

The Effectiveness of Positive Thinking Training on Improving Mental Health in Residents of the RT 15 Community, Pasir Putih Subdistrict, South Jambi District, Jambi City

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ABSTRACT

Background : This research was motivated by the increasing mental health problems in society caused by social, economic, and psychological pressures in daily life. This condition highlights the importance of promotive and preventive efforts to improve community mental health through a positive psychology approach. **Purpose** : The study aimed to determine the effectiveness of positive thinking training on improving mental health among residents of RT 15 Pasir Putih Subdistrict, South Jambi District, Jambi City. **Methods** : This research used a quantitative approach with a pre-experimental one-group pretest-posttest design. The sample consisted of 60 respondents selected using total sampling technique. Data were collected using the Mental Health Continuum–Short Form (MHC-SF) questionnaire and analyzed using descriptive statistics and Pearson correlation tests with SPSS software. **Results** : The results showed that before the training, the majority of respondents were in the moderate mental health category (83.3%), while after the training, the majority were in the high category (96.7%). The Pearson correlation test showed a correlation coefficient value of 0.723 with a significance value of $0.000 < 0.05$, indicating a strong and significant relationship between positive thinking training and improved mental health. **Conclusion** : This study concludes that positive thinking training is effective in improving community mental health through increased optimism, positive emotional management, and the ability to cope with life pressures. This research is expected to serve as a reference for developing community-based mental health programs.

Keywords : positive thinking training, mental health, positive psychology, community

INTRODUCTION

Mental health is a crucial aspect of human life, playing a significant role in determining the quality of life for both individuals and society. The World Health Organization (WHO) defines mental health as a state in which individuals are able to realize their potential, cope with the normal stresses of life, work productively, and contribute to their community. Globally, a 2023 WHO report indicates that more than 970 million people worldwide experience mental health disorders, with anxiety and depression being the most prevalent (1). The rise in mental disorders has also occurred following the COVID-19 pandemic, which has increased psychological stress in the community. In Indonesia, according to the 2019 Indonesian Health Survey, the prevalence of emotional disorders among the population reached 6.1% (2).

Mental health is influenced by various factors, one of which is individual mindset. A positive mindset can help individuals build optimism, improve stress coping skills, and strengthen psychological resilience. Within the positive psychology approach, positive thinking training is a form of psychological intervention aimed at transforming negative thought patterns into more adaptive and constructive ones. Research conducted on communities in Ghana found that community-based positive psychology interventions were able to significantly improve people's psychological well-being (3). Previous research also shows that positive thinking training is effective in reducing individual anxiety about the future (4). In addition, research on Positive Psychology Interventions (PPIs) combines the principles of personal strengths with the view that mental health recovery goes beyond simply eliminating symptoms,

can improve well-being, and reduce negative psychological symptoms in individuals experiencing mental disorders (5).

Research on the effectiveness of positive thinking training in neighborhood community levels is still relatively limited, especially in urban communities with heterogeneous social characteristics. Mental health-related phenomena were also found in the community of RT. 15, Pasir Putih Village, South Jambi District, Jambi City. Based on initial observations, it was found that some residents were experiencing psychological stress due to economic problems, work issues, family conflicts, and social pressures post-pandemic. Some residents exhibited symptoms such as anxiety, irritability, difficulty controlling emotions, pessimism about life's circumstances, and a lack of ability to manage stress positively. Furthermore, the public's lack of understanding of the importance of mental health has led residents to perceive psychological problems as common and not requiring special treatment.

Mental health issues in society not only impact individual psychological well-being but can also affect social relationships, productivity, and the overall quality of life (6). If left untreated, these conditions can lead to increased social conflict, a decline in community psychological well-being, and the emergence of more serious mental disorders. Therefore, this study aims to determine whether positive thinking training can significantly improve the mental health of the community in RT. 15, Pasir Putih Village, South Jambi District, Jambi City.

METHODS

The population in this study were residents in the community in RT. 15, Pasir Putih District, South Jambi District, Jambi City. The sampling method used was total sampling with a sample size of 60 respondents. The instrument in this study used the Mental Health Continuum-Short Form (MHC-SF) Instrument for mental health.

