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### **Leadership for Staff Hope: Can it Offer Similar Outcomes as Student Hope?**

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## Leadership for Staff Hope: Can it Offer Similar Outcomes as Student Hope?

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### ARTICLE INFORMATION

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### ABSTRACT

The purpose of this cross sectional survey research was to assess whether staff hope offered similar academic achievement and school climate outcomes as student hope. Primary data were collected from 405 staff from 45 schools in one U.S. state who responded to the Perceived Hope Scale using Qualtrics. Secondary data were collected from the state's school performance report. Results from correlation analysis indicated staff hope scores were unrelated with school socioeconomic status, but related with one measure of school climate – student to faculty ratio. Multiple regression analysis indicated student to faculty ratio predicted staff hope when modeled with school level socioeconomic status, offering a potential practical finding. The findings overall, however, did not suggest that staff hope offered similar outcomes as student hope regarding academic achievement. This study contributes to the hope in schools evidence base and provides support for future research to examine the role of staff hope to influence school and student outcomes. A delimitation of this research is the findings are specific to one U.S. state. The author did not receive funding to support this research.

**Keywords:** Staff Hope; Perceived Hope Scale; Hope in schools; School climate; Academic achievement; Correlation analysis; Multiple regression analysis



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## Introduction

We can learn more about schools, school improvement efforts, and the role of school leaders by continuing to study the many negative aspects pervasive in schools, but researchers have identified a need to build an evidence base around what might improve schools by studying different positive aspects (Hoy & Tarter, 2011). Research designed with a purpose “in discovering what works, what is right, and what is improving, not what fails, what is wrong, and what is declining” (Hoy & Tarter, 2011, p. 428) might offer school leaders positive targets that are administratively mutable. Leadership agendas focused on the negative aspects of schools – low test scores (Hani, 2016), crime in the school and community (Barnes, 2016), classroom management deficiencies (Shank & Santiago, 2021), or cyberbullying (Waters et al., 2020) – can put additional strain on students and staff in a system of public education that is nearing a critical point (Barnes, 2016; Conderman et al., 2020; DeMatthews et al., 2021; Hani, 2016; Pressley, 2021; Shank & Santiago, 2021; Waters et al., 2020). Burnout, anxiety, and stress are pressing issues facing each layer of schools, including students (Conderman et al., 2020), teachers (Pressley, 2021), and building and district level leaders (DeMatthews et al., 2021). Therefore, building an evidence base around some positive aspects of schools might improve school and student outcomes.

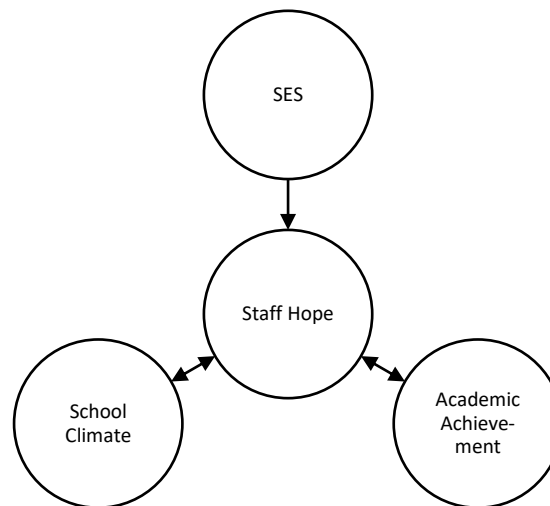
Hope is a construct from the field of positive psychology that might contribute to improved educational outcomes for school leaders who are interested in leading to enhance the positives. Green et. al. (2007) and Marques et. al. (2011) have reported on various interventions, including group coaching, goal setting, and hope-specific interventions, that are available to improve hope in schools (Waters, 2011). Generally defined, hope is a positive expectation of future outcomes (Krafft et al., 2019). Although hope and optimism are often times used interchangeably, there are differences between the two constructs when examined through the lens of positive psychology. While optimism is aligned with an individual’s perception of confidence, hope is aligned with an individual’s perception of effectiveness (Krafft et al., 2021). For example, an optimistic individual might feel confident about completing a task, while a hopeful individual believes they have the efficacy to accomplish it. Additionally, optimistic individuals expect certain outcomes, while hopeful individuals are less certain about future results (Bury et al., 2016; Gasper et al., 2020). As applied to schools, hopeful students and educators might believe they can offer a positive influence on school and student outcomes, but they are less certain about the actual results. Hopeful students and educators might perceive these outcomes as possible, but not likely to occur.

