# Relationship between School-Mindfulness and Academic Optimism: The Case of Secondary School Teachers in Central Zone of Tigray, Ethiopia.

Alemat Abay* and M.V.R. Raju**
Department of Psychology and Para Psychology, Andhra University, Visakhapatnam
*Research Scholar,
**Professor,

***Abstract***

*The purpose of this study was to examine relationship between School-Mindfulness and Academic Optimism among teachers in government secondary schools (9 & 10 grades) of central zone of Tigray, Ethiopia. The study was descriptive survey design and employed quantitative approach. By using a self-response questionnaire, data were collected from a sample size of 540 (216 female and 324 male) teachers drawn from a target population of 1789 (1324 males and 465 females) selected through Multi-stage probability sampling technique. Data were analysed by using percentages, Pearson bivariate correlation, and multiple linear regression. Significant positive relationship was revealed between School-mindfulness and academic optimism; and school-mindfulness with each sub-scales of academic optimism. The sub-scales of academic optimism (self-efficacy, trust, academic emphasis) were also appeared to have significant unique contribution when regressed to school mindfulness. Above half of the teachers were found to experience unfavourable sense of academic optimism. Finally, based on the findings proper conclusions supported with the implied recommendations were forwarded.*

**Key Words**: Academic optimism, School-Mindfulness, Teachers, Secondary School

## Introduction

In congruent to the notion of teachers' beliefs, teachers' sense of academic optimism, which is a relatively new concept emerging from the empirical and theoretical research on positive psychology, optimism, and social cognitive theory, has recently attracted more attention and found to be an important school and individual variable in improving students' achievements (Hoy, Tarter, & Woolfolk Hoy, 2006; Anderson, 2012; Beard et al., 2010). At the individual level, academic optimism is understood as a latent teacher construct comprising of three sub-constructs: 'academic emphases, 'self-efficacy', 'trust in parents and students'. The present study focuses on investigating academic optimism as a teacher variable. Hence, in this study, academic optimism is understood as a teacher's positive belief to make a difference in the academic performance of students by emphasizing academics and learning, by trusting parents and students to cooperate

in the process, and by believing in his/her own capacity to overcome difficulties and react to failure with resilience and perseverance (Hoy, Hoy, & Kurz, 2007).

Having the intention of developing a theoretical analysis to identify the features of school structure that efficiently promoted positive outcomes of schools, while limiting negative consequences that are often associated with bureaucratic structures, Hoy (2003) related the construct of mindfulness developed from individual and organizational settings and applied them to schools. Mindfulness is the constant inspection of present expectations (Hoy, 2003) and constitutes five practices exhibited as explaining features of the construct. These include: preoccupation with failure, reluctance to oversimplification, sensitivity to operations, commitment to resilience, and deference to expertise (Weick & Sutcliffe, 2001). Academic optimism is also noted to constitute three dimensions: academic emphasis, efficacy, and trust (Hoy, Tarter, & Hoy, 2006).

Researchers argued that school effectiveness can be predicted by both a continuing scrutiny of school operations and a combination of efficacy, trust, and academic emphasis (Bandura, 1993; Hoy, Tarter, Hoy, 2006; Hoy, Gage, Tarter, 2004). Supporting such understanding, it was demonstrated that mindfulness and collective efficacy support each other in that when faculty members of your school are mindful of what each of the other are doing, they can then develop a judgment that the faculty as a whole can organize and execute the courses of action required to have a positive effect on students (Goddard, Hoy, & Hoy, 2004). Moreover, the presence of positive and significant correlation between school-mindfulness and academic optimism was disclosed by Sims, R. (2011) in his study on a sample of elementary school teachers by taking the variable as a school level properties, i.e., unit of analysis were schools. In that case, the greater the degree of mindfulness in the school the greater the degree of academic optimism was confirmed. However, the existing empirical evidence concerning school-mindfulness and academic optimism are not adequate to give comprehensive descriptions of the constructs across different contexts and levels. Thus, the current study was driven by the (a) need to contribute knowledge regarding the contextual validity of the constructs when viewed against different levels and settings, (b) provide research based evidence about the contextual realities of these important features (constructs) of effective schools as perceived by teachers. Therefore, to this end, the following questions were raised to be addressed.

