

A Study on Academic Optimism on the Academic Achievement of Secondary Education School in China

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ABSTRACT

Finding the features of schools that lead to improved student accomplishment is one of the challenges that educational researchers, legislators, and school reformers face. The task at hand is unambiguous but challenging. Optimism and self-efficacy are a self-regulatory mechanism that influences students' academic behavior in academic settings because it affects how they perceive their own competence for a specific task and their capacity to adjust to and manage future academic demands. Higher self-efficacy students view homework as a task to be met with self-assurance and to put their skills into efficient and responsible practice. In an effort to address these concerns, this paper investigates the connections between students' academic optimism and their performance. Previous studies on academic optimism have been limited by their narrow focus on its defining traits; this approach may help remedy this. The research aims to shed light on the nature of academic optimism and the ways in which it manifests itself to improve teaching and learning and, by extension, to expand human understanding. The researcher selects the Theory of Planned Behavior in order to strengthen and support the entire body of study. The purpose of this article development and suggested framework on academic optimism and its relationship with student achievement in China's schools. The proposed study design is critical for subsequent analysis to confirm that both exogenous factors and endogenous factor were strongly related to the contingency of institutional efficiency can affect student progress.

Keywords: *academic optimism, academic achievement, China*

I. INTRODUCTION

Finding the features of schools that lead to improved student accomplishment is one of the challenges that educational researchers, legislators, and school reformers face. The task at hand is unambiguous but challenging. Li, (2020) came to the conclusion that the influence of school characteristics on student achievement was negligible; rather, social factors, such as socioeconomic status, were the primary determinants of achievement (Lee & Chiu, 2017) generates a list of effective school characteristics became the basis for a school effectiveness movement that sought to show the importance of school leaders and school characteristics in improving student performance. These characteristics included strong principal leadership, high expectations for student achievement, an emphasis on basic skills, an orderly environment, and frequent systematic evaluation. Students go through many different personal and contextual experiences throughout their time in school.

These experiences can have a significant impact on their development, particularly during adolescence, which is an important time in the life cycle for both academic and personal development because it is during this time that

an adult's personality is shaped (Li, 2016). Some students will breeze through this period of their lives, both academically and personally, without encountering any difficulties; however, other students, conditioned by a variety of variables, may reach a point where they are unable to progress further and may be affected by certain psychological variables, which in turn affect their academic performance (Fend, 2008). Because of this, research on particular psychological variables can have a beneficial effect in the setting of a school and contribute to a better understanding of the cognitive and motivational processes that can lead to improvements in both an individual's personal life and academic performance (Rengiah & Sentosa, 2016).

Strong principal leadership is a necessary component of academic success in schools. This idea is straightforward, understandable, and persuasive, particularly to managers. However, the empirical demonstration of a direct relationship between the leadership of the principle and the achievement of the students has been difficult to come by. It is one thing to find a high-performing school in a low-income urban district and attribute its success to the leadership of the principal, the culture of the school, or an orderly environment, any or all of which may be present in that school. But it is quite another thing to find a high-performing school in a low-income urban district and attribute its success to demonstrate a priority that such qualities are directly and systematically connected to student accomplishment in controlled, quantitative research of large samples is a whole different problem. For instance, Day, Gu and Sammons, (2016) reviewed the research that linked principal leadership and student achievement. Based on their findings, they came to the conclusion that there was either very little or no direct influence between principal leadership and student achievement. Instead, the majority of such influences on achievement are indirect, which means that they are mediated through other variables.

Optimism and self-efficacy are a self-regulatory mechanism that influences students' academic behaviour in academic settings because it affects how they perceive their own competence for a specific task and their capacity to adjust to and manage future academic demands. Higher self-efficacy students view homework as a task to be met with self-assurance and to put their skills into efficient and responsible practise. Academic self-efficacy has been linked to higher levels of academic satisfaction and happiness, according to empirical research, which has demonstrated that it can be used to predict students' involvement and commitment in their academic work, persistence and motivation, academic performance, and more generally, academic performance. On the other hand, low levels of self-efficacy have even been linked to psychological problems including anxiety and tension, as well as low commitment and subpar academic achievement (Usán, Salavera, & Qulez-Robres, 2022). In an effort to address these concerns, this paper investigates the connections between students' academic optimism and their performance. Previous studies on academic optimism have been limited by their narrow focus on its defining traits; this approach may help remedy this. The research aims to shed light on the nature of academic optimism and the ways in which it manifests itself to improve teaching and learning and, by extension, to expand human understanding.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Academic Optimism

