

Academic Optimism of Teachers in Secondary Schools of Pakistan

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Abstract

Educators and researchers have long been interested in determining the effectiveness of schools. Recently, the concept of academic optimism has gained attention as a significant construct that can help schools to enhance the well-being of teachers and success of students. This research aimed to investigate the academic optimism of teachers in secondary schools. A questionnaire was developed to measure the academic optimism of the teachers. The instrument was developed on three constructs i.e. Collective Efficacy, Faculty Trust and Academic Emphasis. The reliability index of the questionnaire was 0.823 which was calculated by using Cronbach Alpha. The data was received from 872 secondary school teachers who were selected based on the district performance rankings from 2017-18, presented by Punjab Education Sector Reform Program (PESRP). The study inferred a significant difference of academic optimism among the teachers based on their districts ranking, gender, and experience in secondary schools. The findings support the critical nature of teachers' academic optimism and its influence on the overall school environment. The study suggests that there is a need to promote collective efficacy, trust, and academic emphasis of teachers through training and faculty development programs.

Keywords: *Academic Optimism, Collective efficacy, Faculty trust, Academic emphasis*

Introduction

The last two decades have centered on restructuring and reforming the foundation of school education and improving educational productivity. One of the foremost contemporary concerns in schools is challenging circumstances. Schools are being expected to enhance their academic performance and teachers can initiate change and improve learning environment through their positive role. Teachers are the most important factor affecting student achievement and overall school environment. The concept of teacher academic optimism has recently drawn the attention of researchers in studies aiming to determine school factors affecting students' academic achievement (Anderson, 2012; Bevel, 2010; Kirby & DiPaola, 2011; Nelson, 2012; Wagner, 2018). Academic optimism refers to teachers' positive beliefs in their capacity and capability to overcome the challenges they encounter and make a difference in students' academic achievement

(Hoy, Hoy & Kurz, 2008). This term also refers that the teachers focus on academic learning by being aware of their powers and responsibilities, receive parents' and students' supports by prioritizing cooperation, believe in their capacities to overcome the problems they face, and have a positive attitude towards student achievement (Hoy, Tarter & Hoy, 2006). Teacher academic optimism is seen as a teacher characteristic that affects the academic achievement of the student (Beard et al., 2010).

Academic optimism as a unified construct

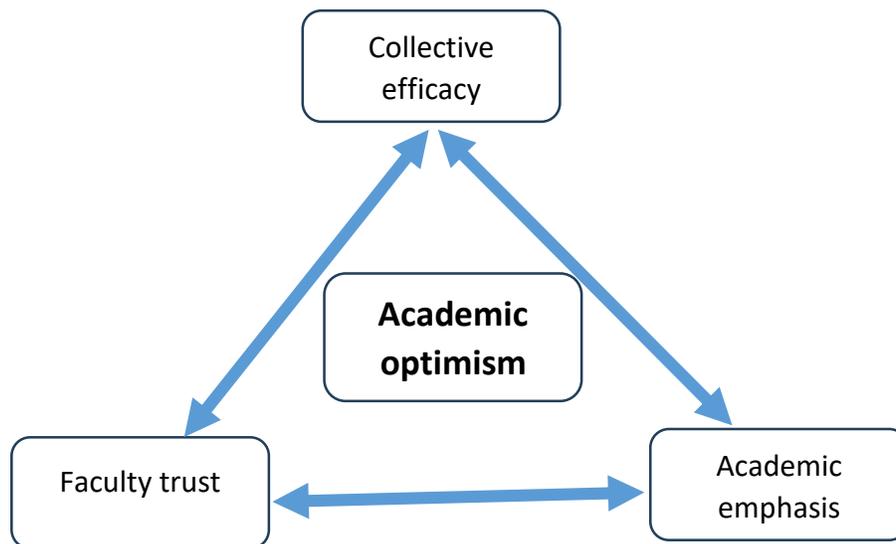
Academic optimism rooted in positive psychology and this term unites cognitive, behavioral, and affective domains. These three domains interact each other and form reciprocal causation on the way people's thinking, believing, and feeling pattern influence on their behavior. Likewise, Bandura (1997) elaborated this reciprocal relation into affective (feel), cognitive (belief), and behavioral (action) facets like how an individual can processes his interaction through self-reflection and tries to adapt its demands in a particular context. Therefore, these three domains or facets are interdependent and interconnected with each other through triadic association. First school characteristic "collective efficacy" links with cognition process and a collective belief of teachers that as a whole they can bring positive contribution to student performance (Hoy et al., 2006). Second characteristic "faculty trust" associate with affective process or facet, and this leads to a belief of cooperation among teachers, students, parents, and principals together and this can enhance student learning (Hoy et al., 2006). Third characteristic "academic emphasis" which represents behavior facet, and this entails the school emphasis towards intellectual activities and student performance. Teachers set high but achievable goals for students and students also work hard to achieve the goals (Hoy et al., 2006).

