

The Hope of Indonesian Students: Current and Future Counseling Challenges

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ABSTRAK

Harapan merupakan komponen dari dimensi kekuatan karakter, menggabungkan rencana pencapaian tujuan (*pathways thinking*) dan dorongan pencapaian tujuan (*agency thinking*). Harapan berkorelasi dengan berbagai faktor dalam perkembangan dan kehidupan individu (*pribadi, sosial, akademik, dan karier*), namun beberapa aspek terkait pandemi belum terungkap, khususnya di Indonesia. Oleh karena itu, untuk menjembatani kesenjangan tersebut, penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengungkap harapan dari 324 siswa SMA yang secara sukarela mengikuti penelitian ini dan berasal dari beberapa provinsi dan daerah di Indonesia. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kuantitatif deskriptif berdasarkan Skala Harapan. Data disediakan menggunakan formulir Google dan dianalisis menggunakan Excel dan perangkat lunak JASP 0.16.1.0. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa 58,3% siswa berada pada kategori kurang. Terdapat perbedaan proporsi harapan antara laki-laki dan perempuan berdasarkan jenis kelamin. Lebih jauh lagi, etnis Sunda memiliki harapan terendah dari semua kelompok etnis. Temuan ini dapat membantu pihak-pihak tertentu, seperti konselor sekolah, dalam mengidentifikasi solusi alternatif untuk membantu siswa dan menekankan serta memperhatikan remaja agar mereka mengembangkan harapan..

ABSTRACT

Hope is a component of the character strength dimension, combining goal-achieving plans (*pathways thinking*) and goal-achieving encouragement (*agency thinking*). Hope correlates with various factors in individuals' development and lives (*personal, social, academic, and career*), but few aspects related to the pandemic have yet to be revealed, particularly in Indonesia. Therefore, to bridge the gap, this study aims to uncover the hope of the 324 senior high school students who voluntarily participated in this research and came from several provinces and regions in Indonesia. The study used descriptive quantitative methods based on the Hope Scale. The data was provided using a Google form and analyzed using Excel and the JASP 0.16.1.0 software. The results showed that 58.3% of students were in the deficient category. There is a difference in the proportion of hope between males and females based on gender. Furthermore, the Sundanese ethnicity has the lowest hopes of all the ethnic groups. The findings may assist certain parties, such as school counselors, in identifying alternative solutions to help students and emphasizing and paying attention to adolescents for them to develop hope.

1. INTRODUCTION

Hope is one aspect of character strength. Individuals who have hope have the character of personal power, which is characterized by having clear aims both now and in the future (*goals*), the ability to make plans to attain goals (*pathways thinking*), and the energy or determination to carry out these plans (*thinking agency*) (Peterson & Seligman, 2004). The strength of hope has been shown to impact the performance of outstanding tasks favorably. Hopeful thinking is a learned and dynamic personality trait that permits future perspectives to be incorporated into the present. In this setting, hope may play an essential role in affecting students' future attitudes and confidence, as well as their capacity to cope with this challenging period and overcome hurdles in their preparation for the future (Cheavens, Heyy, Feldman, Benitez, & Rand, 2019; Bareket-Bojmel, Shahar, Abu-Kaf, & Margalit, 2021).

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At the elementary, middle, high school, and college levels, academic success is linked to hope in the academic and professional fields (Chen, Huebner, & Tian, 2020; Amundson et al., 2013; Feldman & Dreher, 2012). Hope can encourage people to finish their coursework, have the self-assurance to handle challenges under academic pressure, and produce high learning outcomes to achieve study success (Rand, Shanahan, Fischer, & Fortney, 2020). In the social sciences, hopes are linked to families, peers, and teachers support (Ojala, 2015). The student's hope will be defied into three categories; 1) High, which means that the individual achieves all indicators of hope; 2) Moderate, which means that the individual has not fully achieved all the indicators of hope or achieved most of the indicators of hope; 3) Low, means that the individual did not achieve all the hope indicators or only reached a small part of the hope indicators

The most recent data in the field, the COVID-19 pandemic issue has caused widespread damage in a variety of industries, such as the economy (Asare Vitenu-Sackey & Barfi, 2021), technology (George, Lakhani, & Puranam, 2020) and education (De, 2020). It has also caused people worldwide to follow social distancing, quarantine, and other restrictions that change their way of life and psychology (Laslo-Roth, George-Levi, & Margalit, 2021). According to recent studies on the pandemic outbreak, quarantine was a tremendously stressful experience in which people were isolated from their families and close friends, anxious about their health, bored, and limited (Gao et al., 2020). Several studies have shown that quarantine has a negative effect and can lead to a variety of mental health issues (Gao et al., 2020), namely the emergence of fear and anxiety in the community (Redlich Amirav, Besor, and Amirav, 2021; Shanmugam et al., 2020). As a result, there is an increasing need to investigate variables that help people acclimatize to confinement and social isolation.

