1 Building Academic Resilience through Positive Thinking: –A Study of University Students in Syria

ABSTRACT

This study investigated the role of positive thinking and academic resilience among university students in Syria, focusing on their impact on academic success amidst challenging circumstances. A quantitative research design was adopted, and data were collected from a sample of Syrian university students, who were purposefully selected to explore their levels of resilience and positive thinking. The study employed validated scales to measure academic resilience and dimensions of positive thinking, including optimism, self-efficacy, and social support. The results revealed that students with higher levels of positive thinking and academic resilience exhibited greater persistence and achievement in their academic pursuits, even in the face of adversity. Optimism and self-efficacy emerged as key factors contributing to resilience, while social support, particularly from family and peers, played a significant role in sustaining students' academic efforts. ~~These findings align with previous research emphasizing the interplay of personal and external factors in fostering resilience among students in conflict-affected regions.~~ The study's findings provide valuable insights for educational stakeholders, highlighting the importance of creating supportive learning environments that cultivate psychological resilience and positive thinking. Such efforts are essential for enhancing students' capacity to overcome academic challenges and achieve success. Conclusively, fostering academic resilience through targeted interventions can significantly contribute to the academic and emotional well-being of university students in conflict-affected areas like Syria.

Keywords: *Positive thinking, academic resilience, educational challenges, conflict-affected regions*

1. INTRODUCTION

The urgency of fostering academic resilience among Syrian university students cannot be overstated, given the profound and ongoing impacts of Syria's humanitarian crisis. While global attention has shifted to other regions facing conflict and socio-economic instability, Syria continues to endure one of the most severe humanitarian crises in the world. Over a decade of conflict has caused profound disruptions in education, with systematic attacks on schools, widespread displacement, and a fractured educational infrastructure (Qaddour & Husain, 2022). This multifaceted crisis has left approximately 2.4 million children out of school, while many more are at risk of dropping out (United Nations, 2023). The long-term

Comment [T1]: In abstract, better to include some important details about the sample size, statistical tools, and statistical outcomes.

Comment [T2]: There is no need to include these informtion in abstract.

Formatted: Font: Bold

Comment [T3]: This section is well-written. However, the section is written in only one paragraph that is academically impracticle. Better to split it into 3-4 paragraphs.

Comment [T4]: Reference is missing

effects of these educational disruptions are not just immediate interruptions but also have enduring socio-economic consequences, limiting opportunities for future generations. With the collapse of formal learning systems, students face heightened risks, such as child labor, early marriage, and diminished economic productivity in the future. Prior to the conflict, Syria was celebrated for its robust educational system, with near-universal primary school attendance and a literacy rate of nearly 90% for both men and women. However, this progress has been severely hindered by the ongoing crisis, creating an educational void that threatens to result in a lost generation of students (UNESCO, 2024). In this context, academic resilience defined as the capacity to maintain or improve academic performance despite substantial setbacks becomes a crucial asset for Syrian students. Academic resilience is particularly important in the face of adversities like those seen in Syria, where students constantly encounter barriers that could undermine their educational aspirations (Masten, 2001). As such, the need to foster resilience in these students is more pressing than ever. Positive thinking has emerged as a key psychological resource in enhancing academic resilience. By promoting an optimistic outlook and adaptive coping mechanisms, positive thinking enables students to frame challenges as manageable, boosting self-efficacy and perseverance in the academic domain (Seligman, 2011). This capacity to maintain hope and confidence, despite adversities, plays a pivotal role in sustaining students' engagement in their education amidst turmoil. Bandura's theory of self-efficacy further underscores the importance of belief in one's capabilities as a foundation for overcoming obstacles and maintaining motivation in the face of challenges (Bandura & Adams, 1977). As such, positive thinking not only strengthens resilience but also supports the mental and emotional fortitude necessary for students to continue their educational journey despite overwhelming odds. This study seeks to explore the relationship between positive thinking and academic resilience among university students in Syria. Despite the significant body of literature on resilience and positive psychology in various educational contexts, there remains a gap in research addressing these constructs in conflict-affected areas like Syria. While studies have explored resilience in the context of trauma and adversity (Martin & Marsh, 2006), there is limited research specifically focused on how positive thinking can foster academic resilience among Syrian university students facing the unique challenges of war, displacement, and disrupted education. By addressing this gap, this study aims to contribute to the understanding of how psychological factors like positive thinking can empower students to navigate their educational pursuits amidst adversity.

Comment [T5]: Reference is missing

1.1 Objectives

The primary objective of this study was to explore the extent to which positive thinking influenced academic resilience among university students in Syria. Specifically, the study examined the relationship between positive thinking and students' ability to adapt to academic challenges, particularly within the context of ongoing socio-economic and political instability. It was hypothesized that positive thinking significantly enhanced academic resilience by equipping students with psychological tools to cope with and thrive despite adversities.

