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## **An Exploration of the Relationship between Teachers' Psychological Capital and their Collective Self-Esteem**

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*Abstract: Teachers who possess high levels of psychological capital and collective self-esteem are better able to cope with the spate of school violence, student/student bullying, and other current issues confronting the education system globally, regionally, and nationally. A teacher psychological capital high in hope, optimism, self-efficacy, resilience, and collective self-esteem translates into educators who possess a more positive outlook and can impart and influence how their students perceive themselves. No known research exists in the Trinidadian context linking both psychological capital and collective self-esteem. This study expands the body of research in these two areas, locally, by reporting the findings of a psychological questionnaire and the Collective Self-Esteem Survey (CSES, Luhtanen & Crocker, 1992). Results indicated that Trinidadian female participants were optimistic, hopeful, and resilient, filled with self-efficacy, and contained high levels of collective self-esteem.*

### **Introduction**

Newspaper headlines in Trinidad continue to convey issues of school violence and other serious incidences related to education. With such obvious concerns for the education system, teachers' psychological capital in the form of their adaptability and coping mechanisms need to be analysed. An examination of the teachers' psychological capital such as hope, optimism, self-efficacy, and resilience could indicate how teachers are dealing with the increase in school indiscipline among students. Teachers and how they identify with their peers are just as important as understanding whether they will succumb to teacher burn out or somehow find within themselves that motivation that characterizes the indomitable human spirit to persevere.

### **Problem**

SEX, drug abuse, violence and deviant behaviour in several schools, all perpetrated by the students themselves, have left officials of both the Trinidad and Tobago Unified Teachers' Association (TTUTA) and the National Parent Teacher Association (NPTA), expressing disappointment and major concern. (Singh, 2008, p.1)

Such opening words are the norm rather than the exception as current Trinidadian newspapers, YouTube videos and the Trinidadian teachers' Facebook site, *A Teachers' Voice*, teem with issues confronting teachers in the classroom. Maharaj-Sharma (2007) indicated that media headlines in the Trinidad newspapers suggest a worrying trend of school violence which has perpetuated today.

Teachers find themselves in a veritable battle ground when trying to teach students who are more interested in socializing, engaging in violence, bullying each other and other such negative activities (Hakim 2008). Hakim quoted several newspaper headlines exemplifying the harrowing experiences confronting teachers in the classrooms. With such negative events taking place in the Trinidadian classrooms, the need to understand teachers' level of hope, optimism, self-efficacy, resilience, and collective self-esteem is even more acute.

Haskett (2002), in his study of teachers in Trinidad, found that teacher morale among the participants was low. However, he concluded that teacher commitment was strong. Continued issues of school violence have resulted in low teacher morale and teacher burn out. Teachers in the Trinidadian teachers' Facebook site ATV continue to present graphic and sometimes quite worrisome everyday issues of school violence in the classroom. Such occurrences continue to be of concern especially when teachers have expressed the view that they are fed up with the impotence they feel in classroom.

## Purpose

With continued school violence in the classroom and concerns about teachers and their well-being, the intent of this paper was to determine the level of hope, optimism, self-efficacy, and resilience Trinidadian teachers in this study possess as well as their identification with their peers. Such information will shed light on their ability to cope with the continued issues in schools as well as their level of collective self-esteem as it relates to their peers. Additionally, correlational analysis will establish whether subscales of the dependent and independent variables were significantly related. The information garnered in this study should prove insightful to administrators and other key stakeholders in the educational sphere on how well these participants are coping with the issues confronting them in the education system. This study is significant in that it extends the extant literature on psychological capital and collective self-esteem and links them to the field of education. It also attempts to fill the literary gap on studies involving Trinidadian teachers.

## Research Hypotheses

The findings of this study answer the question, "*How do teachers rate their hope, optimism, self-efficacy, resilience and collective self-esteem?*" The response to this question was found through analysis of data collected from 51 female Trinidadian teachers who completed a psychological capital scale and the CSE scale. Frequency counts of the averages of each question and scale are presented as well as any significant correlation found between subscales of psychological capital and collective self-esteem. The following five null hypotheses were tested:

H<sub>01</sub>: There is no statistically significant relationship between job satisfaction and optimism when job satisfaction is the dependent variable and optimism is the independent variable.

