



Investigating the Effectiveness of Positive Thinking Skills on Psychological Well-Being in Parents of Children with Autism

Firooze Afkhami Aghda^{*1}, Azade Choobforoushzadeh², Kazem Barzegar Bafrooei³

1. Department of Psychology, Yazd Branch, Islamic Azad University, Yazd, Iran.

2. Department of Psychology, Ardakan University, Yazd, Iran.

3. Department of Educational and Psychology, Yazd University, Yazd, Iran.

A B S T R A C T

This study aimed to evaluate the effectiveness of positive thinking skills on psychological well-being parents of children with autism. This study in term of method is quasi-experimental (with pretest and posttest design and control group), the population consisted of all parents of children with autism spectrum who records in welfare organization in the city of Sari. Sampling in this study is available. The sample size was in both control and experimental groups for each group 15 people selected. Scales used in this research were psychological well-being questionnaires was described and explained. The questionnaires were distributed and collected in the and control groups, then, during eight intervention training sessions were conducted in experimental group and re-distribute and collect same questionnaires from both groups. To analyze the data covariance and MANCOVA test was used. The findings showed that training positive thinking skills has significant impact on psychological well-being in parents of children with autism. In examining the effect of training positive thinking skills on the components of psychological well-being was found that training positive thinking skills has significant effect on the components of self-acceptance, autonomy and personal growth for parents of children with autism and had no significant effect on the components of positive relations with others, environmental mastery and purpose in life.

Keywords: Positive Thinking, Psychological Well-Being.

INTRODUCTION

The existence of exceptional children in a family is often irreversible harm to the family. The family's vulnerability in the face of this loss to the extent that mental health is severely damaged family (Narimani, AGHA, & Rajabi, 2007). So that as soon as the awareness of parents about their child's disability, all wish and hope is dashed and start parental problems. These problems can include various types, including behavior problems. A behavior once considered a problem for the individual and others interfere with and disrupt their normal life returns (Goldstein & Brooks, 2007; Sieberer-Nagler, 2016). A significant number of families suffer from the negative effects of having a disabled child and must deal with the fact that their child has a special condition that affects his lifetime, come along (Abbeduto et al., 2004; Hartley, Seltzer, Head, & Abbeduto, 2012; Lewis et al., 2006; Usher, DaWalt, Greenberg, & Mailick, 2018).

*. Corresponding Author: ma.afkhami@iauyazd.ac.ir

DOI: [In pressing](#)

To cite this article: Afkhami Aghda, F., Choobforoushzadeh, A., Barzegar Bafrooei, K. (2019). Investigating the Effectiveness of Positive Thinking Skills on Psychological Well-Being in Parents of Children with Autism. *Iranian Journal of Positive Psychology*, 5 (3), 107-114.

Although, psychological well-being need to understanding of life's challenge. Approach to psychological well-being, development observed in the presence of live challenges checks and strongly focused on human development, for example pursuing meaningful goals, development and progress as a person and establishing quality relationships with others (Diener, Lucas, Oishi, & Suh, 2002). A wide collection of literature in the 1950s and 1960s analyze the challenges and life's basic problems (Ryff, 2014; Ryff & Keyes, 1995). Sense of well-being is also a component of emotional and cognitive components. People with a high sense of well-being mainly experiences positive emotion and the events surrounding them have a positive assessment, while those with a low sense of well-being, their life events and situations are unfavorably and experience more negative emotions such as anxiety, depression and anger. Psychological well-being is psychological element and the quality of life as people's perception of life in the area of emotional behaviors, mental and emotional health functions is defined (Pazandeh & al., 2005). So positive thinking skills are able to create a cheerful atmosphere and fun family cohesion and well-being of the family tend to be parents of autistic children and this study tries to answer this question. Whether positive thinking skills being of parents of children with autism is effective?

