

Authoritative Parenting and Academic Hardiness: The Moderating Role of Optimism in South Tangerang Secondary Students

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Abstract: This study examines the relationship between authoritative parenting and academic hardiness with the moderating role of optimism among high school students in South Tangerang City. A total of 540 respondents, selected using snowball sampling, completed three measurement instruments: the Revised Academic Hardiness Scale (RAHS), the Authoritative Parenting Index (API), and the Revised Life Orientation Test (LOT-R). Data were analyzed using Hayes' Moderation Process Analysis (Model 1). The results showed that authoritative parenting had a significant positive effect on academic hardiness, with a regression coefficient of $\beta = 0.1078$. The model produced an R value of 0.8754, indicating a very strong relationship between the independent variables (authoritative parenting and optimism) and the dependent variable (academic hardiness). The R^2 value of 0.7664 indicates that 76.64% of the variation in academic hardiness can be explained by authoritative parenting and optimism. Furthermore, optimism plays a moderating role that strengthens the relationship between authoritative parenting and academic hardiness. This study concludes that the development of academic hardiness is influenced not only by family parenting but also by students' optimism, which is an internal factor that strengthens academic hardiness.

Keywords: academic hardiness, authoritative parenting, high school students, optimism

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Introduction

The Senior High School (SHS) period is a crucial phase in adolescent development, during which students face escalating academic demands alongside the socio-emotional transitions toward adulthood (Aypay, 2017; Meinura, 2022). At this stage, students must adapt to high learning workloads, examinations, and the pressures of preparing for higher education (Suryani & Rahman, 2021). These pressures often result in stress, particularly stemming from academic responsibilities and expectations from parents and teachers (Desmita, 2009; Ma, 2023; Neeta & Singh, 2020). If not managed effectively, academic stress can develop into anxiety or depression, impairing learning motivation and psychological well-being (Barseli et al., 2018; Fitriani & Prasetyo, 2019; Jeyasingh, 2022; Siwach & Devi, 2014).

In this context, the development of academic hardiness becomes paramount. Academic hardiness is a psychological characteristic that enables students to remain resilient, committed, and motivated despite academic pressure (Benishek et al., 2005). This construct comprises three primary dimensions: commitment (dedication to academic tasks), challenge (the ability to perceive difficulties as opportunities), and control (the belief that academic pressures can be effectively managed) (Creed et al., 2013). Research indicates that students with high academic hardiness are better equipped to cope with stress, reduce procrastination, and achieve academic success (Bakar et al., 2022; Maddi et al., 2012; Merino-Tejedor et al., 2015).

External factors, such as authoritative parenting, can support the development of academic hardiness. This parenting style is characterized by a combination of high demandingness and high emotional responsiveness (Baumrind, 2013), ensuring that students feel both challenged and supported (Mirzaei & Kadivarzare, 2014). Studies consistently show that authoritative parenting is positively associated with motivation, independence, and hardiness in facing academic challenges (Anggraeni & Nawangsa, 2018; Loretha et al., 2017; Wulandari & Swandi, 2021).

However, the influence of authoritative parenting is not uniform across all adolescents. The internal factor of optimism potentially serves as a key variable moderating this relationship (Carver & Scheier, 2002). Optimism is defined as a dispositional tendency to expect positive future outcomes and maintain motivation in the face of adversity (Scheier et al., 1994). Highly optimistic individuals tend to be more resilient, better at emotional regulation, and view pressure as a constructive challenge (Carver & Scheier, 2014; Kwok et al., 2016). Conversely, adolescents with low optimism are more likely to interpret parental demands as unrealistic pressure, thereby weakening the positive influence of authoritative parenting (Joshanloo et al., 2017; Tariq et al., 2025).

