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## THE IMPACT OF SPORTS OPTIMISM ON SPORTS PERFORMANCE

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### ABSTRACT

Sports optimism has a significant relationship with sports performance. This study intends to determine the impact of sports optimism on sports performance. The research design was based on co-relational research. It was delimited to the Ghazi University, Dera Ghazi Khan. The players of Ghazi University were considered as a sample of this study. The overall sample size of the study contained 150 players, and a snowball sampling technique was employed. The data was collected through a questionnaire. Suitable statistical techniques such as mean, standard deviation, ANOVA, Pearson's correlation, analysis, and linear regression analysis were applied for data analysis. The level of optimism was evaluated by the life orientation test revised (LOTR) and sports performance. The findings of the study discovered that sports optimism has a significant relationship with sports performance. The players who exhibited more optimistic behaviors are at high risk of performing better even in adverse situations. It was also found that sports optimism has a significant impact on sports performance, both physical and mental. The study concluded that optimism aids the performance of players. The players with a high optimistic level perform better than those with a low optimistic level.

*Keywords: Sports optimism; Sports performance; Relationship of optimism and performance; Sports spirit; Behaviour development.*

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### INTRODUCTION

Optimism is a learned trait associated with environmental factors and personal experiences (Pavey, Burton & Brown, 2015). It is defined as "Optimism is a positive belief that has a positive impact on the event outcomes" (Schweizer et al., 1999). It is observed that people with high optimistic provenance attribute not only work hard but may increase their achievement after facing undesirable response (Carver & Scheier, 2014). An optimistic outlook enhances performance when working towards a goal, which in turn enhances the chance of success. Sports optimism increases the inspiration, determination and performance of players in sports (Carver & Scheier, 2002). Performance is perceived as an accumulation of one's achievement, such as one's performance over a session or a series of competitions, in contrast to individual or group work (Steinberg, 2007). Sports performance is defined as "an approach in which sport participation is measured" (Young, Shearman & Fargier, 2008). It is regarded as explosive movements, agility, reaction and speed (Steinberg, 2007). God-gifted talent or the players' fitness lays an impact on their performance. Various factors influence an individual to improve sports performance, out of which optimism is one of the most influencing factors (Tunçalp et al., 2015). Sports optimism has positive effects on sports performance because an optimistic explanatory style plays a vital role in the determination of sports performance (Johnson et al., 2005). The advantageous properties of optimism and positive managing

skills have been revealed to promote an individual's competence to bear the stress faced during sports performance. The key benefit of containing an optimistic aptitude is that an individual is more intended to be determined and dedicated during the activity time of working towards a target and is more capable of tolerating unmanageable misery (Espahbodi et al., 2001).

An optimistic approach toward competition is essential for success in sports (Wilson et al., 2002) because individuals having optimistic aptitude hold a greater level of self-confidence and maintain higher levels of self-efficacy in their commitment to perform well and attain targets. Hence, sports optimism is an essential component to finding out the level of sports performance, either physical or mental. Therefore, this study was conducted to determine the impact of sports optimism on sports performance. The current study aimed (i) to find out the relationship between sports optimism and sports performance. (ii) to evaluate the influence of sports optimism on sports performance.

Configurational representation of the dependent variable and independent variable elaborates the connection between sports optimism and sports performance. The demographic information contains the sub-variables of age, sports/games, playing experience and department. The conceptual framework of the study is given in Figure 1.