**Research Questions**

1. What is the status of the Teachers on the variables: Sense of Academic Optimism, and School-mindfulness?
2. Is there positive relationship between the teacher's level of Perceived School-mindfulness and Sense of Academic Optimism along with its sub-scales (efficacy, Trust, and Academic Emphasis)?

3. What is the proportional contribution of the sub-scale of Academic Optimism (efficacy, Trust, and Academic Emphasis) in its relation with school-mindfulness?

Hypothesis 1: There is statistically significant ($p < .05$) relationship between school-mindfulness and Academic Optimism.

Hypothesis 2: School-Mindfulness is significantly ($p < .05$) related with each of the three facets of academic optimism: self-efficacy, trust, and academic emphasis

Hypothesis 3: Each of the sub-scales of Academic optimism (efficacy, trust, and academic emphasis) has statistically significant unique contribution in its relationship with school-mindfulness

## Research Methods

### Research Design

The study was descriptive survey design represented by quantitative approach. Since the study was conducted in a relatively large sample size, descriptive survey design was considered appropriate.

### Participants (Sample)

All government general secondary school (grade 9 & 10) teachers in the central zone of Tigray regional state, Ethiopia were the target population of the present study. The target population encompasses teachers working in 38 schools in 12 Districts (Woredas) found in one province (Zone) which consisted of 1789 (1324 males and 465 females) teachers. To maximize confidence in generalizing findings, the researcher decided to take more sample size. So, cognizant to the types of statistical analysis planned to be used, and to minimize the risk of response rate, the researchers decided to take 560 teachers of sample size (31.3% of the target population) just by relaying on the recommendation of scholars in the area.

### Sampling Techniques and Selection Procedure

To draw the representative sample subjects, a multi-stage probability sampling technique was employed. So, subjects were selected by following the following guiding procedures. First, the 12 districts (woredas) were taken as strata from which sample teachers were to be drawn proportionally so as to maximize the representativeness to the Zone as a whole. Second, to make the process more manageable, 16 out of 38 schools were selected randomly as clusters from every district (Woreda). In the 16 schools, there were a total of 1125 teachers (821 males and 304 females). Third, to keep better representativeness of male and female teachers, teachers in each of the 16 schools were put in to two categories based on their sex (i.e., stratified sampling technique). Further, to maintain the balance between male and female strata, disproportionate stratified sampling technique was used. Thus, different sampling fractions were considered (48.17% for female and 25.37% for males) a sample population with a composition of 60% males and 40% females

teachers. Finally, a total sample size of 560 (336 males and 224 female teachers), were selected from the strata using simple random sampling technique.

**Data Gathering Instruments**

**Teacher's Sense of Academic Optimism**

Previously, "Teacher's sense of academic optimism" was found to be explained by the composite score of three constituting variables: teachers' sense of efficacy, teachers' trust in students and parents, and teachers' academic emphasis. So, to measure this latent variable, these three sub-components of the construct were taken in to account.

**Teacher's Sense of Efficacy**. This variable was measured by the short form of the Teacher's Sense of Efficacy Scale (TSES) previously used by Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk Hoy, & Hoy (2001). The scale consisted 12-Items on a 9-point scale ranging from very strongly disagree (1) to very strongly agree (9). The Survey items of this scale fall into three subscales: efficacy for management, efficacy for instruction, and efficacy for engagement. In previous researches, the Cronbach's alpha coefficient of reliability for the 12-items form of the TSES ranged from .81 to .91. In the current study, the computed value of Cronbach's alpha coefficient was .96. The scale's value was interpreted as: the higher the teacher's score, the more efficacious the teacher was labeled to be; and lower the teacher's score signifies the less efficacious the teacher was.