The research base around hope in schools, particularly measured at the student level, continues to grow (Marquez et al., 2015; Dixon, 2020; Dixon, 2019; Dixon & Stevens, 2018; Dixon et al., 2018; Dixon et al., 2017; Snyder et al., 1997). Using the Children’s Hope Scale (CHS), researchers have reported the importance of hope in K-12 schools with respect to a breadth of academic achievement measures (Marquez et al., 2015; Dixon, 2019; Dixon & Stevens, 2018; Dixon et al., 2017; Snyder et al., 1997). More specifically, grade point average seems especially influenced by student levels of hope (Dixon, 2020; Dixon et al., 2018; Dixon et al., 2017). Lenz et al. (2021) used the Herth Hope Index (Herth, 1992) to measure student hope and reported that hope scores predicted school climate in middle and high schools. Dixon et al. (2018) found hope scores among adolescent students, measured via the CHS, to mediate the influence of socioeconomic status (SES) on student achievement (Dixon et al., 2018). Collectively, these findings indicate that efforts to increase student hope in schools might be a worthwhile endeavor to improve student level outcomes.

The research base and administratively mutable nature of student hope provide evidence and strategies for school leaders to consider in practice. Improved student hope is likely to improve a variety of educational outcome measures (Lenz et. al., 2021; Marquez et al., 2015; Dixon, 2020; Dixon, 2019; Dixon & Stevens, 2018; Dixon et al., 2018; Dixon et al., 2017; Snyder et al., 1997). There is, however, a dearth of evidence about the importance of hope among certified school staff – the adults in

schools. Throughout the review of the literature for this current study, peer reviewed sources that examined staff hope with academic achievement measures were not identified. To begin to fill this gap in the literature, the purpose of this research was to assess whether staff hope yields similar academic achievement and school climate outcomes as student hope.

This study was conceptualized so school level SES influenced staff hope, a reciprocal influential relationship was present between staff hope and school climate, and a reciprocal influential relationship was present between staff hope and academic achievement. Figure 1 includes a graphical representation of this conceptual framework. The Institutional Review Board at the author's university provided approval to conduct this research.



**Figure 1**  
*Study's Conceptual Framework*

### ***Hope and academic achievement***

C. R. Snyder developed hope theory to include goals, agency, and pathways (Dixson, 2018; Peterson, 2006; Snyder, 2002). Agency refers to an individual's belief that they can achieve certain goals, and pathways refers to the steps individuals develop to achieve those goals (Dixson, 2018; Peterson, 2006; Snyder, 2002). Another way to think of agency is that it refers to an individual's determination, motivation, and persistence to achieve a goal – the will – while pathways recognizes an individual's abilities to create alternative paths or plans if they encounter obstacles along their planned course – the way (Dixson, 2018; Krafft et al., 2019). “Key attributes of hopeful people are their tenacity and their active thinking and behaving toward ambitious personal goals” (Krafft et al., 2019, p. 1595). More simply stated, hopeful people seem to embody the commonly used phrase – where there's a will, there's a way.