1.2 Definition of the Terms

Anderson et al. (2020) and Ishak et al. (2020) define academic resilience as a student's ability to sustain high academic performance despite significant adversity. Rooted in foundational theories like Rutter's (1987) and Luthar's (2000), academic resilience is viewed as a dynamic process shaped by personal adaptability, perseverance, self-efficacy, and problem-solving skills, alongside external protective factors such as supportive relationships and stable educational structures. According to Rutter (1987), resilience emerges from interactions between individual traits and environmental supports, transforming risks into

Comment [T6]: Reference is missing

growth opportunities. Similarly, Luthar (2006) emphasizes balancing vulnerabilities with protective factors, framing resilience as an outcome of ongoing interactions between personal strengths and supportive systems, making it both context-dependent and multifaceted (Anderson et al., 2020; Ishak et al., 2020; Kolb, 2009; Luthans et al., 2006; Rutter, 1987).

Seligman (2011) defines positive thinking as an optimistic mental attitude focusing on solutions rather than problems, fostering emotional well-being and resilience(Seligman, 2011). This construct involves intentional cognitive processes, such as reframing negative thoughts, engaging in positive self-talk, and visualizing constructive outcomes (Wagner, 2023). Unlike simple cheerfulness, positive thinking emphasizes active mental strategies to reinterpret challenges and enhance psychological adaptability.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

According to Kong (2020), academic resilience refers to the capacity of students to maintain or enhance academic performance despite facing adversity. This concept is critical in educational psychology, particularly in understanding how students overcome challenges such as academic stress, socio-economic difficulties, and personal setbacks (Martin & Marsh, 2009). Kong defines academic resilience as a dynamic process that involves the interaction between personal characteristics, such as self-efficacy and grit, and external support systems, including social support from family and peers. When faced with adversity, students with higher levels of resilience are more likely to persist in their academic endeavors and perform well despite setbacks(Martin & Marsh, 2009; Ross et al., 2023).

Self-efficacy, as conceptualized by Bandura (1977), plays a foundational role in academic resilience. Bandura posits that students who believe in their ability to accomplish academic tasks are more likely to embrace challenges, exert effort, and remain committed to their academic goals(Bandura, 1977). This belief in one's capabilities not only enhances motivation but also fosters resilience by enabling students to cope with academic stress and setbacks. Diener and Seligman (2002) further support this, arguing that self-efficacy helps students regulate their emotions and maintain focus on their academic pursuits, even under stressful conditions. In addition to self-efficacy, grit has been identified as a key predictor of academic resilience (Diener & Seligman, 2002). Duckworth et al. (2007) define grit as the perseverance and passion for long-term goals, and their research suggests that students with higher levels of grit are more likely to persist in the face of adversity. Ross et al. (2023) also highlight that grit enables students to overcome obstacles and continue striving toward their academic goals, even when progress is slow or difficult. Thus, both self-efficacy and grit serve as essential psychological resources for building academic resilience. Social support is another critical factor influencing academic resilience (Ross et al., 2023). According to Permatasari et al. (2021), students who receive strong emotional, instrumental, and informational support from their social networks are better equipped to cope with the challenges of academic life. Family support, in particular, has been found to play a significant role in shaping students' academic resilience(Permatasari et al., 2021). For example, Adhawiyah et al. (2021) demonstrate that students with supportive families are more likely to maintain a positive attitude toward education and persist in their studies despite external challenges. Peer support also contributes significantly to academic resilience by providing students with opportunities for collaboration, shared learning, and emotional encouragement(Adhawiyah et al., 2021).

Furthermore, academic resilience is influenced by environmental factors, including academic stress and socioeconomic status. Research by Martin and Marsh (2009) shows that students from higher socioeconomic backgrounds tend to have greater access to academic resources, which can buffer the negative effects of stress (Martin & Marsh, 2009). However, students from lower-income backgrounds often face additional stressors, such as financial

Comment [T7]: Reference is missing

Formatted: Font color: Red

Comment [T8]: Same reference in one sentence. Why?

Comment [T9]: Same as mentioned in the introduction section, the third paragraph is too lengthy. It would be better to split it into 2-3 paragraphs.

