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Academic Optimism in High Schools

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ACADEMIC OPTIMISM IN HIGH SCHOOLS

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Dedication

In loving memory of John, Sylvia, and George Duffy

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ABSTRACT

This study contributes to the research foundation of academic optimism (Hoy, Tarter & Woolfolk Hoy, 2006) through incorporating the following three aims: to determine the relationships among academic emphasis, collective efficacy, faculty trust in students and parents, and academic optimism; to explore the relationship of academic optimism with state student achievement and Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) standards; and to identify the practices in schools that demonstrate academic emphasis, faculty trust in students and parents, and collective efficacy that comprise academic optimism.

Qualitative and quantitative methods were utilized to collect quantitative survey data and qualitative interview data on academic emphasis, collective efficacy, and faculty trust in students and parents from teachers and principals in one high- and one lower-performing Midwestern high school, as identified by state and federal standard mandates. This study provides an opportunity to describe how the construct of academic optimism, also linked to student achievement, translates into practice in the high school setting.

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INTRODUCTION

Educational leaders across the nation are functioning under intense accountability spotlights. District-level administrators, building principals, and classroom teachers have been charged with demonstrating continuous academic achievement for every student in their respective schools. The eyes of legislators, school board members, and parents look upon these leaders to deliver student achievement scores based on specific learning standards and yearly progress calculations. Educational leaders, in turn, look to research for ways to successfully attain state and national accountability mandates. In response, researchers continue to review, design, and conduct studies to offer a research base for school leaders to draw from.

Past research studies have identified factors that impact student achievement. Coleman et al. (1966) conducted a landmark study which demonstrated that socioeconomic factors and family background differences were associated with academic achievement. Jencks (1972) also concluded that socioeconomic factors, not school characteristics, were linked to student achievement.

Other researchers looked beyond socioeconomic factors to explain student achievement. Weber (1971) studied four instructionally effective inner-city schools to

conclude that effective schools had strong leadership, set high student expectations, had an orderly and quiet atmosphere, emphasized strong acquisition of reading skills, had additional reading personnel, used phonics in their reading program, had individualized instruction, and conducted frequent evaluations of student progress.

Edmonds (1979) also disputed Coleman's findings by identifying that strong administrative leadership, high expectations for student achievement, an emphasis on basis skills, an orderly and quiet environment, and frequent monitoring of student progress were characteristics of schools that were instructionally effective for disadvantaged children.

Purkey and Smith (1983) provided a comprehensive review of effective school research that offered nine variables that were reflected in effective schools. These variables included: school-site management, instructional leadership, staff stability, curriculum articulation and organization, school-wide staff development, parental involvement and support, school-wide recognition of academic success, maximized learning time, and district support. It was also suggested that these variables be woven in a school culture that fosters collaborative planning and collegial relationships, provides for a sense of community, has clear goals and commonly shared high expectations, and has order and discipline.

Research has been specifically conducted to determine the characteristics that have contributed to academic improvement in high-poverty elementary, middle, and high schools. Such past studies included an analysis of "Golden Spike" schools in Illinois that have a sustained record of closing the achievement gap (McGee, 2004), a review of seven middle school case studies, (Picucci, Brownson, Kahlert, & Sobel, 2002), an examination

of six high-performing schools in Tennessee (Craig et al., 2005), a comparison of "high-impact" and "average-impact" high schools for students that enter at achievement levels behind their peers (Education Trust, 2005a), a 3-year-assessment of the policies, practices, and procedures of five high-performing middle schools in Georgia (Trimble, 2002), and an inquiry into eight high-performing elementary schools in Kentucky (Kannapel & Clements, 2005).

Recent studies have attempted to identify school characteristics that explain student achievement by controlling for socioeconomic factors and utilizing more sophisticated quantitative measurement techniques than were previously available. Hoy, Tarter, and Woolfolk Hoy (2006a) conducted a study that linked three school properties, academic emphasis, collective efficacy, and faculty trust in students and parents, together as a single construct called academic optimism to explain achievement at the high school level. Hoy, Tarter, and Woolfolk Hoy (2006b) first theorized and then demonstrated at the elementary school level that academic optimism was a construct that was formed when academic emphasis, collective efficacy, and faculty trust in students and parents work together in a unified fashion. This elementary school study was built upon the findings of several previous studies developed by Wayne K. Hoy and his colleagues who examined academic emphasis (Alig-Mielcarek & Hoy, 2005; Goddard, Sweetland, & Hoy, 2000; Hoy & Hannum, 1997; Hoy & Sabo, 1998; Hoy, Tarter, & Bliss, 1990; Hoy, Tarter, & Kottkamp 1991), collective efficacy (Goddard, Hoy, & Woolfolk Hoy, 2000, 2004; Goddard, LoGerfo, & Hoy, 2004; Hoy Sweetland, & Smith, 2002), and faculty trust in students and parents (Goddard, Tschannen-Moran, & Hoy, 2001; Hoy, 2002) as properties related to student achievement.

Hoy et al. (2006a) proceeded further and took their elementary study to the next step to demonstrate that academic optimism was directly related to student achievement after controlling for socioeconomic and other demographic characteristics at the high school level.

The present study expanded upon the recent work of Hoy et al. (2006a) which introduced the construct of academic optimism as a force that explains school performance at the high school level. The study began with a review of the literature about academic optimism and its three properties: academic emphasis, collective efficacy, and faculty trust in students and parents. A research model was developed to collect descriptive survey and qualitative interview data about these three properties in order to demonstrate their presence and representation in two urban high schools within the same school district with different achievement profiles.

Definition of Terms

Academic emphasis "is the extent to which a school is driven by a quest for academic excellence - a press for academic achievement. High but achievable academic goals are set for students; the learning environment is orderly and serious; students are motivated to work hard; and students respect academic achievement" (Hoy & Miskel, 2005; Hoy et al., 1991; Hoy et al., 2006a, p. 427).

Academic optimism "is a general latent concept related to student achievement after controlling for SES, previous performance, and other demographic variables" (Hoy et al., 2006a, p. 427). Academic optimism is the positive environment created when academic emphasis, collective efficacy, and trust work together in a unified fashion (Hoy et al., 2006a, 2006b).

Achievement refers to the attainment of academic indicators mandated by state and/or federal legislation related to annual student performance benchmarks and yearly school progress gains in mathematics, science, reading, social studies, and/or writing.

Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) is the satisfactory improvement each year that all public schools and districts must make to achieve the goal of all students being proficient in reading and math, as defined by each state, by 2014, according to No Child Left Behind (NCLB) criteria.

Collective efficacy "is the judgment of teachers that the faculty as a whole can organize and execute the actions required to have positive effects on students" (Goddard, 2002; Goddard et al., 2000, 2004; Hoy et al., 2006a, p. 434).

Faculty trust is "a willingness to be vulnerable to another party based on the confidence that that party is benevolent, reliable, competent, honest, and open" (Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 2003; Hoy et al., 2006a, p. 428).

High school is "a secondary school offering the final years of high school study necessary for graduation, usually including grades 10, 11, and 12 (in a 6-3-3 plan) or grades 9, 10, 11, and 12 (in a 6-2-4 plan)" (U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 2006, p. 305).

Problem Statement

School leaders across the nation are being held accountable for attaining national and state achievement standards for their students, schools, and districts. The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) mandates the development of requirements, sanctions, and incentives that impact the nation's districts, schools, and classrooms on all levels (No Child Left Behind Act, 2002). NCLB reauthorizes the Elementary and Secondary Act of

1965 and builds upon the accountability and assessment requirements of the Improving America's Schools Act of 1994.

NCLB provides a framework to improve the performance of America's elementary, middle, and secondary schools while simultaneously ensuring that all students achieve. In addition to the framework, resources and tools are made available to improve schools and student learning. NCLB represents increased accountability for states, school districts, and schools; greater choice options for students attending low-performing schools; more flexibility in the use of Federal education funds by state departments and local educational agencies (LEAs); and an increased emphasis on reading mastery in the early grades. It also calls for highly qualified core subject teachers in every classroom, the use of research-based instructional practices, and the release of timely progress reports to the public.

NCLB translates into increased accountability for states, school districts, and schools in numerous ways (The Education Alliance, 2005). States must develop and submit a plan to measure and determine whether schools and LEAs are meeting adequate yearly progress (AYP) objectives to ensure that all students are proficient in reading and mathematics by the close of the 2013-14 school year. AYP is a state determined measure of progress to attain a 100% goal of student achievement in reading and mathematics proficiency. Individual states select where to set the initial achievement bar and then are required to gradually reach 100% student achievement proficiency with a second bar increase after 2 years and subsequent bar increases every 3 years.

Consequences are defined for identified schools that do not achieve AYP for 2, 3, or more consecutive years. Schools that do not achieve AYP for 2 consecutive years

must be identified as in need of school improvement, receive help, accept technical assistance, develop a 2-year turn around plan, and provide in-district transfer options for students to a school not identified as in need of improvement. Schools that do not achieve AYP for 3 consecutive years remain in school improvement and the district must continue to offer transfer options and provide state-approved supplemental tutoring or academic help to students from low-income families. Schools that continue to remain in school improvement beyond 3 years face additional corrective measures that could include complete school reorganization, staff replacement, and takeover by an effective external agency.

NCLB accountability stakes are high. NCLB has created pressures upon school leaders to make measurable student progress in reading and mathematics and to reduce the achievement gap between average student performance and that of various subgroups.

Some achievement gains have been positive. According to the Secretary of Education, Margaret Spellings (U.S. Department of Education, 2007), NCLB has contributed to more reading progress being accomplished by 9-year-olds from 1999 to 2004 than in the previous 28 years combined; math scores for fourth- and eighth-graders and 9- and 13-year-olds have reached higher levels; and achievement gaps in reading and math between African-American and Hispanic 9-year-olds and their white peers have decreased. Although gains have been documented, Secretary Spellings stated the following concerns:

> As we approach the law's reauthorization, the conversation must focus on how to turn around struggling schools and improve the academic performance of older students. . . . One of the biggest challenges is the performance of late middle and high school students. Between 1999 and 2004, reading scores for 17-year-olds fell three points, and math scores fell one point, according to

> NAEP. Achievement gaps between Hispanic and white 17-year-olds actually grew wider in both subjects. (p. 3)

Differences in achievement patterns at the elementary, middle, and high school levels are also evident in other national reports. The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) reviewed the science performance of students in grades 4, 8, and 12 between 1996 and 2005. NAEP identified that science scores increased in grade 4 from 147 to 151; grade 8 scores remained the same; and grade 12 scores decreased from 150 to 147 (U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics [NCES], 2006). Other NAEP assessments revealed that the average scale scores in U.S. history and geography increased in grades 4 and 8 from 1994 to 2001 with no significant change in scores at grade 12 (U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 2003) and that the average scale score in writing increased in grades 4 and 8 from 1998 to 2002 with again no significant change in scores at grade 12 (U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 2004).

A pattern of low achievement performance at the high school level has also been documented in international comparison assessments such as the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) that involves Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) member countries (U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 2006). As a result of the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002, the NCES is mandated to report on the state of education of the United States and other countries. PISA 2003 results indicated that 15-year-olds in the U.S. had lower scores in mathematics literacy than the OECD average and lower scores than their international peers in 20 of the 28 participating countries. Results from that year's testing also indicated that the same age group scored below the OECD average

in science literacy and below the average scores of their international peers in 15 of the 28 participating countries.

The achievement problem at the high school level becomes even a greater issue when coupled with the public high school freshman graduation rate – which reflects the percentage of the incoming freshman class that graduates 4 years later. The average freshman graduation rate for the graduating class of 2002-03 was 73.9%, with a range of 59.6 to 87.0% (U.S. Department of Education, National Center of Education Statistics, 2006). Added to these numbers is Secretary Spellings' report that stated, "The U.S. has fallen to ninth place in the world in high school graduation rates among young adults, according to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development" (U.S. Department of Education, 2007, p. 4).

National and state data sources indicate that schools are still striving to reach Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) and state board of education student achievement requirements. Data files indicate that one fourth of the high schools in the state where the proposed study will be conducted continue to fall short of meeting AYP requirements as mandated by NCLB and one fifth of the state's high schools fall below the top two performance ratings as defined by the state's accountability report card system (J. Kadlac, personal communication, November 9, 2006).

The growing concern about achievement success at the high school level is demonstrated by the following statement published in a report by the Education Trust (2005a):

> While policymakers continue to exert pressure and pour resources into K-8 improvement, few realize that better-prepared primary school students don't necessarily translate into more – successful – high school graduates. In fact

> available evidence suggests that even as better-prepared students are moving into high schools, academic growth in our high schools is declining. (p. 3)

Public high schools are at critical crossroads (National Association of Secondary School Principals, 2004). As these achievement and graduation concerns heighten, policymakers, school leaders, and researchers have stepped beyond the accountability movement threshold to also examine the structure of present high schools and the design of potential reform models (Harvey & Housman, 2004; Martinez, 2005; National Association of Secondary School Principals, 2004). The discourse on high school accountability and reform issues has gained attention and momentum.

Although NCLB reauthorization is scheduled for 2007, the process timeline could be extended until the next Administration takes office in 2009 (Hess & Rotherham, 2007). Secretary Spellings proposed to build upon NCLB results by recommending:

- A stronger effort must be made to close the achievement gap through high state standards and accountability;
- Middle and high schools must offer more rigorous coursework that better prepares students for postsecondary education or the workforce; and
- States must be given flexibilities and new tools to restructure chronically underperforming schools, and family must be given options. (U.S. Department of Education, 2007, p. 4)

Until the reauthorization process is finalized, the accountability responsibilities remain the same as researchers continue to search for ways to help school leaders reach these national and state achievement goals by reviewing, developing, and conducting studies to identify factors that impact academic achievement.

Past studies have indicated that socioeconomic factors and family background were central factors in predicting student academic success (Coleman et al., 1966; Jencks, 1972). Other researchers including Weber (1971), Edmonds (1979), and Purkey and Smith (1983) reached beyond socioeconomic factors to identify school characteristics that were present in effective school organizations. Hoy et al. (2006a) extended their research efforts even further to conduct a study at the high school level which identified a construct titled academic optimism that was related to student achievement when SES, previous performance, and other demographic variables were controlled for in the model.

The analysis of academic optimism (Hoy et al., 2006a) provides a promising lead for high school principals and teachers to better understand the properties within their schools that impact academic achievement. Hoy and his colleagues reported that their inquiry about academic optimism is at a beginning level and suggested that more research about this construct should be conducted. In the future research section of their study, Hoy et al. (2006a) recommended the following:

> Clearly, more research in a variety of school settings is necessary to build a comprehensive theory of academic optimism in schools. For example, in the tradition of the earlier effective schools research, qualitative investigators could conduct comparative case studies of schools identified as having high and low academic optimism. . . .On the basis of rich descriptions of life in schools, these relationships and other variables could then be identified for further quantitative analysis. It seems obvious that both quantitative and qualitative work are necessary to elaborate a theory of academic optimism in schools. (p. 443)

The current study responded to this research request by providing additional quantitative and qualitative data about academic optimism and its corresponding properties as a means to add to the body of research related to academic achievement, the key accountability challenge of NCLB.

Purpose of the Study

The present study contributed to the research foundation of academic optimism through incorporating the following three aims:

- to determine the relationships among academic emphasis, collective efficacy, faculty trust in students and parents, and academic optimism;
- to explore the relationship of academic optimism with state student achievement and AYP standards; and
- to identify the practices in high schools that demonstrate academic emphasis, collective efficacy, and faculty trust in students and parents that comprise academic optimism.

Quantitative and qualitative research methods were utilized to collect quantitative measurement data and qualitative interview data on academic emphasis, collective efficacy, and faculty trust in students and parents from teachers and principals in a high- and lower- performing high school in a Midwestern state, as identified by state and federal mandates. The first segment of the study involved the administration of valid and reliable instruments to teachers during a faculty meeting in order to calculate the levels of academic emphasis, collective efficacy, and faculty trust in students and parents in each school building. These instruments were: Academic Emphasis Subscale of the Organizational Health Inventory (Hoy & Miskel, 2005; Hoy & Tarter, 1997a; Hoy et al., 1991); the Short Form of the Collective Efficacy Scale (Goddard, 2002; Goddard et al., 2000, 2004); and the Faculty Trust in Students and Parents Subscale of the Omnibus Trust Scale (Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 2003). The second segment of the study incorporated narrative inquiry as a methodology. In-depth interview questions were

constructed from the survey instruments used to gather academic emphasis, collective efficacy, and faculty trust building data. The individual interviews were audio recorded and transcribed in order to code and analyze the statements, themes, and all possible meanings related to academic optimism.

Significance of the Study

Administrators and educators from the district, school, and classroom levels are in search of ways to improve student achievement scores. This search includes the review and incorporation of research recommendations that can have a positive impact on academic progress. Hoy et al. (2006a) have identified a construct that suggests to impact student achievement at the high school level. Study findings from Achieve, Inc. (2004), Gayer, Chudowsky, Hamilton, Kober, and Yeager (2004), Balfanz and Legters (2004), and The Education Trust (2005b) indicate the urgency of focus needed on the high school level.

More than half of the students in the nation must pass an individual exit exam requirement in order to graduate from high school (Achieve, Inc., 2004). By 2009, 19 of the 25 states with exit examinations will utilize these tests to meet accountability requirements of NCLB (Gayer et al., 2004). Using graduation rates as an AYP objective requires directed focus upon the students that are the greatest at risk of dropping out of high school.

Balfanz and Legters (2004) developed a measure called promoting power which compares the number of freshmen in a school to the number of students in their senior class 4 years later. This measure was developed to address the unavailability of a common national measure of dropout or graduation rates and the inconsistency of current

state and district definitions. Balfanz and Legters conducted an analysis of high schools across the country and reported, "One in five high schools in the U.S. have weak promoting power, indicating unacceptably low graduation rates and high dropout rates" (p. 3). Their analysis indicated that there are approximately 2,000 high schools in the nation where graduation is not considered the norm, meaning that the senior class repeatedly decreases to 60% or less compared to the freshman class that began high school 4 years previously.

On the same topic, Secretary Spellings stated:

> When 90 percent of the fastest-growing jobs require postsecondary education or training, it is unacceptable that almost a third of incoming high school students – and about half of African-American and Hispanic students – do not make it to graduation day on time. (U.S. Department of Education, 2007, p. 9)

Drop-out rate data combined with achievement score data create a state of urgency at the high school level. The Education Trust (2005b) conducted a study comparing 2002, 2003, and 2004 achievement results at the elementary, middle, and high school levels from 29, 28, and 23 states, respectively. This study indicated that after 2 years of NCLB implementation, most progress was being made at the elementary grades and results were falling behind at the middle and high school levels. The Education Trust reported:

> States made even less progress closing achievement gaps at the high-school level. In reading and math, for instance, both the Latino-White gap and the gap between poor and non-poor students grew or stayed the same in more states than they narrowed. (p. 2)

In some instances, the gaps were narrowed due to the drop in achievement levels of white students.

While overall Education Trust (2005b) report results were encouraging at the elementary level, they were discouraging at the high school level. These findings run parallel with the proportion of Title I funding allocations and "early start" philosophy that exist at the elementary level. This notion was echoed by Balfanz and Legters (2004) who claimed:

> Policymakers and education decision makers are now realizing that support for preschoolers and elementary school students must be sustained through the secondary grades to keep achievement and attainment gains from fading as students face the academic and social challenges of their middle and high school years. (p. 1)

It is urgent and imperative that all students be prepared to better meet achievement requirements beyond the elementary grades. The challenge is clear. Solutions rest in identifying ways to help all students achieve and close the achievement gap now.

Hoy et al. (2006a) expressed that, "Academic optimism is especially attractive because it emphasizes the potential of schools to overcome the power of socioeconomic factors that impair student achievement. . . . Academic optimism attempts to explain and nurture what is best in schools to facilitate student learning" (p. 443). This present study provided an opportunity to investigate academic optimism further and examined how this construct is linked to student achievement in a high school environment.

Quantitative data from three valid and reliable survey instruments were collected from high school teachers to document evidence of academic optimism in their two schools. Qualitative data through individual teacher and principal interviews were then recorded to describe how this construct and its properties translated into practice in their two high school settings that display a high and lower achievement profile. This

comparative analysis revealed what academic optimism looks like through the conditions, expectations, and behaviors that contribute to its development and existence.

Results from this high school study may also be applied to future studies at the elementary and middle school levels where the three properties of academic optimism have explained learning in past research investigations (Goddard, Hoy et al., 2000; Goddard, Sweetland et al., 2000; Hoy & Hannum, 1997; Hoy & Sabo, 1998; Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 1999, 2003). Future inquiries could add to the growing research foundation of this construct and offer recommendations for consideration and application at all school levels.

Assumptions

The survey instruments selected for the study are valid and reliable instruments that have been utilized in previous studies to represent the properties being investigated. The study assumed that teachers would accurately and honestly respond to the survey instruments in a typical meeting environment. Assumptions were made that the state and federal achievement data that were utilized to select the school research sites were complete and accurate. Valid and reliable survey instruments were used as a basis to develop questions about academic emphasis, collective efficacy, and faculty trust for the interview segment of the study. It was assumed that these questions represented the properties of academic emphasis, collective efficacy, and faculty trust in students and parents accordingly. The study also assumed that teachers and principals accurately and honestly responded to the questions asked during the individual interview sessions.

Limitations

The proposed study was limited to the high school level. Two urban high schools were identified and selected as sites to conduct the study. Both schools were located in the same district. One school met AYP requirements for the 2005-06 school year and the other school did not. Each school had a different demographic profile. Figures representing total enrollment, race, free and or reduced lunch, students with disabilities, and student achievement were different for each school.

Participation in the study was voluntary. Eligible survey participants included all full-time certified and licensed teachers employed by the school district, assigned to the two identified schools, who worked directly with students in that school. Interview participants were randomly selected from the pool of teacher survey participants noted above who wished to continue with the individual interview segment of the study. The lead building principal of each school was also interviewed using the same questions posed during the teacher interview sessions. The initial survey instruments were administered during a regularly scheduled staff meeting and therefore, did not include teachers who were not in attendance at the meeting.

CHAPTER II

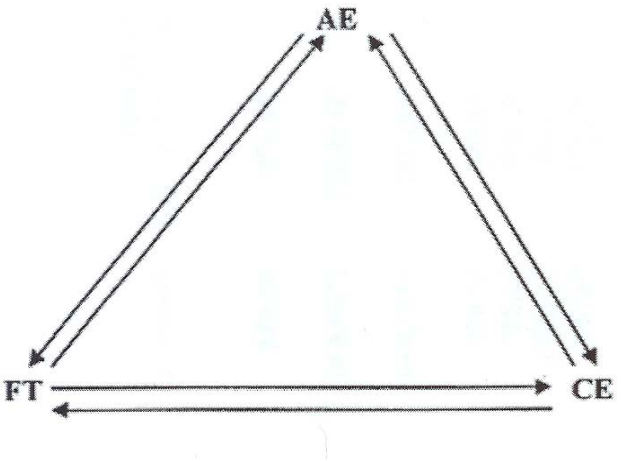
REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This chapter presents a review of the literature related to the construct academic optimism and its corresponding properties, academic emphasis, collective efficacy, and faculty trust in students and parents. It serves as the conceptual foundation for the dissertation study.

Academic Optimism

Hoy et al. (2006b) applied a new construct labeled academic optimism to recognize the school characteristics that explain student achievement at the high school level beyond socioeconomic status (SES). Their study reached beyond the previous findings of Coleman (Coleman et al., 1966) and Edmonds (1979). Coleman indicated that school characteristics had a negligible effect on student performance and that most of the variation in student achievement was related to their differences in family background. Edmonds disputed Coleman's findings by claiming that effective schools were characteristic of strong principal leadership, high expectations for student achievement, an emphasis on basis skills, an orderly environment, and frequent and systematic evaluation of students.

Hoy et al. (2006b) conducted an initial empirical study at the elementary school level to reveal that there are three school properties that work together in a unifying manner to form a general latent construct titled academic optimism. Academic emphasis, collective efficacy, and faculty trust in students and parents were three school properties found to reinforce one another in a transactional manner. The reciprocal relationship among the three dimensions is illustrated in Figure 1.



AE = Academic Emphasis
CE = Perceived Collective Efficacy of the Faculty
FT = Faculty Trust in Students and Parents

Figure 1. Reciprocal relationship among the three dimensions from W. K. Hoy, C. J. Tarter, & A. W. Hoy, 2006b.