A widely used instrument to measure hope in children is the CHS (Snyder et al., 1997). In a meta-analysis of hope in schools research conducted by Marques et al. (2017) on a sample of “9250 unique participants” (p. 253), they reported that “93% of the research papers and 89% of the samples” (p. 253) were based on Snyder's hope theory research. Dixson and colleagues have recently contributed findings to the hope theory in schools literature base from their analyses conducted at the student level using the CHS, with alpha coefficients of 0.70 - 0.91 across these studies (Dixson, 2020; Dixson, 2019; Dixson, et al., 2018; Dixson et al., 2017; Dixson & Stevens, 2018). Hope explained most of the variance in a variety of school level variables when modeled with growth mindset (Dweck, 2006) and school belonging, even though growth mindset seems to get more attention than hope in K-12 schools today (Dixson, 2020). Students who reported higher levels of hope also reported higher levels of engagement

and motivation in school (Dixson, 2019). Specific to a sample of African American high school students, hope predicted an achievement oriented psychosocial profile (Dixson & Stevens, 2018). Student level hope was related with grade point average and school belonging, as well as with a variety of psychological measures (Dixson et al., 2017). Additionally, hope mediated the influence of SES on academic achievement to suggest hope may have an important role in closing achievement gaps in economically and ethnically diverse schools (Dixson et al., 2018). These previous studies indicate hope is an important positive aspect of schools when measured at the student level, but there is a lack of evidence to suggest whether hope measured at the staff level might yield similar outcomes.

To measure staff hope in schools, it is important to have knowledge of the available instruments to measure hope in adults. Like the CHS, the Adult Dispositional Trait Hope Scale (Snyder et al., 1991) is a widely used instrument, due in part to its use among various adult populations and length of 12 items, to measure hope in adults (Snyder, 2002). Others instruments, which range from one to as many as 60 items, are available to measure hope in adults (Krafft et al., 2019). One instrument in particular, the Spirituality, Religion, and Personal Beliefs questionnaire of the World Health Organization's Quality of Life Measure, includes a total of 132 items, with four items designed to assess hope and optimism (Department of Mental Health & Substance Dependence, 2002). This instrument's brevity specific to hope and optimism, just four items, is perceived as both an advantage and disadvantage. Although the four items specific to hope and optimism contribute to the instrument's brevity, two items each for hope and optimism might not be adequate given its context (Krafft et al., 2019). As a result, Krafft et al. (2019) used the Spirituality, Religion, and Personal Beliefs questionnaire of the World Health Organization's Quality of Life Measure to develop and test their six-item Perceived Hope Scale (PHS) in a diverse sample of more than 17,500 adults in Switzerland over three years. Krafft et al. (2019) reported the PHS addressed some of the criticisms of the Adult Dispositional Trait Hope Scale, was internally consistent with alpha coefficients of 0.87 – 0.89, and offered a broader conception of hope than the Adult Dispositional Trait Hope Scale. For the current study, the PHS was administered to the adult staff of participating schools to measure staff hope. The brevity, psychometric properties, and broad conception of hope measured using the PHS were perceived as advantages to using this instrument.

### ***School climate and SES***

A positive school climate can mitigate the influence of SES on student achievement (Berkowitz et al., 2016). Additionally, school climate can positively influence various educational outcomes that are measured at the school or student levels (Berkowitz et al., 2016; Buckman et al., 2021; Daily et al., 2019; Davis & Warner, 2015; Hopson et al., 2014; Sulak, 2016; Thapa et al., 2013; Wang & Degol, 2016). A positive school climate can influence students' sense of belonging and connection with their schools to mediate increased levels of academic achievement (Reynolds et al., 2017). These prior works provide evidence for the importance of a positive school climate on a variety of educational outcomes. More recent evidence supports the role of student hope to positively influence school climate (Lenz et al., 2021), however, the relationship between staff hope and school climate remains unclear.

A concern regarding the utility of school climate as an administratively mutable variable to improve educational outcomes is the lack of a consistent measurement and reporting policy, consensus definition, widely used instrumentation, and consistent indicators to serve as proxy measures of school climate. As a result, it is difficult to generalize whether any state's school climate measures or indicators can serve as antecedents to positively influence educational outcomes in other schools.