Theoretically, authoritative parenting consists of two main dimensions: demandingness and responsiveness (Baumrind, 1991; Grolnick & Ryan, 1989; Maccoby, 1992; Pinquart, 2017). Optimism plays a vital role in how adolescents interpret these dimensions (Grolnick & Pomerantz, 2009). For optimistic adolescents, demandingness is viewed as a form of parental confidence in their abilities, while responsiveness bolsters their academic resilience (Kong, Zhao, & You, 2012). Without optimism, these same demands are easily perceived as a burden rather than a constructive challenge. In other words, optimism influences whether authoritative parenting is accepted as support that strengthens academic hardiness or is experienced as an overwhelming weight.

Recent research supports the protective role of optimism, describing it as positively correlated with academic hardiness and as a tool that helps students frame difficulties as opportunities (Hasanah & Pratama, 2024). Furthermore, optimism can mitigate the negative impact of stress on psychological well-being (Carver et al., 2010; Gungor et al., 2021). Thus, optimism functions not only as an individual psychological resource but also as a factor that enhances the effectiveness of authoritative parenting in fostering academic resilience.

Based on the aforementioned background, this study aims to investigate the role of optimism as a moderating variable in the relationship between authoritative parenting and academic hardiness among high school students. The findings are expected to contribute theoretically to the study of academic hardiness and provide practical insights for parents and educators in supporting adolescents to manage academic stress more effectively.

Method

This study employed a quantitative approach with a non-experimental design involving three variables: authoritative parenting, optimism, and academic hardiness. Three primary instruments were utilized: the Revised Academic Hardiness Scale (RAHS), the Authoritative Parenting Index (API), and the Revised Life Orientation Test (LOT-R).

The RAHS (Benishek et al., 2005) was translated into Indonesian by the researcher and subjected to construct validity testing, resulting in 25 valid items from the original 40, with item-total correlations ranging from $r = 0.417$ to 0.813 and high internal consistency ($\alpha = 0.935$). The API (Smith & Krohn, 1995) was also translated and adapted for the Indonesian context; validity testing showed that all 16 items were valid ($r = 0.599$ to 0.733) with excellent reliability ($\alpha = 0.940$). Meanwhile, the LOT-R (Scheier et al., 1994) was used in an Indonesian-adapted version as reported by Suryadi et al. (2021). All core items were found valid ($r = 0.642$ to 0.702) with adequate reliability ($\alpha = 0.786$). This unidimensional scale consists of 10 items, but only six (items 1, 3, 4, 7, 9, and 10) are used to measure optimism; the remaining four are filler items and are not included in the scoring.

Data analysis was conducted using Hayes' Moderation Process Analysis to test the moderating role of optimism in the relationship between authoritative parenting and academic hardiness. All statistical procedures were performed using SPSS. The study participants consisted of 540 active high school students in South Tangerang. Sampling was conducted via snowball sampling, with an online questionnaire distributed through Google Forms. This technique was selected due to limited direct access to schools for external research and the need to efficiently obtain a large sample size. While not strictly representative, this method allowed the researchers to reach a significant number of participants within a relatively short timeframe.

Result and Discussion

This study involved 540 high school students in South Tangerang. The demographic characteristics of the participants are presented in Table 1:

		Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Female	264	48,9%
	Male	276	51,1%
Age	15 years old	78	14,5 %
	16 years old	240	44,4 %
	17 years old	198	36,7 %
	18 years old	33	4,4 %
Grade	10	220	40,7 %
	11	246	45,6 %
	12	74	13,7 %
Status Sekolah	Public High School	473	87,6 %
	Private High School	62	11,5 %
	Vocational High School	5	0,9 %

Table 1 indicates that 51.1% of the respondents were male and 48.9% were female. The participants' ages ranged from 15 to 18 years, with 16-year-olds being the most dominant group (44.4%). In terms of academic level, the majority of respondents were in Grade 11 (45.6%), followed by Grade 10 (40.7%). Furthermore, most respondents attended public high schools, accounting for 87.6% of the sample.

