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### Academic Optimism and Teachers' Commitment: An Associational Study of Pakistani Teachers

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#### Abstract



*This article looked into relation between academic optimism and teachers' commitment. This article also to determine, how academic optimism influenced teachers' commitment. Correlational study design was adopted in this article. The population comprised of 61762 secondary school teachers (SSTs) of Punjab province. Using a multi-stage random sampling technique, 516 secondary school teachers from Punjab were chosen for the academic year 2021-2022. Two questionnaires were used to collect data. Both questionnaires were adapted. The first questionnaire contained 11 items related to academic optimism. The second questionnaire included 18 items related to teachers' commitment. Pearson r, t-test, and linear regression were used. The data showed positive and significant relationship between academic optimism and teachers' commitment. According to the findings of the data, academic optimism is positively associated with teachers' commitment. Furthermore, academic optimism influences teachers' commitment. Moreover, all subscales of academic optimism and teachers' commitment have gender-wise significant differences. So, it is recommended that teachers should have sense of academic optimism in developing their commitment with teaching profession.*

**Key Words:** Academic Optimism, Teachers' Commitment, Secondary School Teachers

#### Introduction

Academic optimism is a concept that refers to the collective beliefs and expectations of teachers and school leaders regarding student success and the overall effectiveness of the school. It is composed of three components: academic emphasis, collective efficacy, and faculty trust. Teacher commitment, on the other hand, refers to the level of dedication and loyalty that teachers have towards their profession, students, and school. The study aims to explore how academic optimism, as perceived by teachers, relates to their commitment to teaching. The researchers hypothesize that academic optimism is positively associated with teachers' commitment.

The study uses an associational research design, which involves measuring the variables of interest (academic optimism and teachers' commitment) and examining the relationship between them. The participants in the study are Pakistani teachers from different schools and educational levels. Overall, the study seeks to contribute to the understanding of the factors that influence teachers' commitment to teaching in Pakistani schools, which can have important implications for improving the quality of education in the country.

Academic optimism is a general understanding of a school's strengths and positive qualities, including its faculty, staff, students, amenities, acquaintances, and other variables (Safari & Soleimani, 2019). These traits enable a teacher to see prospects in complications and take proactive steps to impart knowledge to his or her students. According to studies, optimism enhances academic success and instructors' and students' self-efficacy, confidence, rapport in the classroom, and resilience (Lu, 2021; Smith & Hoy, 2007; Sezgin & Erdogan, 2015).

According to Asgari and Rahimi (2014), optimism is characterized by collective effectiveness, faculty confidence, and academic focus. It is a basic quality that refers to one's optimistic view of the future in the face of current challenges and failures (Carver & Scheier, 2002).

Specifically, it is the belief that a person will in general avoid negative outcomes and experience positive events in life. According to Hoy et al (2008), the term "optimism" refers to teachers' belief that they can enhance student learning by emphasizing learning and learning, believing in the willingness of parents and students to participate in the learning process. and believe in students' ability to overcome obstacles and respond decisively to failures. According to Pathak and Lata (2018), optimistic teachers maintain their will and strength in the face of difficulties and see favorable results from their actions. As a result, they try their best to follow instructions exactly while ignoring mistakes.

Academic emphasis, faculty trust, and group efficacy are the three factors that have been postulated for instructors' optimism (Hoy et al., 2006; Miske, 2013). Academic emphasis refers to teachers' actual behavior that is motivated by their convictions that creating a positive classroom culture would help pupils learn and achieve academic achievement. Faculty confidence in students' and parents' ability to participate in the learning process is referred to as faculty trust. As a result of this involvement, parents and students both support and promote the establishment of high academic standards for learning. Collective efficacy, the final factor, refers to instructors' confidence in their capacity to carry out instruction effectively and raise student accomplishment. It is important to keep in mind that these dimensions interact and influence one another in a reciprocal manner.

