

GRIT, HOPE, AND RESILIENCE AMONG ISLAMIC GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING STUDENTS WITH ART THERAPY EXPERIENCE

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the relationships of grit and hope with resilience among Islamic Guidance and Counseling students who had experience with art-therapy-based activities. Art therapy functioned only as a participant-context criterion and was not tested as an intervention. A quantitative, cross-sectional correlational design involved 285 active students selected through purposive sampling from a population of 435 students at UIN Sultan Syarif Kasim Riau. Grit, hope, and resilience were measured using the Grit-S, eight substantive items of the Adult Hope Scale, and the CD-RISC-25. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation analysis, and multiple linear regression. Both grit and hope were positively related to resilience, however, hope showed the stronger relationship and remained a significant unique correlate in the simultaneous model, whereas grit did not after hope was controlled. Together, grit and hope were statistically associated with 46.6% of the observed variance in resilience. These findings highlight the importance of goal-oriented motivation and the ability to find alternative ways to ensure student resilience. Because the study was correlational, no causal effects of grit, hope, or art therapy can be inferred.

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INTRODUCTION

During the transition from adolescence to young adulthood, students face various challenges related to personal growth, academics, social life, and career development. Academic pressure, high academic expectations, financial difficulties, interpersonal conflicts, and uncertainty about the future can accumulate and negatively impact psychological well-being. Large-scale research reviews have found that symptoms of depression, anxiety, stress, and sleep disturbances are widespread among students across various countries, indicating that mental health issues among students require action at both institutional and individual levels (Paiva et al., 2025). In Indonesia, faculty members have also reported gaps between

recognizing students' psychological distress and directing them to appropriate professional support (Putri et al., 2023). These conditions underline the importance of psychological resources that help students remain functional when difficulties occur.

Resilience is defined as the ability to withstand adversity, adapt to changing demands, and recover or continue functioning after experiencing stress. This concept does not imply an absence of emotional distress; rather, resilient individuals may experience negative emotions but respond to them in ways that maintain or restore adaptive capacity. (Connor & Davidson, 2003) define resilience as a set of personality traits comprising persistence, resilience in the face of negative experiences, acceptance of change, a sense of control, secure interpersonal relationships, and spiritual factors. Contemporary perspectives similarly emphasize that resilience is dynamic and depends on the fit between a person's responses and the demands of a particular situation (Bonanno, 2021). Among college students, resilience is negatively associated with stress, although the strength of this association varies across contexts, instruments, and participant characteristics (Ansari & Iqbal, 2025)

One personal resource potentially linked to resilience is persistence. Persistence is defined as steadfastness in effort and sustained interest in achieving long-term goals (Duckworth et al., 2007). Students with greater grit are more likely to continue working after setbacks, revise their efforts, and remain committed to goals that require sustained engagement. Nevertheless, grit and resilience are not interchangeable. Grit concerns the continuity of effort and interest, whereas resilience encompasses broader adaptation to stress, emotional regulation, and recovery. (Cheng et al., 2023) found substantial overlap between perseverance of effort and resilience, but a weaker overlap for consistency of interest. Similarly, resilience may predict persistence in academically vulnerable students more strongly than grit does (Caporale-Berkowitz et al., 2022)

Hope is another goal-related psychological resource. According to Snyder's theory, hope consists of "agency thinking," which is the motivational energy that drives a person to initiate and sustain movement toward a goal, and "pathway thinking," which is the ability to find routes and alternatives to achieve that goal. (Snyder, 2002; Snyder et al., 1991). Hope therefore differs from passive wishing: it combines purposeful motivation with strategic planning. Students with high hope can preserve direction when plans fail because they are more able to formulate alternative pathways. Studies have linked hope with adaptive coping, psychological calmness, well-being, and resilience in university populations (Akyil, 2025; Shan & Xu, 2025; Yan et al., 2024). Measurement specificity is important, however, because general hope and academic hope are related but not identical (Wong & Cheung, 2024). The present study examined general dispositional hope because the resilience outcome included academic, emotional, and social pressures.