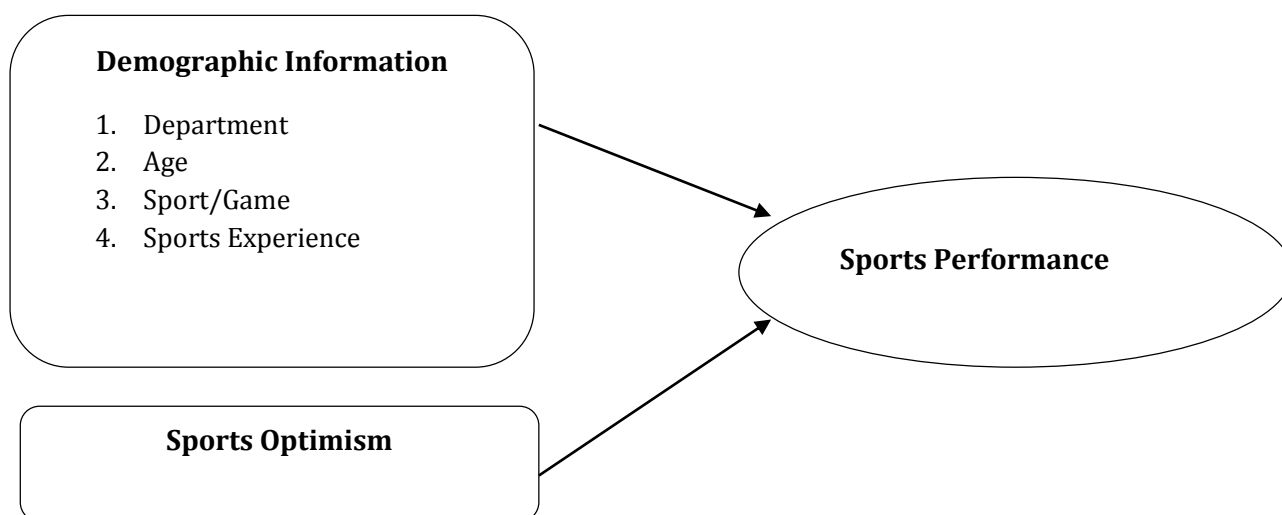


Figure 1. Conceptual framework.

### **Sports Optimism**

Optimism refers to regular individual differences in opinion that positive outcomes will be increased and negative outcomes will be uncommon (Carver et al., 2010). The concepts of sports optimism and pessimism have strongly attached to the motivational theories, which state that optimism and pessimism influence players' behaviors and emotions (Gallagher et al., 2013). According to this theory, players who exhibited more optimistic behaviors are at high risk of doing better performances even in adverse situations. Wilson et al. (2015) studied a team of athletes and highlighted that athletes with high optimistic aptitudes are likelier to perform better in competitions than those with pessimistic aptitudes. Therefore, sports optimism seems to support sports achievements, whereas pessimism causes to decrease the performance. Schinke et al. (2005) have also found that the players having pessimistic aptitude have been displayed to observe more depressive signs than the optimistic players. Radcliffe & Klein (2002) found that the practical negative connections were characteristic of players accrediting negative achievements to deficiency of effort (Defensive pessimism) in contrast to deficiency of ability (Depressive pessimism). People clarify themselves the relationship between their performance and the ensuring outcomes determines to a great

level whether they learn to be helpless or not (Schneider, 2001). Players with lower optimistic attitudes usually tend to perform tasks more inadequately after negative achievements than players with more optimistic attitudes because they have a lack of control over outcomes in such a manner as to consider (Helton et al., 2005). One's level of optimism/pessimism decides whether he will lead to continuing efforts to achieve goals or he will lead to giving up (Chan and Chan, 2004).

The advantages of optimism consist of a higher level of motivation and increased achievement in various sectors (Shepperd et al., 2015). The optimistic is more confident in seeing difficulty as a task to have the capability to create opportunities and find solutions to problems, give more energy to improve efforts, maintain a superior level of confidence and determination, as well as showing the ability to recover quickly after a hindrance (Young et al., 2008). In the field of sports psychology, it is usually considered that a person's optimistic style toward competition is crucial for success in sports (Ruthig et al., 2007). Gordon (2008) found that players having optimistic attitudes exhibited better performance during a session than did the players having a pessimistic attitudes. The optimistic attribute governs a positive outlook and future direction and may arise better performance, better outcomes, better personal well fare and better-facing strategies (Dunn et al., 2010). Sports optimism holds positive expectations across time and situations. Persons who have optimistic temperaments believe that they will meet their goals in any situation (Lonsdale et al., 2013). Thus, sports optimism is an important tendency, optimism that mirrors expectations across a wide range of life spheres. An optimistic approach promotes the assumption that good outcomes will occur, and pessimism results in assumptions that bad outcomes will occur (Peterson, 2000).

