



## Academic Well-Being of University Students with Disability: Role of Hardiness and Social Support

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### Abstract

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Online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic seems to produce a new challenge for students with disabilities. The physical limitations experienced demand an adjustment to a digitalization-based system. These changes are pros and cons for university students with disabilities to achieve well-being through success in the academic field. The achievement of academic well-being of university students with disabilities seems inseparable from internal and external factors. Based on the phenomena, this study aims to determine the role of hardiness and social support (family, friends, and significant others) on the academic well-being of students with disabilities. The method used quantitative with a multiple regression design. The participants were 184 university students with physical disabilities using the snowball sampling technique. The research scale consists of a hardiness scale, a social support scale, and an academic well-being scale. The results of the study indicated that the hardiness and social support affected the academic well-being of university students with disabilities. The achievement of academic well-being experienced by university students with disabilities provides a new understanding that self-limitation does not make it an obstacle to forming a good self-concept, forming a self-strategy in overcoming online learning problems, and increasing productivity in every educational process undertaken. Thus, hardiness and social support factors play an important role in realizing the academic well-being of university students with disabilities.

## INTRODUCTION

Online learning activities during the COVID-19 pandemic require university students to adapt to the changing atmosphere of the new learning environment (Abidah et al., 2020). The same thing happens with university students with disabilities. Due to their limitations, it is a problem that must be faced by university students with disabilities in online learning in order to succeed in the academic field. The conflict between self-expectations and the reality of life has led to diverse mental problems, such as the increased thinking of academic failure and the emergence of stressful situations, stress, feelings of inferiority, and the desire to stop studying (Rahma et al., 2020). This dynamic

manifests through behavior of helplessness in completing academic tasks during the COVID-19 pandemic. Online learning has also presented unpleasant feelings, including feelings of disrespect and loss of hope for success (Ali, 2021).

The more severe problems that students must face with disabilities are related to the use of technology predicted to be an obstacle to adapting and not achieving academic well-being (Supratiwi et al., 2021). This makes students with disabilities lose their spirit and fighting power to be able to achieve learning success during the COVID-19 pandemic. Thus, they become young intellectuals to fight self-fears to achieve academic well-being. Korhonen et al. (2014) reveal that academic well-being has an impact on low dropout rates. Another impact is the increased motivation of students to follow the study optimally (Donohue & Bornman, 2021), and an increased sense of security and feelings of happiness in studying (Rimpelä et al., 2020).

Academic well-being is a multidimensional construct that outlines how individuals conceptualize themselves in intelligent activities, overcome perceived learning difficulties, and prevent fatigue experienced in learning (Korhonen et al., 2014). Korhonen et al. (2014) add that self-concept, strategies to overcome learning problems, and strategies to prevent learning fatigue in school are important requirements to achieve full academic well-being. The realization of academic well-being can be realized through the completion of lecture tasks, group work, and tests or learning projects (Rimpelä et al., 2020). Success in achieving academic well-being seems to be inseparable from factors within the self relating to personality and social roles, such as social support (Poots & Cassidy, 2020).

One of the personalities studied is hardiness. Hardiness is conceptualized as a characteristic of being strong, optimistic, stable, and defensive in facing situations full of bad or heavy pressure (Kobasa, 1979). The hardiness consists of the individual's control over each of his life's events, a commitment to the ability not to give up, and challenges as an opportunity to develop his potential (Kobasa, 1979). Individuals who can form a hardy personality well can change bad conditions for the better. Having a hardy personality is to make individuals more confident of their potential to solve the problems that are being experienced (Abbasi et al., 2020). Besides, by having a hardy personality, individuals can achieve designed life goals, including academic well-being (Sinaga et al., 2020). However, if the hardiness is not good, it will have an impact on the unfaithfulness of academic well-being. Research conducted by Wardani (2020) reveals that individuals who have high hardiness can control doubts and fears about failure in life, especially well-being in the academic field. Meanwhile, in his research, Prakoso (2015) reveals the unattainable academic well-being that individuals want to achieve due to internal factors related to laziness. When associated with personality, laziness is part of the formation of negative hardiness.

In addition to hardiness, social factors also play a role in the academic well-being of university students with disabilities. The social factors reviewed are related to social

support, which can be understood as an important part that an individual needs from his or her closest environment in the form of an exchange of resources aimed at helping (Zimet et al., 1988). Social support can be obtained by individuals from family, friends, and people deemed valuable (Zimet et al., 1988). The family plays an important role in which the family plays as a primary environment where the individual acquires endless affection, care, passion, and support. Friends are also a social factor where individuals can explore themselves because of positive support, especially in pursuing education during the COVID-19 pandemic (Kusumiati & Huwae, 2021).

