CHAPTER 5

COLLECTIVE EFFICACY, COLLEGIAL LEADERSHIP, AND A CULTURE OF TRUST

Predicting Academic Optimism and Overall Effectiveness

Julie A. Gray and C. John Tarter

ABSTRACT

This study explores the role of trust in the principal, trust in colleagues, collegial leadership, and collective efficacy in the prediction of effectiveness. Trust, efficacy and leadership have a connection to academic optimism and overall effectiveness; however this configuration of independent variables elaborates the interrelations among these variables, and offers empirical support for a theoretical framework with multiple measures of effectiveness.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

We give a short history of the variables that go into our analysis beginning with the effectiveness concepts. Then we discuss two different configura-
tions of trust, efficacy, and leadership in the prediction of both academic optimism and overall school effectiveness. This study postulates that trust in principal, trust in colleagues, and collegial leadership will have a direct effect on academic optimism, whereas school trust, collegial leadership, and collective efficacy will have a direct effect on organizational effectiveness.

**Academic Optimism**

Academic optimism is a latent variable comprised of three collective properties: academic emphasis, collective efficacy, and faculty trust in clients (students and parents). Collective efficacy is the judgment that the faculty as a whole make about its ability to plan and execute effective instruction. Collective trust in clients (students and parents) is the faculty’s willingness to be vulnerable to students based on the belief that parents are good working partners with the best interests of the students at heart (Forsyth, Adams, & Hoy, 2011). Academic emphasis is the enacted behavior of the faculty and students that focuses on and celebrates intellectual and academic accomplishment. Hoy and his colleagues contend that “academic emphasis, collective efficacy, and faculty trust are tightly woven together and seem to reinforce each other as they positively constrain student performance” (Hoy, Tarter, & Woolfolk Hoy, 2006, p. 426).

Each of these three elements represents the teachers’ perceptions of the organization as collective organizational attributes (Bandura, 1986, 1997 in Hoy et al., 2006). Further, the three concepts have much in common; in fact, Hoy and his colleagues demonstrated that these three collective properties work together in a unified fashion to produce a positive academic environment, which they labeled academic optimism (Hoy et al., 2006). Optimism emerges from the teachers’ beliefs that all students can learn as well as the teachers’ willingness to make themselves open to parents and students as all three work together for academic success.

It is becoming increasingly obvious that the academic optimism of the school is a salient construct that explains high motivation, perseverance, resilience, and performance of students (Forsyth et al., 2011; Hoy, 2012). In fact, the relationship between academic optimism and student achievement is so strong that it is important to discover the organizational conditions that produce a strong culture of academic optimism. Hence, a basic purpose of this analysis is to develop a set of variables to explain strong academic optimism.
Organizational Effectiveness

In this analysis, organizational effectiveness is a general condition of schools that gauges the extent to which schools are effective in achieving their goals, the degree to which schools have efficient internal operations, and the capacity to adapt and innovate as the environment changes. In brief, organizational effectiveness describes the achievement of goals, the internal operation of the organization, and its ability to change, adapt, and innovate. Mott (1972) was first to conceptualize this multidimensional construct in his study of NASA and hospitals. Miskel, Feurly, and Stewart (1979) reformulated Mott's conception of effectiveness for use in public schools, which was later refined and validated by Hoy and Ferguson (1985).

Collective Trust

Our framework for collective trust comes from the work of Forsyth and his colleagues (2011). They define trust as "a faculty's willingness to be vulnerable to another party based on the confidence that the latter party is benevolent, reliable, competent, honest, and open" (p. 35). The essence of this definition is that one group of people trusts another group to act in their best interest. In this study, trust is a collective property with different reference. In particular we are concerned with the degree to which the faculty as a whole trusts their colleagues (trust in colleagues) and the principal (trust in principal). Trust has been described as being an essential ingredient in the work of schools (Bryk & Schneider, 2002; Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 1999). Collective trust includes trust in principal, trust in colleagues, and trust in clients, students and parents (Forsyth & Adams, 2010).

Culture of Trust

It is useful to view school culture as a set of dominant beliefs that bind the school together and give it a distinctive character. We can consider the culture of schools in terms of trust and in this paper we use the term "culture of trust" to refer to schools where a shared belief in trust dominates the aura of the school. More specifically, a school with a strong culture of trust is one in which the teachers trust each other; they trust their principal; and they trust their students and the students' parents.

