

The Moderating Role of Goal Orientation in the Relationship Between Self-Efficacy, Peer Support, and Academic Resilience Among University Students

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<p>Revised: 2025-08-06</p> <p>Published: 2025-11-25</p> <p>Keywords: Academic Resilience, Self-Efficacy, Peer Social Support, Goal Orientation</p> <p>Copyright holder: © Author/s (2025)</p> <p>This article is under:</p>  <p>How to cite: Wulandari, A. P. J., Setiadi, B. N., Shanti, T. I., & Sitinjak, C. (2025). The Moderating Role of Goal Orientation in the Relationship Between Self-Efficacy, Peer Support, and Academic Resilience Among University Students. <i>Bulletin of Counseling and Psychotherapy</i>, 7(3). https://doi.org/10.51214/002025071569000</p> <p>Published by: Kuras Institute</p> <p>E-ISSN: 2656-1050</p>	<p>ABSTRACT: Academic Resilience is the capacity to manage academic stress and bounce back from challenges, influenced by Self-Efficacy and peer support. This study explores the psychological mechanism underlying these relationships by introducing goal orientation as a moderating variable in the influence of Self-Efficacy and Peer Support on Academic Resilience. The types of goal orientation examined include Learning Goal Orientation, Avoiding Goal Orientation, and Proving Goal Orientation. A moderation test was conducted using hierarchical regression analysis with a sample of 1,082 university students from a private higher education institution in Jakarta. The findings revealed that both Learning Goal Orientation and Avoiding Goal Orientation significantly strengthened the effect of Self-Efficacy on Academic Resilience, while Proving Goal Orientation significantly weakened this relationship. These results suggest that goal orientation can be leveraged to support students who have trouble adjusting during the early stages of university life. However, the study also found that goal orientation did not significantly moderate the relationship between peer social support and Academic Resilience (e.g., LGO: $\beta = 0.015$, $p = 0.224$; AGO: $\beta = 0.031$, $p = 0.330$; PGO: $\beta = 0.038$, $p = 0.674$). It is suggested that this may be due to the inherently strong role of peer relationships among individuals in this age group, reducing the influence of goal orientation in their adaptation process to university settings.</p>
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INTRODUCTION

University students often experience crises during the transitional phase of entering higher education. These crises typically begin as students face early academic challenges, including increased demands for independence, adaptation to new peers and lecturers, and unfamiliar institutional rules. These challenges continue in subsequent years as students encounter conflicts in managing time between academic responsibilities, social networking, and career planning (Santrock, 2015; Robbins, Kaye, & Catling, 2018). Studies by Andrews and Wilding (2004), DeRosier, Frank, Schwartz, and Leary (2013), and Catterall, Davis, and Yang (2014) indicate that such pressures in higher education can lead to stress, burnout, and academic failure.

According to the 2017 Higher Education Statistics report (RISTEKDIKTI, 2017), 2.8% of Indonesia's 6,924,511 university students failed to complete their studies, with the highest proportion located in Jakarta (3.7% of 1,084,123 students). Notably, students in private universities (PTS) had a higher dropout rate than those in public universities (PTN), despite the significantly larger number of students in PTS (4,712,843) compared to PTN (2,211,668). One private university "X" in Jakarta recorded a particularly high dropout rate 8.7% of its 37,270 students well above the Jakarta average. The data from university's Student Advisory Centre (SAC) revealed that approximately 3,400 active students sought counselling for academic-related pressures, such as: (1) difficulty adjusting to the shift from secondary school to university due to different academic systems; (2) inability to adapt to new teaching styles, assignments, and assessment methods; (3) overwhelming task demands with short deadlines; and (4) difficulty prioritising between academic and organisational commitments.

These conditions suggest a lack of student resilience in coping with the academic demands of higher education referred to in psychological terms as Academic Resilience. Students with high Academic Resilience tend to embrace such challenges as opportunities to demonstrate themselves as active learners (Wilks & Spivey, 2010). Hamachek (1990) found that students with low resilience tend to be anxious, fearful, easily discouraged, and prone to avoidance behaviours, often withdrawing before confronting the root of their problems due to perceived threats to their self-worth. Similarly, Cheng and Catling (2015) observed that students vulnerable to mental illness typically exhibit lower Academic Resilience when faced with academic stress and pressure. Brewer et al., (2019) further associated Academic Resilience with students' mental health, psychological well-being, and academic achievement. Thus, resilience is considered a key factor for academic success (Wright & Masten, 2015; Brewer et al., 2019), enabling students to recover from setbacks, cope with challenges, and minimise or even overcome potential harm.