Support from valuable people that have a role for individuals is believed to help increase spirit and fighting power in participating in academic activities (McNaughton-Cassill et al., 2021). The closest person in this study relates to the support of the lecturer. Social support positively impacts individuals to achieve academic well-being, such as increased positive self-image, increased enthusiasm for learning, and increased opportunities to develop themselves as individuals who excel (Rahma, Perwiradara et al., 2020). On the other hand, if social support is lacking, it makes individuals feel incompetent in academic activities (Wiles, 2018). In their research, DeGarmo and Martines Jr. (2006) found that the achievement of academic well-being is inseparable from the support factor obtained from the social environment. Meanwhile, Rahma et al. (2020) found that there is still a part of the form of low social support obtained by individuals, thus having a less good impact on the well-being of learning in educational institutions.

Previous research has contributed a lot to the study of the academic well-being of students and university students in face-to-face learning settings. Researchers have examined it based on various contributing factors, including hardiness and social support. However, the conditions of a very significant change suddenly from offline learning to online cause various mental problems in students with disabilities. This is an important study to be followed up on the description of learning dynamics taken by students with disabilities to achieve academic well-being.

Academic well-being is interesting to study in students with disabilities, especially related to online learning that must be followed during the COVID-19 pandemic. Then, the achievement can be seen in how students with disabilities form hardiness and seek positive support from their closest environment. Therefore, this study aims to find out the influence of hardiness and social support on the academic well-being of university students with disabilities. While the hypothesis proposed is that there is an influence of hardiness and social support on the academic well-being of students with disabilities.

## **METHOD**

The research method used is quantitative with a multiple regression design to see the influence of hardiness (X1) and social support (X2) on academic well-being (Y).

Participants were 184 disabled students (physically disabled, blind, mute, and deaf) from various regions in Indonesia (Java, Sumatra, Kalimantan, Sulawesi, Bali, East Nusa Tenggara, Maluku, and Papua) using the snowball sampling technique. Participant involvement was agreed upon in advance by filling out the informed consent sheet. An overview of the involvement of all participants is presented in Table 1.

**Table 1. Demographic Data of Participants**

Characteristics of Participants	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	108	58.7%
Female	76	41.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>184</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Age</b>		
17 Years	18	9.8%
18 Years	15	8.2%
19 Years	21	11.4%
20 Years	47	25.5%
21 Years	39	21.2%
22 Years	44	23.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>184</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>The Category of Disability</b>		
Physically Disabled	121	65.7%
Blind	32	17.4%
Mute	18	9.8%
Deaf	13	7.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>184</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Causes of Disability</b>		
Congenital disability	103	56%
Accident	81	44%
<b>Total</b>	<b>184</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Regional Origin</b>		
Central Java	12	6.5%
East Java	10	5.4%
D.I. Yogyakarta	10	5.4%
Est Java	12	6.5%
DKI Jakarta	10	5.4%
North Sumatra	10	5.4%
South Sumatra	7	3.8%
West Sumatra	10	5.4%
Lampung	6	3.3%
Riau	4	2.2%
West Kalimantan	8	4.4%
Central Kalimantan	4	2.2%
East Kalimantan	7	3.8%
South Kalimantan	6	3.3%
North Sulawesi	9	4.9%
Central Sulawesi	8	4.4%
South Sulawesi	11	6%
Southeast Sulawesi	9	4.9%
Bali	7	3.8%
East Nusa Tenggara	7	3.8%
Maluku	10	5.4%

Papua	7	3.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>184</b>	<b>100%</b>

The research scale consists of a hardiness scale, a social support scale, and an academic well-being scale. The hardiness scale was organized based on the three components of the hardiness of Kobasa (1979), namely control, commitment, and challenge so that the number of items obtained is 15 items. One example of the item is *"The best way to achieve a goal is to seriously involve myself in what I do."* The scale has four response categories based on the Likert scale, starting from absolutely inappropriate (1) to absolutely appropriate (4), with item selection values between 0.364-0.676 and a Cronbach Alpha value of 0.857.

The social support scale was modified from *the multidimensional scale of perceived social support* (Zimet et al., 1988), consisting of 12 items. One example item is *"When I have a hard time, my friend is always there to give help."* The scale has four response categories based on the Likert scale, from absolutely inappropriate (1) to absolutely appropriate (4), with item selection values between 0.364-0.676 and a Cronbach Alpha value of 0.813.