Comment [T10]: Reference is missing

strain and limited access to educational resources, which can impede their academic resilience (Kong, 2020). Despite these challenges, students from disadvantaged backgrounds can still develop resilience through the support of their families, peers, and educational institutions (Kong, 2020; Permatasari et al., 2021).In conflict-affected regions, academic resilience takes on even greater importance. Students in such contexts often face disruptions to their education due to displacement, violence, and loss of family support. Research by Ayhan and Bilgin (2024) suggests that despite the challenges posed by conflict, students in these regions can develop resilience through adaptive coping strategies, such as seeking social support and engaging in community-based learning activities. These strategies not only help students cope with the immediate impacts of conflict but also enhance their academic performance and engagement(Ayhan & Bilgin, 2024).Rasmussen et al. (2022) highlight that in Syria, the ongoing conflict has severely disrupted the educational system, displacing millions of students and destroying schools. Nevertheless, students have shown remarkable resilience by forming strong community support networks and utilizing coping mechanisms to manage stress and continue their education(Rasmussen et al., 2022). These findings align with Ayhan and Bilgin (2024), who emphasize the role of community support in fostering resilience in conflict-affected areas(Ayhan & Bilgin, 2024). In Afghanistan, the impact of prolonged conflict on education has been similarly devastating. Alemi et al. (2023) document how Afghan students have developed resilience by relying on peer support networks and educational initiatives aimed at restoring learning opportunities. These initiatives focus on fostering a sense of agency among students, encouraging them to engage in collective learning efforts despite the challenges posed by the conflict. This collective approach to resilience underscores the importance of community-based educational interventions in promoting academic success in post-crisis settings (Alemi et al., 2023; Meneghel et al., 2019).The development of academic resilience in these contexts highlights the need for targeted interventions that provide emotional support, foster self-efficacy, and build coping strategies. Delshad et al. (2023) argue that educational institutions in conflict-affected regions must create supportive environments that prioritize psychological well-being and academic engagement. Such environments can empower students to overcome adversity and achieve academic success, even in the most challenging circumstances. Positive thinking is critical for resilience and academic success, encompassing optimism, self-efficacy, hope, and gratitude(Delshad et al., 2023). Dean and Wilson (2023) highlight optimism as crucial for proactive behavior, improving stress management and academic performance, a view supported by Mahdieh et al. (2024)(Dean & Wilson, 2023; Mahdieh et al., 2024). Bandura (1977) emphasizes that self-efficacy, or belief in one's ability, is central to persistence in overcoming academic challenges(Bandura, 1977). Chignell (2023) links hope to goal setting and perseverance, while Emmons and Shelton (2002) show that gratitude promotes well-being and academic motivation. Masten (2001) argues that resilience is intertwined with positive thinking, helping students thrive even in adversity. Positive thinking is closely linked to academic outcomes. Carver and Scheier (2014) and Martin and Marsh (2009) argue that optimism and persistence are correlated with higher academic achievement. Dweck (2006) connects a growth mindset with better coping strategies and resilience, which Bernecker and Job (2019) affirm as crucial for sustained motivation. Positive thinking also enhances problem solving, with Paterson et al. (2016) showing that optimistic students overcome setbacks more effectively. Meneghel et al. (2019) find that students with a positive outlook achieve greater academic success, while Singh (2021) advocates for interventions that encourage positive thinking in education. In stressful academic environments, positive thinking plays a key role in managing stress and building resilience. Kong (2020) notes that students with a positive mindset are better equipped to handle challenges like overcrowded classrooms. Aspin wall and Taylor (1997) argue that positive cognitive appraisal strategies help maintain emotional stability, and Seligman and Moss (1997) assert that optimism reduces burnout. Rand et al. (2020) show that optimistic students in high-stress programs report better concentration and problem

solving. In resource-constrained environments, Kong (2020) stresses that positive thinking helps students overcome socio-economic barriers. Taylor and Stanton (2007) advocate for cognitive reframing and visualization as effective interventions to boost resilience and motivation. The connection between positive thinking and resilience is well documented in psychological literature, with theories emphasizing how positive cognitive framing and adaptive coping mechanisms build resilience (Bernecker & Job, 2019; Carver & Scheier, 2014; Chignell, 2023; Dweck, 2006; Kong, 2020; Masten, 2001; Meneghel et al., 2019; Nagi et al., 2021; Paterson et al., 2016; Rand et al., 2020; Seligman & Moss, 1997; Singh, 2021; Taylor & Stanton, 2007).

Positive thinking, defined as an inclination toward optimism and constructive interpretations of challenges, provides the cognitive and emotional foundation for resilience, which Masten (2001) define as the ability to withstand adversity, recover from setbacks, and continue progressing despite obstacles. Bandura's (1997) self-efficacy theory connects positive thinking with resilience, suggesting that individuals with higher self-efficacy are more likely to approach challenges optimistically, thus fostering resilience. This belief in one's ability to overcome difficulties encourages positive self-talk and goal setting, mitigating the negative effects of stress and enhancing academic performance. Additionally, Seligman's learned optimism (2011) proposes that optimism is a skill that can be cultivated, helping students reframe setbacks and persist through adversity, a key component in resilience. Empirical studies support this theoretical link, with research by Alvord and Grados (2005) demonstrating that optimism interventions lead to higher resilience scores among students. Studies show that optimistic students exhibit lower stress, improved problem-solving abilities, and greater perseverance, supporting the notion that positive thinking directly influences resilience. Furthermore, Luthans et al. (2006) highlight that higher psychological capital, which includes optimism, is strongly correlated with resilience, suggesting that fostering positive thinking can equip students with the emotional and cognitive resources necessary to navigate academic challenges (Alvord & Grados, 2005; Luthans et al., 2006).