Collegial Leadership

Collegial leadership conceptualizes the principal behavior in terms of three interrelated concepts: initiating structure, consideration, and initi-
ating change. Yukl (2002) suggests that these three elements are the basic dimensions of leadership behavior. Initiating structure is behavior by the principal that sets high standards of performance for teachers. Consideration is principal behavior that is friendly and supportive. Finally, effective principals often initiate change to improve the performance of the school. The term “collegial leadership” captures these three fundamental dimensions of leader behavior in one construct.

**Collective Efficacy**

Collective efficacy is “the groups’ shared belief in its conjoint capabilities to organize and execute courses of action required to produce given levels of attainments” (Bandura, 1997, p. 477). Goddard, Hoy, and Woolfolk Hoy (2000) defined the concept more clearly in the context of schools by specifying that collective efficacy was the teachers’ beliefs about the faculty’s capability to educate students successfully. We assume that the more efficacious the teachers are as a group the more likely they will sustain the efforts needed to develop and enhance student achievement. Collective efficacy is also a strong determinant of faculty trust in clients and faculty trust in colleagues (Forsyth et al., 2010, p. 60). Bandura (1986) and Goddard, Hoy, and Woolfolk Hoy (2000) found that collective efficacy was a strong predictor of student achievement regardless of socioeconomic status of the student body.

**Socioeconomic Status (SES)**

Any study that is concerned with explaining or predicting either student achievement or overall organizational effectiveness must control for the effects of SES because of its strong relationship to student achievement (Coleman et al., 1966). Hence, our analyses will include SES as a control as we examine the relationship of other variables to both academic optimism and organizational effectiveness.

**RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND HYPOTHESES**

Three basic questions guide this study:

Q1: To what extent do trust in the principal, trust in colleagues, and collegial leadership of the principal explain academic optimism?
Q2: To what extent do a culture of trust, collective efficacy, and collegial leadership explain overall organizational effectiveness?

Q3: To what extent are academic optimism and overall organizational effectiveness related?

There is sufficient theory and research on these variables so that it is possible to formulate a hypothesis for each of the three questions. The elements of academic optimism are trust in clients, collective efficacy, and academic emphasis. It should not be surprising to predict that trust in the principal and trust in colleagues support a culture of academic optimism. Faculty trust in the principal and in colleagues are routinely correlated with trust in clients (Forsyth et al., 2011; Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 2003); in fact, they are part of a broader construct, which we have labeled a culture of trust (Tarter & Hoy, 2004).

One would expect that the leadership of the principal might also be a facilitating force in developing a culture of academic optimism. We have been able to identify only one study that deals with this relationship. McGuigan and Hoy (2006) looked indirectly at the relationship between the leadership of the principal and academic optimism. An empirical analysis supports their argument that leadership may be viewed as a consequence of behavior, that is, suggesting that the way the school runs is an effect of the principal's work. They found that principals are able to structure their schools so as to enable the development of a culture of academic optimism. McGuigan and Hoy end their study on a positive note: Principals can organize schools for success by creating a culture of optimism. While this view is common in the popular literature, there is little empirical evidence to support it. We propose that a principal with a collegial leadership style may create school conditions that support a culture of academic optimism and in turn affect student achievement. Finally, SES is always a variable that needs to be controlled as one tries to predict student achievement or variables related to high student performance. Hence, we hypothesized that:

H1: Trust in the principal, trust in colleagues, collegial leadership, and socioeconomic status form a linear combination that predicts school academic optimism.

Again there is not a lot of theoretically-directed empirical support for the relationship of culture to effectiveness. However, Bryk and Schneider (2002) found that relational trust was a critical element of schools that facilitated high academic achievement. In their study of the Chicago public schools they did not set out to study trust, but in the end they found it to be a prominent variable in configuration of other school characteristics.
that promoted student learning. Hoy (2012) suggests that the Bryk and Schneider configuration is captured by the construct of academic optimism, which leads to high student achievement.

Collective efficacy is another variable that is directly related to student achievement (Bandura, 1993; Goddard, Hoy, & Woolfolk Hoy, 2000, 2004; Goddard, Sweetland, & Hoy, 2000; Goddard, LoGerfo, & Hoy, 2004). Tarter and Hoy (2004) found that collective efficacy was related to both student achievement and overall organizational effectiveness. Thus it seems reasonable to expect that collective efficacy should facilitate the effectiveness of the organization.