H<sub>02</sub>: There is no statistically significant relationship between job satisfaction and general happiness when job satisfaction is the dependent variable and general happiness is the independent variable.

H<sub>03</sub>: There is no statistically significant relationship between membership self-esteem and private collective self-esteem when membership self-esteem is the dependent variable and private collective self-esteem is the independent variable.

H<sub>04</sub>: There is no statistically significant correlation between public collective self-esteem and private collective self-esteem when public collective self-esteem is used as the dependent variable and private collective self-esteem as the independent variable.

H<sub>05</sub>: There is no statistically significant correlation between dependent variable public collective self-esteem and optimism as the independent variable.

## **Literature/Theory**

### **Positive Psychology**

Seligman (1998) pioneered the movement toward positive psychology with his address to the American Psychological Association (APA). He exhorted that psychology should implement scientific methods to determine individual and collective psychological strengths and weaknesses in order to prosper (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). Sheldon and King (2001) determined that positive psychology assesses human beings' strengths and virtues in order to seek improvement. These researchers further stated that positive psychology is based on examining how individuals thrive, find motivation, explore their inner capacity to succeed, embrace their potential, and are able to live purposeful lives despite adversity. From their examples of positive psychology, it is evident that the concept of psychological capital is one that emerges as an offshoot.

### **Psychological Capital**

Caza et al. (2010) indicated that psychological capital is on par with fiscal and infrastructural capital and can be a valuable tool in regulating organizational performance. Psychological capital is the untapped latent potential in every organization's repertoire of advantageous capitals. Luthans, Youssef et al. (2007b) defined psychological capital as an individual's sanguine state of psychological advancement whilst Caza, Bagozzi et al. (2010) focused on the intangible quality. Luthans, Youssef, and Avolio (2007) and Pырce-Jones (2010) combined these two views and saw it as a positive mental psychological state that is beneficial in times of crisis. These researchers viewed resilience, motivation, hope, optimism, self-belief, confidence, self-worth and energy as priceless in establishing organizational mental health.

Luthans et al. (2008) suggested that, "there is now considerable evidence, both conceptually (Bandura 1997; Snyder 2000, 2002; Luthans 2007b) and empirically (Magaletta & Oliver 1999; Carifio & Rhodes 2002; Bryant & Cvengros 2004), that they are independent constructs" (p. 822). For the purposes of this study, psychological state of development entails four areas of well-being: (a) hope; (b) optimism; (c) self-efficacy; and (d) resilience.

### *Hope*

Hope is described as the quality that causes an individual to tenaciously pursue a goal and in some cases changing the methods toward attaining that goal in order to succeed. Luthans et al. (2005) defined hope as the “perceived capability to derive pathways to desired goals and motivate oneself via agency thinking to use those pathways” (p. 254). Luthans et al. indicated that their research suggests a significant link between individuals who are hopeful and their level of confidence in completing a task as well as their ability to find pathways to attainment of that particular task which can result in higher performance. Hope as a subscale of psychological capital is of vital importance within an organization. Individuals who possess high levels of hope display high levels of positive expectancy and their energy is fuelled toward the attainment of that goal. Such drive to attain a particular goal results in higher levels of engagement (Ouweneel et al. 2012). Several researchers subdivided hope into two components: willpower and pathways (Snyder 2000; Snyder, Feldman, & Taylor 2000; Snyder & Lopez 2002). Luthans et al. (2008) viewed willpower as the drive and motivation individuals contain in attempting to attain a desired aim. Pathways and willpower share a symbiotic dyad where the qualities of willpower foment discovery of additional pathways to the attainment of a desired goal. This willpower assists the individual in persisting and finding other path toward attainment of the desired goal despite any obstacles which may arise.