This study adopts the conceptualisation of resilience as a dynamic process one that can be fostered and represents a vital capacity for students to fully thrive in university settings (Fuller, Belihouse, & Johnston, 2016). It involves managing academic demands, overcoming study-related stress, actively adapting to challenges (Caruana et al., 2011), and ultimately not only surviving but flourishing through adversity (Yeager & Dweck, 2012). Academic Resilience is relevant across all educational levels, as students universally encounter academic difficulties or pressures at various stages (Martin & Marsh, 2006). Academic Resilience fosters a positive attitude, comprising both cognitive and affective responses (Cassidy, 2016), and enables students to respond effectively to academic challenges, leading to satisfactory academic performance (Kuldias, Hashim, & Ismail, 2014).

This study utilises Cassidy's (2016) model of Academic Resilience, operationalised through the Academic Resilience Scale (ARS-30), which encompasses three key dimensions: (1) perseverance, (2) reflecting and adaptive help-seeking, and (3) negative affect and emotional response. Cassidy's model was selected as it was developed using a student sample similar to that of this research and builds upon prior resilience theories.

Resilience is not considered an innate trait but rather a capacity shaped by internal and external factors (Perkins et al., 2018). According to Ungar (2013), resilience arises when individuals can activate both types of resources. Internal factors refer to individual qualities or characteristics (Johnson, 2011), one of which is Self-Efficacy a strong predictor of Academic Resilience (Olwage, 2012). Supporting this, a study by Wulandari and Istiani (2021) involving 455 students from accredited private universities in Jakarta found that Self-Efficacy contributed 39.8% to Academic Resilience, highlighting its central role.

Based on these findings, this study identifies Self-Efficacy as the first internal independent variable. Individuals with strong Self-Efficacy are more likely to persevere, manage stress, and utilise

their resources effectively, thereby enhancing resilience (Scoloven, 2018). Bandura et al., (2001) also emphasised the importance of Self-Efficacy in helping individuals cope with difficulties.

In addition to internal factors, external support particularly Peer Support also influences Academic Resilience. Johnson (2011) identified family, peers, and school as important sources of external resilience. Peer Support is particularly important for college students who as young adults spend more time with peers than with family (Papalia et al., 2008). As adolescents transition into adulthood, peer relationships become more central, often replacing parental interactions (Buhrmester, 1996; Branje, 2018; Delgado et al., 2022).

Several studies have underscored the importance of Peer Support in educational contexts. Solomon (2004) and Wren, Somers, and Piliawsky (2012) emphasised that peer social support fosters development and learning through openness and shared experiences. Peck et al., (2002) found that individuals under stress typically turn to close friends or family rather than distant acquaintances. Werner (2005) observed that resilient adults often had protective social support systems in earlier stages of life. Mwangi and Mwaniki (2017) confirmed that social support is a protective factor for resilience. Likewise, Stewart and Sun (2004) found a positive association between Peer Support and resilience, regardless of age, gender, or socioeconomic background. Robinson (2015) indicated that high levels of Peer Support correlate with high Academic Resilience, whereas Narayanan and Betts (2014) discovered that peer bullying in Indian adolescents was linked to lower resilience levels.

These findings support the inclusion of Peer Support as the second external independent variable in this study. Given that students spend a significant amount of time with peers during university, such support likely facilitates adaptive coping and enhances resilience.

Recent studies have begun linking Academic Resilience to goal orientation the motivational direction that guides individuals in achieving academic objectives. Cassidy (2016) noted that resilience is influenced by students' goal orientation. Splan et al., (2011) found a significant association between goal orientation and resilience in agricultural students. Similarly, Jowkar et al., (2014) confirmed this relationship, and Wulandari et al., (2021) reported that Learning Goal Orientation was positively correlated with Academic Resilience ($r = 0.58$), Avoiding Goal Orientation showed a moderate correlation ($r = 0.39$), and Proving Goal Orientation was not significantly associated.

