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# Effectiveness of Training of Emotional-Social Learning on Students' Academic Well-being and Spiritual Health

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**Abstract**: The aim of this study was to investigate the effectiveness of emotional social learning training on academic well-being and spiritual health in high school male students in Zahedan, Iran. The research method was quasi-experimental pre-test-post-test with a control group and the statistical population of the study included all high school male students in 2021-2022. Participants were 30 students who selected by purposive sampling that after matching, they assigned in experimental and control groups. Emotional social learning training package (Sadri Demirchi and Ismaili Ghazi Volvi, 2016) was performed in the experimental group in 12 sessions of 60 minutes. The research instruments were the Academic Welfare Questionnaire (Tominen-Sweeney et al., 2012) and Spiritual Health Questionnaire (Pulotzin and Ellison, 1982). The validity of the research scales was measured by content validity, and their reliability was estimated by Cronbach's alpha, yielding 0.88 and 0.93 for the academic well-being and spiritual health scales, respectively. For the statistical analysis of the data, univariate covariance analysis and multivariate covariance analysis was used. Covariance analysis results revealed that training in emotional-social learning improved and increased students' academic well-being (and its components) and students' spiritual health (and its components) as well. Our results supported the role of emotional and social factors in mental and spiritual health of students.

**Keywords:** Emotional-social learning training, academic well-being, spiritual health

## Introduction

Academic well-being is one of the more recent concepts of positive psychology. Thuyvy and Deci defined to include such components as skills of doing homework, satisfaction with academic performance and academic enthusiasm. Also, Mistry, Rashmita, Benner, Tan & Kim (2009) considered academic well-being under the category of academic outcomes and regarding its scales to include grade point average, academic enthusiasm and positive attitude toward school (quoted by Veiskarami, Khalili-Goshnigani, Alipour, Alavi, 2019). Belfi, Goos, Fraine & Damme (2012) viewed academic well-being as students' attitudes toward education. This includes four general attitudes toward academic life, teacher, peers and education. Also, students' academic well-being concerning the school's fabric is examined and recognized as a major indicator of the educational process (Holopainen, Lappalainen, Junttila & Savolainen, 2012). Samdal, Wold & Bronis (1997) acknowledge that in addition to these dimensions, academic well-being includes a sense of security and health among students in the educational environment and their sense of how their schools are suitable and can help create a positive attitude in them towards education (Ghadampour, Heidariani, Barzegar-Barfrouei, & Dehghan Menshadi, 2018). Academic well-being was developed by Tuominen, Soini, and Salmela. Aro &

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Niemivirta (2012) aimed to link emotional and academic functions with improving the relationship between the learner and the school. Thus, the academic well-being construct was defined concerning four dimensions of school (Moradi, Soleimani-Khashab, Shahbzadeh, Sabaghian, & Dehghani Zadeh, 2016). The first component of academic well-being is school burnout. School and academic burnout, just examined in the recent decade (Walburg, 2014), includes academic fatigue, the pessimistic attitude of the school and feeling of insufficiency in the student, which causes stress, undesirable feeling and motivation as well as academic drop-out (Kinnunen, Lindford, Rimpela, Salmela-Aro, Rathmen & Perelman, 2016). Another component of academic well-being is schoolwork engagement. The concept of schoolwork engagement has been examined since the late 1980s, which is described as a multi-dimensional structure, including psychological, academic, motivational, cognitive and behavioral dimensions (Upadaya & Salmela-Aro, Upadyaya, 2013). The concept of schoolwork engagement was mainly studied in northern America; however, a new approach in Europe expanded schoolwork engagement differently, which included energy and powerfulness at school (motivational), commitment to the school (cognitive) and absorption in school work (behavioral) (Salmela-Aro, Upadyaya, 2014). Disengagement is one of the biggest challenges that teachers face in the classroom. Recent studies have suggested that over 40-60% of the students demonstrate disengagement in their schoolwork (Yazzie. Mintz & McCormick, 2012). Moreover, engagement is a flexible and changeable factor easily affected by social and educational conditions. Promotion of academic engagement is one of the objectives of school research, especially at junior school levels (International Research Association and Institute of Pharmacy, 2013; quoted by Moradi, 2017). The third component of academic well-being is academic satisfaction, which researchers maintain that satisfaction with school can, on the one hand, be a protective factor and an empowering factor for successful performance at school, increasing learning and psychological well-being (Suldo, Riley & Shaffer, 2006; quoted by Mohanna and Tale' Pasand, 2016). On the other hand, dissatisfaction with school can be a risk factor and causes the person to turn to undesirable conduct, like using drugs (Baykal, Sokmen, Korkmaz & Akgun, 2005; quoted by Ghadampour, Khalili-Goshnigani and Mansourian, 2018). The fourth component of academic well-being is school value, usually defined as students' perception of education at school, which includes internal and external clues (Wigfield & Eccles, 2000). Various studies have suggested that school value helps students to get closer to academic goals and establish positive relations with their classmates, thus contributing to students' academic achievement (Niemivirta, 2004; quoted by Rastgar, Seif & Maleki, 2018). Another variable under study in this research is spiritual health. Spiritual health refers to a state of well-being that indicates positive feelings, behaviors and perceptions of the relationship with self, others, nature and a higher being (Gomez, Fisher, 2003); this state also provides a coordinated and integrated relationship among people and is characterized by stability in life, peace, coordination and preparation, feeling of a close relation with self, God, the society and the environment. When spiritual health is endangered, the individual may have psychological disorders such as the feeling of loneliness, depression and loss of meaning in life, which can cause problems for compatibility with life (Craven, Hirnle, Jensen, 2013; quoted by Kiani-Chelmardi & Khakdal, 2018). For Ellison (1983), spiritual health



