

# Positive Thinking and Its Relationship with Aggressive Behavior among University Students in Riyadh

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## **ABSTRACT**

There are religious teachings that promote optimism, positivity, a sense of security, confidence, the ability to appreciate and evaluate things, think deeply, wisely, balance, and rationally, self-acceptance, openness to others, and a sense of responsibility. These ideas encourage young people to seek stability and optimism while supporting their careers. The university acts as an environment that helps students prepare for this and keeps them away from anything that might harm their future family development, morals, dignity, or manhood. Those who possess positive personality traits are driven by positive thinking that reflects their beliefs, convictions, and happy, optimistic thinking, thus influencing their behavior and leading them to a positive quality of life.

**Keywords:** Positivity, Confidence, University, Students

## **Introduction:**

God created man and endowed him with a mind so that he could think, and equipped him with various skills that enable him to face life's pressures positively and live in peace and psychological harmony that aids him in success. Thus, we find that man goes through different stages of growth, each with its own characteristics and requirements related to the stages of growth it prepares for. The university stage is expected to enable the student to develop skills such as rational and logical thinking and awareness that assist them in daily interactions with their requirements. There is no doubt that at this stage of life and during university, he may have socially acceptable beliefs, convictions, and ideas that yield positive results (Hamdan 1990, Al-Sayed 2010), reflecting positively and rationally on his daily behavior.

On the contrary, a university student's or anyone else's negative and pessimistic thinking can lead them to wrong behaviors, including moral or material aggression towards themselves or others in their environment. If this happens, it will cause them various emotional psychological disturbances that will hinder their ability to continue their lives with balance, especially as they transition from university to a professional

life that requires control and calmness. If his thoughts are filled with optimism, happiness, love, sincerity, trust, and resilience, this will make him a balanced person, capable of reason, wisdom, self-control, altruism, and patience when dealing with those around him and with himself as well. But if an individual's thinking, especially that of a university student, is the opposite—negative and pessimistic and does not appreciate things—he may have a great chance of entering into psychological and emotional crises that could lead to psychological disorders, causing him to lose stability. Kate (2005) mentioned that positive thinking is very important because an individual can shape their thinking style, so if they choose to think positively, they can thereby distance themselves from unpleasant feelings and those that cause problems.

On the other hand, Rustamov et al. (2023) confirmed that one of the strongest indicators for those who use positive thinking in their lives is their enjoyment and sense of well-being, which leads to better mental health. In the same context, Scott (2002) indicated that an individual's use of positive thinking is what drives them to achieve a happy life, enabling them to accomplish their desires with self-confidence, sincerity in their interactions, openness to themselves and others, acceptance of them, and balance in their behavior and interaction with the difficulties they encounter. This is because the negative, pessimistic behaviors they exhibit, such as aggression, or positive, optimistic behaviors, such as happiness, are merely reflections of their thinking and what their beliefs and convictions represent in their behavior. Therefore, the issue of aggressive behavior among university students is considered one of the important matters that deserve study. Because negative thinking can have an impact on increasing this type of behavior. Farid and Harish (2018).

### **The Study problem:**

It seems that the relationship between positive thinking and aggressive behavior or violence in individuals, especially university students, is unclear and intertwined with other factors, requiring research and study. Especially since the individual has transitioned from adolescence to the early stages of youth, aggressive behavior may be linked and influenced by the stages of childhood and adolescence that precede youth, which are characterized by intellectual, emotional, and physiological development. Hamdawi (2020) and Dawy (2021) indicated that adolescence is one of the most important stages of development, as the individual may be affected by the incorrect and incompatible intellectual beliefs and convictions acquired during this stage, causing these ideas to carry over into youth. This may cause his issue of not using positive thinking to persist into his youth, which is part of his university study phase. Consequently, his lack of practicing positive thinking skills might make university students prone to problems, primarily aggressive behavior to meet their needs due to the young person's loss of emotional control and balance, feelings of inferiority and misjudgment, loss of flexibility, and inability to find alternative solutions to difficult situations. Each or some of these elements might drive the young person to express himself aggressively due to the lack of logical and rational positive thinking skills and methods, and it might even put him at risk of falling into several psychological and emotional disorders, making him psychologically unstable and aggressive. (Cen et al 2020., Zhang et al., 2022 Kemal et al 2023).

Therefore, we find that individuals with negative, pessimistic, and selfish thinking, as well as those who experience frustration, failure, or fear, resort to aggressive behavior to confront life and meet their needs. This negative thinking reflects in their daily behavior, making them far from psychological well-being and in constant conflict with others. (Whitney et al 2019)

Al-Assar (2015) confirmed that those who hold negative thoughts and beliefs deal with the situations they encounter in an illogical or incorrect manner. Accordingly, it can be said that the most significant reaction to this is the individual's resort to aggressive behavior, because emotions and feelings, whether negative or positive, are a result of the thinking practiced by the individual. This includes exaggeration, impulsiveness, assumptions, and incorrect generalizations that form as convictions and beliefs shaped by the individual's negative thinking, making them incompatible with reality and interaction with it (Al-Hassan, 2019).

Al-Araji and Al-Mashhadani (1977) point out that aggressive behavior has become a problem facing society and will continue if not addressed, especially if there are psychological, social, and economic stimuli and issues that fuel it. Undoubtedly, university students are part of this society. For his part, Abd al-Samad (2002) confirmed that aggressive behavior affects individual stability and relationships among community members and hinders development. In the same context, Al-Duriji (2014) affirmed that aggressive behavior is widespread among community segments, including university students, despite the scientific advancements occurring in all fields.

And in light of what has been reviewed regarding the topic related to positive thinking and its relationship with aggressive behavior among university students, it becomes clear to the researcher that there is a need to investigate the validity of this relationship. In other words, this study will focus on determining the level of positive thinking and the level of aggressive behavior among university students in Riyadh. From the researcher's experience in university teaching, who observed the importance of promoting positive thinking as a means to reduce negative behaviors and practices, including aggressive behavior among university students, especially those in their first-year levels, which contributes to creating a more positive, stable, cooperative, and successful university environment in the present and future.