The academic well-being scale was compiled based on three components of academic well-being, including academic self-concept, perceived learning difficulties, and learning fatigue in school (Korhonen et al., 2014), consisting of 12 items. One example item is *"I can enjoy every online learning process."* The scale has four response categories based on the Likert scale, from absolutely inappropriate (1) to absolutely appropriate (4), with a range of item selection values between 0.367-0.756 and a Cronbach Alpha value of 0.853.

The data analysis technique used the *ANOVA test*. Data were analyzed using computer assistance of statistical package for the social science (SPSS) series 21 for windows.

## RESULT

The results of the variable categorization test presented in Table 2 showed that the participants (129 university students with disabilities) had a high hardiness score with a percentage of 71.1%. For social support, the participants (131 university students with disabilities) were in the high category with a percentage of 71.2%. Then, the academic well-being of the participants (119 university students with disabilities) was in the high category with a percentage of 64.8%. High scores on all variables measured mean that university students with disabilities can develop themselves in learning to achieve their academic well-being through hardiness and the fulfillment of proper support from the closest environment which is the primary support system for university students with disabilities.

**Table 2. Variable Measurement Categorization**

Variable	Average Score	SD	%	Description
Hardiness	45.58	7.741	71.1	High
Social Support	37.66	6.851	71.2	High
Academic Well-being	36.38	6.192	64.8	High

The normality test through an unstandardized residual of K-S-Z is 0.744 with a significant value of 0.637 ( $p > 0.05$ ), which indicates that the third residual of the variable is normal. Then, the linearity test results of each independent variable with academic well-being indicated the existence of linearity since each had a significant value of 0.000 ( $p < 0.05$ ). Multikolinierity and heteroskedasticity data also met assumption test standards for regression-based tests.

Based on the hypothesis test results in Table 3, it was known that hardiness had a significant influence on academic well-being ( $t = 37.241$ ,  $\beta = 0.871$ ,  $p\text{-value} = 0.000$ ). Besides, social support had a significant influence on academic well-being ( $t = 6.377$ ,  $\beta = 0.149$ ,  $p\text{-value} = 0.000$ ). Then, based on the results of the multiple regression test, it was obtained an F value of 1.354 ( $p\text{-value} = 0.000$ ), with a value of  $R^2$  of 0.937, which means that hardiness and social support give a simultaneous influence of 93.7% on academic well-being in university students with disabilities, and the rest were influenced by other factors outside of this study. The contribution of each predictor to academic well-being involved hardiness of 83.7% and social support of 10%. These findings proved that hardiness played a greater role in explaining and predicting academic well-being, especially in university students with disabilities.

**Table 3. Multiple Linear Regression Test Results**

Variable	Regression Coefficient	Standard Error	T	P-value	Regression Equation
Constant	-0.437	0.743	-0.589	0.557	
Hardiness ( $X_1$ )	0.871	0.019	37.241	0.000	
Social Support ( $X_2$ )	0.149	0.021	6.377	0.000	
$R^2$	0.937				$Y = -.437 - 0.871 X_1 - 0.149 X_2$
Effective Donation $X_1$	83.7				
Effective Donation $X_2$	10				
F	1.354			0.000	

## DISCUSSION

The study of the well-being of university students in academic fields becomes a continuous discussion because it is related to the growth of individual mental health (Aulia et al., 2020). The well-being of university students with disabilities is a study of how academic processes are experienced, especially in difficult times such as the COVID-19 pandemic. The academic well-being of university students with disabilities was positively illustrated due to the role of hardiness and social support that contributes positively. This achievement provides a new understanding that education has become a top priority for university students with disabilities so that any difficulties experienced

can be overcome appropriately. Fatigue of online-based learning can also be controlled by doing positive ways such as not delaying college tasks individually or in groups. The depiction of self-concept that is part of academic well-being was also very well-formed by university students with disabilities. They understood their self-limitations but did not make it an obstacle to achieving their goals through education.

Achieving academic well-being was not an easy thing that university students with disabilities must experience; there were many challenges that must be faced, one of which was the use of technology. Although they have to adjust and adapt to technology, it seems that technological developments provide positive benefits, including making it easier for students to develop their skills (Pokhrel & Chhetri, 2021; Lestari et al., 2021). The academic well-being value, which is in the high category, provides a positive understanding of how university students with disabilities struggle to achieve maximum results in learning while still prioritizing their mental health. Academic well-being also provides its own nuances for every university student with disabilities in designing themselves so meaningfully, to direct themselves to achieve every short- and long-term goal in life.