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includes a social-psychological and religious element. Spiritual health with a religious element indicates a relationship with a superior being, i.e., God. Existential health is a social-psychological element that indicates an individual's feelings; for instance, who is this? What does s/he do and why? Where does s/he belong to? Both religious health and existential health include excellence and movement beyond oneself. Our dimension of religious health directs us toward God, while our dimension of existential health directs us beyond ourselves, others, and the environment (Sayyadi, Sayyad, Vahhabi, Noori & Amani, 2019). Because spiritual health is the newest dimension of health, alongside other dimensions of health, it includes enjoyment of the sense of acceptance, positive feelings, morality and a sense of reciprocally positive relationship with a ruling power and a holy being, others and oneself within a dynamic and coordinated cognitive, emotional, reactional and consequential process. This definition is more inherent (essential) and functional (Salehi & Zamani, 2015). Spiritual health is a complicated and vague process of human evolution that coordinates the relationship between internal forces and the individual. Spiritual health is characterized by stability, peace, close relation with God, self, society, and the environment that determines the individual's integrity (Haji-Esmaeli, Abbasi, Safaeipour, Fani, Abdulkjabbari et al. 2016). Spiritual health has diverse positive impacts on the development of the individual's subjective health and reduction of subjective disorders, as it plays a major role in compatibility with stressors while reducing anxiety and depression and increasing self-confidence and self-control in the individual (Chavoshian, Moeini, Bashirian, & Fardmall, 2015). Also, other studies have revealed that spiritual beliefs and participation in religious assemblies and groups could reduce depression and anxiety among various community groups, including students (Mohr, Brandt, Borras, Gillieron, & Huguelet, 2006). One of the major duties of educational and psychological experts is to identify the factors affecting learning and academic performance and determine ways to improve them so that they can create sustainable motivation, develop capacities and prepare humans who are emotionally capable of compatibility with the growing progress of sciences. One of these effective factors is social-emotional learning (Brown, Jones, LaRusso & Aber, 2010). Social-emotional learning refers to a process whereby children and adults learn knowledge, attitudes and skills, including identification and management of emotions, planning and selection of positive objectives, care for and attention to others, the establishment of positive relations, responsible decision-making and inter-personal compatibility (CASEL, 2005; quoted by Badri-Gorgari, Ahrari, Fathi-Azar, & Mirnasab, 2018). The social-emotional learning training program was first administered by the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL). This leading academy in social-emotional learning was founded by Goleman and Rockefeller in 1994. Accordingly, CASEL is seen as a body that deals with supporting and guiding social-emotional learning using higher learning standards. This body describes five main skills for emotional-social learning, which are: elf-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills and responsible decision-making (Gregory & Fergus, 2017).

