerable proportion of the variance (66%) in these variables being accounted for by the intervention. This highlights the comprehensive advantages of incorporating positive psychology strategies into teacher training programs, promoting not just emotional well-being but also improving overall mental resilience and self-management abilities. The analysis revealed a substantial difference in physical health between the

experimental and control groups ($p < 0.001$, $F = 235.293$). This suggests that 73% of the observed changes in physical health can be attributed to the intervention, highlighting the transformative potential of incorporating positive psychology-based approaches into teacher development initiatives. Conclusively, the findings underscore the multifaceted benefits of training in positive emotions and anger management, transcending mere emotional regulation to encompass broader dimensions of mental and physical well-being among educators.

Tukey's test was used to check the difference between the stages (pre-test, post-test, and follow-up) (Table 4). The results of Tukey's test revealed a significant difference between the pre-test and follow-up stages in terms of positive emotions, negative emotions, and anger management ($p < 0.05$ for all). Notably, there were no significant differences between the follow-up and post-test stages across all variables, indicating the enduring nature of the intervention's effects on emotional well-being. Similarly, regarding emotion regulation and mental health, the intervention demonstrated a significant effect between the pre-test and follow-up stages, underscoring its lasting impact on enhancing teachers' self-regulation and mental resilience. The absence of significant differences between the follow-up and post-test stages further reinforces the stability of these improvements over time, emphasizing the sustained benefits of integrating positive psychology principles into teacher training.

Table 4. The results of Tukey's post hoc test assessing the difference between scores in the pre-and post-test stages

Parameter	Stages	Mean difference	Standard error	p-Value	95% confidence interval		Result
					Lower limit	Upper limit	
Positive emotions and anger management	Pre-test	45.60	4.10	<0.001	35.87	55.32	Confirmed
	Post-test	1.90	4.10	0.889	-7.82	11.62	Rejected
Mental health	Pre-test	6.02	0.67	<0.001	4.41	7.62	Confirmed
	Post-test	0.01	0.67	0.997	-1.60	1.60	Rejected
Physical health	Pre-test	8.16	0.50	<0.001	4.95	9.36	Confirmed
	Post-test	1.12	0.50	0.075	-0.08	2.32	Rejected

Regarding physical health, Tukey's test revealed a significant difference between the pre-test and follow-up stages, indicating a positive impact of the intervention on teachers' physical well-being. Moreover, the lack of significant differences between the follow-up and post-test stages suggests that the intervention's effects on physical health remain consistent over time, highlighting the enduring benefits of the intervention in promoting overall health and well-being among educators. In summary, the findings underscore the efficacy of the intervention in fostering positive emotional states, enhancing emotional regulation, promoting mental resilience, and improving physical health among teachers. The sustained effects observed across all stages, particularly in the follow-up phase, emphasize the robustness and durability of the intervention's

impact, affirming its utility in promoting holistic well-being within educational contexts.

To assess the scores of the experimental group during the follow-up phase and determine if the impact of positive emotions and anger management remained consistent within this group after a two-month period, variations in the scores of the experimental group for positive emotions and teachers' mental health were analyzed using one-way ANOVA with Tukey's post hoc tests (Table 5).

The findings indicated the profound impact of the educational intervention on emotion regulation and mental health of teachers (F value > 1.96 and $p < 0.05$). Moreover, the observed significant differences between the post-test and follow-up stages within the experimental group further highlight the enduring nature of the intervention's effects on

control and mental health outcomes. Tukey's test showed the enduring effectiveness of the intervention in cultivating positive psychological states and enhancing mental health among teachers as time progresses. Similarly, regarding the intervention's impact on the physical health of teachers, the results unveiled a significant effect during the pre-test stage, characterized by an F value surpassing the critical threshold and a significance

level below 0.05. Furthermore, the discernible differences between the post-test and follow-up stages within the experimental group underscore the lasting benefits of the intervention on physical health outcomes. Utilizing Tukey's test to examine the variations across stages reaffirms the sustained nature of the intervention's effects, emphasizing its role in promoting enduring improvements in teachers' physical well-being.

Table 5. One-way analysis of variance results regarding the positive emotions, mental health, and physical health of the experimental group

Parameter	Source of changes	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	p-Value	Result
Positive emotions and anger management	Between-group	66544.33	2	3322.17	78.95	<0.001	Confirmed
	Inter-group	61954.36	77	421.45			
	Total	128498.69	79				
Mental health	Between-group	1208.01	2	604	52.73	<0.001	Confirmed
	Inter-group	1683.86	77	11.46			
	Total	2891.87	79				
Physical health	Between-group	1956.69	2	978.34	150.92	<0.001	Confirmed
	Inter-group	952.88	77	6.48			
	Total	2909.57	79				

Discussion

The current research aimed to investigate the effects of training focused on enhancing positive emotions and anger management on the self-regulation, mental health, and physical well-being of teachers. The results demonstrate a notable enhancement in all these aspects, underscoring the effectiveness of the intervention grounded in the principles of positive psychology. The results demonstrated that the training designed to promote positive emotions and regulate anger substantially improves teachers' capacity to embrace positive emotions and handle anger effectively. This aligns with prior research by Sevaari and Farzaadi ^[21], emphasizing the significance of positive emotions and proficient anger management within educational environments. Moreover, educational approaches emphasizing teachers' emotional well-being, as highlighted by Tang *et al.* ^[25] and Chen ^[24], further substantiate the necessity of implementing interventions aimed at enhancing teachers' emotional regulation skills. The intervention demonstrated significant impacts on enhancing both emotion regulation and mental well-being among teachers. This discovery is consistent with prior studies conducted by Valinasab and Zeinali ^[26] and You and Kang ^[27], highlighting a close relationship between emotional well-being and self-control. The correlation among positivity, self-control, and mental well-being underscores the comprehensive advantages of interventions that focus on emotional regulation and principles of positive psychology. The results also indicated a significant enhancement in the physical health of teachers following the intervention. This outcome is consistent with prior research by Yousefi *et al.* ^[23], highlighting the profound impact of anger management on overall health outcomes. The findings emphasized the relationship between emotional regulation, physical health, and overall

well-being, emphasizing the importance of holistic approaches in promoting teachers' health and resilience.

In conclusion, the intervention centered on instructing positive emotions and anger management rooted in positive psychology principles produced diverse advantages for teachers. Remarkably, it reduced the propensity for negative emotions, enhanced self-control and mental health, and improved physical well-being. These results not only positively impact teachers but also establish favorable conditions for student involvement and active participation in classroom dynamics. Consequently, incorporating such interventions into teacher training initiatives shows potential for nurturing a positive and encouraging educational atmosphere beneficial for the success of both educators and students.

The limitations of the study encompass a non-random sampling technique and a limited sample size, constraining the ability to generalize findings to wider teacher populations. Subsequent research should employ random sampling across varied educational environments and investigate additional methodologies beyond positive psychology to unveil more comprehensive insights. Moreover, concentrating solely on teachers neglects potential effects on students and other involved parties, emphasizing the need for broader evaluations in forthcoming studies. Augmented cooperation with educators and stakeholders is crucial for refining research methodologies and tackling relevant concerns, calling for larger sample sizes and diverse strategies to ensure robust and widely relevant conclusions.

Conclusion

The evaluated training causes significant enhancements in emotional regulation, mental

health, and physical well-being, emphasizing the importance of anger management and embracing positive emotions for overall well-being.

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Ethical Permissions: The study was approved by the ethics committee of Islamic Azad University, Najaf Abad branch, Iran (ID: IR. IAU.NAJAFABAD.REC. 1401.078).

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