

An Analysis of the Philosophical and Educational Foundations of Hope in the Education System and the Development of a Model for Enhancing Academic Hope among Students in Lamerd County

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: This study aimed to analyze the philosophical and educational foundations of hope in the education system and to develop a contextually grounded model for enhancing academic hope among students in Lamerd County.

Methods and Materials: This qualitative study employed an exploratory and interpretive design. Participants consisted of 18 university faculty members, educational experts and researchers, school administrators, counselors, and experienced teachers selected through purposive sampling on the basis of relevant academic and professional expertise. Sampling continued until data saturation was achieved. Data were collected through semi-structured, in-depth interviews focused on the philosophical foundations, educational determinants, barriers, and practical mechanisms associated with academic hope. Interviews were audio-recorded with participants' consent, transcribed verbatim, and supplemented by field notes. Data were analyzed through inductive thematic analysis involving repeated reading of transcripts, identification of meaning units, initial coding, constant comparison, categorization of related codes, development of subcategories and main categories, and integration of the resulting themes into a conceptual model. Credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability were strengthened through member checking, expert review, systematic documentation of analytical decisions, and continuous comparison of interpretations with the original data.

Findings: The analysis showed that academic hope was organized around interconnected philosophical and educational dimensions. The principal philosophical foundations were human agency and freedom, purposefulness and meaning, future orientation, human growth and educability, and dignity and intrinsic human worth. The major educational mechanisms included goal-oriented learning, pathway thinking, academic self-efficacy, self-regulation, supportive teacher-student relationships, family encouragement, peer support, positive school climate, educational justice, access to resources, and experiences of academic success. The resulting model indicated that these individual, relational, institutional, and contextual components interact to generate sustainable academic hope, reflected in meaningful goals, confidence in action, alternative pathways, persistence, stronger school engagement, and positive educational and occupational orientation.

Conclusion: Academic hope is a multidimensional and educationally modifiable phenomenon that develops through the interaction of students' agency and psychological capacities with supportive relationships, equitable school conditions, meaningful goals, and credible future opportunities.

Keywords: *Academic Hope; Hope; Philosophy of Education; Educational Foundations; Student Agency; School Climate; Academic Self-Efficacy; Lamerd County*

1. Introduction

Hope is one of the fundamental psychological, philosophical, and educational constructs that shapes how individuals interpret present circumstances, anticipate future possibilities, and mobilize personal and social resources in pursuit of meaningful goals. In educational contexts, hope assumes particular importance because learning is inherently future-oriented: students invest effort in the present with the expectation that current learning, persistence, and achievement will contribute to future academic, occupational, and personal outcomes. From this perspective, hope is not merely an emotional state characterized by positive expectations, but a dynamic system involving goal formation, perceived agency, the identification of pathways toward desired outcomes, and the capacity to continue purposeful action despite obstacles. Within contemporary educational systems, where students frequently encounter academic pressure, uncertainty regarding future opportunities, competitive evaluation, socioeconomic disparities, and rapidly changing educational environments, the presence or absence of hope may substantially influence their motivation, engagement, persistence, and adaptation. Studies conducted in educational populations have increasingly demonstrated that academic hope is associated with adaptive academic functioning and that students who perceive their educational goals as attainable and believe themselves capable of finding routes toward these goals are more likely to remain engaged with learning and persist in the face of difficulty (Hosseini & Karimi, 2019; Pittman, 2019). Accordingly, hope can be regarded as both an individual psychological resource and an educationally significant capacity that may be shaped, supported, or weakened by the structures and relationships operating within schools.

The concept of academic hope extends general theories of hope into the educational domain and refers to students' positive, goal-directed expectations regarding their ability to advance academically and overcome barriers to educational success. Academic hope includes not only the desire to succeed but also confidence in one's capacity to act effectively and the ability to identify feasible pathways

toward educational goals. This distinction is important because optimism without pathways or agency may remain passive, whereas academic hope entails an active orientation toward goal pursuit. Evidence from studies of students has shown that hope is related to academic performance, motivational functioning, and persistence, suggesting that students with higher levels of academic hope are more likely to interpret academic demands as manageable challenges rather than insurmountable threats (Ahmadi et al., 2019; Mozghan Gholami et al., 2019). The role of hope in academic achievement has also been supported by recent evidence showing significant relationships between academic hope, academic vitality, and educational achievement among secondary school students (Abri et al., 2025). These findings reinforce the view that academic hope is not peripheral to learning; rather, it functions as a central motivational-cognitive resource through which students organize effort, respond to setbacks, and maintain commitment to educational goals over time.

Academic hope is also closely intertwined with academic self-efficacy and students' beliefs regarding their own competence. Students are unlikely to sustain hope when they repeatedly perceive themselves as incapable of completing academic tasks, regardless of whether educational opportunities are objectively available. Conversely, experiences of mastery, constructive feedback, and the perception that one's efforts can produce improvement contribute to stronger expectations of success. Research examining structural relationships among these constructs has shown that academic hope can enhance academic engagement through the mediating role of academic self-efficacy, indicating that hope contributes to participation in learning partly by strengthening students' confidence in their ability to manage academic requirements (Vaziri Mehr & Salimi, 2021). Similarly, educational management has been associated with both academic hope and academic self-efficacy, suggesting that school-level processes and managerial practices can influence students' motivational resources rather than merely administrative outcomes (Pouraslan, 2022). These findings are particularly important from an educational perspective because they shift the

conceptualization of hope away from the assumption that it is solely a stable personal characteristic and toward the view that schools themselves may create conditions that strengthen or weaken students' expectations regarding their future academic progress.

Another important dimension of academic hope concerns students' ability to recover from ordinary academic difficulties and continue functioning effectively following setbacks. Academic life inevitably includes unfavorable grades, demanding examinations, interpersonal challenges, changes in learning environments, and experiences of temporary failure. Hope may operate as a protective resource by enabling students to maintain goal pursuit while revising their strategies when the original pathway becomes ineffective. Empirical evidence has demonstrated that academic hope is related to academic engagement through academic buoyancy, suggesting that students with greater hope may demonstrate stronger engagement because they are better able to respond constructively to routine academic adversities (Azadianbojnordi et al., 2020). This capacity is conceptually significant because successful students are not necessarily those who avoid setbacks, but those who retain sufficient agency and perceived pathways to continue progressing despite them. The importance of hope has similarly been identified in relation to academic procrastination, with evidence indicating that higher levels of academic hope predict lower tendencies toward delaying academic responsibilities (Dami et al., 2020). Together, these findings suggest that hope influences not only students' future expectations but also their everyday patterns of behavioral regulation, persistence, and task completion.

Academic self-regulation represents another mechanism through which hope may contribute to adaptive educational functioning. Students who possess hopeful expectations are more likely to organize their learning behavior around purposeful goals, monitor their progress, modify ineffective strategies, and sustain effort over time. In contrast, students who perceive few realistic pathways toward success may disengage from self-regulatory processes because effort itself appears unlikely to produce meaningful outcomes. Research conducted during periods of virtual education demonstrated that academic hope was positively related to educational well-being and that academic self-regulation played an important mediating role in this relationship (Arbaazi & Foulad Chang, 2022). Likewise, the relationship between academic hope and academic aversion has been found to operate partly through students' self-regulatory capacities, indicating that hope may reduce negative

orientation toward school by strengthening students' capacity to manage their own learning (Barani et al., 2019). Such evidence is particularly relevant in contemporary schooling because students are increasingly expected to assume greater responsibility for planning, monitoring, and adapting their learning across face-to-face, blended, and technologically mediated environments. From this standpoint, academic hope can be understood as a resource that supports autonomous and sustained engagement with educational responsibilities.