These skills constitute the basis of school-oriented curricula for developing social-emotional learning and serve as an integrated and valuable framework for initial prevention; when students encourage themselves and their capacities in a real way and organize their feelings and behaviors appropriately;



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they will likely be capable of effectively communicating with others (Sabzevri, Abedi, & Liaghtadar, 2013); accurately coordinating and organizing social cues and signs, effectively resolving inter-personal conflicts, making correct decisions about daily challenges and responding to difficult situations thoughtfully and responsibly; therefore, the short-term goal of the social-emotional learning programs is to develop social-emotional skills of students and promote their positive attitudes; which would in its own, lead to more compatibility and better academic achievement, as positive social behaviors reveal fewer problems, fewer emotional problems and better scores in aptitude tests ( Zins & Elias, 2006). In other words, social-emotional learning refers to a process through which emotional intelligence is increased (Zins, Weissberg, Wang & Walberg, 2004; quoted by Ebrahimi, 2019). Educational psychologists maintain that people are not only dependent on cognitive skills, as learning social and emotional skills positively contributes to peoples' success (Crane, 2015). In research, Fallah, Abulma'ali Al-Hosseini and Sabet (2020) concluded that the emotional-social learning intervention affected individual independence, social behavior and total compatibility score. Ashuri, Badri, Vahedi and Mohebbi (2020) found that social-emotional learning-based education positively and significantly impacted academic motivation and self-efficacy. In a study, Barzabadi Farahani et al. (2020) suggested that emotional-social learning education significantly affected academic procrastination, but it was ineffective for students' communication skills. Habibi Kaliber et al. (2019) found that training in social and emotional skills significantly affected students' interpersonal relations, thus reducing inter-personal problems among them. Badri-Gorgori et al. (2019) concluded that training in social-emotional learning programs effectively affected children's sense of attachment to school. Sadri Demirchi and Esmaeili-Ghazi Veloei (2016) demonstrated that training in social-emotional learning skills could increase positive emotional strategies and improve appropriate social skills, self-confidence and relation with peers. In their research, Jamali Paghal'e, Abedi, Nazari-Badi' and Mirzaei-Rad (2013) found out that training in social-emotional learning reduced symptoms of the oppositional defiant disorder (ODD) in students. Also, Karimzadeh, Akahavan-Tafti, Kiamanesh and Akbarzadeh (2010) suggested that training in social-emotional skills not only improved teachers' social-emotional skills but also helped improved their mental well-being. In a study, Özhan & Yüksel (2021) showed that each of the academic well-being variables, i.e., engagement, satisfaction, burnout and school value, as well as student-teacher relation, peer relations and family participation at school, affected the academic burnout. Chester, Klemera, Magnusson, Spencer & Brooks (2019) concluded that social-emotional learning training positively affected school health and the development of 11–15-year-old adolescents' spiritual health in England. Ratcliffe, Wong, Dossetor & Hayes (2014) found that training in social and emotional skills increased emotional and affectional skills and social qualifications, thus improving peoples' mental health. Attention to the issues of students as future makers of society is highly important because improving students' academic situation, especially their academic well-being and spiritual health, is a key objective of the modern educational system across the globe. On the one hand, social learning is a major goal of education worldwide. Various educational curricula have been provided in different nations; however, this important matter has received little attention in Iran. As stated, no research has

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been conducted in Iran on the effectiveness of social-emotional learning training on students' academic well-being and spiritual health, as there is an educational gap here. The major goal of this study was also to examine the effectiveness of training in social-emotional learning on students' academic well-being and spiritual health among students of Empirical Sciences in Zahedan City, Iran.

## Material and Methods

The research method was quasi-experimental with a pre-posttest and a control group. The statistical population of the research consisted of all male students of empirical sciences in the city of Zahedan in the academic year 2021-2022. Thus, 30 people were selected via purposive sampling and divided into an experimental and a control group of 15 each. Training in emotional-social learning was conducted on the experimental group for twelve 60-minute sessions.