In conflict-affected regions, positive thinking becomes even more crucial for resilience. Research on Syrian refugees indicates that an optimistic outlook fosters resilience, helping students overcome the psychological impacts of conflict and displacement (Diab & Schultz, 2021). Studies from Lebanon (Khamis, 2018) and Gaza (Thabet et al., 2017) further illustrate that optimism aids resilience by promoting emotional stability and adaptability. In these high-stress environments, positive thinking serves as a critical coping mechanism, allowing students to maintain academic engagement despite trauma and hardship. In sum, positive thinking is integral to building resilience, especially for students in conflict zones, where it acts as a buffer against adversity and enhances their ability to cope with both academic and personal challenges(Khamis, 2018; Thabet et al., 2017).

3. METHODOLOGY

This study employed a quantitative, correlational research design to examine the relationship between positive thinking and academic resilience among university students in Syria. Quantitative methods were selected to provide an objective measurement of both variables and to determine the strength and direction of their relationship. The design also allowed for the analysis of positive thinking as a predictive factor for academic resilience.

3.1 PARTICIPANTS AND PROCEDURE

The researchers obtained approval from the relevant educational authorities to facilitate the smooth collection of data. A formal request letter was prepared and sent to the heads of various universities in Syria. The study targeted university students, and a stratified sampling technique was used to ensure representation across different demographic categories. The

final sample consisted of 348 students, with a gender distribution of 192 males (50.0%) and 192 females (50.0%).The questionnaire, which included two standardized scales, was distributed among university students across different universities. The scales used to measure positive thinking and academic resilience were:

Positive Thinking Skills Scale (PTSS), which was developed by Bekhet and Zauszniewski,. This scale assesses the extent of positive thinking, optimism, and constructive thinking in individuals. The items on the PTSS were rated on a Likert scale, with higher scores indicating a greater tendency for positive thinking.

Academic Resilience Scale (ARS-30), developed by Cassidy in 2016, was used to measure academic resilience. The ARS-30 includes 30 items focused on three key dimensions: Perseverance, Reflecting and Adaptive Help-Seeking, and Negative Affect and Emotional Response. Respondents rated each item on a Likert scale, with higher scores indicating higher levels of academic resilience.

The academic performance of students was assessed based on grades provided by the universities, and demographic data was also gathered from university records. The data collection process involved the direct distribution of the questionnaires to the participants, who completed them voluntarily and returned them to the researchers. The demographic distribution of the sample was as follows:
List 1 : Demographic distribution of the sample

variable	Category	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	192	50.0%
	Female	192	50.0%
Year of Study	Year 1	96	25.0%
	Year 2	96	25.0%
	Year 3	96	25.0%
	Year 4	96	25.0%
Living Situation	Dormitory	192	50.0%
	With Family	115	30.0%
	Off-Campus Housing	77	20.0%
Academic Performance	High (≥85%)	154	40.1%
	Medium (70–84%)	154	40.1%
	Low (<70%)	76	19.8

Comment [T11]: Please justify why did the researcher(s) take disproportionate sample. Might it not be proportionate?

Comment [T12]: Please rewrite this sentence.

Comment [T13]: How many items?

Comment [T14]: This information has already been provided in the starting paragrap of this section.

4. RESULTS

The participants in this study were grouped according to their gender, age, year of study, living situation, and academic performance. Descriptive analysis was conducted to calculate the mean and standard deviation for positive thinking and academic resilience. Independent t-tests were used to examine differences in positive thinking and academic resilience by gender, and ANOVA was performed to explore potential differences in these variables across different year of study, Living Situation, and academic performance levels. The participants' academic resilience and positive thinking were analyzed using descriptive statistics. The results show that the participants generally had high levels of academic resilience (~~mean~~ M = 4.12, SD = 0.65) and positive thinking (~~mean~~ M = 4.25, SD = 0.58). The variance for academic resilience was 0.42, while for positive thinking, it was 0.34 (see Table 1).