Reciprocal Causal Relationships Among the Three Dimensions of Academic Optimism

A subsequent study conducted by Hoy et al. (2006a) involved a diverse sample of 96 high schools to demonstrate how academic optimism made a difference in student achievement when socioeconomic factors, previous performance, and other demographic variables were controlled. In this second study, a random set of teachers in each high school were administered the Academic Emphasis subscale of the Organizational Health

Inventory (Hoy & Miskel, 2005; Hoy & Tarter, 1997a; Hoy et al., 1991), the Short Form of the Collective Efficacy Scale (Goddard, 2002; Goddard et al., 2000, 2004), and the Faculty Trust in Students and Parents Subscale of the Omnibus Trust Scale (Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 2003), all valid and reliable instruments, to measure levels of academic emphasis, collective efficacy, and faculty trust in students and parents, respectively. Descriptive statistics were calculated for each of these variables. Structural equation modeling and hierarchical linear modeling were utilized to test the hypotheses of the study. SES, urbanicity, 12th grade test scores, and previous 9th grade test scores were the measures and variables utilized in the equations. The theoretical model of this study is illustrated in Figure 2.

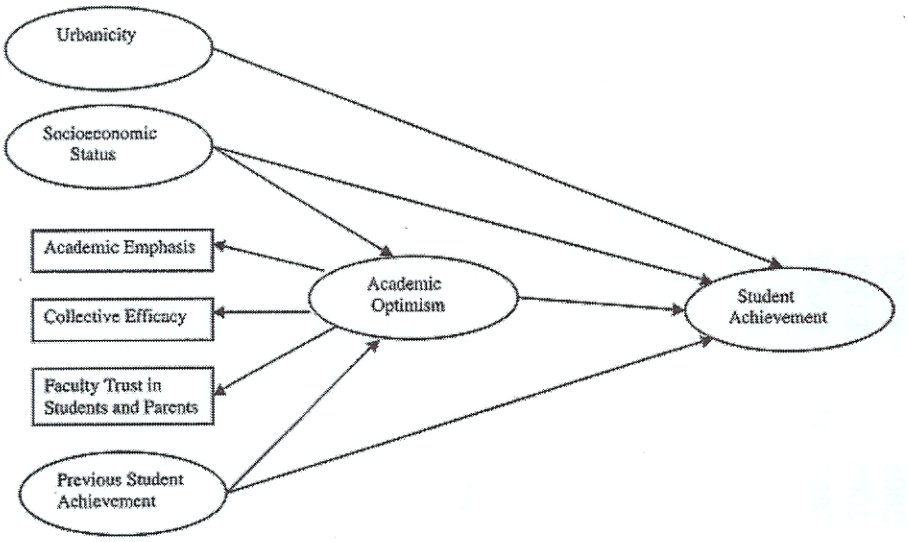


Figure 2. Theoretical model from W. K. Hoy, C. J. Tarter, & A. W. Hoy, 2006a.

Theoretical Model of Academic Optimism and School Achievement

Results from first-order factor analysis procedures using LISREL 8.5 (Joreskog & Sorbom, 1993) confirmed the study hypotheses that academic emphasis, collective efficacy, and faculty trust in parents and students form a general latent construct called

academic optimism, that student academic achievement would be a function of academic optimism after controlling for SES, urbanicity, and previous student achievement, and that SES and previous student achievement would make direct contributions, and indirect contributions through academic optimism to student achievement.

Optimism was a theme emphasized by Seligman (1998) and Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi (2000) as an aim of positive psychology to shift its sole focus upon repairing and healing to include efforts to build upon strengths and positive qualities. Hoy et al. (2006b) were attracted to the notion of optimism and the implication that it could be learned to help impact a shift of pessimistic schools to hopeful ones. Hoy et al. expressed,

> Optimism is an appropriate overarching construct to unite efficacy, trust, and academic press because each concept contains a sense of the possible. Efficacy is the belief that the faculty can make a positive difference in student learning; teachers believe in themselves. Faculty trust in students and parents is the belief that teachers, parents, and students can cooperate to improve learning, that is, the faculty believes in its students. Academic emphasis is the enacted behavior prompted by these beliefs, that is, the focus is student success. Thus, a school with high academic optimism is a collectivity in which the faculty believes that it can make a difference, that students can learn, and academic performance is achieved. (p.145)

The three properties that form academic optimism were derived from three different theories and display three separate dimensions. Academic emphasis came from Hoy and his colleagues' work with organizational health of schools based upon the previous research efforts of Parsons and his colleagues (Parsons, Bales, & Shils, 1953); collective efficacy stemmed from Bandura (1997) and his work with social cognitive theory; and faculty trust in students and parents had its roots from Coleman (1990) and his analysis of social interaction. Academic emphasis demonstrated the behavioral dimension of academic optimism; collective efficacy displayed the cognitive dimension;

and faculty trust in students and parents represented the affective dimension of the construct. These properties were assessed as aggregated individual perceptions of the group, not of the individual participants, therefore, suggesting the emergence of group-level attributes (Bandura, 1986, 1997).

The review of the research of academic emphasis, collective efficacy, and faculty trust in students and parents suggested that these properties translate to school norms and behavioral expectations (Hoy et al., 2006a, 2006b). Coleman (1985, 1987) expressed how group norms impact the control of actions by group members through social sanctions that affect those members who display behaviors that conflict with the norms. Hoy et al. (2006) explained how collective efficacy reflects upon the development of norms and expectations in schools that reinforce the self-efficacy of teachers and how sanctions are applied to those who lack self-efficacy accordingly. They expressed how this pattern of social persuasion also applies to the dimensions of faculty trust in students and parents and academic emphasis as teachers interface with the school culture's norms and expectations. Together, these dimensions "paint a rich picture of human agency" (Hoy et al., 2006a, p. 431) and make an impact on the academic learning environment.

Academic Optimism and Other School Variables

Academic optimism has also been paired with enabling bureaucracy to study academic achievement at the elementary level. McGuigan (2005) conducted a factor analysis of 40 elementary schools to reveal a relationship between the dimensions of academic optimism and mathematics and reading proficiency tests, while controlling for SES. The study confirmed the hypothesis that academic optimism is a latent construct and established a positive correlation between academic optimism and enabling

bureaucracy, school organizational structures, and processes that enable teachers in the performance of their work (Hoy, 2003). A relationship between academic optimism and value added gain index measures of achievement was not identified.

McGuigan and Hoy (2006) later utilized correlation, regression, and factor analysis to study academic optimism, enabling school structure bureaucracy, SES, and school achievement. The results of their study confirmed their hypotheses: that the higher the levels of SES, the higher the achievement levels of the schools; that enabling structure is significantly correlated with academic optimism, controlling for SES; and that the greater the academic optimism of the school, the higher the math and reading achievement levels of schools, controlling for SES.

Both studies featured the importance of academic optimism and invited school principals back into the school improvement discussion by examining the ways that principals can organize their schools to increase academic optimism and the relationship of each dimension of this construct with academic achievement.

An additional elementary school study conducted by Kurz (2006) incorporated correlational, factor, and regression analysis to confirm the existence of individual teacher academic optimism (through the teachers' sense of academic emphasis, efficacy, and trust in parents and students); relate classroom context factors (such as socioeconomic status, identified students, and number of students from ethnic and racial minorities) to academic optimism; and relate teachers' professional commitment to academic optimism. Teacher expertise, in terms of certification/licensure and highest degree attained, was not found to relate to academic optimism. This study served "to test academic optimism as an individual teacher's trait" (p. 46).

To date, very few studies have been published about the construct of academic optimism. The following sections summarize a review of the literature concerning this construct's corresponding properties.

Academic Emphasis

Academic emphasis, also referred to in previous studies as academic press, is defined as "the extent to which a school is driven by a quest for academic excellence – a press for academic achievement" ((Hoy & Miskel, 2005; Hoy et al., 1991; Hoy et al., 2006a, p. 427). This drive for academic excellence includes a school's display of high, achievable goals set for all students; a learning environment that is orderly and serious; students who are motivated to work hard; and students who respect academic achievement (Hoy & Miskel, 2005; Hoy et al., 1991, Hoy et al., 2006a, 2006b). Some research findings regarding academic emphasis have resulted from several school studies that have examined the larger scale dynamics of academic organization, school climate, and organizational health variables.

Academic Organization and Achievement

Lee and Bryk (1989) were two researchers to first draw attention to academic emphasis and its relationship with academic achievement. Lee and Bryk incorporated hierarchical linear modeling techniques to examine mathematics achievement at Catholic and public high schools. Previous effective-schools research was criticized on methodological and substantive levels for incorporating differing agreed upon effective schools factors for disadvantaged children and for a lack of statistical evidence to support the claimed impact.

Lee and Bryk (1989) examined the features of academic organization and narrative environment of schools that impact the social distribution of achievement in Catholic and public high schools. Four categories of variables including demographic characteristics, teachers and teaching, school climate and academic organization of the school were incorporated in the model. Academic climate addressed the average time students spent on homework, the degree to which students want more academic emphasis in their schools, and average attitudes of students towards academics. Data from the High School and Beyond (HS&B) achievement tests over 2 years, HS&B school file data, school level student data, and student responses were collected and analyzed.

Results from this study revealed that "the academic organization of high schools had a significant impact on the social distribution of achievement within them" (Lee & Bryk, 1989, p. 188). It was suggested that core academic programs for all students with fewer comprehensive differentiated offerings is an example of this notion in practice. This study also brought attention to other determinants beyond academic organization such as commitment of teachers, fairness of decisions, orderly environments, emphasis on academics by teachers, and positive attitudes about academics by students that impact student achievement.

Wayne K. Hoy and his colleagues continued the research focus on academic emphasis and student achievement by conducting empirical studies at the elementary (Hoy et al., 1991; Goddard et al., 2000), middle school (Hoy & Hannum, 1997; Hoy & Sabo, 1998), and high school levels (Hoy et al, 1990; Hoy et al., 1991).

Academic Emphasis in School Climate

Hoy et al. (1990) compared a theoretically-based instrument, the Organization Health Inventory (OHI) (Hoy & Feldman, 1987), to the empirically-based instrument, the Organizational Climate Description Questionnaire (OCDQ-RS) (Halpin, 1966; Kottkamp, Mulhan, & Hoy, 1987) to predict student achievement and teachers' commitment to the school at the secondary school level. The OSDQ-RS used two dimensions of principal behavior (supportive and directive), three dimensions of teacher behavior (engaged, frustrated, and intimate), and two factors (openness and intimacy) to examine climate. The OHI contained seven dimensions (institutional integrity, initiating structure, resource allocation, principal influence, consideration, academic emphasis, and morale) that identified the instrumental and expressive functions on three levels of responsibility and control (technical, managerial, and institutional) to examine school health.

The results of this study demonstrated that the dimensions of the OHI were strongly related to student achievement and the OCDQ-RS climate measures were not. More specifically, academic emphasis made significant contributions to student achievement beyond SES. Both instrument measures determined the commitment teachers had to their school, yet the OHI was considered a slightly better predictor. The variables that described assertive leadership did not make a significant contribution to explain student achievement. Results also indicated that the principal had an indirect impact through possible efforts to cultivate a climate of academic achievement by promoting a serious and orderly learning environment, strong academic press and high student expectations.

New Instruments Developed for the Elementary and Secondary School Levels

Within the same time span, Hoy et al. (1991) summarized their research about school climate and outlined their development of the valid and reliable instruments to measure climate at the elementary and secondary levels in a book titled, *Open Schools/Healthy Schools: Measuring Organizational Climate*. Personality and health metaphors were utilized to explore and describe school organizational climate. Hoy et al. provided detailed accounts of how the Organizational Climate Description Questionnaire for Elementary (OCDQ-RE) and Organizational Climate Description Questionnaire for Secondary (OCDQ-RS) were developed from the existing Organizational Climate Description Questionnaire (OCDQ, Halpin & Croft, 1963) to measure the openness of a school. Technical details were also provided to demonstrate the development of the Organizational Health Inventory for Elementary (OHI-E) and the Organizational Health Inventory for Secondary (OHI) Schools to measure school health.

The development of the OHI resulted in the identification of seven dimensions of organizational health: institutional integrity, principal influence, consideration, initiating structure, resource support, morale, and academic emphasis. Whereas the subsequent development of the OHI-E resulted in the identification of five dimensions of organizational health: institutional integrity, collegial leadership, resource influence, teacher affiliation, and academic emphasis. It was through the development of the OHI and OHI-E that academic emphasis was formally recognized as a variable at the technical level of organizational health. Hoy et al. (1991) offered the following statement of relevance:

> Academic emphasis is an integral part of an open, healthy school. True, the climate of a school can be open and student achievement not high, but when

> openness is linked with a press for achievement – that is, high but achievable student goals are set, the learning environment is orderly and serious, teachers believe students can achieve, and students are committed to doing well – schools are successful. Students achieve at high levels. (p. 204)

New Instruments Developed for the Middle School Level

Hoy and Sabo (1998) built upon the efforts of Hoy et al. (1991) at the elementary and high school levels to create two new valid and reliable instruments to measure school climate at the middle school level. Hoy and Sabo reexamined the literature about climate and selected the following definition of school climate "as a relatively enduring quality of school environment that is experienced by participants, affects their behaviors, and is based on their collective perceptions of behavior in schools" (Hoy & Miskel, 1996, p. 141) to guide their work.

Culture and climate comparisons and personality and health metaphors were applied once again to describe the perspectives of openness and health as part of organizational climate. An analysis of quality management principles with the identification of school quality indicators (openness of school climate, health of school climate, student achievement, overall school effectiveness, and culture) added a new theme to the conceptual framework of the instrument development process. This analysis and synthesis coupled with a detailed pilot study with tests and analyses resulted in the development of a new middle school instrument, the Organizational Climate Descriptive Questionnaire for Middle Schools (OCDQ-PM) with six dimensions (supportive, directive, restrictive, collegial, committed, and disengaged) to measure the openness of middle school climates.

In the same publication, Hoy and Sabo (1998) summarized their steps to conceptualize, operationalize, pilot, and test the development of a second new instrument,

the Organizational Health Inventory for Middle Schools (OHI-M) to measure the health of middle school climates. Academic emphasis, teacher affiliation, collegial leadership, principal influence, resource support, and institutional integrity were identified as the six dimensions that describe the organizational health at the middle school level. Correlation and regression analyses of the elements of openness of school climate with aspects of student achievement and of the elements of health of school climate with aspects of student achievement indicated a significant and positive relationship between school climate and student achievement. Adding SES as a variable, due to its strong effect in predicting achievement, to the regression equation, resulted in a similar pattern of relationships. Hoy et al. stated, "Academic Emphasis, Teacher Affiliation, Resource Support, and a negative Institutional Integrity are the key elements of health that foster high student achievement in basic skills" (p. 88). Regarding academic emphasis, Hoy et al. further summarized,

> Schools with high student achievement have a strong internal press for academic excellence. Teachers and administrators set a tone that is serious, orderly, and focused on academics. Students respond by accepting the challenge, believing in themselves, and respecting the academic accomplishments of their peers. In the press for achievement, everyone does his or her part. Principals use their influence with superiors to get the necessary resources and support for the instructional program, teachers set reasonable academic goals for their students and go the extra mile in helping them achieve, and students accept the importance of academics and work hard to be successful (high academic press). (p. 114)

Nearly two decades of such research resulted in the development of new school climate assessment tools and numerous publications. Two particular publications, *The Road to Open Healthy Schools: A Handbook for Change* (Elementary and Middle School Edition) (Hoy & Tarter, 1997b) and *The Road to Open Healthy Schools: A Handbook for Change* (Middle and Secondary School Edition) (Hoy & Tarter, 1997a)

were developed specifically for administrators to help facilitate their school improvement efforts at the elementary, middle, and secondary school building levels.

Academic Emphasis and Student Achievement Research Continues

Within a comparable timeframe, Hoy and Hannum (1997) also examined the relationship between school climate and reading, writing, and mathematics achievement at the middle school level by utilizing only one of the climate measures. Their study was limited to the health aspect of school climate and therefore, utilized the OHI-RI as the instrument to measure middle school health dimensions. Descriptive statistics were calculated for the school health dimensions (teacher affiliation, academic emphasis, collegial leadership, resource support, principal influence, and institutional integrity), SES, and each achievement variable. Regression analysis between dimensions of health and student achievement and SES indicated that academic emphasis and SES were the strongest correlates for mathematics, reading, and writing achievement. Multiple regression analyses further revealed that teacher affiliation, resource support, academic emphasis, and institutional integrity had significant and unique effects on mathematics achievement; teacher affiliation, institutional integrity, academic emphasis, research support, and SES had significant effects on reading achievement; and teacher affiliation, institutional integrity and SES had a significant impact on writing achievement. Most of the dimensions of school health were positively associated with student achievement, with the exception of institutional integrity, which was inversely related to the three achievement variables.

In a different study, Goddard et al. (2000) reviewed effective schools research and applied social cognitive theory to form a comprehensive theoretical basis to study the

impact of academic emphasis on student mathematics and reading achievement in urban elementary schools. This study expanded upon the academic emphasis and achievement research conducted at the high school and middle school levels (Hoy & Sabo, 1998; Hoy, et al., 1991).

OHI-E survey responses, current fourth grade mathematics and reading achievement scores, prior third grade mathematics and reading achievement scores, and student demographic data were analyzed to determine academic emphasis effects. The research results were consistent with the theoretical presentation that academic emphasis promotes students' mathematics and reading achievement in urban elementary schools. The magnitude of the effect of academic emphasis verified the importance of its influence and impact. Goddard et al. (2000) suggested that mathematics and reading achievement can be positively impacted by a climate where an academic emphasis is present through teachers' beliefs that students have the capabilities to achieve, that students work to succeed with respect for their academic accomplishments, and that orderly and serious learning atmospheres are in place.

Academic Emphasis, Instructional Leadership, and Student Achievement

In a more recent elementary school study, Alig-Mielcarek and Hoy (2005) reviewed leadership literature, identified three dominate leadership models, developed an Instructional Leadership Inventory (ILI), and created a path model to explain student achievement that included the following four variables: instructional leadership of the principal, academic press of the school, socioeconomic status, and level of student academic performance in elementary schools.

Academic press, also referred to as academic emphasis, and instructional leadership data were collected from teachers and administrators in 146 elementary schools utilizing OHI and the ILI scale instruments. Descriptive statistics, correlation of variables, and structural equation modeling were utilized to analyze the survey, SES, and reading and mathematics data. The analysis revealed that SES had both direct significant and indirect effects on achievement, and academic press had a significant direct effect on student achievement in reading and mathematics. Instructional leadership was found to only have an indirect effect on student achievement and that was through academic press. Alig-Mielcarek and Hoy (2005) suggested the importance of academic press as follows:

> Our model of student achievement explained almost two-thirds of the variance in school achievement, but much more remains to be done. SES is the strongest predictor of student achievement and the least malleable. The challenge is clear: overcome the dampening effect of low SES by finding school properties that have an independent effect on achievement and can be improved. This study and a few others … suggest that academic press is one such variable. (p.48)

Academic Emphasis and Other School Variables

The importance of academic emphasis (academic press) was also recognized in additional studies conducted by Wayne K. Hoy and his research colleagues. These works included a study of academic emphasis related to teacher efficacy and school climate (Hoy & Woolfolk, 1993), related to teacher empowerment (Sweetland & Hoy, 2000), and related to school climate and faculty trust (Hoy, Smith, & Sweetland, 2002).

Other researchers have also noted the positive relationship between academic emphasis and school variables in their own separate studies. These studies revealed that academic emphasis was reflected in teachers' perceptions of their school climates of high- and low-performing elementary schools (Huang, Waxman, & Wang, 1995); in the relationship between middle school organizational health and robust educational

environments (Licata & Harper, 1999); in the relationship between middle school organizational health and a robust school vision (Licata & Harper, 2001); in the relationship of instrumental support and expressive support with elementary school student achievement (Griffith, 2002); in the relationship of three dimensions of organizational health and student achievement at the middle school level (Henderson et al., 2005); and in the relationship between teachers' perceptions of school health and a robust school vision in elementary schools located in Ankara, Turkey (Korkmaz, 2006).

Summary of Academic Emphasis Findings

For nearly two decades, academic emphasis was demonstrated to be a critical variable to explain student achievement at every school level with varied research methods. Hoy et al. (2006a) summarized their findings as follows:

> Notwithstanding different methodological approaches and school levels, the results are consistent. Whether the type of analysis used is multiple regression, structural equation modeling, or hierarchical linear modeling, and whether the level is elementary, middle, or secondary, academic emphasis is a key variable in explaining student achievement, even after controlling for SES, previous achievement, and other demographic variables. (p. 427)

Collective Efficacy

Collective efficacy in schools "is the judgment of teachers that the faculty as a whole can organize and execute the actions required to have positive effects on students" (Goddard, 2002; Goddard et al., 2000, 2004; Hoy et al., 2006a, p. 434). Collective efficacy has its theoretical roots in social cognitive theory (Bandura, 1986, 1997, 2000). Social cognitive theory describes the basic notion of efficacy and its representational forms.

Social Cognitive Theory

Social cognitive theory is embedded in human social cognition and provides a framework for understanding how beliefs impact behavior, motivation and learning. According to Bandura, this theory suggests that there are three forms of human agency: personal (which displays self-directed control over conditions and practices); proxy (which invites others to act on one's behalf); and collective (which demonstrates collective power to produce desired results).

Personal efficacy or self-efficacy is influenced by performance accomplishments, vicarious experience, verbal persuasion, and psychological states (Bandura, 1977). Self-efficacy beliefs are "beliefs in one's capability to organize and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainments" (Bandura, 1997, p. 3). According to Bandura (2000), "People are partly the products of their environments, but by selecting, creating, and transforming their environmental circumstances they are producers of environments as well" (p. 75).

Three Levels of Efficacy and Academic Development

Bandura (1993) demonstrated that self-efficacy expends its impact through cognitive, motivational, affective, and selection processes. Bandura summarized how efficacy contributes to academic development on three levels: students' beliefs in their efficacy to influence their own learning, teachers' beliefs in their personal efficacy to motivate and promote learning, and faculties' beliefs in their collective instructional efficacy to impact their schools' academic achievement levels.

Hoy et al. (2006a, 2006b) identified researchers who have also indicated how efficacy is related to student academic achievement on these three levels: self-efficacy of

students (Pajares, 1997; Pajares & Miller, 1994), self-efficacy beliefs of teachers (Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk Hoy, & Hoy, 1998), and teachers' collective efficacy beliefs about the school (Goddard, Hoy, & Woolfolk Hoy, 2000).

Pajares and Miller (1994) utilized path analysis to test the relationship between self-efficacy beliefs in mathematical problem solving. Later, Pajares (1997) provided a thorough presentation of social cognitive theory Bandura (1977, 1986, 1997) and described how self-efficacy impacted academic achievement in studies over a two decade period.

Teacher Efficacy

Tschannen-Moran et al. (1998) reviewed previous studies over a two decade period to examine the theoretical and empirical frameworks of teacher efficacy. During this process, they revisited the theories of Bandura (1977, 1986, 1993, 1997) and Rotter (1966), assessed efficacy instruments, and developed an integrated model to illustrate the cyclical nature of teacher efficacy. Tschannen-Moran et al. (1998) expressed teacher efficacy as "the teacher's belief in his or her capability to organize and execute courses of action required to successfully accomplish a specific teaching task in a particular context" (p. 233). Considerations were offered for efficacy differences related to preservice, novice, and experienced teachers; and recommendations were made for future research to test their model, refine/develop new efficacy measures, to better understand the causes and effects of teacher efficacy, and explore the interrelationship between self-efficacy and collective efficacy.

Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk Hoy (2001) expanded upon one of the future study recommendation of Tschannen-Moran et al. (1998) and developed a new measure,

the Ohio State Teacher Efficacy Scale (OSTES), to measure teacher efficacy. Other researchers such as Goodard et al. (2000), Hoy, Sweetland, and Smith (2002), Goddard, LoGerfo et al. (2004), and Goddard, Hoy et al. (2004) accepted the future study invitation posed by Tschannen-Moran et al. (1998) and explored the concept of collective efficacy and its relationship with student achievement.