A person's mental linkage of their beliefs and work in such a way that their entire faithfulness is focused on their vocation is known as teacher commitment (Lu, 2021). It is essential to effective teaching because it creates a setting where students' performance and accomplishment levels are greatly raised (Altun, 2017). Sarikaya and Erdogan (2016) contend that a teacher demonstrates commitment when he or she feels fully obligated to perform extra chores and responsibilities within the context of their employment in order to produce favorable outcomes. Accordingly, it can be said that a teacher's commitment to education is related to that teacher's ability to enthusiastically grasp the goals of the school, identify psychologically with specific roles and actions. to improve the quality of teaching and form emotional connections with students. field. According to Creswell and Elliott (2004) and Han (2021), This involves feeling responsible for the student, the school, maintaining his or her career, strong information, and profession of teaching. As the ultimate principal and source of teaching distinction, teacher involvement rallies student accomplishment and engagement, teacher recital, and school excellence.

There are several qualities that committed teachers have. In essence, they consistently strive for excellence, have outstanding interpersonal communication skills, and are concerned with student growth, erudition, and accomplishment (Altun, 2017). Additionally, dedicated teachers are more likely to considering the need of students and wishes, be able to excite pupils, encourage learners to participate in class activities, and generally work toward the short- and long-term goals of the institution (Lu, 2021). Last but not least, they are passionate about going above and beyond to advance the teaching and learning cycle, committed to faculty development, provide a supportive learning environment, and are mentally engaged in their work (Sarikaya & Erdogan, 2016).

Additionally, commitment is a mental bond formed between a person and an organization in which they promise allegiance to the school's principles and goals. Teacher commitment is the outward display of assurance in the direction of one's work by teachers. It is frequently viewed as the most important element of successful instruction. According to Altun (2017), educators who are very committed can have an impact on the learning and activities of their pupils. Teacher commitment is a motivating factor for instructors to exhibit enhanced work execution because it is linked to creating a strong learning environment where students develop their capacities for more notable successes (Altun, 2017).

In the sense that why research select this topic is that students were deeply demotivated due to unavoidable condition like teaching methodology, learning environment, student-teacher interaction, communication skill of teachers and students and external political pressure as well as instability in the political situation. In these critical conditions the students and teachers deeply disappointed about the academic achievement. So, it was deeply required to see the reason between the teachers' commitment and academic optimism. In this way the researchers decided to examine the association among these constructs.

In the context of the significance, this study was fruitful for the teachers, students, head teachers, parents, stakeholders and policy makers in the context of teaching as well as learning

process at secondary level. This study will also helpful for developing the new strategies and techniques to solve and minimize the problems and issues. It will enhance the teachers' competencies of teachers' commitment, teaching methodology in the new era.

### **Research Objectives**

Following were the objectives:

1. Determine relationship between academic optimism and teachers' commitment at secondary level.
2. Compare difference in academic optimism and teachers' commitment at secondary level with regard to gender.
3. Examine effect of academic optimism on teachers' commitment at secondary level.

### **Literature Review**

Academic optimism and teacher commitment are two constructs that are critical to the success of teaching and learning in educational contexts. The social intellectual hypothesis by Bandura, the community principal hypothesis by Coleman (Beard et al., 2010), the academic optimism by Seligman (Hoy et al., 2002), and the study on school climate (Hoy & Miskel, 2005) and values by Hoy and his colleagues provide the theoretical underpinnings for the educational optimism (McGuigan & Hoy, 2006). This concept has been investigated as a distinctive teaching method and as a resource for the faculty (Hoy et al., 2008). The only difference between the two points is that the hypothetical reinforcements and their components are now being examined instead of the department or the particular instructor. Academic optimism is founded on optimism, which inspires ideas of teachers as informed, students as responsive, parents as compassionate, and the work as doable (Hoy et al., 2006).

Academic optimism is a more modern concept than scholastic optimism (Hoy et al., 2006). According to Hoy and Tarter (2011) it examines the theoretical implications for self-efficacy, self-confidence, and education at both the individual and managerial levels. Academic optimism refers to the confidence of professors in educating students and parents, their self-efficacy in dealing with relevant challenges, and, in the meantime, encouraging researchers to help students succeed. defined as having (Hoy et al., 2006).