The importance of hope is also evident in students' emotional well-being and psychological adjustment. Educational environments can generate substantial stress when academic evaluation, future uncertainty, competitive comparison, and perceived failure accumulate over time. When students lose confidence in their ability to influence educational outcomes, academic distress may gradually develop into hopelessness, demotivation, or withdrawal. Research has shown that academic hope and perceived emotional support contribute to the prediction of academic welfare, demonstrating the close relationship between students' internal hopeful orientation and the supportive quality of their social environments (Ghadampour et al., 2018). By contrast, academic stress, academic demotivation, and negative academic self-concept have been associated with adverse psychological and social outcomes through the mediating role of academic hopelessness (Shafiepour Motlagh & Torabi Nahad, 2018). This contrast between hope and hopelessness illustrates that educational experiences are interpreted through students' expectations about whether improvement remains possible. A student who encounters difficulty but believes that change is attainable may respond with renewed effort, whereas a student who interprets the same difficulty as evidence of a permanently blocked future may become increasingly disengaged.

Emotional and relational dimensions of hope are therefore inseparable from the educational context in which students develop. Adolescents' academic hope exists alongside broader dimensions of adjustment, self-esteem, mental health, and interpersonal experience, suggesting that it should be considered within a holistic conception of student development rather than treated purely as an achievement-related construct (Rabiei, 2013). Teacher behavior is particularly influential because teachers communicate explicit and implicit messages regarding students' competence, potential, and future possibilities. When educators demonstrate professional ethics, respect, fairness, encouragement, and confidence in students'

capacity for growth, they may contribute to a school climate in which hope is sustained. The mediating role of academic hope in the relationship between teaching professional ethics and academic performance provides evidence that the quality of educational interaction may influence academic outcomes partly through students' hopeful beliefs (Ahmadi et al., 2019). Similarly, transformative teaching has been linked with academic hope and academic hardiness, suggesting that instructional practices capable of engaging students intellectually and motivationally may contribute to their willingness to persist in the face of academic challenges (Amiri Khomekani & Hassanpour, 2022). Thus, hope is not simply generated within the learner but is also relationally communicated and institutionally supported.

The future-oriented character of hope further underscores its importance during adolescence, a developmental period in which students increasingly consider higher education, employment, social roles, and long-term identity. A student's attitude toward education and career prospects can affect whether current academic demands are experienced as meaningful investments or burdensome obligations. Research examining a causal model of academic hope has indicated that attitudes toward educational and occupational futures, academic self-confidence, and academic persistence are interconnected in shaping students' hopeful academic orientation (Mehri et al., 2021). Academic aspiration similarly contributes to academic hope, with academic optimism functioning as an important mediating mechanism (Panahi et al., 2023). These relationships indicate that hope is sustained when students can imagine a desirable future, believe that education contributes to reaching it, and perceive themselves as capable of maintaining progress toward that future. Accordingly, interventions seeking to promote hope may need to go beyond general encouragement and assist students in constructing realistic future images, clarifying goals, identifying educational pathways, and developing confidence in their capacity to navigate those pathways.

The importance of future perspective has been reinforced by intervention research demonstrating that educational programs focused explicitly on the future can improve academic hope, psychological well-being, goal orientation, and time perspective among adolescents (Norouzi, 2024). Such findings support the proposition that hope can be intentionally cultivated rather than merely observed as an existing personal difference. Hope-focused interventions have similarly demonstrated beneficial effects on students' academic motivation, academic hardiness, and academic

hope, indicating that structured educational experiences can strengthen both the cognitive and motivational components required for sustained goal pursuit (Raeisi, 2025). Internationally, localized strength-based school interventions have also emphasized hope as a viable target for mental health promotion and student development, particularly when interventions are culturally and contextually adapted rather than imposed as universal programs (Embalsado, 2024). These findings provide an important practical foundation for designing school-based models that translate theories of hope into concrete educational strategies.

The role of social belonging further expands the conceptual boundaries of academic hope. Students do not pursue academic goals in isolation; their expectations are shaped by whether they experience themselves as accepted members of the school community and whether institutional environments communicate that their participation and success are genuinely possible. Research among low-income and underrepresented students in STEM education has shown that a sense of belonging and academic hope contribute to persistence, highlighting the combined importance of psychological and social resources in maintaining educational participation (Hansen et al., 2023). This is particularly relevant for students whose socioeconomic, cultural, or geographical circumstances may lead them to perceive fewer educational opportunities. In such contexts, hope requires not only internal confidence but also credible evidence that pathways to future goals exist. If students repeatedly encounter messages suggesting that advancement is inaccessible, the exhortation to "be hopeful" may have little educational effect. Sustainable academic hope therefore requires alignment between internal agency and external opportunity.

Recent qualitative work on school attendance problems further illustrates the need to conceptualize hope in a broader and more context-sensitive manner. Rather than viewing disengagement or attendance difficulties solely as deficits in students, a hope-oriented perspective draws attention to the ways young people interpret belonging, possibility, recognition, and the perceived attainability of meaningful participation in school (Walther-Hansen et al., 2024). This perspective is valuable because it situates hope within the lived experience of students and acknowledges that educational systems themselves can either expand or restrict perceived possibilities. When institutional routines, interpersonal relationships, or school cultures produce repeated experiences of exclusion, humiliation, or futility,

students' motivational difficulties may reflect not merely individual weakness but an erosion of the belief that educational participation can lead to valued outcomes. A philosophically informed examination of hope can therefore contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of educational responsibility by asking not only whether students possess hope, but also whether educational environments are structured in ways that make hope rational, meaningful, and sustainable.

From a philosophical perspective, hope is closely related to fundamental questions concerning human agency, freedom, purpose, meaning, development, and the possibility of transformation. Education itself rests on an implicit assumption of educability: the belief that individuals are capable of learning, changing, and becoming more than they presently are. Without such an assumption, the educational enterprise would lose much of its normative and developmental justification. Hope is therefore deeply compatible with the philosophical foundations of education because both depend on openness to possibility. A hopeful educational orientation views the learner not as a fixed product of previous achievement but as a developing person whose capacities can be strengthened through appropriate relationships, experiences, and opportunities. This philosophical foundation is especially significant in contexts where excessive emphasis on examination scores or competitive ranking may lead students to define themselves narrowly through performance. Evidence linking academic hope with achievement, academic vitality, and other indicators of adaptive educational functioning supports the importance of maintaining a developmental rather than deterministic conception of learners (Abri et al., 2025).

At the same time, an educational philosophy of hope should avoid reducing hope to unrealistic positivity. Effective hope requires that students recognize obstacles while retaining the capacity to act constructively in response to them. Hope therefore involves both realism and possibility: students need achievable goals, credible pathways, access to resources, and educational relationships that support agency. This interpretation is consistent with findings showing that hope relates to test anxiety and academic performance, since students who possess stronger hopeful beliefs may be better equipped to approach evaluative situations as manageable rather than catastrophic (Hosseini & Karimi, 2019). It is also consistent with research demonstrating the importance of academic optimism in the relationship between hope, motivation, and achievement (Mozhgan Gholami et al., 2019). Such findings suggest that

hope should not be equated with ignoring risk or difficulty; instead, it represents an organized capacity to interpret difficulty within a broader framework of attainable progress.

