



# Comparing the Effectiveness of a Package Containing Ability to Enjoy, the PERMA Well-Being Model, and the Time Perspective on the Academic Vitality of Veterans' Children

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## ABSTRACT

**Aims** The aim of the present study was to compare the effectiveness of an educational package containing the ability to enjoy, the well-being of PERMA, and the perspective of time on the vitality of the children of veterans.

**Materials & Methods** The current semi-experimental research with the pre-test post-test and follow-up design and a control group was done on 72 high school students with veteran parents in the academic year 2022-20233 in Isfahan City. The samples were selected by purposeful sampling and randomly assigned to three experimental groups (18 people each) and a control group (18 people). Those in the experimental groups participated in parallel and simultaneous training sessions on the ability to enjoy, PERMA well-being, and time perspective and the the control group received no intervention. Data were collected by the Academic Vitality Questionnaire by Dehghanizadeh and Chari (2019). To analyze the data, repeated-measures analysis of variance and Bonferroni post hoc test were used.

**Findings** There was a significant difference in academic vitality, ability to enjoy, PERMA well-being, and time perspective between the three experimental groups and the control group ( $p < 0.05$ ), but no significant difference was found between the three experimental groups ( $p > 0.05$ ).

**Conclusion** The findings of this research emphasize the importance of paying attention to the academic vitality of children of veterans and have important practical implications for educational interventions useful for them.

**Keywords** Adult children; Psychological well-being; Education; Veterans

## CITATION LINKS

- [1] Mediating role of emotion regulation in the relationship of metacognitive beliefs and attachment styles with risky behaviors in children of ...
- [2] Relationship between intelligence beliefs and achievement motivation with self-regulated learning in students with ...
- [3] The impact of a flipped classroom approach on student learning experience
- [4] Relationship between intelligence beliefs and achievement motivation with self-regulated learning in students with veteran ...
- [5] Comparing the effectiveness of social-cognitive career counseling with acceptance and commitment counseling on buoyancy and ...
- [6] Riding the bumps in mathematics learning: Relations between academic buoyancy, engagement, ...
- [7] Developing effective assessment feedback: Academic buoyancy and ...
- [8] Relationship between Self-regulation and Self-efficacy with students' academic Buoyancy: Mediating of ...
- [9] To be a language learner or not to be? The interplay among academic resilience, critical thinking, academic emotion regulation, ...
- [10] Comparing the sense of belonging to school, academic vitality and academic emotions among first grade students in the era before and during ...
- [11] Academic self-efficacy and academic performance among high school students: A ...
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- [16] The concept of flow. Flow and the foundations ...
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- [18] The effectiveness of training based on the flourishing psychological model on happiness, competence, and ...
- [19] A comparison of the effect of PERMA model and psychological empowerment training ...
- [20] Time perspective differences between depressed patients and non-depressed participants, and their relationships ...
- [21] The effectiveness of mixed method of time perspective and mindfulness ...
- [22] The role of time perspective in prediction of academic emotions ...
- [23] Time perspective training package on balancing time and anxiety ...
- [24] Academic vitality and perception of family communication pattern; The mediating ...
- [25] The relationship between time perspective and happiness with the mediating role ...

## Introduction

The concept of veterans expanded significantly after the Iranian Islamic Revolution and during the Iran-Iraq war and became one of the main social concepts. After the end of the war and the return of the soldiers, due to the stress caused by the war and its destructive effect on the mental state of the individual, the adverse effects of the war continue on the family [1]. Many students in schools have veteran parents who sometimes face issues that make them differentiate them from normal students [2].

Success and progress in education is the goal and intention of all educational systems, and the degree of benefit from educational environments requires a sense of energy and vitality in students' education and learning [3]. Academic vitality is one of the problems that may be faced by students with veteran parents [4]. Academic vitality means the successful ability of students to face academic obstacles and challenges and overcome them [5]. Academic vitality is a concept that refers to a positive, constructive, and adaptive response to all kinds of challenges and obstacles that exist in the continuous and current field of education [6]. Academic vitality is useful for understanding and conceptualizing the well-being of students in the academic context [7]. Vitality is one of the important indicators related to education and learning. It affects the fruitfulness and success of the individual and, as a result, brings the competencies, abilities, and scientific progress [8]. Academic vitality promotes the adaptation of students to traumatic situations, adversities, problems, and stress [9]. Students who have high academic vitality have more enthusiasm and a sense of belonging to school and education [10]. Also, academic vitality by increasing a person's cognitive ability leads to the strengthening of comprehensive academic goals, which seems to play an essential role in academic performance [11].