Development of the Collective Efficacy Scale and Collective Efficacy Scale (Short Form)

Goddard et al. (2000) worked from the theoretical basis of Bandura's (1977, 1986, 1997) social cognitive theory and the model development of Tschannen-Moran et al. (1998) to create, pilot, and test a new instrument, the Collective Efficacy Scale (CES) to measure collective efficacy. The instrument was then tested at the elementary school level in an urban Midwestern school district. Student reading and mathematics achievement, demographic, and teacher survey data were collected from 47 elementary schools. Descriptive statistics and multilevel analyses were calculated and conducted accordingly. Study results indicated that

> analysis of the task and assessment of group competencies interact to orchestrate the conception of collective teacher efficacy in a school . . . collective teacher efficacy is positively associated with the differences in student achievement that occur between schools . . . collective efficacy is a unified construct that promotes student achievement. (Goddard et al., pp. 501-502)

Shortly after its development, Goddard (2002) reexamined the Collective Efficacy Scale (Goddard et al., 2000) in order to "improve its measurement by constructing a more conceptually pure and parsimonious version of the scale" (p. 97). The development of the second scale involved: a review of the original instrument and theoretical foundation of collective efficacy; an administration of the original scale to 47 elementary schools; an aggregation and factor analysis of the response data; a selection of 12 scale items and

performance of a corresponding factor analysis; and a test of criterion-related validity of the relationship between the original 21-item and the new short form scale. An additional predictive validity test utilizing hierarchical linear modeling with student demographic data, achievement data, and short form scores was also performed as part of the study. The study resulted in the development of a new valid and reliable instrument, The Collective Efficacy Scale (Short Form), with findings "that provide initial evidence that using a 12-item scale that balances the relative weights given to the elements of collective efficacy . . . is equally as effective as using the original 21-item scale" (p. 108).

Collective Efficacy and Student Achievement

Goddard (2001) took his earlier elementary study (Goddard et al., 2000) a step further by controlling for prior student achievement, along with student demographic characteristics, to also demonstrate that collective efficacy was positively and significantly related to differences in student achievement across the participating urban elementary schools.

Hoy et al. (2002) extended the inquiry of collective efficacy to a different school level by developing a model to explain high school achievement. Collective efficacy was depicted as a key variable in the model. After controlling for SES and academic press, Hoy et al. found that collective efficacy was key in explaining student achievement and was even more prominent than SES and academic press. Their findings indicated that academic press worked through the construct of collective efficacy.

Goddard, LoGerfo et al. (2004) continued the emphasis of studying collective efficacy at the high school level to understand the relationship between this construct and student achievement in 96 high schools in a Midwestern state. This study incorporated

the theoretical and empirical foundations of Goddard et al. (2000), Goddard (2001), and Hoy et al. (2002) to refine the interface of collective efficacy with student achievement. Goddard, LoGerfo et al. incorporated additional subject area achievement variables, beyond the previous reading and mathematics indicators, in their new study. Mathematics, science, reading, social studies, and writing achievement results from a state mandated 12th grade assessment were collected. Collective Efficacy Belief Scale (CES), SES, urbanicity, school size, minority, and enrollment data were also included in the data pool. Collective efficacy scores, descriptive statistics of variables, correlation analyses, and LISREL analyses were processed. The results from this study indicated that mastery experience was a positive predictor of perceived collective efficacy and that there were nonsignificant relationships separately between school urbanicity and school minority enrollment with collective efficacy. Goddard, LoGerfo et al. concluded that

> perceived collective efficacy was a significant and consistent predictor of the proportion of 12th grade students who passed mandatory assessments of achievement in five content areas, even when controlling for SES, minority enrollment, urbanicity, school size, and prior achievement. (p. 419)

Goddard, Hoy et al. (2004) analyzed and synthesized the theoretical and empirical frameworks of research studies that involved perceived collective efficacy and its effect upon teachers' practices and student learning. This process resulted in the development of a conceptual model to explain the formation, influence, and change of perceived collective efficacy in the school setting. Goddard, Hoy et al. discussed collective efficacy in terms of its distinctions and clarifications, social cognitive theory, formation and change of beliefs, measurement issues, group goal attainment, teachers' sense of efficacy and influence, and future research considerations.

Collective Efficacy and Other School Variables

Selected researchers, previously mentioned in this literature review, have also examined the relationship between collective efficacy and other constructs in the school setting. These studies focused upon the relationship between collective efficacy and teacher efficacy (Goddard & Goddard, 2001); the relationship of teachers' collective efficacy beliefs and school climate, faculty trust and impact of a grant initiative (Tschannen-Moran, 2001); and the relationship of teachers' collective efficacy beliefs and school social composition (Goddard & Skrla, 2006).

Additional researchers have also conducted school studies in the past that focused upon collective efficacy with other school variables. These studies examined the antecedents of collective teacher efficacy (Ross, Hogaboam-Gray, & Gray, 2004); the relationship among teacher efficacy, collective teacher efficacy, and goal consensus/vision (Kurz & Knight, 2004); the relationship of collective efficacy, perceived teacher preparation quality, and perceived student teaching experiences (Knobloch & Whittington, 2002); and the relationship of collective efficacy beliefs with teachers perceptions of other school constituencies and teacher job satisfaction (Caprara, Barbaranelli, Borgogni, & Steca, (2003).

Summary of Collective Efficacy Findings

Research studies have shown, regardless of methodology, that "collective efficacy is a key variable in explaining student achievement even after controlling for socioeconomic status, previous achievement, and other demographic variables" (Hoy et al., 2006, p. 139) at the elementary and high school levels.

Faculty Trust in Students and Parents

Faculty trust is generally defined as "a willingness to be vulnerable to another party based on the confidence that that party is benevolent, reliable, competent, honest, and open" (Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 2003; Hoy et al., 2006a, p. 428). Faculty trust in students and parents in the school setting specifically means that "teachers can count on students to do their work and parents for their support . . . both students and parents are reliable" (Hoy et al., 2005b, p. 139). Studies support the idea that trust in parents and students be treated as a whole concept and not be separated (Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 2003; Goddard et al., 2001). This notion was supported by Bryk and Schneider (2002) who made the theoretical case that student-teacher trust in elementary schools operated mainly through teacher-parent trust. In many cases, the findings related to faculty trust in students and parents are incorporated in research study designs that explore the other possible referents of faculty trust. Therefore, a review of the studies featuring these referents is provided accordingly.

Facets of Trust and Referents of Faculty Trust

The concept of faculty trust evolved from the understanding, application, and adaptation of the extensive base of research and literature about trust. Hoy and Tschannen-Moran (1999) reviewed this literature to create a multi-faceted definition of faculty trust based on the previous work in sociology, economics, and organizational service. This definition incorporated three referent levels: trust in principal, trust in colleagues, and trust in clients (also meaning trust in students and parents). These three referents, with a general willingness to risk vulnerability concept and five facets of trust (benevolence, reliability, competence, honesty, and openness) were utilized to

successfully develop a valid and reliable instrument (Trust Scale, based upon previous scales developed by Hoy and Kupersmith, 1985) to measure faculty trust in schools.

This study served to conceptualize the facets and referents of faculty trust, relate faculty trust to students and parents, and offer valid and reliable measures of faculty trust in schools for further research application. It was through this elementary school study that faculty trust in students and parents were merged to form a single factor called trust in clients. Results indicated that faculty trust in clients was the strongest predictor of collaboration.

Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2000) again presented a thorough multidisciplinary review of the theoretical and empirical literature on trust that covered a period of four decades. Trust literature from psychology, sociology, philosophy, economics, organizational science, and education provided the background for a featured focus on the importance of trust in schools. This comprehensive review of trust resulted in a variety of definitions with common facets.

The following key elements were again identified as important aspects of trust: willingness to risk vulnerability, confidence, benevolence, reliability, competence, honesty, and openness. Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2000) also presented the basis and degrees of trust, measures of trust, dynamics of trust, and trust related to school processes and functions. Previous research indicated the important connection of trust with communication, collaboration, school climate, organizational citizenship, proliferation of rules, collective efficacy, achievement, and school effectiveness. This extensive examination and summary presented a case for the need to attend to the knowledge

available and conduct further studies of how trust impacts school improvement and effectiveness.

Faculty Trust in Students and Parents and Student Achievement

Few studies have been conducted to examine how trust impacts student learning. Goddard et al. (2001) investigated the relationship between faculty trust and student achievement at the elementary level in the urban setting. After controlling for variation among schools in student demographic characteristics, prior achievement, and school socioeconomic status, the analysis revealed that faculty trust in students and parents was a significant positive predictor of differences between schools in student mathematics and reading achievement. The relationship between teacher trust and student achievement indicated the need to build mutual empowering connections between families and school faculty member in all ways.

A second study conducted by Hoy (2002) provided an opportunity to understand the connection between trust and student learning at a different school level. After summarizing the complex and multi-faceted dimensions of trust, Hoy examined the relationship between faculty trust in students and parents and its impact on student mathematics achievement at the high school level. This study revealed that after controlling for SES, the correlation between faculty trust in students and parents and student achievement was significant. The impact of this finding led to numerous offerings of practical implications and recommendations to improve student achievement through this trust referent.

In a third achievement-related study, Bryk and Schneider (2002) combined quantitative and qualitative methodologies to conduct a 3-year longitudinal case study in

12 Chicago elementary schools that resulted in a book titled, *Trust in Schools: A Core Resource for Improvement.* Hierarchical linear modeling, survey data, achievement data, and in-depth interview accounts from teachers, principals, and parents were incorporated in the study design. Study findings indicated that relational trust (trust among teachers, students, and parents) was a key resource for school improvement as indicated by gains in student learning.

Faculty Trust and School Climate

Smith, Hoy, and Sweetland, (2001) shifted their focus to school climate to study the seven dimensions of school health and four aspects of faculty trust. Dimensions of institutional integrity, consideration, initiating structure, principal influence, resource support, morale, and academic emphasis were examined with faculty trust in students, colleagues, principal, and parents. As predicted, the degree of organizational health was related to the degree of faculty trust. Trust in students and trust in parents, thought to be separate at first, became combined as a unit, called trust in clients, as was the case in an earlier elementary school study (Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 1999).

Hoy, Smith, and Sweetland (2002) continued to work with school climate and faculty trust by developing a perspective and formal measure of high school climate and applying this measure to understand the relationship between school climate and faculty trust at that specific school level. Two instruments were utilized from previous studies to examine the openness and health concepts of school climate. The six dimensions of the Organizational Climate Description Questionnaire (OCDQ) (Halpin & Croft, 1963; Hoy & Tarter, 1997a), representing school openness, and the six dimensions of the Organizational Health Inventory (OHI) (Hoy & Tarter, 1997a), representing school

health, were reduced to create four general dimensions. These four dimensions: "environmental press (the relationship between the school and community); collegial leadership (the openness of the leader behavior of the principal); teacher professionalism (the openness of teacher-teacher interactions); and academic press (the relationship between the school and students)" (Hoy et al., 2002**,** p. 39) provided the basis for the development of the Organizational Climate Index (OCI).

The OCI, along with the Faculty Trust Survey (Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 1999), was then applied to explore the relationship between the dimensions of school climate and three referents of faculty trust (trust in colleagues, trust in the principal, and trust in clients – students and parents). OCI, Faculty Trust Survey, and demographic data from the state department of education, along with correlational analysis and multiple regression analysis were used to test and confirm the study hypotheses.

After controlling for SES, the analyses revealed that aspects of faculty trust were related to positive aspects of high school climate, that there was a strong, positive relationship between faculty trust in the principal and collegial leadership of the principal, and that the achievement press of the school was directly related to faculty trust in clients, meaning students and parents. In other words, trust and climate were found to be related at the high school level.

New Instrument Developed for the Elementary and Secondary School Levels

Hoy and Tschannen-Moran (2003) revisited the diverse body of literature regarding trust, identified the common threads that existed, determined facets of trust (benevolence, reliability, competence, honesty, and openness), categorized referents of faculty trust (students, colleagues, the principal, and parents), and proposed a definition

of trust ("an individual's or group's willingness to be vulnerable to another party based on the confidence that the latter party is benevolent, reliable, competent, honest, and open" (pp. 185-86). After formulating these conceptual notions, Hoy and Tschannen-Moran proceeded to develop instruments to measure faculty trust at the elementary and secondary school levels based on Hoy and Kupersmith's (1985) original work to measure faculty trust in colleagues and in principals (with the addition of items to address faculty trust in students and parents).

The development of the Omnibus Trust Scale was the result of a number of process steps that involved an elementary school Trust Scale phase, a secondary school Trust Scale phase, and an additional phase to create a single valid and reliable scale to measure faculty trust at both school levels. One interesting finding of the study revealed that the four original faculty trust referents were reduced to three referents when it was demonstrated that "for both elementary and secondary samples, faculty trust in students and parents converged . . . to form a single factor . . . called faculty trust in clients" (p. 204). Another important finding supported the assumption that trust is an important component in collaboration with parents on school decision making. According to Hoy and Tschannen-Moran (2003),

> It was faculty trust in clients that proved the strongest predictor of collaboration; in fact, it was the only dimension of trust that was independently related to parental collaboration in decision making. The greater the faculty trust in clients, the more influence teachers say parents have in making important decisions. (p. 204)

This study resulted in the development of a new trust measure that was short in length and crafted for use at either the elementary or secondary school levels for future research inquiries.

Faculty Trust and School Mindfulness

Hoy, Gage, and Tarter (2006) extended the concept of faculty trust to theoretically and empirically explore the notion of school mindfulness and its relationship to faculty trust at the middle school level. Hoy et al. (2006) defined mindful schools to

> have teachers and administrators who develop the ability to anticipate surprise by focusing on failure, avoiding simplification, and remaining sensitive to operations . . . when the unexpected happens, the organization rebounds with persistence, resilience, and expertise. (p. 240)

Data from the School Mindfulness Scale (M-Scale) (Hoy, Gage, & Tarter, 2004) and the Omnibus T-Scale (Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 2003) were collected and descriptive statistics, intercorrelations, and multiple regression analyses were calculated and performed accordingly.

The empirical results from this study supported the theoretical notion that trust and mindfulness were related and were likely necessary conditions for each in a reciprocal sense. Aspects of family trust indicated that faculty trust in the principal was a strong predictor of principal mindfulness and that faculty trust in colleagues was a strong predictor of faculty mindfulness. Results also showed while faculty trust in clients (students and parents) was strongly related to faculty mindfulness, it was moderately related to principal mindfulness. Hoy et al. (2006) concluded that, "Theoretically and empirically, trust is necessary for school mindfulness and school mindfulness reinforces a culture of trust" (p. 252).

Faculty Trust and Other School Variables

Wayne K. Hoy and his colleagues explored the concept of faculty trust with other variables besides the faculty trust in clients (students and parents) component highlighted in the literature review thus far. These studies included an analysis of the relationship

between four dimensions of school climate with faculty trust in the principal and faculty trust in teacher colleagues at the high school level (Tarter, Bliss, & Hoy, 1989); the relationship between trust, leadership roles of elementary principals and school effectiveness (Hoy, Tarter, & Witkoskie, 1992); the relationship between faculty trust in the principal, faculty trust in teachers and school effectiveness at the middle school level (Tarter, Sabo, & Hoy, 1995); the relationship between trust and school climate and the impact of faculty behavior and principal behavior on faculty trust in colleagues and faculty trust in the principal respectively at the middle school level (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 1998); and the impact of a statewide conflict management initiative at the secondary level (Tschannen-Moran, 2001).

Faculty Trust in Students and Parents and Other School Variables

Other researchers have also taken an interest in incorporating the concept of faculty trust in their empirical study designs. In one study, Smith and Birney (2005) investigated the dimensions of teacher protection and student bullying with aspects of faculty trust associated with clients, colleagues and the principal. In a different study, Van Houtte (2006) analyzed student and teacher data from 34 Flemish (Belgium) secondary schools to demonstrate a relationship between tracking and teachers' job satisfaction in technical/vocational schools and reveal the relevance of pupils study culture affecting teacher satisfaction by its influence on teacher trust in pupils at the teacher level and faculty trust in pupils at the school level.

Summary of Faculty Trust in Students and Parents Findings

Trust has been the focus of numerous studies for the past four decades. Hoy and his colleagues, as well as Bryk and Schneider (2002), have demonstrated through their

research that “faculty trust of students and parents is an important school property to enhance student achievement” (Hoy et al., 2006b, p. 141). Faculty trust has been a key variable in past studies and will continue to be incorporated in future research studies at all school levels for years to come.

CHAPTER III

DESIGN OF THE STUDY

Overview

The present study was developed in response to the need to conduct additional research about the construct of academic optimism and its corresponding properties: academic emphasis, collective efficacy, and faculty trust in students and parents (Hoy et al., 2006a, 2006b). Quantitative and qualitative methods were utilized to collect quantitative survey and qualitative interview data for these corresponding properties as a means to contribute to the research foundation and understanding of academic optimism. Previous research has demonstrated that "academic optimism made a significant contribution to student achievement after controlling for demographic variables and previous achievement" (Hoy et al., 2006a, p. 425). This study added to the body of research related to academic achievement, the key accountability challenge of state and federal student achievement mandates, including NCLB.

Design of Study

Quantitative and qualitative research methods were utilized in this study. The study design aligned with the notion expressed by Newman and Benz (1998) that, "Graphic depictions and narrative descriptions present research as a holistic endeavor;

that is, both qualitative and quantitative paradigms coexist in a unified real world of inquiry" (p. xii).

The quantitative segment of the study was "concerned with the assessment of attitudes, opinions, demographic information, conditions, and procedures . . . collected through a questionnaire survey, interviews, or observation . . ." and involved "calculating and interpreting descriptive statistics . . . to meaningfully describe many, many scores with a small number of indices" (Gay, 1992, p. 388, p. 218).

A survey design was utilized as a means to collect quantitative data through the administration of survey instruments to a sample population of teachers. Gay (1992) described that, "A survey is an attempt to collect data from members of a population in order to determine the current status of that population with respect to one or more variables" (p. 219). Newman and McNeil (1998) supported this intent through their claim that, "Survey research is generally used to gather information about some defined population by studying a selected sample from that population of interest" (Preface).

Survey instruments were administered to high school teachers in the present study to determine the current status of the properties of the construct academic optimism: academic emphasis, collective efficacy, and faculty trust in students and parents. Descriptive statistics were calculated from the survey data for each property accordingly.

The qualitative segment of the study

> is designed to be consistent with the assumptions of a qualitative paradigm. This study is defined as an inquiry process of understanding a social or human problem, based on building a complex, holistic picture, formed with words, reporting, detailed views of informants, and conducted in a natural setting. (Creswell, 1994, pp. 1-2)

This segment of the study incorporated a qualitative research process to investigate how academic optimism and its corresponding properties are expressed and displayed in two high school environments. According to Denzin and Lincoln (2005),

> The word qualitative implies an emphasis on the qualities of entities and on processes and meanings that are not experimentally examined or measured (if measured at all) in terms of quantity, amount, intensity, or frequency. Qualitative researchers stress the socially constructed nature of reality, the intimate relationship between the researcher and what is studied, and the situational constraints that shape inquiry. . . . They seek answers to questions that stress how social experience is created and given meaning. (p. 10)

Hoy et al. (2006a) demonstrated empirically that academic optimism is a construct that can help explain student achievement at the high school level. What remained to be studied was how this construct manifested itself in the school setting. Daiute and Fine (2003) proposed, "With qualitative methods we seek to learn, from participants, how they view the world, what a construct means or does not mean to them, where they situate the borders on a construct and what they believe constitutes that construct" (p. 69). It is through the qualitative research tradition of narrative inquiry that this present study accessed the rich descriptions of the processes and meanings that represent academic optimism as revealed by teacher and principal participants in the context of their natural school settings.

Narrative Inquiry

"Narrative inquiry is the study of experience, and experience, as John Dewey taught, is a matter of people in relation contextually and temporally" (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 189). Clandinin and Connelly suggested, based upon Dewey's theory of experience, that any inquiry is defined by a three-dimensional narrative inquiry space that relates to interaction (personal and social), continuity (past, present, and future), and

situation (place). It is in this narrative inquiry space that the researcher interacted with teacher and principal participants during interview sessions to understand the possible meanings of academic optimism across time spans and landscapes. Clandinin and Connelly described how, "This space enfolds us and those with whom we work. Narrative inquiry is a relational inquiry as we work in the field, move from field to field text, and from field text to research text" (p. 60).

Clandinin and Connelly (2000) identified the four directions represented in any inquiry process: inward (internal conditions, such as feelings, hopes, aesthetic reactions, and moral dispositions), outward (existential conditions, the environment), and backward and forward (temporality – past, present, and future). Interview sessions presented opportunities to navigate across these possible directions as they unfolded throughout the narrative inquiry process. Prenarrative stories, narrative stories in motion, and narrative story retelling were invited to surface and evolve during each interview conversation. The "personal practical knowledge" of each participant was acquired from their respective "personal knowledge landscape" as part of the inquiry process (Clandinin & Connelly, 1998, p. 150). Interview transcriptions and researcher notes comprised the field text that was analyzed according to the constant comparative method developed by Maykut and Morehouse (1994).

Josselson and Lieblich (2003) offered the following analogy of narrative inquiry to describe this research investigation process: "In that narrative research is a voyage of discovery – a discovery of meanings that both constitute the individual participant and are co-constructed in the research process – researchers cannot know at the outset what they will find" (p. 260). The voyage in this study provided an opportunity for all

passengers to learn more about a construct that may potentially help support high school student achievement and future researchers who choose to chart subsequent research voyages to explore the same, similar, or newly discovered achievement constructs. The details of this inquiry are described in the sections that follow.

Survey Instruments

Academic emphasis, collective efficacy, and faculty trust in students and parents were measured by the Academic Emphasis Subscale of the Organizational Health Inventory (Hoy & Miskel, 2005; Hoy & Tarter, 1997a; Hoy et al., 1991), the Short Form of the Collective Efficacy Scale (Goddard, 2002; Goddard et al., 2000, 2004), and the Faculty Trust in Students and Parents Subscale of the Omnibus Trust Scale (Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 2003), respectively. These instruments were utilized in previously published research studies. The survey instrument for each property is addressed further in the following sections.

Academic Emphasis

Academic emphasis "is the extent to which a school is driven by a quest for academic excellence – a press for academic achievement. High but achievable goals are set for students; the learning environment is orderly and serious; students are motivated to work hard; and students respect academic achievement" (Hoy & Miskel, 2005; Hoy et al., 1991; Hoy et al., 2006a, p. 427). The Academic Emphasis Subscale of the Organizational Health Inventory (Hoy & Miskel, 2005; Hoy & Tarter, 1997a; Hoy et al., 1991) was used to measure the presence of academic emphasis in each high school. Items from this survey included: "Teachers in this school believe that their students have the ability to achieve academically," "The learning environment is orderly and serious,"

and “The school sets high standards for academic performance” (Hoy et al., 1991, pp. 186-187).

The subscale consisted of eight survey items scored on a 4-point Likert scale ranging from rarely occurs (rated as 1) to very frequently occurs (rated as 4). School scores were computed and standardized based upon existing normative data available. A high score of 700 would indicate that the school has a higher level of academic emphasis than 97% of the schools in the sample (www.coe.ohio-state.edu/whoy/ instruments 6.htm).

The development of the Organizational Health Inventory involved the generation of items by researchers based upon Parsons’ (1967) theoretical framework of the technical, managerial, and institutional levels of an organization; a pilot test of the items in 72 secondary schools; a series of exploratory factor analyses of the pilot data that resulted in the specification of seven dimensions of organizational health; a test of the pilot study instrument with 78 secondary schools; a factor analysis of the test data which indicated the stability of the factor structure of the instrument and the construct validity of the seven school health dimensions; and a second-order factor analysis of the subtest correlations that identified a factor called school health (Hoy et al., 1991).

The reliability scores of the Organizational Health Inventory subtests were high. Specifically, the alpha coefficient for academic emphasis was .93 (Hoy et al., 1991). Hoy et al. (2006a) reconfirmed the reliability of the scale in their high school study, with an alpha coefficient of .83.

Collective Efficacy

Collective efficacy "is the judgment of teachers that the faculty as a whole can organize and execute the actions required to have positive effects on students" (Goddard, 2002; Goddard et al., 2000, 2004; Hoy et al., 2006a, p. 434). The Short Form of the Collective Efficacy Scale (Goddard, 2002; Goddard et al., 2000, 2004) was used to measure the collective efficacy of teachers in each high school. Items from the survey included: "Teachers in this school are able to get through to the most difficult students," "Teachers in this school believe that every child can learn," and "These students come to school ready to learn" (Goddard, 2002, p. 107).