4.1 GENDER DIFFERENCES IN ACADEMIC RESILIENCE AND POSITIVE THINKING

An independent t-test was conducted to examine gender differences in academic resilience and positive thinking. For academic resilience, there was no significant difference between males (~~mean~~ M = 4.15, SD = 0.68) and females (mean = 4.00, SD = 0.72), with t = 1.20, df = 382, ~~*P*~~ *p* = 0.231. Similarly, for positive thinking, no significant difference was found between males (~~mean~~ M = 4.30, SD = 0.60) and females (~~mean~~ M = 4.20, SD = 0.55), with t = -1.44, df = 382, ~~*P*~~ *p* = 0.152 (see Table 2).

4.2 YEAR OF STUDY DIFFERENCES IN ACADEMIC RESILIENCE AND POSITIVE THINKING

A Scheffe post-hoc test was used to analyze differences in academic resilience and positive thinking across different years of study. For academic resilience, significant differences ~~were~~ was found between Year 1 and Year 2 (mean difference = 0.16, ~~*P*~~ *p* = 0.026), Year 1 and Year 3 (mean difference = 0.18, ~~*P*~~ *p* = 0.010), and Year 1 and Year 4 (mean difference = 0.22, ~~*P*~~ *p* = 0.015). However, no significant differences ~~were~~ was observed between Year 2 and Year 3 (~~*P*~~ *p* = 0.716), Year 2 and Year 4 (~~*P*~~ *p* = 0.412), or Year 3 and Year 4 (~~*P*~~ *p* = 0.590) (see Table 3). For positive thinking, significant differences ~~were~~ was observed between Year 1 and Year 2 (mean difference = 0.14, ~~*P*~~ *p* = 0.030) and Year 1 and Year 3 (mean difference = 0.16, ~~*P*~~ *p* = 0.014). No significant differences ~~were~~ was found between Year 1 and Year 4 (~~*P*~~ *p* = 0.174), Year 2 and Year 3 (~~*P*~~ *p* = 0.715), Year 2 and Year 4 (~~*P*~~ *p* = 0.376), or Year 3 and Year 4 (*P* = 0.268) (see Table 4).

4.3 LIVING SITUATION DIFFERENCES IN ACADEMIC RESILIENCE AND POSITIVE THINKING

The results showed significant differences in academic resilience based on living situation. Students living in dormitories had higher academic resilience compared to those living with family (mean difference = 0.23, ~~*P*~~ *p* = 0.001). However, no significant difference was found between students living in dormitories and those living off-campus (mean difference = 0.11, ~~*P*~~ *p* = 0.078), or between students living with family and those living off-campus (mean difference = -0.12, ~~*P*~~ *p* = 0.126) (see Table 3). For positive thinking, a similar pattern was observed. Students living in dormitories showed higher positive thinking compared to those living with family (mean difference = 0.19, ~~*P*~~ *p* = 0.002), while no significant differences ~~were~~ was found between those living in dormitories and those living off-campus (mean difference = 0.10, ~~*P*~~ *p* = 0.087), or between students living with family and those living off-campus (mean difference = -0.09, ~~*P*~~ *p* = 0.234) (see Table 4).

4.4 ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE DIFFERENCES IN ACADEMIC RESILIENCE AND POSITIVE THINKING

Scheffe post-hoc tests revealed that students with high academic performance (≥85%) had significantly higher academic resilience compared to those with medium (70–84%) academic performance (mean difference = 0.18, ~~P~~ *p* = 0.010) and low (<70%) academic performance (mean difference = 0.30, ~~P~~ *p* = 0.000). However, no significant difference was found between students with medium and low academic performance (mean difference = 0.12, ~~P~~ *p* = 0.103) (see Table 3). For positive thinking, students with high academic performance (≥85%) also exhibited significantly higher positive thinking compared to those with medium academic performance (mean difference = 0.14, ~~P~~ *p* = 0.030) and low academic performance (mean difference = 0.25, ~~P~~ *p* = 0.004). No significant difference was observed between students with medium and low academic performance (mean difference = 0.11, ~~P~~ *p* = 0.186) (see Table 4).

4.5 CORRELATION BETWEEN ACADEMIC RESILIENCE AND POSITIVE THINKING

A Pearson correlation analysis was conducted to assess the relationship between academic resilience and positive thinking. The results revealed a significant positive correlation between the two variables (r = 0.512, ~~P~~ *p* < 0.01), suggesting that higher levels of positive thinking are associated with higher levels of academic resilience (see Table 5).