Initially, the concept of academic optimism was presented by Hoy and fellow researchers in 2006 who aimed to grasp some common school properties which directly influenced on students' achievement. They viewed that academic optimism in a school is viewed as "teachers are capable, students are willing, parents are supportive, and the tasks are achievable" (Hoy et al., 2006). Academic optimism is a concept comprised of three key school properties: collective efficacy, faculty trust in parents and students, and academic emphasis. These school properties/characteristics are integrated into whole and one united force called "academic optimism" that leads to students' achievement. Hoy et al. (2006) explain how these three factors interact and create an academic optimism culture as follows: the common sense of collective self-efficacy improves trust. When trust arises, teachers encourage each other. They place more emphasis on academic standards as they have confidence in receiving parental support. Improvement in trust positively affects student achievement because teachers feel they have the freedom and expertise to implement changes that will positively affect student achievement. Academic achievement becomes more important by teachers who experience a common sense of self-efficacy. However, academic optimism creates a common and collective belief that teachers can make a difference in students' performance and students also can be encouraged to learn and achieve high grades.

As discussed before, academic optimism is built on the cognitive, affective and behavioural aspects of collective efficacy, faculty trust and academic emphasis. Each element or school property represents a cognitive, affective, or behavioral dimension and collectively interacts with the other to explain the culture in a given school (Hoy et. al., 2006). For instance, collective efficacy is a group belief that is cognitive, which works with the affective dimension of faculty trust in students

and parents to produce an academic emphasis or behaviors that influence teaching and learning (Wagner & DiPaola, 2011). These three properties have triadic relationship that support each other on the lagging force of academic optimism to improve performance in schools as these three properties are depending upon each other (Hoy et al., 2006).

Figure.1. Relationship among facets of academic optimism



Recent studies on academic optimism investigated that faculty trust increase the collective efficacy and collective efficacy improves the academic achievement as well as faculty trust. Moreover, when faculty members show interest in students and parents, they get motivation from that and moves towards the higher levels of educational standards because they were ensuring that they will get sufficient support and help when required. This leads them to show good progress and excel in the field (Hoy et al., 2006; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000). In addition, when faculty is sure of the fact that when they work collaboratively with full effort their students will definitely show good progress and lay more emphasis on their academic strength. This will enhance their efficacy level and in result academic optimism will be developed among individuals (Hoy et al., 2006; Hoy, 2012).

Being a significant construct and framework, a number of research studies have been conducted on academic optimism to explore its relationship with other variables and constructs. Different studies explored the relationship from different aspects such as some research studies explored the relationship of academic optimism with specifically regards of teachers as teachers’ collective efficacy, teachers’ trust on students and parents, teachers’ academic emphasis etc. (Beard, 2011; Beard et al., 2010; Ngidi, 2012; Woolfolk Hoy et al., 2008).

Context of the Research

By looking at literature and documented evidences, Pakistan have been focusing to improve the education system especially at school level. School education in Pakistan has been facing many challenges such as having large number of out-of-school children and low participation rate at all levels. In Pakistan, approximately, 22.6 million children having age of 5 – 16 years are out of

school and is lagging behind from all its neighbours in South Asia (Asian Development Bank, 2019). Moreover, there is low performance among government schools due to various reasons such as untrained teachers, lack of professional development practices, and least community involvement (Ali, Sharma, & Zaman, 2016). School heads in these schools are usually untrained and unequipped with professional standards and expertise to attain desirable goals (Faraz, 2016). Besides, it is obvious in the education reports that students in schools are not being educated well enough as they are required to succeed individually and for the country at large (Alif-Ailaan, 2018). Therefore, teachers have quite a challenging role to play (Faraz, 2016), in order to improve the school performance. There are some common school properties like collective self-efficacy, faculty trust and academic emphasis need to be explored. These school properties work together like a force called academic optimism of schools and this force is directly associated with students' achievement. However, the study aimed to explore the academic optimism of secondary school teachers in Punjab province.