Goal orientation is a motivational construct that influences how individuals approach learning tasks (Dowson & McInerney, 2001; DeShon et al., 2007; Bell & Kozlowski, 2008). It reflects an individual's disposition toward task engagement, especially when facing challenges (Elliott & Dweck, 1988; VandeWalle, 1997). It also shapes behavioural responses to academic tasks (Dweck & Leggett, 1988) and explains patterns of engagement and motivation in academic contexts (Anderman & Maehr, 1994). This study treats goal orientation as a state variable subject to change based on context rather than a fixed trait. This conceptualisation is supported by experimental research (Nicholls, 1984; Seijts et al., 2004), which showed that goal orientation can be altered and thus may be targeted in interventions.

VandeWalle (1997) proposed a trichotomous goal orientation model comprising three types. Learning Goal Orientation is characterised by intrinsic motivation and the pursuit of skill mastery (Dweck, Hong, & Chiu, 1993). Avoiding Goal Orientation reflects a tendency to avoid situations that might expose incompetence (Nicholls, 1984; Elliot & Harackiewicz, 1996; Elliot, 1999; Somuncuoglu & Yildirim, 1999; Elliott & Thrash, 2001). Meanwhile, Proving Goal Orientation involves a desire to demonstrate competence and gain positive evaluation (VandeWalle, 1997; Dweck, Hong, & Chiu, 1993).

As a moderator, goal orientation may influence cognitive, affective, and behavioural responses to academic challenges (Ningtyas & Kumalasari, 2021). Students with a learning orientation tend to exhibit higher resilience, while those with avoiding or proving orientations may

also display perseverance albeit driven by different motives such as competition or self-presentation. Goal orientation is therefore positioned as a moderating variable in this study, potentially strengthening or weakening the relationship between Self-Efficacy, Peer Support, and Academic Resilience (Diah et al., 2020).

This research was conducted at a private university "X" in Jakarta, selected due to its high proportion of students experiencing academic pressure and failure because the uniformity in academic systems across departments allows for comparable experiences. The study focused on first-year and second-year students, who are still in the adjustment phase. The study aims to determine which type of goal orientation most effectively moderates the influence of Self-Efficacy and Peer Support on Academic Resilience.

Study Aim

This study aims to examine the moderating role of goal orientation comprising Learning Goal Orientation, Avoiding Goal Orientation, and Proving Goal Orientation on the relationship between Self-Efficacy and peer social support with Academic Resilience among university students. Drawing upon prior research indicating the impact of Self-Efficacy and Peer Support on Academic Resilience, this study introduces goal orientation as a psychological mechanism that may either strengthen or weaken these relationships. The goal is to develop a conceptual and empirical model that not only explains the dynamics of Academic Resilience in the context of Indonesian private universities but also informs practical interventions to support students facing academic stress.

Literature Review

University Students and Academic Transition

University students are individuals enrolled in higher education institutions ranging from academies and polytechnics to institutes and universities with the goal of acquiring advanced knowledge and skills. The transition from secondary education to university often signifies the beginning of emerging adulthood (Santrock, 2015), a period characterised by increased independence, exploration of values and lifestyles, and reduced parental supervision. This stage is also marked by a shift to a more autonomous academic environment, requiring students to manage learning demands, adapt to new norms, and regulate their academic performance independently.

In Indonesia, private university students (Perguruan Tinggi Swasta, or PTS) vary widely in age and background, unified by the prerequisite of holding a senior secondary school qualification (SMA, SMK, MA, or equivalent). According to Masten (2013), emerging adults who possess resilience are better equipped to form supportive close relationships with romantic partners, peers, mentors, parents, and to some extent. Masten et al., (2006) further highlight that young adults tend to feel competent when they can overcome adversity and reinforcing the relevance of resilience during this developmental stage.

Academic Resilience

The concept of resilience has evolved from early studies by Garmezy (1991), which focused on children thriving under high-risk conditions, to a broader understanding that includes various life domains. In education, Academic Resilience refers to a student's capacity to persevere, recover from failure, and succeed despite academic difficulties (Cassidy, 2016). Wright and Masten (in Goldstein et al., 2005) identify protective and risk factors as key influences. Protective factors such as internal resources and social support buffer against stress. Whereas, risk factors including personal vulnerabilities and adverse environments increase the likelihood of poor outcomes.