Teacher commitment to teaching refers to how satisfied educators are with their profession and how they plan to stand out as instructors (Park, 2005). For generating the environment for where students can develop their abilities for superior and better successes, teachers must be committed (Tsui & Cheng, 1999). According to some, a key component of effective faculty instruction is teacher commitment, which is linked to students' academic success as well as teachers' work performance, absenteeism, turnover, and attitudes toward teaching (Elliott & Crosswell, 2002). There are primarily two justifications for emphasizing teacher commitment. First, it comes from inside, from educators who, as their ranks in education rise, feel a growing desire for more significant responsibilities, variety, and challenges in their profession. Secondly, it is an exterior agent that emerged from the change programmed and is searching for unique obligations and responsibility that depend on teachers' voluntarily committing to them.

The logic of academic dedication, which considered much important component of operative teaching, is another outcome of teacher optimism (Lu, 2021). It speaks to how motivated teachers are to raise their game and how happy they are with their jobs (Altun, 2017). In other words, instructors' performance, attendance, retention, and propensity for success and accomplishment are all influenced by their dedication (Crosswell & Elliott, 2004). This concept is influenced by personal and contextual influences, which has an impact on a productivity of teacher as well as instruction excellence (Huang et al., 2016). An ardent supporter of the objectives of the school or university where they work, a devoted teacher is eager to take on new tasks (Sarikaya & Erdogan, 2016).

It is believed that optimism increases the likelihood of successful outcomes. Pessimism raises the risk of unfavorable consequences (Scheier et al., 2001; Scheier & Carver, 1992). For instance, it has been demonstrated that optimism is positively related to successful professional and academic outcomes, persistent pleasant mood states, and problem-solving (Peterson, 2000). Additionally, a considerable body has demonstrated the importance of optimism in connection to improving corporal healthiness (Rasmussen et al., 2009; Segerstrom, 2005), happiness and comfort (Mahon & Yarcheski, 2002; Weaver & Habibov, 2010), temperament traits and preparation (Buehler & Griffin, 2003; Weaver & Habibov, 2010).

It has been said that the core of effective instruction is a teacher's commitment to their task. It is necessary for excellent instruction (Day, 2004). It exhorts teachers to do so since it is a source of inspiration (Vallerand, 2008). Therefore, motivated teachers might inspire students to work more. Deprived of enthusiasm, all educational approaches are unsuccessful (Hargreaves, 1997). Thus, the influence of motivation on academic success is widely recognized. In his attempt to define an enthusiastic educator, Hansen (2001) asserts that they can inspire pupils to be more willing and productive. When students think positive things through and are motivated to learn, they achieve more (Fink, 2003).

Teachers that are committed might use creative teaching methods to help students achieve better levels of success. Furthermore, committed teachers can instill a sense of energy in their students by encouraging participation in class activities. Excellent instruction requires instructors those are dedicated with their pupils, the school, their profession, their professional development, and their teaching career (Crosswell & Elliott, 2004). Teachers that are committed are eager to engage with their students and regularly consider how they are developing. These teachers actively compete for competence in instructing and teaching by applying numerous techniques. Teachers are unable to effectively lead education without passion for their work. Unquestionably committed teachers are passionate about cultivating the surroundings with their intellectual approach (Linston & Garrison, 2003).

Assurance to teaching is necessary for lowering teacher turnover, implementing curriculum modifications (Hausman & Goldring, 2001), authorizing changes within a discipline (Ingersoll & May, 2010), monitoring programmed progress, maintaining success, and deepening student learning (Robinson & Edwards, 2012). According to McKim and Velez (2016), Mee and Haverback (2014), and Sorensen and McKim (2014), one of the many things that studies have discovered as having an impact on a person's commitment to instruction is the need for study investigating the association between a variety of skill areas and a dedication to educating others

For a sample of employees from diverse private sector businesses, Akhtar et al. (2012) have predicting the relationship between commitment of the employees and optimism. According to Vohra and Goel's (2009) study, dispositional optimism among mid-level managers is a good predictor of commitment to organization and job satisfaction. Kurz (2006) discovered that academic optimism predicts teachers' professional commitment in his study of elementary teachers. Gallagher et al. (2013) investigated the impact of demographic factors on optimism. Gender, age, and education were found to have an effect on optimism.