The pandemic also increases the psychological challenges faced, especially among students. According to UNESCO, COVID-19 has rendered at least 1.6 billion pupils from more than 190 countries unable to carry out normal educational activities due to school closures. In contrast, 94% of other study rooms have been forced to close due to the epidemic (UNSDG, 2020). Dropout rates worldwide are likely to increase due to this massive disruption to access to education (www.educationcannotwait.org). Moreover, the COVID-19 crisis created a new learning concept, learning digital learning/distance learning or from home (Saha, Barman, & Chouhan, 2020), with a high probability of distraction, complex use of technology, no social interaction, and difficulty keeping in touch with teachers (Alsoud & Harasis, 2021).

On the other hand, hope is one of the most valuable resources. Fear and concern over COVID-19 can cause severe emotional stress in individuals and society. During a global health crisis, one of the resilience qualities that might increase well-being is hope (Gallagher & Lopez, 2018). Think of it as a resource that gives you the tools you need to deal with seemingly unmanageable situations (Gallagher, Smith, Richardson, D'Souza, & Long, 2021). When the psychological costs of COVID-19-related stressors are considered (Hamouche, 2020), People's ability to preserve or repair their well-being may be enhanced by their ability to think.

Hope is defined as a cognitive attribute representing a perceived ability to find pathways or strategies to reach one's goals and agency or motivation to pursue desired goals, according to the most often studied hope model (Gallagher, Pedrotti, Lopes, & Snyder, 2019). Hope will drive people to find effective ways to attain desired goals that contribute to well-being despite the obstacles posed by COVID-19 and related housing constraints. Better psychological adjustment in response to health emergencies is linked to hope (Madan & Pakenham, 2014) and lower levels of psychological distress (Kennedy, Lude, Elfström, & Smithson, 2012). According to research, individuals with high hope (as opposed to those with low hope) are more likely to adjust to life's obstacles and use appropriate coping techniques in the face of adversity (Gallagher et al., 2021). Despite the unpredictability of the COVID-19 pandemic, optimism is a psychological resource that can help people overcome setbacks or keep moving forward toward their goals while on stay-at-home orders. When pursuing goals, hope, particularly during the COVID-19 epidemic, can boost positive influence, life pleasure, and achievement.

The Philippines has conducted promising research on the Asian continent. Bernardo(2020) completed hope to research in the Philippines, limited to testing the Hope Scale during the COVID-19 outbreak in March 2020. This study was conducted on 3128 adults, ages 18 to 60. In Indonesia (Hartanto, 2020) researched hope in two aspects, demonstrating that student agency is higher than pathways. Furthermore, according to research findings (Aminah, Ilfiandra, & Saripah, 2020), 45 out of 201 students continued their studies at higher education institutions in 2017 (around 25% of the total number of students). Hope is known to correlate with various factors in individuals' development and lives (personal, social, academic, and career). Still, a few factors related to the pandemic have yet to be revealed, particularly in Indonesia.

The goal of this research is to conduct a systematic study of the strength of hope profiles of high school students in West Sumatra, Riau, West Java, and Yogyakarta during the pandemic, focusing on a)

general hope among students, b) hope based on gender, and c) hope based on students' cultural backgrounds. This study provided an overview for guidance and counseling teachers and practitioners looking for alternative ways to increase student hope. Additionally, enhancing psychological aspects, especially for guidance and counseling, can use the study's findings to create preventive and developmental guidance and counseling programs.

2. METHOD

A quantitative approach was used in this study, with an online survey method. Participants from West Sumatra, Riau, West Java, and Yogyakarta participated in the study. This study involved 324 senior high school students (186 females and 138 males). [Table 1](#) shows the participant profile.

Table 1. Profile of Participants

Variables	Category	F	%
Gender	Male	138	31
	Female	186	69
Ethnicity	Minang	44	6
	Jawa	70	21
	Melayu	12	7
	Batak	23	22
	Sunda	175	29

A convenience sampling technique was used in the participant selection process. Data was collected using Google forms sent via social media (Instagram, WhatsApp Group) between April and November 2021. The data was entered into an Excel spreadsheet and analyzed using the JASP 0.16.1.0 software for descriptive data analysis. The Hope Scale instrument ([Snyder, 2000](#)) was used to collect data, with 12 differential semantic scale items arranged on 1–8 options ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 8 (strongly agree). Four items represent agency (2, 9, 10, and 12); four items represent pathways (1, 4, 6, and 8); and three, five, seven, and eleven are distractors. The agency item and the pathways item subscale contribute to the overall strength of hope value. The distractor item is not used during the scoring stage.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

The findings of this study summarize empirical evidence of students' hope in Indonesia during the COVID-19 pandemic. The survey findings are shown in [Table 2](#).