The importance and necessity of research

One of disorders in which to understand and express their emotional state and recognition of the shortcomings associated with the emotional effects and consequently social interaction is not optimal for behavior of autistic spectrum disorders. The main obstacles in establishing a relationship between the detection of these disorders, psychological pressure is increasing and lead parents that could reactions such as trauma, despair, anger, depression and so. For most families, this diagnosis is shocking and unexpected; so that some parents refuse to recognize and testing and other, deny any problems in their children. Extensive disorders, autism, language because of a variety of disorders, communication, behavior, social and difficulty in diagnosis, symptoms of normal childhood development, the lack of decisive and effective treatment and poor prognosis, can underlie a lot of stress on the child's family and close friends (Linstead et al., 2017). Studies show that parents of children with autism disorders are extensive than other parents of children with psychological disorders, subjected to psychological stress of having a child with a disability (Goldberg, 2018; Kuhn & Carter, 2006). This pressure can rise to incompatibility problems and anti-social behavior, self-harm, stereotyped movements or psychological stress caused by difficulties in social communication and also problems related to the physical health of children in public places under certain conditions or high cost of educational services and treatment. Patient care trained. Relationships among family members may also be subject to confusion. Parents may feel less of their time should be spent on other members of their family and other family members may feel isolated and less attention from their parents. It can be concluded that having a sick person at home or unable to limit the time and personal freedom as a result, significant changes in the relationships between individual family members.

Psychological well-being shows that people feel themselves and the emotional responses of individuals, judging the quality of life and life satisfaction. Psychological well-being is an important structure at a low level leads to depression and social isolation and a lack of

satisfaction and lack of self-confidence and sense of will or purpose in life and leads to reduce mental and physical health. Positive people are healthier and happier and immune system works better, they are enjoying more effective coping strategies such as re-evaluation and problem solving mental stress fare better also actively avoiding stressful events stress and social support networks around them make valid. So positive thinking skills training for parents of autistic children seem very useful and learning these skills helps parents learn about themselves and about their opinion about themselves and the world (life) on the other hand research on this topic is very essential and important.

Research Hypotheses

Training positive thinking skills on psychological well-being in parents of children with autism is effective.

Training positive thinking skills on the components of psychological well-being in parents of children with autism is effective.

METHODOLOGY

This study in term of method is quasi-experimental (with pretest and posttest design and control group), this study aimed to evaluate the effectiveness of positive thinking skills on psychological well-being parents of children with autism.

This study aimed to control semi-experimental method to infer a causal relationship between phenomena.

Table 1. Unequal control group design with pre- and post-test

E	T1	X	T2
C	T1	-	T2

In this study population consisted of all parents of children with autism spectrum in welfare organization of Sari city which their number is 30. Sampling method in this study is available. The sample size in the experimental and control groups based on previous research for each group was 15 people.

Psychological Well-Being questionnaire: The questionnaire was designed by Ryff and Keyes (1995). Psychological well-being is a multi-component concept. This questionnaire has three words are in any scale. Questions related to the above measures are as follows; Self-acceptance scale (10-8-2), scale of positive relations with others (13-11- 3), scale of autonomy (18 12 9), scale of environmental mastery (6: 4-1) purpose in life scale (16 14 5) and the scale of personal growth (17 15 7). The questionnaire scoring methods respectively, from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (6), 13-10- 17. 16. 9-5- 4-3 scored and phrases are scored in reverse. Convergent validity of the test showed six factors, psychological well-being and life satisfaction, self-esteem and creativity, positive and negative correlation with depression and external locus of control. Ryff and Keyes (1995), internal consistency of psychological well-being scale 0.82 to 0.90 reported. The internal consistency coefficient of the scale of the short

form of psychological well-being as well as total internal consistency coefficient test about 0.50 reported. Reliability and validity of the Persian version of the questionnaire in mechanical source, (2007) reported. In this study, the reliability of the scale and its subscales (including self-acceptance, positive relations with others, autonomy, purposeful life and personal growth), respectively, 0.83, 0.88, 0.74, 0.71, 0.79, 0.81 and 0.76 calculated.

The license for research was taken from Department of Social Welfare in the city of Sari and then the address and telephone number with them were the families of people with autism and according to the folk process was explained to them and they were asked if you wish to carry out this initiative. Then psychological well-being questionnaire to parents who were chosen were given. It should be noted that each parent was told this information is only spent on research work. This information is strictly confidential and is only available to researchers and asked if they could get this information parents were asked to answer the questionnaire with utmost precision and 8th grade tests in a period of one and a half hour meeting was positive thinking skills. The questionnaires were given to parents at the end of the sessions again and after two days they were received, each scoring and were prepared to analyze the data.

RESULTS

According to data from the table 2 the mean pre-test of psychological well-being was 65.93 in test group and post-test score 72.1.

Table 2. Average post-test and pre-test scores of the psychological well-being in experimental group

	Number	Mean	Std. deviation
Pre-test	15	93.65	42.6
Post-test	15	1.72	37.7

Table 3. Average score pre-test and post-test of psychological well-being in control group

	Number	Mean	Std. deviation
Pre-test	15	13.62	02.5
Post-test	15	6.62	68.5

According to data from the table above the mean pre-test of psychological well-being in control group was 62.13 and post-test scoring 62.6.

