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by Dody Hartanto

THE CHARACTER STRENGTH OF STUDENTS: FOUNDATIONS IN FACING THE NEW NORMAL ERA??

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ABSTRACT

This article aims to discuss the theoretical framework and various model opportunities that can be used to facilitate the process of character building in the new normal era. These articles are compiled through a systematic and integrative literature review process. In this paper, the theoretical framework develops from a review of existing research on Character Strength, hope and pedagogy theory, and transformative education. The study uses systematic review research by summarizing the results of primary research to present more comprehensive and balanced facts. The data used in this study is secondary data accessed through Google Scholar with the keyword "character strength" in Indonesian and English. The selected articles were published from 2017-2022 and found data for 68,300 articles. The key articles were selected based on their suitability to the research question and 6 articles were found to be suitable. The results show that various models have been developed regarding character strength. Many character strengths are developed by integrating several variables which are said to have a strong correlation such as happiness, spirituality and other positive psychology. Several models have been developed and tested by other researchers, both on an individual and group basis. Other studies also show that the use of film media can be used as a medium for developing characters.

Keywords: character strength, new normal era

1. INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic is a huge challenge for education around the world as education has to be done virtually to stop the spread of COVID-19. The closure of schools in almost all countries in the world, which lasted for almost more than two years is known to result in a massive decline in student learning abilities. This decline in learning ability is a serious threat. Various studies have shown the problem of losing knowledge, skills and character in students [1].

The strength of character as human behaviour at this time becomes more interesting through the educational process, especially during a pandemic and will change during endemic times. Academics and researchers have attempted to examine various kinds of student attitudes and behaviours in the learning process. Strength of character can be a factor

that affects academic achievement and well-being [2]. Strength of character is a predictor of academic achievement, among others, because it is able to generate hope, self-regulation, enthusiasm and perseverance [3]. However, not many academics and researchers have discussed the strength of student character as a foundation in facing the new normal era.

Several studies have shown that character strength has a strong relationship with well-being, both in adults [4], adolescents and children [5]. Character strength has been shown to be an important predictor of well-being [6]. Strengths of character such as curiosity, enthusiasm, love, gratitude and hope are related to subjective well-being. Meanwhile, character strengths such as honesty, perseverance, kindness, social intelligence, self-regulation and humour have a relationship with psychological well-being [7]. Other studies also show a strong positive association between the dimensions of environmental mastery, life goals and self-acceptance to psychological well-being [8]. In general, it can be assumed that character strength is related to individual well-being, so individual welfare can be improved by displaying character strength [9].

2. METHODS

This study was designed using systematic review research that focuses on summarizing the results of primary research so that it can present comprehensive and balanced facts. The research procedure was carried out as follows:
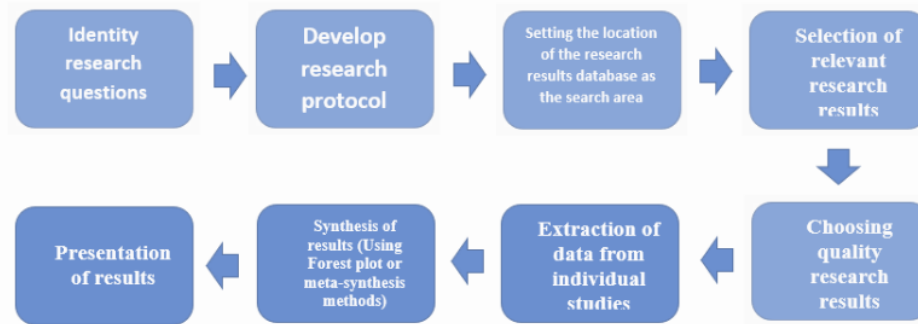

Figure 1. Research Procedure

The selection of articles starts from research journals on Google Scholar. The keyword used in the search is "Character Strength" in Indonesian and English. The screening used is the result of research for the last 6 years, from 2017-2021 found 68,300 articles. The articles were then re-selected by collecting relevant articles to answer the research question, "How is the Character Strength Intervention model?". Analysis of research data was carried out by means of data extraction, namely by writing down all the data obtained through journals

about the character strength development model and converted into new data by filtering the money data used into several categories.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Data penelitian yang diperoleh berdasarkan hasil seleksi adalah 6 artikel yang dapat dilihat pada tabel 1

Tabel 1. Articles About Intervention Models For Character Strength

Writer	Method	Sample Amount	Findings
Niemic (2018) [16]	-	-	Offers a positive psychology intervention model designed to enhance the synergy between character strength and mindfulness training. Using a character strength search step by means of practitioners labelling strengths seen in Action, explaining with rational evidence and showing appreciation and value of perceived strengths in terms of emotionality, meaning, relevance and purpose/outcome.
Saele, et.al (2022) [17]	Mixed method	A cluster-randomized a controlled trial was conducted with 28 classes of 643 Zambian youth ages 10-13 (M=11.39, SD=0.95, 55.4% women)	Resistance to training intervention by holding Global Resilience Oral Workshops (GROW). The program's curriculum is rooted in positive psychology and spirituality.