### *Optimism*

Optimism is the individual’s positive anticipation that he/she will succeed presently and in the future. Tiger (1971) defined optimism as “a mood or attitude associated with an interpretation about the social or material – one which the evaluator regards as socially desirable to his [or her] advantage, or for his [or her] pleasure” (p.18). Optimistic persons are more successful and explain their success based on positive skills, traits, and characteristics. Carver and Sheier (2002) found that individuals who possessed a more optimistic style outperformed those with a pessimistic style. Optimism is the belief that one will expect positive outcomes in life. Optimists are better able to face threatening situations positively and as a result have effective coping skills (Iwanaga et al. 2004). Barsh and Cranston (2011) described optimism as a fuel that energizes an individual and drives him/her to attain higher levels of success. Luthans et al. (2008), Seligman and Schulman (1986), and Seligman (1998) stated that optimistic individuals internalize positive occurrences. Higher levels of optimism denote increased levels of self-efficacy.

### *Self-Efficacy*

Self-efficacy is defined as an individual’s drive to make the required effort to thrive at completing difficult undertakings. Bandura’s (1997) research on self-efficacy suggested that there is a link between an individual’s belief about whether or not he/she can accomplish a task and that level of confidence determines whether or not it is accomplished. Self-efficacy is used widely in educational setting and has strong links with academic achievement. Stajkovic and Luthans (1998) defined efficacy beliefs as “one’s conviction (or confidence) about ones’ abilities to mobilize motivation, cognitive resources or courses of action needed to successfully execute a

specific task within a specific context” (p. 66). Ouwenel et al. (2012) observed that an individual’s level of self-efficacy beliefs governs his/her effort and persistence when confronted with obstacles and unanticipated impediments.

Salanova et al. (2006) linked higher levels of flow or engagement to self-efficacy and Llorens et al. (2007) indicated that higher levels of work engagement were found in individuals possessing increased levels of self-efficacy. Irizarry (2002) stated that self-efficacy is the determining factor in an individual’s belief about his/her ability. This self-efficacy belief system regulates the amount of motivation and pliability an individual possesses. Thus, each individual develops a visualization of self and by so doing creates what Bandura (1997) deemed a “self-system” (p. 5). This self-system consists of the individual’s enculturation and heuristic experiences about his or her efficacy and these are stored in long-term memory ready for recall when the need arises. This self-efficacy belief system affects an individual’s behaviour, thoughts, experiences, and the environment and subsequently, influences how he/she views his/her abilities. Such perceptions of the self fuel the motivational drive and determine the action. Self-efficacy is an individual’s judgement of his/her ability as well as his/her belief that he/she can successfully complete a task/activity. Therefore, Adegbola’s (2011) description of self-efficacy as: (a) being able to predict specific behaviors; (b) results in specific behaviors; and (c) is based on behavioral change and one’s desire and motivation to achieve a set goal completely and effectively is quite relevant.

### ***Resilience***

Resilience is an individual’s ability to face adversity and issues by persistently rebounding in order to reach success. Resilience developed from the concepts of adaptability and coping (Block, 1961). Contemporary thought on resilience stemmed from research on schizophrenic mothers and their children (Gramezy, 1971; 1974; Masten, Best, & Gramezy, 1990). The children in Gramezy’s research belonged to two groups: (a) those who continued to feel disadvantaged throughout their lives; and (b) those who were able to bounce back from their disadvantaged childhoods and lead productive adult lives. Later, researchers have suggested that individuals who are resilient are able to cope with changes in life experiences and positively adapt to changes and negative events (Block & Kremen, 1996; Coutu, 2002; Masten, 2001; Masten & Reed, 2002). Luthans (2002) defined resilience as the “positive psychological capacity to *bounce back* from adversity, uncertainty, conflict, failure, or even positive change, progress and increased responsibility” (p. 702). Resilience has been touted as the main quality that defines what is good and right about an individual.

Luthans, Vogelgesang, and Lester (2006) viewed the other psychological capital subscales, optimism, hope, and self-efficacy as the pathways to resilience. They advocated, “those who are hopeful, optimistic, and confident are more likely to bounce back from adversity than those who are not” (p. 29). These are the areas which are deemed high levels of psychological capital and necessary elements in a productive organization and society. Studies have found that persons who exhibited strong psychological capital in the four dimensions: (a) optimism; (b) hope; (c) efficacy; and (d) resilience were more likely to cope in times of crisis (Silva & Roche, 2010).