However, one of the ways to improve learners' performance is the use of educational strategies, and the ability to enjoy in educational environments. The ability to enjoy means a kind of mental ability that a person with full knowledge of any subject and activity creates a kind of pleasure and gets the maximum benefit from it so that recreating its memory is also accompanied by pleasure. The result of this pleasure and its memory also arouses the desire to repeat this pleasure in the future [12]. According to Asadi and Aghaei [12], the ways to achieve the ability to enjoy are: 1) Spending time and money to enjoy, 2) understanding the taste of pleasure, 3) practicing for enjoyment, 4) Beyond every emotion, finding the cause and philosophy of existence, 5) equipping and preparing for the day, 6) observing children enjoying themselves, 7) looking at scientists and artists and thinking, and 8) asking mothers about the meaning of pleasure and learning. Hemmati-Kashani and Aghaei [13] showed the effectiveness of an educational package on the ability

to enjoy, which is based on Aghaei's healthy human theory [12], on emotional divorce, marital satisfaction, rumination, and metacognitive beliefs of women involved in emotional divorce. However, unfortunately, the effectiveness of this educational package on students and academic variables has not been investigated, and this investigation is one of the innovations of the present research.

The PERMA model of well-being is a famous model in positive psychology, which was presented by Seligman, the father of positive psychology, and is based on five basic elements. The first element is positive emotion (P), which includes relaxation, gratitude, satisfaction, and desire; being is hoping and loving and it is necessary to enjoy life [14]. The second element is engagement and fascination (E), in the sense that when people are involved in various factors, such as tasks, situations, or projects, they feel fluid and moved and focused on the present, and as a result, feel well-being and live well [15]. The third element is positive relationships (R), which refers to the fact that humans, as social beings, need good relationships to live well. People who have positive relationships in life are always happier than those who lack these relationships [16]. The fourth element is the feeling of meaning (M), which expresses the feeling of great power in the person and the person with this feeling lives for a greater purpose. Believing in God and the supernatural source creates this feeling and helps humankind. Therefore, meaningful people have a better sense of well-being. The fifth element, which is achievement or progress (A), refers to flourishing, success, and progress. Most human efforts are aimed at finding skills, a meaningful goal, and winning a competition, and after a person succeeds with his ability, his sense of well-being is strengthened [17]. In recent years, few studies in Iran have addressed the effectiveness of the PERMA model on some variables of students [18]; for example, education based on the psychological model of PERMA flourishing created stable changes in the level of happiness and social participation of male students. Also, this model is effective in students' future orientation and self-actualization [19].

The third educational package studied in this research is the time perspective package. Time perspective can be defined as a person's view of his past, present, and future [20]. Zimbardo & Boyd identified five dimensions of time perspective: Positive past, negative past, deterministic present, hedonic present, and future (general future orientation, focused on planning to achieve future goals). Positive retrospect people focus on the good days of the past and negative retrospect people focus on all the mistakes in the past. Present-day hedonistic people are looking for immediate pleasure, novelty, feeling, and avoiding pain and suffering; present-day deterministic people consider decisions useless because, from their point of view, the determined

destiny guides their lives. By planning for the future, purposeful futurists believe that their decisions will be implemented. Transcendental futurist people consider life after death to be a better time and plan to make it better during their lifetime, and based on the logical evaluation of future consequences, they make decisions based on profit and loss [4]. In recent years, researchers have shown the effectiveness of time perspective education on variables related to education. Rahimpour *et al.* [21] showed that the combined training of time perspective and mindfulness has a beneficial effect on increasing resilience and wisdom in female students. Farzin *et al.* [22] found a significant relationship between the dimensions of time perspective, hedonic present, future, and deterministic time perspective in predicting positive educational emotions, as well as negative past, hedonic present, and future transcendental time perspective in predicting students' negative educational emotions. Also, Hosseini *et al.* [23] showed in their research that time perspective education was effective on students' time balance, anxiety, and academic persistence.

All three perspectives are the basis for designing training and programs to improve educational life and personal growth, interventions whose achievements are planning for the future, and facilitating the path of personal prosperity and enthusiasm. In the meantime, students are the future builders of the country and their academic life is one of the most important periods of life that affects a productive and successful education, and also mental and physical problems of veterans affect management. Family, children's education, emotional relationships, livelihood, and educational affairs of family members have a great impact, which clearly shows the need to address this issue. Therefore, the aim of the present study was to compare the effectiveness of the educational packages of the ability to enjoy, the well-being of PERMA, and the perspective of time on the vitality of the children of veterans.