Although one might expect the leadership of the principal to be directly related to school trust, the research to date indicates that collegial teacher behavior works through trust to promote effectiveness (Tarter, Sabo, & Hoy, 1995). Nonetheless, it seemed reasonable to expect that collegial leadership would predict school effectiveness. As always, socioeconomic status should be included in any study of organizational effectiveness. Thus we predict that:

H2: A culture of trust, collective efficacy, collegial leadership, and socioeconomic status will form a linear combination that predicts overall organizational effectiveness.

The final relationship to be tested in this paper is between academic optimism and organizational effectiveness. We expected that a culture of academic optimism would produce effective schools. There is ample evidence that links academic optimism with student achievement (DiPaola & Wagner, in press; Hoy, 2012; Hoy, Tarter, Woolfolk Hoy, 2006; Smith & Hoy, 2007). Hoy and Ferguson (1985) demonstrated that overall effectiveness and student achievement were positively correlated, a finding replicated in 2004 by Tarter and Hoy. Therefore, it seems reasonable to predict that:

H.3. A culture of academic optimism should be strongly correlated to overall organizational effectiveness.

**METHODOLOGY**

In order to answer the three guiding questions of this study, a sample of Alabama elementary schools was identified, data were collected from the faculty in each school, and then the data were analyzed; hence, in the following section, we examine the specifics of the sample of the study, the reliability and validity of the measures, the data collection procedures, and the statistical analyses.
Sample

Eighty-four elementary schools from ten urban southeastern school districts in Alabama make up the sample for this study. The school districts ranged from 1,600 to 17,000 students enrolled. The mean percentage for students eligible for free and reduced lunch services was 51%. The ethnic make-up of the students enrolled in the schools in the sample is: 59% Caucasian, 34% African American, Hispanic (non-White) 4.3% and Asian/Pacific Islander 1%. Of the teachers from the district who participated in the study 39% had earned a bachelor’s degree, 52% had a master’s degree, and 7.5% had a doctoral degree.

Measures

Data were collected using five measures: academic optimism, overall effectiveness, trust in colleagues, trust in the principal, collegial leadership, and collective efficacy.

Faculty Trust

The Omnibus Trust Scale is comprised 26 items in a Likert format ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (6). Sample questions include, “teachers in this school trust each other;” “the teachers in this school have faith in the integrity of the principal”; “teachers here believe students are competent learners”; and “parents in this school are reliable in the commitments”.

The Omnibus Trust Scale, which is an instrument that measures three aspects of collective trust: faculty trust in teachers (8 items), in the principal (8 items), and in clients (students and parents) (10 items). Each set of these items is a reliable subtest of trust: in colleagues (alpha = .93), in principal (alpha = .87), trust in clients (alpha = .95), entire scale (alpha = .96). A series of factor-analytic studies has supported the predictive and construct validity of the subscales of the Omnibus Trust Scale (Forsyth, Adams, & Hoy, 2011).

Culture of Trust

The Omnibus Trust Scale was also used to measure a culture of trust in schools, also referred to as collective trust. Such a culture is one in which trust is pervasive. The faculty as a whole trust each other, the principal, the students, and parents. An index of the strength of this culture of trust can be obtained by combining the measures of all of the referents of trust indicated by the scale (Tarter & Hoy, 2004)
Collegial Leadership

Collegial leadership was measured as a subtest of the Organizational Climate Index. It is a 7-item Likert scale with the item response ranging from rarely occurs (1) to very frequently occurs (4). Samples of items include “the principal maintains definite standards of performance;” “the principal treats all faculty members as his or her equal;” and “the principal is willing to make changes.” Reliability coefficients are consistently high and in this study the subscale has an Alpha coefficient of reliability of .95. Hoy, Smith, and Sweetland (2002) report strong construct reliability with items loading strongly on each of the predicted dimensions.

Academic Optimism

Academic optimism was measured using the School Academic Optimism Scale, which is composed of three subscales—collective efficacy (12 items), faculty trust in students and parents (10 items), and academic emphasis (8 items). Sample items include “Teachers in this school are able to get through to the most difficult students;” “Teachers in this school trust their students;” and “Academic achievement is recognized and acknowledged by the school.” Reliability for the School Academic Optimism Scale yielded an alpha of .89. Construct and predictive validity of the scale has been supported in a number of studies (Forsyth et al., 2011; Hoy et al., 2006; Smith & Hoy, 2007).

