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Original Article

SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS' ACADEMIC OPTIMISM AND GRIT AS PREDICTORS OF BURNOUT

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ABSTRACT

Teachers play an essential part in influencing students' growth both academically and personally, yet their effectiveness can be impacted by psychological elements such as academic optimism, grit, and burnout. Academic optimism reflects teachers' positive beliefs that their instructional efforts, supportive relationships, and emphasis on academic success can lead to improved learning outcomes. Grit describes instructors' perseverance and persistent commitment to long-term objectives in the face of adversity. Burnout is a condition of physical, mental, and emotional exhaustion brought on by prolonged stress or workload. This quantitative study looked at how secondary school teachers perceived academic optimism, grit, and burnout. It also looked into how much academic optimism and grit predicted burnout. A cross-sectional, descriptive survey design was employed. A random sample procedure was used to identify female secondary school teachers from whom data were gathered. Data was gathered using standardized questionnaires for each dimension. Both descriptive and inferential statistical analysis were used to comprehend the data. The results provide significant new information about the psychological aspects affecting teachers' performance and well-being. The study provides evidence-based recommendations for school administrators and educational officials to create support programs that increase teacher resilience, boost academic optimism, and lessen burnout.

I. INTRODUCTION

This research examines the connections between female teachers in Punjab secondary schools in terms of academic optimism, grit, and burnout. Positive attitudes and ideas of a teacher towards her teaching capabilities, student learning and academic environment are called academic optimism. The word grit refers to the long-lasting interest and long-lasting effort of a teacher in long-term goals, which is characterized by relentless effort and interest over time. Nevertheless, teachers who are more grittyare usually motivated and not discouraged. The professional fatigue survey (CBI) is a test that assess burnout which is described as a situation of bodily and psychological tiredness due to continuous stress. Research conducted in Pakistan has examined instructors' academic optimism, emphasising its importance in learning environments (Ahmed, 2020; Khan, 2018). Academic optimism has been studied in secondary schools and other settings (Khan, 2018). The academic optimism has been recognized to be an important element of teacher achievement (Khan, 2018). The concept has also been analyzed regarding the teacher performance (Ahmed, 2020). Academic optimism has been recognized to be a main cause

behind teacher success (Khan, 2018). Grit has been widely researched all over the world, and it has shown its importance in success and solving problems Duckworth and colleagues (2007).

Grit has been repeatedly demonstrated to be a powerful index of intellectual achievement, more so than more traditional measures, such as talent and IQ (Duckworth & Quinn, 2009). Grit has also been associated with better performance in other areas, such as sports, business, and education (Duckworth & Eskreis-Winkler, 2014; Duckworth et al., 2007). Burnout is the state of physical and emotional exhaustion brought on by prolonged stress and excessive demands. A study has revealed the commonness and impact of burnout amids the secondary school teachers in Punjab (Khan, 2018). Due to their demanding professions and limited resources, teachers experience high levels of both burnouts related to work brought on by job pressures and personal burnout, which includes feelings of physical and psychological tiredness (Khan, 2018). Teachers' job satisfaction and instructional efficacy are adversely affected by burnout (Ali, 2019). Due to challenging working conditions like large class sizes, a lack of resources, and inadequate administrative support, secondary school teachers in Punjab also experience higher levels of burnout (Hassan, 2017). Teacher support and stress management initiatives have been proposed as the solutions to these issues to reduce the burnout and improve the wellbeing of teachers (Siddiqui, 2020). This study is expected to offers empirical evidence that can be used by policymakers and school administrators to pinpoint factors which ease teacher burnout. The results are in line with the development of professional development programs that facilitate academic optimism, perseverance, and resilience among teachers. Additionally, the research notifies strategies to permit teachers to cope with the qualified hurdles better and to reinforce the learning environment at the secondary level, which eventually leads to refined pupil performance and retention of the instructors.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Academic optimism is a multifaceted concept that shows positive attitudes of the teachers toward their capabilities in helping students to learn and succeed in their studies. It was originally proposed by Hoy et al. (2006) and refers to a characteristic that combines behavioural, affective and cognitive elements on teacher and school levels. Hoy et al. (2006) and Woolfolk Hoy et al. (2008) suggest that academic optimism is based on the belief that the attitude and beliefs of instructors as a group significantly influences teaching practices, learning conditions and overall student achievement. Grit is a nonintellectual character with its origin in positive psychology, which is depicted by a devotion to lasting goals and diligent work. Duckworth et al. (2007) formulated the idea to determine why some people succeed and survive after a big failure and disappointments. Grit emphasizes the need to be consistent and to have a strong will to achieve, especially in situations of failure, misfortune or stagnation. It also prioritises perseverance over inherent skill (Duckworth et al., 2007). Burnout is a psychological disorder which is occasioned by long-term and repeated exposures to work related stresses especially in human services professions, like teaching. According to Leiter et al. (2001), burnout within a teaching setting is a condition where teachers experience extreme emotional and physical fatigue as a result of overworking, time consideration, emotional demands and constant engagement with the students. The pressure of academic responsibility, the pressure of the tests, the management issues in the classroom, and the administrative work contribute to burnout especially in secondary teachers (Skaalvik and Skaalvik, 2017). Among the few psychological and ecological elements that affect teachers' well-being are academic optimism and grit, which are essential as preventative measures against burnout.