### **Sports Performance**

Helton et al. (2005) revealed the positive impact of the explanatory attitude of athletes on their performance. The assessment of the effects of the explanatory aptitude on the athletes' performance among players showed that the players with a pessimistic explanatory aptitude showed significantly poor performance during the session than performed the optimistic players. Similarly, Lewis (2015) found that the players with pessimistic aptitude showed greater bad performances than the optimistic players did during competition.

Research Questions:

RQ1: What is the connection between sports optimism and sports performance?

RQ2: What is the effects of sports optimism on sports performance?

### **Research Hypothesis:**

Ha1: There is significant connection between sports optimism and sports performance.

Ha2: There is significant effects of sports optimism on sports performance.

### **METHODOLOGY**

This study has a correlational research design, a type of non-experimental research design in which the relationship between two variables is measured and shown in Figure 2.

### **Sample Size and Sampling Procedures**

Players of Ghazi University were associated with different departments and different sports. So, it was difficult for the researcher to touch them at one point, but all the players could know one another. Therefore, considering the players' location and availability, the researcher adopted the snowball sampling technique for this research. This research's overall sample size consisted of 150 players from Ghazi University, Dera Ghazi Khan.

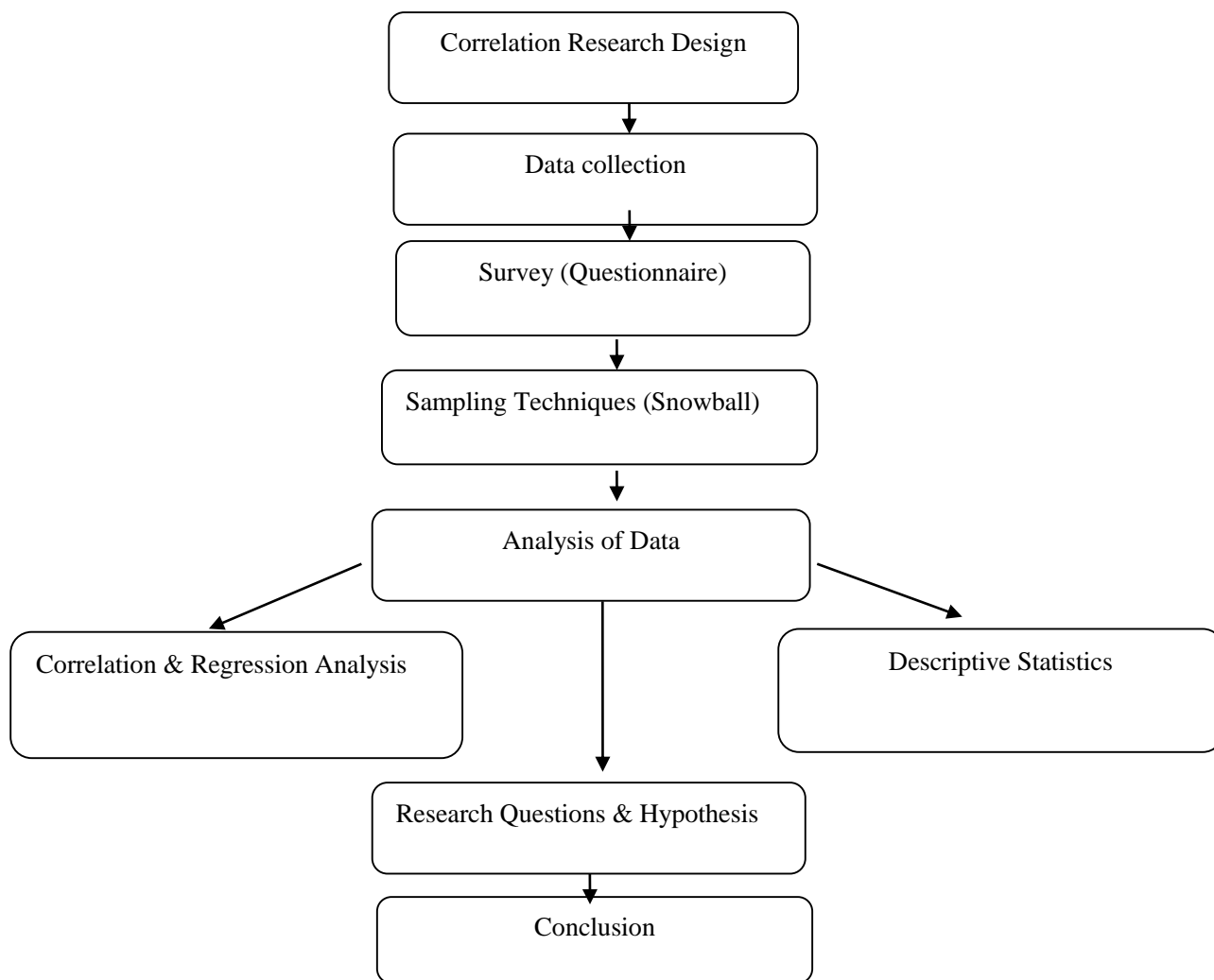


Figure 2. Research design.

**Instrumentation**

The survey questionnaire as a research tool was used in this research. Questionnaire metrics are given in Table 1. The research tool contains three sections, A: Demographic Information, B: Optimism, and C: Sports Performance.

Table 1. The research tool metric.

Items	Research Items	Source
10 items	Optimism	Scheier& Carver (1985)
8 items	Sports performance	Donoghue (2009)

**Sports Optimism**

Section B of the research tool consisted of 10 items related to optimism developed by Scheier & Carver (1985) as shown in Table 2.

**Sports' Performance**

Section B of the research tool consisted of 8 items inquired about sports' performance developed by Donoghue (2009), as given in Table 3.

Table 2. Sports optimism.

Sr. No	Items
1	I expect the best even in difficult times.
2	I can easily make me relax.
3	I can face if something goes against me.
4	I have high level of optimism about outcomes.
5	I find my friends cooperative.
6	I usually remain busy.
7	I do not want things to go in my way.