To investigate the hypothesis of the research parametric tests normality such as Shapiro-Wilk test were used and the results of which are as follows:

Table 4. Assessing the normality test of research scale

Variable	Number	Mean	Std. deviation	Shapiro-Wilk test	Significant (sig)
Psychological Well-Being	30	03.64	49.3	779.0	579.0

According to the data in the table 2 psychological well-being scale at significant level (sig) Shapiro-Wilk z test is larger than 0.05, and thus, these variables are not significantly

Investigating the Effectiveness of Positive Thinking Skills on ...

different from the normal distribution and can be said a normal distribution and parametric tests can be used to test hypotheses related to these variables.

Hypothesis 1: Training positive thinking skills on psychological well-being in parents of children with autism is effective.

Table 5. Results of Leven test for equality of variances

F	DF2	DF1	Sig.
2.562	28	1	0.121

Due to the significance level F is larger than 0.05, there is no difference between two groups in term of variances and variances are equal.

Table 6. Results of covariance analysis of the effectiveness of positive thinking skills on psychological well-being in two groups:

Source	Sum Square	DF	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Chi Eta (R ²)	Statistical power
Without intervention	821.433	1	821.433	007.17	000.0	386.0	978.0
Pre-test	856.18	1	856.18	739.0	397.0	027.0	132.0
Group	208.569	1	208.569	314.22	000.0	452.0	995.0

In the above table it is clear that the group factor (F=22.314) with P value = 0.000 from $\alpha = 0.05$ smaller and this shows the significant impact of teaching skills, positive thinking being of parents of children with autism in the group is tested; in other words, the null hypothesis is rejected and main hypothesis is confirmed. Amount R corrected (0.460) shows that 46% of the variance in the dependent variable (psychological well-being post-test) by group and test can be explained, rest of the variance (54%) expressed by other unknown factors.

Hypothesis 2: Training positive thinking skills on the components of psychological well-being in parents of children with autism is effective.

Table 7. Results of Leven test for equality of variances

F	DF2	DF1	Sig.
1.398	551.2883	21	0.107

Given that a significant level of 0.05 is larger F test, we can say there is no difference between the variances of the two groups and variances are equal.

Table 8. Results of covariance analysis of training positive thinking skills on the components of psychological well-being of two groups.

Source	Sum Square	DF	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Chi Eta (R ²)	Statistical power
Group	Self-acceptance	703.12	1	703.12	164.7	014.0	725.0
	Positive relations with others	328.2	1	328.2	914.1	180.0	263.0
	Autonomy	173.36	1	173.36	217.21	000.0	993.0
	Environmental mastery	617.9	1	617.9	161.4	054.0	496.0
	Purpose in Life	225.3	1	225.3	308.1	265.0	194.0
	Personal growth	607.23	1	607.23	194.10	004	862.0

It was found in the table above, given that MANCOVA test by removing the pre-test, the average of the two groups differed, and the significance level (sig) F component of their admission score (7.164), autonomy (21.217), personal growth (10.194) is significantly less than 0.05, the effect of training on the above components is significant and positive thinking with regard to the significance level (sig) F component score of positive relations with others (1.914), environmental mastery (4.161) and the purpose in life (1.308) is more than 0.05. The effect of training on the components of recent positive thinking is not meaningful.

CONCLUSION

Training positive thinking skills on psychological well-being in parents of children with autism is effective

The study hypothesis was found that the group factor and intervention in the experimental group has taken effective and we can say positive thinking skills of psychological well-being in parents of children with autism are effective in the experimental group.

The amount of R corrected (0.510) showed that 46 percent of the variance in the dependent variable can be explained by the pre-test, rest of the variance (54%) expressed by other unknown factors. According to the research conducted within and outside the country to investigate or article that is not found exactly related to the hypothesis, the results obtained from this hypothesis cannot be compared with experimental background. The importance of positive thinking can be realized. As mentioned at the beginning of the second quarter, optimism and positive beliefs in general has a great impact on human disease and their mental and physical health. People who have an optimistic attitude toward the events surrounding instead negative bias towards the events around him, trying to make optimum use of these events as well as the people happy and healthy personalities, people will be responsible and good citizens. Considering the issues those families with disabled children, health and mental balance is probably the individuals affected. Thinking positive and hopeful with progressive attitude can reduced the psychological well-being and improves the well-being of the parents.