The participant context in this study was prior involvement in art-therapy-based activities. Art therapy uses visual and creative media to facilitate expression, reflection, and meaning-making, particularly when experiences are difficult to communicate verbally. Research conducted on university students shows that structured creative activities can enhance emotional expression, self-awareness, and stress management (Arriaga et al., 2024; Haryati et al., 2025; Liu et al., 2024). These findings do not establish that any art activity is equivalent to clinical art therapy, nor do they imply that exposure automatically increases grit, hope, or resilience. In this study, art-therapy experience was used only to define a shared participant context, it was not manipulated, measured as an independent variable, or evaluated as an intervention.

A related systematic review by (Hariyadi et al., 2025) synthesized 12 studies and reported that digital games, virtual reality, board games, and role-playing may help reduce anxiety and depression while strengthening adolescents' social and emotional abilities. Although the review did not specifically examine art therapy, grit, hope, or resilience, it provides complementary evidence that structured creative and interactive media can support mental-health services.

Although prior studies have examined grit, hope, resilience, and creative activities, these topics have more often been investigated in separate models. Evidence comparing the relative and joint associations of grit and hope with general resilience remains limited, particularly among Indonesian Islamic Guidance and Counseling students. A further conceptual issue is that experience with art-therapy-based activities may be mistaken for an intervention effect even when it is used only to define the participant context. This study addresses this gap by simultaneously examining resilience and hope within the broader context of resilience among Islamic Guidance and Counseling students at Sultan Sharif Qasim State Islamic University of Riau who have prior experience with art therapy methods. Art therapy was not measured as a predictor, and the study did not evaluate its effectiveness. The study tested whether grit and hope were individually and jointly related to resilience and compared their unique statistical contributions.

METHOD

A quantitative, cross-sectional, and correlational research design was employed because the study aimed to identify relationships between variables in a natural setting, without the influence of external factors. The sample consisted of 435 students enrolled in the Islamic Guidance and Counseling program at Sultan Sharif Qasim Islamic University (UIN) in Riau Province. Purposive sampling was used with the following inclusion criteria: active enrollment in the study program, prior participation in a practicum, training program, workshop, or counseling activity involving art-therapy-based methods, voluntary consent, complete questionnaire responses, and responses that passed data-quality screening. Of the 435 students in the target population, 285 met all criteria and provided analyzable responses. The available study records did not contain a category-by-category count of the remaining students, who either did not participate or did not meet one or more eligibility or data-quality requirements.

Grit was assessed using the Grit-S, a brief scale comprising eight items reflecting consistency of interest and perseverance of effort (Duckworth & Quinn, 2009). Four negatively worded items were reverse-scored. Hope was measured using the Adult Hope Scale developed by Snyder et al. (1991). Eight core items were used in the analysis; eight additional items from the original scale were excluded from the assessment. Resilience was assessed using the 25-item Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale (CD-RISC-25), which reflects personal competence and tenacity, tolerance of negative emotions, positive acceptance of change and secure relationships, control, and spiritual influences (Connor & Davidson, 2003).

All three instruments were adapted into Indonesian through forward translation, synthesis, independent back-translation, and expert review. The adapted items were reviewed by one guidance-and-counseling instrumentation expert from UIN Sultan Syarif Kasim Riau. The content review assessed item clarity, representation of the intended constructs, response-format suitability, and cultural appropriateness; feedback was used to revise wording that was unclear, overly long, or potentially ambiguous. Linguistic equivalence was additionally checked by comparing the back-translated version with the original instruments. Responses were recorded on a five-point agreement scale. For consistency across the questionnaire, CD-RISC response categories were coded from 1 to 5 rather than the original 0 to 4, yielding a total-score range of 25 to 125. This coding represents a constant linear shift, so rank ordering, correlations, and standardized regression estimates are unchanged; however, raw means and score ranges are not directly comparable with studies using the original 0–4 coding.

Empirical item validity was evaluated with item-total Pearson correlations. All eight grit items, all eight substantive hope items, and all 25 resilience items met the study's criterion of r greater than .116 with $p < .05$. Internal consistency was estimated using Cronbach's alpha. The alpha coefficients were .571 for grit, .782 for hope, and .859 for resilience. The Grit-S alpha indicated limited internal consistency. A sensitivity check showed that removing the weakest item increased alpha only to approximately .600, which remained below conventional thresholds; therefore, all eight theoretically specified items were retained rather than deleting an item solely to optimize alpha. Results involving grit were interpreted cautiously. Because each grit subscale contained only four items, dimension-level reliability was not emphasized; future studies should evaluate the two-factor structure and report reliability coefficients by dimension.