This survey scale consisted of 12 items scored on a 6-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree (rated as 1) to strongly agree (rated as 6). School scores were computed and standardized based upon existing normative data available. A high score of 700 would indicate that the school has a higher level of collective efficacy than 97% of the schools in the sample (www.coe.ohio-state.edu/whoy/instruments_6.htm).

The Collective Efficacy Scale (Short Form) (Goddard, 2002) was developed from the original 21-item Collective Efficacy Scale (Goddard et al., 2000). The steps to create the original scale included: the development of items derived from Gibson and Dembo's (1984) previous Teacher Efficacy Scale; a review of the items by a panel of three experts from The Ohio State University; a field test of the revised survey with six teachers; a pilot study of teachers from 70 schools representing five states (one half with high-conflict reputations among faculty staff and the other half with low-conflict reputations among faculty staff as determined by educators, administrators, and professors of education), that included the administration of additional sense of powerlessness

(Zielinski & Hoy, 1998), individual teacher efficacy (Bandura, 2000), and teacher trust (Hoy & Kupersmith, 1985; Hoy & Sabo, 1998) instruments; a factor analysis of the pilot study data (that included a search one-factor analysis and an examination of the relationship between collective teacher efficacy with conflict, sense of powerlessness, trust in colleagues and individual efficacy to check for criterion validity); a test of the collective teacher efficacy measure with teachers from 47 elementary schools; an aggregation of the test response data to the school level and submission of the data to a factor analysis; a construction of a two-factor solution that rendered additional evidence that collective efficacy was a common unobserved factor identified by the revised scale; and an additional test of criterion-related validity tests that examined personal teaching efficacy (Hoy & Woolfolk, 1993), faculty trust in colleagues (Hoy & Kupersmith, 1985), and environmental press (Hoy & Sabo, 1998). The testing step also indicated that the Collective Efficacy Scale had high internal reliability, with an alpha coefficient of .96.

The development of the Collective Efficacy Scale (Short Version) (Goddard, 2002) was created through a separate process that included: an administration of the original 21-item Collective Efficacy Scale to teachers from 47 schools; an aggregation of the survey response data to the school level and submission of the data to a principal axis factor analysis; a selection of 12 items based on factor scores and theoretical balance; another principal axis factor analysis conducted on the 12 items (that included the measurement of the internal consistency of scores from the scales with Cronbach's alpha); a test of criterion-related validity of the relationship of the new version of the Collective Efficacy Scale to the original 21-item scale conducted with a Pearson product-moment correlation; and a predictive validity test that utilized hierarchical linear

modeling with student demographic and achievement data along with short version scores. Goddard reported that, "Scores from the 12-item scale and the 21-item scale were highly correlated (r = .983), suggesting that little change resulted from the omission of almost 43% of the items (from 21 to 12 items)" (p.107). The new Collective Efficacy Scale (Short Version) also rendered high internal reliability, with an alpha coefficient of .94. Hoy et al. (2006a) reconfirmed the reliability of the measure in their high school study, with an alpha coefficient of .91.

Faculty Trust in Students and Parents

Faculty trust is "a willingness to be vulnerable to another party based on the confidence that that party is benevolent, reliable, competent, honest, and open" (Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 2003; Hoy et al., 2006a, p. 428). The Faculty Trust in Students and Parents Subscale of the Omnibus Trust Scale (Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 2003) was used to measure faculty trust in students and parents. Items from this survey included: "Teachers here believe students are competent learners," "Teachers can believe what parents tell them," and "Teachers in this school trust their students" (Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 2003, pp. 202-203).

This subscale consisted of 10 survey items scored on a 6-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree (rated as 1) to strongly agree (rated as 6). School scores were computed and standardized based upon existing normative data available. A high score of 700 would indicate that the school has a higher level of faculty trust in students and parents than 97% of the schools in the sample (www.coe.ohio-state.edu/whoy/instruments_6.htm).

The Omnibus T-Scale was created after the initial development of the elementary and the secondary Trust Scales. When the elementary scale was developed, item content validity was checked by a panel of experts (professors from the College of Education and the Fisher Business School at The Ohio State University); face validity was established through a field test with experienced teachers; pilot test items were submitted to a factor analysis that indicated the emergence of three, instead of four, strong factors (also supported by a scree test and conceptual review); a content analysis was performed to make certain that all five facets of trust were represented; a factor analysis of a more comprehensive sample of 50 elementary schools demonstrated a stable factor structure; and an additional multiple regression analysis of parental collaboration and the three dimensions of faculty trust explained "the degree of parental collaboration in school decision making" and supported the "predictive validity of the items that measure trust" (Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 2003, p. 197).

The secondary scale development process involved a sample of 97 high schools with a 31-item scale (which included one item added and four items eliminated from the previous elementary scale). A factor analysis was performed that indicated similar results to the elementary factor analysis and demonstrated a stable factor structure.

A final process was initiated to develop a single scale for use at both the elementary and secondary levels. A comparison on the factor loading of the items for the elementary and secondary samples resulted in the development of a 26-item scale, the Omnibus Trust Scale, that measured the five facets of trust and three aspects of faculty trust.

In terms of reliability of the Omnibus Trust Scale, Hoy and Tschannen-Moran (2003) reported that, "The alpha coefficient of reliability were high in both samples – trust in principal (.98), trust in colleagues (.93), and trust in clients (.94). Moreover, the omnibus subscales correlated very highly with the longer subscale versions for both samples – none were lower than .96" (p. 203). Hoy et al. (2006a) reconfirmed the reliability of the scale in their high school study, with an alpha coefficient of .94.

Interview Resources

Seidman (1998) recommended that, "The primary way a researcher can investigate an educational organization, institution, or process is through the experience of the individual people, the 'others' who make up the organization or carry out the process" (p. 4). Therefore, during the second segment of this study, the researcher re-entered the high school settings and conducted individual, semi-structured interviews with five teacher volunteers and the principal in each building. Daiute and Fine (2003) supported the notion that, "The search for meaning is implicitly dependent upon collecting multiple perspectives" (p. 67). Fontana and Frey (2005) proposed that "interviewing is one of the most powerful ways in which we try to understand our fellow humans" (p. 699). Polkinghorne (1988) further claimed, "For a researcher, the basic source of evidence about the narratives is the interview" (p. 163).

Structured questions (determined prior to the interview and read by the researcher) and open-ended questions (allowing respondents to clarify responses with details in many possible ways) comprised a semi-structured interview format. Gay (1992) suggested that, "most interviews use a semi-structured approach involving the asking of structured questions followed by clarifying unstructured or open-ended

questions. The unstructured questions facilitate explanation and understanding of the responses to the structured questions" (p.232). Newman and Benz (1998) utilized a comparable term "partially structured interview" and the same use of "open-ended questions and probes to explore more in-depth reasons for answers" (p. 197).

Interview questions developed from the original survey questions of the Academic Emphasis Subscale of the Organizational Health Inventory for the Secondary Level (Hoy & Miskel, 2005; Hoy & Tarter, 1997a; Hoy et al., 1991); the Short Form of the Collective Efficacy Scale (Goddard, 2002; Goddard et al., 2000, 2004); the Faculty Trust in Students and Parents Subscale of the Omnibus Trust Scale (Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 2003) were the predetermined questions utilized during the interview sessions. These questions are listed in Table I.

Table I

Teacher and Principal Interview Questions

Academic Emphasis

Q 1 In what ways do students achieve the goals of this school?

Q 2 What are examples of high standards for academic performance in this school?

Q 3 What are examples of ways that teachers in this school believe that their students have the ability to achieve academically?

Q4 In what ways is the learning environment orderly and serious in this school?

Q5 In what ways is academic achievement recognized in this school?

Collective Efficacy

Q 6 In what ways do the teachers in this school believe that they can help all students achieve academically?

Q 7 In what ways do teachers in this school get through to the most difficult students?

Table I (continued) Teacher and Principal Interview Questions

Q 8 In what ways are teachers in this school confident that they will be able to motivate their students?
Q 9 In what ways do the opportunities in this community help ensure that the students in this school will learn?
Q 10 In what ways do the teachers in this school acknowledge that student learning is related to worries about their safety?
Q 11 In what ways do the teachers in this school acknowledge that drug and alcohol abuse in the community make learning difficult for students in this school?
Faculty Trust in Students and Parents
Q 12 In what ways do the teachers in this school trust their students?
Q 13 In what ways do the teachers in this school trust their students' parents?
Q 14 In what ways can the students in this school be counted on to do their work?
Q 15 In what ways can the teachers in this school count on parental support?

Each interview was audio taped and transcribed and served as field notes for later analysis, along with spontaneous notations that were recorded by the researcher during the interview sessions. Clandinin and Connelly (2000) expressed that, "Tape recorders are important in this version of narrative inquiry because the stories are the target; we need to get them right; and if linguistic analysis can tell us about story construction, then getting the words right by using the tape recorder is important" (pp. 77-78). The stories, responses, and conversations recorded in the interview field notes provided the basis for analysis and research text development.

Participants

All full-time certified or licensed teachers, employed by the school district and assigned to one of the two identified public high schools selected for the study, were invited to complete the teacher surveys at a regularly scheduled staff meeting as part of the first segment of the study. During the same meeting, survey participants were also invited to participate in the individual interview segment of the study. Five teachers were randomly selected from the generated list of volunteers to participate in semi-structured interview sessions scheduled at a time and place convenient for each teacher participant. The building principal from both high schools was also invited to participate in an individual interview session.

Sampling

For the first segment of the study, all full-time certified or licensed teachers, employed by the school district and assigned to one of the two identified urban high schools located in a Midwestern state, were eligible to participate and voluntarily complete teacher surveys administered at a regularly scheduled staff meeting.

One high school was a high-performing school and the other was a lower-performing high school. The high-performing school met AYP requirements and 100% of the state's achievement indicators for the 2005-06 school year (the data set available at the time this participating school was selected). The lower-performing high school did not meet AYP requirements and met 25% of the state's achievement indicators for the 2005-06 school year (the data set available at the time this participating school was selected).

Each school had a different demographic profile. Figures representing total enrollment, race, fee and/or reduced lunch, students with disabilities, and student achievement were different for each school. The high-performing school had 20% more students enrolled than the lower-performing school. The difference in the percentage of African American students between the high- and the lower-performing school was 42.7%. In other words, the lower-performing school had about four times the percentage of African American students than the high-performing school. The difference in the percentage of economically disadvantaged students between the high- and lower-performing school was 27.8%. This means the lower-performing school had approximately 1.8 times the percentage of economically disadvantaged students than the high-performing school. The difference in the percentage of students with disabilities between the high- and lower-performing school was 5.7%. This means that the lower-performing school had about 1.3 times the percentage of students with disabilities than the high-performing school.

For the second segment of the study, any teacher from the high- and lower-performing schools who completed a teacher survey was eligible and invited to participate in an individual semi-structured interview. Five teachers from each school were randomly selected from the volunteer interview list to participate in an interview. The building principal of both schools was also invited to participate in an individual interview session.

Procedure

A research proposal request was submitted to an identified school district in a Midwestern state in compliance with that district's research protocol requirement. This

proposal included an abstract of the study, procedural details, corresponding research documents, and designated district forms.

Upon district approval of the research proposal, the principal of each building was contacted to set up a time to administer survey instruments to teachers at a regularly scheduled staff meeting to initiate the first data collection portion of the study.

Data Collection

Survey data and interview data were the two major forms of data collected during the course of the study. Full-time certified or licensed teachers, employed by the district and assigned to the two identified schools, were administered the following three survey instruments, namely the Academic Emphasis Subscale of the Organizational Health Inventory (Hoy & Miskel, 2005; Hoy & Tarter, 1997a; Hoy et al., 1991), the Short Form of the Collective Efficacy Scale (Goddard 2002; Goddard et al., 2000, 2004), and the Faculty Trust in Students and Parents Subscale of the Omnibus Trust Scale (Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 2003). The survey instruments measured teacher levels of academic emphasis, collective efficacy, and faculty trust in students and parents in each school respectively.

The surveys were administered by a trained researcher. Participation in the survey was voluntary and anonymous. Data were coded to protect the identity of each school building and retained by the researcher in a secured place.

At the same staff meeting where the surveys were administered, survey participants were invited to participate in the next phase of the study. Five teachers from each school were randomly selected from the generated volunteer list to participate in semi-structured interviews that incorporated structured and open-ended questions based

upon the valid and reliable survey instruments previously cited. The interviews were scheduled at a time and place convenient for each participant. Building principals were also invited to participate in an interview session.

Interview participants completed informed consent forms and were guaranteed anonymity and confidentiality. Narrative inquiry guided the qualitative interview segment of the study. Detail-oriented, elaboration, and clarification probes (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994) were incorporated into the interview inquiry when and where appropriate and necessary. Each interview was audio taped, transcribed, and analyzed according to the constant comparative method (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994). All interview data were coded to protect the identity of each participant and retained by the researcher in a secured place. Researcher journal notations of insights, understandings, ideas, questions, thoughts, concerns and decisions, (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994) were also maintained and secured throughout the research process.

Ethics

"Ethics has to do with how one treats those individuals with whom one interacts and is involved and how the relationships formed may depart from some conception of an ideal" (Smith, 1990, p. 260). Fundamental ethical principles, values, ideals, and practices were incorporated and adhered to during the entire research process. Ethical values (including honesty, fairness, respect for persons, and beneficence) and ethical issues, standards, and norms (including privacy, avoidance of deception, confidentiality, and informed consent) were reflected throughout all phases of the study (Soltis, 1990).

Approval was obtained from the university's Institutional Review Board (IRB) prior to the commencement of the study. The ethical standards of the IRB were followed throughout the study.

All participants in the study participated on a voluntary basis, completed informed consent forms, had the option to withdraw from the study at any time, and were protected from any harm they may have ensued from their involvement. The names of the participants, schools, and district were held confidential and not reported in any manner. Interview participant codes were assigned for privacy and anonymity purposes. The codes were kept by the researcher in a secured location.

Smith (1990) advised researchers that, "At the most microlevel, every decision and every act in a qualitative research project can be placed against one's ethical standards" (p. 271). Therefore, all research decisions and actions were also guided by ethical standards, procedures, and considerations. Survey and interview sessions were conducted in a respectful, dignified, and professional manner. Data were recorded, transcribed, analyzed, and reported to align with the identified aims of the study. Data were obtained and processed accurately. All data were coded and kept by the researcher in a secured location.

All aspects of the study and research process were guarded against deceptive intent and practice. Research concerns, tensions, or dilemmas were processed with the advisement of the dissertation committee representatives and the IRB accordingly.

Data Analysis

"Quantitative research is based on observations that are converted into discrete units that can be compared to other units by using statistical analysis" (Maykut &

Morehouse, 1994, p. 2). Descriptive statistics were calculated from the teacher surveys to produce school aggregates for academic emphasis, collective efficacy , and faculty trust in students and parents.

First, each survey item for each respondent was scored with the appropriate number (reversing scores for designated survey items) for each separate survey. Next, the average school score was calculated for each item. School scores for academic emphasis, faculty trust in students and teachers, and collective efficacy were determined by adding the average item scores for each survey and dividing each separate school total by 8, 10, and 12 (representing the total items numbers for each survey instrument) respectively. School scores were converted to standardized scores for each survey by using the guidelines and normative data posted on the research instrument website: http://www.coe.ohio-state.edu/whoy/instruments_6.htm.

"Qualitative research, on the other hand, generally examines people's words and actions in narrative or descriptive ways more closely representing the situation as experienced by the participants" (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994, p. 2). The constant comparative method adapted and summarized by Maykut and Morehouse, based upon the original work of Glaser and Strauss (1967) and the expanded work of Lincoln and Guba (1985), was used to analyze interview and researcher journal data. Maykut and Morehouse proposed that as qualitative researchers,

> We are interested in developing propositions: statements of fact inductively derived from a rigorous and systematic analysis of data. In arriving at these propositions, we want to stay close to the research participants' feelings, thoughts and actions as they broadly relate to our focus of inquiry. (p. 126)

The constant comparative method is an inductive approach that guided the data analysis process of the research study. This method involved performing the following research tasks:

(a) preparing the data for analysis (transcribing, photocopying, and labeling all data);

(b) unitizing (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) the data, (identifying smaller units of meaning on photocopied data sheets, cutting the research data sheets into units of meaning sections, and posting the units of meaning on blank cards);

(c) discovery processing (identifying and recording concepts, phrases, topics, patterns, and themes from all data sources on discovery charts);

(d) inductive category coding (creating a provisional coding category and placing unitized data cards in that appropriate provisional category according to look/feel alike criteria (Lincoln & Guba, 1985);

(e) creating a rule of inclusion for additional data cards (composing a propositional statement of fact based on the data cards);

(f) refining the categories (matching all data cards to a substantive category or miscellaneous pile and coding data cards with respective category labels);

(g) exploring relationships and patterns across categories (examining initial proposition statements and connecting these statements to form outcome propositions); and

(h) rethinking the data (writing narrative descriptions of newly discovered insights and understanding).

The constant comparative method also recommended the use of an external peer debriefer (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994) to verify the analysis procedures. An external PhD peer debriefer was secured to audit the data coding system and data analysis to confirm the process and findings.

Trustworthiness

"The question of trustworthiness essentially asks: To what extent can we place confidence in the outcomes of the study?" (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994, p. 145). Steps were taken to ensure the confidence in the outcomes of the study in the following ways:

(a) Research aims guided all aspects of the design, implementation, analysis and narration of the study.

(b) Concepts of "credibility," "transferability," "dependability," and "confirmability" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) were addressed throughout the research process.

(c) Questions incorporated into the semi-structured interview were developed from existing valid and reliable instruments and were consistent with the purpose of the research study (Newman & Benz, 1998).

(d) An external PhD peer debriefer (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994) audited the data coding system and data analysis to confirm the process and findings.

(e) Detailed thick description was represented to add transferability value to the study (Creswell, 1998).

(f) Documentation of the research process was established by "building an audit trail" (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994) and maintained throughout the study by

"leaving an audit trail" (Newman & Benz, 1998) so that replication of the study would be possible and interpretation of the data would be consistent.

Maykut and Morehouse (1994) also suggested that, "A detailed description of the research process and outcomes provides readers with a basis for judging the credibility of a study" (p. 145). With this notion in mind, a detailed description of the following components was included in the study: "a) the purpose of the study; b) how participants and/or settings became part of the sample; c) the specific people and/or settings studied; d) the data collection and analysis procedures used, and e) the findings or outcomes" (p. 145).

A final indicator of trustworthiness will be evident from the potential future use of the study by readers, researchers and practitioners to act upon study findings based upon its compelling nature and "truth value" (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994; Mischler, 1990).

Researcher Bias

"We believe that one always has preexpectations and that it is important for researchers to be aware of what biases they have. Only through awareness can one control for bias in the data-collection stage" (Newman & Benz, 1998, p. 24).

> Thus the qualitative researcher's perspective is perhaps a paradoxical one: it is to be acutely tuned-in to the experiences and meaning systems of others – to indwell – and at the same time to be aware of how one's own biases and preconceptions may be influencing what one is trying to understand. (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994, p. 123)

With these processing concerns in mind, the researcher in this study was constantly vigilant not to intentionally bring personal assumptions and preconceptions into any aspect of the research process.

The researcher brought to this study over 30 years of combined experience in public and private schools. During this span of time, the researcher provided services to almost 40 schools across two state counties in roles ranging from classroom teacher to CEO of a PreK through grade 12 private school campus. The researcher also served as an elected official in her local community for the past 5 years. Although the researcher possessed previous experiences, knowledge, and skills, constant care and consideration were taken not to overtly impose personal agendas or alter the research process in any self-fulfilling manner to compromise the integrity this study.

The aims of the research study consistently focused and guided the cognitive and behavioral functioning of the researcher. This intention was reinforced by incorporating an external PhD peer debriefer (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994) to audit the data coding system and data analysis to confirm the process and findings. The peer debriefer met with the researcher on a regular basis prior to the collection of interview data, during the analysis of the interview data, and during the reporting of the study findings. The debriefer reviewed the unitized interview data, the provisional categories, the secondary level themes, and the written documentation of the conclusions that were drawn from the data analysis process. Questions, comments, and suggestions were addressed and incorporated into the appropriate stages of the data collection, analysis, and reporting process.

This external review component served to prevent and identify possible procedural and content concerns associated with researcher bias. All possible efforts and care were taken not to "privilege any ways of looking at the world" (Fontana & Frey, 2005, p. 697) while simultaneously demonstrating "ways to stay open to complexities,

contradictions, and enigmas" (Clandinin & Rosiek, 2007, p. 68) that could evolve throughout the research process.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

Overview

The Academic Emphasis Subscale of the Organizational Health Inventory (Hoy & Miskel, 2005; Hoy & Tarter, 1997a; Hoy et al., 1991), the Short Form of the Collective Efficacy Scale (Goddard, 2002; Goddard et al., 2000, 2004), and the Faculty Trust in Students and Parents Subscale of the Omnibus Trust Scale (Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 2003) were administered to teachers from a high- and lower-performing high school during a regularly scheduled staff meeting to measure the corresponding properties of academic optimism (academic emphasis, collective efficacy, and faculty trust in students and parents) represented in their schools. Five full-time, certified/licensed teachers from each building were then randomly selected from a volunteer pool to participate in subsequent individual semi-structured interviews that incorporated structured and open-ended questions developed from the valid and reliable survey instruments previously noted. The lead principal from each building also participated in an individual interview session and responded to the same set of questions. This chapter summarizes the results of the survey and interview research processes.

Survey Results

Fifty-eight teachers (85% of eligible participants) and 53 teachers (74% of eligible participants) from the high- and lower-performing high schools respectively completed a 30-item Likert scale survey designed to measure levels of academic emphasis, collective efficacy, and faculty trust in students and parents. Teacher response data were entered into a database, reversed as necessary, computed, and standardized according to recommended normative data procedures posted on www.coe.ohio-state.edu/whoy/instruments_6.htm. The levels of academic emphasis, collective efficacy, and faculty trust in students and parents and the respective mean scores for each building are reported in Table II.

Table II

Levels of Academic Emphasis (AE), Collective Efficacy (CE), and Faculty Trust in Students and Parents (FT) and Their Corresponding Statistics in a High- and Lower-Performing High School

	AE Level/Mean	CE Level/Mean	FT Level/Mean
High-performing	503/21	466/46	513/36
Lower-performing	515/21	443/45	490/34

The standardized scores for academic emphasis, collective efficacy, and faculty trust in students and parents were compared to the normative sample scores from the references found at www.coe.ohio-state.edu/whoy/instruments_6.htm. The range of standardized scores for these three properties are as follows:

- If the score is 200, it is lower than 99% of the schools.

- If the score is 300, it is lower than 97% of the schools.
- If the score is 400, it is lower than 84% of the schools.
- If the score is 500, it is average.
- If the score is 600, it is higher than 84% of the schools.
- If the score is 700, it is higher than 97% of the schools.

The standardized scores of both schools fell in the average range within one standard deviation of the mean. The high-performing school did have higher collective efficacy and faculty trust scores than the lower-performing school, although they still fell within a common range. The lower-performing school had a higher level of academic emphasis (514) than the high-performing school (503).

A Cronbach Alpha calculation for internal consistency of the collapsed data from both buildings indicated a reliability statistic of .827 for academic emphasis, .765 for collective efficacy, and .876 for faculty trust. These statistics indicated that the conditions between the items were good and that the items related well to one another.

The standard deviation calculations for the collapsed data from both buildings were 3.88 for academic emphasis, 7.52 for collective efficacy, and 7.50 for faculty trust in students and parents.

A preliminary review of the results revealed that there were standardized score differences between the high- and lower-performing schools. An inquiry into the following interview data provided additional information about the two schools.

Interview Results

Twelve subjects (five teachers and one principal from each building) participated in an individual audio-taped semi-structured interview at a time and place most

convenient for them. Seven female and five male subjects responded to 15 open-ended questions developed from the valid and reliable survey instruments that measured the three properties of academic optimism. The interview responses were audio-taped, transcribed, and analyzed according to the constant comparative method (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994). This data analysis method involved preparing the data for analysis, unitizing the data, discovery processing, inductive category coding, creating rules of inclusion, refining categories, exploring relationships and patterns across categories, and rethinking the data. (This method and its corresponding steps of analysis were presented in Chapter III.) An external PhD peer debriefer also reviewed the audit trail of this analysis and corresponding research findings. As stated in Chapter III, the debriefer reviewed the unitized interview data, the provisional categories that were developed, the secondary level themes that evolved, and the written documentation of the study results. The interactive exchange of questions, comments, and suggestions were processed on a regular basis and incorporated accordingly.