Research Tools

**a) Academic Well-Being Scale:** Developed by Tominen -Sweeney et al. (2012), this scale models psychological indicators of well-being related to the school fabric using self-assessment and respondents' level of agreement and disagreement via 31 items. This scale includes the following dimensions: 1) school value, including 8 items (1-8) answered on a seven-degree Likert scale, including not at all true (1), to completely true (7); 2) school burnout, including 10 items (9-18), answered on a seven-degree Likert scale, from totally disagree (1) to agree (7); 3) academic satisfaction, including 4 items (19-22), answered on a five-degree Likert scale, from not at all (1) to very much (5) and 4) schoolwork engagement, including 9 items (31-23), answered on a seven-degree Likert scale from never (1) to always (7).

Tominen and Sweney (2012) calculated Cronbach's alpha of school value, school burnout, academic satisfaction and schoolwork engagement to be 0.64, 0.77, 0.91 and 0.94, respectively. Also, Moradi et al. (2016) examined the psychometry of the scale among Iranian students, calculating the RMSEA of 0.06; they also calculated the reliability of the scale for the school value, school burnout, academic satisfaction and schoolwork engagement to be 0.88, 0.73, 0.73 and 0.75. The content and construct validity of the scale were also reported to be desirable. Also, Karami et al. (2018) reported the reliability of the scale to be 0.81.

**b) Spiritual Health Scale:** The 20-item scale was developed by Polutzin and Ellison (1982), designed on a six-degree Likert scale of totally disagree (1) to agree (6). It is noteworthy that items 3, 4, 7, 8, 10, 11, 14, 15, 17, 19, and 20 had reverse scoring.

The minimum score is 20, and the maximum score is 120. In the end, spiritual health is classified into three low (20-40), medium (41-99) and high (100-120) categories, as the more the score, the more the spiritual health. The validity and reliability of the scale were also confirmed in various researches. In Iran, Seyyed Fatemi, Givari and Hosseini (2006) reported the Cronbach's alpha of the scale to be 0.82. Zare' and Jahandideh (2014) obtained the reliability of the scale using Cronbach's alpha to be 0.85. also, Mahboubi et al. (2012) reported the alpha of this scale to be 0.90.

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**c) Training of Emotional-Social Learning Package:** This research was a quasi-experimental with pre-posttest design with a control. People were divided into an experimental and a control group; they were administered the pretest (spiritual health and academic well-being). Following the pretest, the package (Sadri Demirchi and Esmaeili Ghazi-Veloei, 2016) conducted 12 sixty-minute sessions on the experiments group, then administered a post-test on both groups after a month.

**Table1.** Summary of social-emotional learning sessions (Sadri Demirchi and Esmaeili Ghazi-Veloei, 2016).

| Sessions | Content | Objective |
|---|---|---|
| First session | General familiarity | Investigating training of social and emotional skills and its role in improving inter-personal relations, the familiarity of the members with each other and with group laws |
| Second session | Self-awareness skill | Th ability to understand and be aware of characteristics, weak and strong points, wants, fear and resentment, awareness of the relationship between thoughts, feelings and reactions |
| Third session | Inter-personal relations (communications) | Familiarity with communication models, physical characteristics and environmental factors in non-verbal communication, types of listening and mastery over listening skills when communicating, sending messages which start with "me" instead of rebuke and interpersonal relations |
| Fourth session | Decision-making skills | Familiarity with decision-making stages, investigating one's and others' conduct and awareness of them, training on the role of decision making and their contribution to interpersonal relations |
| Fifth session | Problem-solving | Understanding the problem and properly representing them, relating it with behaviors and awareness of the fact that potential problems can be solved; familiarity with barriers to problem-solving and awareness of receiving assistance when solving basic life issues |
| Sixth session | Empathy | Training and defining empathy, barriers to empathy and training necessary skills for empathy, respect for existing differences in the differences of the and others, as well as different phenomena |
| Seventh session | Perception of feelings | Understanding the difference between emotions and feelings, awareness of emotional states, accepting responsibility for one's feelings, true ways to express feelings and their effects on interpersonal relations |
| Eighth session | Coping with stress | Training stress-coping strategies; this ability includes understanding various stressors in life and their effects on the individual |
| Ninth session | Control of emotions | Training the role of emotions to improve interpersonal relations, ways to express anger in people, effective ways to control anger and correctly express it |
| Tenth session | Flexibility against changes | Training flexibility and its role in life compatibility with the environment and its changes, training changes in life and compatibility with them, the role of change and adaptation with it |
| Eleventh session | Self-assertiveness | Debates about behaviors based on self-assertiveness and alternative behaviors, training individual and social rights and the ability to say "no," difference between self-assertiveness and aggressive behaviors, and training skills of controlling aggressive behaviors |
| Twelfth session | Time management | Training time management and activity prioritization, ways of adjusting time, solutions to prevent wasting time and using it correctly, and tips to improve the quality of time. |

## Results

Table 2 gives the mean and standard deviation results of the pre-test and post-test of the students' academic well-being and spiritual health by the experimental and control groups.