The need for a contextualized model of academic hope becomes particularly important when considering local educational systems. Although existing studies have established significant relationships between academic hope and variables such as academic achievement, vitality, self-regulation, hardiness, self-efficacy, engagement, persistence, optimism, well-being, and procrastination, much of this literature examines isolated psychological relationships rather than the integrated philosophical and educational foundations from which academic hope develops. Studies have identified individual predictors and consequences of hope (Barani et al., 2019; Dami et al., 2020; Ghadampour et al., 2018), while other research has demonstrated the importance of teaching, educational management, and supportive environments (Amiri Khamekani & Hassanpour, 2022; Pouraslan, 2022). However, there remains a need to integrate these dimensions into a coherent framework that explains how philosophical beliefs about learners, individual psychological capacities, teacher-student relationships, family support, school climate, educational justice, and perceptions of future opportunity collectively contribute to academic hope.

This need is especially salient in geographically and culturally specific settings such as Lamerd County. Students' hopeful expectations are likely to be shaped by the particular educational, familial, cultural, socioeconomic, and occupational realities surrounding them. A model developed without attention to these contextual conditions may identify general psychological principles while failing to capture how students interpret their actual possibilities. International work emphasizing localized and culturally responsive hope interventions supports the importance of designing approaches that reflect local resources, barriers, and social relationships (Embalsado, 2024). Likewise, research emphasizing belonging and persistence among students facing structural disadvantages demonstrates that hope is strengthened when learners perceive both social inclusion and realistic routes to future achievement (Hansen et al., 2023). For students in Lamerd County, therefore, understanding academic hope requires attention not only to internal beliefs but also to the school, family, community, and opportunity structures through which those beliefs acquire practical meaning.

A comprehensive model for promoting academic hope should consequently operate at multiple levels. At the

individual level, it should address academic self-efficacy, goal clarity, agency thinking, pathway thinking, resilience, self-regulation, and future orientation. At the interpersonal level, it should consider teacher support, family encouragement, peer belonging, and counseling relationships. At the institutional level, it should include school climate, educational management, fairness, access to supportive services, and recognition of students' progress. At the contextual level, it should acknowledge students' perceptions of educational and occupational opportunities. The existing literature provides empirical support for each of these components, yet their integration remains insufficiently developed. Evidence regarding self-efficacy and engagement (Vaziri Mehr & Salimi, 2021), self-regulation and well-being (Arbaazi & Foulad Chang, 2022), emotional support and academic welfare (Ghadampour et al., 2018), future perspective and goal orientation (Norouzi, 2024), and strength-based hope promotion (Raeisi, 2025) collectively suggests that academic hope is best understood as a multidimensional educational phenomenon rather than a single isolated trait.

Accordingly, there is both a theoretical and practical justification for examining the philosophical and educational foundations of hope and translating them into an applied model capable of guiding schools, teachers, counselors, families, and educational policymakers. Such a model can provide a conceptual bridge between abstract philosophical assumptions about human possibility and concrete educational practices that strengthen students' motivation and persistence. It can also help educational systems identify conditions that unintentionally erode hope, such as humiliating instructional practices, chronic social comparison, lack of perceived opportunity, rigid evaluation, insufficient counseling support, or failure to connect schooling with meaningful future pathways. Conversely, practices that strengthen agency, clarify goals, create alternative pathways, provide mastery experiences, reinforce belonging, and communicate realistic expectations may contribute to a sustainable form of hope capable of supporting both academic performance and broader student development. This is particularly important because the existing literature indicates that hope is associated not only with academic success but also with psychological well-being, educational persistence, adaptive self-regulation, school engagement, and resilience in the face of academic demands (Azadianbojnordi et al., 2020; Mehri et al., 2021; Panahi et al., 2023).

Therefore, the aim of the present study was to analyze the philosophical and educational foundations of hope within the education system and to develop a contextually grounded model for enhancing academic hope among students in Lamerd County.

2. Methods and Materials

2.1. Study Design and Participants

The present study employed a qualitative research design with an exploratory and interpretive orientation to identify and analyze the philosophical and educational foundations of hope in the education system and to develop a conceptual model for enhancing academic hope among students in Lamerd County. Given the multidimensional nature of hope and its close association with philosophical anthropology, educational aims, motivation, agency, goal-directed behavior, interpersonal relationships, and the broader cultural and institutional context of schooling, a qualitative approach was considered appropriate for obtaining an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon. The study population consisted of university faculty members, researchers, educational experts, school administrators, counselors, and experienced teachers who possessed specialized knowledge or professional experience in the fields of philosophy of education, educational psychology, curriculum studies, educational sciences, counseling, student motivation, and academic development. Participants were selected through purposive sampling based on predetermined inclusion criteria, including possession of relevant academic or professional expertise, at least five years of experience in education or research related to the subject of the study, familiarity with issues concerning student motivation and academic hope, and willingness to participate in an in-depth interview. Sampling continued according to the principle of theoretical and data saturation, whereby recruitment was terminated when subsequent interviews no longer produced substantively new concepts, categories, or explanatory insights. Data saturation was achieved after interviews with 18 participants, and these 18 experts constituted the final sample of the study. To maximize the richness and diversity of the data, efforts were made to include participants with different disciplinary backgrounds and professional roles so that the philosophical, psychological, pedagogical, managerial, and school-based dimensions of academic hope could be examined from complementary perspectives. All participants were informed about the purpose and procedures of the study, the voluntary

nature of participation, confidentiality of the information provided, and their right to withdraw from the study at any stage without any consequences. Informed consent was obtained prior to each interview, and participants' identities were protected throughout data collection, analysis, and reporting by using identification codes instead of personal names.

2.2. Instruments

Data were collected primarily through semi-structured, in-depth interviews designed to elicit participants' understandings and experiences regarding the meaning, philosophical foundations, educational determinants, contextual conditions, and practical mechanisms of hope and academic hope within the education system. The interview protocol was developed on the basis of the objectives of the study, a preliminary review of the theoretical literature on hope and education, and consultation with specialists in educational sciences and qualitative research. The interviews began with broad, open-ended questions intended to encourage participants to describe their conceptualization of hope in educational settings and gradually progressed toward more focused questions concerning the philosophical assumptions underlying hope, the characteristics of a hopeful learner, the role of teachers and school administrators, curriculum and instructional processes, school climate, family and peer relationships, educational policies, students' perceptions of future opportunities, and possible strategies for strengthening academic hope among students in Lamerd County. Probing questions were used whenever necessary to clarify participants' statements, explore underlying meanings, obtain concrete examples, and identify relationships among emerging concepts. Particular attention was given to the distinction between hope as a general psychological or existential construct and academic hope as a form of goal-oriented cognition and motivation operating within educational contexts. The interviews also investigated factors that could weaken academic hope, including repeated academic failure, perceived lack of competence, restricted opportunities for advancement, inappropriate teacher–student interactions, competitive or discouraging school environments, family pressures, socioeconomic limitations, and uncertainty regarding educational and occupational futures. Participants were subsequently invited to suggest educational interventions, institutional mechanisms, and contextual strategies that could form the components of a model for enhancing

academic hope. Each interview was conducted individually in a setting convenient and appropriate for the participant and lasted approximately 45 to 75 minutes. With participants' permission, interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim immediately after completion. Field notes were also prepared during and after the interviews to document contextual information, significant nonverbal observations, preliminary analytical ideas, and emerging relationships between concepts. Data collection and preliminary analysis were conducted concurrently so that concepts emerging from earlier interviews could inform probing questions in later interviews. To enhance the credibility and comprehensiveness of the data, the interview guide remained flexible throughout the research process, allowing newly emerging concepts to be explored in subsequent interviews while maintaining consistency with the principal objectives of the study.