## Materials and Methods

The current semi-experimental research with a pre-test post-test and a follow-up period of one and a half months and a control group was done on high school students with veteran parents in the academic year 2022-2023 in Isfahan City. A total of 72 students were selected and randomly assigned to three experimental groups and one control group using purposeful sampling based on inclusion and exclusion criteria. In this study, a sample of 18 participants for each one of the four groups was selected based on the logic proposed by Cohen,  $\alpha=0.05$ , and the effect size of 0.50 to achieve the test power of 0.90. The inclusion criteria were having a veteran parent, not taking neuropsychiatric drugs, and being a high school student. The measuring tool

was the Academic Vitality Questionnaire, which was implemented by the researchers among the participants in person. Dehghanizadeh and Hossein Chari developed the Academic Vitality Questionnaire in 2011 based on the academic vitality scale of Martin and Mars with four items [24]. This tool has nine items and measures the respondent's degree of agreement or disagreement on a five-point scale ranging from 1=completely disagree to 5=completely agree. The sum of scores indicates a total score that indicates academic vitality. The possible score for each person will be between 9 and 45. Dehghanzadeh and Hossein-Chari [24] used principal component analysis with orthogonal varimax rotation to verify the validity of this questionnaire. The factor load of the items was between 0.50 and 0.64. Also, the result of sampling adequacy tests (KMO) was equal to 0.83 and Bartlett's sphericity test (360/611) also confirmed performing factor analysis. Pebble plots and values of eigenvalues higher than one indicated that a factor could be extracted. In total, the nine mentioned items explained 37% of the variance of academic vitality. The reliability of this tool was also obtained using Cronbach's alpha and retest coefficients of 0.80 and 0.73, respectively. In the current study, Cronbach's alpha of the questionnaire was 0.73.

Participation in this research was voluntary for all students, and they were explained about the type of research and their duties, and written consent forms were signed by the participants. The questionnaire was completed anonymously and other information was recorded and kept confidential. It was not possible to identify the volunteers based on their results. Those in the experimental groups participated in parallel and simultaneous training sessions on the ability to enjoy, PERMA well-being, and time perspective, but the control group received no intervention. Statistical analysis was done using repeated-measures ANOVA and Bonferroni's and Chi-square tests using SPSS 24.

## Findings

According to the Chi-square test, there was no significant difference between the four groups in terms of education, age, occupation of parents, the number of children, and birth order. Also, in terms of the father's injury percentage, 9, 11, 11, and 8 people had < 25%, 5, 7, 2, and 5 people had between 25 and 50%, and 2, 5, 2, and 5 people had 50% injury in the ability to enjoy, PERMA model, time perspective, and control groups, respectively. Table 1 presents the descriptive indicators of the academic separately by research groups and in three measurement stages. The average scores of academic vitality and its dimensions in the educational groups (PERMA, ability to enjoy, and time perspective) increased more than in the control group in the post-test and follow-up compared to the pre-test (Table 1).

**Table 1)** Mean scores of academic vitality and its dimensions according to group and three stages of research

Variable	Stage	PERMA group		Ability to enjoy group		Time perspective group		Control group	
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Vitality	Pre-test	27.22	6.2	26	4.92	25.94	4.7	26	6.07
	Post-test	34.66	6.21	34.5	6.71	35.11	4.58	25.38	7.65
	Follow-up	33.77	6.14	34.27	7.25	34.05	5.04	26.72	6.16

**Table 2)** The results of repeated-measures ANOVA on within-subject and between-subject effects of academic vitality and its dimensions

Variable	The source of the effect	The sum of the squares	df	The mean of the squares	F	p-value	Eta	Power
Vitality	Time	174.583	1.413	123.386	8.8061	0.0001	0.546	0.999
	Time×group interaction	620.083	4.24	146.262	9.709	0.0001	0.3	0.999
	Error (time)	144.668	9.0966	15.065				
	Group	131.278	3	438.093	4.953	0.004	0.179	0.897
	Effect size	601.222	68	88.444				

Before performing repeated- measures ANOVA Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk tests checked the normality of the data, and Leven's test checked and confirmed the equality of variance between the three research groups ( $p < 0.05$ ). The assumption of sphericity was also checked by Machelli's test and as the results for the academic vitality and its dimension were smaller than 0.05, this assumption was violated; thus, a conservative test, such as Greenhouse-Geisser was used. The assumption of the same variance-covariance matrix was also checked by the M-box test, and as the significance level for academic vitality and its dimensions was greater than 0.001, this assumption was not violated. Table 2 presents the results of repeated-measures ANOVA on the within-subject and between-subject effects of academic vitality.

