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## The role of democratic parenting, school climate, and internal locus of control as predictors of academic optimism

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### ABSTRACT

This study examined the relationship between democratic parenting, school climate, and internal locus of control with academic optimism. This was a correlational study involving 335 students of state junior high schools who were selected using cluster random sampling technique. The data were collected by using scales of democratic parenting, school climate, internal locus of control, and academic optimism. Multiple regression technique was used to analyze the data on statistical product and service solutions (SPSS) 20. The results showed a positive and significant relationship between democratic parenting and academic optimism, school climate and academic optimism, internal locus of control and academic optimism. Besides, the result also showed that democratic parenting, school climate, internal locus of control simultaneously affected academic optimism among students. Furthermore, counseling and guidance teachers, homeroom teachers, and parents to work together to grow and improve students' academic optimism, so the students can actualize their character optimally and develop effectively.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Academic optimism is a positive individual belief regarding academic success. This belief can lead to students' expectations of success and motivation [1]. The pattern of academic optimism was first suggested by Hoy [2] that the pattern of academic optimism from time to time based on humanistic psychology is the most important component of positive psychology, with the support of the theoretical basis of social cognition. On the other hand, Tschannen-Moran [3], emphasize that students' academic optimism consists of three components, namely: students' academic emphases, students' trust in teachers, and students' sense of identity towards the school. In line with this, Maktabi [4] state that academic optimism is regarding positive individual beliefs in students to be able to contribute to their academic achievement by emphasizing learning, trusting teachers, and understanding school identity.

Optimism has an important role in supporting one's academic achievement. If the optimism that students have tends to be low, then students experience depression, lack of communication both between students and teachers, low learning achievement, often commit school violations, and have low self-esteem compared to students who have high optimism [5]. The results of research in Indonesia on academic optimism as reported by Retno [6] show that in Senior high schools, students getting low scores in mathematics can cause students to be pessimistic about their abilities, which in turn encourages students not

to do assignments and prefer to cheat in doing the task. On the other hand, students who have the drive to succeed in doing assignments will show an optimistic and unyielding attitude, and get good scores. This of course has implications for guidance and counseling teachers or school counselors to provide guidance and counseling services to homeroom teachers regarding assistance in increasing students' optimism, because support from homeroom teachers is quite effective in increasing students' academic optimism [7], [8]. The results of the research reported by Indarhadi [9] showed that more than 60% of students had low academic optimism. The description shows that there are symptoms of low academic optimism in students that need to be investigated and solved immediately so that learning objectives can be achieved.

The situation that occurs has an impact on many parties including parents, students, and teachers. This is also reflected in the previous researches [10]–[13] which state that students often experience worries about their future and achievements, feel anxious about the education that they are undergoing because of problems in learning, including problems in managing study time, fear of exams, low scores, and pressure from school policies. This is also based on the fact that if the attitude of academic optimism is ignored for a long time, it will have a bad impact on the image of the school, especially for public schools in which people will consider that the competence of the teachers is unprofessional in which the teachers cannot develop students' academic optimism in school. Low optimism or pessimism is a problem that mostly afflicts students in school, friendship, career, and family relationships [14]. If a student has a tendency to think pessimistically and it is not immediately addressed, so it will threaten the orientation of his thinking that failure is always on him which can cause problems and interfere with students' learning at school.

Basically, optimism plays an important role in a positive mood, good morale, perseverance, and effective problem-solving in academics, which also affects self-efficacy and confidence toward expected learning outcomes [15], [16]. Therefore, to foster and improve students' academic optimism, supporting components that come from within and outside the individual are needed, including internal locus of control, democratic parenting, and school climate. The internal factor that is thought to have an effect on academic optimism is the internal locus of control. Locus of control is an individual's belief that whatever happens in his life is determined by how the individual is able to manage himself [17]. According to Anggraini and Marwan [18], individuals who have an internal locus of control tend to be active in seeking, processing, and utilizing various information, as well as have a desire to achieve higher achievements. When the student's internal locus of control is high, then the students have higher self-confidence, have the willingness to study diligently and work hard, and are not afraid of failure so that it creates an attitude of optimism in students.

External factors that are thought to have an influence on students' academic optimism are democratic parenting and school climate. Democratic parenting can affect the character and behavior of children in the surrounding environment. Children who are accustomed to democratic parenting will have an impact on the learning process and learning outcomes or achievement, including forming the child's optimism. Democratic parenting is important because it can influence children's optimism and achievement in school. The application of parenting helps in building self-confidence, behavior, and academic excellence of adolescents [19], [20]. Effective communication between wise parents and adolescents plays an important role in preventing other problems that may exist in this parenting style [20]. Apart from the parenting factors, the findings of previous research indicate that one way to improve the quality of education is through improving the school climate. Way [21] through their research found a close relationship between the school climate, especially in high school, and students' abilities to adapt, including in the academic side.