Therefore, the problem of the study is summarized in examining the relationship between positive thinking and aggressive behavior among university students in Riyadh. It is well known that university students are the future generation and are about to build society with their important work, and they need a stable and balanced environment to face that. Based on that, we can now move on to the study questions that aim to explore this relationship in a deeper and more precise manner.

### **The Study questions:**

1- What is the level of positive thinking among first-year students at public universities in Riyadh?

- 2- What is the level of aggressive behavior among first-year students at public universities in Riyadh?
- 3- What is the relationship between the level of positive thinking and aggressive behavior among first-year students at government universities in Riyadh?

### **The Study hypotheses:**

- 1- There is a high level of positive thinking among first-year students at public universities in Riyadh.
- 2- There is a low level of aggressive behavior among first-year students at public universities in Riyadh.
- 3- There is no statistically significant relationship between positive thinking and aggressive behavior among first-year students at government universities in Riyadh.

### **The Study objectives:**

- A - Identifying the level of positive thinking among first-year students at public universities in Riyadh.
- B - Identifying the level of aggressive behavior among first-year students at public universities in Riyadh.
- C – Identifying the relationship between the level of positive thinking and aggressive behavior among first-year students at government universities in Riyadh.

### **The importance of the study: -**

#### **Scientific importance.**

- The importance of the study lies in shedding light on the topic of developing positive thinking, which will add a cognitive aspect that demonstrates strength.
- And the skill of positive thinking and its impact on the behavior and personality of the university student, who will be presented in the future in a work environment that requires the stability that helps him succeed in his future.
- The study will enrich the cognitive aspect by addressing the two variables (positive thinking and aggressive behavior) and the importance of shedding light on them.
- And understanding the relationship between them, which benefits the accused and specialists in this field.

#### **Practical importance:**

- The study's results will help in creating programs and courses to reduce the problem of aggressive behavior and its triggering factors, ensuring a stable life for the student to complete their work and progress successfully.
- Faculty members will benefit from conducting awareness courses for students to develop positive thinking and steer clear of aggressive behavior, which makes

Understanding and interaction between students and members, as well as among the students themselves and the community, are free from conflicts and problems, driving achievement and success.

- The study's results and information will contribute to opening counseling and guidance clinics and support training programs to help students who have engaged in aggressive behavior to overcome it and prevent those who might fall into it.

### **The Study limitations:**

**Objective limitations:** A study of the relationship between positive thinking and aggressive behavior among male students regularly enrolled in their first year at public universities in Riyadh.

**Spatial limitations:** This study was conducted in universities in Riyadh City, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

**Time limitations:** This study was conducted during the academic year 1446 AH.

### **Definition of terms:**

#### **A-Positive thinking:**

Seligman (2003:160) defined it as "the use or focus on the positive outcomes of an individual's mind on what is constructive and good to eliminate destructive or negative thoughts, replacing them with positive thoughts and feelings."

Abu Zaid (2021: 648) defines it as "a set of mental skills that maximize an individual's effectiveness and energy to the fullest extent possible to harness positive emotions."

Abdul Sattar (2008: 111) defines it as "developing the strengths in an individual's thinking and behavior, and helping the individual discover the positive aspects that achieve a lot of success, excellence, personal happiness, and self-satisfaction."

The researcher adopts Abdul Sattar's definition, which is operationally defined and measured by the total score obtained by the student in response to the Positive Thinking Scale prepared by Abdul Sattar (2008).

#### **B- Aggressive behavior :-**

Amara (2008: 18) defines it as "any behavior that can be observed, identified, and measured, taking various forms or shapes. It can be physical or verbal, direct or indirect, characterized by continuity and repetition, and is expressed as an individual's deviation from social norms, resulting in physical, psychological, and material harm to others. This behavior may also lead to self-harm."

Baza (2003) defined aggressive behavior as "a behavior aimed at causing harm to others, whether that harm is physical or psychological." This behavior includes a range of actions that may be physical, such as hitting or kicking, verbal, such as insults and mockery, or even psychological, such as threats and intimidation. I defined it in four basic dimensions of aggressive behavior, where I indicated that one dimension is physical aggressive behavior, which means causing harm to others or oneself, and it is expressed in a direct and clear manner, such as hitting and breaking. And after

verbal aggressive behavior, which means the verbal response to the other party, such as using foul language or sarcasm, and after hostility, which means implicit and indirect responses like criticizing others. And after anger, it includes distress, tension, difficulty in mood regulation and its fluctuations, and intolerance to others' criticism and mistakes" (in Briam 2017: 377).

The researcher adopts the definition of Baza (2003) and defines it operationally as the score obtained by the respondent on the Aggressive Behavior Scale from Baza (2016) used in this study.

## **Theoretical framework and previous studies:**

### **First, the theoretical framework.**

#### **1- Positive thinking.**

Positive thinking is considered one of the main elements of positive psychology, as it originated and the interest in positive psychology became what it is today since 1999 AD at the hands of the scientist Martin Seligman, who is considered the true and actual founder of positive psychology with his colleagues: "Mihaly" Mihaly, Eddins Diener, Peterson and others. This branch of psychology pushed the study to focus on positive aspects such as: (happiness, virtues, ethics, reassurance, hope, stability, appreciation, contentment, optimism, confidence, altruism, courage, honesty, and wisdom, instead of focusing and caring about negative aspects and topics such as: (anxiety, fear, depression, aggression, deviation, and psychological and emotional disorders of all kinds) (Abdul Khaliq 2004, Barbakh 2015, and Younis 2015).

According to Staudinger & Aspinwall (2003), positive psychology, which considers positive thinking one of its most important components, focuses on studying three main axes, which are:

The first section: It focuses on positive subjective experiences, such as flourishing, well-being, psychological, emotional, and social happiness, religiosity, hope, interpretation or attribution style, positivity and emotions, positive thinking, emotional empathy, and gratitude.

The second section: It studies working values and virtues (the strengths of character) that relate to the personal level and its alignment and organization with oneself and others, characterized by a number of positive and common values in the positive human personality, which are believed to be universal, including tolerance, justice, humility, perseverance, vitality, and religiosity. (Park., Peterson & Seligman 2006 )

The third section: It aims to study personality in a specific social context, and also aims to elevate organizations and institutions to positive entities at the general level, not just at the individual level. Among its most important topics are those related to studying the relationship between management and subordinates in the workplace, the relationship between classrooms involving cooperation and positive competition, in order to form an organization and institution based on the development of the positive aspect to contribute to education and achieve good citizenship, (in Younes 2-1: 2015).