### ***Psychological Capital and Educators***

Research on job satisfaction and job burn-out among 442 Taiwanese University Physical Education teachers showed that positive psychological capital plays a mediating role in determining levels of each component (Chia-Ming et al. 2013). Cheung et al. (2011) found a similar situation occurred among 264 Chinese teachers where job satisfaction and psychological capital were high. Moreover, Kesari (2013) in her study of 140 teachers' positive psychology capital in Durban found that participants reported work stressors such as poor organizational management, role ambiguity and job satisfaction as well as task stress as the main areas of concern in the educational occupational field. She further stated that increased awareness of the subscales of positive psychological capital will assist in determining the factors contributing to teacher turnover rates in Durban and globally. Hajloo (2013) also found that 80 female educators in Iran shared a direct correlation between their levels of resilience, optimism, self-confidence and to a lesser extent hope and subscales of humour. She suggested that managers should promote a culture of humour in the workplace so that educators will be more productive. Collective self-esteem is important when discussing positive psychological capital.

### **Collective Self-Esteem**

Self-esteem and high levels of engagement, connecting, and finding meaning in one's life lead to more successful individuals. Kernis (2003) suggested that self-esteem is crucial to an individual's daily life because it defines how an individual feels about himself/herself. This in turn has a ricochet effect on his/her daily interactions and the environment. According to Luhtanen and Crocker (1992) collective self-esteem is the extent to which individuals positively evaluate their social group. Woolfolk (2004) added that an individual's perception of the value of his/her social groups such as family, peers, and ethnic groups defines his/her collective self-esteem.

Research has substantiated that a relationship exists between components of collective self-esteem and psychological well-being (Blaine & Crocker, 1995; Crocker et al. 1994). Social identity, according to Tajfel (1981) is "part of an individual's self-concept which derives from his knowledge of his membership in a social group together with the value and emotional significance attached to that group membership" (p. 255). Collective self-esteem comprises four subscales: (a) private collective self-esteem (the extent to which individuals feel positively about their social groups); (b) public collective self-esteem (the extent to which individuals believe that other people feel positively about their social groups); (c) membership esteem (the extent to which individuals believe they are good members of their social groups); and (d) importance to identity (the extent to which individuals believe their social groups are an important part of their self-concept (Luhtanen & Crocker, 1992).

### ***Self-Esteem and Educators***

Baumeister et al. (2003) indicated that occupational success may boost higher levels of self-esteem rather than the reverse" they segued that "high self-esteem does lead to greater happiness" (p. 1). These researchers further stated that high self-esteem foments "enhanced initiative and pleasant feelings" (Baumeister et al. p. 1). On the subject of self-esteem and

educators, Kumar and Mohana (2014) interviewed 800 teacher trainees in a Bachelor of Education degree programme from India on their self-esteem beliefs and how these are related to their ability to adjust and found a direct correlation between teachers' self-esteem and their ability to adjust to circumstances. These findings are congruent with Tunde and Onabanjo's (2013) conclusions about 200 teachers from Lagos where they discovered that teachers whose self-esteem is higher are less likely to suffer burn-out. Wang et al. (2013) found that self-esteem was a positive predictor of psychological empowerment in 1,273 Chinese teachers. Very few studies were found in the extant literature linking collective self-esteem and educators. The following describes the research methodology used in this study.

## Research Method

### *Participants/Ethics*

Data were collected from April 2011 to August 2011. All respondents gave informed consent in writing to participate in this study. Convenience sampling was used to obtain data from 51 female Trinidadian teachers who completed the Gross National Happiness Assessment. Creswell (2008) described convenience sampling as the process whereby the researcher chooses participants because they are willing and easily accessible. These female Trinidadian teachers were enrolled in the Bachelor of Education degree (B Ed) and taught by the researcher. It should be noted that females were the only students in the class at the time when the surveys were administered and does not in any way represent gender bias. Participants ranged from ages 18 to 58 with a mean age of 28 and a frequency age of 26 years.