In the U.S., the New Jersey (NJ) Department of Education's policy for reporting school climate in its School Performance Reports (SPR) database reflects eight different school level indicators to serve as proxies for school climate:

- Length of school day
- Full time instructional time
- Shared time instructional time

- Student to faculty ratio (S:F)
- Student to administrator ratio (S:A)
- Faculty attendance
- Student suspensions
- Student expulsions

Although these proxy measures are not typically included in research informed school climate instruments, these proxies can be useful when exploring school climate in NJ schools. Therefore, it was worthwhile to examine whether these school climate proxies influenced staff hope in the current study. Although Lenz et al., (2021) reported that student hope improved school climate in middle and high schools, the decision was made that the NJ school climate proxy measures were more likely to indicate that school climate influences staff hope.

Yeung et. al. (2022) reported that school level SES was related with and predicted academic achievement in reading and self-efficacy. In the current study, it was worthwhile to examine whether school level SES influenced staff hope, as well as to examine whether the influence of SES on staff hope was stronger than its influence on academic achievement.

This study was designed to test the following hypotheses, which were developed based on hope theory and the evidence for student hope.

*H<sub>1</sub>*: Staff hope is unrelated with school level SES.

*H<sub>2</sub>*: Staff hope is positively related with academic achievement.

*H<sub>3</sub>*: Staff hops is positively related with school climate.

*H<sub>4</sub>*: Staff hope is a positive predictor of academic achievement when modeled with school level SES.

*H<sub>5</sub>*: School climate is a positive predictor of staff hope when modeled with school level SES.

## Methods and Materials

The school was the unit of analysis for this cross sectional survey research. The intended sample size for this study was 60 schools. Participant recruitment began upon receiving approval from the Institutional Review Board for Human Subjects Research. Participation in this study was voluntary and anonymous, and the participants' schools comprised a convenience sample. A total of 2,533 NJ public school principals were recruited via email to solicit their schools' participation in this research. A copy of the recruitment letter used for this study is included in the Appendix. Participation was voluntary, and the study's participants comprised a convenience sample. Certified administrative, instructional, or educational services staff from these schools served as participants. A minimum of five participants from a school was established for a school's inclusion in this study's sample. The sample size achieved for this study was 45 schools.

Using Qualtrics, primary data were collected from participants via administration of the PHS (Krafft et al., 2019). The PHS contains six items to provide a measure of dispositional hope as perceived by the individual who responds to the instrument. Each of the six items is scored on a continuum from zero through five. A response of zero indicates the respondent strongly disagrees with the item, while a response of five indicates the respondent strongly agrees with the item. Intermediary responses include the following: disagree = one; somewhat disagree = two; somewhat agree = three; and agree = four. Item scores are summed, then an average is calculated to find the respondent's perceived hope score, which can range from zero to five. To obtain a school level measure of staff hope in this study,

participant responses to the PHS who worked in the same school were aggregated to determine a school level staff hope score, which also ranged from zero to five. In this study's sample, Cronbach's  $\alpha$  for the six items of the PHS is 0.87, which is consistent with the reliability of the instrument in other studies (Krafft et al., 2019; Marujo et al., 2021; Slezackova et al., 2021).

For each school that met the study's inclusion criterion, secondary data were collected from the NJ SPR to obtain a school level measure of SES. The percentage of economically disadvantaged students in a school, which included students who received either free or reduced price lunch, served as the school level measure of SES for this study. Although not appropriate for use as a student level measure of SES, Harwell (2018) reported that the percentage of free or reduced price lunch students is an appropriate measure of SES at the school or district levels of analysis.

Additionally, secondary data were collected from the NJ SPR to obtain school level measures of school climate. The following school climate proxy measures included in the NJ SPR were used to serve as distinct school level measures of school climate:

- Length of school day
- Student to faculty ratio (S:F)
- Student to administrator ratio (S:A)
- Faculty attendance
- Student suspensions
- Student expulsions

SPSS was used for all data analyses in this study. Descriptive statistics are reported for all school level measures and inferential statistics to test the study's three directional hypotheses. A correlation analysis was conducted to test  $H_1$ ,  $H_2$ , and  $H_3$ . Separate multiple regression analyses were conducted to test  $H_4$  and  $H_5$ . The results of these analyses are presented in the following section.