Organizational Effectiveness

Organizational effectiveness was measured using the School Effectiveness Index. The measure is an 8-item Likert scale with item responses ranging along a continuum from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (6). Sample items include “the quality of products and services produced in this school is outstanding;” “the teachers in my school do a good job coping with emergencies and disruptions;” and “teachers in this school use available resources efficiently.” The alpha coefficient of reliability for the measure in this study was .94. The validity of the scale was supported in studies by Hoy and Ferguson (1985) and Forsyth and his colleagues (2011).

Socioeconomic Status

SES was measured by the percentage of students qualifying for free and reduced lunch—the more who qualify, the lower the SES.

Data Collection

Each principal or school secretary acted as the liaison for the school and encouraged teachers to participate. Pen and paper versions of the
instruments were completed during faculty meetings and gathered by the researchers. School visits took place throughout the state over 2 months. The data for each school were gathered, scored, and aggregated to the school level using Excel and SPSS software.

First, descriptive data of the study are summarized; means, standard deviations, and range for each variable are reported. Next, intercorrelations among the variables of the study are computed and analyzed. Finally, the results of the multiple regression analyses predicting academic optimism and overall organizational effectiveness are provided.

RESULTS

The first step in the analysis of the results was to consider the descriptive properties of the major variables in the study: faculty trust in the principal, faculty trust in colleagues, collective school trust, collective efficacy, collegial leadership, socioeconomic status, school academic optimism, and organizational effectiveness. The means, standard deviations, and ranges are summarized in Table 5.1. An examination of the table led us to conclude that there was sufficient variation within the variables to proceed with further analysis.

Correlations

Next, the correlations among the major variables of the study were computed and examined. As expected, the trust variables were highly correlated with each other. Trust in the principal and trust in colleagues were significantly correlated with an \( r = .61 (p < .01) \). Further, school collective trust was strongly and significantly correlated with trust in both principal \( (r = .86) \) and colleagues \( (r = .86) \); however, these are slightly inflated \( r \) values because each of the two types of trust is part of the collective measure of trust. All of the variables were strongly and significantly related to overall effectiveness, with collegial leadership having the smallest correlation \( (r = .47, p < .01) \) and collective school trust having the highest correlation \( (r = .78, p < .01) \). Similarly and as expected, academic optimism was positively associated with all the variables in the study except SES, which was negatively related to academic optimism \( (r = -.76, p < .01) \). There were no surprises in the correlations of this study. The results are summarized in Table 5.2.

Test of Hypothesis 1: Predictors of Academic Optimism

Multiple regression analysis was used to test the first hypothesis. Collegial leadership, trust in colleagues, trust in the principal, and SES com-
### Table 5.1. Descriptive Statistics of Sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Trust in principal</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>3.04</td>
<td>5.98</td>
<td>5.2182</td>
<td>.57712</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust in colleagues</td>
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<td>3.71</td>
<td>5.88</td>
<td>5.0088</td>
<td>.49230</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust in clients</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>3.09</td>
<td>5.79</td>
<td>4.1755</td>
<td>.62961</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SES</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>9.30</td>
<td>99.00</td>
<td>55.0420</td>
<td>22.7266</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic optimism</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>3.24</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>4.1051</td>
<td>.46083</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall effectiveness</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>6.19</td>
<td>8.82</td>
<td>7.6417</td>
<td>.60904</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collegial leadership</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>4.3102</td>
<td>.39670</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collective efficacy</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>3.62</td>
<td>5.55</td>
<td>4.6346</td>
<td>.49667</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culture of trust</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>3.27</td>
<td>5.61</td>
<td>4.6445</td>
<td>.49935</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 5.2. Correlations of All Variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Trust in principal</th>
<th>Trust in colleagues</th>
<th>Collegial leadership</th>
<th>Collective efficacy</th>
<th>Culture of trust</th>
<th>Overall effectiveness</th>
<th>SES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Academic optimism</td>
<td>.510**</td>
<td>.560**</td>
<td>.436**</td>
<td>.962**</td>
<td>.819**</td>
<td>.627**</td>
<td>-.763**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust in principal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>.705**</td>
<td>.607**</td>
<td>.533**</td>
<td>.864**</td>
<td>.646**</td>
<td>.267**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust in colleagues</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>.462**</td>
<td>.577**</td>
<td>.862**</td>
<td>.740**</td>
<td>-.319**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collegial leadership</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collective efficacy</td>
<td>.344**</td>
<td>.560**</td>
<td>.468**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culture of trust</td>
<td>.811**</td>
<td>.649**</td>
<td>.764**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall effectiveness</td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).
bined to explain 74% of the variance in academic optimism. Unfortunately, the best single predictor of academic optimism was SES. What was disappointing and unexpected was that collegial leadership did not have a positive effect on academic optimism controlling for the other variables in the regression equation. In fact, other than SES, the only variable to have a significant independent effect on academic optimism was trust in colleagues, not trust in the principal. The regression data are summarized in Table 5.3 and pictorially given in Figure 5.1.