Fraser and Fisher [22] stated that one way to improve the quality of education is through improving the school climate. The result indicates that students can achieve better learning achievement if they feel that they are in a school climate that they like. Way [21] through their research found a close relationship between the school climate, especially in high school, and students' abilities to adapt, including in the academic side. On the other hand, the school climate also has a positive contribution to the achievement of non-academic outcomes, such as the formation of self-concept, self-confidence, and aspirations. Therefore, it is very important to really create a school environment that is in favor of the needs and learning interests of students so that students' academic optimism continues to increase.

This research aims to examine the relationship between democratic parenting and academic optimism, school climate and academic optimism, and internal locus of control and academic optimism. Besides, this research also aims to know whether democratic parenting, school climate, and internal locus of control simultaneously affect academic optimism in students. The researchers hypothesized that: i) There is a positive relationship between democratic parenting and academic optimism (H1); ii) There is a positive relationship between school climate and academic optimism (H2); iii) There is a positive relationship between internal locus of control and academic optimism (H3); and iv) There is an interaction between democratic parenting, school climate, and internal locus of control with academic optimism in students (H4).



## 2. RESEARCH METHOD

### 2.1. Research design

The research employed multiple regression design, which determined the relationship between the criterion variable and a combination of two or more predictor variables [23]. There are three predictor variables in this study, namely democratic parenting, school climate, and internal locus of control. The predictable variable is academic self-concept. The multiple regression design of the three predictors is shown in Figure 1. The population of this research was junior high school students in Kediri City, East Java, Indonesia. Data were taken directly from the research sample using the cluster random sampling technique, with a total of 335 students (female=79, male=56).

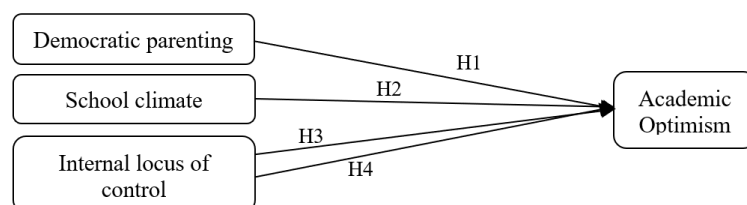


Figure 1. Research design

### 2.3. Research instrument

The research data were taken using an instrument in the form of a scale for each variable. The instrument for the democratic parenting variable used a democratic parenting scale. This scale consists of 16 items and has four answer choices, namely always, often, sometimes, and never. The validity and reliability test were declared valid and reliable because it had an item validity value above 0.7 and the composite reliability is 0.854. The instrument for the school climate variable uses the school climate scale. This scale consists of 34 items and has four answer choices, namely always, often, sometimes, and never. The validity and reliability test were declared valid and reliable because it has an item validity value above 0.7 and the composite reliability is 0.876.

The instrument for the internal locus of control variable uses an internal locus of control scale. This scale consists of 36 items and has four answer choices, namely always, often, sometimes, and never. The validity and reliability test were declared valid and reliable because it has an item validity value above 0.7 and the composite reliability is 0.857. Furthermore, students' academic optimism in this study was measured using an academic optimism scale consisting of 38 items. The validity and reliability test were declared valid and reliable because it has an item validity value above 0.7 and the composite reliability is 0.757.

### 2.4. Data analysis

Data analysis was conducted using parametric statistical analysis. Multiple regression analysis was conducted on statistical product and service solutions (SPSS) 20 for Windows to examine the relationship between democratic parenting, school climate, and internal locus of control with academic optimism. The assumptions tested before conducting the analysis were normality test, multicollinearity test, heteroscedasticity test, and autocorrelation test.

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 3.1. Results

#### 3.1.1. Assumption test

The test results showed that the data met the requirements for conducting regression analysis. The normality test was carried out in two ways, namely the normal probability plot and the Kolmogorov–Smirnov analysis. The data is normally distributed if the data spreads around the diagonal line and follows the diagonal line direction [24]. The test results also showed that the points exactly followed the diagonal line, this means that the normality of the data has been verified. This can also be seen from the results of the Kolmogorov - Smirnov test where the significance value is 0.991 greater than 0.05, therefore, the research data is normally distributed. The multicollinearity test also showed that the research data did not show multicollinearity problems. Based on the test results using SPSS, the value of the coefficient, tolerance, and VIF column of the three predictor variables is greater than 0.999, while the VIF value of all predictor variables is less than 10. The results of the heteroscedasticity test also showed that the data are well

distributed. This data also did not have autocorrelation symptoms because the Durbin Watson value is 1.715 where the value is still in the range of -2 to 2. Symptoms of autocorrelation do not occur with the assumption that the Durbin Watson value is between (du value) to (4-du) [24].