## Ethical Considerations

Participant responses to the research instrument used in this study, the Perceived Hope Scale (PHS) (Krafft et al., 2019), were collected electronically via Qualtrics. The use of Qualtrics allowed participants to consent to or withdraw from study participation prior to responding to items on the PHS. Additionally, the use of Qualtrics for primary quantitative data collection ensured participant anonymity. Participation in this study resulted in minimal risks to respondents.

Ethical review board name: The William Paterson University of New Jersey Institutional Review Board for Human Subject Research.

Date of ethics review decision: May 2, 2019.

Ethics assessment document issue number: 2019-349.

## Findings

A total of 599 staff members from 122 NJ schools participated in this research. Forty five schools met the study's inclusion criterion, and a total of 405 individual participants from these 45 schools completed the PHS ( $M = 9.0$ ;  $SD = 5.34$ ). The study's sample of 45 schools includes 24 elementary schools, 11 middle schools, and 10 high schools from NJ. The average staff hope score in these sample schools was 4.75 ( $SD = 0.31$ ), which indicated the participants in this study had high levels of perceived hope.

The average percentage of economically disadvantaged students in this sample of 45 schools was 30.82% ( $SD = 25.25$ ). For academic achievement, the percentage of students in these sample schools who scored at the proficient level or higher on the NJ accountability test was 58.70% ( $SD = 19.00$ ) for English-language arts and 52.00% ( $SD = 19.40$ ) for math. Descriptive statistics for the six school level

measures of school climate were: length of school day in minutes ( $M = 396.33$ ,  $SD = 11.79$ ); S:F ( $M = 12.31$ ,  $SD = 2.41$ ); S:A ( $M = 300.30$ ,  $SD = 120.28$ ); faculty attendance percentage ( $M = 96.60$ ,  $SD = 1.44$ ); student expulsion percentage ( $M = 0.00$ ,  $SD = 0.00$ ); and student suspension percentage ( $M = 2.94$ ,  $SD = 6.18$ ).

For  $H_1$  – staff hope is unrelated with school level SES – the results of the correlation analysis indicated that staff hope was unrelated with school level SES ( $r = .22$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ). The data from these sample schools for staff hope and SES supported  $H_1$ , which is a promising finding for hope in schools research.

For  $H_2$  – staff hope is positively related with academic achievement – the results of the correlation analysis indicated that staff hope was unrelated with English-language arts scores ( $r = -.21$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ) and math scores ( $r = -.21$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ). The data from these sample schools for staff hope and academic achievement did not support  $H_2$ .

For  $H_3$  – staff hope is positively related with school climate – the results of the correlation analysis indicated that staff hope was related with one school level measure of school climate, S:F ( $r = .34$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ,  $r^2 = .12$ ). The coefficient of determination for this relationship, however, indicated minimal potential practical benefit. Staff hope scores were unrelated with the other five school level measures of school climate included in this analysis. Therefore, the data from these sample schools for staff hope and school climate partially supported  $H_3$ .

For  $H_4$  – staff hope is a positive predictor of academic achievement when modeled with school level SES – the results of the regression analysis indicated that staff hope does not predict academic achievement in either English-language arts or math. Therefore, the data from these sample schools for staff hope, SES, and academic achievement did not support  $H_4$ .

For  $H_5$  – school climate is a positive predictor of staff hope when modeled with school level SES – the results of the multiple regression analysis indicated that one school level measure of school climate, S:F, positively predicted staff hope scores when modeled with SES. Table 1 includes the summary of regression analysis for school climate on staff hope. This model accounted for 21.6% of the variance in staff perceptions of hope, thereby offering a potential practical benefit. The data from these sample schools for staff hope, SES, and school climate partially supported  $H_5$ .