Research Questions of the Study

Based on the research objective, following research questions were formed.

1. How do teachers perceive their academic optimism in the secondary schools?
2. Is there any difference in the perception of male and female teachers regarding academic optimism in secondary schools?
3. Is there any difference in perception of teachers regarding academic optimism in secondary schools based on their district ranking?

Research Methodology

A descriptive research design was adopted to explore the academic optimism of teachers in secondary schools in Punjab province. The teachers of public secondary schools were the population of this research. A multistage research sampling technique was employed to select the sample of teachers. At the first stage, districts of the Punjab were divided into three categories i.e., high, average, and low performance according to districts ranking 2017-18 reported by Punjab Education Sector Reform Program (PESRP). At the second stage, two (2) districts from each category were selected randomly. At the third stage, twenty (20) schools were selected randomly from each selected district in a way that ten (10) boys and ten (10) girls' schools from each district category. The average numbers of teachers in secondary schools in Punjab were around fifteen (15) teachers per school and all the teachers were selected from each selected school. In this way, finally 900 teachers were selected as a sample but only 872 provided data. Researcher developed one questionnaire to measure the academic optimism of teachers. After finalisation of the instrument, the researchers followed ethical considerations and gained formal consents from the school heads to access their teachers. The researchers personally visited and accessed the teachers for data collection in their respective schools. The teachers were provided with detailed information of research purpose and instructions to fill up the questionnaire. Moreover, the teachers were ensured the confidentiality and anonymity of their identity in this research. The collected data were analyzed through SPSS.

Data Analysis

The data analysis of the research is as follows:

Table 1

Mean and Standard Deviation of Teachers' Responses about Academic Optimism

Academic Optimism	Mean	SD
Collective Efficacy	29.89	5.30
Faculty Trust	25.50	7.03
Academic Emphasis	18.08	5.50

Table 1 indicates the value of mean and standard of different factors of academic optimism. The value of collective efficacy is ($M = 29.89, SD = 5.30$), faculty trust ($M = 25.5, SD = 7.03$), and academic emphasis is ($M = 18.08, SD = 5.50$). The table value indicated that the mean score of collective efficacy is greater than other factors of academic optimism.

Table 2

Frequencies and Percentages of Teachers Responses about Collective Efficacy

Sr.	Statements	SA	A	N	DA	SD
1	Teachers in this school are able to get through to the most difficult students.	260 (29.8)	468 (53.7)	86 (9.9)	29 (3.3)	29 (3.3)
2	Teachers here are confident that they will be able to motivate their students.	357 (40.9)	413 (47.4)	49 (5.6)	27 (3.1)	26 (3.0)
3	If a child does not want to learn teachers here give up.	192 (22)	265 (30.4)	120 (13.8)	183 (21)	112 (12.8)
4	Teachers here do not have the skills needed to produce meaningful results.	70 (8.0)	136 (15.6)	102 (11.7)	322 (36.9)	242 (27.8)
5	Teachers in this school believe that every child can learn.	480 (55)	265 (30.4)	73 (8.4)	32 (3.7)	19 (2.2)
6	The students come to school ready to learn.	201 (23.1)	306 (35.1)	193 (22.1)	151 (17.3)	20 (2.3)
7	Home life provides so many advantages that students are bound to learn.	169 (19.4)	359 (41.2)	181 (20.8)	115 (13.2)	48 (5.5)
8	Students here just are not motivated to learn.	38 (4.4)	195 (22.4)	165 (18.9)	363 (41.6)	111 (12.7)
9	Teachers in this school do not have the skills to deal with student disciplinary problems.	252 (28.9)	324 (37.2)	88 (10.1)	154 (17.7)	53 (6.1)
10	The opportunities in this community help ensure that these students will learn.	114 (13.1)	334 (38.3)	206 (23.6)	180 (20.6)	38 (4.4)
11	Learning is more difficult at this school because students are worried about their safety.	74 (8.5)	146 (16.7)	177 (20.3)	283 (32.5)	191 (21.9)
12	Different problems in the community make learning difficult for students here.	139 (15.9)	375 (43.0)	167 (19.2)	144 (16.5)	46 (5.3)