### 3.1.2. Hypothesis testing

The results of data analysis in Table 1 regarding the relationship between democratic parenting and academic optimism shows that the value of  $r$  is 0.42 with ( $p < 0.01$ ), meaning that partially there is a positive and significant relationship between democratic parenting and academic optimism, so that the first hypothesis (H1) is accepted. The relationship between school climate and academic optimism obtained  $r = 0.567$  with ( $p < 0.01$ ), meaning that partially there is a positive and significant relationship between school climate and academic optimism, so the second hypothesis (H2) is accepted. The relationship between the internal locus of control and academic optimism obtained  $r = 0.384$  with ( $p < 0.01$ ), meaning that partially there is a positive and significant relationship between the internal locus of control and academic optimism, so the third hypothesis (H3) is accepted.

Table 1. Partial hypothesis testing

Variable	r	sig.	Criteria	Description
Democratic parenting and academic optimism	0.42	0.000	$p < 0.01$	Significant relationship
School climate and academic optimism	0.567	0.001	$p < 0.01$	Significant relationship
Internal locus of control and academic optimism	0.384	0.001	$p < 0.01$	Significant relationship

Based on results of multiple linear regression analysis as shown in Table 2, simultaneously democratic parenting, school climate, and internal locus of control have a very significant relationship with academic optimism. These results indicate that the fourth hypothesis (H4) is accepted, so it can be concluded that democratic parenting, school climate, and internal locus of control are predictors of students' academic optimism. Table 2 also shows that the value of the determinant coefficient for the academic optimism variable is 0.707, which means that the percentage of variation of the magnitude of changes in the academic optimism variable that can be explained by democratic parenting, school climate, and internal locus of control is 70.7%, while other factors may influence by 29.3%. Other factors that can influence academic optimism include self-concept [25], expectations [26], principal leadership [27].

Table 2. Simultaneous hypothesis testing

Variable	R	R square	sig.	Criteria	Description
Democratic parenting, school climate, and internal locus of control as predictors of academic optimism	0.841	0.707	0.000	$p < 0.01$	Significant relationship

## 3.2. Discussion

Optimism is a concept derived from positive psychology which has a comprehensive meaning that includes the study of positive emotions, character, and other positive supporting activities. Positive psychology attempts to complement traditional psychological models that focus mostly on human suffering, weakness, and disorders [28], and have the aim of understanding individual characteristics and tendencies that contribute to the health and well-being of individuals and social psychology in general [29]. In this study, the researchers used the academic optimism framework, which is rooted in positive psychology to identify students who are academically optimistic in terms of democratic parenting, school climate, and internal locus of control at the junior high school level.

The results show that there is a significant relationship between democratic parenting and academic optimism of junior high school students in Kediri city. The results indicate that children have positive perceptions of parents where parents have good control over children, clarity of communication, and demands for children's maturity that affect their academic optimism. The results support the theory presented by Baumrind [30] that democratic parenting is a comfortable parenting style for raising children with positive attitudes. This is in line with the opinion of Shapiro [31] that children tend to imitate the behavior of their parents, they will try to understand good and bad aspects. If parents are optimistic, then children will be optimistic too.

The results showed that when students were raised with a democratic parenting style, the students' level of optimism was more developed than students who thought that they were raised through other parenting styles [32]. The finding of Griess is in line with this study; although measuring authoritative, authoritarian, and permissive parenting styles, the results show that the democratic parenting style perceived

by students contributes to higher levels of optimism than the authoritarian parenting style [32]. On the other hand, the impact of implementing democratic parenting makes children tend to feel safe, have self-control, and be able to rely on themselves. This situation certainly does not exist in children who are cared for using permissive or authoritarian parenting [33]. Therefore, mistakes in implementing the parenting style can have a negative impact on children's development, especially children's optimistic attitudes. When parents apply democratic parenting, researchers believe that children are able to explore their potential, have the ability to try, and have a high interest in learning. Parents who nurture democratically will provide opportunities for children to show independence or they are not dependent on parents, have self-control, have an interest in new things, have obedience, and are oriented towards achievement [34].