**Table 1.** Regression results for school climate on staff hope

Predictor	B	$\beta$	t	p	95% CI
SES	.002	.157	.899	.374	[-0.002, 0.006]
LSD	.006	.216	1.349	.185	[-0.003, 0.014]
S:F	.052	.400	2.522	.016	[0.010, 0.093]
S:A	.000	-.053	-.320	.750	[-0.001, 0.001]
FA	-.007	-.032	-.200	.843	[-0.076, 0.062]
SUS	.002	.047	.287	.776	[-0.014, 0.019]

Note.  $R^2 = .216$ ;  $F(6, 43) = 1.697$ ;  $p > .05$

LSD = length of school day; S:F = student to faculty ratio; S:A = student to administrator ratio; FA = faculty attendance percentage; SUS = student suspension percentage

## Discussion

The purpose of this research was to assess whether staff hope yields similar academic achievement and school climate outcomes as student hope. The PHS was administered to certified staff members from sample schools to obtain a school level staff hope score, and secondary data were collected from the NJ SPR to obtain school level measures of SES, school climate, and academic achievement. In these sample schools, staff hope is unrelated with school level SES, but staff hope is related with one measure of school climate, S:F. These findings provide support for hypothesis one and partial support for hypothesis three, respectively. Hypothesis four, staff hope is a positive predictor of academic



achievement when modeled with school level SES, is not supported by the findings. One school level measure of school climate, S:F, predicts staff hope scores when modeled with SES. This finding provides partial support for hypothesis five, school climate is a positive predictor of staff hope when modeled with school level SES, and offers a potential practical benefit for school leaders.

The results of this study indicate that leading with a focus on staff hope is likely to yield limited improvements in academic achievement and school climate. Throughout the literature review for this study, research that examined staff hope and educational outcomes was not identified. Conversely, and as discussed earlier in this paper, there was a wealth of research that examined the role of student hope and educational outcomes (Lenz et al., 2021; Marquez et al., 2015; Dixon, 2020; Dixon, 2019; Dixon & Stevens, 2018; Dixon et al., 2018; Dixon et al., 2017; Snyder et al., 1997). As a result, it was worthwhile to discuss findings from this study relative to work on student hope.

In the current study, staff hope is unrelated with SES. At the student level, Dixon and Stevens (2018) reported a weak, direct relationship between student hope and self-reported SES. In the current study, the percentage of students who received free/reduced price lunch was used as the measure of SES. In addition to the analyses being conducted at different levels, this inconsistency of measures for SES likely contributes to this study's lack of support for Dixon and Steven's (2018) work on student hope. As conceptualized for the current study, the absence of a relationship between staff hope and SES could be a meaningful finding for school leaders. The level of poverty or wealth of the sample schools is unrelated with perceptions of staff hope.

In the current study, staff hope is unrelated with and does not predict academic achievement. This finding does not support the student level work of Dixon (2020, 2019), Dixon et al. (2018, 2017), and Dixon and Stevens (2018). These prior studies of student hope utilized measures of academic achievement that differed from the measures used in the current study. Dixon (2020, 2019), Dixon et al. (2018, 2017), and Dixon and Stevens (2018) used a variety of non-accountability test measures for academic achievement and reported that student hope predicted these measures. In the current study, the percentage of students who scored at the proficient level or higher on NJ's accountability test was used to measure academic achievement. In addition to the analyses being conducted at different levels, this inconsistency of measures for academic achievement contributes to this study's lack of support for results at the student level (Dixon, 2020, 2019; Dixon et al., 2018, 2017; & Dixon & Stevens, 2018).

In this study, student to faculty ratio (S:F) is one measure of school climate that is related with and predicts staff hope when modeled with SES. Although Lenz et al. (2021) reported that student hope improved school climate, the current study's finding indicates that S:F influences staff hope. This is an unexpected finding, because it suggests that as S:F increases, so will staff hope. As student enrollments increase and the number of faculty members remain constant, staff hope will increase. The limitations of the school climate proxy measures in NJ likely contribute to this unexpected finding.