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**Table 2.** Descriptive statistical results of pre-test and post-test of academic well-being and spiritual health of students by group

| Group | Variables | Pretest | | Posttest | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Mean | SD | Mean | SD |
| Experimental | School value | 37.33 | 2.02 | 49.93 | 5.57 |
| | School burnout | 33.93 | 2.76 | 24.13 | 3.06 |
| | Academic satisfaction | 15.13 | 1.88 | 20.80 | 0.94 |
| | School engagement | 37.20 | 1.89 | 52.60 | 2.84 |
| | Total academic well-being score | 123.60 | 4.98 | 147.46 | 7.27 |
| Control | School value | 37.47 | 2.16 | 43.00 | 4.32 |
| | School burnout | 33.33 | 2.69 | 31.80 | 2.54 |
| | Academic satisfaction | 16.20 | 1.42 | 17.07 | 1.87 |
| | School engagement | 37.33 | 2.02 | 43.13 | 4.42 |
| | Total academic well-being score | 124.33 | 4.77 | 135.00 | 10.41 |
| Experimental | Religious health | 21.53 | 2.32 | 34.00 | 2.69 |
| | Existential health | 21.67 | 2.46 | 34.20 | 2.80 |
| | Total spiritual health score | 43.20 | 4.78 | 68.20 | 5.48 |
| Control | Religious health | 22.60 | 1.72 | 27.53 | 3.50 |
| | Existential health | 22.73 | 1.90 | 27.67 | 3.55 |
| | Total spiritual health score | 45.33 | 3.61 | 55.20 | 7.05 |

Univariate analysis of covariance was used to investigate the effect of social-emotional learning on students' academic well-being.

**Table 3.** Results of Levene's test of homogeneity of variances of academic well-being

| Variable | F | Freedom degree (1) | Freedom degree (2) | Sig |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Academic well-being | 1.186 | 1 | 28 | 0.28 |

As seen from the table, Levene's test results were insignificant at the confidence level of 95% (P>0.05). Thus, the assumption of homogeneity of variances for academic well-being was met.

**Table 4.** Results of covariance analysis of comparing academic well-being in the experimental group and the control group

| Sources of changes | Sum of squares | Freedom degree | Mean squares | F value | Sig | Effect size |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Pretest | 292.664 | 1 | 292.664 | 4.013 | 0.05 | 0.12 |
| Academic ell-being w | 1250.682 | 1 | 1250.682 | 17.149 | 0.001 | 0.388 |
| Error | 1969.70 | 27 | 72.929 | | | |
| Total | 601833.00 | 30 | | | | |

Table 4 indicates that the Fa value is 1.149, significant at the confidence level of 99% (P<0.01). Also, the effect size of the social-emotional learning training on students' academic well-being was 38.8%. Thus, considering the higher mean scores of the experimental group in the post-test, it 9s concluded that training in social-emotional learning affected and increased the academic well-being of male students



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majoring in Empirical Sciences of Zahedan. MANCOVA was used to examine the effects of training of social-emotional learning on academic well-being components.

**Table 5.** Homogeneity test results of the covariance matrix (Box) of academic well-being components

| **Box's** | **F** | **df1** | **df2** | **p** |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 5.02 | 0.424 | 10 | 3748.20 | 0.93 |

As noted in table 5, the Box's test value (5.05) was not significant at the confidence level of 95% (P>0.05). Thus, the homogeneity of the covariance matrix of academic well-being was confirmed.