2.3. Data Analysis

The qualitative data were analyzed using a systematic thematic analysis with an inductive–interpretive approach. Analysis began simultaneously with data collection and continued iteratively until the conceptual structure of the proposed model became sufficiently developed and no major new categories emerged from the data. Each recorded interview was transcribed verbatim and repeatedly read to achieve immersion in the participants' narratives and to obtain an overall understanding of their perspectives. In the initial stage, meaningful units relevant to the philosophical meaning of hope, educational conditions influencing academic hope, barriers to hope, developmental mechanisms, and strategies for promoting hope were identified throughout the transcripts. These meaningful units were subsequently condensed and assigned preliminary codes that remained as close as possible to the participants' intended meanings. Constant comparison was used throughout the coding process to examine similarities and differences among codes across participants and to avoid unnecessary duplication. Related initial codes were then grouped into more abstract concepts and subcategories according to their conceptual similarity and explanatory relevance. During the next stage, relationships among the subcategories were examined in order to identify broader categories representing the principal philosophical, educational, individual, interpersonal, organizational, and contextual dimensions of academic hope. Analytical attention was directed not only toward identifying factors

associated with hope but also toward determining how philosophical assumptions concerning human agency, purposefulness, freedom, meaning, future orientation, personal development, and educability could be translated into educational principles and practical school-based mechanisms. Through repeated comparison, integration, and conceptual refinement, the categories were organized into a coherent framework representing the antecedents, enabling conditions, educational processes, supportive mechanisms, and expected outcomes involved in enhancing students' academic hope. The final model was developed by integrating the major categories and examining the logical relationships among them in light of both participants' accounts and the conceptual objectives of the study. Several strategies were employed to enhance the trustworthiness of the findings. Credibility was strengthened through prolonged engagement with the data, iterative interviewing, member checking with selected participants, and comparison of interpretations across interviews. Dependability was supported by maintaining a detailed record of the research process, including interview transcripts, coding decisions, category development, and analytical memos. Confirmability was enhanced through continuous comparison between interpretations and the original data and by seeking expert review of the coding structure and emerging conceptual model. Transferability was facilitated by providing a detailed description of the study context, participants' professional characteristics, sampling procedures, and analytical process so that readers could evaluate the applicability of the findings to comparable educational settings. Any disagreements regarding the classification or interpretation of codes were reconsidered through repeated examination of the original transcripts and conceptual discussion until an analytically defensible interpretation was reached. The final analytical framework therefore reflected a systematic synthesis of participants' expert perspectives regarding the philosophical and educational foundations of hope and the mechanisms through which academic hope can be promoted among students in Lamerd County.

3. Findings and Results

The participants in the qualitative phase consisted of 18 experts and educational practitioners who were selected purposively on the basis of their academic expertise and professional experience relevant to the philosophical and educational dimensions of hope and academic hope. Of the 18 participants, 11 were male and 7 were female. The participants ranged in age from 34 to 59 years, with the majority being between 40 and 50 years of age. In terms of educational qualifications, 10 participants held doctoral degrees and 8 held master's degrees in fields including philosophy of education, educational psychology, curriculum studies, counseling, educational management, and related areas of educational sciences. Regarding professional position, the sample included 5 university faculty members, 4 educational experts and researchers, 3 school administrators, 3 school counselors, and 3 experienced teachers. Participants' professional experience ranged from 7 to 31 years, with most having more than 15 years of direct experience in educational, academic, counseling, or managerial settings. This diversity of professional backgrounds made it possible to examine academic hope from several complementary perspectives, including philosophical foundations, psychological processes, instructional practices, school organization, interpersonal relationships, and the socioeconomic and cultural context of students in Lamerd County. Analysis of the interviews revealed that participants generally regarded academic hope not as a simple positive emotional state, but as a multidimensional educational phenomenon rooted in students' perceptions of meaning, agency, capability, future possibility, supportive relationships, and access to credible pathways for educational progress. Through iterative coding and constant comparison of interview data, a comprehensive set of initial codes was extracted and progressively organized into subcategories, main categories, and overarching dimensions.

Table 1

Philosophical and Educational Foundations of Hope Identified in the Qualitative Analysis

Main dimension	Main category	Subcategories	Representative conceptual indicators
Philosophical foundations of hope	Human agency and freedom	Capacity for choice; responsibility for action; perceived ability to influence outcomes; active rather than passive orientation	Belief that students can change their academic trajectory through purposeful action and meaningful choices
Philosophical foundations of hope	Purposefulness and meaning	Meaning in learning; educational purpose; personal significance of goals; connection between present effort and future aspirations	Understanding education as a meaningful process linked to personal development and future life
Philosophical foundations of hope	Future orientation	Positive anticipation; openness to future possibilities; belief in attainable progress; temporal continuity	Ability to imagine a desirable future and regard current academic efforts as steps toward that future
Philosophical foundations of hope	Human growth and educability	Capacity for development; changeability of abilities; learning from failure; developmental view of the learner	Belief that abilities are not fixed and that students can improve through learning, effort, and support
Philosophical foundations of hope	Dignity and intrinsic human worth	Respect for individuality; recognition of student potential; non-humiliating educational relationships; acceptance	Experiencing oneself as a valued learner whose abilities and efforts deserve recognition
Educational foundations of hope	Goal-oriented learning	Clear academic goals; attainable objectives; progressive goal setting; meaningful academic expectations	Having identifiable academic targets that are challenging yet realistic
Educational foundations of hope	Perceived pathways	Alternative routes to goals; problem solving; planning; flexibility in overcoming barriers	Ability to identify more than one strategy for reaching an academic objective
Educational foundations of hope	Academic self-efficacy	Perceived competence; confidence in learning; mastery experiences; constructive interpretation of performance	Belief in one's ability to perform academic tasks and manage educational demands
Educational foundations of hope	Supportive educational relationships	Teacher support; counselor accessibility; peer encouragement; family-school cooperation	Availability of emotionally and academically supportive relationships that sustain persistence
Educational foundations of hope	Positive educational climate	Psychological safety; fairness; encouragement; participation; constructive feedback	A school environment that minimizes humiliation and exclusion and encourages engagement and progress
Educational foundations of hope	Opportunity and educational justice	Equal opportunities; access to resources; recognition of individual differences; supportive services	Perception that progress is possible regardless of socioeconomic or educational disadvantage
Educational foundations of hope	Success experience and feedback	Recognition of progress; mastery experiences; formative feedback; realistic encouragement	Repeated experiences demonstrating that effort can lead to observable academic improvement

As shown in Table 1, the findings indicated that the foundations of hope were organized around two broad and mutually reinforcing dimensions: philosophical foundations and educational foundations. The philosophical dimension reflected participants' view that hope emerges when learners understand themselves as capable, purposeful, developing, and valuable human beings who possess some degree of agency over their educational future. Human agency and freedom were repeatedly emphasized because participants believed that hope diminishes when students experience themselves as passive recipients of predetermined outcomes. In contrast, when students perceive that their decisions, efforts, and strategies can alter their academic trajectory, a sense of active hope becomes possible. Purposefulness and meaning were also central, because academic effort was perceived as difficult to sustain when students could not connect schooling with personally meaningful goals or future possibilities. Future orientation extended this idea by emphasizing the importance of maintaining a cognitively

accessible image of a desirable and attainable future. The categories of human growth, educability, dignity, and intrinsic worth further indicated that hope depends on viewing students as capable of change rather than defining them through previous failures or current limitations. The educational foundations complemented these philosophical principles by identifying the institutional and pedagogical conditions through which hope could be cultivated in practice. Goal-oriented learning, perceived pathways, academic self-efficacy, supportive educational relationships, a positive school climate, educational justice, and experiences of success were consistently described as the principal mechanisms through which philosophical hope becomes translated into academic motivation and sustained engagement. Accordingly, the qualitative findings suggested that academic hope cannot be reduced to individual optimism; rather, it develops through the interaction between students' beliefs about themselves and their future

and the educational structures that provide goals, pathways, support, opportunities, and evidence of progress.