Data were collected online using Google Forms. Before completing the questionnaire, participants were informed about the study's purpose, the voluntary nature of participation, confidentiality, and the right to withdraw. The resulting dataset was screened for incomplete and duplicate responses, as well as responses showing illogical patterns. Values for reverse-coded items were reversed prior to calculating the total score.

Analyses were conducted in JASP and IBM SPSS Statistics 26. Descriptive statistics summarized the score distributions. The assumptions for Pearson correlation and multiple linear regression were examined through a standardized residual Q-Q plot, deviation-from-linearity tests, tolerance values, and variance inflation factors (VIF). Pearson correlations tested the bivariate relationships of grit and hope with resilience. Multiple linear regression evaluated their joint association with resilience and the unique contribution of each predictor. The statistical significance level was set at 0.05, a 95% confidence interval was provided for the correlation coefficient.

Table 1. Instruments and Internal Consistency

Variable	Instrument	Scored items	Possible range	Cronbach's alpha
Grit	Short Grit Scale (Grit-S)	8	8-40	.571
Hope	Adult Hope Scale	8	8-40	.782
Resilience	CD-RISC-25	25	25-125	.859

Source: Authors' analysis of primary data (2026)

Instrument specifications based on (Connor & Davidson, 2003; Duckworth & Quinn, 2009; Snyder et al., 1991)

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The standardized residual Q-Q plot indicated that most points followed the diagonal reference line, with only limited deviations at the tails. The linearity tests were nonsignificant for grit-resilience (deviation from linearity $p = .189$) and hope-resilience ($p = .877$). Multicollinearity was not indicated: both predictors had a tolerance of .798 and a VIF of 1.252. These results supported continuation with the planned analyses.

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics for the Study Variables

Variable	N	M	SD	Minimum	Maximum
Grit	285	26.50	3.655	15	36
Hope	285	33.08	3.791	16	40
Resilience	285	101.39	9.568	70	124

Source: Authors' Analysis of Primary Data (2026)

Descriptive statistics are presented in Table 2. Grit scores averaged 26.50 ($SD = 3.655$), hope scores averaged 33.08 ($SD = 3.791$), and resilience scores averaged 101.39 ($SD = 9.568$). The observed ranges indicated adequate variation for correlational analysis.

Table 3. Pearson Correlations with Resilience

Relationship	r	p	95% CI	Interpretation
Grit-resilience	.369	< .001	[.265, .466]	Positive, modest
Hope-resilience	.679	< .001	[.611, .737]	Positive, strong

Source: Authors' Analysis of Primary Data (2026)

Both bivariate hypotheses were supported. Grit was positively and significantly associated with resilience, $r = .369$, $p < .001$. Hope was also positively and significantly associated with resilience, $r = .679$, $p < .001$, and its association was notably stronger.

Table 4. Multiple Regression Predicting Resilience

Predictor	B	SE	Beta	t	p	95% CI for B
Intercept	42.110	3.972	-	10.602	< .001	[34.292, 49.929]
Grit	.211	.127	.081	1.659	.098	[-.039, .462]
Hope	1.622	.123	.643	13.203	< .001	[1.381, 1.864]

Source: Authors' Analysis of Primary Data (2026)

The regression model was significant, and the two predictors were statistically associated with 46.6% of the observed variance in resilience. This proportion describes model fit and should not be interpreted as a causal effect. Hope was a significant unique correlate of resilience, whereas grit was not statistically significant after hope was included in the model. The third hypothesis concerning the joint relationship was supported, but the coefficients show that the two predictors did not contribute equally.

At the bivariate level, a positive relationship was found between grit and resilience. Students who reported greater sustained effort and consistency of interest also tended to report greater ability to adapt and continue functioning under

pressure. The size of the relationship was modest, however. This pattern is theoretically plausible because persistence can support continued engagement after setbacks, but resilience includes additional processes such as emotional regulation, flexible adjustment, perceived control, social support, and recovery. The finding is consistent with evidence that perseverance of effort overlaps with resilience more strongly than consistency of interest does (Cheng et al., 2023).