**Table 6.** Results of multivariate covariance analysis of comparing the academic well-being components in groups

| Effect | Tests | Values | F | DF of the effect | DF of error | p | Effect size |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Group | Pillai trace | 0.898 | 46.42 | 4 | 21 | 0.001 | 0.898 |
| | Wilks's lambda | 0.102 | 46.42 | 4 | 21 | 0.001 | 80.898 |

As noted in Table 6, Pillai's trace (0.898) and Wilks's lambda (0.102) were significant at the 99% confidence level (P<0.01). Also, the effect size of social-emotional learning training on academic well-being was 89.8%. Thus, the students' academic well-being components in the two groups revealed no significant difference in the post-test.

**Table 7.** The results of the effects test comparing the academic well-being components of the groups in the post-test

| Variable | Source | SS | DF | MS | F | p | Effect size |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| School value | Inter-group | 346.594 | 1 | 34.5946 | 2.6860 | 0.001 | 0.463 |
| | Intra-group | 402.127 | 24 | 16.755 | | | |
| | Total | 6583.002 | 30 | | | | |
| School burnout | Inter-group | 499.443 | 1 | 49.4439 | 9.8131 | 0.001 | 0.793 |
| | Intra-group | 130.555 | 24 | 5.440 | | | |
| | Total | 2412.007 | 30 | | | | |
| Academic satisfaction | Inter-group | 86.170 | 1 | 86.170 | 3.0878 | 0.001 | 0.607 |
| | Intra-group | 55.777 | 24 | 2.324 | | | |
| | Total | 1092.000 | 30 | | | | |
| School engagement | Inter-group | 567.468 | 1 | 56.4867 | 52.571 | 0.001 | 0.687 |
| | Intra-group | 259.071 | 24 | 10.795 | | | |
| | Total | 69796.00 | 30 | | | | |

In Table 7, the F value obtained for the component of school value, the component of school burnout, the component of academic satisfaction, and the component of school work engagement were (20.686), (91.813), (37.078), and (52.571), respectively, being significant at the level 99% confidence (P<0.01). Also, the effect size of the social-emotional learning on the component of school value, component of school burnout, component of academic satisfaction, and schoolwork engagement were (0.463), (0.739), 0.607) and (0.687), respectively. Considering the higher mean scores of the experimental group in the post-test stage and the effect size of social and emotional learning training on academic well-being components, it is concluded that the training of social and emotional learning affected the academic well-being components of male students majoring in Empirical sciences in the city of Zahedan, Iran.

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Univariate analysis of covariance was used to investigate the effect of social-emotional learning on students' spiritual health.

**Table 8.** Levene's test results of examining the homogeneity of variances of spiritual health

| Variable | F | DF1 | DF2 | p |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Spiritual health | 3.20 | 1 | 28 | 0.08 |

As seen in Table 8, the results of Levene's test were not significant at the 95% confidence level (P>0.05). Thus, it is concluded that the assumption of homogeneity of variances for the variable of spiritual health was satisfied.

**Table 9.** The results of covariance analysis of comparing spiritual health in the experimental group and the control group

| Sources of changes | SS | DF | MS | F | p | Effect size |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Pretest | 113.775 | 1 | 113.775 | 3.069 | 0.09 | 0.10 |
| Spiritual health | 1379.442 | 1 | 1379.442 | 37.133 | 0.001 | 0.579 |
| Error | 1003.025 | 27 | 37.149 | | | |
| Total | 116591.00 | 30 | | | | |

As noted from the table above, the obtained F value is 37.133, which is significant at the 99% confidence level (P<0.01). Also, the effect size of social-emotional learning on students' spiritual health was 57.9%. Thus, considering the higher mean scores of the experimental group in the post-test, it is found that the training of social and emotional learning was effective on the spiritual health of male students majoring in the empirical sciences in the Zahedan city, which also increased their spiritual health. The multivariate analysis of covariance (MANCOVA) test was used to investigate the effect of training social-emotional learning on the components of students' spiritual health.

**Table 10.** Results of homogeneity of the covariance matrix (Box) of the components of spiritual health

| Box's | F | df1 | df2 | Sig |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 3.916 | 1.20 | 3 | 141120 | 0.30 |

As seen from the table, the Box's test value (3.916) was not significant at the confidence level of 95% (P>0.05). Thus, the homogeneity of the covariances matrix of the students' spiritual health components is confirmed.