There is a need for [Méndez \(2016\)](#) research findings that assert the interdisciplinarity of students to learn firsthand about other variables that directly influence the academic performance of students, not only to enhance their grades but also to collaborate with all of the underlying elements that determine students' personal growth. Optimism, defined as a more or less stable set of positive expectations towards future events, is another significant determinant for self-perception in a number of circumstances ([Carver & Scheier, 2014](#)). Optimism is a human tendency that mediates between environmental conditions and our interpretation of them, so influencing our decision-making processes. Less optimistic persons are less able to respond to unpleasant, critical, and even traumatic situations. Optimistic individuals tend to respond positively to unfavourable circumstances, thereby conquering them.

This component can be used to predict other psychological variables, according to the existing literature on optimism in academic settings. Students who utilise adaptive coping strategies and have higher levels of personal and academic self-efficacy ([Usán, Salavera, & Qulez-Robres, 2022](#)) are more likely to achieve their personal and academic goals, are less vulnerable ([Smith & Hoy, 2007](#)), have a more positive self-concept and self-esteem, and are more assertive. In short, optimism has a vital role in how individuals respond to daily challenges, particularly during adolescence, when their adult personality is developed ([Carver & Scheier, 2014](#)). Academic emphasis, collective efficacy, and faculty trust are all features of academic optimism; they are collective attributes. Even when controlling for school level, each is associated with student achievement. In addition, the studies we have studied indicate that academic emphasis, collective efficacy beliefs, and faculty trust influence the normative and behavioural environment of the school. In conclusion, these three collective characteristics – efficacy, trust, and academic attention are not only identical in nature and function, but also have substantial, positive effects on student accomplishment ([Smith & Hoy, 2007](#)).

B. Collective Efficacy

A review of the evidence on collective efficacy reveals four studies linking school collective efficacy to student accomplishment ([Hoy et al., 2002](#)). Bandura was the first to identify the connection, and he discovered that schools where the faculty had a strong feeling of collective efficacy excelled academically, but schools where the faculty had major reservations about their collective efficacy made little academic progress or decreased. Briefly, he established that collective efficacy contributed significantly to the academic success of schools, even when socioeconomic and other demographic factors were controlled for ([Bandura, 1993](#)). [Goddard et al. \(2000\)](#) demonstrated the effectiveness of collective efficacy in urban elementary schools; collective efficacy was favourably associated with student achievement. In domains as diverse as dieting, smoking cessation, sports performance,

political participation, and academic accomplishment, studies have proved the significance of positive efficacy evaluations in human learning and achievement (Bandura, 1997).

Researchers in the field of education have discovered relationships between student accomplishment and three types of efficacy views: student self-efficacy beliefs, teacher self-efficacy beliefs, and teachers' collective efficacy beliefs about the school (Smith & Hoy, 2007). In this investigation, researchers are interested in the relationship between school-based collective efficacy and student achievement. Within schools, perceived collective effectiveness is the faculty's evaluation of the performance capacity of the entire social system (Bandura, 1997). Teachers have individual ideas of their own efficacy as well as collective beliefs about the faculty's capacity. These instructor perceptions of the faculty's capability reflect the school's assessed collective effectiveness. Briefly, perceived collective efficacy of a school is the teachers' belief that the faculty as a whole can organise and carry out the actions necessary to have a good impact on students (Goddard et al., 2000). Based on the descriptive literature and arguments, the researcher hypothesizes that:

Hypothesis 1: Collective Efficacy is a general construct for academic optimism.

C. Faculty Trust

One would believe that these two types of trust are distinct, however this assumption is erroneous. When teachers have faith in parents, they have faith in pupils, and vice versa. It makes no difference whether the school is elementary or secondary; staff trust in parents and pupils is an integral aspect of trust (Bryk & Schneider, 2002). An examination of the literature on trust reveals that it has numerous dimensions (Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 2003). In schools, however, the fundamental components of trust such as benevolence, reliability, competence, honesty, and openness are coexisted to build an integrated view of trust (Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 2003). The faculty's trust in another party is founded on the belief that the other party is benevolent, dependable, competent, honest, and open. Three studies on school trust (Bryk & Schneider, 2002; Goddard et al., 2001; Hoy, 2002) have proven the significance of teacher trust in parents and students as an explanatory variable for student achievement.