The psychological resources that reduce the impact of burnout include academic optimism and grit, although it is an undesirable professional outcome (Duckworth et al., 2007; Hoy et al., 2006). According to Hoy et al. (2006), academic hopefulness is a mixture of academic focus, reliance in the faculty, and shared teacher efficacy. It shows how teachers are devoted to academic success, expectations of high achievement among students and how they believe in their teaching skills. High academic optimism leads teachers to remain more engaged in their work, engage in proactive coping behaviours, and view challenges as manageable all of which minimise the risk of burnout (Thoonen et al., 2011). The empirical evidence from worldwide research supports this all-encompassing viewpoint. Thoonen et al. (2011) identified that those instructors who were more optimistic about their academic performance had reduced personal and work related burnout, whereas grit was a indicator of reduced student-

related burnout. Guo et al. (2019), state that grit plays a factor in maintaining motivation under pressure by partially mediating the association between teacher burnout and school support. High grit and academic optimism are highly linked to lower CBI burnout ratings across personal, related to work, and student related domains, according to Hodge et al. (2018) and Kim et al. (2020).

III. METHOD

This research used a quantitative approach. A causal comparative design was used to explore the links among academic optimism, grit, and burnout. In addition, a predictive approach (regression analysis) were included as the objective of the research was to discover to what extent academic optimism and grit may be predictors of burnout. Data were collected using a cross-sectional survey approach based on a structured questionnaire to gather information on the topic of academic optimism, grit, and burnout by the teachers of secondary schools. The population consisted of secondary school teachers in Punjab. 313 valid responses were obtained out of the 415 questionnaires that were issued. The part of the research study recorded important participant details such as age, qualification, teaching experience, job status, subject taught and marital status. The study employed three standardized and modified measures to assess the variables burnout, grit and academic optimism. The Teacher Academic Optimism Scale for Secondary Teachers was used to gauge academic optimism. The nine questions on this scale were divided into three subscales. A 5-point Likert scale was used to score the test. Grit was measured using the Short Grit Scale. This scale's eight items were split into two subscales. A 5-point Likert scale was used to measure the scale. The Copenhagen Burnout Inventory was used to measure burnout. Nineteen items total, split into three subscales, made up the scale. A 5-point Likert scale was also used to rank this scale. Quantitative data was analysed using the Statistical Package of the Social Sciences (SPSS).

III. RESULTS

Table I: Academic Optimism Scale Subscales with Number of Items

Sr. No	Subscales	Items
1	Teacher Sense of Self Efficacy (TSE)	1,2,3
2	Trust in Students and Parents (TSP)	4,5,6
3	Academic Emphasis (AE)	7,8,9

The table 1 represents the sub-scales of academic optimism and items included in each sub-scale. For the quantification, a five-point Likert-type rating scale, ranging from nothing (1) to a great deal (5), was used to score each item.

Table II: Short Grit Scale Subscales with Number of Items

Sr. No	Subscales	Items
1	Consistency of Interest	1,3,5,6
2	Perseverance of Effort	2,4,7,8

The grit sub-scales and the components that make up each sub-scale are shown in table 2. A five-point Likert-type rating scale, ranging from not like me at all (1) to very much like me (5), was used to score each item for the quantification.

Table III: CBI Scale Subscales with Number of Items

Sr. No	Subscales	Items
1	Personal Burnout (PB)	1,2,3,4,5,6
2	Work-Related Burnout (WB)	7,8,9,10,11,12,13
3	Client/Student-Related Burnout (SB)	14,15,16,17,18,19

The table 3 represents the sub-scales of burnout and items included in each sub-scale. For the quantification, a five-point Likert-type rating scale, ranging from never (1) to always (5), was used to score each item.