Table 1.Descriptive Statistics for Academic Resilience and Positive Thinking

variable	N	Range	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance
Academic Resilience	384	1–5	4.12	0.65	0.42
Positive Thinking	384	1–5	4.25	0.58	0.34

Table 2.Group Statistics for Gender Differences in Academic Resilience and Positive Thinking

Group Statistics							
	~~gender~~Gender	N	Mean	~~Std. Deviation~~ SD	T	DF	Sig
Academic Resilience	male	192	4.15	0.68	1.20	382	0.231
	female	192	4.00	0.72			
Positive Thinking	male	192	4.30	0.60	-1.44	382	0.152
	female	192	4.20	0.55			

Table 3.Multiple Comparisons for Year of Study, Living Situation, Academic Performance Differences in Academic Resilience

Multiple Comparisons						
Scheffe						
Dependent Variable	(I) Group	(J)Group	Mean Difference (I-J)	~~Std. Error~~ SE	~~Sig.~~ p	95% Confidence Interval
Year of	Year 1	Year 2	0.16	0.06	0.026	0.02 to 0.31

Study	Year 1	Year 3	0.18	0.06	0.010	0.04 to 0.32
	Year 1	Year 4	0.22	0.07	0.015	0.05 to 0.39
	Year 2	Year 3	0.02	0.06	0.716	-0.08 to 0.12
	Year 2	Year 4	0.06	0.07	0.412	-0.08 to 0.20
	Year 3	Year 4	0.04	0.07	0.590	-0.10 to 0.18
	Dormitory	With Family	0.23	0.06	0.001	0.11 to 0.36
Living Situation	Dormitory	Off-Campus	0.11	0.06	0.078	-0.02 to 0.23
	With Family	Off-Campus	-0.12	0.07	0.126	-0.27 to 0.02
	High (≥85%)	Medium (70–84%)	0.18	0.06	0.010	0.05 to 0.32
Academic Performance	High (≥85%)	Low (<70%)	0.30	0.08	0.000	0.14 to 0.46
	Medium (70–84%)	Low (<70%)	0.12	0.07	0.103	-0.02 to 0.26

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Table 4. Multiple Comparisons for Year of Study, Living Situation, Academic Performance Differences in Positive Thinking

Multiple Comparisons						
Scheffe						
Dependent Variable	(I) Group	((J) Group	Mean Difference (I-J)	~~Std. Error~~ SE	~~Sig.~~ p	95% Confidence Interval
Year of Study	Year 1	Year 2	0.14	0.05	0.030	0.02 to 0.26
	Year 1	Year 3	0.16	0.05	0.014	0.04 to 0.28
	Year 1	Year 4	0.09	0.06	0.174	-0.03 to 0.21
	Year 2	Year 3	0.02	0.05	0.715	-0.08 to 0.12
	Year 2	Year 4	-0.05	0.06	0.376	-0.17 to 0.07
	Year 3	Year 4	-0.07	0.06	0.268	-0.18 to 0.04
Living Situation	Dormitory	With Family	0.19	0.06	0.002	0.08 to 0.30
	Dormitory	Off-Campus	0.10	0.06	0.087	-0.01 to 0.22
	With Family	Off-Campus	-0.09	0.07	0.234	-0.23 to 0.05
Academic Performance	High (≥85%)	Medium (70–84%)	0.14	0.06	0.030	0.02 to 0.26

High (≥85%)	Low (<70%)	0.25	0.08	0.004	0.09 to 0.41
Medium (70–84%)	Low (<70%)	0.11	0.07	0.186	-0.03 to 0.25

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Table 5.Correlation Between Academic Resilience and Positive Thinking

Comment [T15]: Better to follow APA format for tabulations.

Correlations

		Academic Resilience	Positive Thinking
Academic Resilience	Pearson Correlation	1	0.512**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		(p < 0.01)
	N	348	348
Positive Thinking	Pearson Correlation	0.512**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	(p < 0.01)	
	N	348	348

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

5. DISCUSSION

This study highlights the pivotal role of positive thinking in fostering academic resilience among university students in Syria, a country deeply affected by the ongoing conflict. The findings emphasized that despite the overwhelming challenges posed by displacement, disrupted education, and the loss of family support, students exhibited remarkable resilience, primarily facilitated by positive thinking and self-efficacy. This aligns with existing research, which underscores that psychological resources such as optimism and belief in one's abilities are crucial in enhancing resilience (Kong, 2020). Specifically, students who maintained a positive academic outlook, despite the adversities surrounding them, were better able to manage academic stressors and persist in their studies. These findings are consistent with the work of Martin and Marsh (2009), who have stressed the importance of internal psychological resources in promoting resilience. In addition to psychological resources, the study found that social support particularly from family and peers was instrumental in sustaining students' academic engagement and fostering self-efficacy. This highlights the critical role that emotional and social resources play in helping students navigate educational challenges in conflict zones (Adhawiyah et al., 2021; Permatasari et al., 2021). Students who had access to social support reported higher levels of resilience, which reinforces the idea that both individual and collective resources are necessary for maintaining academic perseverance. However, the study also ~~reveals~~ revealed intriguing variations in resilience based on certain factors, such as the year of study and living situation. For example, students living in dormitories reported higher levels of resilience compared to those living with their families. This could be explained by the greater autonomy and control students in dormitories may experience, which can foster a stronger sense of self-efficacy. In contrast, students living with their families might be more vulnerable to familial stressors and the direct impact of the conflict on their home lives, which may hinder their ability to maintain a positive academic outlook. Further exploration into how different living situations influence resilience could provide valuable insights into the specific challenges faced by students in various environments.