**Teacher's Sense of Trust in Students and Parents**. This variable was measured by T-Scale which is one sub-test from the Omnibus T-Scale (OTS) of (Hoy and Tschannen-Moran 2003), which was also used by (Hoy et al., 2006). For the purpose of this study, the scale items were reworded to allow looking at individual teachers' beliefs. The items on the Trust-scale were 6 and weighed on a 6-point scale ranging from 1 = "strongly disagree" up to 6 = "strongly agree". In previous research works, the reliability of alpha coefficient (Cronbach's alpha) for the Omnibus T-Scale was found to be within the range of .82 to .98. For this study Cronbach's alpha reliability was computed and the value of the coefficient was .96. The score value of the scale was interpreted as: the higher the teacher's score, the more trustful the students and parents were on the part of the teacher; and the lower the teacher's score signifying the opposite.

**Teacher's Sense of Academic Emphasis**. This variable was determined by a 6 -item scale that was adopted from Hoy, Sweetland, and Smith (2002) which is one sub-test from the Organizational Climate Index (OCI) that specifically focused on achievement press (otherwise known as academic emphasis). The items were scored on a 6-point scale ranging from "strongly disagree" (1) to "strongly agree" (6). In previous researches, the Cronbach's alpha coefficient of reliability for the 6-items of this scale ranges from .6 to .92. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient for the present study was .96. The scale's value was interpreted as the teacher's

higher score signifying the teacher's higher emphasis and academic learning tasks; and the lower score to signify less emphasis given by the teacher to academics and learning tasks.

**Perceived School-Mindfulness**

To measure the variable 'perceived school-mindfulness', the School Mindfulness Scale (M-Scale) developed by Hoy et al. (2004) was used. The M-Scale is a 14-item Likert-type scale. The scale responses range from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). The construct validity has also been supported in previous factor analyses results. In previous researches, the reliability for the internal consistency (alpha coefficient) of the scale was indicated to be consistently high, usually .90. In the present study the reliability for scale's internal consistency was computed and the value of the Cronbach' alpha coefficient was found to be .95. The scale's value was interpreted as: the higher the teacher's score, the greater the favourable perception that the teacher held regarding the school-mindfulness; and the teacher's lower score signifying the opposite. That is, the higher the score the greater that the school was considered to have been perceived as mindful by the teachers.

In the present study, the validity issues of the survey instruments were addressed by (i) adapting the scales which were used in previous research works and reported as valid instruments, and (ii) summiting the instruments to be reviewed (for face and content validity) by professional in the area where the study was conducted, and (iii) finally employing factor analysis by conducting pilot test. Further, by taking the data from the pilot study, the tools reliability for internal consistency was confirmed by computing Cronbach' alpha coefficient.

**Data Gathering Procedure**

In collecting the data, permission from the school principals and consent among the participants was maintained. Then after, the school principals and /or unit leaders were used to supervise the administering and collecting of the questionnaires. One teacher in each school who was not part of sample subjects was used to distribute and collect the questionnaires in accordance to the direction of the researcher and the supervisors as well. By clearly communicating the purpose of the study and not demanding to write their name, an attempt was made to make participants confident that their answers were confidential and only used for the research purpose by the researcher. Since all participants were degree holder and were involved in the teaching-learning process where the medium of instruction was English, the survey instruments were administered using English language.

Data collection was done after securing a reliable and valid instrument through pilot study and professional comments. Then, the task of selecting sample schools and number of participants in each school was undertaken. To this end, the researcher has made preliminary visits to the study areas to get familiarized and

create smooth relationship and in turn gain consent from the prospective participants, which was set as a prerequisite for easing the upcoming data collection process. In doing so, the researcher had made discussion with the school principals and /or unit leaders and let them assist in supervising in the process of selecting sample participants, administering the questionnaires, and collecting as well.