Ghasemzadeh et al. (2020) carried out research in Iran. The results show that Affective Commitment serves as a mediator in the link between Academic Optimism and Enabling Structure. Additionally, affective commitment act as mediator between academic optimism and collective responsibility. The results reflect the strongest association existed between Academic Optimism and Collective Responsibility. In secondary schools of Malaysia, Vetriveilmamy and Ismail (2021) found that teachers' organizational commitment was significantly influenced by their academic optimism. This demonstrates unequivocally that for teachers to demonstrate their dedication to the organization, they must think they can influence the caliber of the teaching-learning procedure and invest their time as well as energy to enhancing teaching. The results appear to be corroborated by those of Coban and Dermatas (2011), who found a connection between instructors' organizational commitment and academic optimism.

### **Methodology**

The positivist paradigm was adopted by the researchers to carry out the current study and non-experimental, quantitative, and correlational designed was used. A cross-sectional survey was carried out to obtain the data.

Total number of persons from which individuals were selected are called population (Ali et al., 2021; Faiz et al., 2021; Jabeen et al., 2022; Kanwal et al., 2022; Lakhan et al., 2020; Mah Jabeen et al., 2021). There are 36 districts in the Punjab province. The population of the study includes 61762 SSTs working in 7084 secondary level in Punjab (boys = 3739, girls = 3345; males = 32986, females = 28776) (School Education Department, 2016). A subset which was selected from the accessible population for the purpose of data collection in the form of subjects or individuals is called sample (Munir et al., 2021; Saeed et al., 2021; Sajjad et al., 2022; Siddique, 2020; Siddique et al., 2022; Muhammad Siddique et al., 2021; Muhammad Siddique et al., 2021).. Multistage random sampling

technique was used to gather the sample. In the initial phase, the Punjab province was divided into three zones, with two districts drawn at random from each zone. The districts selected were Rahim Yar Khan, Muzaffar Grah (from the south zone), Pakpattan, and Kasur (all from the central zone), Rawalpindi, and Jehlum (all from the north zone). For the second stage, 20 public secondary schools were selected randomly the said district. For the second stage, 20 public secondary schools were randomly chosen from each district. At the third stage, all secondary school teachers in these selected schools were included in the study's sample. As a result, the sample size for the study was decided by 516 instructors from 120 secondary schools.

Two closed-ended self-report measures were adapted for data collection from secondary school teachers. The Individual Teacher Academic Optimism scale, developed by Beard et al., was the academic optimism scale that was employed (2010). At the individual level, academic optimism can be measured in three ways. These are: Academic emphasis (4 items), faculty trust (4 items), and group efficacy (3 items). The reliability value was .82.

Meyer et al. (1993) framed the 5-point Likert scale for assessing teachers' commitment, which was adapted to collect data from respondents. The scale measures secondary school teachers' commitment on three levels: affective commitment, normative commitment, and continuance commitment. This section includes 18 questions, with 6 questions for each component. A five-point Likert-scale was used to collect the responses of the respondents. The reliability coefficient was .86.

**Analysis of Data**

Inferential statistics techniques such as Pearson *r*, t-test and linear regression were used to analyze the collected data.

**Table 1: Correlation between Academic Optimism and Teachers' Commitment**

Variables	<i>n</i>	<i>r</i> -value	<i>Sig.</i>
Academic Optimism and Teachers' Commitment	516	.832	.000

\*\**P*<0.01

According to the table 1 "Pearson *r*" (.832, *P*<0.01) findings, there is a significant positive correlation between academic optimism and teachers' commitment at the secondary school level.