Academic Emphasis

Academic emphasis "is the extent to which a school is driven by a quest for academic excellence - a press for academic achievement. High but achievable academic goals are set for students; the learning environment is orderly and serious; students are motivated to work hard; and students respect academic achievement" (Hoy & Miskel, 2005; Hoy et al., 1991; Hoy et al., 2006a, p. 427). Interview questions one through five represented this property of academic optimism (Table I). These five questions served to generate responses regarding ways that students achieve the goals of the school, examples of high standards of academic performance, teacher beliefs about student

ability to achieve, the orderliness and seriousness of the learning environment, and academic achievement recognition. The responses for each question were separately transcribed, unitized, categorized according to rules of inclusion, and coded for reference purposes. The results of these process steps can be found in Appendix B, with a summary list of codes referenced in Appendix A.

Academic Emphasis: Vertical Analysis of Respondent Percentages

The responses for each question were individually analyzed in a vertical fashion according to each provisional category and corresponding rule of inclusion. A percentage total of respondents was calculated for each provisional category. Respondent percentages for the provisional categories of academic emphasis ranged from 8% to 92%. The results for respondent percentages of 50% and higher are reported in the following vertical analysis section.

The vertical analysis process revealed that 92% of the respondents expressed how publications of student accomplishments (PB) printed, posted, and distributed throughout the school community were ways that academic achievement was recognized in their schools. One respondent explained this practice in the following manner:

> Then we publish their names in the school newspaper and you know, it's distributed throughout the community. So if they get the grades, their names are pretty much spread out . . . they are recognized.

Seventy-five percent of the respondents expressed how award recognition events (AEV) were scheduled throughout the school year to celebrate student academic achievement. These celebrations were described as follows:

> I know they have an academic awards banquet once a semester. They give academic letters and pins. Parents are invited. It's in the evening.

> We have a special recognition assembly at the end of the year for the seniors. It takes about 3 hours to do, but every single senior is recognized.

The emphasis on recognizing academic achievement was also demonstrated by 75% of the respondents who revealed that school-wide reward events (SWR), including special activities, programs, and trips was a means for schools to recognize students who attain academic goals. One respondent summarized the opportunities in the following quote:

> All of those, who in any given 9-week period, who are on the Honor Roll, Merit Roll, or who have 100% attendance, attend an enrichment assembly which we contract for and the faculty pays for. And those range from special musical performances to Chinese ballet. Just all kinds of different activities that are enrichment for that period and they get a letter saying that they're invited.

School operational norms (SSB), which include building plans, procedures, and protocols were suggested by 75% of the respondents as a way to direct, monitor, and modify student behavior. Evidence of this notion was reflected in the following interview statements:

> The learning environment is orderly, I believe, because the principals are very visible in the hallways.

> Well this year, we have a nice change with the dress code being enforced. The school district firmed up the dress code and made it mandatory in every single building, instead of each building adopting its own code. And the administrators are actually supporting that. I think it sets a serious tone. It lets the students know what's acceptable, what is not. Everyone's enforcing it. That sets a cohesive tone.

It was expressed by 58% of the participants that students are recognized for their achievement by being admitted into honorary programs and organizations (APO) for meeting academic criteria. The following quote described such a program:

> Certainly we have Honor Society. It's quite active and that is all based on achievement and service and character. That group of children is always very highly recognized.

Fifty-eight percent of the respondents shared how individual teachers have their own strategies and awards (TRA) as a way to recognize academic achievement in their respective classrooms during the school year. Two interview participants offered the following quotes:

> Individually, teachers have programs within their classes that recognize academic achievement.
>
> Within the classrooms I see teachers using different award strategies or different achievement strategies. You know, within their own small micro-classroom environment, more so than on a grand scale.

Academic Emphasis: Horizontal Analysis of Respondent Percentages

The next step of interview data analysis involved reviewing the provisional categories and corresponding rules of inclusion on a horizontal level to identify provisional categories that were repeated across two or more of the five interview questions about academic emphasis. Redundancy of respondents was eliminated by cross-referencing the respondent lists of provisional categories that were repeated across any of the five questions. This process revealed that student accomplishments (AC) was collectively expressed across three questions by all of the respondents (100%) as a way to describe student achievement of goals. These thoughts were represented in the following quotes:

> Students achieve the goals of this school in a variety of ways, both academically and socially. Regarding academically, we have one of the highest set of scores on the state mandated achievement test for this district.
>
> . . . all of our students that were alternatively assessed came out beyond proficient academically. They were advanced and accelerated…They're all in upper levels.
>
> Our library sees over 3,000 students a month. . . . There are a lot of research projects and computer projects…All seniors are supposed to finish a career passport which brings together all their past experiences in high school, their awards, and their achievements.

Ninety-two percent of the respondents expressed collectively, across three interview questions, how schools provide specific programs and initiatives (SPIA) to improve the academic achievement levels of students. Respondents offered the following examples:

> We try to make sure the students are best prepared for college. There are honors classes. There are college prep classes.
>
> Regarding our vocational programs, we have a lot of successful vocational programs in which our students are actually able to move on directly into careers.
>
> We started adding pluses and minuses in the actual grade that they get for the nine weeks . . . I think that it supposedly makes them work a little harder the next grading period and have a difference in how they perform. But the simple plus and minus system in the final grades seem to make some difference lately.
>
> Over the last couple of years we rigidly switched to 93 to 100 rather than 90 to 100 being a solid A.

Four of the five questions contained responses by the participants (75%) that collectively suggested that instructional strategies and assessment techniques of teachers (TPA) impact student learning and student academic performance. These views were summarized as follows:

> In and out of all the core subject areas, involving responses to questions that require an extended response or a short answer response, we're constantly going with samples of our exercises, whether on our actual tests in a subject matter or into the 9-week assessment that the district provides. Those things all seem to gear toward the state mandated style of testing.
>
> We have high standards at our school for academic performance because our teachers are giving students higher level questions. We are using a 6-point rubric that makes them bright and think more extensively. Probably, it's a higher level of thinking.

Sixty-seven percent of the respondents commented across three questions on the presence of academic learning expectations and standards (EXA) evident in the school

culture as a way to help drive student academic achievement. The following statements reflected these sentiments:

> Students achieve the goals of this school through expectations and through missions and visions of the teachers and the staff. . . . We also put benchmarks in place saying we want them to achieve certain goals by January, and then by March, and then by May. So, the students know what the goals are of the school because they're posted inside the classrooms. We use the PA morning announcements to announce what we want from the students.

> Actually looking at the classes and the range of students from the low level to the high level, the higher expectations are that the students rise up to meet whatever the challenge is.

This learning expectations and standards percentage also related to the percentage of respondents (42%) who recognized that a complementary provisional category titled, Philosophy/Academic (PHA), revealed how values and beliefs about student achievement are displayed in the thoughts and actions of teachers and principals in the school setting. Such philosophical beliefs were demonstrated in the following examples:

> We all understand that there has to be learning taking place regardless of the time that it's taking place. There has to be learning taking place.

> They will find that the academic rigor in this building does show that we think that our students will succeed, are capable of doing so, and thus, we challenge them accordingly.

After combining the percentage of respondents recognizing academic expectations and standards (EXA) with the percentage recognizing philosophy of academic achievement (PHA), and eliminating respondent redundancy, a higher respondent percentage emerged (83%).

Fifty percent of interview respondents identified teachers, staff, and parents as external forces that influence student academic achievement (IFA) through their

involvement, guidance and support. This opinion was emphasized in the following quotes:

> Students achieve by being guided by their teachers and staff here to stay on track and stay on the right path. We have parental involvement. They can help the students achieve the goals of this school.
>
> When the strong family unit isn't there, then it's important that the school tries to step in and be that secondary family.
>
> I would say that students tend to with prodding, work to achieve their goals.

A complete summary of the horizontal analysis of provisional categories repeated across the interview questions that represented academic emphasis and the collapsed corresponding respondent percentages is documented in Table III.

Table III

Horizontal Analysis of Repeated Academic Emphasis Provisional Categories With Corresponding Collapsed Respondent Percentages

Category	Code	Respondent Percentage
Accomplishments	AC	100%
School Programs and Initiatives/Academic	SPIA	92%
Teacher Practices/Academic	TPA	75%
Expectations/Academic	EXA	67%
External Forces/Academic	EFA	50%
Internal Forces/Academic	IFA	42%
Philosophy/Academic	PHA	42%
School Resources/Academic	SRA	33%
Climate	C	25%

Academic Emphasis: Secondary Level Themes

A secondary level of three major themes emerged from the vertical and horizontal analysis of the provisional categories, rules of inclusion, and responses across interview

questions one through five. Categories, rules, and responses were reorganized according to a new set of secondary level themes. These major themes included: what schools have in place and do (what philosophies/expectations, programs, initiatives, traditions, events, practices, and resources schools have in place that support the presence of academic emphasis); what teachers have and do (what philosophies/expectations, awareness, knowledge, and skills teachers possess and efforts and practices they display that demonstrates the presence of academic emphasis); and what students have and do (what traits and dispositions students possess and behaviors and accomplishments they display within a school that demonstrates the presence of academic emphasis). These secondary level themes and corresponding provisional categories are listed in Table IV.

Table IV

Secondary Level Themes

What Schools Have in Place and Do			What Teachers Have and Do			What Students Have and Do		
Academic Emphasis	Collective Efficacy	Faculty Trust	Academic Emphasis	Collective Efficacy	Faculty Trust	Academic Emphasis	Collective Efficacy	Faculty Trust
AEV	EXA	SRA	EXA	EXA	DEXCSSW	AC	AC	DEXCCSW
APO	EXB		EXB	EXB	DTS	IFA	IFA	DTS
C	PD		EFA	NC	EXCSSW		IFB	EXCCSSW
EXA	PHA		PHA	PHA	EXPS		STR	EXST
EXB	PHS		TCM	PHS	EXST		STRCPI	HTS
PHA	SPIA		TIRB	TA	EXTSP			IFA
PU	SPIB		TPA	TCM	HPS			LTS
SPIA	SRA		TRA	TEA	HTS			PHCSSW
SRA	SRB			TEB	HTSP			PHTS
SRB				TF	LPS			STEA
SSA				TIRA	LTS			STEXA
SSB				TIRB	LTSP			STRCPI
SWR				TPA	PHCSSW			STRT
				TRA	PHPS			TMTS
				TTA	PHTS			
					TA			
					TEA			
					TIRA			
					TIRB			
					TMTS			
					TPIPS			
					TPITSP			
					TPR			

Table IV (continued) Secondary Level Themes

What the Community Has In Place and Does			What Parents Have and Do		
Academic Emphasis	Collective Efficacy	Faculty Trust	Academic Emphasis	Collective Efficacy	Faculty Trust
	CA IFO SPSP JWE PC PS		EFA	EFA EFB PC	EXPS EXTSP HPS HTSP LPS LTSP PHPS PEXA PRCPI TPIPS TPITSP

Collective Efficacy

Collective efficacy "is the judgment of teachers that the faculty as a whole can organize and execute the actions required to have positive effects on students" (Goddard, 2002; Goddard et al., 2000, 2004; Hoy et al., 2006a, p. 434). Interview questions 6 through 11 represented this property of academic optimism (Table I). These collective efficacy questions were developed to initiate examples of ways that teachers believe that all students achieve academically, ways that teachers get through to difficult students, ways that teachers are confident that they are able to motivate students, ways that the community helps to ensure that students in their school will learn, and ways that safety, drug, and alcohol issues relate to student learning. The responses for each individual question were again transcribed, unitized, categorized according to rules of inclusion, and coded for reference purposes, as was done with the academic emphasis question responses. The results of these process steps are listed in Appendix C, with a summary list of codes recorded in Appendix A.

Collective Efficacy: Vertical Analysis of Respondent Percentages

The responses for each question were again individually analyzed in a vertical fashion according to each provisional category and corresponding rule of inclusion, as was done with the responses for academic emphasis. A percentage total of respondents was then calculated for each provisional category. Respondent percentages for the provisional categories of collective efficacy ranged from 8% to 75%. The results for respondent percentages of 50% and higher are reported in the following vertical analysis section.

The vertical analysis of collective efficacy revealed that 50% of the respondents expressed that school operational norms (SSB), which include plans, procedures, and protocols to direct monitor and modify student behavior, helped to address student school safety issues related to student learning. Examples of such responses included:

> There's really not a lot of altercations in the hallways with the kids. That's because the staff between periods, they'll go stand out in the hallways and watch and welcome kids into their classroom and keep kids moving along instead of loitering. That's a big tactic that we use.
>
> I personally think that enforcing the dress code is partly about safety.
>
> They are immediately removed if they become a problem. That helps the other students to realize I'm not going to mess around because I won't be able to stay in here and also that student is removed so I don't have to worry about it.

The community was also viewed by 58% of the interview participants to provide jobs and work experiences (JWE) as an extension of school career education programs. This support to the school and student learning was demonstrated in the following comments:

> Most of the employers in the area are quite useful and very amiable whenever it comes to getting students jobs for different career programs.

> They take our students in and work with us to keep them learning how to succeed in a work environment and in a work site. I think that that's important. An important job to the community to accept our students and then work with the school to try and help to make them grow, allow them to grow.

Collective Efficacy: Horizontal Analysis of Respondent Percentages

The next step of interview data analysis involved reviewing the provisional categories and corresponding rules of inclusion on a horizontal level to identify provisional categories that were repeated across two or more of the six interview questions about collective efficacy. Redundancy of respondents was eliminated by cross-referencing the respondent lists of provisional categories that were repeated across any of the six questions. This process demonstrated that four provisional categories about teachers (Teacher Awareness, Teacher Practices/Academic, Teacher Efforts/Academic, and Teacher Efforts/Behavioral) stretched across five interview questions, that three provisional categories about school factors (Philosophy/Academic, School Programs and Initiatives/Academic, and Professional Development) extended across five interview questions, and one provisional category about the community (Institutions/Facilities/Organizations) spanned across two interview questions.

All respondents (100%) acknowledged that teacher awareness (TA) of societal factors that impact learning institutions and their stakeholder groups helps school staff understand the impact that non-academic issues have on student learning and academic achievement. Examples of this concept were described in the following comments:

> I know that there are some kids at times that do have worries. I think the worries most of the time come from outside, over the weekend, after school, home, and sometimes that does come back into the school.

> I am able to reach through to some because I come from that type of background. I know how to talk to them and I know what they've gone through.

> Again just through past experience, a lot of the teachers have been in this building for quite a few years. So they had the parents of these kids.

Ninety-two percent of interview participants noted that the instructional strategies and assessment techniques of teachers (TPA) impact student learning and academic performance. This understanding was expressed as follows:

> Most difficult students learn with differentiated instruction. That is something that I truly believe in.
>
> I try to connect literature to their daily lives. We can read Oedipus Rex. It's almost three thousand years old. I try to make ways that they can relate to Oedipus or his situation…
>
> They try, well some of them will try alternative assignments.

Teacher efforts during and after class time (TEA) were suggested by respondents (75%) to support the academic achievement of students in their schools. The following statements summarized this sentiment:

> Through one-on-one attention, either in the form of tutoring or just talking to kids or explaining the assignment in more detail.
>
> There are very few teachers who wouldn't be here and continue to be here for a student. We try to make ourselves available if they are struggling.
>
> We're always here for the students. We have extra time, extra help.

Teacher efforts during and after class time (TEB) were also identified by interview respondents (50%) as a way to also impact student behavior. This complementary notion was expressed in the following responses:

> Sometimes you can tell. You can hear from other students that something has gone on, or you know to keep an eye on them. . . . You can separate kids if you know something or I will talk to them at different times in the hall.
>
> I've had problems with students and I can speak of my own. When they come in and they're a difficult student and you know it, just take them under your wing usually.

> You can't get through to a difficult kid by yelling at them or embarrassing them in front of the classroom…

The horizontal analysis of collective efficacy responses also identified a set of statements affiliated specifically with school themes. Seventy-five percent of respondents expressed how values and beliefs about academic achievement (PHA) are displayed in the thoughts and actions of teachers and principals in the school setting. These sentiments were noted as follows:

> We have the philosophy, we don't care where you come from, you've got the mental capacity to learn what you need to learn at the high school level.

> I think all the teachers believe that every student has the ability and the right to achieve.

School Programs and Initiatives (SPIA) were emphasized by respondents (75%) as ways that student academic achievement can be improved. For example, two respondents said the following:

> We tried this credit recovery option that gives the opportunity to eliminate that failing grade from a previous grading period, by taking tutoring time and maybe an extra section of the class, and so forth, to get it off their record somehow…

> We try to put the kids with the mentor that's going to do the best good for them.

Seventy-five percent of the interview participants revealed that professional development experiences (PD) expands a teacher's knowledge base and classroom practices. Examples of these experiences were stated as follows:

> We have a lot of opportunities to learn about drugs and alcohol and how it affects the students and how they appear when they come in.

> The teachers in this school I know are willing and have in the past, been involved in workshops and professional development. . . . The most recent stuff that we have been through was related to street gangs and getting the staff a better understanding of our community that our students are coming from.

A final horizontal collective efficacy theme, Institutions, Facilities, and Organizations (IFO) was described by 50% of the respondents to actually serve functions and support the needs of the school community. Examples of this support were reflected in the following responses:

> The library's been very generous at least allowing kids to work there…
>
> We have pastoral counseling.
>
> We have a number of community groups that work with us. We have an Upward Bound group.

A complete representation of the horizontal analysis of provisional categories repeated across the interview questions that represented collective efficacy and the collapsed corresponding respondent percentages is captured in Table V.

Table V

Horizontal Analysis of Repeated Collective Efficacy Provisional Categories With Corresponding Collapsed Respondent Percentages

Category	Code	Respondent Percentage
Teacher Awareness	TA	100%
Teacher Practices/Academic	TPA	92%
Philosophy/Academic	PHA	75%
Professional Development	PD	75%
School Programs and Initiatives/Academic	SPIA	75%
Teacher Efforts/Academic	TEA	75%
Institutions/Facilities/Organizations	IFO	50%
Teacher Efforts/Behavioral	TEB	50%
Expectations/Behavioral	EXB	42%
School Resources/Academic	SRA	42%
School Resources/Behavioral	SRB	42%
School Programs and Initiatives/Behavioral	SPIB	33%
Teacher Interpersonal Relations/Academic	TIRA	25%
Teacher Frustrations	TF	17%
Teacher Traits/Academic	TTRA	17%

Collective Efficacy: Secondary Level Themes

A secondary level of four major themes emerged from the vertical and horizontal analysis of the provisional categories, rules of inclusion, and responses across collective efficacy interview questions 6 through 11, as was processed from the vertical and horizontal analysis of the academic emphasis interview data. Categories, rules, and responses were reorganized according to a new set of secondary level themes. These major themes included: what schools have in place and do (what philosophies/ expectations, programs, initiatives, traditions, practices, and resources schools have in place that support the presence of collective efficacy); what teachers have and do (what philosophies/ expectations, awareness, traits, knowledge, skills, and frustrations teachers possess and efforts and practices they display that demonstrates the presence of collective efficacy); what students have and do (what traits, dispositions, and personal issues students possess and behaviors, reactions, and accomplishments they display within a school that demonstrates the presence of collective efficacy); and what the local community has in place and does (what institutions, facilities, and organizations are in place and services, activities, traditions, practices, and support are available that impact collective efficacy to ensure that students in the school learn). These secondary level themes and corresponding provisional categories are listed in Table IV.

Faculty Trust in Students and Parents

Faculty trust is "a willingness to be vulnerable to another party based on the confidence that that party is benevolent, reliable, competent, honest, and open" (Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 2003; Hoy et al., 2006a, p. 428). Interview questions 12 through 15 represented this property (Table I). The questions representing faculty trust were crafted

to produce subject responses that describe ways that teachers trust their students and their students' parents, ways that students can be counted on to do their work, and ways that teachers can count on parental support. The responses for these four questions were transcribed, unitized, categorized according to rules of inclusion, and coded for reference purposes, as was processed for the previous two properties. The results of these process steps can be found in Appendix D, with a summary list of codes available in Appendix A.

Faculty Trust in Students and Parents: Vertical Analysis of Respondent Percentages

The responses for each question were again individually analyzed in a vertical fashion according to each provisional category and corresponding rule of inclusion, as was done with the responses for academic emphasis and collective efficacy. A percentage total of respondents was then calculated for each provisional category. Respondent percentages for the provisional categories of faculty trust in students and parents ranged from 8% to 75%. The results for respondent percentages of 50% and higher are the primary focus in this vertical analysis section.

The initial analysis identified three opposite meaning pairs of provisional categories. The pairs included: High/Trust in Students (HTS) and Low/Trust in Students (LTS); High/Trust in Students' Parents (HTSP) and Low/Trust in Students' Parents (LTSP); and High Parent Support (HPS) and Low Parent Support (LPS). Fifty percent of the respondents expressed evidence that teacher trust in students was high (HTS) and 50% of the respondents expressed evidence that teacher trust in students was low (LTS). This high trust/low trust evidence was noted in the following comments respectively:

> We give the kids responsibilities. Those that have proven that they've been trustworthy, sometimes they're office helpers. They're gym assistants. There are extra responsibilities that they receive.

> We had one problem in our school where the President of the National Honor Society, the President of the Student Council and the President of the Senior Class, all got suspended over a lack of trust this year. . . . So unfortunately, I'd say the trust level was zero.

Fifty percent of the respondents revealed that trust in students' parents was high (HTSP) and 33% of respondents revealed that trust in students' parents was low (LTSP). These high trust/low trust levels were represented in the following interview statements accordingly;

> It's happened in the reverse too. The parents have contacted me to want to know what they can do on their end to help their child out in my class. And I can trust that we can work out an arrangement that assists the child and helps them achieve.

> You talk to the parent and you talk to the parent and all of a sudden the kid comes home and gets their way anyways. . . . You like to have their support and want to believe in their support, but sometimes it's hard to believe and it's hard to have that trust in parents.

Another opposite pair of provisional categories indicated that 75% of respondents claimed that levels of parental support are high (HPS) and 50% of respondents claimed that levels of parental support are low (LPS). Examples of these claims were described in the following respective statements:

> We have several senior parents that come in and run a whole bunch of senior activities and fund raisers and popcorn and do a lot of things that kind of make things nice, you know, here at the school.

> After two or three times of the same conference, parents too often give up and say it's your problem.

Faculty Trust in Students and Parents: Horizontal Analysis of Respondent Percentages

The next step of interview data analysis involved reviewing the provisional categories and corresponding rules of inclusion on a horizontal level to identify provisional categories that were repeated across two or more of the four interview questions about faculty trust. Redundancy of respondents was eliminated by cross-

referencing the respondent lists of provisional categories that were repeated across any of the four questions. This process demonstrated that only one provisional category about teachers spanned across multiple interview questions. This single category demonstrated that 42% of respondents emphasized that teacher awareness (TA) of the societal factors that impact learning institutions and their stakeholder groups was a way to better understand the level of faculty trust in students, faculty trust in their parents and parental support. This awareness was expressed in the following two quotes:

> When I can't talk to parents, when I haven't had access to the parents, often the parents are uninvolved, or they're in situations where they can't be involved. A number of them have families where parents have multiple jobs and simply there is no parenting. It's very difficult in many cases.

> All of our kids work. Every single student I know has a part-time job. Anywhere from 10 to 30 hours, sometimes 40.

A complete listing of all the provisional categories that represented faculty trust in students and parents and the collapsed corresponding respondent percentages is referenced in Table VI.