### ***Limitations and Strengths***

The current study had several limitations given its cross sectional survey design. The achieved sample size of 45 schools was adequate to conduct the data analyses, however, this sample limits the generalizability of findings to schools in other states. The findings are also limited within NJ, because sample schools represented elementary, middle, and high school levels. The number of participants per sample school is another limitation. Due to its brevity, psychometric properties, and broad conception of hope, the PHS was used to measure staff hope. To date, other researchers have not used this instrument to study hope in schools, so perhaps another instrument might offer greater utility in these settings. The school climate proxies in NJ continue to be problematic for use in research and appear to offer little value as measures of school climate. Despite these limitations, the strength of this study is its contribution to the hope in schools research base. This is the first study to examine the role

of staff hope to predict academic achievement and school climate. This foundational work offers value for future research and school leadership practice.

### ***Implications for Research***

More work is needed to examine the value of staff hope as an administratively mutable variable for school leaders to consider in practice. Future research should examine whether staff hope is related with and predicts other school and student level outcomes in various settings, in addition to the psychological and academic achievement measures that others have studied at the student level (Dixson, 2020, 2019; Dixson et al., 2018, 2017; & Dixson & Stevens, 2018). Perhaps the use of accountability test scores as measures of academic achievement to do not adequately serve as an outcome of staff hope. Future work should examine the role of staff hope against educational outcomes used in other work that examined student hope (Lenz et al., 2021; Marquez et al., 2015; Dixson, 2020; Dixson, 2019; Dixson & Stevens, 2018; Dixson et al., 2018; Dixson et al., 2017; Snyder et al., 1997).

Future research that compares staff hope to student hope would likely be a valuable contribution to the hope in schools research base, especially given the availability of interventions to improve hope in schools (Green et al., 2007; Marques et al., 2011; Waters, 2011). Findings from this type of research would provide valuable evidence to school leadership practitioners regarding whether to lead with a focus on hope at the student or staff levels, both.

### ***Implications for Practice***

The current study may have two primary implications for practice. First, school leaders can communicate with staff that SES is unrelated with staff hope. Perhaps this might encourage school staff to embrace the popular phrase – where there’s a will, there’s a way – especially in schools with a higher percentage of students who receive free/reduced price lunch. Second, the one measure of school climate that is related with and predicts staff hope is S:F. The potential practical benefit of this finding is that school leaders can encourage staff that they can positively influence school and student outcomes, even as school enrollments continue to increase.

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## Appendix

### *Recruitment letter*

Dear Principal,

I am an Assistant Professor in the Department of Educational Leadership and Professional Studies at William Paterson University. The purpose of this email is to ask for your assistance in recruiting your certified staff to participate in my research.

The purpose of this study is to examine staff perceptions of hope and school level variables included in the New Jersey School Performance Report. The design of this study requires me to collect staff responses to the items included in the Perceived Hope Scale (PHS). Staff participation is completely voluntary and anonymous, and survey completion should require less than five minutes. Risks associated with completing the PHS are minimal, meaning that the risks involved are no greater than those encountered in everyday life. A benefit of participation in this study is an enhancement of the general knowledge of this study area.

Please forward this email to all certified staff members so they may consider volunteering to participate in this study and complete the PHS by clicking here. I hope you will consider volunteering to participate in this study and complete the PHS, too.

Please contact me at your earliest convenience if you have any questions about this research. I look forward to collecting your staff's responses to the PHS.

Sincerely,  
Samuel F. Fancera, Ed.D.  
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### **Biographical notes:**

**Samuel F. Fancera:** Assistant Professor and Director of Educational Leadership at William Paterson University. Generally, his research is focused on K-12 school leadership and principals. More specific lines of inquiry include school leadership for professional development and learning, positive psychology in schools, and leadership preparation.