Regarding the administration of the questionnaire, first, a list of the total number of teachers was secured from the respective sample schools. Then after, the participants were selected using the aforementioned sampling techniques, the questionnaires were administered, most often in the researcher's or the assistants' presence, in order to clear up any ambiguities that the respondents might have in filling out the questionnaire. Out of the 560 questionnaires distributed among the sample participants, 552 questionnaires were returned back and from these 12 questionnaires were avoided for their incompleteness or inappropriately filled. Finally, 540 (with an average return rate of 96.4%) fully completed questionnaires were considered for the final analysis.

**Data Analysis Techniques**

To analyse the data collected from the participants, quantitative data analysis technique was employed by using Statistical packages (SPSS 20/AMOS 22). Thus, frequency, percentages, mean, Pearson bivariate correlation, and multiple linear regression statistical techniques were used.

## Result and Discussion

Once again the major purpose of the current study was examining relationships between teachers' Classroom Management Beliefs (PCI) and Sense of Academic Optimism. Hence, this section reports what has been obtained in the analysis concerning the issue at hand.

**Demographic characteristics of the Participants**

The teachers in the central zone of Tigray regional state, Ethiopia were served as the unit of analysis for the present study. Accordingly, data were collected from 540 teachers of varying demographic characteristics (Gender, age, and teaching experience) and then analysed by using appropriate statistical techniques. Table 1 summarizes the details.

**Table 1: Frequency (Percent) distribution of the Participants' Demographic data**

| Characteristic | Category | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|---|
| Age in Years | <=25 | 24 | 4.4% |
| | [26,35] | 212 | 39.3% |
| | [36, 45] | 158 | 29.3% |
| | >45 | 146 | 27.0% |
| Teaching Experience in Years | <=5 | 61 | 13.3% |
| | [6, 10] | 155 | 28.7% |
| | [11, 15] | 166 | 30.7% |
| | > 15 | 158 | 29.3% |
| Education Level | All Degree holders | 540 | 100% |
| Gender | Female | 216 | 40.0% |
| | Male | 324 | 60.0% |

**The Teachers' Status on Academic Optimism and Classroom management Beliefs**

In this study, the teachers' status based on the perceived level of school-Mindfulness, and their Sense of Academic Optimism were disclosed as presented in the tables below. To address the research question pertaining to the teachers level of perceived experiences on these variables, the scales were first converted in to levels (High, Medium, and Low) based on the concept of Normal Distribution. As a result, those whose scores fall in the range from one standard deviation (1SD) away from the mean and above in the scale were labelled 'High', those whose scores ranged from the mean value up to 1SD above the mean were labelled 'Medium'; and those who scored below the mean value of the scale were labelled 'Low'.

**Table 2 : Frequency/Percentage Distribution of the Teachers Across the Levels of Academic Optimism Scale**

| Variable | Scale Levels | Frequency/Percentage | Sex | | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | Female | Male | |
| Academic Optimism | High | Frequency | 39 | 38 | 77 |
| | | % of Total | 7.2 | 7.1 | 14.3 |
| | Medium | Frequency | 78 | 109 | 187 |
| | | % of Total | 14.4 | 20.2 | 34.6 |
| | Low | Frequency | 99 | 177 | 276 |
| | | % of Total | 18.3 | 32.8 | 51.1 |
| | Total | Frequency | 216 | 324 | 540 |
| | | Percentage | 40.0 | 60.0 | 100.0 |

Table 2 above illustrates the distribution of the teachers across the levels of the 'Teacher's Sense of Academic Optimism scale'. As per these data set, most (51.1%) teachers were found to fall within the "low" level of the scale. Relatively small (14.3%) proportion of the teachers were found to have scores falling with in the 84th

percentile and above of the scale value. In other word, they have obtained score values falling in the range of 1SD away the mean and above. The remaining 34.6% of the teachers obtained score values within the "Medium" level of the scale. As it can be deduced from the data in Table 2, the result revealed that 48.9% of the teachers got average and above score values in the levels of academic optimism scale; but, with majority of the teachers confined below 1SD above the mean. That is, higher proportion of the teachers belong to the "Medium" whereas small proportion to the "High" category of the scale.