8	I do not become easily upset.
9	I do not want to take credit alone of good things.
10	I expect future outcomes will be better to me than bad.

Table 3. Sports' performance.

Sr. No	Items
1	I follow games tactics.
2	I focus my attention to correct my technical and tactical mistakes.
3	I give special care to play by utilizing technical and tactical skills.
4	I am conscious of doing the best in every situation in playing.
5	I see to it that my efforts are co-ordinate.
6	I try my own way to co-ordinate with during game.
7	I know to carry out with interpersonal code to during game.
8	I trust upon my fellows during plays.

### DATA ANALYSIS

The researcher used the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) Version-21 for the data analysis process in this study. The percentage was applied for data analysis of demographic information whereas mean and standard deviation (SD) were used in descriptive statistics. However, the researcher also used correlation and linear regression analysis to express the distribution of variables under different conditions for the existing research.

### Summary of Data Analysis

Table 4 describes the summary of the research objectives, research questions, hypothesis and data analysis technique.

Table 4. Summary of the objectives, research questions, hypothesis and data analysis technique.

Research Objectives	Research Questions	Hypothesis	Analysis Techniques
i. To find out the relationship between sports optimism and sports performance.	RQ1: What is the connection between sports optimism and sports performance?	Ha1: There is significant connection between sports optimism and sports performance.	Correlation Analysis
ii. To evaluate the influence of sports optimism on sports performance.	RQ2: What is the effects of sports optimism on sports performance?	Ha2: There is significant effects of sports optimism on sports performance.	Regression Analysis

**Demographic Information**

Table 5. Distribution of participants related to their age level.

Age	Number of Participants	Percentage %
Eighteen years old	06	4.0
Nineteen years old	09	6.0
Twenty years old	22	14.67
Twenty-one years old	25	16.67
Twenty-two years old	40	26.67
Twenty-three years old	17	11.33
Twenty-four years old	14	9.33
Twenty-five years old	12	8.0
Twenty-six years old	01	0.67
Twenty-seven years old	01	0.67
Total	150	100%

Table 5 shows the frequency distribution of participants about the age level of 150 students. 22 years old students took frequently participated in games, while more than 25 years old persons did not show interest in the game. This table also demonstrated that teenagers showed less interest towards games. The age level of 70% of participants was 20 to 23 years.