**Table 2: Relationship of Sub-scales of Teachers' Commitment with Academic Optimism**

Sub-scales of Teachers' Commitment with Academic Optimism	1	2	3	4
Affective Commitment	1	.725**	.725**	.768**
Normative Commitment		1	.733**	.740**
Continuance Commitment			1	.747**
Academic Optimism				1

\*\* *p* < .001 (2-tailed), *n* = 516

The table 2 reflects the sub-variables of teachers' commitment, such as Affective Commitment (*r* =.768\*\*), Normative Commitment (*r* =.740\*\*), and Continuance Commitment (*r* =.747\*\*), were substantially connected with academic optimism. It was found that there was a significant positive link between academic optimism and each of the teachers' commitment's sub-variables.

**Table 3: Gender Wise Comparison between Academic Optimism and Teachers' Commitment**

Variables	<i>Gender</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
Academic Optimism	Male	325	47.12	5.60	3.45	314.01	.000
	Female	191	44.95	7.53			
Teachers' Commitment	Male	325	75.70	9.33	2.96	328.76	.000
	Female	191	72.73	11.82			

\**P*<0.05

Based on their gender, teachers' commitment and academic optimism were significantly different, as shown in table 3. It was shown that there were substantial differences between male and female teachers in terms of their commitment to teaching and academic optimism. In terms of academic optimism and commitment, male instructors had higher mean ratings than female teachers. It was found that male teachers were more committed to their careers as teachers and had higher levels of academic optimism than female teachers.

**Table 4: Gender Wise Comparison about Factors of Academic Optimism and Teachers' Commitment**

Sub-scales of Academic Optimism and Teachers'	<i>Gender</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
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Commitment							
Self-efficacy	Male	325	17.21	2.30	2.76	321.57	.000
	Female	191	16.52	2.99			
Trust	Male	325	17.19	2.29	3.28	309.37	.000
	Female	191	16.33	3.14			
Academic Emphasis	Male	325	12.72	1.94	3.01	332.74	.001
	Female	191	12.09	2.42			
Affective Commitment	Male	325	25.18	3.71	2.40	326.23	.000
	Female	191	24.21	4.75			
Normative Commitment	Male	325	25.12	3.22	2.02	352.58	.012
	Female	191	24.46	3.74			
Continuance Commitment	Male	325	25.39	3.45	3.57	322.34	.000
	Female	191	24.04	4.48			

Teachers' commitment and academic optimism differed significantly by gender, as shown in Table 4. There was a significant difference between male and female instructors on all subscales of academic optimism and teachers' commitment. In sub-scales of commitment and academic optimism, male teachers had higher mean scores than female teachers. Male teachers were found to be more committed to their profession and to have higher levels of academic optimism than female teachers.

**Table 5: Effect of Academic Optimism on Teachers' Commitment**

Variables	$\beta$	<i>t-value</i>	<i>Sig.</i>	Model <i>R</i> Square
Academic Optimism and Teachers' Commitment	.832	33.94	.001	.692

According to Table 5, the  $R^2$  value (.692) of the linear regression result reflects the effect of independent variable on dependent variable. In this case, academic optimism causes for (69.2%) of the variation in teachers' commitment. The significance of the beta value (.832) with  $p = .001$  was explained. The findings showed that academic optimism had a large, statistically significant effect on teachers' commitment, with a value of .832 at  $p = .001$ . The null hypothesis was thus disproved. It was determined that teachers' commitment at the secondary school level was positively and significantly impacted by academic optimism.

**Discussion**

Academic optimism has a positive effect on development of teachers' commitment. Academic optimism can improve teachers' and students' self-efficacy, confidence, rapport in the classroom, resilience, well-being, participation, and academic performance/success. Committed teachers consistently strive for excellence, have outstanding interpersonal communication skills, and are concerned with student progress, learning, and achievement (Hoy et al., 2008; Hoy and Tarter, 2011; Lu, 2021; Smith & Hoy, 2007; Sezgin & Erdogan, 2015; Wang & Guan, 2020).