Slightly above half of the teachers were observed to have been experiencing unfavourable sense of academic optimism. Generally speaking, as displayed by this result, the teachers' sense of academic optimism is not adequately being experienced by the teachers. In other words, the teachers' self-referent positive beliefs to make a difference in the academic performance of students by emphasizing academics and learning, by trusting parents and students to cooperate in the process, and by believing in their own capacity to overcome difficulties and react to failure with resilience and perseverance shows demand for proper support. Fortunately, academic optimism is an individual variable that can be learned and developed. This implies the need for educational leaders to work more in creating school environment the flourish teachers' sense of academic optimism.

**Table 3: Frequency/Percentage Distribution of the Teachers Across the Levels of School-Mindfulness Scale**

| Variable | Scale Levels | Frequency/Percentage | Sex | | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | Female | Male | |
| School-Mindfulness Scale | High | Frequency | 7 | 13 | 20 |
| | | % of Total | 1.3 | 2.4 | 3.7 |
| | Medium | Frequency | 158 | 233 | 391 |
| | | % of Total | 29.3 | 43.1 | 72.4 |
| | Low | Frequency | 51 | 78 | 129 |
| | | % of Total | 9.4 | 14.4 | 23.9 |
| | Total | Frequency | 216 | 324 | 540 |
| | | % of Total | 40.0% | 60.0 | 100.0 |

When the variable 'School-Mindfulness' is considered, the primary claim of the 'Research Question 1' was to disclose the extent to which the teachers' were experiencing a perception concerning the school teachers and administrators when viewed against their ability to anticipate surprise, and containment of the unexpected by experiencing the culture of focusing on failure, avoiding simplification, deference to expertise, remaining sensitive to operations, and resilience.

The distribution of the teachers across the levels of the 'School-Mindfulness Scale' is summarized in Table 3 above. It was observed that most (72.4%) of the teachers were in the "Medium" category of the scale indicating that the teachers were experiencing favorable perception concerning mindfulness features of the school. However, only a small number of the teachers were observed placed in the "High" category of the scale; and these teacher were situated at and above 84$^{th}$ percentile of the scale implying highly favorable experience of mindful-school. The remaining 23.9% of the total teachers were found to fall in the "Low" category of the scale indicating that these much teacher were holding unfavorable perception on the features of mindful-schools.

Further, the result revealed that majority of the teachers who were experiencing a favorable perception about the mindful features of the school were occupied with in 1SD from the mean on the favorable dimension of the scale. In other words, 76.1% of the teachers were found to fall in the favorable dimension of the scale, "Medium" and "High" levels together.

In sum, in the current study, it was observed that majority (though highly concentrated at the average level) of the teachers were holding favorable perceptions regarding the teachers and administrators in their school when weighed against their ability to anticipate surprise, and containment of the unexpected by experiencing the culture of focusing on failure, avoiding simplification, deference to expertise, remaining sensitive to operations, and resilience.

**Result for the Correlation Analysis**

To test what was stated in 'Research question 2', two research hypotheses were formulated claiming to be proven true. Preliminary analyses were performed by visual inspection of scatter plot distribution of the variable of interest and, reasonably, no violation of the assumptions of linearity, and homoscedasticity was ensured.