Table IV: Alpha Reliability Coefficients by Scale

Variables	Measuring Scale	*N*	Items	α
Academic Optimism	AO	30	9	0.88
Grit	Grit	30	8	0.87
Burnout	BO	30	19	0.91

The researcher collected the data on an individual basis. Prior to gathering the data, the appropriate authority was consulted. The responders were given an explanation of the research and the instrument. They were assured of anonymity and confidentiality. To analyse the data, the researcher employed both descriptive and inferential statistics.

Research Question I: What is the perception of secondary school teachers regarding academic optimism?

Table V: Descriptive Statistics of AO (Item Wise)

Items	Nothing	Very Little	Some Influence	Quite a Bit	A Great Deal
Item 1	10	21	64	69	149
Item 2	11	24	73	76	129
Item 3	17	24	47	77	148
Item 4	40	33	63	91	86
Item 5	32	39	71	84	87
Item 6	25	31	64	93	100
Item 7	23	34	69	75	112
Item 8	17	29	75	111	81
Item 9	23	27	65	84	114

Table VI: Alpha Reliability Coefficients by Scale

					Range			
Subscales	N	M	SD	MPI	Actua.	Potent.	Skew.	Kurt.
TSE	313	11.97	2.92	0.97	3-15	3-15	-0.84	0.14
TSP	313	10.65	3.54	1.18	3-15	3-15	-0.61	-0.47
AE	313	11.13	3.12	1.04	3-15	3-15	-0.78	-0.02
AO	313	33.75	7.85	0.87	11-45	9-45	-0.58	-0.26

The descriptive statistics of academic optimism based on secondary school teachers' replies are displayed in table 6. The skewness and kurtosis scores indicate that the data is roughly regularly distributed. The academic optimism sub-scales Teacher Self-Efficacy (TSE), Trust in Students and Parents (TSP), and Academic Emphasis (AE) are also included in the above table. The sub-scale TSE has a MPI value of 0.97. This value is close to the scale mark of Some Influence (1) on the 5-point Likert-type rating scale. TSP and AE sub-scales have a MPI value of 1.18 and 1.04 respectively. These two values are close to the scale mark of "Some Influence" (1) on 5-point Likert-type rating scale. The total MPI of the variable AO is 0.87 and also close to the scale mark of Some influence (1).

Table VII: Descriptive Statistics of Grit (Item Wise)

Items	*Not like me at all*	*Not much like me*	*Somewhat like me*	*Mostly like me*	*Very much like me*
Item 1	49	77	91	58	38
Item 2	33	46	91	87	56
Item 3	52	87	64	77	33
Item 4	27	39	62	87	98
Item 5	78	70	77	56	32
Item 6	82	71	69	60	31
Item 7	24	21	44	105	119
Item 8	16	22	41	87	147

Table VIII: Descriptive Statistics of Short Grit Scale (SGS)

					Range			
Subscales	*N*	*M*	*SD*	*MPI*	*Actua.*	*Potent.*	*Skew.*	*Kurt.*
CI	313	12.98	4.13	1.03	4-20	4-20	-0.04	-0.85
PE	313	14.81	3.69	0.92	4-20	4-20	-.088	0.46
Grit	313	27.79	7.24	0.90	8-40	8-40	-0.35	-0.18

The descriptive statistics of grit based on replies from secondary school instructors are shown in Table 8. The data are normally distributed, according to the skewness and kurtosis readings. The aforementioned chart also considers two sub-scales of grit: consistency of interest (CI) and perseverance of effort (PE). The sub-scale CI is 1.03. On a 5-point Likert-type rating scale, this result is close to the "Somewhat like me" (1) threshold. The sub-scale PE MPI score is 0.92 on a 5-point Likert-type rating scale, which is also close to the somewhat like me (1) scale threshold. Grit as a whole has an MPI value of 0.90, which is likewise near the "Somewhat like me" threshold on the scale (1).

Research Question III: What is the perception of secondary school teachers regarding burnout?

Table IX: Descriptive Statistics of CBI (Item Wise)

Items	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Always
Item 1	44	59	94	73	43
Item 2	37	73	97	59	47
Item 3	37	77	113	50	36
Item 4	47	77	90	54	45
Item 5	53	67	95	50	48
Item 6	49	79	91	51	43
Item 7	36	66	100	66	45
Item 8	55	73	87	55	43
Item 9	60	77	79	60	37
Item 10	35	47	80	96	55
Item 11	54	67	94	57	41
Item 12	65	72	82	53	43
Item 13	65	74	73	57	44
Item 14	54	64	84	78	33
Item 15	41	72	90	71	39
Item 16	46	74	79	74	40
Item 17	35	57	85	79	57
Item 18	55	57	81	74	46
Item 19	41	51	80	67	74

Table X: Descriptive Statistics of Copenhagen Burnout Inventory (CBI)