The data collection techniques in this study used questionnaires, observation, and documentation. Questionnaires were used as the primary method for obtaining quantitative data regarding positive thinking training and community mental health. A questionnaire is a data collection technique that involves providing respondents with a set of written questions to answer based on their actual situation (7). The questionnaire used a five-level Likert scale; 1 is strongly agree, 2 is agree, 3 is neutral, 4 is disagree, and 5 is strongly disagree (8). Meanwhile, to measure the mental health, the questionnaire on the mental health questionnaire consisted of 14 questions with categories 0-23 low mental health, 24-46 medium mental health, and 47-70 high mental health (9).

In this study, data analysis used the Perason correlation. The process of data collection and information analysis for the research procedure was using scores. A pre-test was conducted before the training and used to measure the initial mental health of the participants through positive thinking training. The training was conducted in 2 sessions with each time of 90 minutes. Post-test scores collected 1 week after the training were used to measure changes in mental health following the training.

RESULTS

Respondent Characteristics

Table 1. Analysis of Respondent Characteristics Mental Health (n=60)

		Age	Occupation	Education Level	Marital Status	Gender
N	Valid	60	60	60	60	60
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0
Mean		2.32	2.53	3.08	1.20	1.50
Std. Error of Mean		.065	.122	.060	.078	.065

	Age	Occupation	Education Level	Marital Status	Gender
Median	2.00	2.00	3.00	1.00	1.50
Mode	2	2	3	1	1
Std. Deviation	.504	.947	.462	.605	.504
Minimum	1	1	2	1	1
Maximum	3	4	4	3	2

Based on the results of descriptive statistical analysis, the age variable has a mean of 2.32 with a standard deviation of 0.504. The median value of 2.00 and the mode of 2 indicate that most respondents are in the second age category according to the research data coding. The minimum value of 1 and the maximum value of 3 indicate that respondents come from three different age groups. The relatively small standard deviation indicates that the distribution of respondents' ages is quite homogeneous or not to spread far from the average value. This indicates that the majority of respondents are in a relatively similar age range so that the psychological and social conditions of respondents tend to have almost the same characteristics.

The occupation variable has a mean value of 2.53 with a standard deviation of 0.947. The median and mode values of 2 indicate that the majority of respondents fall into the second occupational category based on the classification used in the study. The minimum value of 1 and the maximum value of 4 indicate that respondents have a fairly diverse range of occupations. The larger standard deviation value compared to other variables indicates that respondents' occupations are quite heterogeneous. The type of work can affect the level of stress, psychological pressure, and emotional well-being of individuals in everyday life.

Furthermore, the education variable has an average value of 3.08 with a standard deviation of 0.462. The median and mode values of 3 indicate that the majority of respondents are in the third educational category according to the research classification. The minimum value of 2 and the maximum value of 4 indicate that respondents have a secondary to higher education level. The relatively small standard deviation indicates that the respondents' educational levels are quite homogeneous. This indicates that most respondents have a relatively uniform ability to understand the positive thinking training material provided during the study.

The marital status variable has a mean value of 1.20 with a standard deviation of 0.605. The median and mode values of 1 indicate that the majority of respondents are in the first marital status category, namely married, according to the research coding. The minimum value of 1 and the maximum value of 3 indicate that there are several marital status categories in this study. The standard deviation value indicates that there is variation in respondents' marital status, even though the majority are in the same category. Marital status can affect an individual's mental health because it is related to social support, the burden of family responsibilities, and emotional conditions in daily life.

The last variable is gender variable. Based on the results of descriptive statistical analysis, the gender variable has an average value of 1.50 with a standard deviation of 0.504. The median value of 1.50 indicates a relatively balanced distribution of male and female respondents. The mode value of 1 indicates that the first gender category is slightly more dominant than the second category. The small standard deviation value indicates a fairly even distribution of respondents' genders. The balance between the number of male and female respondents provides advantages in research because the research results can describe the mental health conditions of the community more representatively without being dominated by one particular gender group.

Descriptive Analysis of Respondents' Mental Health

Table 2. Respondent Distribution Analysis based on Mental Health Pre-test (n= 60)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Low	10	16.7	16.7	16.7
	Middle	50	83.3	83.3	100
Total		60	100.0	100.0	

Based on Table 2 above, it shows that before receiving positive thinking training, the majority of respondents are 50 respondents (83.3%) had moderate mental health. Meanwhile, 10 respondents (16.7%) had low mental health. No respondents had high mental health in the pretest. These results indicate that the community's mental health before the training was still suboptimal.