**Table 4: Pearson Correlation Result for Teacher's Perceived School-Mindfulness and Academic Optimism along with its sub-scale (N =540)**

| **Variables** | School-Mindfulness |
|---|---|
| Sense of efficacy | **.585**$^{***}$ |
| Trust in Parents and Students | **.428**$^{***}$ |
| Academic Emphasis | **.460**$^{***}$ |
| Sense of Academic Optimism | **.591**$^{***}$ |

*Note: *** p < .001*

As shown in Table 4, statistically significant positive correlation results were found between all the variables of interest. Specifically, there was statistically significant positive relation between academic optimism and school-mindfulness ($r = .591$, $p < .001$). In a similar way, the Teacher's perceived school-mindfulness was found to have statistically significant positive correlation with the three sub-scales of Academic Optimism. Specifically, the result revealed that teacher's perceived level of school-mindfulness was significantly and positively correlated with the Teacher's Sense of efficacy ($r = .585$, $p<.001$), with the Teacher's Trust in parents and students ($r = .428$, $p<.001$), and with the Teacher's Academic Emphasis($r = .460$, $p<.001$).

The result was consistent with what was hypothesized regarding the relationship between the variables (See Table 4) of the present study. Therefore, the Teacher's perceived level of school-mindfulness was observed to have positive, statistically significant ($p < .001$) relationship with Sense of Academic Optimism along with its sub-scales. Accordingly, hypotheses 1 & 2 claiming for the presence of statistically significant positive relations between the variables of interest was proven to be true at probability level of very far below the specified level of significance. Therefore, in all cases, the prevailing correlation of the Teacher's perceived level of school-mindfulness with all the variables was appeared to assert the phenomenon that the Teacher's higher level of perceived school-mindfulness to be associated with his/her higher level of scores in all the correlating variables and vice versa. Conversely, the Teacher's higher level of perceived school-mindfulness was asserted to be associated with his/her lower level of score in all the correlating variables and vice versa.

The present study was consistent with the findings of a study done by Sims (2011) investigating relationship between mindfulness and academic optimism along its components. Since the previous research work was conducted by taking these variables as a school level construct, the present study contributes knowledge about the context relevance of the concepts being dealt in the study. So, beyond proving the presence of the hypothesized relations, the current study disclosed the stability of the constructs' relations across different levels and different settings.

**Result for the Regression Analysis**

To further test the relationship, a regression analysis was conducted to find out the unique contribution of mindfulness onto each element of academic optimism as stated in Hypothesis 3. A pre-assessment on the assumptions of normality of residuals, homoscedasticity, outlier, and multicollinearity was found to be in favour of the analysis, i.e., no reasonable violation of the assumptions was noted. The two values (Tolerance and VIF) of multicollinearity indicators revealed that multicollinearity was not a problem to proceed the analysis as it was hypothesized, (Tolerance = .68, .58, & .59; and VIF = 1.47, 1.73, & 1.69 for sense of efficacy, Trust, and Academic Emphasis, respectively).

**Table 5: Summary of Multiple Regression Result for Perceived School-Mindfulness Regressed on the Sub-scales of Academic Optimism**

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | $R = .62$ | | $F(3,536) = 111.715, p < .001$ | | |
| | $R^2 = .385$ | | Adjusted $R^2 = .381$ | | |
| Predictor Variables | B | SE | β | t-value | Part r |
| Constant | .57 | 2.57 | | .22 | |
| Sense of efficacy | .38 | .03 | .45 | 10.93*** | .370 |
| Trust in Parents and Students | .15 | .08 | .09 | 1.97* | .067 |
| Academic Emphasis | .34 | .08 | .18 | 4.17*** | .141 |

Note: *** significant at $p < .001$ ; * significant at $p < .05$

Table 5 shows the results of the standard multiple regression analysis run to test what was stated in hypothesis 3. The result of the analysis revealed that the three components of Academic optimism (sense of efficacy, trust, and academic emphasis) significant contributors of the regression model. Therefore, the Teacher's sense of efficacy, Trust in students and parents, and academic Emphasis come together to significantly explain perceived level school-mindfulness, [$F(3,536) = 111.715, p < .001, R^2 = .385$]. As a result, the hypothesis tempting for the linear combination of the sub-scales of academic optimism to significantly predict the teacher's perceived level of school-mindfulness was confirmed by attesting it to be true at probability level of very far below the predetermined level of significance ($p < .001$).