Studies have shown that students with more protective factors are more likely to graduate on time. While, those with increased risk factors are prone to poor academic performance (Lee, Cheung, & Kwong, 2012; Masten, 1994; Chung, 2008; Alarcon, Edwards, & Menke, 2011). The

emergence of positive psychology has further highlighted resilience as a critical strength in navigating stress, setbacks, and educational challenges (Räty, Kasanen, & Rautiainen, 2013; Luthar, Cicchetti, & Becker, 2000). Cassidy (2016) proposes three dimensions of Academic Resilience: perseverance, reflecting and adaptive help-seeking, and negative affect and emotional response which together reflect cognitive, affective, and behavioural reactions to adversity.

Self-Efficacy and Academic Resilience

Self-Efficacy, defined by Bandura (1997), is the belief in one's ability to exercise control over personal functioning and environmental events. Individuals with high Self-Efficacy are more likely to succeed because they approach tasks with confidence and persistence. Bandura distinguishes Self-Efficacy across three dimensions: magnitude (belief in handling tasks of varying difficulty), generality (belief across different domains), and strength (consistency of belief under pressure). Empirical studies have confirmed that Self-Efficacy is a strong predictor of resilience (Olwage, 2012; Utami & Helmi, 2017; Wulandari & Istiani, 2021), enabling students to cope effectively with academic demands and adaptively solve problems.

Peer Social Support

Peer social support is a crucial external factor in promoting Academic Resilience. According to Perez et al., (2009), academically successful students often rely on their peer network for advice and emotional support. Sarafino and Smith (2012) emphasise that receiving support fosters a sense of belonging, self-worth, and emotional security. Solomon (2004) notes that Peer Support enhances learning outcomes by encouraging openness and collaboration. Defined by Malecki and Elliott (1999), peer social support encompasses emotional, informational, and instrumental assistance from individuals of similar age and experience. As students in the emerging adulthood stage often spend more time with peers than family (Berk, 2009), Peer Support becomes a critical buffer against academic stressors.

Goal Orientation as a Moderator

Goal orientation is a motivational framework explaining how individuals' approach and interpret achievement situations (VandeWalle, 1997; Vandewalle, 2001). Originally developed within educational psychology (Melissa & Jason, 2016), goal orientation has gained traction in organisational behaviour research (Christina et al., 2019). This study adopts VandeWalle's (1997) trichotomous model, comprising:

Learning Goal Orientation describes individuals who are intrinsically motivated to develop competence and master challenging situations; they show persistence, view mistakes as opportunities for growth, and maintain strong academic engagement (Dweck, Hong, & Chiu, 1993; Anderman & Young, 1994; Sujana, Weitz, & Kumar, 1994). In contrast, Avoiding Goal Orientation reflects a tendency to evade failure or negative evaluations, with individuals often avoiding difficult tasks and experiencing heightened anxiety that may undermine Academic Resilience (Nicholls, 1984; Elliot, 1999; VandeWalle, Cron, & Slocum, 2001). Finally, Proving Goal Orientation is characterised by a strong need to demonstrate competence and gain approval, which can drive high achievement but may also reduce effort after failure and foster avoidance of challenging tasks (Dweck et al., 1993; DeShon & Gillespie, 2005).

Studies suggest that goal orientation can moderate the impact of internal and external factors on resilience. Learning Goal Orientation tends to *strengthen* the positive influence of Self-Efficacy and Peer Support (Wang et al., 2021; Ormrod et al., 2019), while Avoiding Goal Orientation may *weaken* these effects by promoting withdrawal and helplessness. Proving Goal Orientation can either support resilience through validation-seeking behaviour or undermine it, depending on the individual's response to feedback and challenge (Lee et al., 2017; Elliott & Dweck, 1988).

Theoretical Framework and Hypotheses

Given the significant role of Self-Efficacy and Peer Support in predicting Academic Resilience, this study proposes a moderated model in which the effect of these variables is influenced by students' goal orientation. The framework posits that different types of goal orientation may either strengthen or attenuate the relationships between the independent variables (Self-Efficacy and Peer Support) and the dependent variable (Academic Resilience). The study tests the following hypotheses:

- **H_a**: Learning, avoiding, and Proving Goal Orientations moderate the effects of Self-Efficacy and peer social support on Academic Resilience among private university students.
- **H_o**: Learning, avoiding, and Proving Goal Orientations do not moderate the effects of Self-Efficacy and peer social support on Academic Resilience among private university students.