Table 3. Respondent Distribution Analysis based on Mental Health Post-test (n= 60)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Middle	2	3.3	3.3	3.3
	High	58	96.7	96.7	100
Total		60	100.0	100.0	

Based on Table 3 above, it shows that after receiving positive thinking training, the majority of respondents experienced improvements in their mental health, falling into the high category (58 respondents, or 96.7%). Meanwhile, only two respondents, or 3.3%, fell into the moderate category. There were no further respondents in the low mental health category. These results indicate a very significant improvement in the respondents' mental health after participating in the positive thinking training.

Pearson Correlation Analysis

A Pearson correlation analysis was conducted to determine the relationship between positive thinking training and respondents' post-training mental health. The results of the correlation test are shown in the following table.

Table 4. Pearson correlation analysis of respondents after mental health training (n=60)

Pearson Correlation	.723	1
Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
N	60	60

Based on the results of the Pearson correlation test in Table, the correlation coefficient (Pearson Correlation) was 0.723 with a significance value (Sig. 2-tailed) of 0.000. Because the significance value is less than 0.05 ($0.000 < 0.05$), the relationship between positive thinking training and mental health is declared statistically significant. The correlation coefficient value of 0.723 indicates that the relationship between positive thinking training and mental health is in the strong and positive category. This means that the better the implementation of positive thinking training, the higher the level of mental health in the community.

DISCUSSION

From the table provided, it can be seen that before receiving positive thinking training, the majority of respondents (83.3%) were in the moderate mental health category, while 16.7% were in the low mental health category. After the training, there was a significant improvement, with 96.7% of respondents in the high mental health category, and only 3.3% in the moderate category. These results demonstrate that positive thinking training can significantly improve people's psychological well-being. The research was further strengthened by the results of a Pearson correlation test, which showed a correlation coefficient of 0.723 with a significance level of 0.000. This value indicates a strong and significant relationship between positive thinking training and community mental health.

Kloos et al. (2012) state that the concept of community psychology differs from other psychological concepts—particularly individual psychology—in two respects. First, community psychology offers a distinct framework for understanding human behavior, viewing it as part of community dynamics. The second aspect is the expansion of the range of topics considered worthy of study within the field of psychology. Research findings by Kurniawan and Sulistyarini indicate that community involvement in fostering a mentally healthy community effectively supports the work of mental health professionals and raises collective awareness regarding the importance of mental health (10).

According to Diener et al. (2005), strong psychological well-being has a positive impact on all aspects of life, including performing well at work, maintaining healthy interpersonal relationships, and successfully achieving life goals to one's full potential. However, feelings of sadness, worry, or excessive stress can sometimes pose challenges that hinder the attainment of healthy psychological well-being. Consequently, understanding mental health and emotional management, as well as efforts to enhance overall well-being, have become significant areas of focus within society (11).

Mental health is an individual's psychological state regarding their ability to manage emotions, cope with life's pressures, build social relationships, and function productively in life. According to the World Health Organization, mental health is a state of well-being in which an individual realizes their own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively, and is able to make a contribution to their community. From a modern psychological perspective, mental health is understood not merely as the absence of mental disorders but also encompasses an individual's emotional, social, and psychological well-being (12). Keyes explains that mental health comprises three primary dimensions: emotional well-being, psychological well-being, and social well-being. These three dimensions are interconnected in shaping an individual's healthy psychological state. Individuals with good mental health are better equipped to cope with life's pressures, manage their emotions, and build positive social relationships.

The results of this study align with the positive psychology theory developed by Martin Seligman. Positive psychology theory explains that individuals who develop positive emotions, optimism, and a sense of meaning in life tend to have better mental health. In the PERMA model, Seligman emphasizes that positive emotions and meaning are essential components in improving an individual's psychological well-being (13). In this study, positive thinking training helped respondents develop an optimistic mindset and improve their perspective on various life problems, thus impacting on improving people's mental health.

The results of this study also support the Cognitive Behavioral Theory (CBT) proposed by Aaron Beck. According to CBT, a person's emotional state is influenced by their thought patterns. Negative thoughts can lead to anxiety, stress, and psychological distress, while positive thoughts can improve an individual's ability to manage emotions and cope with life's pressures (14). In this study, positive thinking training helped respondents change negative thought patterns into more constructive ones so that their mental health improved after participating in the training.