Table 6. Age levels of participants.

Age level	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
	150	18	29	21.80	1.570

Table 6 shows that 150 participants of age level between 18 and 29 years were enrolled in this study. The mean of age level (21.80) showed that the result was directed towards the central tendency of the data; it did not spread towards minimum to maximum measurements of the age level. It was acquired with the help of the standard deviation of the age level (1.570) which indicated that the spread or variation in age level was reasonably high.

Table 7. Frequency distribution of participants about game/sport.

Games	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Wrestling	02	1.33
Tug of war	03	2.0
Wushu	03	2.0
Football	29	19.33
Netball	07	4.67
Badminton	14	9.33
Volleyball	34	22.67
Handball	02	1.33
Hockey	14	9.33
Base ball	03	2.0
Basketball	07	4.67
Table Tennis	07	4.67
Cricket	22	14.66
Athletics	03	2.0
Total	150	100 %

Table 7 shows the frequency distribution of participants in different games or sports. The present study showed that volleyball is the most famous game among students. Football and cricket stood in second and

third ranks respectively among the participation of students. This table also demonstrated that more than half of the participants played these three games. The national game of Pakistan stood in the fourth rank of participation.

Table 8 shows the frequency distribution of participants about their experience in different games or sports. The experience of one, two and three years in the games were frequently reported, and more than half participants stood on this maximum participant range. This analysis explored that this experience range proved best suited that matched to the approximately average experience age of participants in the games.

Table 8. Frequency distribution of participants about game experience.

Sports Experience	Frequency	Percentage %
One month	03	2.0
Two months	02	1.33
Four months	01	0.67
Five months	03	2.0
Six months	08	5.33
One year	21	14.0
One and half years	04	2.67
Two years	39	26.0
Three years	19	12.67
Four years	14	9.33
Five years	12	8.0
Six years	06	4.0
Seven years	01	0.67
Eight years	03	2.0
Ten years	06	4.0
Twelve years	03	2.0
Thirteen years	01	0.67
Fifteen years	02	1.13
Total	150	100 %

Table 9. Frequency distribution of participants about department.

Departments	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Physical Education	81	54.0
English	04	2.67
MBA	15	10.0
DMS	14	9.33
Urdu	06	4.0
Education	09	6.0
Engineering	04	2.67
Commerce	01	0.67
Psychology	01	0.67
Mathematics	02	1.33
Physics	01	0.67
Arabic	01	0.67
Computer Science	03	2.0
Biochemistry	02	1.33
Information Technology	01	0.67
DVM	02	1.33
Economics	01	0.67
Chemistry	01	0.67
Total	150	100 %

Table 9 shows the frequency distribution of participants in the department where they study. More than half number of the participants were studying in the department of Physical Education. This table also demonstrated that the department of Physical Education promoted sports among the students. This table also showed that the students of other departments took participated in their free time. This analysis explored that the department of Physical Education proved the best advisor for games and sports.

**Pearson’s Correlation Results for Research Questions 1**

The results of research question 1 were drawn by Pearson’s correlation analysis. What is the relationship between sports optimism with sports performance?

Table 10. Correlations between optimism and sports performance (n=150).

Variables	Optimism	SP
Optimism	Pearson Correlation (2-tailed) Significant	- .706**
Sports Performance (SP)	Pearson Correlation (2-tailed) Significant	- .000

Note. \*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The findings of table 10 showed that optimism was significantly correlated with the sports performance ( $r = .706, p = 0.01$ ). Correlation analysis of both variables showed that optimism had a significantly positive relationship with sports performance.

**Regression Results for Research Questions 2**

Regression analysis was made to check the role of optimism on sports performance. What is the impact of sports optimism on sports performance?

Table 11. Statistics.

Statistics	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Sports Performance	12.02	2.04	150
Optimism	22.24	3.10	150

Findings given in table 11 showed that optimism was significantly correlated with the sports performance with the mean of 12.02 and 22.24. This mean showed that the result was directed towards the central measurement of the data. The standard deviation indicated that the variation was spread over the mean.