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics of Student's Hope in Indonesia

No	Classification	Interval	Frequency	Per cent
1.	Very Low	≤ 22	189	58.3
2.	Low	23-31	23	7.1
3.	Middle	32-40	112	34.6
Total			324	100

According to the data analysis, 58.3% (n=189), 7.1% (n=23), and 34.6% (n=112) of the students had hope in the deficient, low, and moderate categories. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, students have been forced to practice social distancing and study from home. Students who engage in social distancing avoid interacting with others, including teachers and friends. During a pandemic, students are more likely to feel hopeless and bored with activities at home ([Alsoud & Harasis, 2021](#)). In this COVID-19 period, hope is needed because hope significantly affects other dimensions of life, such as stress and loneliness ([Bareket-Bojmel et al., 2021](#); [Knowles et al., 2021](#)). Misra's research showed a variety of sources of student stress, including academic load (e.g., increased class load) and interpersonal relationships (e.g., changes in social networks and activities) ([Davidson, Feldman, & Margalit, 2012](#)). Furthermore, [table 3](#) shows the results of a gender-based data analysis of students' hope during this pandemic.

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics of Students Hope Based Gender

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Error of Mean	Std. Deviation
_ Hope	female	186	42.220	0.615	8.383
	Male	138	43.145	0.687	8.072

Based on the study's results, female and male students had M scores of 42.22 and 43.14, respectively, so there was a difference in the percentage of hope between males and females. It is in line with research on hope before the COVID-19 pandemic. In the study by Kemer and Atik (Kemer & Atik, 2012) in Turkey of 737 (407 female and 330 male) from two schools in urban and rural areas in Ankara City, male students were found to have a more positive contribution to hope. It means that males in urban areas have more hope than females. However, the results of this study contradict the research (Hartanto, 2017) in Yogyakarta, which found no difference between men and women in hope. Next, table 4 shows the results of an ethnicity-based data analysis of students' hope during this pandemic.

Table 4. Descriptive Statistics Students Hope Based Ethnicity

	Batak	Java	Melayu	Minang	Sunda
Valid	23	70	12	44	175
missing	0	0	0	0	0
mean	43.870	43.743	45.000	47.091	40.709
Std. Deviation	7.412	7.040	8.718	7.962	8.338
Minimum	30.000	28.000	31.000	25.000	27.000
Maximum	57.000	61.000	60.000	62.000	64.000

The study results show that students with Sundanese backgrounds have the lowest hope compared to other ethnic backgrounds. It is also known that students with Minang backgrounds generally tend to have higher hope than other ethnic groups. However, this is contrary to the research conducted (Hartanto, 2017) before the COVID-19 pandemic, where students with Sundanese backgrounds had higher hope than students with Javanese and Malay ethnic backgrounds. Also, another culture-based hope study found that the hope of belonging to a social group has a positive and significant correlation with the culture and religion they claim (Braun-Lewensohn, Abu-Kaf, & Kalagy, 2021).

Discussion

Hope is an essential aspect of an individual's emotional well-being. Individuals with positive emotions can overcome obstacles, never give up, and be confident. Individuals who have high hopes have clear goals either now or in the future, have the ability to generate plans to achieve their goals, and have the energy/determination to carry out those plans. It is characterized by being able to complete tasks, obtain good learning outcomes, be able to set priorities, be able to overcome problems, and be able to survive when under pressure (Snyder, Feldman, Shorey, & Rand, 2002). One of the components of hope is future goals. Future goals describe what students want to achieve within a particular time, both long-term and short-term goals. It is necessary to have the ability to develop plans or strategies that must be carried out and to form confidence or determination to carry out the methods/techniques that have been designed (Rand, Shanahan, Fischer, & Fortney, 2020).

The psychological value of hope has been proven in studies conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic. Self-efficacy, for example, predicts adherence to health advice and support for COVID-19 therapies, and it does so more strongly than fears about the virus. Other positive emotions, including empathy and optimism, have also been proven to have a role in protective behavior during pandemics (Petersen et al., 2022). The results of research by Lopez et al. (Callina, 2014) through a survey method of 240,000 children at levels 5 to level 12 show that the power of hope strongly correlates with self-efficacy, self-regulation, and well-being. The power of hope can also increase academic success, academic ability, and individual achievement (Chen, Huebner, & Tian, 2020). When faced with academic stress or pressure, hope can motivate students to complete academic assignments, score higher on academic tests, have confidence in their ability to solve problems, and gain life satisfaction (Rand et al., 2020).