The study of parenting style strategies carried out by parents is related to the involvement of emotional climate and psychological constructs for raising children [35]. This is an important and influential factor in adolescent development, for example, parenting style has been associated with psychological adjustment, social development, academic achievement, and behavioral problems [36]. Positive parenting styles are related to self-expectation and the effectiveness of the role of junior high school in which students are in adolescence [37]. For example, students who are fostered in an environment of parental acceptance, the intensity of dialogue between children and parents, and affection make students have a strong sense of self-confidence [37]. On the other hand, the lack of self-control from parents causes the decline in self-concept in adolescents [38]. Based on some of the research results, democratic parenting is a factor that influences academic optimism, which means that to increase academic optimism, the democratic parenting style must be considered. The role of educators is also important considering that educators must realize that to further increase students' academic optimism, they must work closely with students' parents.

The researchers also found that school climate had a significant relationship with academic optimism. This means that school climate and optimism have a reciprocal relationship. On the one hand, the occurrence of a positive school climate that occurs among school members will form better students' academic optimism, so that they can further improve their duties and responsibilities. The relationship between school climate and academic optimism shows that the more the students get the support of a good school climate in carrying out their duties, the more students improve academic optimism in carrying out learning activities at school.

The psychological experience felt by students in school life is that students have enough good relationships with fellow students and teachers, and students have quite a good understanding of discipline and a good understanding of school facilities. Good communication between teachers and students in schools has a good impact on teachers' teaching motivation in schools. In addition to having a role for students, the school climate directly plays a big role for teachers in forming their teaching motivation. The results of previous research show that the school environmental factors support and play an important role in developing teachers' teaching motivation, which in turn can have an impact on students' academic optimism in school [39]. The direct influence of school climate on academic optimism also strengthens the statement from Wei [40] that school climate as an external factor has a strong influence on the activities of teachers and students in schools, and teachers who understand the importance of school climate will have implications for education [41]. The existence of the influence of school climate on academic optimism supports the aspect of personalization as expressed that individuals can explain what causes an event, whether it comes from oneself or others [42]. On the other hand, a positive school climate is also inseparable from the leadership of the principal in improving teacher professionalism. Academic optimism is an important mediator between school leadership and teacher professional learning activities [43].

The researchers also found a positive and significant relationship between the internal locus of control and academic optimism of junior high school students in Kediri City. Conditions that come from students can increase the students' academic optimism so that they feel confident that they can survive even in difficult situations so that optimism is formed through individuals about whether they are worth or not [44]. On the other hand, according to Nykänen [45], internal locus of control is closely related to supporting students' high academic achievement. This is also supported by Nykänen [45] that individuals with a stronger internal locus of control show more enthusiasm and optimism in work situations because individuals assume that they have greater control of their environment. The psychological dynamics of individuals who have an internal locus of control for optimism are individuals who prefer to work to achieve achievements. After successfully dealing with a task, individuals with an internal locus of control will try to improve their behavioral goals. If they fail to face a task, the individual will re-evaluate for its implementation in the future and reduce expectations for success. Individuals in carrying out tasks have the aim of increasing self-progress and further improving themselves in completing the next work, and when completing their work, individuals place more emphasis on their abilities, not on fate or luck. Individuals who have a high locus of control have high academic optimism as well, and individuals will feel optimal subjective well-being [46].

The contribution of democratic parenting, school climate, and internal locus of control together to academic optimism is also quite large, which is above 70%. However, these factors need the attention of teachers, especially homeroom teachers and guidance and counseling teachers. Teachers must collaborate with parents so that parents apply democratic parenting so that there is an increase in students regarding expected academic optimism. The teachers should also develop a peer-to-peer climate by designing guidance that allows peer interaction. The development of students' self-control should also be a concern for teachers, especially guidance and counseling teachers because this is also an important factor.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

This study provided empirical information about academic optimism and how it relates to democratic parenting, school climate, and internal locus of control. Based on the results and discussion, it can be concluded that democratic parenting has a positive and significant relationship with academic optimism. Parents who apply democratic parenting are parents who are flexible, use reasonable explanations for children's demands, do not force but supervise children, and have clear and logical expectations for children's demands. Besides, school climate has a positive and significant relationship with academic optimism. A pleasant school climate for students will have an impact on the increase of learning achievement accompanied by an optimistic attitude. Then, the internal locus of control has a positive and significant relationship with students' academic optimism. This is because students who have an internal locus of control have an expectation that they are in control of their own lives. Furthermore, democratic parenting, school climate, and internal locus of control have a simultaneous relationship with students' academic optimism. Thus, democratic parenting, school climate, and internal locus of control in learning can form students' academic optimism. Academic optimism plays an essential role for the psychological well-being of students in minimizing pressure and high demands that may be experienced by students.

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