

Measuring PAGI Values in Student Character Development: A Quantitative Study of Universitas PGRI Adi Buana Surabaya

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Abstract: This study aims to measure the level of internalization of PAGI character values (Caring, Trustworthy, Persistent, and Innovative) among students at Universitas PGRI Adi Buana Surabaya and to identify implementation challenges in the digital era. Using a descriptive quantitative approach, this research involved a survey of 524 students selected through random sampling. The research instrument was a questionnaire with 76 statement items that was tested for validity and reliability, yielding a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.960. The results show that the majority of students (76.13%) are in the "moderate" category for PAGI character internalization, while 12.35% are in the "high" category and 11.52% are in the "low" category. This finding indicates that although the PAGI character-building program has progressed well, further strengthening is still necessary. Deeper analysis reveals specific challenges, such as the influence of digital culture hindering the 'Caring' character, and passive learning patterns limiting the development of the 'Innovative' character. The 'Persistent' character was also identified as a significant weakness, with students' motivation to persevere in the face of failure remaining relatively low. This study concludes that a more intensive and integrated strategy for strengthening and socialization is required to instill PAGI values deeply. It recommends a contextual approach that integrates these values into all aspects of campus life, producing graduates who are not only academically superior but also possess strong, adaptive characters to face future challenges.

Key words: PAGI Values (Caring, Trustworthy, Persistent, Innovative), Internalization of Values, Higher Education, and Student Development.

INTRODUCTION

Strong student characters that align with local cultural values are increasingly needed in the current era of globalization and modernization. Universities play a central role in forming students who possess not only academic competence but also integrity, empathy, resilience, and high creativity. Character education fosters resilience and ethical reasoning,

which are essential for addressing global issues like inequality, climate change, and digital misinformation (Berkowitz & Bier, 2020). University must therefore emphasize holistic education that integrates local wisdom and cultural values into academic life (Setiawan et al., 2021). By cultivating well-rounded individuals, higher education institutions contribute to a more just, compassionate, and sustainable global society (Rahmawati & Sulisty, 2022).

One example of character development based on local values is the PEGI (Caring, Trustworthy, Persistent, Innovative) character program developed by Universitas PGRI Adi Buana Surabaya. This program aims to instill character traits that align with the demands of the times and the needs of society in various dimensions of professional life. Introduced as a core institutional identity, the PEGI framework was designed to address contemporary challenges by integrating moral and cultural values into higher education practices. The program integrates character education across academic activities, leadership development, and community engagement, with a focus on shaping students into ethical and competent professionals. Recent institutional studies have highlighted the effectiveness of PEGI in fostering student responsibility, resilience, and innovation, aligning with Indonesia's cultural heritage and national development goals (Hartono, 2023; UNIPASBY, 2024). As a result, PEGI has emerged as a contextualized model for value-based education that is both locally grounded and globally relevant.

Each character developed includes values that are relevant to the formation of a strong personality. *Caring*, for example, encourages students to increase their sense of empathy, compassion, and awareness of the importance of helping others (Kurniawan, 2021). *Amanah* emphasizes the importance of trust, sincerity, and integrity, which are the main foundations in building positive professional relationships (Hasanah & Wibowo, 2020). *Gigih* teaches students about the importance of fighting spirit and resilience in facing academic and personal challenges (Prasetyo & Hidayat, 2022). Meanwhile, *Innovative* fosters critical and creative thinking skills, which are crucial in the digital era and Industry 4.0 (Setyawan & Sudrajat, 2019).

Several studies have demonstrated that character development through higher education has a positive impact on the growth of students' personalities. According to Alawiyah (2020), a caring character in students facilitates increased social interaction and better cooperation in the campus environment. Another study by Ratnasari & Putra (2021) stated that a trustworthy character supports the creation of trust and a sense of responsibility among students, which significantly improves academic outcomes. Meanwhile, persistence (Sari & Pramono, 2023) is crucial in enhancing students' resilience to academic pressure, which can mitigate the risk of stress and burnout.

The urgency of this research is also increasingly apparent, given the challenges of the modern workplace, which now demand more than just academic competence. The professional world requires workers who possess strong character, can collaborate effectively, are responsible, and are innovative in problem-solving. The absence of these characters, as noted by Prasetyo and Hidayat (2022), can make it difficult for students to adapt to the world of work and potentially impact their career success.

However, in today's modern context, the internalization of these values among students is not optimal. Several factors that become obstacles include the increasing influence of digital culture, individualism, and the lack of intensive PEGI value socialization programs

(Kusuma & Wijayanti, 2022). Therefore, this study is essential in identifying the extent to which the PAGI character, which represents the local cultural value of UNIPA Surabaya, is internalized by students and serves as the basis for developing more effective strategies to optimize positive personality development.