According to Snyder, hope results from a calculation of the interactions made by children with caregivers, peers, and teachers. Snyder explained that high and low hope could be influenced by the individual's contact with other people. Apart from that, Taylor (Gallagher et al., 2021) states that the ability of adaptive coping style also influences hope. Another study was conducted by (Ouweneel et al., 2012; Yarcheski & Mahon, 2014; Muyan-Yılık & Demir, 2020; Cankaya & Denizli, 2020; Bryce et al. 2020).

Also, hope positively correlates with psychological adjustment, psychological well-being, and subjective well-being. Furthermore, high and low hope is influenced by social support (Bareket-Bojmel et al., 2021). Meanwhile, hope is also known to contribute to resilience (Togo et al., 2018; Karaman et al., 2020).

Many studies have tried to compare hope by gender (Bernardo & Estrellado, 2014; Callina, Johnson, Buckingham, & Lerner, 2014; Ojala, 2015). This study's results contradict Snyder's theory (Snyder, 2000). There is no difference between men and women in hope. Furthermore, according to research (Loucia Demetriou, Mirsiana Drakontides, & Hadjicharalambous Demetris, 2020), gender does not significantly impact positive feelings of hope. However, this is understandable because children will encounter different environments and receive care during development. Many factors will then affect the development of hope in individuals. Family factors in terms of parents, living environment, school, friends, education, and personality aspects of the individual will encourage the acquisition and development of hope. Nurmi & Pulliainen (Callina et al., 2014) states that parenting by parents will directly influence the hope of adolescents in the future as well as different periods from one another. According to Erikson (Callina et al., 2014), the relationship between parents and children will strengthen hope and increase confidence in children.

Furthermore, because culture influences different values and individual goals are linked to values, knowing clients' goals can help better understand their hopes. In contrast to the traditional viewpoint, the multicultural behavior model provides a different and more radical perspective on the development of hope theory. Hope can be embedded in socio-cognitive processes, and culture can "influence how people select, interpret, process, and use information" (Lopes & Snyder, 2003). Individualistic cultures emphasize the importance of groups and their values, activities, and roles for independent activities and achievements. In contrast, collective societies underscore groups' significance, values, activities, and functions. Furthermore, individuals with collectivist attitudes are more sensitive to external, profound, and situational effects on personal behavior, with correspondingly different beliefs about emotional health, adjustment, and responsibility (Hartanto, 2017).

According to the American School Counselor Association, the hope component, meaning creating goals and preparing steps to accomplish those goals (pathways thinking), is the eighth goal in nine areas of student development. It is the foundation for developing all program objectives through guidance and counseling. Furthermore, hopes are a critical component of success in personal, social, learning, and career planning (ASCA, 2012). In developing research to establish hope, various experiments have also been conducted to increase individual and variable hope with other variables such as hope-based intervention, mental rehearsal strategies, self-management support intervention, art-based group intervention, narrative photo-taking intervention, and the miracle question (Asiah, N., Rusmana, N., & Saripah, I., 2022). However, the different counseling approaches used have not provided an adequate impact. It is because these various approaches are still focused on the problems and diseases experienced by individuals.

As a result, researchers must maintain a constant state of development to test new ideas. Along with the development of the positive psychology paradigm, a new way of building hope has arisen, which incorporates more assumptions and self-power-based philosophies or strength-based counseling (Smith, 2006). The development of this hope can be divided into two modes: in-home and school settings. In-home settings are mainly directed through narrative concepts and increasing parental participation in assisting children with peer interaction. Improved family bonding could lead to increased family support, which is critical in times of crisis, such as the COVID-19 epidemic. Family support is essential and helpful for people with mental illnesses because it meets their physical, emotional, and spiritual requirements (Shanmugam et al., 2020). The development of hope through interventions in schools is carried out by involving teachers as an essential instrument. In addition, the development of hope in schools is carried out by integrating the curriculum and can be done through guidance and counseling services.

4. CONCLUSION

The COVID-19 pandemic has presented several life challenges, including a lack of hope among students. It can potentially create new psychological issues in other areas of life. This study can help guidance and counseling teachers and practitioners find alternative ways to increase student hope after the COVID-19 pandemic and to develop guidance and counseling programs. Furthermore, future research can focus on various demographic backgrounds related to parents based on the research's findings, discussions, and limitations (education, marital status, religion and beliefs, and economic level). Additionally, survey studies with a qualitative design and data collection techniques based on in-depth analysis can be used to create this kind of research.

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