Variable	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev
Academic hardiness	47	95	75,01	9,507
Optimisme	2	24	16,44	4,995
Authoritative parenting	10	68	43,24	11,529

The descriptive data presented in Table 2 shows that the mean academic hardiness score of the respondents was 75.01 (SD = 9.51), with scores ranging from 47 to 95. The mean optimism score was 16.44 (SD = 4.99) within a score range of 2 to 24. Meanwhile, authoritative parenting yielded a mean score of 43.24 (SD = 11.53), with a minimum score of 10 and a maximum of 68.

Table 3. Contribution of Independent Variables to the Dependent Variable

Model Summary	R	R ²	F	p
	0,8754	0,7664	586,0219	0,0001

Based on Table 3, the coefficient of determination (R^2) is 0.7664, indicating that 76.64% of the variance in academic hardiness can be explained by authoritative parenting, optimism, and their interaction, while the remaining percentage is attributed to other factors. The overall regression model is significant with an F value of 586.0219 and $p = 0.0001$, demonstrating that the model is robust in predicting academic hardiness.

Subsequently, a hypothesis test was conducted using Hayes' Moderation Process Analysis to reveal the moderating role of optimism in the relationship between authoritative parenting and academic hardiness, as presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Results of Hypothesis Testing with Moderation Process Analysis (Model 1)

Variabel	β	t	p
Academic hardiness (Y)	46,4590	20,1338	0,0001
Authoritative parenting (X)	0,1074	2,0273	0,0431
Optimisme (M)	1,0675	7,4468	0,0001
Interaction (X*M)	0,0088	2,7454	0,0062

Individually, authoritative parenting significantly predicts academic hardiness ($t = 2.0273$; $p = 0.0431$), indicating that higher perceived authoritative parenting scores are associated with higher levels of academic hardiness. Furthermore, optimism as a moderator also exerts a significant effect ($t = 7.4468$; $p = 0.0001$), demonstrating that higher levels of optimism contribute to increased academic hardiness.

Crucially, the interaction between authoritative parenting and optimism is significant ($t = 2.7454$; $p = 0.0062$). This statistical significance confirms the presence of a moderation effect on the relationship between authoritative parenting and academic hardiness.

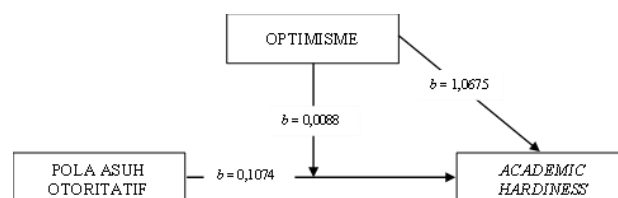


Figure 1. Statistical Model of Testing Results
Authoritative Parenting, Academic Hardiness, and Optimism

The results indicate that as optimism increases, the influence of authoritative parenting on the formation of academic hardiness becomes stronger. Figure 2 illustrates the results of the moderation analysis across three levels of optimism: low, moderate, and high. At all levels, authoritative parenting significantly affects academic hardiness; however, this influence intensifies as the level of optimism rises. The strongest effect is observed in individuals with high optimism, demonstrating that optimism serves to amplify the positive relationship between authoritative parenting and academic hardiness.

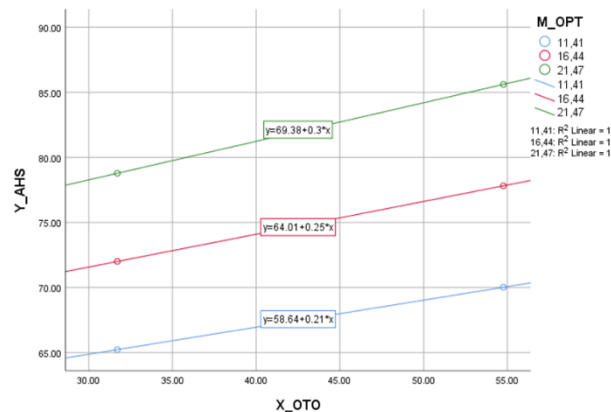


Figure 2. Conditional effect of authoritative parenting on academic hardiness at different levels of optimism moderation.