Prasetyo & Ika (2019) [18]	Experiment	Psychology Student of University of Diponegoro year 2018	Career Happiness Plan training has an effect on increasing character strength in students. There was a difference in the strength of the subject's character (students of the 2018 Undip Psychology Faculty) after attending the career happiness plan training.
Siritikul, et. al. (2021) [19]	Descriptive analyses, Rasch model analysis	40 first-year medical students	There is a change in character after watching the movie. The films that the researchers watched were Twilight, Gandhi, The Shawshank Redemption and Amelie.
Arumsari (2018) [20]	Qualitative method with descriptive technique	3 Counselees who have low character strength	Individual counselling with symbolic modelling techniques is proven to be effective in developing the strength of the character of simplicity.
Bu & Duan (2018) [21]	-	79 freshmen	Increasing Strength Knowledge using the Aware-Explore-Apply model which includes: first, increasing awareness of character strengths that were previously not realized or used by clients on a limited basis;

			furthermore, exploring together the strengths of character with questions, activities, reflections, and challenges; and finally, switch to the app when the client chooses a concrete goal and next step to put the power of character into action

Table 1 shows the various models that have been developed regarding character strength. Many character strengths are developed by integrating several variables which are said to have a strong correlation such as happiness, spirituality and other positive psychology. Several models have been developed and tested by other researchers such as the Aware-Explore-Apply model. Other studies have also shown that some films can be used as a medium for character development. In addition, individual-based interventions such as individual counselling can also be used as an alternative in developing character strengths.

Character is defined as a set of good personality traits or a collection of individual virtues [22]. It is characterized by positive behaviours that last long into habits such as moral commitment, social responsibility, determination and self-discipline towards individuals [23]. Character is also referred to as an individual's general attitude towards social responsibility and their acceptance of their environment, which is supported by knowledge of social conditions, emotional reactions to other people's difficulties, and the development of prosocial skills [24]. Character is also seen as involvement in attitudes or behaviours that are in line with morals [25].

Strength of character is a positive personality trait that has a positive impact on emotional, rational, and operational well-being [26]. Strength of character is a valuable asset that can help improve one's life by using the ability to help others [27]. Strength of character is described as part of positive attitudes, the driving force that allows individuals to develop by achieving optimal or advanced psychological functioning [9]. Besides being able to help individuals in achieving goals in life, the strength of character can also encourage individuals to do good [28]. The strength of this character is believed to be a driving force for someone

to be more productive [29]. Strengths of character such as creativity, love of learning, and prudence, are personality traits that have positive values [9], so it can be assumed that character strengths can be shown in various situations in various domains of life. [30]. Character strength is important to note because it can affect every element of development, be it positive emotions, intrinsic involvement, positive relationships, feelings of meaning and purpose, and achievement [31].

There are two articles in table 1 which show efforts to increase the two strengths of character, namely the power of knowledge and simplicity. Values in Action (VIA) classifies 24 character strengths and six universal policies (Peterson: 2004). The six policies are humanity, wisdom and knowledge, justice, courage, transcendence and simplicity. Humanity's policies consist of love, kindness, and social intelligence. Policies regarding wisdom and knowledge consist of creativity, curiosity, judgment, love of learning, and perspective. The policy on justice consists of teamwork, fairness, and leadership. The policy of courage consists of bravery, perseverance, honesty, and zest. The policy on transcendence consists of an appreciation of beauty and excellence gratitude, hope, humour, and spirituality. The policy of simplicity consists of forgiveness, humility, prudence, and self-regulation.

The results of this study explain the existence of several interventions that have been developed. However, in intervention-based research or personality strength models, there are still few findings. Basic research on the relationship of character strength with various variables is easy to find, but related to model interventions is still quite limited. This can be a concern for further research to be moved to conduct intervention-based research on character strength. The strength of character continues to receive attention but there is a great opportunity for expansion and deepening of the study so that various practices can be carried out more routinely and in tandem with work.

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