Table VI

Faculty Trust in Students and Parents Provisional Categories With Corresponding Collapsed Respondent Percentages

Category	Code	Respondent Percentage
High Parent Support	HPS	75
High/Trust in Students	HTS	50
High/Trust in Students' Parents	HTSP	50
Low Parent Support	LPS	50
Low/Trust in Students	LTS	50
Expectations/Confidence in Students/ Student Work	EXCSSW	42
Philosophy/Trust in Students	PHTS)	42
Student Expectations/Academic	STEXA	42
Teacher Awareness	TA	42
Teacher Efforts/Academic	TEA	42

Table VI (continued) Faculty Trust in Students and Parents Provisional Categories With Corresponding Collapsed Respondent Percentages

Category	Code	Respondent Percentage
Discriminate/Trust in Students	DTS	33
Expectations/Trust in Students	EXST	33
Internal Forces/Academic	IFA	33
Low/Trust in Students' Parents	LTSP	33
Parent Responsibilities/Constraints/Personal Issues	PRCPI	33
Teacher/Parent Interactions/Trust in Students' Parents	TPITSP	33
Student Reactions/Trust	STRT	25
Student Responsibilities/Constraints/Personal Issues	STRCPI	25
Student Efforts/Academic	STEA	25
Too Much/Trust in Students	TMTS	25
Teacher Precautions	TPR	25
Expectations/Parental Support	EXPS	17
Expectations/Trust in Students' Parents	EXTSP	17
Parent Expectations/Academic	PEXA	17
Philosophy/Confidence in Students/Student Work	PHCSSW	17
Philosophy/Trust in Students' Parents	PHTSP	17
School Resources/Academic	SRA	17
Teacher/Parent Interactions/Parental Support	TPIPS	17
Discriminate Expectations/Confidence in Students/ Student Work	DEXCSSW	8
Philosophy/Parental Support	PHPS	8
Teacher Interpersonal Relations/Academic	TIRA	8
Teacher Interpersonal Relations/Behavioral	TIRB	8

Faculty Trust in Students and Parents: Secondary Level Themes

A secondary level of four major themes emerged from the vertical and horizontal analysis of the provisional categories, rules of inclusion, and responses across faculty trust interview questions 11 through 15. Categories, rules, and responses were reorganized according to a new set of secondary level themes, as was processed with the academic emphasis and collective efficacy interview data. These major themes included: what schools have in place and do (what philosophies/expectations, programs, initiatives, traditions, practices, and resources schools have in place that support the presence of

faculty trust in students and parents); what teachers have and do (what philosophies/ expectations, awareness, knowledge, skills, and opinions teachers possess and efforts and practices they display that foster the presence of faculty trust in students and parents); what students have and do (what traits, dispositions, expectations, and reactions students possess and efforts and behaviors they display that impacts the presence of faculty trust in students); and what parents have and do (what responsibilities, constraints, and issues parents have and what actions they display that impacts the presence of faculty trust in parents). These secondary level themes and corresponding provisional categories are listed in Table IV.

Horizontal Analysis of Secondary Level Themes for Academic Emphasis, Collective Efficacy, and Faculty Trust in Students and Parents

There were three major secondary level themes that emerged for academic emphasis (what schools have in place and do, what teachers have and do, and what students have and do), four major themes for collective efficacy (what schools have in place and do, what teachers have and do, what students have and do, and what the local community has in place and does), and four major themes for faculty trust in students and parents (what schools have in place and do, what teachers have and do, what students have and do, and what parents have and do). Table IV depicts each major secondary level theme with corresponding provisional codes organized according to each property of academic optimism (academic emphasis, collective efficacy, and faculty trust in students and parents).

A closer analysis of this table revealed a common strand within each secondary level theme. School resources (SRA) including certified and licensed personnel who

have roles and responsibilities to instruct, monitor, and remediate the academic achievement outcomes of students was individually listed beneath each academic optimism property heading under the major secondary level theme, What Schools Have in Place and Do. The following respondent statements reinforced this sentiment:

> Most of the teachers are highly trained so they know most of the problems.
>
> We have a number of special education intervention specialists who work with those teachers and after a few months, they begin to see the light and are much more adept to helping each student with what they need to do.
>
> We get a lot of support from our administrators.

Philosophical values and beliefs about academic achievement, safety, trust in students, trust in parents, and parental support (PHA, PHS, PHPS, and PHTS) along with complementary categories of expectation for student behavior, academic achievement, trust in students, trust in parents, and parental support (EXA, EXB, EXST, EXSP, and EXPS) were listed beneath the three academic optimism property headings under the second major secondary level theme, What Teachers Have and Do. The importance of this philosophical/expectation strand was validated by the following participant responses:

> We believe that we can make a difference.
>
> I believe academically, showing them the rigor of our class work, that our students are realizing this learning environment is serious. It is orderly and most of them rise to the occasion.

Teacher communications that build relationships that impact student behavior (TIRB) was also listed specifically under all three academic optimism property headings of What Teachers Have and Do. This communication strategy was identified in the following quote:

> You know most of what I've heard and what I've seen is that you know, struggling kids or difficult kids, as we might call them, you know they respond mostly to adults that they have relationships with.

Student predispositions and traits (IFA) that impact student achievement appeared beneath each academic optimism property heading under the next major secondary level theme titled, What Students Have and Do. This understanding was exemplified in the following statement:

> Sometimes they come through, sometimes they don't. But you know, you just kind of work with them. You know some students, obviously, are more mature or more prepared than others.

The fourth major secondary level theme, What the Community Has and Does, only had provisional categories listed under the collective efficacy heading. The responses for this provisional category were only generated from question 9 of the collective efficacy segment of the interview.

The remaining major secondary level theme, What Parents Have and Do had parental support and influence categories (EFA, EFB, and EXPS, EXTSP, HPS, and HTSP) listed across the three academic optimism subheadings. Parental influence of student behavior and achievement was depicted in the following interview statement:

> I think the strong family unit is probably the best way for students to achieve. Unfortunately, that's an aspect the schools have very little control over.

The same common strands within each major theme noted above were also confirmed in Table VII that listed the collapsed respondent percentages per provisional code according to academic optimism properties.

Table VII

Collapsed Respondent Percentages per Code According to Specific Academic Optimism Property: Academic Emphasis (AE), Collective Efficacy (CE), and Faculty Trust (FT)

	Code	AE	CE	FT
Accomplishments	AC	100	25	
Admittance into Programs or Organizations	APO	58		
Award Events	AEV	75		
Case Examples/Drug and Alcohol	CEXDA		25	
Climate	C	25		
Community Activities	CA		42	
Discriminate Expectations/Confidence in Students/Student Work	DEXCSSW			8
Discriminate/Trust in Students	DTS			33
Expectations/Academic	EXA	58	8	
Expectations/Behavioral	EXB	33	42	
Expectations/Confidence in Students/Student Work	EXCSSW			42
Expectations/Parental Support	EXPS			17
Expectations/Trust in Students	EXST			33
Expectations/Trust in Students' Parents	EXTSP			17
External Forces/Academic	EFA	50	8	
External Forces/Behavioral	EFB		25	
High Parent Support	HPS			75
High/Trust in Students	HTS			50
High/Trust in Students' Parents	HTSP			50
Institutions/Facilities/Organizations	IFO		50	
Internal Forces/Academic	IFA	42	17	33
Internal Forces/Behavioral	IFB		17	
Jobs/Work Experience	JWE		58	

Table VII (continued) Collapsed Respondent Percentages per Code According to Specific Academic Optimism Property: Academic Emphasis (AE), Collective Efficacy (CE), and Faculty Trust (FT)

	Code	AE	CE	FT
Low Parent Support	LPS			50
Low/Trust in Students	LTS			50
Low/Trust in Students' Parents	LTSP			33
Not Concerned	NC		33	
Parents/Community	PC		17	
Parent Expectations/Academic	PEXA			17
Parent Responsibilities/Constraints/Personal Issues	PRCPI			33
Philosophy/Academic	PHA	42	75	
Philosophy/Confidence in Students/Student Work	PHCSSW			17
Philosophy/Parental Support	PHPS			8
Philosophy/Safety	PHS		33	
Philosophy/Trust in Students	PHTS			42
Philosophy/Trust in Students' Parents	PHTSP			17
Post Secondary	PSEC	17		
Professional Development	PD		75	
Provide Services	PS		33	
Publish	PB	92		
School Programs and Initiatives/Academic	SPIA	92	75	
School Programs and Initiatives/Behavioral	SPIB	33	33	
School Resources/Academic	SRA	33	42	17
School Resources/Behavioral	SRB	33	42	
School Structures/Academic	SSA	8		
School Structures/Behavioral	SSB	75	50	
School-wide Rewards	SWR	75		

Table VII (continued) Collapsed Respondent Percentages per Code According to Specific Academic Optimism Property: Academic Emphasis (AE), Collective Efficacy (CE), and Faculty Trust (FT)

	Code	AE	CE	FT
Student Efforts/Academic	STEA			25
Student Expectations/Academic	STEXA			42
Student Reactions/Safety	STRS		25	
Student Reactions/Trust	STRT			25
Student Responsibilities/Constraints/Personal Issues	STRCPI		33	25
Support Sports	SPSP		33	
Teacher Awareness	TA		100	42
Teacher Classroom Management	TCM	42	8	
Teacher Efforts/Academic	TEA		75	42
Teacher Efforts/Behavioral	TEB		58	
Teacher Frustrations	TF		17	
Teacher Interpersonal Relations/Academic	TIRA		25	8
Teacher Interpersonal Relations/Behavioral	TIRB	8	42	8
Teacher/Parent Interactions/Parental Support	TPIPS			17
Teacher/Parent Interactions/Trust in Students' Parents	TPITSP			33
Teacher Practices/Academic	TPA	75	92	
Teacher Precautions	TPR			25
Teacher Rewards/Academic	TRA	58	25	
Teacher Traits/Academic	TTRA		17	
Too Much/Trust in Students	TMTS			25

Provisional Category Relationships Across Two Academic Optimism Properties

The previous section(s) addressed provisional categories that appeared under all three properties of academic optimism (academic emphasis, collective efficacy, and faculty trust in students and parents). These categories were Internal Forces/Academic (IFA), School Resources/Academic (SRA), and Teacher Interpersonal Relations/ Behavioral (TIRB). There were also provisional categories that appeared under two of the three properties with strong respondent percentage rates. The repetition of provisional categories across academic optimism properties is illustrated in Table VII.

The predominate pairs of these provisional categories related first to teachers and then to schools. The teacher-related categories included: Teacher Awareness (TA) (100% CE and 42% FT); Teacher Practices/Academic (TPA) (75% AE and 92% CE); Teacher Efforts/Academic (TEA) (75% CE and 42% FT); and Teacher Rewards/ Academic (TRA) (58% AE and 25% CE). The school-related categories included: Philosophy/Academic (PHA) (42% AE and 75% CE); School Programs and Initiatives/ Academic (SPIA) (92% AE and 75% CE); and School Structures/Behavioral (SSB) (75% AE and 50% CE). Most of the pairs of provisional categories were repeated across the same two properties of academic optimism, academic emphasis, and collective efficacy. The remainder of these category pairs are listed in Table VII.

Interview Response Differences Between the High- and Lower-performing High Schools

One hundred and twenty-nine provisional category groupings were developed from the pool of 12 interview subjects' responses to the original 15 interview questions. Eighteen of these groupings had responses that were exclusively represented by either the high- or the lower-performing school. These category groupings ranged from two to

three respondents and were present across all three properties of academic optimism. Eleven of the category groupings were exclusively represented by the high- and seven of the categories were exclusively represented by the lower-performing school. Of the 11 category groupings of the high-performing school, seven were school-related (climate, programs/initiatives, academic and behavioral resources, and professional development) and the remaining four groupings were related to students (traits/ dispositions, drug/alcohol and trust) and parents (parental support). The remaining seven groupings were represented by the lower-performing school. Of the seven category groupings, four were related to parents (expectations and support), two were about teachers (awareness and effort), and one was about students (accomplishments).

Another grouping of 16 provisional categories had responses that were represented by the majority (total minus one) of either high- or lower-performing school respondents in category groups of four or more respondents. Ten of these categories were represented by the high- and five of the categories were represented by the lower-performing school. Of the 10 categories of the high-performing school, four related to students (traits/dispositions, behavioral expectations, personal issues, and accomplishments), two were about the community (institutions/facilities/ organizations, and sports), one was school related (behavioral resources), one was about the parents (parental support), one was about the teachers (concerns about safety), and one was related to teachers and parents (external support). Of the six categories from the lower-performing school, four were about teachers (philosophical beliefs about safety, interpersonal relationships, practices, and efforts regarding student behavior), one was about the students (trust expectations), and one was about the parents (personal issues).

The remaining 95 provisional category groupings (74%) had a mixed representation of high- and lower-performing school interview participant responses within each category.

Table VIII illustrates the disaggregated respondent subtotal percentages of each high school for each provisional category and corresponding academic optimism property. The 129 provisional category groupings are reflected in the 67 primary provisional categories that originally evolved from the constant comparatives method of data analysis (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994).

Table VIII

Subtotal Percentages of Respondents per Code According to Specific Academic Optimism Property: Academic Emphasis (AE), Collective Efficacy (CE), and Faculty Trust (FT) of the High-/Lower-performing School, Respectively

	Code	AE	CE	FT
Accomplishments	AC	50/50	0/25	
Admittance into Programs or Organizations	APO	42/17		
Award Events	AEV	50/25		
Case Examples/Drug and Alcohol	CEXDA		25/0	
Climate	C	17/8		
Community Activities	CA		17/25	
Discriminate Expectations/Confidence in Students/Student Work	DEXCSSW			0/8
Discriminate/Trust in Students	DTS			17/17
Expectations/Academic	EXA	33/25	8/0	
Expectations/Behavioral	EXB	25/8	17/25	

Table VIII (continued) Subtotal Percentages of Respondents per Code According to Specific Academic Optimism Property: Academic Emphasis (AE), Collective Efficacy (CE), and Faculty Trust (FT) of the High-/Lower-performing School, Respectively

	Code	AE	CE	FT
Expectations/Confidence in Students/Student Work	EXCSSW			25/17
Expectations/Parental Support	EXPS			0/17
Expectations/Trust in Students	EXST			8/25
Expectations/Trust in Students' Parents	EXTSP			0/17
External Forces/Academic	EFA	42/8	8/0	
External Forces/Behavioral	EFB		17/8	
High Parent Support	HPS			33/42
High/Trust in Students	HTS			33/17
High/Trust in Students' Parents	HTSP			25/25
Institutions/Facilities/Organizations	IFO		25/25	
Internal Forces/Academic	IFA	17/25	17/0	25/8
Internal Forces/Behavioral	IFB		8/8	
Jobs/Work Experience	JWE		25/33	
Low Parent Support	LPS			33/17
Low/Trust in Students	LTS			25/25
Low/Trust in Students' Parents	LTSP			25/8
Not Concerned	NC		25/8	
Parents/Community	PC		0/17	
Parent Expectations/Academic	PEXA			0/17
Parent Responsibilities/Constraints/Personal Issues	PRCPI			8/25

Table VIII (continued) Subtotal Percentages of Respondents per Code According to Specific Academic Optimism Property: Academic Emphasis (AE), Collective Efficacy (CE), and Faculty Trust (FT) of the High-/Lower-performing School, Respectively

	Code	AE	CE	FT
Philosophy/Academic	PHA	17/25	50/25	
Philosophy/Confidence in Students/Student Work	PHCSSW			8/8
Philosophy/Parental Support	PHPS			8/0
Philosophy/Safety	PHS		8/25	
Philosophy/Trust in Students	PHTS			25/17
Philosophy/Trust in Students' Parents	PHTSP			17/0
Post Secondary	PSEC	8/8		
Professional Development	PD		42/33	
Provide Services	PS		17/17	
Publish	PB	50/42		
School Programs and Initiatives/Academic	SPIA	42/50	42/33	
School Programs and Initiatives/Behavioral	SPIB	17/17	8/25	
School Resources/Academic	SRA	25/8	25/17	8/8
School Resources/Behavioral	SRB	25/8	33/8	
School Structures/Academic	SSA	0/8		
School Structures/Behavioral	SSB	42/33	33/17	
School-wide Rewards	SWR	42/33		
Student Efforts/Academic	STEA			8/17
Student Expectations/Academic	STEXA			25/17
Student Reactions/Safety	STRS		17/8	

Table VIII (continued) Subtotal Percentages of Respondents per Code According to Specific Academic Optimism Property: Academic Emphasis (AE), Collective Efficacy (CE), and Faculty Trust (FT) of the High-/Lower-performing School, Respectively

	Code	AE	CE	FT
Student Reactions/Trust	STRT			8/17
Student Responsibilities/Constraints/Personal Issues	STRCPI		25/8	8/17
Support Sports	SPSP		25/8	
Teacher Awareness	TA		50/50	17/25
Teacher Classroom Management	TCM	17/25	8/0	
Teacher Efforts/Academic	TEA		42/33	17/25
Teacher Efforts/Behavioral	TEB		8/50	
Teacher Frustrations	TF		8/8	
Teacher Interpersonal Relations/Academic	TIRA		8/17	0/8
Teacher Interpersonal Relations/Behavioral	TIRB	0/8	8/33	8/0
Teacher/Parent Interactions/Parental Support	TPIPS			8/8
Teacher/Parent Interactions/Trust in Students' Parents	TPITSP			17/17
Teacher Practices/Academic	TPA	25/50	42/50	
Teacher Precautions	TPR			17/8
Teacher Rewards/Academic	TRA	33/25	17/8	
Teacher Traits/Academic	TATA		8/8	
Too Much/Trust in Students	TMTS			25/0

Interview Response Differences Between Male and Female Respondents

A closer examination was taken of the 129 provisional category groupings that resulted from the response pool of the 12 interview subjects (seven female and five

male). Thirteen of these category groupings had responses that were exclusively represented by either females (11) or males (2). These groupings ranged from two to four respondents and were present across two of the three properties of academic optimism (collective efficacy and faculty trust in students and parents). Of the 11 category groupings represented exclusively by female respondents, four were related to teachers (traits, efforts for academic and behavioral outcomes, and philosophical beliefs about parental support); four were related to students (traits/dispositions, academic efforts, academic expectations, and behavioral expectations); two were repeated about the school (academic resources); and one was related to the parents (parental support). Of the two groupings represented exclusively by male respondents, one was related to teachers (academic efforts) and the other was related to students (traits/dispositions).

Another grouping of provisional categories had responses that were represented by the majority (total minus one) of either male or female respondents in category groups of four or more respondents. Ten of these category groupings had responses that were represented by either a female (6) or male (4) majority. Of the five female majority response groups, three were related to students (behavioral expectations, trust expectations, and trust levels); one was related to the school (programs/initiatives); one was related to teachers (instructional practices); and one was related to the community (activities). Of the four male majority response category groupings, two were school-related (academic resources and philosophies about academics); one was about the students (work expectations); and one was about the parents (parental support).

The remaining 106 provisional category groupings (82%) had a mixed representation of male and female interview participant responses within each group.

Interview Response Differences Between the Building Principals

The responses of the lead principal from the high- and lower-performing high school were reviewed to identify similarities and differences. Principal responses were represented in 45 of the 67 (67%) possible provisional categories that initially emerged from the data analysis of the interview responses for all 15 questions. The 22 provisional categories that did not have principal representation were about students (Case Examples/Drug and Alcohol, Discriminate Expectations/Confidence in Students/Student Work, Expectations/Confidence in Students/Work, Expectations/Trust in Students, External Forces/Behavioral, High/Trust in Students, Internal Forces/Behavioral, Philosophy/Confidence in Students/Student Work, Philosophy/Safety, Student Efforts/Academic, and Student Responsibilities/Constraints/Personal Issues), parents (Expectations/ Parental Support, Expectations/Trust in Students' Parents, Philosophy/ Parental Support, Philosophy/Trust in Students' Parents, and Teacher/Parent Interactions/Trust in Students' Parents), teachers (Teacher Classroom Management, Teacher Interpersonal Relations/Academic, and Teacher Traits/Academic), and the community (Jobs/Work Experience, Parents/Community, and Provide Services).

Total respondent percentages were reviewed to identify principal representation in the provisional categories that had a total respondent percentage of 50% and higher. Sixty-seven percent of these categories were represented by both principals. Seven provisional categories at a respondent percentage of 50% and higher had the response of either the high- or lower-performing school principal. The high-performing school principal had responses about Award Events, External Forces/Academic, and Low Parent Support categories, and the lower-performing school principal had responses about

Teacher Efforts/Behavioral, Low/Trust Students, High/Trust Students' Parents, and High Parent Support categories.

A look was then taken at the unitized principal responses related to questions about academic emphasis, collective efficacy, and faculty trust in students and parents. This analysis revealed that the high-performing school principal had 18 unitized responses about academic emphasis, 14 responses about collective efficacy, and 7 responses about faculty trust in students and parents. The lower-performing school principal had 13 unitized responses about academic emphasis, 13 responses about collective efficacy, and 12 responses about faculty trust in students and parents. The unitized responses of the principal of the lower-performing school were more evenly spread across the three properties of academic optimism.

Interview transcripts for each principal were also revisited, question by question, to examine any differences between the principal participant responses. Most question responses were similar in content and meaning. The following two quotes reflect this similarity in the high- and lower-performing high school, respectively, about the learning environment being orderly and serious:

> If the assistants are out and the faculty tend to get out as much as they can. Some better than others, in the hallways, et cetera. Certainly students have fun, but there is a lot of monitoring of the halls.

> Again the learning environment is orderly, I believe because the principals are very visible in the hallways. They know we're serious about academics.

Another example of the similarity can be found in the following two statements about teachers in the school believing that they can help all students achieve academically:

> I think that most of them tend to provide extra help, provide tutoring opportunities. They're willing to come before and after school, during lunch time, and things like that.
>
> Teachers in this school believe they can help out students achieve because you will typically see any teacher at any time in a study hall tutoring students, telling them to come up to their room during planning. . . . Teachers want to be available to help with tutoring after school.

The interview transcripts also revealed that there were some differences between the principals' responses associated with student learning related to safety, teacher acknowledgement of drug and alcohol abuse in the community that impacts student learning, teacher trust in students, and counting on students to do their work. The following statements summarize each principal's account of teacher perceptions about student learning and safety from the high- and lower-performing school:

> Their perception is this is a very, very safe place. The kids think that you can go and find somebody to solve their problem, and that's good, because they do come and they relate what they have heard and everything else.
>
> I believe that the teachers know that safety is always an issue every day. Last year, we had a couple of lock downs. . . . So they do know there's a problem and they do know that the kids are worried.

Principal accounts of teacher acknowledgement of drug and alcohol abuse in the community that impacts student learning in the high- and lower-performing school were summarized as follows:

> They don't really. Not that they don't know what goes on, but I don't think they admit that except perhaps on an individual basis.
>
> A lot of the teachers have been in this building for quite a few years. So they've had the parents of these kids. . . . We know that drug and alcohol is a big issue. They are very familiar with it. Teachers don't put it underneath a stone. They very much know because we've had quite a few students who are users. . . . Drug and alcohol is very big and we've known that for years. So I don't think that's something we put by the wayside.

Principal comments about teacher trust of students from the high- and lower-performing school, respectively, included:

> Oh, I think that they tend to trust for the first couple of times until they know differently.

> I don't think too many of them trust their students.

Principal statements about students being counted on to do their work in the high- and lower-performing school were as follows:

> If it's interesting, if it's challenging, if it's different, if they don't perceive it as busy work, if they perceive it as having to do with their real life, it works. If not, they don't do it.

> Students like it when we watch over them. Students like when we're involved because they don't get the interaction at home. They are very much on their own a lot of times because parents work two jobs. A lot of times Dads are long distance truck drivers and they go away. So they like the one-on-one very much. They like to be needed. The students in this building like to be needed. They like to get your attention. So I think to be counted on to do their own work, they will do the work if they know there comes a reward, or an award with it because they will get the attention. They don't want any more negative. They want positive. So the student will know that he will be getting positives rather than negatives, more times than not, they will do the work. But a lot of kids don't do their homework. They don't do it without someone standing over them and we don't have that kind of parental supervision in our community and in our school.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

Overview

The last step in data analysis is to write about what you have heard, seen, and now understand, to create the harmonic sound of data coming together in narrative form to make sense of the phenomenon you have studied (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994, p. 145).

This final chapter begins with a brief summary of the research aims, results, and the interface between these two study components. A narrative depiction of academic emphasis, collective efficacy, and faculty trust in students and parents through teacher and principal perspectives next illustrates the representation of academic optimism in the two high schools involved in this study. Implications and limitations of the current study are then presented for review and consideration. The chapter closes with recommendations for future study and concluding comments.

Research Aims

This study was originally developed and implemented to accomplish the following research aims:

- To determine the relationships among academic emphasis, collective efficacy, faculty trust in students and parents and academic optimism;

- To explore the relationship of academic optimism with state student achievement and AYP standards; and
- To identify the practices in high schools that demonstrate academic emphasis, collective efficacy, and faculty trust in students and parents that comprise academic optimism.

