Original Research Article

Building Academic Resilience through Positive Thinking - A Study of University Students in Syria

ABSTRACT

This study examined the role of positive thinking and academic resilience in academic success among Syrian university students. A quantitative research design was utilized, with data collected from 384 students (50% male, 50% female) through stratified sampling. The study measured academic resilience and positive thinking using validated scales that assessed optimism, self-efficacy, and social support. Descriptive analysis showed high levels of academic resilience and positive thinking. Gender differences were non-significant, while academic year, living situation, and academic performance were associated with variations in resilience and positive thinking. A significant positive correlation was found between academic resilience and positive thinking. The findings highlight that students with higher resilience and positive thinking exhibited greater academic persistence and success. Optimism and self-efficacy emerged as crucial factors, while social support, especially from family and peers, played a key role in sustaining academic efforts. These results underscore the importance of fostering supportive learning environments to enhance students' resilience and overall academic achievement in conflict-affected regions 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 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. These disruptions have led to significant gaps in students' educational experiences, making it essential to explore factors that can promote resilience and help students navigate these challenges. 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). Academic resilience encompasses not only the capacity to maintain or enhance performance despite adversity but also the ability to regulate emotions and thoughts, which is crucial for overcoming challenges in educational settings. Emotion regulation and positive cognitive beliefs, such as self-efficacy, contribute significantly to academic resilience(Namaziandost et al., 2023). 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. Positive thinking was chosen as the primary variable in this study due to its proven potential to enhance self-efficacy, optimism, and coping strategies, all of which are crucial for fostering resilience in the face of adversity. 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. Specifically, the study aims to examine how positive thinking influences students' ability to overcome educational challenges in conflict-affected environments. 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.

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), 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 growth opportunities. Similarly, Luthans (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 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. Research by Namaziandost et al (2023) suggests that self-efficacy beliefs, supported by emotional regulation and critical thinking, enable students to better navigate academic stress and engage with academic tasks in a more focused and determined manner(Namaziandost et al., 2023). 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. Critical thinking, which involves evaluating and adjusting one's cognitive strategies, plays a role in sustaining perseverance in challenging academic contexts. Emotion regulation, as explored by Namaziandost et al (2023) aids in maintaining focus and motivation even in difficult academic situations(Namaziandost et al., 2023). 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. However, students from lower-income backgrounds often face additional stressors, such as financial 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.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).

While existing literature has explored various aspects of academic resilience, there are several areas that remain underexplored, particularly in conflict-affected regions. For instance, while studies such as Ayhan & Bilgin (2024) have noted the role of community support in conflict zones, few studies have specifically examined how positive thinking impacts resilience among university students in these settings. This study aims to fill this gap by investigating the role of positive thinking as a critical factor in building academic resilience in Syrian university students, particularly in the context of their socio-political challenges. Furthermore, while Bandura's (1977) work on self-efficacy has been widely cited, the interaction between self-efficacy and positive thinking in fostering resilience has not been adequately addressed in the context of Middle Eastern students. This study will explore this relationship and its influence on academic persistence and success.

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. Stratified sampling was employed to ensure that key demographic variables, such as gender, , and academic year, were proportionally represented within the sample. This approach allows for a more precise understanding of how these factors may influence the relationship between positive thinking and academic resilience. By ensuring balanced representation, the stratified sampling technique minimizes bias and ensures that findings are generalizable to the broader population of university students in Syria. The final sample consisted of 384 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:

The Positive Thinking Skills Scale (PTSS), developed by Bekhet and Zauszniewski, measures the degree of positive thinking, optimism, and constructive thinking in individuals. The 8 items on the PTSS are rated on a Likert scale, with higher scores reflecting a stronger inclination toward 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.

Both the Positive Thinking Skills Scale (PTSS) and the Academic Resilience Scale (ARS-30) were reviewed for cultural relevance prior to use in the Syrian context. While these scales have been widely used in other populations, careful attention was given to ensuring their appropriateness for Syrian university students. No major adaptations were made to the PTSS, as the construct of positive thinking is universally understood. However, some minor adjustments were made to the ARS-30, particularly with regards to language and examples used in items, to ensure they resonate with students' experiences in the Syrian context. These adjustments were reviewed by experts familiar with both the original scales and the cultural setting to ensure their continued validity and reliability