The role of universities in shaping students' character is increasingly crucial, given the challenges of globalization and modernization that are transforming the landscape of professional life. Students are required to possess strong academic competence, but strong character and social values, such as empathy, responsibility, resilience, and creativity, are also essential in the world of work. This is reinforced by a study stating that these characters, especially in the form of the PAGI character program at Universitas PGRI Adi Buana Surabaya, can improve students' social interaction, cooperation, and academic resilience (Alawiyah, 2020; Ratnasari & Putra, 2021). In addition, Prasetyo and Hidayat (2022) demonstrate that without a strong character, graduates will struggle to adapt to the workforce and may encounter obstacles in achieving career success. Therefore, this study urges the assessment and strengthening of the internalization of PAGI characters, so that graduates can effectively face the demands of the workplace and adapt to the influence of individualism and digital culture.

This study differs from previous studies in that it does not merely examine each element of the PAGI character (Caring, Trustworthy, Persistent, Innovative) in isolation; instead, it focuses on integrating these values into a unified and comprehensive character development model within the context of higher education in the digital era. While earlier research has explored individual aspects such as empathy in student interactions (Kurniawan, 2021), trustworthiness in professional ethics (Hasanah & Wibowo, 2020), and persistence in academic resilience (Sari & Pramono, 2023) this study addresses the gap by analyzing how these values can be collectively internalized and sustained amid the rise of digital culture and increasing individualism. Furthermore, this study makes a novel contribution by identifying key obstacles to PAGI internalization and proposing targeted socialization strategies that optimize character development based on local wisdom. By doing so, it not only contextualizes character education for the digital age but also provides a culturally relevant framework for the holistic development of students.

METHOD

This study employs a descriptive quantitative approach to gain an understanding of the level of internalization of PAGI characters (Caring, Trustworthy, Persistent, and Innovative) among students at Universitas PGRI Adi Buana Surabaya. The subjects in this study were active students selected by random sampling. The instrument used in this study was a PAGI character questionnaire, developed based on the indicators of the Caring, Trustworthy, Persistent, and Innovative characters, which have been adjusted to local values and campus contexts. This instrument consists of 76 statement items. Before being used to collect primary data, validity and reliability tests were conducted on the instrument. After the instrument was declared valid and reliable, the questionnaire was distributed to respondents. The collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistical techniques, grouping scores into three categories—low, medium, and high—based on predetermined score intervals.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Based on the results of the validity test with 222 UNIPA Surabaya students as the test subjects, the instrument validity results, with a significance level of 0.05 and an R table of 0.161, revealed one invalid item, namely item number 55. Meanwhile, based on the results of the Reliability test, a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.96 was obtained, indicating that the PAGI Character instrument is considered highly reliable. The results of the instrument reliability test are as follows:

Table 4.1 Reliability Test Results

		N	%
Cases	Valid	222	100.0
	Excluded ^a	0	.0
	Total	222	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.960	76

Furthermore, a valid and reliable questionnaire is used to conduct research. Based on the results of distributing the instrument in the form of a PAGI character questionnaire to students, the data are then tabulated. Furthermore, based on the tabulation, data grouping is carried out with the following criteria:

Table 4.2 categorization of research results

Score	Category
$X < 214$	Low
$214 \leq X < 253$	Moderate
$X > 253$	High

Based on the categorization, data analysis reveals that 11.52% fall into the low category, 76.13% into the moderate category, and 12.35% into the high category. The majority of students own a PAGI character in the category. This indicates that the internalization of PAGI values has been progressing well, although there is still room for further improvement.

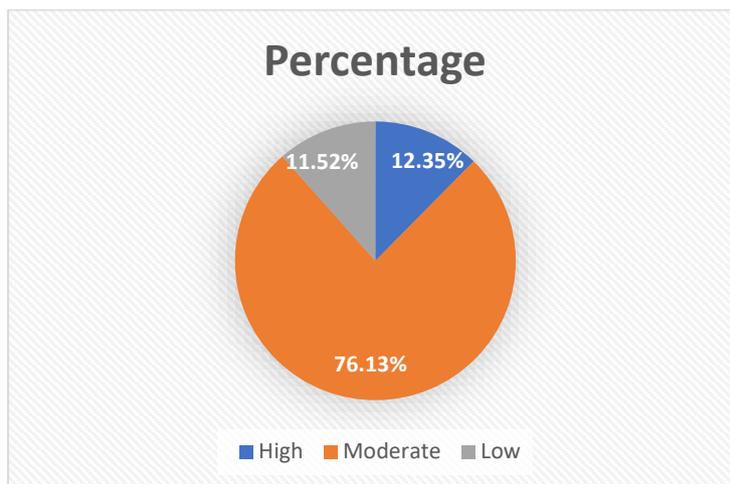


Diagram 4.1 Percentage of Respondents

Based on the results of data processing from 524 respondents, it was found that the majority of students fell into the medium category in terms of internalization of PAGI characters, accounting for 76.13%. Meanwhile, 11.52% of students were in the low category, and 12.35% were in the high category. This finding suggests that the implementation of PAGI characters has been quite successful, but a further strengthening strategy is needed to achieve optimal results.