### *Measures/Instruments: Gross National Happiness Assessment*

The Gross National Happiness Assessment consisted of 21 questions along a Likert scale from 1 to 5 with 1 being seldom and 5 being frequently. The assessment instrument consisted of four sections: (a) job satisfaction; (b) reaction to positive/negative events (optimism and resilience); (c) self-reported happiness (hope); and (d) general happiness and physical well-being. The questions were derived from Luthans, Avolio, and Avey's (2007) four factors of their Psychological Capital Questionnaire for Researchers.

Job satisfaction comprised five statements which female Trinidadians were asked to rate. An example of sentence 1 is, *I am satisfied that my work gives me a feeling of personal accomplishment*. Reaction to positive/negative events consisted of 6 statements which participants rated. This section was drawn from a survey by Scheier and Carver (1985). An example of statement 6 is, *I see the glass half full* and statement 7, *When something negative occurs I take an optimistic view*. Self-reported happiness (hope) contained five statements which respondents rated. An example of statements 12 and 14 respectively are *My friends/family think I am a happy individual* and *When one of my friends are down and need to be uplifted he/she speaks to me*. This section was drawn from a survey by Synder et al. (1996). The last section on general happiness and physical well-being consisted of five statements with such statements as 19, *I suffer from low/high blood pressure* and 21, *I am stressed out*.



*Measures/Instruments: Collective Self-Esteem Survey*

Forty-four participants completed the Collective Self-Esteem Survey (CSE) and were Trinidadian female teachers/students enrolled in the Bachelor of Education degree (B. Ed) ages 18 to 58 with a mean age of 29 and a frequency age of 30 years. Since both surveys were quantifiable a quantitative methodology was implemented with correlational analyses of subscales of each survey as well as correlational analyses of subscales between the two surveys. The CSE Survey contained four subscales: (a) membership self-esteem; (b) private collective self-esteem; (c) public collective self-esteem; and (d) importance to identity. Each section comprised four statements which each respondent was expected to strongly disagree 1 or strongly agree 7. Membership self-esteem consisted of questions 1, 5, 9, and 13, private collective self-esteem comprised 2, 6, 10, and 14, public collective self-esteem consisted of 3, 7, 11, and 15 and importance to identity was 4, 8, 12, and 16. Higher scores denote higher levels of collective self-esteem (Healy, 2011). Luhtanen and Crocker (1992) found good internal consistency (coefficient  $\alpha$  range = .71 -.88) in a series of three studies. This suggested good inter-item reliability for the collective self-esteem instrument.

## Results

### Psychological Capital

When the mean and standard deviation scores for each subscale were compared respondents scored highest in the subscales of: (a) reaction to positive/negative events (optimism and resilience) and (b) self-reported happiness (hope). It must be noted that reaction to positive/negative events contained six statements instead of five. Table 1 shows the mean and standard deviations for each of the subscales of the psychological capital. The mean score for job satisfaction was 3.08 (SD=.439), the mean score for optimism/resilience was 3.665 (SD=.219), the mean score for hope was 3.61 (SD=.357), and the mean score for general happiness was 3.286 (SD=.778). The overall psychological capital obtained a mean score of 17.972 (SD=2.891).

	<b>Job Satisfaction</b>	<b>Optimism</b>	<b>Hope</b>	<b>General Happiness</b>	<b>Psychological Capital</b>
<b>Mean</b>	3.08	3.665	3.61	3.286	17.972
<b>Standard Deviation</b>	0.439	0.219	0.357	0.778	2.891

**Table 1. Mean and Standard Deviations for Each Subscale.**

H<sub>a1</sub>: A significant statistical positive relationship exists between job satisfaction and optimism. A regression analysis was conducted with job satisfaction as the dependent variable and optimism as the independent variable a p value of .0345 was obtained which indicates a significant correlation between the dependent and independent variables. Table 2 shows the values obtained.