Even after controlling for socioeconomic status, Goddard et al. (2001) demonstrated a direct, positive association between staff trust in students and parents and higher student achievement in elementary schools. Similarly, Hoy (2002) found the similar correlation between trust in clients and high school student accomplishment, and Bryk and Schneider (2002) conducted a three-year longitudinal study in 12 Chicago elementary schools; they found that schools with high levels of trust between teachers, parents, and students were more likely to demonstrate substantial gains in student achievement, whereas schools with low levels of trust between teachers, parents, and students saw virtually no improvement in student achievement scores. Based on the descriptive literature and arguments, the researcher hypothesizes that:

Hypothesis 2: Faculty trust is a general construct for academic optimism.

D. Academic emphasis

Academic concentration or the school's push for exceptional student performance is an important organisational characteristic that fosters student success. Academic emphasis refers to the extent to which a school is motivated by a pursuit of academic excellence, which is a push for academic accomplishment (Hoy & Tarter, 1997). Students have challenging but attainable academic goals; the learning atmosphere is orderly and serious; teachers believe in their students' potential to succeed; and students value academic achievement (Hoy & Miskel, 2005). A subtest of the Organizational Health Inventory has accurately measured academic attention (Hoy & Tarter, 1997). Goddard et al. (2001) have revealed that the academic concentration of the school is significantly connected to student achievement. Regardless of school level (elementary, middle, or high school) and approach (multiple regression, structural equation modelling, or hierarchical linear modelling), the results are consistent. Based on the descriptive literature and arguments, the researcher hypothesizes that:

Hypothesis 3: Academic Emphasis is a general construct for academic optimism.

E. Student Academic Achievement

Academic performance is the quantitative and qualitative evaluation of academic accomplishments during the learning process. The scientific literature has mostly relied on two approaches for assessing and determining the academic achievement of students: from a quantitative perspective, gaining school grades, and from a qualitative perspective, focusing on their personal factors and context. On the one hand, school grade averages have historically acted as an accurate indicator of pupils' academic success. On the other hand, certain scholars argue that other sorts of evaluations, such as the number of repeated school years and even the time devoted to student assimilation, are stronger indicators of academic accomplishment. Academic performance in teenagers is a broad concept that has been tackled from a variety of theoretical and philosophical standpoints. González (2018) emphasises the intrapersonal aspects that define the personality of teenage students, whereas Fierro, Almagro, and Sáenz-López (2019) focus on all of these socio-emotional variables, particularly the motivational processes that determine student behaviour.

Pulido and Herrera (2019) emphasised the significance of sociodemographic variables in the setting closest to the student population. How vitally significant school efficiency and improvement can be gauged by looking at student accomplishment. It's also important to note that principals' responsibilities are intrinsically linked to the kind of school climate and culture they hope to foster (Bellibas & Liu, 2018). Leithwood, Harris, & Hopkins (2020) and Sun et al. (2020) came to similar conclusions when they examined the connections between leadership and four distinct outcomes: teacher beliefs and actions; student achievement; school conditions; and teacher working conditions.

De Maeyer et al. (2007) also looked into the indirect effect of organisational culture on the relationship between trust in school leadership and students' success in mathematics and their native language. Findings on the effect of belief in integrated teacher leadership on student achievement varied among research designs. Most recently, Boberg and Bourgeois (2016) investigated the direct and indirect effects of serial mediation models of school leadership on student achievement. These researchers found that both teacher and instructor behaviour contributed to students' academic success. Further, multiple studies have shown that the national political context and political acumen (Wutoy et al., 2022) have a positive influence on school performance, especially when combined with the need for school quality assurance and effective teaching. Thus, there are few articles that relate study characteristics to academic success or other variables that play significant roles in the research of factors determining academic performance. Consequently, the purpose of this study was to examine the association between optimism, and academic achievement in adolescents. Based on the descriptive literature and arguments, the researcher hypothesizes that:

Hypothesis 4: Academic optimism has a positively significant impact on student academic achievement.

III. CONCEPTUAL DEVELOPMENT

The intricacy of human behaviour makes it a challenging subject to explain. Physiological mechanisms on one end and social institutions on the other are just two examples of the spectrum of possible approaches. In terms of research, social and personality psychologists have tended to zero in on a middle ground: the fully functional human being, whose information processing capabilities mediate the influences of both genetics and upbringing on behaviour. Human behaviour has been the subject of numerous attempts to anticipate and explain, and concepts pertaining to behavioural dispositions, such as social attitude and personality trait, have played a significant role in these endeavours (Ajzen, 1988). The researcher selects the Theory of Planned Behavior in order to strengthen and support the entire body of study. Initially, this theory was founded in 1987 by Ajzen and Fishben.