Based on the moderation analysis using Hayes' Process Macro, both authoritative parenting and optimism exert significant effects on academic hardiness, both directly and through their interaction. Partially, authoritative parenting shows a significant positive influence on academic hardiness, indicating that higher levels of perceived authoritative parenting among students correlate with higher levels of academic hardiness. This finding aligns with previous research (Baumrind, 1991) and is consistent with Dwairy and Achoui (2006), who assert that the combination of firm demands, warmth, and emotional support inherent in authoritative parenting fosters independence, responsibility, and psychological resilience in the face of academic pressure. This parenting style creates a conducive psychological climate that bolsters a student's endurance against challenges.

In addition to the direct influence of parenting, optimism was also proven to play a significant role in increasing academic hardiness. Highly optimistic individuals tend to possess greater academic hardiness. Research by Carver and Scheier (2002) indicates that optimism is a robust predictor of academic resilience, as optimistic individuals are more likely to perceive challenges as opportunities rather than threats. This result is consistent with Benishek and Lopez (2001), who emphasized the role of optimism in enhancing a student's ability to persist amidst academic strain.

A compelling finding is the significant interaction between authoritative parenting and optimism, indicating that optimism moderates the influence of parenting on academic hardiness. As an individual's optimism increases, the impact of authoritative parenting in forming academic hardiness becomes significantly stronger. This aligns with the work of Shin, Steger, and Frazier (2014), which demonstrates that internal factors, such as optimism, can amplify the impact of external support systems like authoritative parenting.

These findings are consistent with Rutter's Protective Factor Model (1987), which explains that external protective factors (authoritative parenting) are more effective when supported by positive internal factors (optimism). Studies by Shen et al. (2016) show that adolescents with high optimism who receive family support tend to exhibit greater academic hardiness. Furthermore, Atkinson et al. (2020) state that supportive parenting yields positive outcomes only when individuals maintain a positive outlook on the future, the core of optimism. Thus, optimism functions as a protective shield that enhances the efficacy of environmental support. This supports the person-environment interaction model proposed by Taylor and Stanton (2007) and aligns with Luthar and Zelazo (2003), who identified positive future orientation as a key component in protecting individuals from academic stress.

Within the framework of child-rearing, Baumrind (1991) stated that authoritative parenting provides the best social foundation for the development of self-regulation and academic hardiness. However, the effectiveness of this style is highly dependent on internal capacities, with optimism playing a central

role. The person $\times$ context interaction approach by Lerner et al. (2006) further strengthens this understanding, asserting that environmental effects on psychological outcomes are not universal but depend on internal characteristics.

This study reinforces previous findings that examined these relationships partially. While prior research often investigated authoritative parenting or optimism in isolation, this study highlights the moderating role of optimism in amplifying the influence of parenting. This provides a new perspective on how optimism can strengthen the positive effects of parenting, moving beyond its role as a simple predictor to an enhancer of environmental support.

Conclusion

The results of this study demonstrate that authoritative parenting exerts a significant positive influence on the academic hardiness of high school students. Furthermore, optimism functions as a crucial moderating variable that significantly amplifies this relationship. Higher levels of dispositional optimism serve to enhance the impact of authoritative parenting, leading to greater academic hardiness among students.

For future research, it is recommended to employ longitudinal designs and mixed-methods approaches to capture the developmental dynamics of these constructs. Additionally, future studies should investigate other potential variables, such as self-efficacy and emotional regulation, to provide a more comprehensive model of academic resilience.

From a practical standpoint, parents are encouraged to consistently apply authoritative parenting practices, balancing firm expectations with high emotional support. Meanwhile, schools and educators should develop targeted intervention programs designed to instill realistic optimism and promote positive coping strategies, enabling students to navigate academic challenges with greater psychological fortitude.

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