Table 12. Summary of the model.

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Estimated Std. Error	Durbin - Watson
1	.518a	.408	.404	1.18	1.31

- a. Optimism: Constant Predictor
- b. Sports Performance: Dependent Variable

The results show that the value of R was .518 (adjusted R Square = .404), which is strongly significant, whereas the Std. Error of estimate value was 1.18, and Durbin - Watson was 1.31 as displayed in table 12. The optimism had the strongly and significantly predicted sports performance in table 12.

Table 13. ANOVA<sup>a</sup>

Model		Sum of Squares	Difference	Mean Square	F	Significance
1	Regression	320.19	1	123.120	111.50	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	213.47	149	1.18		
	Total	130.81	149			

Dependent variable: Sports performance; Constant predictors: Optimism.



The results of ANOVA showed that the value of  $F(1,149) = 111.50$  and  $p = .000$  that these results were found statistically strong and significant as given in Table 13.

Table 14. Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficient		Standardized Coefficient			Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.	Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	-.241	.428			.403	
	Optimism	.051	.025	.406	2.04	.000	.299

Dependent variable: Sports performance.

The findings of the coefficient in table 14 showed that standardized coefficient optimism was  $\beta = .406$ ,  $t = 2.04$ ,  $p = .000$ . The total values of  $\beta$ ,  $t$ , and  $PF$  were found significant.

### Discussion

Optimism seems to assist the performance of the individuals, whereas pessimism cause them to decline their performance. The advantages of optimism contain improved motivation and greater achievement in various spheres. Optimist individuals usually see hurdles as a challenge, having the skills to overcome problems, maintain a greater level of determination, as well as capabilities to recover quickly after a hindrance. The study revealed that when the mission setting raises a facing style opposing to destroyed preference, performance is generally reduced. In the case of low salience, calm situation optimism correlated negatively with performance, and this situation also revealed high levels of maladaptive management and elevated levels of distress. Maybe in difficult conditions, if there is external guidance and support to improve performance, distress emotions may arise regardless of task focusing; in these stressful situations, the players with a dispositional task for emotion-oriented facing the challenge may really be better furnished than those setting task-oriented strategies. But having merely a highly optimistic level may not always be beneficial, and the players given the task must also be well prepared.

### Relationship between Sports Optimism and Sports Performance

The findings of the present study showed a significant ( $p=0.01$ ) relationship of optimism with sports performance. Optimism has a positive relationship with sports performance. Therefore, the findings of the study revealed a highly significant relationship between optimism and players' performance. The results of the study were aligned with the previous studies conducted by Gordon (2008) who found that optimism and players performance were strongly correlated with each other. Another research concluded by Nicholls et al. (2008) that a positive relationship was found between optimism and sports performance. The findings were measured by Kaufman et al. (2009) that sports performance increased with a high level of optimism. Smith and Hoy (2007) also concluded the positive correlation between optimism and sports performance.

### Impact of Sports Optimism on Sports Performance

The results of this study showed that model of linear regression analysis was developed to assess the influence of optimism as a predictor factor on sports performance (outcome variable). The findings revealed that optimism had a positive influence on sports performance. The effect of optimism was significant ( $p=0.01$ ) and strong on sports performance. The findings of the study were aligned with the previous studies by Johnson et al. (2005), which concluded that optimism had a positive and significant effect on sports performance. The findings measured by Gaudreau and Blondin (2004) showed that optimism exerts a positive effect on sports performance. Another research conducted by Krizan and Windschitl (2007) that there is a positive effect of optimism on sports performance. Kietzmann et al. (2011) also measured that optimism had a positive effect on sports performance.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

The current study determines the impact of sports optimism on sports performance. The relationship between sports optimism and sports performance is highly significant. The study examines that sports optimism can increase sports performance. Individuals with a more optimistic style often win the games or face challenges than those with a pessimistic style. Certainly, studies exist that indicate that optimism at the workplace is positively associated with performance. Therefore, the study concluded that there is a significantly strong link between an individual's optimism and level of performance.

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