The grit result must also be interpreted in light of measurement quality. The Grit-S alpha of .571 indicates limited internal consistency in this sample. The scale combines two dimensions and includes reverse-scored items, both of which may increase response heterogeneity. Measurement error can attenuate correlations and reduce the stability of regression coefficients. Moreover, grit did not make a statistically significant unique contribution in the simultaneous model after hope was controlled ($B = .211$, $\beta = .081$, $p = .098$). Thus, the significant zero-order grit-resilience correlation should not be interpreted as evidence that grit independently explains resilience beyond hope in this dataset.

Hope demonstrated a substantially stronger relationship with resilience. Agency thinking may help students retain motivation when demands become difficult, while pathways thinking may help them generate alternatives when an initial strategy fails. These functions closely match the adaptive flexibility required in resilience. The result is consistent with research linking hope to adaptive coping and psychological calmness among university students (Shan & Xu, 2025), as well as evidence that hope can connect social support with resilience (Akyil, 2025). In the regression model, hope remained a strong unique correlate of resilience ($B = 1.622$, $\beta = .643$, $p < .001$).

The joint model was statistically associated with 46.6% of the observed variance in resilience, indicating a substantial noncausal association between goal persistence, goal-directed thinking, and adaptive capacity. Grit and hope are conceptually complementary: grit emphasizes sustained effort and consistency, whereas hope adds motivational agency and the capacity to generate alternative pathways. The reduction of the grit coefficient after hope entered the model may therefore reflect variance shared by two goal-oriented constructs. Continued effort may support resilience most effectively when students also believe they can act toward their goals and modify routes when obstacles arise. Thus, part of the bivariate grit-resilience association may overlap statistically with hope. Because the present study did not test mediation, commonality, or dominance models, this interpretation remains theoretical and should be examined directly in future research.

More than half of the variance in resilience remained outside the model. Prior research suggests that campus belonging, peer support, teaching and learning conditions, coping strategies, emotional regulation, and other personal and environmental resources may also be relevant (Daniilidou et al., 2025; Wang et al., 2026). Accordingly, resilience should not be reduced to perseverance or positive goal thinking alone. Guidance and counseling services should consider the interaction between individual strengths and educational environments.

All participants had experience with art-therapy-based activities, which may have provided opportunities for emotional expression and reflection. However, the study neither measured the intensity or quality of those experiences nor included a comparison group without such experience. The results therefore cannot establish that art therapy increased grit, hope, or resilience. Art-therapy experience defines the population to which the present findings most directly apply, rather than serving as an explanatory variable.

Several limitations constrain generalization. The cross-sectional design precludes temporal or causal inference. Purposive sampling from one study program limits representativeness. All variables were assessed using self-reports, which may increase variance due to the common measurement method. The modified response scoring for the CD-RISC affects direct comparison with studies using the original 0-4 format, and the grit scale's moderate reliability weakens confidence in estimates involving grit. In addition, the study did not measure the form, frequency, duration, facilitator competence, or therapeutic fidelity of participants' art-therapy experiences.

Despite these limitations, the findings have practical relevance for higher-education counseling. Programs may benefit from activities that help students formulate realistic goals, identify several pathways, monitor progress, and preserve agency when plans are disrupted. Persistence remains relevant, but it should be paired with flexible strategy adjustment rather than framed as uncritical endurance. Such applications should be evaluated prospectively before claims of effectiveness are made.

CONCLUSION

Grit and hope were positively related to resilience among Islamic Guidance and Counseling students with prior art-therapy-based experience, but hope showed the stronger association and remained the only significant unique correlate in the simultaneous model. The main practical implication is that higher-education counseling services should strengthen hope by helping students formulate realistic goals, maintain motivational agency, and develop alternative pathways when plans are disrupted, while pairing persistence with flexible strategy adjustment. The study contributes evidence that grit and hope do not make equal statistical contributions to resilience in this student context. Future longitudinal research should test these relationships in more diverse samples and use stronger multidimensional measurement of grit. Art therapy was a participant-context criterion only, no intervention or causal effect was evaluated.

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