Table 2 shows the responses of secondary school teachers about collective efficacy which is one of the factors of school academic optimism. There were twelve statements in the questionnaire through which individualized consideration was measured. In statement 1, most of the teacher (about 84%) were agreed that the teachers in this school are able to get through the most difficult students; about 6% were disagreed with this statement and 10% were neutral. In statement 2, mostly teachers about 88% claimed that the teachers in their schools are confident enough to motivate the students; 6% teachers were disagreed with this and about 5% teachers gave neutral response while marking the statement. In response of statement 3, about 52% were of the view that teachers give up if students do not want to learn; about 34 % teachers disagreed with the statement and 14% teachers marked neutral in response of this statement. In statement 4, about 23% teachers said that the teachers in their schools are not equipped with skills to produce meaningful results; about 65% disagreed with the statement and 12% marked it as neutral. In response to statement 5, about 85% teachers said that the teachers in their schools believe that every child can learn while 6% disagreed with the statement and 8% marked it as neutral. In response to statement 6, about 58% teachers said that the students in their school are ready to learn; about 20% disagreed with the statement and 22% marked neutral in response to this statement. In response to statement 7, about 60% teachers said that home life provides so many advantages that students are bound to learn; 19% disagreed with this and 21% teachers marked this statement neutral. In statement 8, about 26% teachers agreed to the point that students in their school are not motivated to learn; 55% were disagreed with this statement and 19% marked this statement as neutral. While answering statement 9, about 66% teachers agreed to the teachers in their schools have the skills to deal with the disciplinary problems of the students while 24% were disagreed and about 10% marked this statement as neutral. While answering statement 10, 51% of the teachers think that the opportunities are enough that ensure that students will learn; 25% students disagreed with the statement and about 23% marked it as neutral. In response to statement 11, only 25% teachers agreed that learning is more difficult in schools because they are worried about their safety; 55% were disagreed with this and 20% marked this statement as neutral. While responding statement 12, 59% teachers said that different problems in the community are the hurdles inn students' learning; 22% students were disagreed with this and 19% marked the statements as neutral.

Table 3

Frequencies and Percentages of Teachers Responses about Faculty Trust

Sr.	Statements	SA	A	N	DA	SD
13	Teachers in this school trust their students.	169 (19.4)	410 (47.0)	170 (19.5)	92 (10.6)	31 (3.6)
14	Teachers in this school trust the parents.	132 (15.1)	375 (43.0)	173 (19.8)	161 (18.5)	31 (3.6)
15	Students in this school care about each other.	111 (12.7)	391 (44.8)	193 (22.1)	143 (16.4)	34 (3.9)
16	Parents in this school are reliable in their commitments.	90 (10.3)	322 (36.9)	210 (24.1)	214 (24.5)	36 (4.1)
17	Students in this school can be counted upon to do their work.	86 (9.90)	426 (48.9)	240 (27.5)	99 (11.4)	21 (2.4)
18	Teachers can count upon parental support.	82 (9.4)	407 (46.7)	217 (24.9)	122 (14)	43 (4.9)

19	Teachers here believe that students are competent learners.	182 (20.9)	442 (50.7)	99 (11.4)	105 (12)	44 (5)
20	Teachers think that most of the parents do a good job.	127 (14.6)	369 (42.3)	108 (12.4)	207 (23.7)	61 (7)
21	Teachers can believe what parents tell them.	113 (13)	376 (43.1)	188 (21.6)	137 (15.7)	58 (6.7)
22	Students here are secretive.	69 (7.9)	340 (39)	261 (29.9)	143 (16.4)	59 (6.8)

Table 3 shows the responses of secondary school teachers about faculty trust which is one of the factors of school academic optimism. There were ten statements (13-22) in the questionnaire through which faculty trust was measured. In statement 13, about 67% teachers were agreed that the teachers in this school trust their students; about 14% were disagreed with this statement and 19.5% were neutral. In statement 14, about 58% claimed that the teachers in their schools trust the parents of their students; 22% teachers were disagreed with this and about 20% teachers gave neutral response while marking the statement. In response of statement 15, about 57.5% were of the view that students in their school care each other; about 20 % teachers disagreed with the statement and 22% teachers marked neutral in response of this statement. In statement 16, about 47% teachers said that the parents are reliable in their commitments; about 29% disagreed with the statement and 24% marked it as neutral. In response to statement 17, about 60% teachers said that the students in their schools can be counted upon to do their work while 13% disagreed with the statement and 27% marked it as neutral. In response to statement 18, about 56% teachers said that they can count on parental support; about 19% teachers disagreed with the statement and 25% marked neutral in response to this statement. In response to statement 19, about 72% teachers said that they believe on their students that they are competent learners; 17% disagreed with this and 11% teachers marked this statement neutral. In statement 20, about 57% teachers were agreed that mostly parents done a good job; 31% were disagreed with this statement and 12% marked this statement as neutral. While answering statement 21, about 56% teachers said that they believe on what the students’ parents tell them while 23% were disagreed with the statement and about 21% marked this statement as neutral. While answering statement 22, about 47% of the teachers were of the view that students are secretive while 23% teachers were disagreed with this and 30% teachers marked this as neutral.