Figure 1 illustrates the research framework showing how goal orientation moderates the influence of Self-Efficacy and Peer Support on students' Academic Resilience.

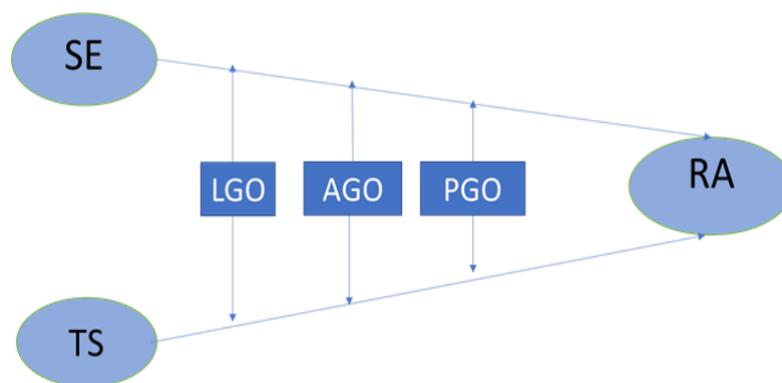


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework: The Moderating Role of Goal Orientation in the Relationship Between Self-Efficacy, Peer Support, and Academic Resilience

METHODS

Design

This study employed a quantitative correlational design with a moderation analysis approach. The primary aim was to examine whether goal orientation (learning, avoiding, and proving) moderates the relationship between Self-Efficacy and peer social support with Academic Resilience. Moderation effects were tested using hierarchical regression analysis.

Participants

The participants were 1,082 undergraduate students from a private university (PTS "X") in Jakarta, Indonesia. The sample was drawn from students in their first and second year of study, as they were considered to be in the transitional phase of adapting to university life. The university was chosen due to its relatively high percentage of students experiencing academic pressure and dropout rates, providing a relevant context for investigating Academic Resilience.

Participants were selected using a purposive sampling technique, focusing on individuals who had been enrolled for at least one semester and who were willing to complete the research instruments. Demographic data included gender, year of study, and faculty affiliation.

Instruments

Academic Resilience was measured using the Academic Resilience Scale (ARS-30) developed by Cassidy (2016), which comprises 30 items distributed across three dimensions: Perseverance,

Reflecting and Adaptive Help-Seeking, and Negative Affect and Emotional Response. Responses were recorded on a Likert scale, with higher scores indicating greater levels of Academic Resilience.

Self-Efficacy was assessed using a validated scale adapted for academic contexts, measuring the degree to which students believe in their ability to organise and execute the actions necessary to overcome academic challenges. Each item was rated on a Likert-type scale.

Peer social support was measured using a scale designed to capture students' perceptions of emotional and instrumental support provided by their peers. The items assessed the availability, quality, and reliability of Peer Support in academic settings, also using a Likert response format.

Goal orientation was measured using a scale adapted from VandeWalle (1997), which includes three distinct types: Learning Goal Orientation, which focuses on mastery and the development of competence; Avoiding Goal Orientation which reflects a tendency to avoid failure or situations that might expose perceived incompetence; and Proving Goal Orientation, which reflects a desire to demonstrate capability and obtain positive evaluations. Each subscale contained several Likert-type items that assessed the strength of the respective orientation.

All instruments were translated and pre-tested for clarity and contextual appropriateness among Indonesian university students. Reliability analysis indicated that all scales achieved acceptable internal consistency with Cronbach's alpha coefficients exceeding the standard threshold of 0.70.

Procedure

The research received approval from the university's ethics committee. Data were collected via an online survey distributed through official university channels and student networks. Participation was voluntary and informed consent was obtained prior to survey completion. Anonymity and confidentiality of responses were ensured.

Data Analysis

Data were analysed using hierarchical regression analysis to examine the moderating effects of goal orientation on the relationships between Self-Efficacy, peer social support, and Academic Resilience. The analysis was conducted in sequential steps. First, the main effects of Self-Efficacy and Peer Support on Academic Resilience were tested. In the next step, the main effects of the three types of goal orientation learning, avoiding, and proving were entered into the model. Finally, interaction terms between each type of goal orientation and the independent variables (Self-Efficacy and Peer Support) were included to assess potential moderation effects. Statistical analyses were conducted using SPSS software. A moderation effect was considered present when the interaction term significantly contributed to the prediction of Academic Resilience beyond the effects of the main variables.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Participant Profile

A total of 1,203 responses were collected for this study. However, only 1,082 were included in the final analysis, as 121 responses were excluded for not meeting the participant criteria. Of the valid respondents, 550 (51%) were male and 532 (49%) were female. The participants' ages ranged from 18 to 25 years, with a mean age of 19 years. In terms of academic standing, 542 respondents (50%) were in their second semester, while 540 (49.82%) were in their fourth semester. Participants were drawn from various academic disciplines, with the three largest groups being Management (257 students, 24%), Information Systems (213 students, 20%), and Accounting (111 students, 10%).