**Test of Hypothesis 2: Predictors of Organizational Effectiveness**

Multiple regression was again used to test the predicted relationship. A culture of trust, collegial leadership, collective efficacy, and SES combined to explain 58% of the variance in organizational effectiveness. Disappointingly again, collegial leadership had virtually no influence on organizational effectiveness (β = .05, ns); however, a culture of trust, collective efficacy, and SES were each significantly related to effectiveness controlling for all the other variables in the regression. A culture of trust produced the strongest relationship with organizational effectiveness (β =

![Figure 5.1. Conceptual diagram of first configuration of hypothesized relationships.](image-url)
Table 5.3. Regression of Academic Optimism on Trust in Principal, Trust in Colleagues, Collegial Leadership, and SES Coefficients

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Unstandardized Coefficients</th>
<th>Standardized Coefficients</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Std. Error</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>(Constant)</td>
<td>2.483</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Trust in Principal</td>
<td>.110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Trust in Colleagues</td>
<td>.209</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Collegial Leadership</td>
<td>.169</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SES (control)</td>
<td>-.013</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: a. Dependent Variable: Academic Optimism
** Correlation is significant at the .01 level (2-tailed). \( R = .87 \) ** \( R^2 = .74 **
* Correlation is significant at the .05 level (2-tailed).

.58, \( p < .01 \) followed by collective efficacy (\( \beta = .37, p < .01 \)) and SES (\( \beta = .27, p < .01 \)). Although SES made a significant independent contribution to organizational effectiveness, the influence of a culture of trust was twice as strong as the effect of socioeconomic status of the student body. These results are summarized Table 5.4 and pictorially given in Figure 5.2.

Test of Hypothesis 3: Academic Optimism and Organizational Effectiveness

The final hypothesis demonstrated that academic optimism was a strong predictor of organizational effectiveness controlling for SES. The multiple regression analysis yielded a beta of .94 (\( p < .01 \)) for AO and a beta of .38 (\( p < .01 \)) for SES. Together the two variables explained 46% of variance of organizational effectiveness. Academic optimism can be viewed as a process variable affecting student performance through the combination of efficacy, trust, and academic emphasis captured by the overall unitary measure. The judgment made by faculty about the effectiveness is, of course, subjective; it is based on the evaluation of how well the school operates with the resources that is has. The subjective impression probably develops from the feedback faculty members get from their
Table 5.4. Regression of Overall Effectiveness on Collective Trust, Collegial Leadership, Collective Efficacy, and SES Coefficients

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Unstandardized Coefficients</th>
<th>Standardized Coefficients</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Std. Error</td>
<td>Beta</td>
<td>t</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>(Constant)</td>
<td>1.472</td>
<td>.800</td>
<td>1.840</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Culture of Trust</td>
<td>.721</td>
<td>.191</td>
<td>.580</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Collegial Leadership</td>
<td>.068</td>
<td>.137</td>
<td>.045</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Collective Efficacy</td>
<td>.444</td>
<td>.208</td>
<td>.371</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SES</td>
<td>.007</td>
<td>.003</td>
<td>.267</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: a. Dependent Variable: Overall Effectiveness

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). $R = .77$ **  $R^2 = .58$ **

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

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Figure 5.2. Conceptual diagram of second configuration of hypothesized relationships

\[ R = .77 \quad \text{Adjusted } R^2 = .58 \]
environment. As Hoy and Ferguson (1985) demonstrated years ago, the subjective impression of effectiveness lies within a realistic outcome of the school.