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. Ethical considerations were carefully addressed throughout the study. In addition to obtaining informed consent from participants, the researchers ensured the confidentiality and anonymity of all respondents. Identifiable information was not collected, and data were stored securely to prevent unauthorized access. Participants were also informed of their right to withdraw from the study at any time without any negative consequences. 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

4. RESULTS

The participants in this study were grouped according to their gender, 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 = 4.12, SD = 0.65) and positive thinking (mean = 4.25, SD = 0.58). The variance for academic resilience was 0.42, while for positive thinking, it was 0.34 These standard deviations suggest that while the participants' scores are generally clustered around the mean, there is a moderate degree of variability in both measures (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 = 4.15, SD = 0.68) and females (mean = 4.00, SD = 0.72), with t = 1.20, df = 382, *P* = 0.231. Similarly, for positive thinking, no significant difference was found between males (mean = 4.30, SD = 0.60) and females (mean = 4.20, SD = 0.55), with t = -1.44, df = 382, *P* = 0.152 These results indicate that gender does not significantly influence academic resilience or positive thinking in this sample. To provide a more comprehensive understanding of these findings, effect sizes (Cohen's d) were also calculated. For academic resilience, Cohen's d = 0.23, indicating a small effect size, while for positive thinking, Cohen's d = 0.18, reflecting a very small effect size. These effect sizes suggest that although gender differences were not statistically significant, the practical differences between males and females in terms of academic resilience and positive thinking are minimal. (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 found between Year 1 and Year 2 (mean difference = 0.16, *P* = 0.026), Year 1 and Year 3 (mean difference = 0.18, *P* = 0.010), and Year 1 and Year 4 (mean difference = 0.22, *P* = 0.015). However, no significant differences were observed between Year 2 and Year 3 (*P* = 0.716), Year 2 and Year 4 (*P* = 0.412), or Year 3 and Year 4 (*P* = 0.590) (Table 3). For positive thinking, significant differences were observed between Year 1 and Year 2 (mean difference = 0.14, *P* = 0.030) and Year 1 and Year 3 (mean difference = 0.16, *P* = 0.014). No significant differences were found between Year 1 and Year 4 (*P* = 0.174), Year 2 and Year 3 (*P* = 0.715), Year 2 and Year 4 (*P* = 0.376), or Year 3 and Year 4 (*P* = 0.268) (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* = 0.001). However, no significant difference was found between students living in dormitories and those living off-campus (mean difference = 0.11, *P* = 0.078), or between students living with family and those living off-campus (mean difference = -0.12, *P* = 0.126) (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* = 0.002), while no significant differences were found between those living in dormitories and those living off-campus (mean difference = 0.10, *P* = 0.087), or between students living with family and those living off-campus (mean difference = -0.09, *P* = 0.234) (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* = 0.010) and low (<70%) academic performance (mean difference = 0.30, *P* = 0.000). However, no significant difference was found between students with medium and low academic performance (mean difference = 0.12, *P* = 0.103) (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* = 0.030) and low academic performance (mean difference = 0.25, *P* = 0.004). No significant difference was observed between students with medium and low academic performance (mean difference = 0.11, *P* = 0.186) (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* < 0.01), suggesting that higher levels of positive thinking are associated with higher levels of academic resilience (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	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	T	DF	Sig	Cohen's d
Academic Resilience	male	192	4.15	0.68	1.20	382	0.231	0.23
	female	192	4.00	0.72				
Positive Thinking	male	192	4.30	0.60	-1.44	382	0.152	0.18
	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	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval
Year of Study	Year 1	Year 2	0.16	0.06	0.026	0.02 to 0.31
	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	Sig.	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

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 emphasize 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 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 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. In light of these findings, fostering resilience among students in conflict zones holds the potential to create a more resilient generation that can not only overcome immediate academic challenges but also contribute to the long-term rebuilding and stability of their communities. Educational institutions in conflict zones must adopt interventions that nurture resilience, provide psychological support, and enhance coping mechanisms. Such efforts will ensure students' academic success, foster personal growth, and ultimately play a pivotal role in the broader process of social and educational recovery in regions recovering from conflict.

CONSENT

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

DISCLAIMER (ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE)

Author(s) hereby declare that NO generative AI technologies such as Large Language Models (ChatGPT, COPILOT, etc.) and text-to-image generators have been used during the writing or editing of this manuscript

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.

1- Suggestions for improving sentence clarity and coherence.

2- Refining style consistency throughout the manuscript.

3- 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.

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