### Regression Analysis

$r^2$  0.125  
 Adjusted  $r^2$  0.000  
 $r$  0.354  
 Std. Error 0.475  
 n 5  
 k 1  
 Dep. Var. **Job Satisfaction**

#### ANOVA table

<i>Source</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p-value</i>
Regression	0.0969	1	0.0969	0.43	.5590
Residual	0.6767	3	0.2256		
Total	0.7736	4			

Regression output		<i>confidence interval</i>				
<i>variables</i>	<i>coefficients</i>	<i>std. error</i>	<i>t (df=3)</i>	<i>p- value</i>	<i>95% lower</i>	<i>95% upper</i>
Intercept	2.6335	0.7137	3.690	.0345	0.3621	4.9048
Optimism	0.1018	0.1553	0.655	.5590	-0.3924	0.5959

**Table 2. Regression Analysis of Job Satisfaction and Optimism**

H<sub>a2</sub>: A slight statistical correlation exists between job satisfaction and general happiness. A regression analysis was conducted with job satisfaction as the dependent variable and general happiness as the independent variable a p value of .043 was obtained which indicates a slight correlation between the dependent and independent variables. This result suggests that participants' general happiness is slightly dependent on job satisfaction. Table 3 shows the values obtained.

### Regression Analysis

$r^2$  0.070  
 $r$  -0.265  
 Std. Error 0.490  
 n 5  
 k 1  
 Dep.  
 Var. **Job Satisfaction**

#### ANOVA table

<i>Source</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p-value</i>
Regression	0.0542	1	0.0542	0.23	.6668
Residual	0.7194	3	0.2398		
Total	0.7736	4			

Regression output		<i>confidence interval</i>				
<i>variables</i>	<i>coefficients</i>	<i>std. error</i>	<i>t (df=3)</i>	<i>p- value</i>	<i>95% lower</i>	<i>95% upper</i>

Intercept	3.5717	1.0567	3.380	.0431	0.2087	6.9346
General Happiness	-0.1496	0.3146	-0.476	.6668	-1.1508	0.8516

**Table 3. Regression Analysis of Job Satisfaction and General Happiness**

#### Collective Self-Esteem

Table 4 shows the mean scores and standard deviations for each subscale of collective self-esteem. For membership self-esteem the mean score was 3.9 (SD = 1.729), for private collective self-esteem the mean score was 4.13 (SD= 1.408), for public collective self-esteem, the mean score was 3.932 (SD=1.236), for importance to identity the mean score was 4.102 (SD= 7.835). The total collective self-esteem was a mean score of 4.016 (SD=1.203).

	Membership	Private	Public	Identity	Collective
<b>Mean</b>	3.9	4.13	3.932	4.102	4.016
<b>Standard Deviation</b>	1.729	1.408	1.263	7.835	1.203

**Table 4. Mean and Standard Deviations for Each Subscale.**

H<sub>a3</sub>: A significant statistical positive relationship exists between membership self-esteem and private collective self-esteem. A regression analysis was conducted with membership self-esteem as the dependent variable and private collective self-esteem as the independent variable a p value of .003 was obtained, therefore, significant correlation exists (as indicated in Table 5).

**Table 5. Regression Analysis of Membership self-esteem and Private Collective Esteem**

#### Regression Analysis

r <sup>2</sup>	0.978	n	4
r	-0.989	k	1
Std. Error	0.315	Dep. Var.	<b>Membership</b>

#### ANOVA table

Source	SS	df	MS	F	p-value
Regression	8.7773	1	8.7773	88.60	.0111
Residual	0.1981	2	0.0991		
Total	8.9754	3			

Regression output		confidence interval				
variables	coefficients	std. error	t (df=2)	p-value	95% lower	95% upper
Intercept	8.9164	0.5557	16.045	.0039	6.5254	11.3074
private	-1.2146	0.1290	-9.412	.0111	-1.7699	-0.6594

**Table 5. Regression Analysis of Membership self-esteem and Private Collective Esteem**

H<sub>a4</sub>: A significant statistical correlation exists between public collective self-esteem and private collective self-esteem. Table 6 shows the correlation when public collective self-esteem is used as the dependent variable and private collective self-esteem as the independent variable. There is a significant correlation since a p value of .0078 was obtained. Therefore, it can be stated that participants' belief that others feel positively about their social group is dependent on their own feelings about their social group.