Seligman et al. (2000) indicate that positive thinking is reflected in an individual's optimism. The more optimistic a person is, the more their beliefs, convictions, and overall thoughts are positive, which confidently drives them away from negative pessimism. This will be reflected in their behavior and actions, allowing them to interact with life positively. As Seligman and Powelski (2003) indicate, positive thinking is the use of the mind positively to eliminate destructive negative thoughts and replace them with constructive positive thoughts and beliefs.

Ellis and Griger (1986), proponents of the "rational emotive therapy" theory, emphasize that thinking and emotion are intertwined and interconnected. What an individual thinks reflects on their feelings and emotions, whether negatively or positively, and this is manifested in their daily behavior. Irrational and illogical thinking, along with the negative beliefs it represents, leads to negative behavior in dealing with reality, and vice versa.

On the other hand, Abdulaziz (2012) points out that troubles and negative thinking lead individuals into psychological and emotional problems and disorders such as anxiety, fear, alienation, and aggression, as well as falling into psychosomatic crises like health deterioration and the occurrence of psychological disorders. These are nothing but the result of negative thinking that supports despair, helplessness, and failure, which negatively affects both the psychological and physical aspects due to life's pressures and the absence of positive thinking.

### **Dimensions of positive thinking:**

There are different dimensions of positive behavior that an individual acknowledges as a result of positive thinking. Among these dimensions are: the personal dimension, which develops through various stages of growth and is a component of personality building, through beliefs and convictions formed by the individual's personal thinking, carrying optimism, flexibility, transcendence, confidence, hope, cooperation, satisfaction, competence, and empathy with others to reach the best ways to interact with life and fulfill basic needs. This indicates that thinking does not stop at a certain stage of growth but is continuous and influenced by each stage of growth, accompanied by individual, social, and civilizational maturity and development. These are considered determinants of positive behavior. Mahmoud (2012), Barbak (2015).

And Bashir "Peter" pointed out that life situations, social events, and the pressures individuals face require quality thinking, emotional and mental maturity, good judgment, decision-making, and situational assessment, as well as flexibility and avoidance of daily complications. When an individual is capable of thinking, gathering facts, evaluating, and benefiting from life experiences, they become more organized, balanced, controlled, rational, independent, proactive, perseverant, resilient, moderate, adaptable, and self-disciplined. All of these represent the personality traits of someone who uses positive thinking. Hence, the importance of developing positive thinking to achieve a better life, (in Barbak, 2015).

The researcher believes that developing university students' positive thinking makes them more accomplished, effective, and responsive in a refined manner. Collective thinking becomes more productive and responsive, both to themselves and to others,

as well as to their surrounding environment. This creates psychological stability and security, leading to a problem-free life that enables them to succeed.

Bashir Al-Tayeb (2010) indicated that positive thinking fosters healthy and positive behavior to cope with life's pressures, leading to psychological stability. Similarly, Belciug (1992) explained that an individual with positive thinking, which reflects on their personal side, will experience a decrease in fear and anxiety, helping them with life's problems and granting them the confidence and ability to assess situations, ultimately achieving a stable life. This is confirmed by Hijazi (2012), who points out that positive thinking gives its possessor a more effective ability and readiness to face problems and overcome the difficulties and complexities they encounter. Therefore, positive thinking is associated with success in life.

### **Theories explaining positive thinking:**

Seligman mentioned that optimism and pessimism are two styles of thinking through which we can interpret and understand an individual's reality and what happens within it. Therefore, what an individual carries and forms in their mind is what optimism and pessimism provide them. In other words, optimism and pessimism stem from their thinking style and the experiences they go through, including their upbringing, (Barzangi 2010).

Seligman (2003, Seligman & Pawelski) pointed out that one of the dimensions of positive thinking is the positive expectations for the future and what an individual strives to achieve in order to reach success. These dimensions also include the individual's feelings of empathy, happiness, and reassurance in their interactions with others. The concept of an individual's positive self depends on their beliefs and thoughts, such as satisfaction with their life and its quality and their evaluation of it, which helps them build a happy and positive life entirely based on their way of thinking and outlook on life.

### **2- Aggressive behavior:**

At every stage of development, there is aggressive behavior that corresponds with it, and the manifestations of aggressive behavior vary according to the individual's upbringing and education, the culture of the society, the economic and social level, the gender (male-female), and also the age (Badawi, 2011).

On the other hand, aggressive behavior is agreed upon as something that does not align with societal standards and is unacceptable. Nevertheless, it is a learned behavior and not something an individual is born with. Therefore, it can be modified and limited due to the ability to observe and measure it, as it manifests physical and verbal aggression, exhibits continuity and repetition, and is harmful to others (Ben Halil, 2014; Al-Jundi, 2021).

There is a form of aggression that is covert, hidden, and not apparent, such as envy, hatred, jealousy, resentment, contempt, and insulting a person by not looking at them to belittle them (Al-Zlitni, 2014).

Al-Wahidi and Shu'ayb (2023) indicated that aggressive behavior is a response to a state of frustration, where the aggressive individual directs their behavior towards the source of frustration to confront and overcome it. They may direct it towards another

target when confronting the actual source of frustration fails to discharge the emotion. Aggression is a result of an angry reaction to what the individual feels as distress and anxiety. Al-Wahidi and Shu'ayb confirmed that among the characteristics of a person with impulsive behavior are the following: lack of rational thinking and reasoning, inability to control and regulate emotions, hatred and jealousy, inability to resist pressures, inflexibility, feelings of rejection and inadequacy, selfishness and narcissism, rebellion against systems and contempt for authority, bullying and intimidation, inability to assess problems to solve them, poor adaptation to reality. Therefore, you find them resorting to aggression to meet their needs as a way to obtain them, which leads them into problems and poor adjustment to their social and environmental surroundings.