Research by Putri, Handayani, and Rahman (2022) also demonstrates that positive self-talk training programs can boost optimism and reduce psychological stress among adults. The study's results indicate that changes in individual mindset significantly influence improvements

in mental health. These findings support the results of the present study, showing that positive thinking training significantly improves respondents' psychological well-being following the intervention (15). The results of this study are also consistent with international research conducted by Cheng, Wang, and Li (2021). That study found that positive thinking interventions can enhance psychological well-being and reduce psychological distress among adults. It demonstrated that individuals participating in positive psychology training programs possessed better emotional regulation skills than they did prior to the intervention (16).

Research by Lee and Kim (2022) indicates that training in positive self-talk and cognitive reframing is effective in improving public mental health in the post-pandemic period. The findings show that individuals trained to develop a positive mindset exhibit higher levels of optimism and emotional well-being. These results align with the current study, which demonstrates a significant improvement in the respondents' mental health following the training (17). This research is supported by research conducted by Saputra and Lestari (2021) which found that positive thinking training effectively improved community mental health during the COVID-19 pandemic. The study showed that participants who attended the training experienced improved psychological well-being and significantly reduced anxiety levels (18). This study shows that there is the use of positive psychology interventions as an effort to improve community-based mental health, similar to what was done in RT. 15, Pasir Putih Village, South Jambi District, Jambi City.

Furthermore, research conducted by Wibowo and Sari (2023) found that community-based positive psychology training effectively improved the mental well-being of urban residents. The study explained that social interactions during the training helped participants build emotional support and boost self-confidence(19). This aligns with this study, as the training was conducted in groups, thus fostering social interaction among residents, which strengthened the training's positive impact on the mental health of residents in RT. 15, Pasir Putih Village, South Jambi District, Jambi City.

Nevertheless, this study differs from previous research in several respects. While most prior studies focused on university students, workers, or specific age groups, this study was conducted among the general public within a neighborhood (RT) setting. Furthermore, it was carried out within the context of a local community in Jambi City—a setting that has been relatively under-researched in the field of community-based mental health. Consequently, this study offers a new contribution to the development of community mental health interventions at the local community level.

The practical implications of this research are significant for the development of community mental health programs. The findings indicate that positive thinking training can serve as a promotional and preventive strategy to improve community mental health. Local governments, healthcare professionals, and community organizations can utilize a positive psychology approach—as part of community empowerment initiatives—to reduce stress, enhance psychological well-being, and strengthen residents' mental resilience.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the research that has been conducted, the author can conclude that positive thinking training can significantly improve people's mental health. The results of the Pearson correlation test demonstrated a strong and significant relationship between positive thinking training and improved mental health in the community. The better the implementation of the positive thinking training, the higher the respondents' mental health levels (20).

Positive thinking training has been proven effective in helping people increase optimism, manage negative emotions, improve psychological well-being, and strengthen individuals' ability to cope with the stresses of everyday life. These findings support positive psychology and Cognitive Behavioral Theory, which suggest that positive thinking influences an individual's emotional state and mental health (21).

A mental health education program implemented through a community-based approach is one method that can be used to raise awareness about the importance of maintaining psychological well-being. This model prioritizes active participation from the surrounding community—including families, educational institutions, and youth leaders—in providing collective support for mental health (22).

In the field of public health, the results of this study demonstrate that simple psychological interventions do not always require complex clinical approaches. Community-based training emphasizing optimism, positive emotion management, and constructive mindsets has proven capable of significantly impacting the mental health of the community (23). Consequently, positive-thinking training programs can serve as an alternative, community-based mental health approach that is easy to implement and relatively low-cost. From a theoretical perspective, this study reinforces positive psychology theory, which posits that positive emotions and optimism contribute to improved individual mental health. It also supports Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) theory, which underscores the importance of mindset shifts in influencing an individual's emotional state. The findings indicate that altering an individual's way of thinking through psychological training can lead to behavioral changes and healthier psychological outcomes (24).

In addition to reinforcing existing theories, this study contributes to the development of community-based mental health research in Indonesia. It demonstrates that positive psychology interventions can be effectively implemented among the general public using a simple, easily understood approach (25).

Overall, the research findings indicate a strong and significant relationship between positive thinking training and improvements in public mental health. This training has been shown to enhance optimism and emotional well-being, as well as individuals' ability to cope with the pressures of daily life. These results reinforce positive psychology and cognitive-behavioral theories and support previous research regarding the effectiveness of positive psychology interventions for public mental health. Consequently, this study can serve as a reference for future research aiming to develop local, community-based mental health training models.

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