Subscales	N	M	SD	MPI	Range		Skew.	Kurt.
					Actua.	Potent.		
PB	313	17.66	5.87	0.98	6-30	6-30	0.18	-0.46
WB	313	20.51	6.89	0.98	7-35	7-35	0.31	-0.44
SB	313	18.33	6.10	1.02	6-30	6-30	-0.08	-0.81
BO	313	56.50	14.94	0.79	22-95	19-95	0.31	-0.39

The descriptive statistics of burnout based on secondary school teachers' replies are displayed in table 10. The skewness and kurtosis scores show that the data is almost regularly distributed. The above table additionally accounts for the burnout sub-scales, Personal Burnout (PB), Work-Related Burnout (WB), and Student-Related Burnout (SB). The sub-scale PB has an MPI value of 0.98. This score is close to the Sometimes (1) scale mark on the five-point Likert-type rating scale. The subscales WB and SB have MPI values of 0.98 and 1.02, respectively. Both of these figures are close to the Sometimes (1) scale threshold on a 5-point Likert-type rating scale. Similar to the Sometimes (1) scale level, the variable BO overall MPI is 0.

Research Question IV: Is there any relationship among academic optimism, grit and burnout among secondary school teachers?

Table XI: Relationship Among Academic Optimism, Grit and Burnout

Scales	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1. Teacher Self Efficacy	--										
2. Trust in Students and Parents	.38**	--									
3. Academic Emphasis	.41**	.69**	--								
4. Academic Optimism	.70**	.86**	.86**	--							
5. Consistency of Interest	.05	.09	.10	.10	--						
6. Perseverance of Effort	.17**	.21**	.26**	.26**	.71**	--					
7. Grit	.12*	.16**	.19**	.19**	.93**	.91**	--				
8. Personal Burnout	.01	-.02	-.01	-.01	.35**	.22**	.32**	--			
9. Work-related Burnout	-.19**	-.11*	-.03	-.13*	.33**	.16**	.27**	.51**	--		
10. Student-related Burnout	-.08	-.05	-.03	-.07	.38**	.17**	.30**	.27**	.51**	--	
11. Burnout	-.12*	-.08	-.03	-.09	.45**	.23**	.37**	.74**	.87**	.75**	--

*p< .05, **p< .01

The Pearson r correlations of SPSS are displayed in Table 10 to explore the connection between academic optimism, grit, and burnout. There is a weak or negative correlation between academic optimism and burnout, although there is a strong internal relationship. On the other hand, there are moderate to substantial positive correlations between all aspects of burnout and grit, especially consistency of interest. This demonstrates that grittier teachers surprise report higher levels of burnout.

Research Question V: What is the predictive contribution of academic optimism to teacher burnout?

Table XII: Model Summary[b] (N = 313)

Model	*R*	*R²*	*Adj. R²*	*Std. Error*	*F*	*P*
1	.098a	.010	.007	14.89	3.05	.082α

a. Predictor: (Constant) AO, b. Dependent Variable: BO

The above table additionally accounts for the burnout sub-scales, Personal Burnout (PB), Work-Related Burnout (WB), and Student-Related Burnout (SB). The sub-scale PB has an MPI value of 0.98. This score is close to the

Sometimes (1) scale mark on the five-point Likert-type rating scale. The subscales WB and SB have MPI values of 0.98 and 1.02, respectively. Both of these figures are close to the Sometimes (1) scale threshold on a 5-point Likert-type rating scale. Similar to the Sometimes (1) scale level, the variable BO overall MPI is 0.79.

Table XIII: Regression Coefficients[a] (N=313)

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
Model	*B*	SE_B	*β*	*t*	*P*
Constant	62.83	3.72		16.88	.00
AO	-.187	.107	-.098	-1.75	.082

The regression results for the association between academic optimism and burnout are shown in Table 13. Academic optimism and burnout have a negative connection, according to the unstandardised coefficient, meaning that the more academic optimism, the lower burnout. Nevertheless, this correlation was not statistically significant. Therefore, intellectual optimism is not a significant predictor of secondary school teacher burnout.

Research Question VI: What is the impact of grit on burnout among secondary school teachers?

Table XIV: Model Summary[b] (N = 313)

Model	*R*	R^2	*Adj.* R^2	*Std. Error*	*F*	*P*
1	.38a	.14	.14	13.86	51.45	.000α

a. Predictor: (Constant) Grit, b. Dependent Variable: BO

Table 14 shows the model description of a linear regression study examining the relationship between grit and burnout in secondary school teachers. The results indicate that grit accounts for 14% of the variance in burnout, with an adjusted R^2 of. The regression model showed that grit was a significant predictor of burnout in this population.