Hypothetical Testing

Hypothesis testing in this study was conducted using hierarchical regression analysis to examine the extent to which Learning Goal Orientation (LGO), Avoiding Goal Orientation (AGO), and Proving Goal Orientation (PGO) moderate the relationships between Self-Efficacy (SE), Peer Social Support (TS), and Academic Resilience (RA).

The analysis began with a model comparison approach and the results are presented in Table 1. Model 1 included only SE and TS as predictors, with RA as the dependent variable. Model 2 added the three types of goal orientation (PGO, AGO, and LGO) as additional predictors alongside SE and TS. Model 3 retained all predictors from Model 2 and introduced interaction terms between SE and each type of goal orientation (SELGO, SEAGO, SEPGO) to test for moderation of the SE–RA relationship. Model 4 is the full model further included the interaction terms between TS and the three goal orientations (TSLGO, TSAGO, TSPGO) to test for moderation of the TS–RA relationship.

The full moderation effects of LGO, AGO, and PGO on the relationships between both SE and TS with RA were examined through Model 4, which served as the basis for hypothesis testing.

Table 1. Regression Coefficients in Hierarchical Regression Analysis.

Model Summary ^e										
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	R Square Change	Change Statistics			Sig. F Change	Durbin-Watson
						F Change	df1	df2		
1	.745	.555	.554	7.3616	.555	671.853	2	1079	.000	
2	.801	.641	.639	6.6187	.086	86.271	3	1076	.000	
3	.812	.660	.657	6.4542	.019	19.513	3	1073	.000	
4	.813	.660	.657	6.4557	.001	.826	3	1070	.480	1.932

a. Dependent Variable: RA

b. Predictors: (Constant), TS, SE

c. Predictors: (Constant), TS, SE, PGO, AGO, LGO

d. Predictors: (Constant), TS, SE, PGO, AGO, LGO, SE_xLGO, SE_xAGO, SE_xPGO

e. Predictors: (Constant), TS, SE, PGO, AGO, LGO, SE_xLGO, SE_xAGO, SE_xPGO, TS_xAGO, TS_xLGO, TS_xPGO

Table 2 presents the regression coefficients (β) and significance levels (p) for each variable included in the analysis. A visual representation of the hypothesis testing results can be seen in Figure 2.

Table 2. Standardised Beta Coefficients for Moderation Effects of Goal Orientation on Academic Resilience.

Model	β	P
Prediktor 1 Self-Efficacy	0.497	0.000
Prediktor 2 <i>Dukungan sosial teman sebaya</i>	0.204	0.000
Prediktor 3 Learning Goal Orientation	0.102	0.000
Prediktor 4 Avoiding Goal Orientation	-0.066	0.000
Prediktor 5 Proving Goal Orientation	0.016	0.049
Moderator 1 Self-Efficacy*Learning Goal Orientation	0.065	0.002
Moderator 2 Self-Efficacy*Avoiding Goal Orientation	-0.072	0.000
Moderator 3 Self-Efficacy*Providing Goal Orientation	-0.068	0.000
Moderator 4 <i>Dukungan sosial teman sebaya</i> *Learning Goal Orientation	0.015	0.224
Moderator 5 <i>Dukungan sosial teman sebaya</i> *Avoiding Goal Orientation	0.031	0.330
Moderator 6 <i>Dukungan sosial teman sebaya</i> *Proving Goal Orientation	0.038	0.674