The result revealed that 38.5% of the variance in the three properties of academic optimism was directly linked with variability in the teacher's perceived level of school-mindfulness. This implies that increase/decrease in the teacher's sense of efficacy, trust, and academic emphasis indicates increase/decrease in the teacher's level of perceived school-mindfulness. So, the existence of positive relationship between academic optimism and school-mindfulness implies that school-mindfulness is positively linked with the separate properties or sub-scales of that together form the construct academic optimism.

All of the three sub-scales of Academic Optimism were found having significant unique contribution ($\beta = .45$, $p < .001$, and $\beta = .09$, $p < .05$, and $\beta = .18$, $p < .001$, respectively) in the regression model for predicting the teacher's level of perceived school-mindfulness. In statistical language, the beta weights associated with the predictor variables indicate the magnitude of change in the outcome variable for every unit change in the respective predicator variable. In view of this, one unit change in the teacher's sense of efficacy was appeared to be associated with higher change in the level (magnitude) of the teacher's perceived level of school-mindfulness than the change in either of the two sub-scales of academic optimism (trust and academic

emphasis).Therefore, as presented in Table 5, Variability in academic optimism as a result of its relationship with school-mindfulness is more experienced in one's sense of efficacy as compared to the other sub-scales of academic optimism (trust and academic emphasis). In a similar sense, academic emphasis took the second places in indicating variability in one's level of school-mindfulness. Thus, according to this result, when estimating teachers' level of academic optimism on the basis of its relation with school-mindfulness, more focus should be given to the variability in the efficacy component.

To sum up, Teachers' level of experience in their perception of school teachers and administrators when viewed against their ability to anticipate surprise, and containment of the unexpected by experiencing the culture of focusing on failure, avoiding simplification, deference to expertise, remaining sensitive to operations, and resilience (perceived school-mindfulness) can be inferred from the teachers' level of self-referent positive belief to make a difference in the academic performance of students by emphasizing academics and learning, by trusting parents and students to cooperate in the process, and by believing in their own capacity to overcome difficulties and react to failure with resilience and perseverance (Sense of Academic Optimism).

In previous research works, when the analysis was done by taking the constructs as school properties, mindfulness and collective efficacy was revealed to support each other. When faculty members of the school are mindful of what each of the other are doing, they can then develop a judgment that the faculty as a whole can organize and execute the courses of action required to have a positive effect on students (Goddard, Hoy, & Hoy, 2004). Although the present study was conducted by using academic optimism at individual teacher level, it was observed to yield a result consistent with what has been reported by Goddard, Hoy, & Hoy (2004). Thus, at both collective and individual level, this sub-scale of the academic optimism was prevailed to have positive relation with school-mindfulness. Therefore, since academic optimism was confirmed to exist at both individual teacher and school level construct, the present result goes in line with what has been reported to occur between mindfulness and efficacy. So, the influence of mindfulness on teacher sense of efficacy can be stated as: the more the teacher perceives the school to be mindful, the greater the likely hood that he/she will develop the belief that he/she can make a difference in the students' academic performance.

Hoy, Gage, and Tarter (2006) tested a theory that school mindfulness and faculty trust were necessary conditions for each other. In their study, they found a strong relationship between mindfulness and faculty trust. As asserted in hypothesis 3 of the present study, trust as component of academic optimism, unique and significant contribution in connecting school-mindfulness with academic optimism. Thus, Trust as one facet of academic optimism is expected to have positive interdependence with school-mindfulness. Accordingly, it can be said that if teachers are mindful of situations, they may develop a higher sense of willingness to be

vulnerable to another party based on the confidence that the latter party is reliable, competent, honest, and open. This is theoretically supported by (Tschannen-Moran, & Hoy, 1998). Therefore, as per the present result, teachers' with favourable perception of the school-mindfulness may be expected to develop a higher sense of willingness to be vulnerable to students and parents based on the confidence that the students and parents are reliable, competent, honest, benevolent, and open.