Training positive thinking skills on the components of psychological well-being in parents of children with autism is effective.

In analyzing the data using MANCOVA, in which psychological well-being components are tested simultaneously and interactively, it was found positive thinking skills has significant effect on the components of self-acceptance, self-determination, personal growth and effectiveness of training positive thinking skills in the above components is significant and the effectiveness of positive thinking skills on the components of positive relations with others, environmental mastery and purpose in life is not meaningful. Investigating the effects of optimism on the components of psychological well-being according to the record of empirical research has been done and the findings of this hypothesis cannot be compared.

Considering the effect of components in MANCOVA test, the test components have the most significant impact on the effectiveness of the intervention. The positive thinking skills on

the components of positive relations with others, environmental mastery and purpose in life was not strong enough along with other components placed.

Practical suggestions:

According to the results of this study, the importance of effective education, especially to the families realized positive thinking. Suggestions and solutions can be offered in line with the results:

Considering the workshops in order to improve the situations of families who have children with disabilities. Cultural content production in the mass media and education group affect the mental health of families.

REFERENCES

- Abbeduto, Leonard, Seltzer, Marsha Mailick, Shattuck, Paul, Krauss, Marty Wyngaarden, Orsmond, Gael, & Murphy, Melissa M. (2004). Psychological well-being and coping in mothers of youths with autism, down syndrome, or fragile X syndrome. *American Journal on Mental Retardation*, 109(3), 237-254.
- Diener, Ed, Lucas, Richard E, Oishi, Shigehiro, & Suh, Eunkook M. (2002). Looking up and looking down: Weighting good and bad information in life satisfaction judgments. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 28(4), 437-445.
- Goldberg, Sophia EM. (2018). *Connectedness in Mothers of Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder: Associations with Maternal Stress, Self-Efficacy, and Empathy*. (Master's), Mills College.
- Goldstein, Sam, & Brooks, Robert B. (2007). *Understanding and managing children's classroom behavior: Creating sustainable, resilient classrooms* (Vol. 207): John Wiley & Sons.
- Hartley, Sigan L, Seltzer, Marsha Mailick, Head, Lara, & Abbeduto, Leonard. (2012). Psychological well-being in fathers of adolescents and young adults with Down Syndrome, Fragile X syndrome, and autism. *Family relations*, 61(2), 327-342.
- Kuhn, Jennifer C, & Carter, Alice S. (2006). Maternal self-efficacy and associated parenting cognitions among mothers of children with autism. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, 76(4), 564-575.
- Lewis, Pamela, Abbeduto, L, Murphy, M, Richmond, E, Giles, N, Bruno, L, . . . Orsmond, G. (2006). Psychological well-being of mothers of youth with fragile X syndrome: Syndrome specificity and within-syndrome variability. *Journal of Intellectual Disability Research*, 50(12), 894-904.
- Linstead, E, Dixon, DR, Hong, E, Burns, CO, French, Ryan, Novack, MN, & Granpeesheh, D. (2017). An evaluation of the effects of intensity and duration on outcomes across treatment domains for children with autism spectrum disorder. *Translational psychiatry*, 7(9), e1234.
- Narimani, M, AGHA, MOHAMMADIAN HR, & Rajabi, S. (2007). A comparison between the mental health of mothers of exceptional children and mothers of normal children. *Journal Of Fundamentals Of Mental Health*, 9(33-34), 15-24 [In Persian].
- Pazandeh, F , & al., et. (2005). Investigating the Relationship between Infertility and Well-being and Satisfaction of Marriage. *Pajoohande*, 9(6), 9-15 [In Persian].
- Ryff, Carol D. (2014). Psychological well-being revisited: Advances in the science and practice of eudaimonia. *Psychotherapy and psychosomatics*, 83(1), 10-28.
- Ryff, Carol D, & Keyes, Corey Lee M. (1995). The structure of psychological well-being revisited. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 69(4), 719.
- Sieberer-Nagler, Katharina. (2016). Effective Classroom-Management & Positive Teaching. *English Language Teaching*, 9(1), 163-172.
- Usher, Lauren V, DaWalt, Leann S, Greenberg, Jan S, & Mailick, Marsha R. (2018). Unaffected siblings of adolescents and adults with fragile X syndrome: Effects on maternal well-being. *Journal of*