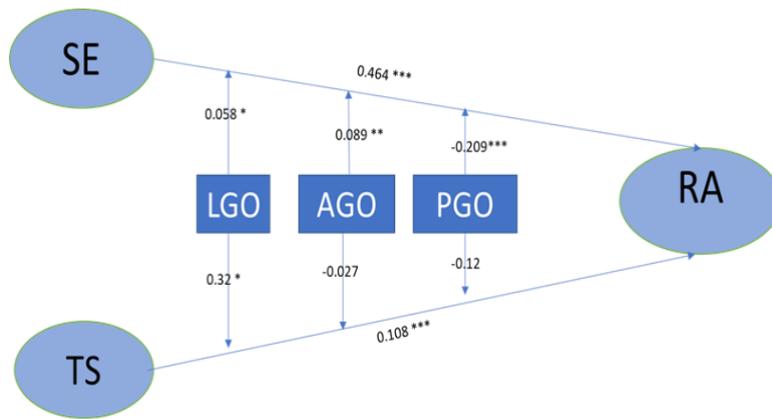


Figure 2. Hypothesis result

Based on the analysis results presented in Table 2 and Figure 2, the following conclusions can be drawn:

- (a) Learning Goal Orientation, Avoiding Goal Orientation, and Proving Goal Orientation significantly moderated the effect of Self-Efficacy on Academic Resilience among students at Private University "X".
- (b) Learning Goal Orientation, Avoiding Goal Orientation, and Proving Goal Orientation did not significantly moderate the effect of peer social support on Academic Resilience.

Thus, the hypothesis stating that Learning Goal Orientation, Avoiding Goal Orientation, and Proving Goal Orientation moderate the effects of Self-Efficacy and Peer Support on Academic Resilience is only partially supported. The moderating role of goal orientation was found to be significant only in the relationship between Self-Efficacy and Academic Resilience, not in the relationship between peer social support and Academic Resilience.

Further examination revealed that Learning Goal Orientation and Avoiding Goal Orientation positively moderated the relationship between Self-Efficacy and Academic Resilience (i.e., strengthened the effect), while Proving Goal Orientation acted as a negative moderator (i.e., weakened the effect). Notably, the positive moderating effect of Avoiding Goal Orientation contradicts the researchers' initial assumption that this orientation would weaken the effect of Self-Efficacy. This unexpected result will be addressed in the discussion section.

An additional analysis was conducted to determine whether respondents' semester of study had an impact on the independent and dependent variables. The results of this analysis are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Results of the Independent Samples t-Test.

Variable	Mean		Significant
	Sem 1	Sem 2	
Academic Resilience	68.96	69.43	0.488
Self-Efficacy	110.12	110.64	0.560
Peer Social Support	60.6	59.13	0.007*

Table 3 shows that there is no significant difference in Academic Resilience and Self-Efficacy between students in their second and fourth semesters. However, a significant difference was found in peer social support, with students in their fourth semester reporting lower levels of Peer Support compared to those in their second semester. This suggests that the role of peer social support tends to diminish as students' progress through their university studies.

Discussion

Academic Resilience plays a critical role in helping students manage academic demands, cope with study-related stress, recover from adversity, and adapt effectively to challenges (Caruana et al., 2011; Fuller et al., 2016; Seçer & Ulaş, 2020; Fiorilli et al., 2020; Martin, 2013). In line with the initial assumption, the findings of this study demonstrate that Academic Resilience is significantly influenced by both Self-Efficacy and peer social support, with a considerable effect size. These results align with prior research (Olwage, 2012; Ungar, 2013; Kwek et al., 2014; Perkins et al., 2018) suggesting that resilience emerges when individuals can leverage both internal factors such as Self-Efficacy and external factors, including environmental support (Ungar, 2013). Individuals with strong self-belief tend to use their abilities to resist temptation, manage stress, and mobilise their best resources for coping (Scoloven, 2018), thereby strengthening their resilience. Peer social support is also essential for individual development, particularly in educational settings, as the openness and solidarity among peers foster optimal learning outcomes (Solomon, 2004; Werner, 2005; Wren et al., 2012; Robinson, 2015).

The hypothesis testing confirmed that Self-Efficacy and Peer Support influence Academic Resilience and that this relationship is moderated by goal orientation specifically, Learning Goal Orientation (LGO), Avoiding Goal Orientation (AGO), and Proving Goal Orientation (PGO). This supports the study's theoretical assumption that goal orientation reflects how individuals perceive and pursue their academic goals and motivation. Different orientations lead to different cognitive and behavioural responses, thereby either strengthening or weakening the effects of Self-Efficacy and Peer Support on Academic Resilience.