Table 4

Frequencies and Percentages of Teachers Responses about Academic Emphasis

Sr.	Statements	SA	A	N	DA	SD
23	The school sets high standards for performance.	160 (18.3)	453 (51.9)	130 (14.9)	96 (11)	33 (3.8)
24	Students respect others who get good grades.	157 (18)	472 (54.1)	125 (14.3)	95 (10.9)	23 (2.6)
25	Students seek extra work so they can get good grades.	197 (22.6)	362 (41.5)	119 (13.6)	169 (19.4)	25 (2.9)
26	Academic achievement is recognized and acknowledged by the school.	179 (20.5)	477 (54.7)	125 (14.3)	66 (7.6)	25 (2.9)

27	Students try hard to improve on previous work.	102 (11.7)	431 (49.4)	173 (19.8)	146 (16.7)	20 (2.3)
28	The learning environment is orderly and serious.	141 (16.2)	447 (51.3)	146 (16.7)	118 (13.5)	20 (2.3)
29	The students in this school can achieve the goals that have been set for them.	163 (18.7)	494 (56.7)	119 (13.6)	71 (8.1)	24 (2.8)
30	Teachers in this school believe that their students have the ability to achieve academically.	300 (34.4)	424 (48.6)	72 (8.3)	46 (5.3)	30 (3.4)

Table 4 shows the responses of secondary school teachers about academic emphasis which is one of the factors of school academic optimism. There were eight statements (23-30) in the questionnaire through which academic emphasis was measured. In statement 23, about 70% teachers were of the view that school sets high standards for the performance of students; 15% were disagreed with this statement and 15% were neutral. In statement 24, about 72% teachers agreed that students’ respect those who get good grades and 13% teachers were disagreed with this and about 14% teachers gave neutral response while marking the statement. In response of statement 25, about 64% teachers were of the view that students in their school seek extra work for good grades; about 22% teachers disagreed with the statement and 13.6% teachers marked neutral in response of this statement. In statement 26, about 75% teachers said that the academic achievement is recognized by the school; about 10% disagreed with the statement and 14% marked it as neutral. In response to statement 27, about 61% teachers said that the students of their school try hard for improvement; 19% disagreed with the statement and 20% marked it as neutral. In response to statement 28, about 68% teachers said that the learning environment of their school is serious while 16% teachers were disagreed with this and about 17% marked neutral in response to this statement. In response to statement 29, about 75% teachers said that the students in their school can achieve goals that were set for them; 11% disagreed with this and 14% teachers marked this statement neutral. While answering statement 30, most of the teacher (about 83%) said that they believe that their students have ability to achieve academically; while 9% teachers were disagreed with the statement and about 8% marked this statement as neutral.

Table 5

Difference between Male and Female Secondary School Teachers Regarding Academic Optimism Factors

Factors	Gender	N	Mean	SD	t-value	df	Sig.
Collective Efficacy	Male	423	30.22	5.75	1.785	870	.075
	Female	449	29.58	4.83			
Faculty Trust	Male	423	26.29	7.41	3.238	870	.001
	Female	449	24.75	6.58			
Academic Emphasis	Male	423	18.42	5.69	1.741	870	.082
	Female	449	17.77	5.29			

Table 5 shows the difference between male and female secondary school teachers’ opinion regarding factors of academic optimism i.e. collective efficacy, faculty trust and academic emphasis by using independent sample t-test.

For collective efficacy, independent sample t-test was applied to compare the views of male (M= 30.22, SD= 5.75 and female secondary school teachers (M= 29.58, SD= 4.83) using an alpha level of significance .05. The calculated t-value was (1.78) at df=870 on .05 level of significance. Similarly, the value of p was .075 > .05, which indicate that there is no significant difference in opinion of male and female secondary school teachers about collective efficacy.