Aggressive behavior can be theoretically explained, as the "Psychoanalytic School" indicated that aggression is instinctual, oscillating between the "life instinct" and the "death instinct." The school led by Freud views aggression as an energy that a person expends on others through unacceptable means to overcome feelings of inferiority and frustration. This energy must be satisfied, which is why aggression occurs (Al-Masri, 2006; Freud, 2000).

On the other hand, the "behavioral school" sees aggression as a behavior learned from the environment between a stimulus and a response, which is then reinforced. Therefore, aggression becomes a response that appears when an individual feels frustrated (stimulus) (Al-Mahi and Maki, 2015, and Butros, 2010). This trend is supported by the "Social Learning Theory," which asserts that aggressive behavior is a learned behavior just like any other behavior that an individual learns from society (Hegazi, 1995, and Badawi, 2011).

Crick and Dodge (1994), as scholars interested in the "Cognitive Information Processing Theory," believe that aggressive behavior arises from the interaction between different components that are completed during the steps of information processing. Proper information processing leads to socially acceptable normal behavior, whereas deficiencies and inadequacies in processing information and dealing with reality as it should lead to aggressive behavior. Therefore, an individual's behavior is the result of a cognitive reservoir of previous experiences, whether normal or abnormal.

## **Secondly: Previous studies:**

### **1-Studies on positive thinking and its dimensions:-**

Karaj (2005) conducted a study on emotional intelligence and its relationship with feelings of anger and aggression among students of the Faculty of Education, Basic Education Department, at the University of Alexandria. The study sample consisted of 142 students from the first-year Basic Education Department, comprising 65 male students and 77 female students. The research results revealed the following: statistically significant differences in feelings of anger in favor of those with low emotional intelligence, similar differences in aggressive behavior in favor of those with low emotional intelligence, and differences in feelings of anger in favor of males and in feelings of aggression in favor of males.

Refaat (2005) conducted a study aimed at investigating the relationship between altruism variables, self-actualization, and personality dimensions. The sample consisted of (300) male and female students from the Faculty of Education in Port Said. The study results revealed a significant relationship between self-actualization, altruism, and personality variables.

Al-Farra (2006) conducted a study aimed at identifying the level of positivity among university students, in addition to determining the basic components of positivity. The sample consisted of 684 male and female students from Palestinian universities in the Gaza Strip. The study results revealed that the five components of positivity in the personalities of university students are: creativity, self-esteem, assertiveness, emotional stability, and ego strength.

Wong (2012) in his study addresses positive thinking versus negative thinking and its relationship with well-being – psychological happiness and poor psychological adjustment. Three hundred and ninety-eight university students from Singapore participated in this study. First, positive thinking was positively associated with indicators of psychological well-being—life satisfaction and happiness—and negatively associated with indicators of mental illnesses—stress, anxiety, depression, and anger. Conversely, negative thinking was positively associated with indicators of psychological disorders—stress, anxiety, depression, and anger—and negatively associated with indicators of psychological well-being—life satisfaction and happiness.

Alwan and Al-Nawajha (2013) conducted a study aimed at identifying emotional intelligence and its relationship with positivity among students at Al-Aqsa University in the Gaza Strip. The sample consisted of 247 male and female students. The study results revealed statistically significant differences between males and females in emotional intelligence and positivity in favor of females, as well as statistically significant differences between students in scientific and literary majors in favor of students in scientific majors. The low level of positivity among some individuals is attributed to unsound parental upbringing methods and low economic, social, and cultural levels.

Abdullah's (2017) study aimed to identify the level of positive thinking and its relationship with life satisfaction and perfectionism among a sample of university students. The sample consisted of (100) male and female students from the Faculty of Education at Ain Shams University. The study found that there is an inverse relationship between positive thinking and perfectionism, and it also found a positive relationship between life satisfaction and perfectionism. In other words, students who have a high level of positive thinking tend to feel more satisfied with their lives and exhibit higher levels of perfectionism. The study also found a positive relationship between positive thinking and life fulfillment.

The research conducted by Al-Mahdawi and Al-Ta'i (2017) aims to identify the level of positive thinking among university students. The sample size was 667 students, and the researchers reached the following conclusion: university students possess positive thinking.

The study by Askar and Karim (2018) aims to identify the relationship between emotional creativity and positive thinking among university students. The study sample consisted of 400 students from the University of Baghdad. After data analysis, the results showed that university students have a high level of positive thinking and emotional creativity.

The study by Al-Waeel (2021) aimed to identify positive thinking and its relationship with dimensions of mental health among female students of the College of Education at Princess Nourah bint Abdulrahman University in Riyadh, with a sample size of 201 students. And the results reached included the existence of a positive correlation between positive thinking and mental health, significant at the level (0,01).

The study aimed (2021). To identify the relationship between self-confidence and positive thinking among first-year students at the Faculty of Education, Omdurman Islamic University, the researcher used the correlational descriptive method. The study population consisted of first-year students (Faculty of Education), with a sample size of 113 students (34 male and 79 female). The researcher reached the following conclusions: positive thinking among first-year students at the Faculty of Education is high, and there is a statistically significant correlation between self-confidence and positive thinking.

The study by Mazari et al. (2021) aimed to uncover the relationship between positive thinking and psychological well-being. A sample of 50 university students studying at Lounici Ali University in Blida showed that university students have a high level of psychological well-being. It was also found that there is a strong relationship between positive thinking and psychological well-being among the study sample.

The study by Rafat (2021) aimed to explore the relationship between positive thinking and quality of life among university students. The Positive Thinking Scale and the Quality of Life Scale were used to collect data from a sample of 200 students from Sohag University. The results showed a strong positive relationship between positive thinking and quality of life, as students who have positive thinking tend to feel a higher quality of life. The study also showed that positive thinking can be an important factor in improving the quality of life for university students.

Al-Dulaimi (2021) conducted a study aimed at measuring the level of positive thinking among students at the University of Mosul. The main research sample consisted of 958 male and female students from the faculties of the University of Mosul. The results showed that the students of the University of Mosul have an average level of positive thinking.