Table 2

Factors Weakening and Strengthening Academic Hope among Students

Domain	Factors weakening academic hope	Factors strengthening academic hope
Individual-cognitive	Negative self-evaluation; fear of failure; learned helplessness; unrealistic comparisons; uncertainty about abilities	Academic self-awareness; realistic self-evaluation; growth mindset; self-efficacy; recognition of personal strengths
Motivational	Lack of meaningful goals; low perceived usefulness of education; repeated failure; absence of progress indicators	Clear and attainable goals; perceived value of learning; progressive success experiences; recognition of improvement
Emotional	Academic anxiety; chronic discouragement; shame; hopelessness; fear of judgment	Emotional security; encouragement; resilience; positive coping; tolerance of temporary failure
Instructional	Uniform teaching; excessive emphasis on grades; punitive assessment; lack of differentiated support	Active teaching; formative assessment; differentiated instruction; feedback emphasizing progress and mastery
Teacher-related	Humiliation; labeling; low expectations; indifference; comparison among students	Respectful interaction; high but realistic expectations; individual attention; motivational feedback; recognition of effort
Family-related	Excessive pressure; unrealistic expectations; negative comparisons; lack of emotional support	Realistic expectations; encouragement; emotional support; cooperation with school; recognition of effort and progress
Peer-related	Ridicule; exclusion; unhealthy competition; social comparison	Peer acceptance; cooperative learning; constructive competition; supportive friendships; shared academic goals
School organizational	Rigid regulations; limited student participation; weak counseling services; lack of recognition	Participatory climate; accessible counseling; student voice; recognition systems; supportive leadership
Socioeconomic	Financial constraints; perceived lack of opportunity; limited access to learning resources; uncertainty about future employment	Equal access to resources; targeted support; educational guidance; exposure to realistic pathways for further education and employment
Cultural-contextual	Social narratives of limited opportunity; pessimism about the future; devaluation of educational achievement	Positive local role models; community support; realistic success narratives; connection between education and community development

Table 2 presents the factors identified by participants as either weakening or strengthening students' academic hope. The findings showed that academic hope is influenced by multiple levels of the students' educational ecology rather than by personal characteristics alone. At the individual level, negative self-evaluations, fear of failure, uncertainty about ability, and learned helplessness were described as important mechanisms through which repeated academic difficulties may gradually be interpreted as evidence of permanent incapacity. Participants explained that such perceptions can weaken both the motivation to pursue academic goals and the willingness to search for alternative solutions when difficulties arise. Conversely, awareness of personal strengths, realistic self-evaluation, a developmental understanding of ability, and growing academic self-efficacy were regarded as major protective factors. At the motivational level, the absence of personally meaningful and attainable goals was associated with reduced persistence, whereas clear objectives and visible indicators of progress increased students' willingness to maintain effort. The emotional environment was similarly important; participants repeatedly emphasized that chronic anxiety, humiliation, and fear of judgment may make students increasingly risk-avoidant, while emotional safety and constructive

encouragement enable them to interpret temporary failure as part of the learning process. Teacher behavior emerged as one of the most influential school-based factors. Labeling students as weak, repeatedly comparing them with higher-performing peers, or communicating low expectations was viewed as particularly damaging because such practices can transform temporary academic difficulty into a stable negative academic identity. In contrast, teachers who communicate realistic confidence in students' capacity for improvement, provide individualized feedback, and recognize effort as well as outcomes were considered central agents in the development of hope. Family expectations and peer relationships showed a comparable pattern. Excessive family pressure and negative comparison were perceived as reducing hope, whereas supportive expectations and recognition of incremental progress strengthened students' persistence. At the organizational level, participants emphasized that counseling accessibility, student participation, supportive leadership, and school recognition systems could either reinforce or undermine students' perceptions of educational possibility. Finally, the socioeconomic and cultural context was especially important in Lamerd County, where participants noted that students' expectations about higher education, employment,

and future life may be influenced by perceived opportunity structures. Thus, strengthening academic hope was understood to require simultaneous attention to cognitive,

emotional, relational, instructional, institutional, and contextual conditions.

Table 3

Proposed Model for Enhancing Academic Hope among Students in Lamerd County

Model component	Core elements	Educational mechanisms	Expected outcomes
Meaning and future orientation	Personal meaning of education; future vision; connection between learning and life goals	Future-oriented counseling; values clarification; educational and career planning; exposure to realistic future pathways	Greater sense of educational purpose; stronger future orientation; increased commitment to learning
Agency development	Personal responsibility; decision-making; perceived control; self-regulation	Student participation in goal setting; self-monitoring; choice within learning tasks; responsibility-based activities	Increased perceived agency; stronger self-regulation; greater persistence
Goal-setting and pathway thinking	Clear goals; intermediate objectives; alternative pathways; problem solving	SMART academic goals; breaking long-term goals into manageable steps; pathway mapping; contingency planning	Increased goal clarity; improved problem solving; greater ability to overcome academic barriers
Academic competence and self-efficacy	Mastery; recognition of strengths; realistic beliefs about ability	Differentiated tasks; scaffolded learning; formative feedback; strength identification; incremental challenges	Higher academic self-efficacy; reduced helplessness; increased willingness to attempt difficult tasks
Supportive teacher-student relationships	Respect; trust; empathy; realistic expectations; encouragement	Teacher training in supportive communication; strengths-based feedback; non-humiliating classroom management; mentoring	Greater psychological safety; stronger engagement; improved academic confidence
Family support and alignment	Realistic expectations; emotional support; constructive monitoring; reduced comparison	Parent education; school-family communication; guidance on encouragement and expectations	Reduced academic pressure; increased emotional security; consistent support across home and school
Peer and social support	Belonging; cooperation; positive peer influence; reduced exclusion	Cooperative learning; peer mentoring; group problem solving; anti-bullying practices	Greater school belonging; stronger social support; lower social discouragement
Positive school climate	Fairness; participation; recognition; safety; student voice	Participatory decision-making; recognition of improvement; accessible counseling; inclusive school practices	Increased school attachment; stronger trust in the educational environment; improved motivation
Educational justice and opportunity	Access to resources; individual support; recognition of contextual barriers	Academic support programs; counseling access; resource allocation; targeted assistance for disadvantaged students	Increased perceived opportunity; reduced inequality in hope; stronger belief in attainable progress
Monitoring and sustainability	Assessment of hope; feedback loops; intervention review; continuity	Periodic academic hope assessment; counseling follow-up; teacher and parent feedback; school-level evaluation	Sustained academic hope; early identification of declining hope; continuous improvement of intervention practices

As demonstrated in Table 3, the proposed model for enhancing academic hope was developed by integrating the philosophical foundations of hope with the educational conditions and intervention mechanisms identified through qualitative analysis. The model consists of ten interrelated components, each of which addresses a distinct but complementary dimension of academic hope. The first component, meaning and future orientation, emphasizes that students must be able to perceive a credible connection between present academic activities and personally meaningful future possibilities. Participants believed that educational goals become motivationally effective when they are not merely imposed externally but are connected to the student's values, aspirations, and expected future roles. The second component, agency development, focuses on strengthening the student's perception that personal choices