For faculty trust, the difference in the mean scores of male (M= 26.29, SD= 7.41 and female secondary school teachers (M= 24.75, SD= 6.58) explored by using an alpha level of significance .05. The calculated t-value was (3.238) at df=870 on .05 level of significance. Similarly, the value of p was .001 < .05, which indicate the significant difference in opinion of male and female secondary school teachers about faculty trust.

For academic emphasis, the difference in the mean scores of male (M= 18.42, SD= 5.69 and female secondary school teachers (M= 17.77, SD= 5.29) explored by using an alpha level of significance .05. The calculated t-value was (1.741) at df=870 on .05 level of significance. Similarly, the value of p was .082 > .05, which indicate that there is no significant difference in opinion of male and female secondary school teachers about academic emphasis.

Table 6

District wise Difference in Secondary School Teachers’ Opinions about Factors of Academic Optimism

Factors		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Collective Efficacy	Between Groups	1588.62	5	317.72	11.99	.000
	Within Groups	22941.67	866	26.49		
	Total	24530.29	871			
Faculty Trust	Between Groups	3572.94	5	714.58	15.64	.000
	Within Groups	39561.06	866	45.68		
	Total	43134.00	871			
Academic Emphasis	Between Groups	3404.55	5	680.91	25.69	.000
	Within Groups	22948.46	866	26.49		
	Total	26353.02	871			

Table 6 shows the district-wise difference among secondary school teachers regarding different factors of academic optimism by using one way ANOVA. The views of teachers were recorded across three different factors of academic optimism i.e. collective efficacy (F=11.99; p > .000), faculty trust (F=15.64; p > .000) and academic emphasis (F=25.69; p > .000).

The result of one-way ANOVA shows that there was significant difference in opinion of secondary school teachers across all factors of academic optimism at .05 level of significance.

Table 7

Post Hoc Test for District wise Difference in Secondary School Teachers’ Views on Academic Optimism

Dependent Variable	(I) Districts	(J) Districts	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
Academic Optimism	Rawalpindi	Multan	-4.92	1.60	.027
		Khanewal	-15.34	1.66	.000
		Mianwali	-5.31	1.60	.012
	Multan	Rawalpindi	4.92	1.60	.027
		Khanewal	-10.42	1.66	.000
		Kasur	5.37	1.62	.013
	Khanewal	Rawalpindi	15.34	1.66	.000
		Multan	10.42	1.66	.000
		Kasur	15.79	1.68	.000
		Lahore	13.28	1.66	.000
	Kasur	Mianwali	10.03	1.66	.000
		Multan	-5.37	1.62	.013
		Khanewal	-15.79	1.68	.000
	Lahore	Mianwali	-5.76	1.62	.006
		Khanewal	-13.28	1.66	.000
Mianwali	Rawalpindi	5.31	1.60	.012	
	Khanewal	-10.03	1.66	.000	
	Kasur	5.76	1.62	.006	

Table 7 shows that the post hoc Tukey test was applied to find out the significant difference in opinions of teachers across various districts. The mean scores of teachers of Rawalpindi district is less than the teachers of Multan and Khanewal and Mianwali and their opinions were different at $p > .000$ level of significance. Likewise, the teachers of Multan district vary in their opinion with three districts i.e. Rawalpindi, Khanewal, and Kasur. The opinion of teachers who belonged to Khanewal district differs from the opinion of teachers from four other districts i.e. Rawalpindi, Multan, Kasur and Lahore. The teachers from district Kasur differs in their opinion from the teachers of Multan, Khanewal and Mianwali. The teachers of district Lahore differs in their opinion from the teachers of Khanewal only. Similarly, the teachers from district Mianwali were different in their opinion from the teachers of districts i.e. Rawalpindi, Khanewal and Kasur.