**Table 11.** The results of multivariate covariance analysis comparing the components of spiritual health in groups

| Effect | Tests | Values | F | DF of the effect | DF of error | *p* | Effect size |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Group | Pillai’s trace | 0.592 | 18.17 | 2 | 25 | 0.001 | 0.592 |
| | Wilks's lambda | 0.408 | 18.17 | 2 | 25 | 0.001 | 0.592 |

Table 11 shows the value of Pillai's trace to be (0.592) and the Wilks's lambda to be (0.408), which is significant at the 99% confidence level (P<0.01). Also, the effect size of the social-emotional learning training on spiritual health components was 59.2%. Thus, there was a significant difference in post-test in the spiritual health components among the experimental and control groups students.



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**Table 12.** The results of the effects test comparing the spiritual health components in the groups in the post-test

| Variable | Source | SS | DF | MS | F | p | Effect size |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Religious health | Inter-group | 347.489 | 1 | 34.4897 | 37.784 | 0.001 | 0.592 |
| | Intra-group | 239.118 | 26 | 9.197 | | | |
| | Total | 28985.00 | 30 | | | | |
| Existential health | Inter-group | 356.160 | 1 | 356.160 | 36.951 | 0.001 | 0.587 |
| | Intra-group | 250.608 | 26 | 9.639 | | | |
| | Total | 29314.00 | 30 | | | | |

According to Table 12, the F value for the religious health component (37.784) and existential health component (36.951) was significant at the confidence level of 99% ($P<0.01$). Also, the effect size of the social-emotional learning training on religious and existential health were 0.859 and 0.587, respectively. According to the higher mean scores of the experimental group in the post-test stage and the effect size of the training of social-emotional learning on the components of spiritual health, it is determined that social-emotional learning training on the components had a large effect on the spiritual health of male students in the city of Zahedan.

## Discussion

This research aimed to determine the efficacy of training social-emotional learning on academic well-being and spiritual health of male students majoring in Empirical Sciences in Zahedan. The effect size of social-emotional learning training on students' academic well-being was 38.8%. Thus, training in social-emotional learning effectively increased students' academic well-being. This finding was consistent with those of Fallh et al. (2020), Ashuri et al. (2020), Barzabadi -Farahani et al. (2019), Habibi-Kalibr et al. (2019), Badri-Gorgori et al. (2019), Vafaei (2019), Ebrahimi Orang et al. (2018), Veskarami et al. (2019), Boroumand (2016), Sadri Demirchi and Esmaeili-Ghazi Veloei (2016), Ozhan and Youksel (2021), Halliday et al. (2019), Oaklnad et al. (2018) and King (2017). In a research, Fallah et al. (2020) concluded that training in social-emotional learning for parents of preschool children would improve their adaptive behaviors. Barzabadi et al. (2020) also reported that social-emotional learning training had affected students' academic procrastination and communication skills. For Yeager (2017), the training of a social-emotional learning program changes the academic atmosphere and creates a positive mentality among students to help them successfully face life challenges. Also, this program helps students to materialize their deepest motivations of their adolescence (like the tendency to gain respect and place among peers and parents whose opinions are valuable) and to increase their academic well-being. Thus, one would suggest that social-emotional learning training can improve and increase the students' academic well-being. The second question indicated that the effect size of the training of social-emotional learning on the component of school value, school burnout, and academic satisfaction, as well as on schoolwork engagement, were 0.463, 0.793, 0.607 and 0.687, respectively. Therefore, training in social-emotional learning positively impacted the components of students' academic well-being in Zahedan. This finding was in line with those of Barzabadi -Farahani et al. (2019), Habibi-Kalibr et al. (2019), Badri-Gorgori et al. (2019), Vafaei (2019), Ebrahimi Orang et al. (2018), Veskarami et al. (2019), Boroumand (2016), Sadri Demirchi and Esmaeili-Ghazi Veloei (2016), Ozhan and Youksel