Abdul Hafiz (2024) sought to identify the positive self-directed attention and its relationship with aggressive behavior among university students. The study relied on the correlational descriptive method and the sample consisted of 500 students from the University of Baghdad. The study reached the following conclusions: university students possess a well-directed and high level of positive self-attention, and they exhibit a low level of aggressive behavior. And that having a high level of positive self-directed attention among university students means that the level of aggressive behavior was low.

Basharat (2024) conducted a study aimed at identifying the levels of positive thinking, optimism, and life satisfaction among Palestinian university students in the northern West Bank in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. The study sample consisted of 200 male and female students from Palestinian universities in the northern West Bank. The study reached several conclusions, the most important of which were that the levels of positive thinking, optimism, and life satisfaction among university students in the northern West Bank during the COVID-19 pandemic were high. It was also found that there is a positive relationship between positive thinking and both optimism and life satisfaction, as well as a positive relationship between optimism and life satisfaction.

### **Secondly: Studies on violent behavior:-**

The study aims. (2003) To identify the basic features of aggressive behavior among a sample of male and female students in the secondary (N=310) and university (N=209) stages, the factor analysis of the scale items revealed six factors measuring aggressive behavior among the university student sample. These factors are: general aggression, verbal aggression, anger, hostility, verbal/physical aggression, and recklessness, while significant differences were found at the level. (05) Between genders in university student samples, males had higher averages than females in the aggression variable.

The study by Al-Jamal (2006) aimed to understand aggressive behavior and its relationship with certain personal variables among university students. The researcher followed a descriptive approach, and the sample size consisted of 512 male and female students enrolled in the four public universities [Khartoum, Islamic, Sudan University of Science and Technology, and Nilein] in Khartoum State at the undergraduate level. The researcher used several tools to collect data, and this study reached a set of results, including the distinction of students at public universities in Khartoum State with a statistically significant low degree in the dimensions of aggressive behavior.

The study by Al-Hawamdeh (2007) aimed to shed light on student violence in public and private Jordanian universities from the students' perspective, and the types of violence practiced within the university. The study sample consisted of (6000) male and female students from all official and private Jordanian universities. The results indicated differences in violence towards males, first and second-year students, in humanities colleges, and among rural students. The study also found that the most common forms of violence are disruptive behavior in lectures, anger towards classmates, disrupting teaching, using offensive language, and damaging university property. The causes of violence lie in feelings of repression, intolerance, poor adaptation to university life, and feelings of inequality due to university regulations.

Abdullah (2009) conducted a study aimed at identifying the nature of violent behavior among university students, and the personal variables that predict this behavior, along with developing a program on how to address violence in university life. The study sample consisted of 111 students from Cairo, Helwan, and Al-Azhar universities. The results indicated that the students committed most types of violent crimes or felonies, with the most common being assault leading to death, intentional murder and attempted murder, and theft and attempted theft.

Al-Sobehey and Al-Rawajfeh (2010) conducted a study aimed at identifying student participation in violence within universities and its relationship with certain variables.

The study sample included 2,000 male and female students from the University of Jordan across various disciplines and academic levels. The results showed statistically significant differences between male and female students in student violence, favoring males with lower academic levels, lower cumulative GPAs, and lower incomes.

The study by Al-Douma (2011) aimed to examine student violence and its relationship with thinking patterns and intolerance among students at Sudanese universities, with a sample size of 688 students. The main findings of the study were: that student violence at Sudanese universities is characterized by high levels in the psychological and economic dimensions and moderate levels in the physical dimension, and there is a statistically significant correlation between student violence and thinking patterns.

The study by Abu Hdeib (2014) aimed to measure the level of violence and aggression among undergraduate students from the humanities colleges at the University of Jordan. The study sample consisted of 539 male and female undergraduate students from the humanities colleges registered at the University of Jordan. The study concluded with several findings, including that undergraduate students from the humanities colleges at the University of Jordan exhibited a high tendency towards aggressive behavior.

Fred and Harish (2018) conducted a study aimed at clarifying the relationship between students' attitudes towards aggressive behavior and students' aggressive behavior. The sample consisted of 474 male and female students who were studying their first semester at Al-Quds University. The results indicated a relationship between students' attitudes towards aggressive behavior and aggressive behavior directed towards faculty members, university students, and university property. This means that the more positive the students' attitudes towards aggressive behavior, the more aggressive the students' behavior towards faculty members, university students, and university property.

Al-Bulayd (2020) conducted a study aimed at identifying the relationship between psychological resilience and deviant behavior among university students. The sample consisted of 448 male and female students from Imam Muhammad bin Saud Islamic University and King Saud University in Riyadh. The study results showed an inverse correlation between psychological resilience and deviant behavior. And the presence of a high degree of psychological resilience and a low degree of deviant behavior.

The study by Younes (2020) aimed to identify the factors associated with violence among university youth using a sample of students from the College of Social Sciences at Imam Muhammad bin Saud Islamic University in Riyadh, with a sample size of 425 students. The study revealed that the most significant factors included: personal factors such as exaggerated reactions, inability to cope with stress, excessive nervousness, and feelings of anxiety. The researcher then presented the role of the social worker in using cognitive therapy to address the factors associated with violence among university youth.

The study by Ben Zouai and Addad aimed to... (2023) To identify the level of "aggressive behavior among university students," the study was conducted on (70) male and female students. The Aggressive Behavior Scale by "Amal Bada" was used, which is adapted to the Algerian environment. The study concluded that: the level of

physical aggressive behavior among university students is average, the level of verbal aggressive behavior among university students is high, the level of hostility among university students is high, and the level of anger among university students is high. Additionally, there are statistically significant differences in the level of aggressive behavior among university students attributed to the gender variable in favor of males.

Finally, the study by Mawahiba and Akhrab (2023) aimed to understand the relationship between electronic addiction and aggressive behavior. This study was conducted on a sample of 140 students majoring in psychology and computer science. The research procedures involved applying an aggression scale, and the following results were obtained. The level of aggressive behavior among first-year master's students (majoring in psychology and computer science) is low.

### **The study method:**

The researcher used the correlational descriptive method, through which the variables of this study are examined, its objectives are achieved, its questions are answered, and its hypotheses are verified.

### **Study Community:**

They are male undergraduate students at public universities in Riyadh studying in their first year for the academic year 1446 AH.