Discussion and Conclusion

Academic optimism is still relatively new idea at school level in Pakistan context. Academic achievement of students and well-being of teachers particularly in public schools have been concerning areas of research for educational experts. There have been comparatively few quantitative evidences that how teachers perceive their academic optimism in school which ultimately influence the performance of students in schools. However, the main purpose of this study was to highlight the perception of teachers regarding their collective efficacy, faculty trust and academic emphasis at school level. Recent literature has been evident that these school properties or characteristics (collective efficacy, faculty trust and academic emphasis) directly

influence on students' academic achievements. Prior studies also reveal that teachers with high academic optimism set high academic goals for their students, attempt to develop effective teaching in the classroom to achieve the goals they set, and they believe that every student can be successful (McGuigan & Hoy, 2006). Teachers can be expected to have academic optimism in schools where school administrators support teachers, see them as experts in their fields, facilitate their work, and show that they respect their competencies, knowledge and skills. The high scores of academic optimism and its sub factors in this study also showed its presence in schools. The existence of academic optimism in schools is also supported by researchers (Anderson et al., 2018; Dean, 2011; Guvercin, 2013; Messick, 2012; Wu, 2018). This research builds on considering the previous work of academic optimism of researchers at school level (Akyürek, & Bülbül, 2024; Gage, 2003; Gurol, 2010; Hoy, Tarter, & Hoy, 2006; Wagner, 2008). There are numerous study papers that support this research (May, 2016; Mitchell et al., 2018). Some previous studies also found the magnitude of academic optimism as being high in schools (McGuigan & Hoy, 2006; Shrivastva & Dhar, 2016). A number of research studies exist which provide evidence of the positive relationship between the subscales of academic optimism (Anderson et al., 2018; May, 2016; Şenay, 2018).

This study set out to address specific gaps in the current state of the art of the quantitative measurement of the concept of academic optimism. More specifically, in answering the first research question, which was concerned with critically assessing the concept of academic optimism, we built on existing research on this topic and aimed to incorporate various theoretical and empirical insights to broaden the scope of existing academic optimism questionnaires. Teachers in our research believed on their collective effort and ability to promote the learning for their students. The teachers with a strong sense of collective efficacy work together and share their responsibilities for a shared goal of learning. Having a collective efficacy not only establish higher expectations but also invest more effort in attaining them and exhibit greater resilience while confronting with challenges in schools. These findings support the research of (Goddard et al., 2004). Teachers in our research believed that trust in students and parents was crucial for improving learning outcomes. The sincere relationship between teachers, students and parents based on the shared goal of enhancing students learning. This point supports the views of (Hoy & Miskel, 2012). Moreover, the findings infer that teachers set high but achievable learning goals and expectations for their students. They focused to establish a planned environment or settings conducive for students learning. Student learning and success are the primary focus of all group members and the main idea of schools. Teachers believe that their students can learn and be successful, and in the same way, students believe that all teachers care about and emphasize academic success. Hoy et al. (2006) also viewed the importance of setting serious and achievable learning goals for students.

This study gathered the data based on district wise performance ranking of secondary schools and categorized them into high, moderate, and low performance schools. Therefore, the study endorsed that high performance schools are more academically optimistic, on the other hand, low performance schools had comparatively low academic optimism. The findings of this study marked that academic optimism of male teachers are significantly different from that of female teachers that contradicts the findings of Ngidi (2012) who discovered no differences in AO based on experience or gender.

It is concluded that academic optimism is a big picture that explains teachers' judgment in terms of cognitive, affective, and behavioural dimensions. The study confirmed that the value of collective efficacy, faculty trust, and academic emphasis which are the key constructs of academic optimism of secondary school teachers. The findings of the study showed that the mean score of collective efficacies is greater than faculty trust and academic emphasis which mean the teachers in schools have strong belief that their collective actions can change the behaviour of students and almost all students have the capability to learn in the situation.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, a number of recommendations can be made to promote the academic optimism of teachers in schools. Teacher training programs and comprehensive instructive schemes should be conducted in a way to improve the level of well-being of novice and professional teachers. Teachers should be provided with opportunities for professional development and offering constructive feedback. The optimistic behavior of teachers can enhance positivity in learners. On the basis of results, it can be recommended to conduct this kind of study at some other level i.e. primary, elementary, or higher education level. Education ministry may ensure a conducive environment for teacher in school so they could enhance their academic optimism. Teacher training or faculty development programs may help teacher to enhance their optimism. For instance, school education department with negotiation of Quaid-E-Azam Academy of Educational Development (QAED) may conduct proper training and workshops to develop academic optimism of teachers in public schools. In addition, the research on academic optimism is mainly quantitative and warrants additional qualitative studies like this one in order to explore beliefs and practices that help to support or influence academic optimism.

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