6. CONCLUSION

This study has highlighted the critical role of positive thinking and resilience in academic success, particularly among university students in conflict-affected regions like Syria. The research ~~underscores~~ underscored that, despite significant challenges such as displacement, educational disruptions, and loss of family support, students can build resilience through psychological resources like self-efficacy, optimism, and grit. These factors, in combination with social support from peers and family, provide students with the strength to persist in their academic endeavors. The study demonstrates that resilience is not solely an individual trait but a dynamic process influenced by both internal and external factors, including personal beliefs and social networks. Given the prolonged conflict in Syria, where educational systems have been severely disrupted, the findings emphasize the need for educational institutions to focus on creating supportive environments that prioritize mental health, self-efficacy, and positive thinking. To improve academic outcomes, it is recommended that universities in conflict zones implement interventions that foster resilience, provide psychological support, and enhance coping mechanisms. These measures will not only help students overcome the challenges they face but also ensure their academic success and personal growth, even in the most adverse conditions.

CONSENT

The author(s) have collected and preserved the participants' written consent as per international or university standards.

DISCLAIMER (ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE)

The author(s) declare that generative AI technologies, including Grammarly (for grammar and style suggestions) and other AI-assisted tools, were utilized during the writing and editing process of this manuscript. The specific uses of AI are outlined as follows:

Grammar and spelling checks.

Suggestions for improving sentence clarity and coherence.

Refining style consistency throughout the manuscript.

Providing structural and formatting recommendations.

The author(s) reviewed, modified, and approved all AI-generated suggestions to ensure accuracy, originality, and alignment with the study's objectives.

The research content, data analysis, and conclusions were fully developed by the author(s), and AI tools were used solely to enhance the manuscript's language quality and readability.

REFERENCES

Adhawiyah, R., Rahayu, D., & Suhesty, A. (2021). The effect of academic resilience and social support towards student involvement in online lecture. *Gadjah Mada Journal of Psychology (GamaJoP)*, *7*(2), 212-224.

Alemi, Q., Panter-Brick, C., Oriya, S., Ahmady, M., Alimi, A. Q., Faiz, H., Hakim, N., Hashemi, S. A. S., Manaly, M. A., & Naseri, R. (2023). Afghan mental health and psychosocial well-being: thematic review of four decades of research and interventions. *BJPsych open*, *9*(4), e125.

Alvord, M. K., & Grados, J. J. (2005). Enhancing resilience in children: A proactive approach. *Professional psychology: research and practice*, *36*(3), 238.

Anderson, R. C., Beach, P. T., Jacovidis, M. J. N., & Chadwick, K. L. (2020). Academic buoyancy and resilience for diverse students around the world. *Inflexion, August*.

Ayhan, C. H., & Bilgin, H. (2024). The relation between self-efficacy, resilience, acculturative stress and mental health problems in Syrian youth: the mediating role of acculturation strategies. *Current Psychology*, 1-12.

Bandura, A. (1977). Self-efficacy: toward a unifying theory of behavioral change. *Psychological review*, *84*(2), 191.

Bandura, A., & Adams, N. E. (1977). Analysis of self-efficacy theory of behavioral change. *Cognitive therapy and research*, *1*(4), 287-310.

Bernecker, K., & Job, V. (2019). Mindset theory. *Social psychology in action: Evidence-based interventions from theory to practice*, 179-191.

Carver, C. S., & Scheier, M. F. (2014). Dispositional optimism. *Trends in cognitive sciences*, *18*(6), 293-299.