As noted by Goddard, Sweetland, and Hoy (2000), a strong argument can be made that many of the practices found in a mindful school would lend themselves to creating a general perspective of the importance of academics in a school held by administrators, teachers, and students themselves. Given the findings in this data, it is safe to state that teachers with favourable perception of school-mindfulness will have higher likelihood to be driven by a quest for academic excellence. Taking the variables at school level, this understanding was supported by the findings of Hoy, Gage, and Tarter, (2006).

## Conclusion and Recommendation

### Conclusion

- Since slightly above half of the teachers were observed to have been experiencing unfavourable sense of academic optimism, generally speaking, teacher's sense of academic optimism is not adequate.
- Majority of the teachers were holding favourable perceptions regarding the teachers and administrators in their school when weighed against their ability to anticipate surprise, and containment of the unexpected by experiencing the culture of focusing on failure, avoiding simplification, deference to expertise, remaining sensitive to operations, and resilience. However, only 3.7% of the teachers scoring at & above 84th percentile of the scale value.
- correlation of the Teacher's perceived level of school-mindfulness with all the variables was appeared to assert the phenomenon that the Teacher's higher level of perceived school-mindfulness to be associated with his/her higher level of scores in all the correlating variables and vice versa. Conversely, the Teacher's higher level of perceived school-mindfulness was asserted to be associated with his/her lower level of score in all the correlating variables and vice versa.
- Variability in academic optimism as a result of its relationship with school-mindfulness is more experienced in one's sense of efficacy as compared to the other sub-scales of academic optimism (trust and academic emphasis).
- Teachers' level of experience in their perception of school teachers and administrators when viewed against their ability to anticipate surprise, and containment of the unexpected by experiencing the culture of focusing on failure, avoiding simplification, deference to expertise, remaining sensitive to operations, and resilience (perceived school-mindfulness) can be inferred from the teachers' level of self-referent positive belief to

make a difference in the academic performance of students by emphasizing academics and learning, by trusting parents and students to cooperate in the process, and by believing in their own capacity to overcome difficulties and react to failure with resilience and perseverance (Sense of Academic Optimism).

**Recommendation**

To get the benefit of academic optimism in the school setting, it would be good for educational leader to pay attention to the level of teacher's Sense of Academic Optimism. In view of the present result, to enhance the teachers' level of academic optimism, educational leaders should address the favourable presence of the following conditions.

Schools with teachers and administrators having developed the culture of focusing on failure, avoiding over simplification, deference to expertise, remaining sensitive to operations, and resilience. So, to enhance mindfulness among teachers, principals should ensure the typical feathers of mindful-schools to be the culture of their schools. Specifically, (a) take heed of small failures so as not to be overwhelmed when a large more pressing problem arises; and take failures and mistakes as opportunities to learn, (b) reluctance to oversimplification by constant interactions with stakeholders decreases simplification and increases mindfulness, seeking for diversity of opinions about an issue of interest, (c) avoiding discovering failures after they occur by constantly availing and communicate with teachers; conditions should be inviting for teachers to constantly avail and communicate with the parents and students in a way that they can count on the teacher to give them assistance when needed, and (d) giving responsibilities teachers who have expertise and not necessarily rank or authority.

Ensure proper implementation of Continuous professional development. It is a great way to keep the faculty up-to-date of current educational practices and constantly anticipating and preparing for the unexpected, which is an element of mindfulness. If the school is placing high importance and emphasis on academics, then the administrators, teachers, and students are continuously anticipating and preparing for the possibility of failure and scrutinizing their day-to-day practice to avoid becoming complacent.

Moreover, it would be valuable to conduct similar research by including qualitative approach. For instance, including teachers' perceptions of relationships among these variables would provide greater insight into defining antecedents and outcomes. Further, in the context where this study was conducted, research works linking the constructs of this study with students' motivational constructs and academic performance are highly recommended and are of course complementary to the present study.

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