Academic well-being can be achieved due to the role of hardiness. Huwae and Rugebregt (2020) reveal that the formation of a positive personality can help university students become productive individuals and will achieve satisfaction in every action or activity performed. Hardiness becomes a very attached part of every university student with disabilities in forming themselves into a strong and resilient person during learning. The result of this study is in line with previous research from Wardani (2020) that to achieve academic well-being, hardiness is needed in overcoming every academic difficulty. Online learning due to the COVID-19 pandemic requires that every university student must be able to form a strong and healthy mind so that negative circumstances in learning can be controlled properly. This seemed to be well resolved by university students with disabilities. Arsyad and Sulistiyana (2021) emphasize the importance of hardiness for every university student during online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic. In line with this, the results of the study proved that hardiness contributed to the academic well-being of university students with disabilities.

Hardiness becomes a strong factor for university students with disabilities in increasing beliefs regarding self-potential so that any obstacles or difficulties are used as a responsibility that can be resolved, and students with disabilities experience self-advancement in learning. It must be noted that individuals who undergo academic activities during the COVID-19 pandemic can have good hardiness, which makes it easier for them to overcome fatigue and severe problems in learning (Hutami et al., 2020) so that achieving academic well-being can be achieved. The positive research results provide a breakthrough that anyone, including university students with disabilities, can undergo the learning process prosperously when they have hardiness so that they can enjoy every

dynamic in academic activities. This process helps individuals with disabilities overcome every obstacle or challenge to become successful people (Nirvana et al., 2014).

An external factor contributing to the academic well-being of university students with disabilities is social support. Social support is a strengthening factor needed to increase the sense of love, passion, and fighting power of university students with disabilities. The results showed that hardiness and social support had an effect on the academic well-being of university students with disabilities. This research is in line with DeGarmo and Martines Jr. (2006) that proper social support provided according to individual needs is very helpful in self-improvement in learning to achieve academic well-being. The importance of social support helps university students with disabilities see the hope to be useful in every academic activity undertaken.

Social support from the family obtained by university students with disabilities makes it more form a good self-concept to enjoy every learning process that is being taken. The family becomes the main foundation for children to obtain a sense of security and comfort in performing every task and responsibility, including academic activities (Wijayanti & Sulistiobudi, 2018). Besides, the family provides a full space of warmth and affection to university students with disabilities to survive from the academic difficulties experienced. This positive support also provides opportunities for university students with disabilities to achieve academic achievement and feel prosperous in academic activities (Singh et al., 2011).

In addition to the family, peer support also contributes to the achievement of academic well-being of university students with disabilities. Small to large difficulties tend to be overcome by university students with disabilities because of the positive assistance received from college friends, so the spirit to study during the COVID-19 pandemic can be enjoyed so positively. Kusumiati and Huwae (2021) say that peer friendship can contribute to mutual progress due to the positive support provided by fellow friends. This also happens to university students with disabilities; although they have physical limitations that tend to make it difficult to follow online learning, it seems to make them not lose the support, encouragement, and positive motivation of college friends who together accompany them in facing academic difficulties.

Another thing also needed by university students with disabilities is the support of valuable people such as lecturers. Lecturers are highly regarded as being responsible for the success of every learning process carried out by students (Widianoro et al., 2019). Lecturers who present a conducive and pleasant learning atmosphere or climate are felt to have a positive impact, including on the achievement of academic well-being in university students with disabilities. Besides, lecturers who understand the self-limitations possessed by students with disabilities help ease the burden of thoughts that damage the mental health of students with disabilities in participating in online learning. Psychological assistance and additional learning time from lecturers also make it easier



for students with disabilities to understand every learning task and can be successful in all courses taken.

The achievement of academic well-being provides another breakthrough in the academic field, that with confidence, high spirit, and struggle to succeed in the academic field, making university students with disabilities very meaningful people and should not be denigrated or ostracized (Rahma, Perwiradara et al., 2020). University students with disabilities can make a positive contribution to the advancement of education. The positive support that is always provided can also help university students with disabilities show good academic quality so that, in the end, educational equality can be enjoyed by anyone, including university students with disabilities.

## **CONCLUSION**

The study concludes that the academic well-being of university students with disabilities can be achieved due to the role of hardiness possessed and social support obtained from family, friends, and lecturers. The three variables measured are also in the high category, thus implying that the formation of hardiness can help university students with disabilities achieve academic well-being. Besides, the social support of parents, friends, and lecturers provides achievements that lead to positive well-being in learning during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The academic well-being of university students with disabilities should continue to be studied on an ongoing basis related to the development of industry 4.0 and social 5.0. Considering that there is still a very minimal study of mental health in educational psychology related to the risky situation for university students with disabilities to be able to prosper in every academic process. Moreover, this research contributes to the field of school psychology for the study of learning systems and strategies for university students with disabilities in order to achieve optimal well-being without having to be treated with discrimination or bullying.

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