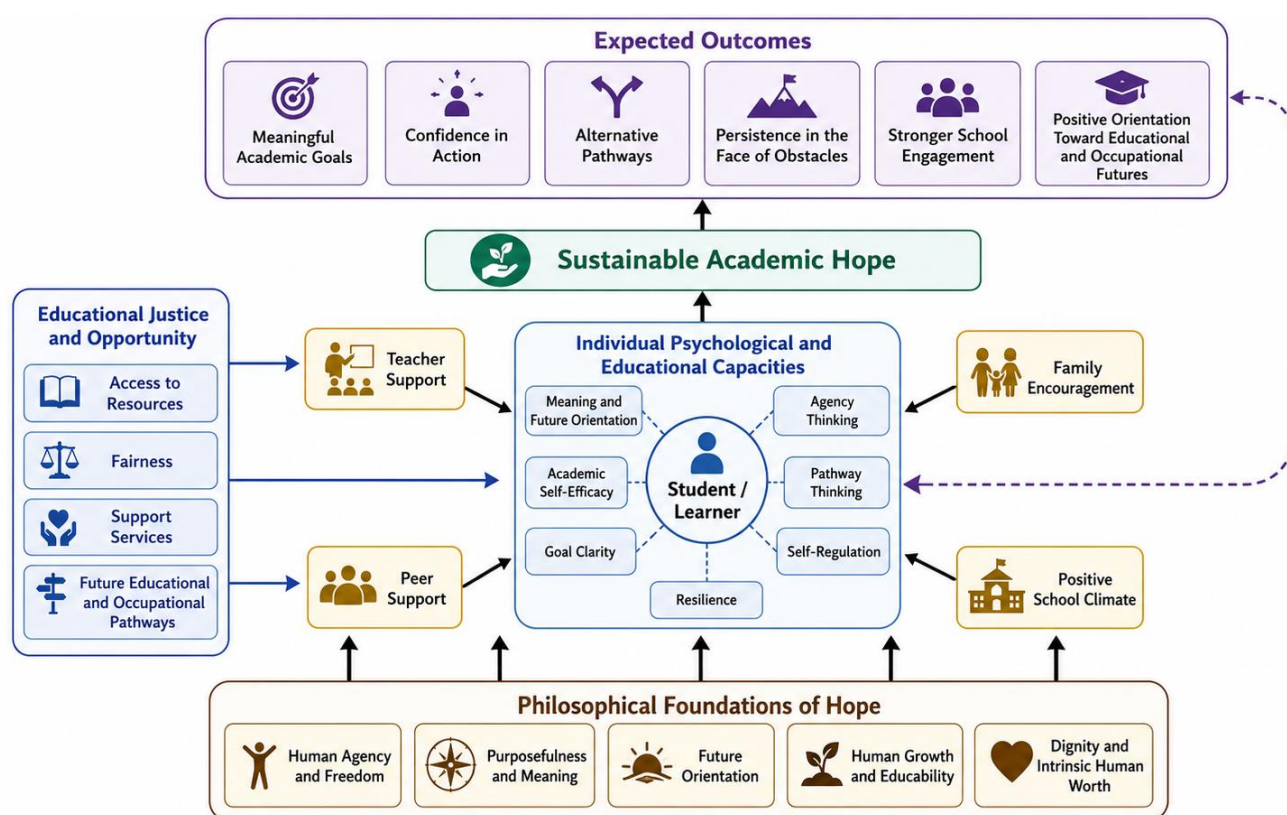
and actions can influence educational outcomes. This component therefore includes opportunities for decision-making, self-monitoring, participation in academic goal setting, and responsibility for learning. Goal-setting and pathway thinking constitute the third component and represent the cognitive structure through which hope is operationalized. Participants emphasized that having a goal is insufficient unless students can identify practical routes toward achieving it and can generate alternative strategies when obstacles arise. Academic competence and self-efficacy represent the fourth component and are developed through mastery experiences, differentiated learning opportunities, constructive feedback, and recognition of personal strengths. The fifth and sixth components address teacher-student and family relationships, reflecting the finding that hope is relationally reinforced through

consistent messages of respect, realistic confidence, support, and acceptance. Peer and social support form the seventh component because school belonging and constructive peer interaction can strengthen persistence and reduce social forms of discouragement. The eighth component, positive school climate, extends these interpersonal processes to the organizational level by emphasizing fairness, psychological safety, student participation, recognition of progress, and access to counseling. Educational justice and opportunity constitute the ninth component, indicating that hope is difficult to sustain when students perceive educational

barriers as structurally insurmountable. The final component, monitoring and sustainability, ensures that academic hope is treated as a dynamic educational indicator that can be periodically assessed and supported rather than as a one-time intervention outcome. Overall, the model suggests that sustainable academic hope emerges when students possess meaningful goals and perceived agency while simultaneously experiencing a school and family environment that provides credible pathways, supportive relationships, equitable opportunities, and repeated evidence that purposeful effort can lead to progress.

Figure 1

Conceptual Model for Enhancing Academic Hope among Students in Lamerd County



The conceptual structure represented in Figure 1 illustrates academic hope as the outcome of a dynamic interaction among philosophical foundations, individual psychological capacities, educational processes, relational supports, school-level conditions, and contextual opportunities. At the foundational level, the model begins with a philosophical conception of the learner as an agentic, purposeful, developing, and intrinsically valuable person. These assumptions provide the conceptual basis for educational practices that strengthen students' sense of meaning, future orientation, responsibility, and capacity for change. At the individual level, these philosophical

principles are translated into academic self-efficacy, goal clarity, agency thinking, pathway thinking, self-regulation, and resilience in response to academic obstacles. However, participants strongly emphasized that these capacities are not expected to develop independently of the educational environment. Consequently, the model places teacher support, family encouragement, constructive peer relationships, and a positive school climate around the learner as relational and institutional conditions that reinforce the internal components of hope. These processes are further influenced by the degree to which students perceive actual educational opportunities, access to

resources, fairness, and realistic pathways toward higher education and future employment. The model therefore assumes reciprocal relationships among its components. For example, supportive teacher feedback can strengthen self-efficacy, stronger self-efficacy can increase willingness to pursue challenging goals, successful goal pursuit can produce mastery experiences, and mastery experiences can further reinforce students' expectations for future success. Conversely, repeated humiliation, exclusion, blocked opportunities, or failure without constructive support may disrupt this reinforcing cycle and lead to reduced agency and perceived pathways. The final outcome of the model is a sustainable form of academic hope characterized by meaningful academic goals, confidence in one's ability to act, perceived availability of alternative pathways, persistence in the face of obstacles, stronger school engagement, and a more positive orientation toward educational and occupational futures. Thus, the proposed model conceptualizes academic hope not as an isolated psychological trait but as a developmental and educationally modifiable phenomenon that emerges through the coordinated influence of the learner, teacher, family, peer group, school organization, and wider social context.

4. Discussion and Conclusion

The present study aimed to analyze the philosophical and educational foundations of hope in the education system and to develop a contextual model for enhancing academic hope among students in Lamerd County. The qualitative findings indicated that academic hope is a multidimensional educational phenomenon emerging from the interaction of philosophical beliefs about the learner, individual psychological capacities, interpersonal relationships, school conditions, and perceived educational opportunities. At the most fundamental level, the findings identified human agency and freedom, purposefulness and meaning, future orientation, human growth and educability, and dignity and intrinsic human worth as the principal philosophical foundations of hope. These foundations were translated educationally into goal-oriented learning, pathway thinking, academic self-efficacy, supportive relationships, a positive school climate, educational justice, and experiences of success. The findings further showed that students' academic hope may be either strengthened or weakened by factors operating at individual, emotional, motivational, instructional, family, peer, organizational, and socioeconomic levels. On the basis of these findings, a

model was developed in which meaningful future orientation, agency development, goal setting, pathway generation, self-efficacy, teacher support, family encouragement, peer relationships, positive school climate, educational justice, and continuous monitoring collectively contribute to sustainable academic hope and subsequently to stronger engagement, persistence, confidence, and positive educational and occupational orientation.