Summary of Results

"Academic optimism is a general latent concept related to student achievement after controlling for SES, previous performance, and other demographic variables" (Hoy et al., 2006a, p. 427). Academic optimism is the positive environment created when academic emphasis, collective efficacy, and trust work together in a unified fashion (Hoy et al., 2006a, 2006b). This study expanded upon the work of Hoy et al. which introduced the concept of academic optimism and its corresponding properties (academic emphasis, collective efficacy, and faculty trust in students and parents) as a force that explains school performance at the high school level.

Summary of Survey Results

The first segment of this study involved collecting teacher survey data from a high- and lower-performing high school within the same urban school district to determine the levels of academic emphasis, collective efficacy, and faculty trust in students and parents in each school. The results of this survey indicated that the levels of academic emphasis, collective efficacy, and faculty trust in students and parents for both schools fell within the same average range, within one standard deviation of the mean (Table II). The high-performing school did indeed have higher collective efficacy and faculty trust scores than the lower-performing school, although they still were within a

common range. The lower-performing school had a higher level of academic emphasis (514) than the high-performing school (503). Perhaps this was an indication that the lower-performing school had focused more attention and efforts on emphasizing academic achievement in order to improve overall student achievement scores to meet state mandated and Average Yearly Progress (AYP) requirements. There were differences in the standardized scores of the academic optimism properties between the high- and lower-performing schools, yet not as great in range as one might initially expect. However, the normative data utilized for determining the levels of academic optimism indicated that most schools (approximately 70%) would fall into the average range for academic emphasis, collective efficacy, and faculty trust in students and parents.

Summary of Interview Findings

The second segment of this study involved the implementation of an interview process that allowed for a closer look at the properties of academic optimism (academic emphasis, collective efficacy, and faculty trust in students and parents). Twelve subjects were asked 15 interview questions about the three properties of academic optimism. These questions generated responses that were later organized into 129 provisional category groupings by utilizing the constant comparative method of data analysis (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994).

Vertical analysis per interview question.

The response data from this survey were analyzed vertically within each individual question. The provisional categories that resulted were then analyzed horizontally across each set of questions that corresponded to academic emphasis

(questions 1 through 5), collective efficacy (questions 6 through 11), and faculty trust in students and parents (questions 12 through 15) listed in Table I. Next, the provisional categories were analyzed horizontally again across all three properties of academic optimism to identify themes that emerged.

> The accordion metaphor may be helpful here. This expansive process of categorizing data is analogous to fully pulling apart the folds of the accordion, which is necessary for the eventual harmonic synthesis to occur. Like an accordionist the qualitative research methodically pulls apart the meaning contained in the data, enabling her or him to eventually reconstruct the important melodies contained in the phenomenon being studied. (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994, p.137)

The initial vertical analysis identified provisional categories that were recognized by a high percentage of respondents. These provisional categories for academic emphasis included: Publications (PU); Award Events (AEV); School Structures/ Behavioral (SSB); Admittance into Programs and Organizations (APO); and Teacher Rewards/Academic (TRA). The provisional categories for collective efficacy included: School Structures/Behavioral (SSB) and Jobs and Work Experiences (JWE). The provisional categories for faculty trust in students and parents included the following pairs: High/ Trust in Students (HTS) and Low/Trust in Students (LTS); High/Trust in Students' Parents (HTSP) and Low/Trust in Students' Parents (LTSP); and High Parent Support (HPS) and Low Parent Support (LPS).

Horizontal analysis per academic optimism property and across all properties.

A horizontal analysis of respondent percentages was then conducted to identify predominant provisional categories across the question sets of each academic optimism property. The predominant horizontal categories for academic emphasis (having a collapsed respondent percentage of 50% or higher) (Table III) included:

Accomplishments (AC); School Programs and Initiatives/Academic (SPIA); Teacher Practices/Academic (TPA); Expectations/Academic (EXA); Philosophy Academic (PHA); and External Forces/Academic (EFA). The predominant horizontal categories for collective efficacy (Table V) included: Teacher Awareness (TA); Teacher Practices/ Academic (TPA); Philosophy/Academic (PHA); Professional Development (PD); School Programs and Initiatives/Academic (SPIA); Teacher Efforts/Academic (TEA); Institutions/Facilities/Organizations (IFO); and Teacher Efforts/Behavioral (TEB). The only provisional category that appeared more than once across the faculty trust in students and parents question responses was Teacher Awareness (TA) (Table VI). The provisional categories that evolved from the responses of the questions regarding faculty trust in students and parents were more specific in nature and scope compared to the other two academic optimism properties.

Another horizontal analysis of respondent percentages across academic emphasis, collective efficacy, and faculty trust in students and parents identified three provisional categories that were repeated within all three properties. These categories were Internal Forces/Academic (IFA), School Resources/Academic (SRA), and Teacher Interpersonal Relations/Behavioral (TIRB).

Emergence of secondary level themes across all properties.

A closer horizontal analysis of the provisional categories across academic emphasis, collective efficacy, and faculty trust in students and parents revealed the emergence of five secondary level themes:

- What Schools Have in Place and Do
- What Teachers Have and Do

- What Students Have and Do
- What the Community Has in Place and Does
- What Parents Have and Do

Table VI illustrates the interface of these themes, properties of academic optimism and representative provisional categories. These secondary level themes provide a springboard for further inquiry and research to understand the preliminary characteristics that support and enhance the presence of academic optimism properties at the high school level.

Additional findings.

There were provisional categories that appeared under two of the three properties of academic optimism with strong respondent percentage rates (Table VII). Examples of these predominate pairs included Teacher Practices/Academic (TPA) (75% AE and 92% CE), School Programs and Initiatives/Academic (SPIA) (92% AE and 75% AE), and Teacher Efforts/Academic (TEA) (75% CE and 42% FT).

Only 15% of the 129 provisional category groupings indicated any differences in exclusive male or female responses. Examples of differentiation could only be identified, but not generalized from the small number of groupings with only two to four corresponding respondents.

Seventy-four percent of 129 total provisional categories had a mixed representation of high- and lower-achieving school interview participant responses within each category. The remaining 26% of the categories were either represented by the high- or the lower-performing school in an exclusive or majority representation. Table VIII depicts the aggregation of the total 129 categories into the original 67 identified

provisional categories which amplifies the per school response percentage differences in a condensed reference format. These differences ranged from 0% (Case Examples/Drug and Alcohol) to represent no response from the high-performing school to 50%/50% (Accomplishments) to indicate a collective representation of all 12 subjects from both the high- and lower-performing schools. The similarities and differences between the two schools that were identified are incorporated in the narrative summary found in a proceeding section of this chapter.

Principal interview responses were represented in 67% of the possible 67 provisional categories that emerged from the data analysis of the interview responses for all 15 interview questions. A closer examination of the unitized responses related to questions about academic emphasis, collective efficacy, and faculty trust in students and parents and the actual interview transcripts for each principal revealed differences between the principal responses. The principal of the lower-performing school had unitized responses that were more evenly spread across the properties of academic emphasis (13), collective efficacy (13), and faculty trust in students and parents (12). Most question responses for the principal of the high- and lower-performing school were similar in content and meaning. Differences between the principals' responses were related to safety, teacher acknowledgement of drug and alcohol abuse in the community impacting student learning, teacher trust in students, and counting on students to do their work. Responses from the principal of the lower-performing school indicated that these topics were of concern for the teachers and administration. The similarities and differences of the two building principals are also incorporated in the narrative summary presented later in this chapter.

The Relationships Among Academic Emphasis, Collective Efficacy, Faculty Trust in Students and Parents and Academic Optimism

Nearly two decades of research have focused upon academic emphasis (Lee & Bryk, 1989; Hoy & Tarter, 1997a; Hoy et al., 1990; Hoy et al., 1991;), collective efficacy (Goddard, LoGerfo et al., 2004; Hoy et al., 2002;), and faculty trust in students and parents (Hoy, 2002; Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 2003) to help explain student achievement at the high school level. Hoy et al. (2006a) specifically incorporated all three properties in a recent study to examine how these properties in a unified fashion represent academic optimism and also help explain secondary school student achievement.

In this present study, these previously referenced surveys were administered to measure the levels of academic emphasis, collective efficacy, and faculty trust in students and parents that were present in a high- and lower-performing high school located within the same urban school district. Results from the surveys indicated that all three properties were present in both schools at an average level (Table II).

Since previous studies did not include the examination of academic emphasis, collective efficacy, and faculty trust in students and parents together in a qualitative research format and since previous researchers made suggestions to conduct further inquiries of this nature (Hoy et al., 2006a), an attempt was made in this study to examine the properties of academic optimism through individual teacher and building principal interviews.

The constant comparative method of data analysis (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994) was utilized to create provisional categories from the interview responses generated from interview questions developed from the original survey instruments for academic emphasis (Hoy & Miskel, 2005; Hoy & Tarter, 1997a; Hoy et al., 1991), collective efficacy (Goddard, 2002; Goddard et al,. 2000, 2004), and faculty trust in students and parents (Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 2003). Most of the provisional category titles that resulted were in alignment with the basic intent of the interview questions and in the spirit of the conceptual notions gleaned from the previous high school studies regarding academic emphasis (Hoy & Tarter, 1997a; Hoy et al., 1990; Hoy et al., 1991; Lee & Bryk, 1989), collective efficacy (Goddard, LoGerfo et al., 2004; Hoy et al., 2002), and faculty trust in students and parents (Hoy, 2002; Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 2003).

Some novel provisional category titles also emerged from the analysis of participant responses in this current study. Categories related to student dispositions/ traits, teacher academic practices and interpersonal relationships, and school resources/ structures/programs/initiatives (IFA, TPA, TIRB, SRA, SSA, and SPIA) evolved from the academic emphasis survey questions. Categories associated with school resources/ programs/initiatives (SPIA, SPIB, SRA, and SRB) resulted from the collective efficacy questions. Additionally, categories connected with student dispositions/traits, expectations, efforts, reactions and responsibilities/constraints/personal issues, teacher awareness and interpersonal relationships, and parent expectations and personal responsibilities/constraints/personal issues (IFA, STEXA, STEA, STRT, TA, TIRA, TIRB, PEXA, and PRCPI) developed from the faculty trust in students and parents question responses. These novel categories are worthy of further inquiry in future studies

about the presence of school, teacher, student, and parent characteristics related with the three properties of academic optimism.

The data analysis resulted in the creation of some provisional categories that related exclusively to the property of either academic emphasis (such as Publish), collective efficacy (such as Philosophy/Safety), or faculty trust in students and parents (such as Student Expectations/Academic). These categories most likely evolved due to the specificity of the interview questions affiliated with the academic optimism properties developed from the original survey instruments.

A horizontal analysis resulted in the identification of provisional categories that appeared across two or more of the properties of academic optimism such as Philosophy/ Academic (PHA), School Programs and Initiatives/Academic (SPIA), School Structures/ Behavioral (SSB), and Teacher Practices/Academic (TPA) for academic emphasis and collective efficacy and Teacher Awareness (TA), Teacher Efforts/Academic (TEA), and Teacher Interpersonal Relations/Behavioral (TIRB) for collective efficacy and faculty trust in students and parents. Academic emphasis and collective efficacy were both represented in 18% of the same provisional categories. These shared categories were related mainly to school resources, programs and initiatives of schools, and the types of teacher practices. Collective efficacy and faculty trust were both identified in 6% of the same provisional categories. These shared categories about students, teachers, or students and teachers were Student Responsibilities/Constraints/Personal Issues (SRCPI), Teacher Awareness (TA), Teacher Efforts/Academic (TEA), and Teacher Interpersonal Relations/Academic (TIRA). Faculty trust in students and parents was not found to be

exclusively paired with academic emphasis. This could be due to the specific content of the faculty trust in students and parents questions.

Further analysis identified three provisional categories that were represented horizontally across all three properties Internal Forces/Academic (IFA), School Resources/Academic (SRA), and Teacher Interpersonal Relations/Behavioral (TIRB). These repeated representations were noted at low participant percentage levels ranging from 8% to 25%. Once again, other than the three provisional categories noted above, provisional categories were not found to be repeated between the properties of academic emphasis and faculty trust in students and parents. The individual and collective representations of these provisional categories and their respective collapsed respondent percentages can be found in Table VII.

During the constant comparative analysis process, themes began to emerge related to the provisional categories and in turn, the properties of academic optimism. These themes focused upon the school, teachers, students, community, and parents (Table IV). Academic emphasis was evident in the themes: What Schools Have in Place and Do, What Teachers Have and Do, What Students Have and Do, and What Parents Have and Do. Collective efficacy appeared in the themes: What Schools Have in Place and Do, What Teachers Have and Do, What Students Have and Do, What the Community Has in Place and Does, and What Parents Have and Do. Faculty trust in students and parents was found in the following themes: What Schools Have in Place and Do, What Teachers Have and Do, What Students Have and Do, and What Parents Have and Do. Collective efficacy was the only property that appeared in the What the Community Has in Place and Does theme. Academic emphasis was represented slightly in What Students Have

and Do and What Parents Have and Do and faculty trust was represented slightly in What Schools Have in Place and Do. This slight representation could again be related to the specific intent and nature of the original interview questions.

The Relationship of Academic Optimism with State Student Achievement and AYP Standards

Data from this study were affiliated with three separate school years. The schools that were selected for the study were chosen based upon their state and federal statistics available from the previous 2005-06 school year. Surveys were administered to the teachers of two selected high schools within the same urban district before the close of the 2006-07 school year. Individual interviews were then conducted and completed during the first quarter of the 2007-08 school year.

The achievement statistics indicated that the high-performing school met AYP requirements and met 100% of the state indicators for achievement, attendance, and graduation for the 2005-06 school year. The achievement statistics revealed that the lower-performing school did not meet AYP requirements for the 2005-06 school year and met 25% of the state indicators for achievement, attendance, and graduation for that same school year.

The surveys that were conducted before the close of the 2006-07 school were later compared with the federal and state achievement statistics that represented the 2006-07 school year (available and posted a few months after the close of the school year). The achievement statistics indicated that the high-performing school still met AYP requirements and still met 100% of the state indicators for achievement, attendance, and graduation for the 2006-07 school. The achievement statistics revealed that the lower-

performing school now met AYP requirements for the 2006-07 school year and now met 33% of the state indicators for achievement, attendance, and graduation for the same school year.

Survey results from the high- and lower-performing high schools indicated that both schools had levels of academic emphasis, collective efficacy, and faculty trust in students and parents that were represented in the average range. Although both high schools now met AYP requirements for the 2006-07 school year, the lower-performing school still only met 33% of the state achievement, attendance, and graduation requirements for the same school year. How could two schools with similar measures of the properties of academic optimism meet state achievement, attendance, and graduation requirements at such different percentage levels? Perhaps further exploration of the novel provisional categories related to schools, teachers, students, and parents would provide further clarification. Further examinations of the characteristics of academic emphasis related to curriculum (specified in state models) and assessment measures could also shed some light on the achievement differences between the two high schools.

A sample size of two makes the predictive value of this study problematic. However, the survey measures can be utilized to illuminate the findings of the three properties evident in the schools.

The Practices in High Schools That Demonstrate Academic Emphasis, Collective Efficacy, and Faculty Trust in Students and Parents That Comprise Academic Optimism: A Tale of Two Schools

Narrative overview.

Our stories are lived experiences to which we, in concert with others, give meaning to those experiences (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994, p. 38).

> It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of Light, it was the season of Darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair, we had everything before us, we had nothing before us… (Dickens, 1859/1997, p. 13)

School leaders have related to the opening lines of Dickens' Tale of Two Cities to describe the educational landscapes that they have straddled during the course of their professional careers. The following narrative describes the tale of two schools summarized from this study's interview data that depicted how academic emphasis, collective efficacy, and faculty trust in students and parents were represented at a high- (referred to as School H) and lower-performing high school (referred to as School L). This narrative is based upon the similarities and differences reflected in respondent percentages of provisional categories generated from the interview responses (Table VIII) in addition to the similarities and differences reflected in the per question interview responses of the lead principal for each school.

> Remember the accordionist who was pulling apart the bellows of her musical instrument, in preparation for the harmonic synthesis? It is time to carefully and systematically squeeze the bellows (the data) together to create a sight and sound somewhat different but accurately reflective of the data with which you started. (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994, p. 143)

Prologue.

Once upon a time, (in the recent past) there were two urban high schools with different demographic profiles. School H met all AYP and state achievement requirements for the past two school years and School L met AYP, and less than half of the state achievement requirements for the past school year. Despite their demographic and achievement differences, there were a number of common ways and some different ways that academic emphasis, collective efficacy, and faculty trust in students and parents were depicted in each school.

Academic emphasis emphasized.

Academic emphasis was described by teachers in each school in a number of comparable ways. Attendance, homework, classroom quizzes and tests, state achievement tests, PSAT/SAT/ACT exams, diplomas, and scholarships were described as the means that students accomplished the academic goals of both schools. School programs and initiatives that included honors and AP courses, along with clearly cited academic expectations, were examples of high academic standards for the schools. Teacher practices that involved different methods of teaching, a variety of assignments, pacing adjustments, re-teaching, re-evaluation, relevant student work, and assignment/ assessment modifications indicated that teachers believed that students in their school had the ability to achieve academically. School plans, procedures and protocols that consisted of school rules, classroom rules, routines, hallway monitoring, and immediate intervention/removal/consequences for disruptions were ways that an orderly and serious learning environment was portrayed. Both schools acknowledged student achievement

by publishing and posting lists within the school and local community of students who attained attendance, honor roll, and merit roll goals.

Teachers from School H and School L displayed some differences about the representation of academic emphasis in their schools. More teachers in School H talked about school resources, such as certified/licensed staff that supervised and monitored student behavior. More teachers also expressed how staff and parents served as external forces to guide and support student achievement, how students were admitted into honorary programs and organizations, and how special recognition events were scheduled throughout the year to recognize and celebrate academic achievement.

Collective efficacy collected.

Collective efficacy was also illustrated in both School H and School L in a variety of comparable ways. Teachers from both schools narrated the numerous ways that the school provided programs and initiatives to offer tutoring and help sessions at various times and in various formats before, during, and after the school day. Teachers characterized their ongoing efforts of availability, one-on-one attention, encouragement, and extra time during and after class time to support their beliefs regarding the academic achievement of all students. Teachers related the ways that their practices motivated all students and reached the most difficult students. These teacher practices focused upon teachable moments, interesting material, building upon previous results and successes, and relating to the students. Practices also involved differentiated instruction, a variety of instructional strategies, modified teaching styles, alternative assignments, guest speakers, humor, and creativity. They acknowledged how the community provided role models, mentoring, and pastoral services; hosted holiday activities; sponsored institutions/

facilities/organizations, such as the library, community center, boys/girls clubs, Upward Bound, and Veterans of Foreign Wars; and provided jobs and work experiences as an extension of career education programs to support and ensure student learning. Teachers in School H and School L spoke of their keen understanding of the societal factors that impacted their learning institutions and clientele, and acknowledged the relationship between student learning and students' worries about their safety. Teachers in both schools also recounted how professional development experiences regarding drugs and alcohol also helped them acknowledge how drug and alcohol abuse in the surrounding community impacted student learning.

There were some differences displayed by the teachers from School H and L about the representation of collective efficacy in their schools. More teachers from School L expressed how collective efficacy was related to student behavior topics. Teachers from this school revealed how their efforts during and after class time made an impact on student behavior. Such efforts included providing praise, attention, and motivation for students and did not involve embarrassing students or calling them out in front of their peers. Teachers in School L also related how communicating one-on-one at various times and places in school with students built relationships that impacted student behavior.

Faculty trust in students and parents entrusted.

Teachers from School H and L had thoughts and beliefs about faculty trust in students and parents, but not to the same degree that they expressed their thoughts and beliefs about academic emphasis and collective efficacy. Some teachers believed that there was low trust in students and some teachers believed that there was high trust in

students. Teachers expressed concerns about school and personal property, cheating, and the need for constant supervision, yet articulated praise about student jobs and responsibilities throughout the school. Some teachers believed that there was low trust in students' parents while some teachers believed that there was high trust in students' parents. Teachers verbalized examples of the discrepancy between what some parents said to the teachers on the phone and in conferences and what actually transpired back in the home setting with the student, yet voiced their appreciation for parent initiated phone calls and parent attendance at school meetings and conferences. Some teachers believed that there was low parent support and some teachers believed that there was high parent support. Teachers conveyed their frustration with the inconsistency of the manner and amount of time that parents were supportive, yet communicated their appreciation of parent-initiated contacts about student achievement and the ways parents volunteer to support extracurricular activities and school events.

Neither school displayed an overwhelming representation of trust/support levels regarding the students and parents in their schools. Nor were representation levels high in any of the topics/categories that involved faculty trust in students and parents. Teachers in School H even suggested that perhaps students were being trusted too much with responsibilities that were geared more for adults in the school environment.

Philosophies about trust in students and expectations about trust in students and counting on students to do their work were delineated by the teachers of both schools. Philosophical beliefs and expectations about mutual trust, relative trustworthiness, and respect were expressed. Teachers also revealed their expectations about students being counted on to do their work were relative to the learning profiles of students and specific

situations. Teacher awareness of the causes for students not completing their work, such as personal issues, and teacher efforts to support students under various circumstances were revealed on a small scale.

Some teacher explanations about faculty trust in students and parents introduced issues and expectations that students and parents also had regarding school and their own personal lives. These teachers understood that students come to school with expectations to receive relevant school work with corresponding rewards for completion of the work. They also understood that the responsibilities, constraints, and personal issues of parents working two and three jobs impacted parent support and school involvement.

The principle view of principals.

School H and School L had lead building principals who shared a majority of the same perceptions, as their teachers had, about the representation of academic emphasis, collective efficacy, and faculty trust in students and parents in their two high schools. Both principals acknowledged the presence of academic emphasis through their descriptions of the plans, climate, and practices that help students achieve the goals of their schools; the grading scales and grading rubrics that teachers used to demonstrate high academic standards; the types of projects and assignments that were completed to illustrate teacher beliefs that all students can achieve academically; the supervision of building hallways that reinforced a serious and orderly learning environment; and the organizations, events, and assemblies that were in place to acknowledge academic achievement.

Both principals revealed how collective efficacy was reflected openly in their schools through the help and tutoring efforts that teachers provided during/before/after

school to demonstrate that they were able to help all students achieve; the resource staff, differentiated instruction, courses, activities, and relationship building that were implemented to get through to difficult students; the accomplishments on state achievement assessments, mentorships, and positive reinforcements given to students which indicated that teachers were confident that they were able to motivate their students; and the strong pastoral ministry support present in the school community that helped to ensure student learning.

Each principal also related how collective efficacy was reflected differently in their schools. Teacher acknowledgement of student learning related to student safety was summarized in a different manner for each building. The principal of School H expressed that the students and staff perceived their school itself as a safe place with resources to solve problems when needed. The principal of School L recounted that safety was an issue always at the forefront and that both students and teachers were aware of the factors that impact safety. Presentations in School L provided opportunities to build student and staff awareness about safety and address the concerns that impact the school and community. The principal of School L also depicted that the veteran staff members, now teachers of the next generation of students from the school neighborhood, were aware of and addressed the issues of drug and alcohol abuse in the community that impacted student learning. Staff awareness that was built through professional development and direct knowledge of student use kept this issue and challenge at the forefront in School L.

Principals characterized the differences about teacher trust in students in School H and School L. The principal of School H recounted that students were generally trusted

for the first few times until the teachers knew differently and perhaps at times trusted too much under certain circumstances. The principal of School L expressed that not many of the teachers in the school trusted their students with school and personal belongings. This principal also illustrated that students themselves were faced with trust issues in their own homes and usually carried their special personal belongings around with them at all times.

A final difference was characterized by the two principals regarding the ways that students could be counted on to do their work. The principal of School H outlined if the work were interesting, challenging, different, not perceived as busy work, and applicable to real life, that it would get done. The principal of School L explained that if someone were standing over the students, the work would get done. This principal further described that students liked it when adults were directly involved with their homework because students don't get that interaction at home, their parents often work two jobs, and students liked the attention.

Epilogue.

There were numerous ways that academic emphasis, collective efficacy, and faculty trust in students and parents were represented and illustrated by the teachers and principals of the two schools summarized above. Most of the properties of academic optimism were commonly expressed in the tales of both schools. Some of the properties were not. Ongoing efforts to probe further would reveal more examples and new tales of the presence of academic optimism in high school settings.

"This story's end is another story's beginning. . . . Learning about learning is a continuous, infinite process. These lived and told stories and the talk about the stories are

one of the ways that we fill our world with meaning and enlist one another's assistance in building lives and communities" (Clandinin & Rosiek, 2007, p. 35).