The Machelli's sphericity assumption was not confirmed. Table 2 shows the significant effect of group, time ( $F = 81.806$ ,  $df = 1.413$ , and  $p < 0.001$ ), and the interaction between time and group ( $F = 9.709$ ,  $df = 4.240$ , and  $p < 0.001$ ) on academic vitality in pre-test, post-test, and follow-up.

The effect size for the time was 0.546 and the test power was 0.999; thus, the ANOVA was performed with 99.9% power and showed a 54.6% difference in the effect size of the academic vitality in three stages. The effect size and test power for the interaction of time and group were 0.300 and 0.999, respectively. Also, the results of Table 2 regarding the group effect ( $F = 4.953$ ,  $df = 3$ , and  $p < 0.01$ ) showed a significant difference in academic vitality between the four groups ( $p < 0.01$ ).

The effect size for the group was 0.179 and the test power was 0.897, that is, 17.9% of the changes in vitality were related to the difference between the groups.

**Table 3)** Bonferroni's post hoc test results for pairwise comparison of research groups regarding academic vitality

Base group	Compared group	Mean difference	SE	p-value
PERMA	Ability to enjoy	0.296	1.81	0.999
		0.185	1.81	0.999
		5.852	1.81	0.011
Ability to enjoy	Time perspective	-0.111	1.81	0.999
		5.556	1.81	0.018
Time perspective	Control	5.668	1.81	0.015

The results of the Bonferroni test in Table 3 show that there was a significant difference in academic vitality between all three training groups (PERMA, ability to enjoy, and time perspective) and the control group ( $p < 0.05$ ), but the training groups showed no significant difference with each other ( $p > 0.05$ ).

The results of the Bonferroni test in Table 4 show that the difference between the average scores of academic vitality in the pre- and post-test stages and also the pre-test and follow-up was significant ( $p < 0.001$ ). However, the difference between the average scores of academic vitality in the post-test and follow-up was not significant ( $p < 0.05$ ). Therefore, the educational packages (ability to enjoy, PERMA, and time perspective) had a significant effect on the academic vitality of students with veteran parents, and the effects of the training remained in the follow-up phase. Also, there was no significant difference between the effectiveness of the educational package.

**Table 4)** Bonferroni's post hoc test results to compare the average academic vitality in research stages

Stages		Mean difference	SE	p-value
Pre-test	Post-test	*-6.125	0.611	0.0001
	Follow-up	*-5.917	0.638	0.0001
Post-test	Follow-up	0.208	0.326	0.999

## Discussion

The purpose of this research was to determine the significant difference between the effectiveness of the ability to enjoy, the PERMA well-being model, and the time perspective packages on the academic vitality of students with veteran parents. The results showed that the use of the considered package had a positive effect on increasing students' academic enthusiasm and led to the improvement of their vitality, but no significant difference was found between the three packages and all three interventions were equally effective. Only by comparing the difference in the average scores after the training, it can be said that the time perspective training package had a stronger effectiveness compared to the other two training packages. The used training was effective in the students' academic vitality, and this indicates that the independent variables were chosen correctly.



The impact of a package containing the ability to enjoy, the PERMA well-being model, and the time perspective on the academic vitality of students has not been investigated; thus, it is not possible to directly refer to the alignment or non-alignment of the results with past studies. However, the results regarding the effectiveness of the enjoyment training are indirectly in line with the findings of Hemmati-Kashani and Aghaei<sup>[13]</sup> and Asadi & Aghaei<sup>[12]</sup>. These researchers believed that teaching the ability to enjoy based on the healthy human theory has a significant effect on increasing the use of efficient strategies in regulating emotions and reducing cognitive problems. In this context, Asadi and Aghaei<sup>[12]</sup> also showed that teaching the ability to enjoy based on the healthy human theory has a significant effect on improving mental health and increasing self-efficacy of secondary school students.