### Regression Analysis

	r <sup>2</sup>	0.940	n	4	
	r	-0.969	k	1	
			Dep.		
	Std. Error	0.379	Var.	<b>public</b>	
ANOVA					
table					
	<i>Source</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>
	Regression	4.4979	1	4.4979	31.24
	Residual	0.2880	2	0.1440	
	Total	4.7859	3		
	Regression output				<i>confidence interval</i>
	<i>variables</i>	<i>coefficients</i>	<i>std. error</i>	<i>t (df=2)</i>	<i>p-value</i>
	Intercept	7.5235	0.6699	11.231	.0078
	private	-0.8695	0.1556	-5.589	.0306
					95% lower
					95% upper

**Table 6. Regression Analysis of Public and Private Collective Self-Esteem**

When a regression analysis was conducted between subscales of collective self-esteem and subscales of psychological capital, no significant correlations existed except one. H<sub>a5</sub>: There was a slight correlation with a p value of .045 when the dependent variable was public collective self-esteem and optimism was the independent variable (as indicated in Table 7). This would suggest that participants' belief about how other people feel about their social group is slightly dependent on their level of optimism.

### Regression Analysis

	r <sup>2</sup>	0.451	n	4	
	r	-0.671	k	1	
			Dep.		
	Std. Error	1.147	Var.	<b>public</b>	
ANOVA					
table					
<i>Source</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p-value</i>
Regression	2.1561	1	2.1561	1.64	.3288
Residual	2.6298	2	1.3149		

Total	4.7859	3				
Regression output			<i>confidence interval</i>			
<i>variables</i>	<i>coefficients</i>	<i>std. error</i>	<i>t (df=2)</i>	<i>p-value</i>	<i>95% lower</i>	<i>95% upper</i>
Intercept	5.2089	1.1499	4.530	.0454	0.2613	10.1566
Optimism	-0.2327	0.1817	-1.281	.3288	-1.0146	0.5492

**Table 7. Regression of Public Collective Self-Esteem and Optimism**

## Discussion

Teachers scored highest with questions pertaining to seeing negative events as stepping stones, perceiving positive outcomes, and looking on the bright side of situations. These findings suggest that teachers in this study will continue to reflect their positive psychological qualities in their classrooms and continue to be driven to have hopeful and optimistic expectations of themselves and their students despite the issues confronting them. By displaying high levels of hope, optimism, and resilience Trinidadian teachers exemplify qualities of agentic perspective where they see themselves as producers of their destinies rather than products (Bandura, 2006, 2008).

A summary of the findings is presented in Table 8 below. Note that the p value has to be  $\leq .05$  to be considered statistically significant. The r value (coefficient correlation value) suggests a correlation if the r value is closer to +1 or -1. The finding in H<sub>1</sub> is in agreement with conclusions drawn by Luthans et al. (2008), Seligman and Schulman (1986), and Seligman (1998). Luthans et al. indicated that optimists will anticipate positive results to specific occurrences. Therefore, a higher level of optimism should indicate that participants have more positive expectations of outcomes in the classroom and work environment and contribute to a more advanced psychological capital. Higher levels of optimism also suggest that these teachers felt more optimistic about their lives which determine their drive and level of self-efficacy. When they are in the classrooms, such qualities will positively affect their students. The r value is also positively correlated which means that when job satisfaction is high optimism is high and vice versa.

Hypotheses	P Value Obtained $\leq .05$	R value -1.0- +1.0
H <sub>a1</sub> : A significant statistical positive relationship exists between job satisfaction and optimism when job satisfaction is the dependent variable.	.034	.354
H <sub>a2</sub> : A slight statistical correlation exists when job satisfaction is the dependent variable and general happiness as the independent variable.	.043	-0.265
H <sub>a3</sub> : A significant statistical positive relationship exists when membership self-esteem is the dependent variable and private collective self-esteem is the independent variable.	.003	-0.989

H <sub>a4</sub> : A significant statistical correlation exists when public collective self-esteem is used as the dependent variable and private collective self-esteem as the independent variable.	.007	-0.969
H <sub>a5</sub> : A slight statistical correlation exists when the dependent variable was public collective self-esteem and optimism was the independent variable	.045	-0.675