The number of new male students at Imam Muhammad bin Saud Islamic University reached 10,273, while the number of male students at King Saud University was 8,122. Ministry of Education 1446 AH - Riyadh).

### **The Study sample:**

The study sample consisted of 143 first-year students from public universities in Riyadh, including 70 from King Saud University and 73 from King Saud University, who were selected using a purposive random sampling method to achieve the study's objectives and collect the appropriate data. Their average age was 19.62 with a standard deviation. (0.610).

### **The Study Instruments:**

#### **First: The Positive Thinking Scale:**

The researcher used the Positive Thinking Scale developed by Abdulsattar (2008), which has recently been applied to a number of university students in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, such as: (Al-Sultani, 2014, Haddadi, 2018, Al-Wail (A) 2021, and Al-Wail (B) 2021).

#### **A-Description of the Positive Thinking Scale:**

The scale consists of ten dimensions and (110) items, with each question comprising two parts: A (positive) and B (negative). The respondent selects what suits them, and it accurately measures and determines the individual's positive thinking, complete beliefs, convictions, and daily behaviors, which reflect their thinking and the characteristics they possess in this regard. And the ten dimensions are:

- 1- Positive expectations and optimism (from 1-8).
- 2- Emotional regulation and judgment of higher cognitive processes (items 9-19).
- 3- Love for learning and healthy cognitive openness (phrases 20-30).
- 4- General feeling of satisfaction (statements from 31-42).
- 5- Positive acceptance of differences from others (phrases 43-54).
- 6- Generosity and ease (phrases 55-65).
- 7- Emotional intelligence (statements 66-75).
- 8- Unconditional self-acceptance (statements 76-92).
- 9- Accept personal responsibility (phrases from 93-100).
- 10- Positive risk-taking (phrases 101-110).

**B- Validity of the Positive Thinking Scale:**

Correlation equations were established between the statements and the overall score of the dimension after applying it to a pilot sample. It was found that all correlation coefficients of the items with the overall score of the respective dimension (10 dimensions) were positive and significant at the 0.05 level and below. Thus, the scale is considered to have a degree of validity, and the items measure what they are intended to measure.

- This procedure was also carried out to determine the correlation coefficient of the ten dimensions of the scale with the total score of the scale, and it was found to be positive and significant at the (0.01) level, which confirms the validity of the scale dimensions and that they measure what they were intended for, and it is ready for application on the current study sample.

**C-Consistency of the Positive Thinking Scale:**

The results of the pilot sample on which the positive thinking scale was applied showed that the Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficients ranged between (0.61, 0.84) and that the reliability score of the positive thinking scale was (0.84), indicating the scale's reliability and its readiness for application on the current study sample.

**D-Scale correction:**

To calculate the respondents' data and handle it statistically, the researcher used the Al-Wail method (2021:212), where the levels of the positive thinking scale with its ten dimensions were determined, and it was divided into three equal ranges using the following equation:-

{Class length = (Maximum value - Minimum value) ÷ 3 = (0 - 100) ÷ 3 = 33.33.} The teacher determined the three levels according to the following table.

Table (1) Determining the three levels of the positive thinking scale.

<b>Description of the level</b>	Low	Medium	High
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<b>Average score</b>	<b>range</b>	0 - 33.33	34.33 - 66.66	67.6 - 100
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**Secondly: The Instrument of aggressive behavior:**

After reviewing the literature in psychology to identify a tool that measures aggressive behavior, several studies were consulted (Al-Sheikh, Al-Masri, 2001, Ibrahim, 2017, Al-Rashoud, 2021, and Al-Ruwaili, 2021). The Aggressive Behavior Scale developed by Baza (2016) was used, which was designed to measure aggression among adolescents and young adults.

**A-Description of the Aggressive Behavior Scale:**

According to what Baza (2016) indicated and confirmed by Briam (2017), the scale consists of (56) items distributed across four dimensions:

1- The dimension of physical aggressive behavior (14) refers to causing harm to others or oneself, and it is expressed in a direct and clear manner. Like hitting and breaking, which is measured by the following items. (14,13,12,11,10,9,8,7,6,5,4,3,2,1 )

2- After verbal aggression behavior (14 items): It refers to verbal responses that carry hostility, such as sarcasm or the use of foul language, which are measured by the following items (15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28).

3- After the hostility (14 phrases). It refers to latent aggression expressed implicitly and indirectly without attacking or destroying, and it is considered part of the individual's general punishment. It takes forms such as self-criticism, criticism of others, and overt hostility.

And feelings of guilt, which are measured by the following items (29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43).

4- After the anger (14 phrases). It is an unpleasant and uncomfortable emotion accompanied by a desire to attack, destroy, and harm oneself. Anger serves as a starting point when aggression occurs, which is measured by the following items (43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56).

**B- The validity of the violence behavior scale:**

To verify the content's validity, it was presented to several reviewers (8 reviewers) from the faculty members of Imam Muhammad bin Saud Islamic University and King Saud University, and some items were modified to reach its final form (56 items).

A comparative analysis (lower and upper bounds) was then conducted after applying it to a pilot sample, where the values were (0.79) for physical aggression, (0.69) for verbal aggression, (0.68) for hostility, and finally (0.65) for anger. All of these are statistically significant at the 0.01 significance level, which means that both ends of the scale in its four dimensions are valid, and thus the scale is applicable.

**C- Reliability of the Violence Behavior Scale:**

Reliability was calculated using the Cronbach's alpha reliability equation, and its value for the overall scale score was high, reaching (0.86). After applying it to a pilot sample (test and retest), the reliability coefficient was determined for the physical aggression dimension (0.81), the verbal aggression dimension (0.74), the aggressive behavior dimension (0.82), and the anger behavior dimension (0.74). It was then found that the overall reliability score of the scale (0.84). Indicating that the scale has a high degree of reliability and yields the same desired results if reapplied, it is considered ready for application on the current study sample.