**DISCUSSION**

We were surprised that the only significant predictor of academic optimism was trust in colleagues and neither the leadership of the principal nor the faculty trust in the principal made a significant contribution. The strongest predictor of academic optimism was SES, which is discouraging because of all the variables in the regression, SES is the one over which administrators have no control. Earlier research demonstrated that schools with enabling structure cultivated a culture of academic optimism.

It seems reasonable to suggest that the principal’s role in creating collective efficacy, faculty trust in parents and teachers, and academic emphasis may be indirect rather than a clear function of the principal’s leadership style. Perhaps, the principal’s role in affecting academic optimism indirectly moves through the elements of optimism. For example, the principal who matches professional development with specific activities that nudge the teachers toward working cooperatively on common problems indirectly produces a situation in which efficacy can grow and teachers can come know students and parents in such a way as to bolster trust in them. In fact, there is some evidence that suggests that the principal can improve academic optimism by developing structures and procedures that facilitate rather than hinder the teaching-learning process (McGuigan & Hoy, 2006).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Unstandardized Coefficients</th>
<th>Standardized Coefficients</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>Sig</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Std. Error</td>
<td>Beta</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 (Constant)</td>
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<td>.841</td>
<td>2.674</td>
<td>.009</td>
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<tr>
<td>Academic Optimism</td>
<td>1.182</td>
<td>.167</td>
<td>.938</td>
<td>7.082</td>
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<tr>
<td>SES</td>
<td>.010</td>
<td>.003</td>
<td>.383</td>
<td>2.894</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Notes: a. Dependent Variable: Overall Effectiveness
** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). R = .69  R²= .46**
Trust is important in creating academic optimism, but it is trust in colleagues, in students, and in parents that are the pivotal elements of collective trust, not trust in the principal (Forsyth et al., 2011). Conceivably, when it comes to developing dominant beliefs in a school, it is the faculty who is the star and the principal who plays the important supporting role.

Once again we were mildly surprised that collegial leadership did not have any influence on organizational effectiveness. A culture of trust (faculty trust in students, parents, colleagues, and the principal) provided a strong influence on organizational effectiveness, controlling for all the other variables including SES. The finding was consistent with earlier work (Tarter & Hoy, 2004), which also pointed to the significance of trust in creating effectiveness. Not surprising, we also found that collective efficacy has a substantial and significant relationship with organizational effectiveness controlling for all the other variables in the regression.

We were glad to find that both collective efficacy and a culture of trust had substantially stronger relationships with effectiveness than SES. There are characteristics in schools that can be developed that dampen the negative effect of SES on school effectiveness. Again, the principal’s role seems to be an indirect rather than a direct one. Principals would be well advised to work on developing a culture of trust and a culture imbued with high collective efficacy.

Finally, as predicted, the culture of academic optimism promotes effective school organizations regardless of SES. Taken together, the findings of the study suggest that effectiveness of schools can be improved by principals to the extent that they are effective in developing a school culture characterized by trust and academic optimism. In particular, academic optimism appears to be a direct link to highly effective schools in terms of not only student achievement (Forsyth et al., 2011; Hoy & Hoy, 2011; Hoy, Tarter, & Woolfolk Hoy, 2006) but also efficiency of internal operations, flexibility, innovation, and general quality.

A culture of academic optimism promotes student achievement and teacher satisfaction because academic optimism leads to the achievement of goals, motivation, and cooperation of students, teachers, and parents (Hoy, 2011). While academic optimism is conceptually distinct from dispositional optimism, the notion that things are going to get better, one would expect to find the judgments and attitudes of academic optimism related to a sense that accomplishment is possible. That is, academic optimism is probably an antidote to “learned helplessness” or the despair that teachers sometimes feel when things are not going right. However, academic optimism is more than a feel-good attitude. It is a realistic assessment of possibility.
CONCLUSION

The study is more of an exploratory study that tried to find factors predicting academic optimism and organizational effectiveness. Academic optimism, in particular, is a relatively new construct but show promise of being a direct link to academic achievement. Clearly, research is needed to understand both the antecedents of academic optimism as well as those variables that might intervene in the relationship of optimism to student achievement as well as other school outcomes that we value, for example, teacher job satisfaction, student satisfaction, and maybe life satisfaction (Seligman, 2011).

REFERENCES