**Table 8. Summary of Findings**

According to H<sub>2</sub>, there is a slight correlation between job satisfaction and general happiness. The *r* value suggests a slight negative correlation between job satisfaction and general happiness which suggests that general happiness is slightly dependent on job satisfaction. This finding is in agreement with Wevers' (2000) conclusions that educators, albeit, not satisfied with their salaries are satisfied with the feeling of accomplishment they get from helping students. Congruently, Haskett (2002) in his study of Trinidadian secondary school teachers also found teacher commitment high and teacher morale low. Job satisfaction is of concern since participants indicated that their compensation did not match their responsibilities. This finding underpins Herzberg's Two Factor Hygiene Theory where job dissatisfaction can be a result of salary (Drafte & Kossen, 1998). Trinidadian female teachers further indicated that they were motivated intrinsically because they thought that their job was meaningful.

H<sub>3</sub> showed a significant statistical positive correlation between membership collective self-esteem and private collective self-esteem and was the most significant correlation of all the hypotheses. This summation is in agreement with Crocker et al. (1994) where the strongest significant correlation was found between membership and private collective self-esteem. This finding is also in concordance with Bandura's (2001) conclusions that one of the social cognitive modes of agency is "collective agency exercised through socially coordinated and interdependent effort" (p. 1). Respondents, therefore, viewed themselves as good members of the group to which they belonged and this is dependent on their positive sentiments about the group. These findings are similar to those conclusions by Crocker et al. (1994) where strongest correlations were found between CSE membership self-esteem and private collective self-esteem. In this case, there is a coefficient correlation of -.0989 which suggests that, albeit, there is a positive statistical significance, there is a strong negative correlation between each variable. When membership collective self-esteem is high private collective self-esteem is low and vice versa.

There was a significant statistical positive correlation between teachers' public collective self-esteem and private collective self-esteem. H<sub>4</sub> is not in agreement with findings by Crocker et al. (1994) where the coefficient correlation  $r = .50$ . In this study the coefficient correlation  $r = -0.671$  which indicates a strong negative correlation between public and private self-esteem which suggests that as the teachers' public collective self-esteem increases their private collective self-esteem decreases and vice versa.

H<sub>5</sub> shows a slight statistical correlation between public collective self-esteem and optimism when the former is the independent variable. Since, there were no studies linking these aspects of collective self-esteem and general happiness, findings for this study cannot be substantiated in the extant literature. This study acts as a catalyst for future studies linking both concepts.

## Conclusion

Although participants in this study represented a small portion of the number of actual teachers in Trinidad, the study serves to show the level of psychological capital and collective self-esteem among the respondents and to demonstrate that despite whatever issues these teachers are facing they are choosing to have hope, be optimistic, possess self-efficacy and be resilient. This study is significant in that it substantiates earlier findings on the interconnectedness of the subscales of psychological capital and collective self-esteem individually. It also shows that, although, Trinidadian teachers in this study are faced with infrastructural and financial constraints, they are willing to search within themselves and find that indomitable spirit that connects them to hope, optimism, self-efficacy, resilience, and collective self-esteem. With the high incidence of job burnout among teachers globally, the participants in this study illustrated that their strong psychological capital and collective self-esteem should hold them in good stead in times of crisis.

It is recommended that more extensive studies be conducted on Trinidadian teachers' psychological capital and even a comparative analysis of their psychological capital to those of their peers regionally and globally. There is a need for further research on teacher issues within the Caribbean context and how teachers see themselves in order to understand, commiserate and address the challenges they face daily as they endeavor to impart instruction in a manner that is beneficial to all stakeholders. Bissessar (2013) stated, "Educational leadership, staff and student morale, motivation and student self-efficacy continue to be significant issues in education with need for more local and regional evidence-based research to contextualize the Caribbean education system" (p. 12). Teachers determine the end products-the students- if they are not satisfied and do not display high levels of hope, optimism, resilience, self-efficacy, and self-esteem they cannot convey these qualities to their students. Whereas, fiscal capital can be measured in terms of monetary value, such intangible qualities as hope, optimism, self-efficacy, resilience, and collective self-esteem transcend corporeal value.

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