**D-Correction of the Aggressive Behavior Scale:-**

To correct the answers, a progressive grading system was used: very much (5 points), much (4 points), sometimes (3 points), rarely (2 points), and never (1 point). Thus, the full score for the scale is (280) and the lowest score is (56), with the average for each dimension being (42). The average of all four dimensions of the scale is (168) points. Therefore, if the examinee's score exceeds the average score, their aggressive behavior is increased, and if the score falls below the average, their level of aggressive behavior decreases. Table No. (2) illustrates this:

Table No. (2) Calculation of the total score for each dimension of the Aggressive Behavior Scale and for all dimensions of the scale.

<b>Dimension of aggressive behavior</b>	<b>physical</b>	<b>verbal</b>	<b>hostility</b>	<b>anger</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Number of phrases</b>	14	14	14	14	56
<b>The value of the hypothetical mean</b>	42	42	42	42	168

And the grades for each dimension were also taken into account, which were indicated to be (14) degrees as well, ranging from (70 to 14) degrees. Table (5) shows the levels of the emotional scale for each dimension according to the scores obtained by the examinee. The scores range between (56-43) for the first level as the highest level of aggression, the second level (42-39) high, the third level (28-15) medium, and the fourth level (14-0) as a low level of aggression.

Table (3) shows levels of aggressive behavior

<b>Level</b>	<b>First</b>	<b>Second</b>	<b>Third</b>	<b>Fourth</b>
<b>Grade</b>	43 - 56	29 - 42	15 - 28	Zero - 14

It is clear from Table No. (3) that the first level indicates that aggression is very high, the second level indicates that aggression is high only, then the third level is moderate, and the fourth level indicates that aggression is low.

**Statistical methods:**

- 1- Ensuring the internal consistency validity of the scale by finding the "Pearson correlation coefficient" between each item and the total score of the scale.
- 2- Ensuring the reliability of the scales by finding the reliability coefficient using the Cronbach's alpha method.
- 3- Using the Pearson correlation coefficient method to measure the correlation between variables.

4- T-test to determine the differences between the means of only two samples.

### Presentation of the study results:

#### Result of the first hypothesis:

The first hypothesis states: "There is a high level of positive thinking among first-year students at public universities in Riyadh."

And to verify the hypothesis, the means and standard deviations for each dimension of positive thinking, in addition to the overall score, were calculated. The dimensions of positive thinking were ranked according to the means and standard deviations (N=143), as shown in Table No. (4):

Table No. (4) The level of positive thinking and its ten dimensions among university students in Riyadh.

Level	High		Medium		Low		Hypothetical Mean	Standard Deviation
Dimensions	N	Percentage	N	Percentage	N	Percentage		
Positive expectations and optimism	137	95.8	4	2.71	2	1.39	88.36	17.20
Generosity and hospitality	134	93.7	6	4.19	3	2.09	84.12	16.71
Positive acceptance of differences with others	133	93.0	4	2.71	6	4.19	83.22	15.41
Emotional regulation and control of higher cognitive processes	128	89.5	9	6.29	6	4.19	82.71	14.43
Accepting personal	125	87.41	11	7.69	7	4.89	82.54	15.12

responsibility								
Emotional intelligence	122	83.31	13	9.09	8	5.59	81.87	14.61
Complete satisfaction	120	83.91	18	12.58	5	3.49	77.15	17.44
Love for learning and healthy cognitive openness	117	81.74	22	15.38	4	2.79	78.16	16.32
Unconditional self-acceptance	113	79.02	21	8.39	9	6.29	68.24	16.12
Positive risk-taking	110	76.92	24	15.38	9	6.29	69.11	15.14
The total score for the positive thinking scale	119	83.21	16	11.18	8	5.59	78.12	12.56

Table No. (4) shows the descending order of the dimensions of positive thinking in terms of their most frequent practice. We find that the dimension of "positive expectations and optimism" ranked first with a mean of (88.36) and a standard deviation of (17.20), making it the most highly used dimension in positive thinking.

It ranks second after "tolerance and ease" with a mean of (84.12) and a standard deviation of (16.71), with a slight difference from the first dimension. It ranks third after "positive acceptance of differences with others" with a mean of (83.22) and a standard deviation of (15.41). It ranks fourth after "emotional regulation and control of higher cognitive processes" with a mean of (82.71) and a standard deviation of (14.43).

It ranked fifth after "accepting personal responsibility" with a mean score of (82.54) and a standard deviation of (15.12), then came "emotional intelligence" in sixth place with a mean score of (81.76) and a standard deviation of (14.61). It ranked seventh after "complete satisfaction" with a mean score of (77.15) and a standard deviation of (17.44), and after "love for learning and healthy cognitive openness" in eighth place with a mean score of (78.16) and a standard deviation of (16.32). It came after "unconditional self-acceptance" in ninth place with a mean score of (68.24) and a standard deviation of (16.12), and in tenth place after "positive risk-taking" with a mean score of (69.11) and a standard deviation of (15.14).

The overall score for the dimensions came out with a high arithmetic mean of (83.21), indicating a high level of positive thinking. The university students in Riyadh, who represent the current study's community, use positive thinking in their lives, thus confirming the first hypothesis.

This result is consistent with the study (Al-Fara 2005, Al-Mahdawi and Al-Taie 2017, Askar and Kareem 2018, Al-Wa'il 2021, Al-Wadi 2021, Mazray et al. 2021, and Basharat 2024), who found a high level of positive thinking among university students. And it does not agree with the study by Alwan and Al-Nawajha (2013), which found a low level of positivity among university students, attributed to improper upbringing and low social and economic status.

The researcher attributes this result to the presence of religious upbringing, which emphasizes looking forward to the Day of Judgment by fostering optimism, positivity, a sense of tranquility, and confidence. It encourages the appreciation and evaluation of matters, thinking with deliberation, wisdom, balance, and rationality, self-acceptance, openness to others, and a sense of responsibility. Behind this feeling lies the belief in fate and destiny and the existence of the Creator, may He be glorified and exalted, who is merciful to His servants. These beliefs support the young person's journey and drive them towards stability and positivity.

**Result of the second hypothesis: -**

The second hypothesis states: There is a low level of aggressive behavior among first-year students at public universities in Riyadh. To verify this hypothesis, the means and standard deviations were extracted while statistically handling the data of the respondents (N=143) from the university students.

Table No. (5) The mean and standard deviation of the sample's responses on the dimensions of the Aggressive Behavior Scale.