Table XV: Regression Coefficients[a] (N=313)

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
	B	SE_B	*β*	*t*	*P*
Constant	34.89	3.11		11.20	.000
Grit	.78	.108	.38	7.17	.000

a. Predictor: (Constant) Grit, b. Dependent Variable: BO

The regression results for the association between grit and burnout are displayed in Table 15. According to the unstandardized coefficient, there is a positive correlation between grit and burnout, suggesting that the stronger the grit, the higher the burnout. In this regard, there was statistical significance. Grit is therefore a strong positive predictor of burnout among secondary school teachers.

IV. DISCUSSION

Hoy et al. (2006), conceptualised academic hopefulness as a collective belief system in schools, which is consistent with the finding that secondary school tutors have fairly upper levels of academic optimism. Strong teacher self-efficacy, which Bandura (1997) found to be essential for effective teaching, is shown in teachers' confidence in their capacity to inspire pupils (highest mean item). The findings of Goddard et al. (2001), who pointed out that trust grows gradually and requires pleasant interactions, are supported by the comparatively lower trust in students' honesty. Teachers' moderate levels of grit support Duckworth's (2016) claim that grit entails enthusiasm and persistence for long-term objectives. In line with the findings of Datu et al. (2017), who suggested that these two characteristics may function differently in various cultural contexts, perseverance of effort is slightly more significant than consistency of interest. Because of their professional commitment, teachers may continue to work even when their interest levels fluctuate. The findings of Maslach et al. (2001), who recognised teaching as a high-stress profession, are consistent with the moderate levels of burnout, especially work-related burnout. Given how

common work-related burnout is, it is likely that institutional variables like workload, administrative pressures, and resource limitations play a major role in teacher feeling fatigued. The theoretical framework of Hoy et al. (2006), who contended that optimistic teachers are better able to handle obstacles, is supported by the negative association among academic optimism and burnout.

The results of Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2017), who discovered that teacher self-efficacy guards against burnout. Nevertheless, the weakness of this relationship has shown that academic optimism cannot be used to sufficiently explain the variations in burnout. The most unexpected finding of this study could be the positive correlation between grit and burnout. This unforeseen consequence challenges the commonly accepted notion that grit is always beneficial. Gritty people seek purpose and fulfilment, according to Duckworth et al. (2014), but the current study indicates that this desire may have a cost in educational settings. This result promotes the findings of Jachimowicz et al. (2018), who advised that grit without boundaries could result in fatigue and overwork. Highly persistent teachers may find it difficult to get away from their profession, which might drain their emotions. This interpretation is further supported by the substantial positive connection among between burnout and consistency of interest. Unwaveringly interested teachers run the risk of being excessively invested and becoming disappointed when results fall short of expectations. This is consistent with the idea of passion burnout as defined by Vallerand et al. (2003), in which excessive passion results in unfavourable consequences. The finding that grit significantly predicts burnout, explaining of the variance, has important implications. While Duckworth et al. (2007) established grit as a forecaster of success in several domains, the current study suggests that in teaching, grit may have dual effects. This is stable with the results of Fernet et al. (2012) that enthusiastic teaching practice might result into satisfaction and burnout based on the nature of passion.

The positive predictive relationship shows that the greater the grit, the greater burnout. This observation calls educators and policymakers to reflect on the blind application of the concept of grit, without considering the well-being of teachers. Resilience does not just entail persistence, as Tugade and Fredrickson (2004) note that it necessitates recovery and positive emotions. Based on theoretical predictions, the non-significant predictive value of academic optimism was unexpected. This conclusion may be explained by the research by Klassen and Chiu (2010), who detected that the connection between teacher views and outcomes is often contextual and changes as a result of differences in context. The safeguarding impacts of academic optimism could be obscured in the present sample by additional extrinsic elements such as the school climate, administrative backup, or policy requirements. Another rationale is the conclusions of Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2001) who found that the views of teachers are most predictive when they are correlated with specific outcomes. School climate or student achievement might be more strongly related to academic optimism than burnout.

IV. CONCLUSION

Secondary school teachers showed moderate levels of academic optimism, grit, and burnout, according to the study's findings. Although it was not a significant predictor, academic optimism had a weak negative correlation with burnout. Grit, on the other hand, was found to be a substantial positive predictor of burnout, accounting for 14% of the variance. This suggests that teachers who are very persistent may be more vulnerable to burnout in stressful work environments. Burnout was more common among younger, less experienced, contractual, and single instructors and was mainly linked to work-related issues. These results emphasise how crucial it is to support teachers' well-being and supportive school settings while taking demographic variations in burnout reduction techniques into account.

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