Consistent with expectations, the results showed that Learning Goal Orientation significantly strengthened the relationship between Self-Efficacy and Academic Resilience. Students with high LGO are motivated by mastery and the development of competence (Dweck & Leggett, 1988), and are more likely to engage in adaptive learning strategies (Fatmawiyati et al., 2020), which facilitate resilience. These individuals tend to view mistakes and failures as opportunities for growth rather than as threats. They are intrinsically motivated, maintain persistence in the face of difficulties, and derive satisfaction from their progress (Geitz et al., 2016; Jakobsen, 2022; VandeWalle, 1997). The orientation toward learning encourages reflection and self-improvement, which in turn reinforces Self-Efficacy and Academic Resilience.

Unexpectedly, the analysis also revealed that Avoiding Goal Orientation significantly strengthened the influence of Self-Efficacy on Academic Resilience, contrary to the researcher's initial assumption. Students with high AGO typically avoid difficult tasks and prefer familiar challenges to prevent feelings of incompetence (VandeWalle et al., 2001; Li & Tsai, 2020). This orientation is often associated with increased anxiety and a reluctance to engage in tasks that might expose perceived weaknesses. However, in this study it is possible that the anxiety experienced by students with AGO encouraged them to avoid more challenging tasks and instead select those they perceived as manageable. Successfully completing these tasks may have increased their confidence and belief in their academic capabilities, thereby fostering resilience. It is worth noting that the sample consisted of early-semester students, who may not yet have encountered significant academic difficulty, thus maintaining relatively high Self-Efficacy despite their avoidance tendencies.

As hypothesised, the findings confirmed that Proving Goal Orientation weakened the relationship between Self-Efficacy and Academic Resilience. Students with PGO tend to seek validation through outperforming others and receiving external praise. While this orientation may drive short-term performance, it can undermine resilience in the face of setbacks, as such individuals often interpret failure as a threat to self-worth (Li & Tsai, 2020). When faced with academic challenges, they may experience anxiety and reduced confidence in their abilities, which explains the observed negative moderating effect.

In contrast to the initial hypothesis, goal orientation did not significantly moderate the effect of peer social support on Academic Resilience. Although Peer Support positively predicted Academic Resilience, its relationship was not conditioned by the type of goal orientation. This may be attributed to the developmental context of the participants: as early-semester students, they are likely to depend heavily on Peer Support to navigate university challenges. Thus, the benefits of Peer Support may be uniformly distributed, regardless of goal orientation. This finding aligns with previous literature suggesting that social support provides emotional, informational, and instrumental resources (Sarafino & Smith, 2012) that aid students in overcoming academic stress. The universal benefit of such support may override individual motivational differences, such as goal orientation.

Additional analyses revealed significant differences in Peer Support between second and fourth-semester students, with second-semester students reporting higher levels of Peer Support. This suggests a decline in the perceived importance or availability of Peer Support as students advance through their studies. These results align with McLean et al., (2022) and Morales (2014), who noted that first-year university students are more reliant on social support due to transitional stressors such as living away from home, financial management, and self-care responsibilities.

CONCLUSION

Academic Resilience arises from the interplay between students' internal capacities and external supports, with Self-Efficacy serving as a key predictor whose impact is shaped by goal orientation. A learning orientation strengthens resilience through perseverance and openness to feedback, while an avoidance orientation may unexpectedly support resilience in early university stages by minimizing risks. In contrast, a proving orientation tends to weaken resilience due to performance anxiety. Peer social support exerts a consistent positive effect regardless of goal orientation, suggesting its universal value as a buffer during academic transitions. These findings imply that institutions should integrate motivational training and learning-oriented goal setting into academic programs while fostering peer mentoring to enhance resilience. Nonetheless, the study's focus on early-semester students, reliance on self-report, and cross-sectional design limit generalizability and causal conclusions. Future research should employ longitudinal and mixed-method approaches across diverse academic and cultural contexts to capture the complex dynamics of resilience, motivation, and social support.

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AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS STATEMENT

Y.P.JW was responsible for the conceptual development of the research, the theoretical framework, and the overall supervision of the project B.N.S conducted the statistical analyses and contributed to interpreting the findings T.I.S played a key role in compiling the literature review and assisting in the editing and structuring of the manuscript C.S contributed to data collection and the initial organization of the dataset. All authors reviewed and approved the final manuscript.

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