The study's correlational descriptive research findings are presented in this part. This quantitative study predicts the relationship between teachers' dedication and students' academic optimism. Furthermore, regression analysis was used to examine the effect of student optimism and teacher commitment. The first objective was to look at the connection between instructor commitment and students' academic optimism. A correlation between academic optimism and teacher dedication was found using Pearson's *r* statistic. The results showed a strong and favorable association between instructor commitment and students' academic optimism. Additionally, the correlation between academic optimism factor and teachers' commitment was studied. The findings showed that factor of teachers' commitment has a substantial positive correlation with teachers' commitment. Furthermore, the relationship between academic optimism factors and teacher commitment was discovered, and the results revealed that teacher commitment factors have a strong positive association with academic optimism. The results are consistent with previous research (Akhtar et al. 2012; Coban & Dermitas, 2011; Ghasemzadeh et al. 2020; Kurz et al., 2006; Lu, 2021; Vetriveilmany & Ismail, 2021). All of these studies have discovered a strong and positive link between optimism and teacher commitment. Furthermore, all sub-variables of teachers' commitment correlated significantly with academic optimism.

The second key goal looked at how teachers' commitment to their gender and academic optimism varied. A t-test was used to find the gender-related data. The academic optimism and commitment of male and female teachers differed significantly. The differences between all sub-

scales of commitment and sub-variables of academic optimism were statistically significant. The results support those of Gallagher et al (2013).

The second main goal investigated the gender difference in academic optimism and teachers' commitment. The gender information was discovered using an independent sample t-test. Male and female teachers differed significantly in their academic optimism and commitment. All academic optimism sub-variables and commitment sub-scales differed significantly. The results support those of Gallagher et al. (2013).

The impact of academic optimism on teacher' commitment was examined. The effect of academic optimism on teachers' commitment was studied using linear regression analysis. According to the findings, academic optimism had a reasonable predictive power of teachers' commitment. The outcomes are consistent with (Ghasemzadeh et al. 2020; Vetriveilmany & Ismail, 2021). The data revealed that academic optimism has a positive effect on teachers' commitment and that academic optimism is a major determinant of teachers' commitment.

### **Conclusion**

Academic optimism is seen to be a good indicator of a teacher's commitment to their career. This study sought to ascertain the link between teachers' dedication and students' academic optimism. The results showed that academic optimism and instructors' dedication had a significant, favorable, and robust link. Additionally, based on the demographic variable of gender, the study found differences in academic optimism and teachers' commitment. Results indicated that male instructors were more committed to and optimistic about their academic careers than female teachers.

Academic optimism has been regarded as a predictor of teachers' commitment to their profession. This study aimed to determine the relationship between academic optimism and teachers' commitment. According to the findings, there was a significant positive strong relationship between academic optimism and teachers' commitment. In addition, the study discovered a difference in academic optimism and teachers' commitment based on the demographic factor of gender. The outcomes showed that male teachers were having higher level of academic optimism and commitment than female teachers. The results showed that there were statistically significant differences between the sub variables of academic optimism and all of the subscales of teachers' commitment (affective commitment, normative commitment, and continuation commitment) (Academic emphasis, faculty trust, and group efficacy). Additionally, a linear regression analysis was done to ascertain how academic optimism affected instructors' commitment. Academic optimism was found to have a substantial effect on teachers' commitment.

### **Limitation and future directions of the study**

It was impossible to collect data from every element in the population, researchers face some limitations in carrying out their research. In the current study, researchers have delimited the study to six districts in Punjab province, Pakistan. The researcher used the multistage simple random sampling technique to complete this study. For data collection, two adapted research tools were used. Depending on the type of research, population, sample, and environmental ground, various sampling techniques may be used for data collection. Because this research study was obviously quantitative in nature, other research studies such as qualitative studies, experimental studies, casual-comparative studies, comparative studies, and mix-method studies could be conducted. Because this study was conducted in secondary schools, additional research studies may be conducted at different levels such as primary, elementary, college, and university level. Furthermore, the self-structured research instruments can be used for the research study and further studies may conduct on the same construct varying sample size and environmental ground.

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