Familiarizing students with the five senses and the use of each in improving and creating intimate relationships in school and education, training to understand the taste of pleasure, teaching techniques to enjoy the eyes or the sense of sight from the delightful details of life, and understanding of the suffering students to pass the special conditions of his/her veteran parents, and are some of the mechanisms of the effect learning the ability to enjoy. Teaching the technique of enjoying the ear or the sense of hearing doubled the students' achievement of the sense of pleasure through listening to the lesson materials. Teaching to enjoy all the five senses at the same time, teaching to pay attention to inner feelings and talk about them, teaching to look for a reason and philosophy of existence beyond every feeling, teaching to be equipped for the day just in case, paying attention to the happiness of those around you and modeling others to make the people around happy, teaching to emulate how children, scientists, artists, and mothers enjoy themselves, paying attention to bitter and sweet memories of the past until now and learning from them, each in turn was an exercise to impress. This training rebuilds the senses and raises the level of pleasure and hope and the desire to review positive thoughts towards maintaining a positive attitude while facing the difficulties of life and its adversities. Raziee *et al.*<sup>[25]</sup> developed the PERMA psychological model, which thrives on lasting changes in happiness and social participation. Dorfeshan and Fouladchang<sup>[19]</sup> also found this model effective in students' future orientation and self-actualization. The reason for this alignment in results may be the similarity of the statistical population.

The implementation of the components emphasized in the PERMA model helps students to be more hopeful about the future in achieving mental well-being and optimism, and with a more positive view, they can imagine the achievement of long-term goals and career, academic, and personal success plans, and develop and improve their abilities. The main

element in the PERMA model is positive emotions that lead to a positive orientation in life. Teaching the skills of positivity optimism and positive excitement encourages students to hope for the future instead of paying attention to their environmental and personal limitations and to take an active position to achieve their goals. The element of meaning in the PERMA model means having a purpose in life, which is encouraged in positive psychology and provides the basis for academic enthusiasm. Also, the fifth component, i.e., achievement or progress, emphasizes goal setting; goals that are specific, measurable, realistic, attainable, and time-limited are pursued with more vitality and happiness. This also helps the growth of vitality. Academic vitality refers to a positive, constructive, and adaptive response to all kinds of academic challenges and obstacles, such as stress levels, poor grades, decreased motivation, etc. When a student does a task spontaneously, he/she not only does not feel tired and disappointed but also feels an increase in energy and strength, which in the field of education increases effort and perseverance and ultimately increases academic vitality.

The findings regarding the impact of time perspective education on academic vitality are also consistent with some studies, such as those by Sharifi *et al.*<sup>[4]</sup>, Farzin *et al.*<sup>[22]</sup>, and Hosseini *et al.*<sup>[23]</sup> on the effect of time perspective education on academic vitality and its constructs. Time perspective education has a fundamental role in motivation and enthusiasm and how to achieve social goals, how to interpret, shape perception, bias attention, and shape expectations; therefore, the five components of time perspective should be implemented for students to have academic enthusiasm. A hedonic present perspective is related to a hedonistic attitude, with high impulsivity, novelty and sensation seeking, low impulse control, and low preference for conformity<sup>[25]</sup>.

In a comprehensive view, it can be said that academic vitality is one of the components of psychological well-being that can improve the level of tolerance and flexibility of students in education. Teaching the ability to enjoy, the PERMA well-being model and the perspective of time can make students make their decisions and choices in a spontaneous manner and with a greater focus on cognitive and semantic processes. This can reduce the feeling of fatigue and frustration and increase the level of academic vitality. On the other hand, the use of diverse education can improve students' ability to cope with academic problems. This improvement in the ability to cope can be one of the foundations for the improvement of academic vitality. Considering that middle school students are about to enter the higher levels of the university, efforts should be made to improve their sense of vitality. Thus, administrators, teachers, and families, especially the families of veterans, due to special circumstances, should seriously consider

students' academic vitality. They should also be careful and provide appropriate planning in the form of long-term planning for its promotion and prepare in the process of teaching students in such a way that students do not suffer from academic fatigue and lack of motivation.

The statistical population of this research was limited to secondary school students in Isfahan city; therefore, care must be taken in interpreting and generalizing the research results. They were teenagers in the identification phase, and confusion caused by this period possibly affected the results of the research.

## Conclusion

By changing the quality of education, it is possible to influence students' enthusiasm for learning, activation of curiosity, and emotions related to learning. It increased the level of their belonging and dependence on schools; in other words, by teaching and institutionalizing positive thinking in schools, it can be expected that the level of enthusiasm of students in the learning process will increase.

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