Implications

This study was able to respond to the call of researchers from the original studies about academic optimism (Hoy et al., 2006a, 2006b) to design and conduct a qualitative and quantitative inquiry to elaborate upon the theory of academic optimism and its corresponding properties. This study was able to establish that academic optimism was present in two urban high schools with very different demographic profiles. Survey results indicated that both high schools displayed average levels of academic emphasis, collective efficacy, and faculty trust in students and parents. A closer qualitative analysis of teacher and principal interview data illustrated how the three properties of academic emphasis were represented in two high school settings.

Provisional Categories

The analysis of the teacher and principal interview data resulted in the development of nearly 70 provisional categories with accompanying rules of inclusion (Appendices B, C, and D) which describe attributes/conditions/practices affiliated with academic emphasis, collective efficacy, and faculty trust in students and parents at the high school level. These provisional categories provide a foundation for additional research and dialogue about the properties of academic optimism at the high school level.

Secondary Level Themes

The secondary level themes (Table IV) that emerged from the interview data analysis offer another window to view the foundational components of academic optimism according to what schools/communities have in place and do to support

academic achievement and what teachers/students/parents have and do to facilitate academic achievement. These themes represent the roles and responsibilities that interface with the development and impact of academic emphasis, collective efficacy, and faculty trust in students and parents.

The emergence of the secondary themes emphasized school, teachers, students, parents, and community as shared stakeholders in the educational process. Provisional categories evolved from the analysis of the faculty trust in students and parents question responses that focused upon what students and parents bring with them to school and what impacts their lives outside of school. Students bring disposition/traits, past experiences, and worries to the learning table. They also have expectations, reactions, and opinions about what the teaching/learning process should entail. Parents bring past experiences, concerns, talents, and resources to the learning table (whenever they are able to be present). Parents also have expectations, responsibilities, personal constraints, and personal issues that impact their roles in this process. Present consideration and further exploration of these notions are necessary in order to better serve students and parents.

The emergence of the secondary themes also indicated that community plays an important role in supporting academic achievement through collective efficacy. The community provides institutions/facilities/organizations, services, activities, jobs/work experiences, and spiritual support. Both building principals cited several examples of the collaborative pastoral support that is available to the students from the community. Further cultivation of the collective support from community sources will enhance the efforts of the schools.

Similarities and Differences

Teacher representation of academic emphasis and collective efficacy was comparable in the high- and lower-performing high schools. However, differences were also apparent. More high-performing teacher participants talked about some aspects of academic emphasis (resources, external support for students, honorary programs, and special event programs) than the lower-performing school participants. More lower-performing school teacher participants outlined aspects of collective efficacy (teacher efforts and interpersonal relations) related to the impact on student behavior than the higher-performing school participants.

Faculty Trust in Students and Parents

The findings about faculty trust in students and parents generated both interest and concerns. Most of the disaggregated provisional category response percentages of faculty trust in students and parents found in Table VIII were not overwhelming high. Thirty-three provisional categories were identified from the data analysis of the faculty trust in students and parents question responses (Table VI) (approximately 30% more categories than academic emphasis and collective efficacy). The larger number of provisional categories illustrates the complex and multi-dimensional nature of this academic optimism property. There is a need to conduct more inquiries to garner further insights into this construct. This need was also expressed by Hoy et al. (2006a) in the following statement: **. . . "**there is little systematic research on how to build authentic trust . . . much more research is needed about what programs and factors support the development of teachers' trust in parents and students (pp. 441-442).

Perhaps a closer look at the facets of trust (benevolence, reliability, competence, honesty, and openness) previously conducted by Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2000) and a reexamination of previous research on teacher-parent trust, teacher-student trust, and faculty trust in students and parents (Bryk & Schneider, 2002; Goddard et al., 2001; Hoy, 2002; Hoy, Smith, & Sweetland, 2002; Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 1999, 2003; Smith, Hoy, & Sweetland, 2001) could provide direction for better research models and inquiries. Another recent study that linked faculty trust with school mindfulness (Hoy, Gage, & Tarter, 2006) could also be revisited.

Safety/Drug and Alcohol Abuse/Trust/Support

The pronounced differences between the responses of the building principals of the high- and lower-performing schools regarding collective efficacy and faculty trust in students and parents warrants additional examination. The principal of the lower-performing school expressed that safety concerns and drug/alcohol abuse issues in the community had an impact upon student learning. This principal also indicated that not many of the teachers in the school trusted their students with school/teacher belongings and that students required direct adult support in order to complete work assignments. These concerns about confidence and trust in students reinforced the previous recommendation for a closer examination of the faculty trust property.

Property Levels and AYP/State Mandated Achievement Requirements

The high- and lower-performing schools had academic emphasis, collective efficacy, and faculty trust in students and parents levels that fell within the same average range. Knowing that approximately 70% of schools would typically fall within this range, what else would account for the differences of the attainment levels of the state

achievement indicators of the high-performing (100%) and the lower-performing school (33%)?

Both schools met AYP requirements for the 2006-07 school year. Increases in the math and reading benchmarks and graduation formula for the 2007-08 will impact all high schools in the country, including the two schools in this study.

The past research of academic optimism at the high school level provides "clarification of some of the significant linkages within schools that influence student achievement . . . and emphasizes the potential of schools to overcome the power of socioeconomic factors that impair student achievement" (Hoy et al., 2006a, pp.442-443). The identification of the provisional categories and emergent secondary level themes did indeed reinforce these claims. What else could explain why the lower-performing school is still only achieving 33% of the state achievement indicators?

Discussions with representatives from the state department of education would suggest a closer examination of the actual curriculum being delivered and assessment practices being implemented to monitor academic progress. In other words, what is actually being "emphasized" in academic emphasis endeavors and how can those efforts be measured. Bringing the principals, teachers, students, parents, and community into the analysis and discussion is a necessary step. Also keeping the trust, safety, and drug/alcohol use issues and student/parent needs and concerns that evolved from this study in the forefront will benefit academic achievement improvement efforts. Much more study and work lie ahead to address and resolve this achievement dilemma.

Limitations of the Study

The findings of this study are representative of two urban high schools that were involved. Other limitations of the study include the following considerations:

- The high- and lower-performing high schools both had academic emphasis, collective efficacy, and faculty trust in students and parents levels that fell within the average range. This similarity did not allow for the exploration of possible differences between schools with high and low representations of academic optimism properties.
- The research study was not developed and implemented within the same school year. Achievement data were one year delayed. Teacher surveys and teacher/principal interviews straddled over the 2006-07 and 2007-08 school years.
- The high schools selected for the study had different demographic profiles which limited comparative opportunities.
- Fifteen of the original 30 survey questions were adapted and incorporated into the interview process.
- Academic emphasis, collective efficacy, and faculty trust in students and parents levels were calculated from the survey instruments that were administered and collected from the teachers that attended the staff meeting (85% representing the high- and 74% representing the lower-performing school) on the designated survey administration date.

Recommendations for Future Studies

Academic optimism attempts to explain and nurture what is best in schools to facilitate student learning. This simple conclusion should encourage teachers and principals to move forward with confidence, knowing many of the significant links within schools that influence student achievement (Hoy et al., 2006a). The present study drew upon the claims of this past study in order to gain a deeper understanding of the presence and impact of academic optimism in the high school setting. However, more research is needed to explore the concepts, issues, and questions that surfaced from the current study. The following research prospects are offered for review, consideration, and future implementation:

- Return to the high schools represented in the existing study and conduct a case study to identify examples and collect artifacts that demonstrate the presence of academic emphasis, collective efficacy, and faculty trust in students and parents. Then compare the examples and artifacts with the provisional categories and secondary level themes that emerged from the existing study.
- Return to the high schools represented in the present study and interview students and parents to learn about the presence and impact of academic emphasis, collective efficacy, and faculty trust in students and parents through the eyes of another stakeholder group.
- Return to the high schools represented in the study to explore similarities and differences in curriculum/instruction/formative assessment practices to identify what is being "emphasized" as part of academic emphasis in order to understand the differences of their building achievement profiles.

- Identify two or more high schools with similar demographic profiles and contrasting achievement level profiles and repeat the existing study to identify similarities and differences between the schools and the studies.
- Identify two or more high schools that have high and low levels of academic emphasis, collective efficacy, and faculty trust in students and parents and conduct interviews with the teachers and principals of these schools to identify possible differences in the representation of these academic optimism properties.
- Explore the notion of community support as a subcomponent of collective efficacy through principal and community leader interviews.

Conclusion

This study adds to the existing research base of academic optimism at the high school level (Hoy et al., 2006a). The properties of academic optimism (academic emphasis, collective efficacy, and faculty trust in students and parents) were found to be present in two urban high schools from the same district at a similar average level. Provisional categories (attributes/conditions/practices) and secondary level themes (roles and responsibilities) were identified that describe the presence and impact of the properties of academic optimism. Academic emphasis, collective efficacy, and faculty trust in students and parents were found to manifest themselves individually, in pairs, and collectively in various manners throughout the school setting. Further studies need to be conducted to explore the relationships among academic optimism, other school constructs, and the contrasting achievement profiles of the two high schools represented in this study.

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APPENDIX

APPENDIX A

CATEGORIES AND CODES

Category	Code
Accomplishments	AC
Admittance into Programs or Organizations	APO
Award Events	AEV
Case Examples/Drug and Alcohol	CEXDA
Climate	C
Community Activities	CA
Discriminate Expectations/Confidence in Students/Student Work	DEXCSSW
Discriminate/Trust in Students	DTS
Expectations/Academic	EXA
Expectations/Behavioral	EXB
Expectations/Confidence in Students/Student Work	EXCSSW
Expectations/Parental Support	EXPS
Expectations/Trust in Students	EXST
Expectations/Trust in Students' Parents	EXTSP
External Forces/Academic	EFA
External Forces/Behavioral	EFB
High Parent Support	HPS
High/Trust in Students	HTS
High/Trust in Students' Parents	HTSP
Institutions/Facilities/Organizations	IFO
Internal Forces/Academic	IFA
Internal Forces/Behavioral	IFB
Jobs/Work Experience	JWE
Low Parent Support	LPS
Low/Trust in Students	LTS
Low/Trust in Students' Parents	LTSP
Not Concerned	NC
Parents/Community	PC
Parent Expectations/Academic	PEXA
Parent Responsibilities/Constraints/Personal Issues	PRCPI
Philosophy/Academic	PHA
Philosophy/Confidence in Students/Student Work	PHCSSW
Philosophy/Parental Support	PHPS
Philosophy/Safety	PHS
Philosophy/Trust in Students	PHTS
Philosophy/Trust in Students' Parents	PHTSP
Post Secondary	PSEC
Professional Development	PD
Provide Services	PS
Publish	PB
School Programs and Initiatives/Academic	SPIA
School Programs and Initiatives/Behavioral	SPIB

Appendix A (continued) Categories and Codes

Category	Code
School Resources/Academic	SRA
School Resources/Behavioral	SRB
School Structures/Academic	SSA
School Structures/Behavioral	SSB
School-wide Rewards	SWR
Student Efforts/Academic	STEA
Student Expectations/Academic	STEXA
Student Reactions/Safety	STRS
Student Reactions/Trust	STRT
Students Responsibilities/Constraints/Personal Issues	STRCPI
Support Sports	SPSP
Teacher Awareness	TA
Teacher Classroom Management	TCM
Teacher Efforts/Academic	TEA
Teacher Efforts/Behavioral	TEB
Teacher Frustrations	TF
Teacher Interpersonal Relations/Academic	TIRA
Teacher Interpersonal Relations/Behavioral	TIRB
Teacher/Parent Interactions/Parental Support	TPIPS
Teacher/Parent Interactions/Trust in Students' Parents	TPITSP
Teacher Practices/Academic	TPA
Teacher Precautions	TPR
Teacher Rewards/Academic	TRA
Teacher Traits/Academic	TTRA
Too Much/Trust in Students	TMTS

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APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW RESULTS FOR ACADEMIC EMPHASIS

Category	Code	Rule	Question #/Frequency of Respondents
Accomplishments	AC	Students achieve school goals by using skills and knowledge to fulfill course requirements and attain mastery benchmarks.	1/83% 2/33% 3/8%
Admittance into Programs or Organizations	APO	Students who demonstrate academic performances according to designated criteria are admitted into honorary programs and organizations.	5/58%
Award Events	AEV	Students receive awards at special recognition events scheduled throughout the school year to celebrate student academic achievement.	5/75%
Climate	C	A safe learning environment is a prerequisite condition for student academic achievement.	1/17% 4/8%
Expectations/Academic	EXA	Expectations and standards of student academic achievement are evident in the school culture.	1/17% 2/50% 3/8%
Expectations/Behavioral	EXB	Expectations of student behavior are evident in the school culture.	4/33%
External Forces/Academic	EFA	Teachers, staff and parents influence student academic achievement through involvement, guidance, and support.	1/42% 2/8% 3/8%
Internal Forces/Academic	IFA	Student predispositions and traits impact student academic achievement.	1/33% 3/8%
Philosophy/Academic	PHA	Values and beliefs about student academic achievement are displayed in the thoughts and actions of teachers and principals in the school setting.	3/8%

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Appendix B (continued) Interview Results for Academic Emphasis

Category	Code	Rule	Question #/Frequency of Respondents
Post Secondary	PSec	College acceptances and scholarship awards validate the post-secondary preparatory efforts of the school.	2/17%
Publish	PB	Student accomplishments are printed, posted and distributed throughout the school and community.	5/92%
School Programs and Initiatives/ Academic	SPIA	Schools provide specific programs and initiatives to improve the academic achievement levels of students.	1/50% 2/67% 3/50%
School Programs and Initiatives/ Behavioral	SPIB	Schools provide specific programs and initiatives to improve student behavior.	4/33%
School Resources/Academic	SRA	Certified and licensed personnel have roles and responsibilities to instruct, monitor and remediate the academic achievement outcomes of students.	1/17% 3/25%
School Resources/Behavioral	SRB	Certified and licensed personnel have roles and responsibilities to supervise and monitor student behavior.	4/33%
School Structures/Academic	SSA	School operational norms include plans, procedures, and protocols that foster student academic achievement.	1/8%
School Structures/Behavioral	SSB	School operational norms include plans, procedures, and protocols to direct, monitor, and modify student behavior.	4/75%
School-wide Rewards	SWR	Students who attain academic goals become eligible to attend special activities, programs, trips, and events.	5/75%
Teacher Classroom Management	TCM	The organization and management of the learning environment impacts student behavior, learning, and academic achievement.	4/42%
Teacher Interpersonal Relations/ Behavioral	TIRB	Teacher communications with students build relationships that impact student behavior.	4/8%

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Appendix B (continued) Interview Results for Academic Emphasis

Category	Code	Rule	Question #/Frequency of Respondents
Teacher Practices/Academic	TPA	Instructional strategies and assessment techniques impact student learning and academic performance.	1/8% 2/8% 3/58% 4/17%
Teacher Rewards/Academic	TRA	Individual teachers have strategies and issue their own grades/rewards for academic achievement in their respective classrooms.	5/58%

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APPENDIX C

INTERVIEW RESULTS FOR COLLECTIVE EFFICACY

Category	Code	Rule	Question #/Frequency of Respondents
Accomplishments	AC	Students achieve school goals by using skills and knowledge to fulfill course requirements and attain mastery benchmarks.	8/25%
Case Examples/Drug and Alcohol	CEXDA	Teachers site examples of the impact that drug and alcohol abuse have upon learning in the school setting.	11/25%
Community Activities	CA	The community hosts yearly events that provide opportunities for school stakeholders and local community members to interact and build mutual relationships.	9/42%
Expectations/Academic	EXA	Student academic expectations are evident in the school culture.	6/8%
Expectations/Behavioral	EXB	Student behavioral expectations are evident in the school culture.	7/25% 10/17%
External Forces/Academic	EFA	Teachers, staff, and parents influence student achievement through involvement, guidance, and support.	6/8%
External Forces/Behavioral	EFB	Teachers, staff members, and parents influence student behavior through involvement, guidance, and support.	11/25%
Institutions/Facilities/ Organizations	IFO	Institutions, facilities and organizations throughout the surrounding community serve several functions to support the needs of the school community.	9/42% 11/8%
Internal Forces/Academic	IFA	Student predispositions and traits impact student academic achievement.	8/17%
Internal Forces/Behavioral	IFB	Student predispositions and traits impact student behavior.	7/17%

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Appendix C (continued) Interview Results for Collective Efficacy

Category	Code	Rule	Question #/Frequency of Respondents
Jobs/Work Experience	JWE	Students perform jobs and receive work experience in the school community as an extension of school career education programs.	9/58%
Not Concerned	NC	Some teachers express opinions that safety is not a concern for students in their school.	10/33%
Parents/Community	PC	Parents interface with both the school and the local community in ways to support their child's learning.	9/17%
Philosophy/Academic	PHA	Values and beliefs about student academic achievement are displayed in the thoughts and actions of teachers and principals in the school setting.	6/67% 8/8%
Philosophy/Safety	PHS	Values and beliefs about student safety are displayed in the thoughts and actions of teachers and principals in the school setting.	10/33%
Professional Development	PD	Teachers attend professional development experiences to expand their knowledge base and enhance classroom practices.	8/17% 10/25% 11/50%
Provide Services	PS	Members of the surrounding community provide numerous services to the school community.	9/33%
School Programs and Initiatives/ Academic	SPIA	Schools provide specific programs and initiatives to improve the academic achievement levels of students.	6/58% 7/17% 8/25%
School Programs and Initiatives/ Behavioral	SPIB	Schools provide specific programs and initiatives to improve student behavior.	7/25% 10/8% 11/8%

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Appendix C (continued) Interview Results for Collective Efficacy

Category	Code	Rule	Question #/Frequency of Respondents
School Resources/Academic	SRA	Certified and licensed personnel have roles and responsibilities to instruct, monitor, and remediate the academic achievement outcomes of students.	6/17% 8/33%
School Resources/Behavioral	SRB	Certified and licensed personnel have roles and responsibilities to supervise and modify student behavior.	7/25% 10/25% 11/17%
School Structure/Behavioral	SSB	School operational norms include plans, procedures, and protocol to direct, monitor, and modify student behavior.	10/50%
Student Reactions/Safety	STRS	Students have reactions and opinions regarding school safety issues.	10/25%
Student Responsibilities/ Constraints/Personal Issues	STRCPI	Students have personal circumstances that impact behavior, learning and academic achievements.	11/33%
Support Sports	SPSP	The surrounding community traditionally attends school sporting events which extend from the school athletic program.	9/33%
Teacher Awareness	TA	Teachers are conscious of the societal factors that impact learning institutions and their stakeholder groups.	7/25% 10/75% 11/75%
Teacher Classroom Management	TCM	The organization and management of the learning environment impacts student behavior, learning, and academic achievement.	7/8%
Teacher Efforts/Academic	TEA	Teacher efforts during and after class time support the academic achievement of students.	6/67% 8/17% 10/17%
Teacher Efforts/Behavioral	TEB	Teacher efforts during and after class time make an impact on student behavior.	7/33% 10/17% 11/8%

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Appendix C (continued) Interview Results for Collective Efficacy

Category	Code	Rule	Question #/Frequency of Respondents
Teacher Frustrations	TF	Teachers express frustrations about the challenges involved with performing their professional responsibilities.	7/8% 8/8%
Teacher Interpersonal Relations/ Academic	TIRA	Teacher communications with students build relationships that facilitate student academic achievement.	6/17% 8/8%
Teacher Interpersonal Relations/ Behavioral	TIRB	Teacher communications with students build relationships that impact student behavior.	7/42%
Teacher Practices/Academic	TPA	Instructional strategies and assessment techniques impact student learning and academic performance.	6/42% 7/42% 8/67%
Teacher Rewards/Academic	TRA	Individual teachers have strategies and issue their own grades/ rewards for academic achievement in their respective classrooms.	8/25%
Teacher Traits/Academic	TTRA	Affective teacher personality traits promote student academic achievement.	6/17% 8/8%

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APPENDIX D

INTERVIEW RESULTS FOR FACULTY TRUST IN STUDENTS AND PARENTS

Category	Code	Rule	Question #/Frequency of Respondents
Discriminate Expectations/ Confidence in Students/Student Work	DEXCSSW	Teachers describe evidence that levels of teacher confidence in students being counted on to do their work are shown discriminately according to student learning profiles.	14/8%
Discriminate/Trust in Students	DTS	Teachers describe evidence that levels of teacher trust in students are shown discriminately according to student learning profiles.	12/33%
Expectations/Confidence in Students/Student Work	EXCSSW	Teacher expectations of students being counted on to do their work are evident in the school culture.	14/42%
Expectations/Parental Support	EXPS	Teacher expectations of parental support are evident in the school culture.	15/17%
Expectations/Trust in Students	EXST	Teacher trust expectations of students are evident in the school culture.	12/33%
Expectations/Trust in Students' Parents	EXTSP	Expectations of teacher trust in students' parents are evident in the school culture.	13/17%
High Parent Support	HPS	Teachers describe evidence that levels of parental support are high.	15/75%
High/Trust in Students	HTS	Teachers describe evidence that levels of teacher trust in students are high.	12/50%
High/Trust in Students' Parents	HTSP	Teachers describe evidence that levels of teacher trust in students' parents are high.	13/50%
Internal Forces/Academic	IFA	Student predispositions and traits impact student academic achievement.	14/33%
Low Parent Support	LPS	Teachers describe evidence that levels of parental support are low.	15/50%

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Appendix D (continued) Interview Results for Faculty Trust in Students and Parents

Category	Code	Rule	Question #/Frequency of Respondents
Low/Trust in Students	LTS	Teachers describe evidence that levels of teacher trust in students are low.	12/50%
Low/Trust in Students' Parents	LTSP	Teachers describe evidence that levels of teacher trust in students' parents are low.	13/33%
Parent Expectations/Academic	PEXA	Parents have expectations about their students' academic achievement.	15/17%
Parent Responsibility/ Constraints/Personal Issues	PRCPI	Parents have personal circumstances that impact their roles and responsibilities.	15/33%
Philosophy/Confidence in Students/Student Work	PHCSSW	Values and beliefs about teachers' confidence in students being counted on to do their work are displayed in the thoughts and actions of teachers and principals in the school setting.	14/17%
Philosophy/Parental Support	PHPS	Values and beliefs about parental support are displayed in the thoughts and actions of teachers and principals in the school setting.	15/8%
Philosophy/Trust in Students	PHTS	Values and beliefs about teacher trust in students are displayed in the thoughts and actions of teachers and principals in the school setting.	12/42%
Philosophy/Trust in Students' Parents	PHTSP	Values and beliefs about teacher trust in students' parents are displayed in the thoughts and actions of teachers and principals in the school setting.	13/17%
School Resources/Academic	SRA	Certified and licensed personnel have roles and responsibilities to instruct, monitor, and remediate the academic achievement outcomes of students.	14/17%
Student Efforts/Academic	STEA	Students display efforts to complete academic tasks.	14/25%
Student Expectations/Academic	STEXA	Student expectations of types and content of academic work are evident in the school culture.	14/42%

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Appendix D (continued) Interview Results for Faculty Trust in Students and Parents

Category	Code	Rule	Question #/Frequency of Respondents
Student Reactions/Trust	STRT	Students have reactions and opinions about trust issues in their immediate environments.	12/25%
Student Responsibilities/ Constraints/Personal Issues	STRCPI	Students have personal circumstances that impact behavior, learning and academic achievements.	14/25%
Teacher Awareness	TA	Teachers are conscious of the societal factors that impact learning institutions and their stakeholder groups.	13/17% 14/25% 15/25%
Teacher Efforts/Academic	TEA	Teacher efforts during and after class time support the academic achievement of students.	14/42%
Teacher Interpersonal Relations/ Academic	TIRA	Teacher communications with students build relationships that facilitate student academic achievement.	14/8%
Teacher Interpersonal Relations/ Behavioral	TIRB	Teacher communications with students build relationships that impact student behavior.	14/8%
Teacher/Parent Interactions/ Parental Support	TPIPS	Teacher interactions with students' parents relate to issues of parental support of those parents.	15/17%
Teacher/Parent Interactions/Trust in Students' Parents	TPITSP	Teacher interactions with students' parents relate to issues of teacher trust in those parents.	13/33%
Teacher Precautions	TPR	Teachers take measures to make their learning environments secure from attempted trust infractions.	12/25%
Too Much/Trust in Students	TMTS	Teachers describe evidence that levels of teacher trust in students are excessive.	12/25%