The theory of planned behaviour is defined as theory that suggests that actions are immediately influenced by behavioural intentions and under certain conditions, consider behavioural influence. It is utilized to identify and predict behaviours. Attitudes toward the action, subjective norms, and perceive behavioural command are generally factors that impact behavioural intentions. Because of the limits of the theory of reasoned action (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1970), the idea of planned behaviour was developed to account for actions over which individuals only exert partial control. An organisational diagram of the theory is shown in Figure 1. The probable impacts of behaviour's feedback on the antecedent variables have been omitted for the sake of clarity.

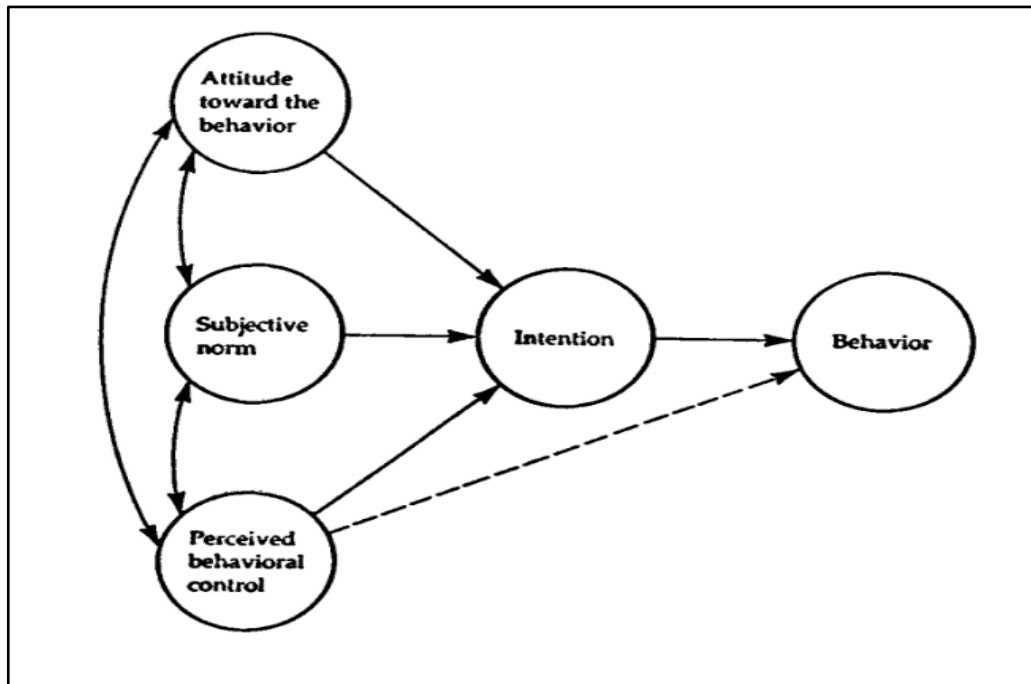


Figure 1: Theory of Planned Behaviour

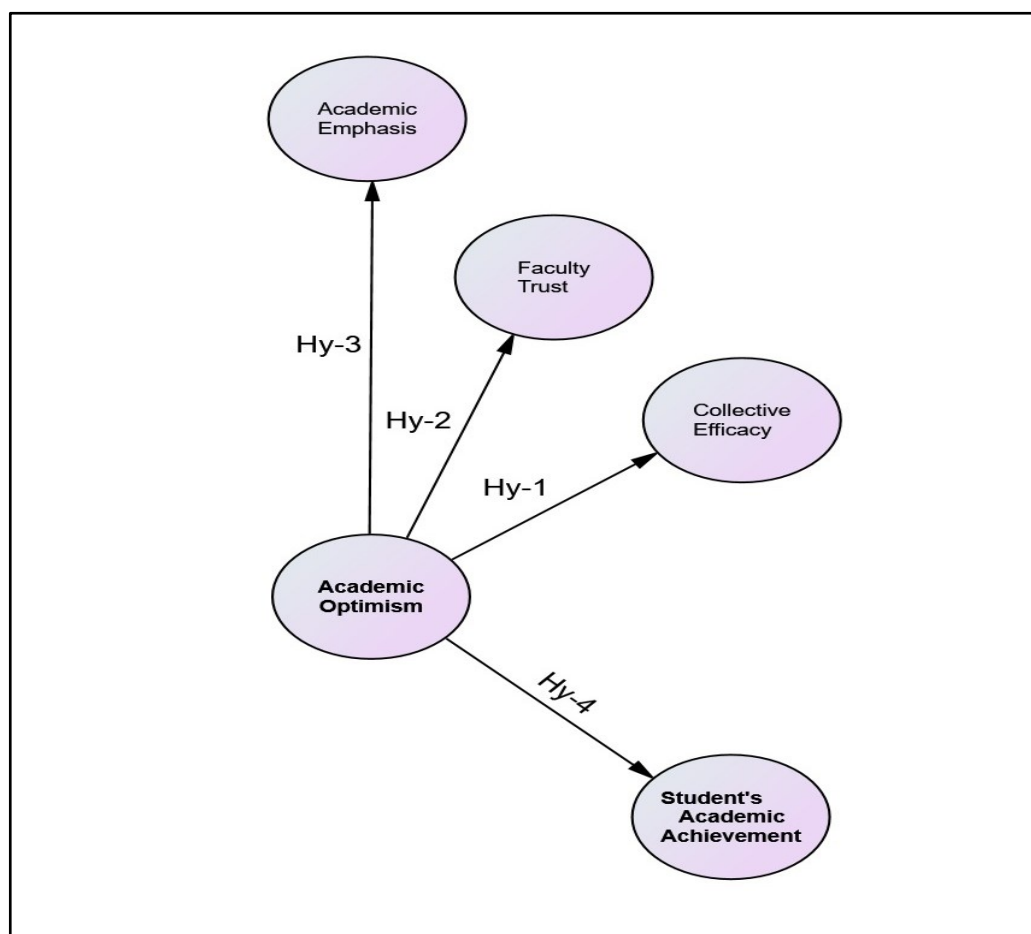


Figure 2: Conceptual Framework

Figure 2 indicates how this research lays the framework for establishing a theory of academic optimism and its causal relationship to academic achievement. The research is conducted to investigate the relationship between academic optimism and academic achievement. The researcher proposed a second-order construct approach in order to measure the relationship between the exogenous factors (collective efficacy, faculty trust, and academic emphasis), which are characteristics of academic optimism created by [Hoy et al. \(2002\)](#), and the endogenous variable. This was done in order to determine whether or not the endogenous variable was related to academic optimism (Student Academic Achievement).

The methodology of the study takes into account the various ways in which educational institutions, particularly secondary schools in China, might be involved to improve the quality of the services they provide to their customers and the overall effectiveness of the institution as a whole. Adopting a holistic perspective makes it possible to understand and explain complex and well-organized events, in which all of the parts have meaningful connections to one another and make substantial contributions to the whole. This ability is made possible by the fact that all of the parts make substantial contributions to the whole. As a result of the fact that Chinese secondary school students are the