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(2021), Halliday et al. (2019), Oaklnad et al. (2018) and King (2017). Badri Gorgori et al. (2019) found that social-emotional learning training positively and significantly affects students' sense of attachment. Vafaei (2019) determined in a study that spirituality and psychological capital effectively affect students' academic well-being. Veskarami et al. (2019) also demonstrated that academic enthusiasm effectively predicts students' academic well-being. Ozhan and Youksel (2021) concluded that academic burnout was directly and negatively related to students' academic achievement and academic well-being. Social-emotional learning helps students be aware of their talents, emotions and skills, learn how to communicate with the surrounding world, manage their emotions, and solve life affairs better. Moreover, learning these skills helps students find solutions to their problems and preserve to achieve their goals in life (Ashuri et al. 2020). These factors help students have more academic satisfaction and academic engagement, thus reducing their burnout at school. In other words, their academic well-being will increase. Thus, it is determined that training in social and emotional learning increases school value, academic satisfaction and schoolwork engagement. Third question analysis suggested that the effect size of the training of social-emotional learning on spiritual health was 57.9%; thus, the training of social-emotional learning was effective on students' spiritual health, which increased it. This finding was consistent with those of Barzabadi -Farahani et al. (2019), Habibi-Kalibr et al. (2019), Badri-Gorgori et al. (2019), Vafaei (2019), Ebrahimi Orang et al. (2018), Veskarami et al. (2019), Boroumand (2016), Sadri Demirchi and Esmaeili-Ghazi Veloei (2016), Ozhan and Youksel (2021), Halliday et al. (2019), Oaklnad et al. (2018) and King (2017). In a study, Ashuri et al. (2019) found that the social-emotional learning program had a significantly positive effect on improving students' academic motivation and academic self-efficacy. Habibi-Keliber et al. (2018) also concluded that training in social and emotional learning skills effectively improved students' interpersonal relationships while reducing interpersonal problems. Also, Chester et al. (2019) determined that training in social-emotional learning had positive advantages for developing spiritual and cultural health at school. In research, Radcliffe et al. (2014) concluded that training social-emotional skills helped increase emotional and social skills, thereby increasing people's mental health. Social-emotional learning is a process whereby students gain knowledge, attitudes and skills such as identifying and managing emotions, planning and selecting positive goals, caring for and paying attention to others, establishing and maintaining positive relationships and making decisions (Badri-Gorgori et al., 2017). Goleman maintains that social-emotional skills refer to a set of various skills which can be learned or increased through training at any age.

Considering the significance of social-emotional skills, increasing these skills can be a major objective of school education; thus, training students can ensure their development in all cognitive and social-emotional dimensions and improve their spirituality (Sadri-Demirchi, Esmaeieli-Ghazi- Veloei, 2016). Thus, it is inferred that social and emotional learning training can improve students' spiritual health. The findings of the fourth question suggest that the effect size of the social-emotional learning on the components of religious health and existential health were 0.859 and 0.587. Therefore, training in social-emotional learning was effective in the spiritual health of male students of Zahedan. This finding was



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in line with those of Fallah et al. (2020), Ashuri et al. (2020), Badri Gorgori et al. (2019), Rajabipour Meibdi and Dost-Hosseini (2018), Salehi and Zamani (2015), Sadri Demirchi and Ismaili Ghazi Valoi (2016), Mahoney et al. (2019), Chester et al. (2019), Turki et al. (2018), McBean (2016). Ebrahimi-Orang et al. (2017) concluded that the training of social-emotional learning program was effective in self-awareness. Rajabipour Meybodi and Doust Hosseini (2017) determined that spiritual health was effective on academic burnout and life expectancy, increasing life expectancy but reducing academic burnout. Meta-analysis results by the CASEL (2008) suggested that training in social-emotional learning programs positively impacts social and emotional skills, behavioral problems, and academic and behavioral performance of the individual with himself, others, and at school, thus improving their religious and existential health. In sum, it is concluded that the training of social-emotional learning program was found to increase students' religious health and existential health. Tools used in this research were measurement scales. Thus this research faced all the limitations of the scales. Considering the positive effect of the training of social-emotional learning on students' academic well-being and spiritual health, it is recommended that in-service courses and training workshops be held for teachers in the area of training social-emotional learning skills. Also, consistent with the results, education experts are suggested to pay special attention to the role of social-emotional learning to educate students with high spiritual health and academic well-being and to include social-emotional learning skills in the students' curricula.

**Conflict of interest:** The authors state no conflict of interest in the study.

**Disclosure Statements**

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