Chignell, A. (2023). The focus theory of hope. *The Philosophical Quarterly*, *73*(1), 44-63.
Dean, A. J., & Wilson, K. A. (2023). Relationships between hope, optimism, and conservation engagement. *Conservation Biology*, *37*(2), e14009.
Delshad, E. S., Nobahar, M., Raiesdana, N., Yarahmadi, S., & Saberian, M. (2023). Academic resilience, moral perfectionism, and self-compassion among undergraduate nursing students: A cross-sectional, multi-center study. *Journal of Professional Nursing*, *46*, 39-44.
Diab, S. Y., & Schultz, J.-H. (2021). Factors contributing to student academic underachievement in war and conflict: A multilevel qualitative study. *Teaching and teacher education*, *97*, 103211.
Diener, E., & Seligman, M. E. P. (2002). Very happy people. *Psychological science*, *13*(1), 81-84.
Dweck, C. S. (2006). *Mindset: The new psychology of success*. Random house.
Ishak, N., Yusoff, N., & Madihie, A. (2020). Resilience in mathematics, academic resilience, or mathematical resilience?: An overview. *Universal Journal of Educational Research*, *8*(5), 34-39.
Khamis, V. (2018). How can gender affect psychopathology in Lebanese school-age children? *Psychology in the Schools*, *55*(4), 404-418.
Kolb, R. (2009). *Martin Luther: Confessor of the faith*. OUP Oxford.
Kong, K. (2020). Academic resilience of pupils from low socioeconomic backgrounds. *The Journal of Behavioral Science*, *15*(2), 70-89.
Luthans, F., Avey, J. B., Avolio, B. J., Norman, S. M., & Combs, G. M. (2006). Psychological capital development: toward a micro-intervention. *Journal of Organizational Behavior: The International Journal of Industrial, Occupational and Organizational Psychology and Behavior*, *27*(3), 387-393.
Mahdieh, N., Hooman, F., & Asgari, P. (2024). A structural model of academic performance based on the meaning of education and academic optimism for students of medical sciences: The mediating role of stress. *Research and Development in Medical Education*, *13*(1), 12-12.
Martin, A. J., & Marsh, H. W. (2006). Academic resilience and its psychological and educational correlates: A construct validity approach. *Psychology in the Schools*, *43*(3), 267-281.
Martin, A. J., & Marsh, H. W. (2009). Academic resilience and academic buoyancy: Multidimensional and hierarchical conceptual framing of causes, correlates and cognate constructs. *Oxford Review of Education*, *35*(3), 353-370.
Masten, A. S. (2001). Ordinary magic: Resilience processes in development. *American psychologist*, *56*(3), 227.
Meneghel, I., Martínez, I. M., Salanova, M., & De Witte, H. (2019). Promoting academic satisfaction and performance: Building academic resilience through coping strategies. *Psychology in the Schools*, *56*(6), 875-890.
Nagi, Y., Sender, H., Orcutt, M., Fouad, F., Burgess, R. A., & Devakumar, D. (2021). Resilience as a communal concept: Understanding adolescent resilience in the context of the Syrian refugee crisis in Bar Elias, Lebanon. *Journal of Migration and Health*, *3*, 100046. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jmh.2021.100046
Paterson, T. S. E., Yeung, S. E., & Thornton, W. L. (2016). Positive affect predicts everyday problem-solving ability in older adults. *Aging & Mental Health*, *20*(8), 871-879.
Permatasari, N., Ashari, F. R., & Ismail, N. (2021). Contribution of perceived social support (peer, family, and teacher) to academic resilience during COVID-19. *Golden Ratio of Social Science and Education*, *1*(1), 01-12.
Qaddour, K., & Husain, S. (2022). Syria's education crisis: A sustainable approach after 11 years of conflict. *Middle Eastern Institute*.

Rand, K. L., Shanahan, M. L., Fischer, I. C., & Fortney, S. K. (2020). Hope and optimism as predictors of academic performance and subjective well-being in college students. *Learning and Individual differences*, *81*, 101906.

Rasmussen, B., Sheehan, P., Symons, J., Maharaj, N., Welsh, A., & Kumnick, M. (2022). Syria Education and Development Investment Case: Economic, Social and Psychological Costs and Risks Resulting from Not Investing in Education Systems in Syria: Report to UNICEF Syria.

Ross, P. M., Scanes, E., & Locke, W. (2023). Stress adaptation and resilience of academics in higher education. *ASIA PACIFIC EDUCATION REVIEW*, 1-21.

Rutter, M. (1987). Psychosocial resilience and protective mechanisms. *American journal of orthopsychiatry*, *57*(3), 316-331.

Seligman, J., & Moss, L. S. (1997). Situation theory. In *Handbook of logic and language* (pp. 239-309). Elsevier.

Seligman, M. E. P. (2011). Building resilience. *Harvard business review*, *89*(4), 100-106.

Singh, J. K. N. (2021). Academic resilience among international students: lived experiences of postgraduate international students in Malaysia. *ASIA PACIFIC EDUCATION REVIEW*, *22*(1), 129-138.

Taylor, S. E., & Stanton, A. L. (2007). Coping resources, coping processes, and mental health. *Annu. Rev. Clin. Psychol.*, *3*(1), 377-401.

Thabet, A. A., Elhelou, M., & Vostanis, P. (2017). Prevalence of PTSD, depression, and anxiety among orphaned children in the Gaza Strip. *EC Paediatr*, *5*(6), 159-169.

Wagner, M. (2023). Developing a Positive Self-Talk Toolbox.