Aggressive behavior	Mean Standard	Deviation	Max value	Min value
	189.73	41.82	263	89

Table number (5) shows that the mean of the respondents' answers to the aggressive behavior scale statements is (189.73), with a standard deviation of (41.82). According to the level determination for the entire scale dimensions, this score falls between (224-169), indicating that the aggressive behavior among the study sample of university

students is very low and significantly low. Thus, the hypothesis regarding the decrease in aggression levels among the sample was confirmed.

This result is consistent with the findings of studies by Al-Jamal (2006), Al-Baleed (2020), Al-Muhiba (2023), and Abdul-Hafiz (2024), who found a low level of aggressive behavior among university students.

And as a result, this hypothesis, on the other hand, does not align with the study of Tawfiq (2003), Al-Hawamdeh (2007), and Abdullah (2009). Al-Sabihi and Al-Rawajfeh (2010), Al-Douma (2011), Younis (2020), and Ben Zouai and Addad (2023), who found high levels of aggressive behavior among university students.

The researcher explains this low level of aggression among university students in Riyadh as being due to their positive thinking, which has been instilled in them since their upbringing in earlier developmental stages that focus on Islamic teachings and self-regulation, even in the absence of legislation and systems.

And also the clarity of the systems and regulations that guarantee the student their rights when needed, and other punitive measures that prevent them if they violate university regulations. Additionally, it is about reducing aggressive behavior and its capacity, as shown in Table (4), since the student is connected to the values of the society and family they belong to, which prepare them to become a reliable man expected to produce more and maintain discipline in the future. The university is merely an environment that prepares them for this, steering them away from anything that diminishes their morals, dignity, manhood, and future family formation.

**Result of the third hypothesis:**

Which states: There is no statistically significant relationship between positive thinking and aggressive behavior among first-year students at public universities in Riyadh. To verify the hypothesis and then use Pearson's correlation coefficient to reveal the nature of the relationship between positive thinking and the four dimensions of the aggression behavior scale among the sample (N=143) as shown in the following table:-

Table No. (6) Pearson correlation coefficient to determine the correlational relationship between positive thinking and behavioral dimensions Aggression among university students.

<b>Dimensions of Aggressive behavior</b>	<b>physical aggression</b>	<b>verbal aggression</b>	<b>psychological aggression</b>	<b>Hostility</b>
<b>Positive Thinking Scale</b>	0.62.0	.571	.650	.552
<b>Significance level</b>	<b>.000</b>	<b>.000</b>	<b>.000</b>	<b>.000</b>

It was evident from Table (6) that the relationship between positive thinking and the dimension of "physical aggression" is inversely and statistically significant at the (0.01) level, with a correlation value of (0.624). This means that as the level of positive

thinking increases, the level of physical aggression behavior among university students decreases.

Regarding the correlational relationship between positive thinking and the "verbal aggression" dimension, it is inversely and statistically significant at the (0.01) level, with a correlation value of (0.571). This indicates that as the level of positive thinking increases, verbal aggression behavior decreases. It is also evident that the correlational relationship between positive thinking and the "anger" dimension is inversely and statistically significant at the (0.01) level, with a correlation value of (0.571). Therefore, this relationship confirms that as positive thinking increases, "anger" behavior decreases.

Finally, we indicate that the correlation between positive thinking and the dimension of "aggressiveness" is an inverse and significant relationship at the (0.01) level, with a correlation value of (0.552). Thus, it can be said that as the level of positive thinking increases, the level of aggressiveness among university students decreases.

Thus, Table (6) shows a relationship between positive thinking and aggressive behavior (in its four dimensions), indicating that university students who possess positive thinking exhibit reduced and diminished aggressive behavior. This clarifies that positive thinking has a positive effect on the student's personality, helping them avoid aggressive behavior.

This is consistent with the study by Farraj (2005), which showed that a high level of emotional thinking reduces aggressive behavior, Al-Douma (2011), who found that negative thinking patterns are associated with the occurrence of aggressive behavior, and Al-Baleed's study (2020), which showed that high psychological resilience, as a trait of positive thinking, reduces the level of aggressive behavior among university students. The result of the third hypothesis also aligns with Younis's study (2020), which found that psychological factors such as nervousness, emotionality, anxiety, and inability to cope with stress, which are traits of positive thinking, increase aggressive behavior among university students. And we agree with the result of the third hypothesis.

We also agree with the study by Sharh (2005), which found that low emotional intelligence leads to anger among university students, and also with the study by Wong (2012), which found that negative thinking is associated with stress, anxiety, anger, and depression among university students.

This result can be interpreted as those who possess positive personality traits—optimism, balance, contentment, evaluation, perseverance, patience, confidence, appreciation of responsibility, tranquility, tolerance, and others—are driven by positive thinking, which reflects their beliefs and convictions and optimistic happy thinking, thereby influencing their behavior and leading them to a positive quality of life.

This is related to proper religious and faith-based social upbringing, which has worked on developing positive thinking among students, their belief in fate and destiny, and steering clear of any behavior that distances them from paradise. Among the most important of these is good character in dealing with others kindly, tolerance, accepting others, prioritizing others over themselves, and avoiding aggression and disputes. This

is part of their upbringing, which has enabled them to gain self-awareness and understand their feelings and emotions, allowing them to acquire the necessary skills to deal with reality in a way that preserves their psychological stability.

### **Recommendations:**

- 1- To enhance the development of positive thinking and ensure its continuity, it is assumed to conduct workshops and guidance and awareness courses for university students, as well as to integrate dimensions of positive thinking into the curricula at various educational stages by including study units that focus on the importance of positive thinking and its impact on personal and social behavior.
- 2- Providing psychological consultations and offering individual counseling sessions for students to help them develop positive thinking strategies, cope with stress, confront aggressive behavior, and manage life's pressures in healthy ways to ensure a safe and stable future .
- 3- Conduct studies such as: a study on the impact of the educational environment (such as school and university environments) on the relationship between positive thinking and aggressive behavior, including experimental studies to evaluate the effectiveness of positive thinking training programs in reducing aggressive behavior among students. And studying the mediating factors that may affect the relationship between positive thinking and aggressive behavior, such as the level of social support and psychological stress.

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