demographic of interest for this study, it is these students who will serve as the source of the data that will be collected. This framework functions well with any kind of management system and can simply be modified to new systems. Furthermore, there is a clear separation between the various elements in terms of their capability to manage resources and accomplish the organization's goals. This framework has a great deal of potential use in the disciplines of psychology and management of education.

IV. DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Knowing the composite parts of collective academic optimism has the added benefit of suggesting a wider set of techniques for boosting optimism within the school. This is a benefit that adds to the overall value of having this knowledge ([Chen, Ning & Bos, 2022](#)). The leaders of the school have three different options available to them: they may either boost the academic emphasis, improve the collective efficacy, or enhance the trust that the faculty has in the student and their parents. The outcomes of this study need to be re-created in subsequent research, but after that, the focus should shift to understanding how each of the three components can be developed. The purpose of this article development and suggested framework on academic optimism and its relationship with student achievement in China's schools.

The proposed study design is critical for subsequent analysis to confirm that both exogenous factors and endogenous factor were strongly related to the contingency of institutional efficiency can affect student progress. The focus of optimism is on potential, with all of its strengths and resiliencies, rather than pathology, with all of its associated weaknesses and feelings of helplessness. This makes optimism a powerful motivator. Academic optimism is an approach that seeks to explain and cultivate the positive aspects of educational institutions in order to improve student learning. The path forward for school administrators and educators is quite obvious: take advantage of the possibilities of optimistic thought and positive thought, and steer clear of the defeatism that results from

disappointment and disillusionment. It is both possible and necessary to achieve academic achievement in the urban schools.

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