One of the most important findings was the central position of agency, freedom, and perceived capacity for purposeful action in the formation of academic hope. Participants repeatedly emphasized that students are more hopeful when they believe that their academic future is not predetermined and that their own choices, effort, and strategies can influence educational outcomes. This finding is consistent with the broader conception of academic hope as an active rather than passive motivational orientation. Hope requires students not simply to desire success but to believe that they can initiate and sustain behaviors directed toward meaningful academic goals. The observed importance of agency is consistent with research showing that academic hope is related to academic engagement through students' beliefs in their own competence and capacity to act (Vaziri Mehr & Salimi, 2021). Likewise, findings indicating a relationship between academic hope, academic vitality, and achievement support the proposition that students who perceive themselves as capable of influencing their educational trajectory are more likely to remain active in learning and persist when facing difficulties (Abri et al., 2025). This can be explained by the motivational function of agency: when students believe that effort has the potential to alter outcomes, academic tasks acquire greater behavioral significance, whereas a perception of helplessness reduces the perceived value of continued effort.

The findings also demonstrated that purposefulness, meaning, and future orientation constitute foundational elements of academic hope. Participants described hope as difficult to sustain when students are unable to understand why they are studying, how current educational activities relate to future goals, or what possibilities may become available through continued learning. This result aligns with studies demonstrating that students' attitudes toward their educational and occupational futures are associated with academic hope and that this relationship is closely connected to academic persistence and self-confidence (Mehri et al., 2021). Similarly, academic aspiration has been shown to contribute to academic hope through academic optimism, indicating that students who possess clearer and more

positive future expectations are more likely to develop hopeful educational orientations (Panahi et al., 2023). The current findings can therefore be interpreted through the temporal structure of hope. Academic effort requires students to tolerate present difficulties in anticipation of future benefits; consequently, the motivational value of learning diminishes when the future appears vague, inaccessible, or unrelated to current effort. Conversely, when students can imagine attainable future roles and connect present learning with those aspirations, effort becomes meaningful rather than merely obligatory.

The importance assigned to future orientation is further supported by evidence that future-perspective training can improve academic hope, psychological well-being, goal orientation, and time perspective among secondary school students (Norouzi, 2024). This alignment suggests that the future-oriented component identified in the proposed model is not only conceptually significant but also potentially modifiable through educational intervention. Helping students envision future possibilities, clarify personal values, identify educational and occupational goals, and understand the intermediate steps required to reach them may transform an abstract sense of hope into a structured motivational system. The present findings therefore suggest that hope-enhancement programs should not be limited to positive messages or general encouragement. Rather, they should provide students with a realistic framework for connecting present actions with future goals, thereby increasing both the perceived significance of educational effort and confidence in the possibility of progress.

Another major finding concerned the role of goal setting and pathway thinking. Participants emphasized that hopeful students require both clear goals and the ability to identify multiple strategies for achieving them. This distinction is important because students may possess strong aspirations but become discouraged when they encounter barriers if they are unable to generate alternative routes. The proposed model therefore positioned goal clarity, pathway thinking, problem solving, and contingency planning among its core components. This interpretation is compatible with evidence linking academic hope to lower academic procrastination (Dami et al., 2020). Students who possess clear goals and practical pathways are more likely to initiate academic tasks because they know what should be done and perceive task completion as possible. In contrast, ambiguity regarding goals or uncertainty about how to proceed can contribute to avoidance and postponement. The finding is also consistent with research showing that hope contributes to academic

engagement through academic buoyancy (Azadianbojnordi et al., 2020). When students can generate alternative strategies following setbacks, difficulties are less likely to terminate goal pursuit and more likely to be treated as problems requiring adjustment.

Academic self-efficacy emerged as another central component of the proposed model. Participants believed that students need repeated experiences demonstrating that effort can produce improvement and that educational challenges can be managed successfully. This finding strongly aligns with the structural relationship identified between academic hope, academic self-efficacy, and academic engagement (Vaziri Mehr & Salimi, 2021). It is also consistent with findings showing that educational management can influence both academic hope and self-efficacy (Pouraslan, 2022). These relationships suggest that self-efficacy provides an important psychological mechanism through which educational environments affect hope. Students who repeatedly receive tasks far beyond their current abilities, experience failure without instructional support, or receive feedback focused exclusively on deficiencies may gradually conclude that academic effort is ineffective. Conversely, scaffolded learning, attainable challenges, constructive feedback, and recognition of improvement create mastery experiences that strengthen both competence beliefs and hope. Accordingly, academic hope may be enhanced when schools systematically provide students with opportunities to experience progress rather than evaluating them solely through final outcomes.

The qualitative findings further identified self-regulation as an important mechanism supporting academic hope. Participants described hopeful students as more capable of organizing their learning, monitoring progress, adjusting strategies, and sustaining effort over time. This finding is supported by research demonstrating that academic self-regulation mediates the relationship between academic hope and educational well-being (Arbaazi & Foulad Chang, 2022). Similarly, academic self-regulation has been shown to mediate the relationship between academic hope and academic aversion (Barani et al., 2019). The consistency between these findings indicates that hope and self-regulation may operate reciprocally. Hope provides students with sufficient confidence and motivation to remain involved in goal-directed activity, while self-regulation provides the practical mechanisms through which that motivation is translated into sustained academic behavior. From this perspective, interventions that attempt to strengthen hope without teaching students how to plan,

monitor, and revise their learning behavior may have limited effectiveness. Academic hope is most likely to become durable when students possess both motivational expectations and behavioral strategies for pursuing their objectives.

Supportive teacher-student relationships constituted another prominent finding. Participants regarded teachers as major agents in either strengthening or undermining academic hope. Respectful communication, realistic expectations, individualized attention, constructive feedback, and recognition of effort were identified as hope-enhancing practices, whereas humiliation, labeling, repeated comparison, and low expectations were viewed as particularly harmful. This finding is consistent with evidence indicating that academic hope mediates the relationship between teaching professional ethics and academic performance (Ahmadi et al., 2019). It also aligns with research demonstrating relationships among transformative teaching, academic hope, and academic hardiness (Amiri Khamekani & Hassanpour, 2022). These findings can be explained through the interpersonal nature of students' beliefs about competence and future possibility. Teacher feedback does more than communicate information about performance; it also conveys judgments about whether improvement is expected and whether the learner is viewed as capable of growth. A teacher who communicates confidence in a student's capacity while providing realistic guidance may therefore strengthen agency and persistence, whereas repeated negative labeling may transform temporary difficulty into an enduring negative academic identity.

Family encouragement and peer support were similarly identified as critical relational foundations of hope. Participants emphasized that family expectations can be either supportive or damaging depending on whether they are realistic, emotionally supportive, and responsive to individual differences. Excessive pressure and negative comparison were viewed as factors that weaken hope, while encouragement and recognition of gradual progress were considered protective. Peer belonging was also regarded as important because social exclusion, ridicule, and unhealthy competition can undermine students' confidence and connection with school. These findings are consistent with research showing that perceived emotional support contributes to academic welfare alongside academic hope (Ghadampour et al., 2018). They are also supported by evidence demonstrating that a sense of belonging and academic hope contribute to educational persistence,

particularly among students facing structural disadvantages (Hansen et al., 2023). Thus, hope appears to be socially embedded. Students' expectations about what is possible are partly constructed through the messages they receive from significant others regarding their worth, competence, and future.