According to research (Kurniawan, 2021), the application of caring characters in academic environments can lead to improved cooperation and social interaction on campus. However, in the context of current digitalization, Kusuma & Wijayanti (2022) stated that the influence of digital culture tends to reduce social awareness because students are more involved in virtual interactions than face-to-face interactions.

In addition to the digitalization factor, the lack of social activities and direct interactions after the Pandemic also influenced the strengthening of caring characters among students. Field observations suggest that students frequently display limited empathy for their peers' situations, particularly in non-academic settings. According to research by Herlina and Wulandari (2023), caring characters can be developed through real collaborative activities, such as community service programs or peer mentoring activities, which directly foster a sense of social responsibility. Therefore, higher education institutions need to design empathy-based activities that are not only formal but also interactive and touch the real needs of the community.

In the Amanah character, students tend to exhibit a moderate level of responsibility and integrity. This supports the findings of research (Ratnasari & Putra, 2021), which state that the amanah character is crucial in shaping ethical academic and professional behavior. However, because most students have not reached the high category, a consistent program is needed to habituate amanah values, for example, through campus organizational activities or strengthening academic ethics.

Strengthening the character of trustworthiness in students is not enough through cognitive delivery of material alone, but also requires real-world practice and an environment that supports the internalization of these values. According to Nugroho & Arifin (2022), the formation of a trustworthy character can be strengthened through a coaching system based

on role models, where lecturers, academic supervisors, and student organization leaders actively demonstrate honest, disciplined, and responsible attitudes in daily interactions. In addition, the implementation of transparent and consistent academic policies, such as a fair assessment system and sanctions for violations of academic ethics, also plays a crucial role in fostering a culture of trustworthiness on campus. Students who are accustomed to being in an environment that values honesty and responsibility tend to internalize the value of trustworthiness more easily in their daily behavior, both in academic and social contexts.

As for grit, which is one of the leading indicators of academic success, it also shows that students still need to improve their fighting spirit. According to Prasetyo and Hidayat (2022), the character of grit plays a crucial role in enhancing students' academic resilience and reducing their academic stress levels. However, in this study, only a small number of students achieved a high category in the character of grit, indicating a need for further intervention in developing students' fighting spirit, especially in facing academic challenges and competition in the workforce.

The persistent character or grit is also still a significant weakness in the character profile of students. Although some students demonstrate perseverance in learning, the drive to continue trying when faced with failure remains relatively low. According to a study by Handayani and Mukhlis (2021), students with high levels of grit tend to be more able to complete their studies on time and have resilience to academic pressure. This highlights the importance of integrating persistent character into the curriculum, as well as non-academic training such as stress management, mental endurance, and the formation of a supportive learning community.

Environmental factors also have a significant influence on the development of persistent character. Students who are accustomed to a competitive and supportive environment tend to be better able to withstand pressure. The results of research by Saputra and Lestari (2023) revealed that the existence of a process-based reward system, rather than just focusing on results, can motivate students to be more persistent in fulfilling their academic and organizational responsibilities. Therefore, it is necessary to develop an appreciation strategy that not only focuses on final achievement but also on the efforts, perseverance, and learning process that students undergo.

Innovative characters related to creativity and critical thinking are a challenge in themselves. According to Kusuma and Wijayanti (2022), students in the digital era often struggle to develop creative ideas because they are accustomed to relying on instant information from the internet without conducting in-depth exploration. This study indicates that student innovation remains in the moderate category, suggesting that they still require training and habituation to think more creatively and innovatively. In terms of innovative character, some students still show a tendency to follow passive learning patterns. They more often use instant sources such as video summaries, without doing a critical analysis of the content. This aligns with the findings of Putri and Santosa (2022), which indicate that digital-native students tend to experience a decline in reflective thinking skills due to their tendency to consume information rapidly and superficially.

The internalization of the PEGI character as a whole requires synergy among academic systems, campus culture, and learning approaches. Character is not only formed through Knowledge, but through experience, habituation, and role models. This aligns with

the research results (Yuliana & Hadi, 2024), which indicate that the character strengthening process must be holistic, continuous, and involve all elements of the campus, including leaders, lecturers, education staff, and students themselves. Thus, efforts to internalize PEGI character will be more effective if carried out through an integrative and contextual approach in all aspects of campus life.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the PEGI character (Caring, Trustworthy, Persistent, and Innovative) in students is generally in the moderate category, with 76.13% of students showing internalization of PEGI values at a moderate level. Meanwhile, only 12.35% of students demonstrated PEGI characters at a high level, and 11.52% fell into the low category. This finding suggests that, although the PEGI character-building program has had a positive influence, more intensive strengthening and socialization efforts are still necessary to ensure that these characters are internalized more deeply by all students. A contextual approach that utilizes digital technology wisely and integrates PEGI values into all aspects of campus life needs to be developed, so that students can become individuals who are not only academically superior but also possess strong and adaptive characters in facing future challenges. Future research should investigate the effectiveness of specific digital-based interventions and learning models in promoting character development. Meanwhile, education policymakers are encouraged to institutionalize character education frameworks, such as PEGI, across curricula and student affairs programs.

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