The role of school climate and educational justice was another important result. Participants argued that students cannot be expected to maintain academic hope if they perceive the educational environment as unfair, humiliating, exclusionary, or unable to provide credible opportunities for progress. Access to resources, counseling services, recognition systems, participatory school practices, and equitable educational opportunities were therefore incorporated into the proposed model. This result extends psychological explanations of hope by demonstrating that perceived opportunity structures matter alongside individual cognition. Similar implications can be derived from research on school attendance problems, in which hope has been used to broaden understanding beyond individual deficits toward young people's perceptions of belonging, possibility, and participation in schooling (Walther-Hansen et al., 2024). The current findings suggest that educational systems may inadvertently weaken hope when they encourage students to aspire but fail to provide realistic pathways or equitable support. Hope promotion therefore requires not only psychological intervention but also institutional conditions that make improvement genuinely achievable.

The findings regarding school climate are also compatible with research on academic hopelessness. Negative academic self-concept, demotivation, and academic stress have been associated with negative psychosocial outcomes through academic hopelessness (Shafiepour Motlagh & Torabi Nahad, 2018). The present study complements this evidence by identifying positive organizational and interpersonal conditions that may interrupt such processes. Psychological safety, supportive relationships, fairness, recognition of progress, and accessible guidance may prevent academic difficulty from being interpreted as evidence that future success is impossible. Similarly, previous research has demonstrated relationships between academic hope and test anxiety and performance (Hosseini & Karimi, 2019), suggesting that hopeful students may approach academic evaluation with greater confidence and reduced threat perception. Hope may therefore serve a protective function by enabling students to frame academic challenges as temporary and manageable rather than definitive judgments about their abilities.

Another notable finding was the emphasis on human growth, educability, and intrinsic dignity as philosophical foundations of the model. Participants did not view academic hope merely as a technique for increasing performance; instead, they described it as dependent on a fundamental educational belief that students are capable of change and worthy of respect irrespective of current achievement. This interpretation is consistent with the finding that hope is associated with broader dimensions of adolescent adjustment and psychological functioning (Rabiei, 2013). It also helps explain why purely performance-oriented practices may fail to cultivate sustainable hope. If students believe that their value depends exclusively on examination results, hope becomes fragile because any failure threatens both academic expectations and personal worth. A growth-oriented educational philosophy, in contrast, allows failure to be interpreted as information about current learning rather than as a fixed definition of the learner.

The proposed model also emphasized academic hope as an intervention-sensitive construct. This finding is supported by evidence demonstrating that structured hope training can improve academic motivation, academic hardiness, and academic hope (Raeisi, 2025). It is further strengthened by the development of localized strength-based programs that use hope as a school-based mental health promotion resource (Embalsado, 2024). These studies support the practical assumption underlying the current model: academic hope can be intentionally developed when educational interventions target its underlying mechanisms. Such interventions may be particularly effective when they combine individual skills, including goal setting and pathway generation, with environmental changes involving teachers, families, and school structures. This multilevel approach is preferable to interventions focused solely on individual students because the current findings show that hope is continually shaped by interactions between personal capacity and contextual opportunity.

Finally, the proposed model suggests that sustainable academic hope can produce a cluster of desirable outcomes, including meaningful academic goals, confidence in action, alternative pathways, persistence in the face of obstacles, stronger school engagement, and a more positive orientation toward educational and occupational futures. This interpretation is consistent with previous research linking academic hope with achievement and academic motivation (Mozhgan Gholami et al., 2019), academic vitality and achievement (Abri et al., 2025), engagement and buoyancy

(Azadianbojnordi et al., 2020), and persistence and future-oriented attitudes (Mehri et al., 2021). Taken together, these findings suggest that academic hope operates as an integrative educational resource connecting students' beliefs about themselves, their goals, available strategies, supportive relationships, and perceptions of future opportunity. The contribution of the present study lies in bringing these elements together within a contextually grounded model for Lamerd County and in emphasizing that hope should be cultivated simultaneously at philosophical, psychological, pedagogical, relational, organizational, and contextual levels.

The present study has several limitations that should be considered when interpreting the findings. First, the qualitative design and purposive selection of 18 experts and educational practitioners were appropriate for obtaining in-depth and conceptually rich information but limit the statistical generalizability of the findings to broader student populations or other educational contexts. Second, the data were derived primarily from the perspectives of educational specialists, teachers, administrators, counselors, and academic experts rather than directly from a large and heterogeneous sample of students; consequently, some dimensions of students' lived experiences of academic hope may not have been fully represented. Third, because the study was situated in Lamerd County, local educational, cultural, socioeconomic, and institutional characteristics may have influenced the categories identified and the structure of the proposed model. Fourth, qualitative analysis inevitably involves interpretive judgment, and although procedures were adopted to improve credibility, dependability, and confirmability, complete elimination of researcher interpretation is neither possible nor desirable in qualitative inquiry. Finally, the proposed model was developed conceptually from qualitative findings and was not quantitatively tested for structural relationships, predictive validity, or effectiveness as an intervention framework.

Future studies should examine the proposed model through quantitative and mixed-method designs to determine the strength and direction of relationships among its principal components and to evaluate its construct validity across different educational populations. Structural equation modeling could be used to test whether variables such as agency, pathway thinking, academic self-efficacy, self-regulation, teacher support, family encouragement, school climate, and perceived educational opportunity predict sustainable academic hope and subsequent outcomes

such as engagement, persistence, achievement, and well-being. Future qualitative studies should also include students from different academic achievement levels, socioeconomic backgrounds, school types, and educational stages in order to compare their lived experiences of hope and hopelessness. Longitudinal research would be valuable for determining how academic hope develops or declines across transitions between educational stages and how major academic successes or failures alter students' future orientation. Researchers should also develop and evaluate school-based intervention programs derived directly from the proposed model and compare their effects with conventional motivational or counseling programs. Replication in other counties and provinces would further clarify which components of the model are context-specific and which represent broader principles applicable across different educational settings.

Educational authorities, school administrators, counselors, teachers, and families can use the proposed model as a framework for developing coordinated strategies to strengthen academic hope. Schools should provide systematic opportunities for students to define meaningful academic and occupational goals, break those goals into achievable steps, identify alternative pathways, and monitor their progress over time. Teachers should be trained to use strengths-based and non-humiliating communication, provide feedback that emphasizes progress and strategy rather than fixed ability, and create mastery experiences through appropriately challenging learning tasks. School counselors can implement structured programs on goal setting, future planning, resilience, self-regulation, and problem solving, while also identifying students showing persistent signs of hopelessness or disengagement. Parents should be encouraged to maintain realistic expectations, reduce harmful comparison, and recognize gradual improvement rather than focusing exclusively on grades. At the organizational level, schools should improve access to counseling and academic support, create opportunities for meaningful student participation, strengthen peer mentoring and cooperative learning, and ensure that students perceive educational processes as fair and supportive. Particular attention should be given to students who experience socioeconomic or academic disadvantage so that encouragement is accompanied by genuine access to resources and realistic educational pathways. In this way, academic hope can become an integrated feature of school culture rather than a temporary motivational intervention.

Authors' Contributions

Authors equally contributed to this article.

Declaration

In order to correct and improve the academic writing of our paper, we have used the language model ChatGPT.

Transparency Statement

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All procedures performed in studies involving human participants were under the ethical standards of the institutional and, or national research committee and with the 1964 Helsinki Declaration and its later amendments or comparable ethical standards.

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