

## The Influence of Courage, Perseverance, Integrity and Spirit on Adversity Quotient on High School Level Adolescents in Tarakan City

Sri Utami<sup>1\*</sup>, Muhammad Nur Wangid<sup>2</sup>

Faculty of Education and Psychology, Yogyakarta State University

**Corresponding Author:** Sri Utami [sri0123fip.2022@student.uny.ac.id](mailto:sri0123fip.2022@student.uny.ac.id)

---

### ARTICLE INFO

*Keywords:* Adversity Quotient, Bravery, Persistence, Integrity and Vitality

*Received :* 04, January

*Revised :* 18, January

*Accepted:* 19, February

©2025 Utami, Wangid : This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the [Creative Commons Atribusi 4.0 Internasional](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/).



### ABSTRACT

This study investigates (1) the description of adversity quotient, bravery, persistence, integrity, and vitality, and (2) their influence on the adversity quotient of high school students in Tarakan City. Using a quantitative correlational approach, a sample of 370 students was selected from a population of 4,416 through proportionate stratified random sampling (Slovin formula, 5% error rate). Variables included Bravery ( $X_1$ ), Persistence ( $X_2$ ), Integrity ( $X_3$ ), Vitality ( $X_4$ ), and Adversity Quotient ( $Y$ ). Data collection used a scale instrument, with reliability confirmed via Cronbach's alpha (AQ: 0.853; BPIV: 0.837). Multiple regression analysis with SPSS 26 revealed a significant joint effect of Bravery, Persistence, Integrity, and Vitality on AQ ( $F=206.475 > F_{table}=2.396$ ,  $R^2=0.694$ ). Individually, Bravery ( $t=5.695$ ,  $p=0.000$ ), Persistence ( $t=-27.904$ ,  $p=0.000$ ), Integrity ( $t=2.558$ ,  $p=0.011$ ), and Vitality ( $t=5.409$ ,  $p=0.000$ ) had significant effects. Collectively, these factors explain 69.4% of AQ variance, with 30.6% attributed to other factors.

---

## **INTRODUCTION**

The teenage phase is one of the stages of life. This is a transition phase that can be guided towards healthy adult human development. This stage has a significant role in the overall development of an individual. According to Papalia, Olds, and Feldman (2009). Adversity Quotient (AQ) measures an individual's ability to face and overcome life's difficulties. According to Mulyasari and Maryam (2023), AQ reflects a person's ability to face challenges and turn them into opportunities that can be overcome. Meanwhile, Stoltz (2004) defines AQ as an individual's capacity to survive and overcome difficulties.

Previous research by Sugiarti, Nurlaili, and Febrian (2020) regarding the influence of adversity quotient on achievement motivation at MTs Negeri 1 Semarang shows that students with a high adversity quotient tend to be able to overcome the problems and challenges they face, which in turn encourages them to continue trying to achieve performance. On the other hand, students with a low adversity quotient have low achievement motivation. They tend to give up easily, become pessimistic, and lack responsibility.

According to Stoltz (2004), Adversity Quotient (AQ) is the main foundation for various aspects of success. AQ can be used to predict various things, such as performance, motivation, empowerment, creativity, productivity, energy, hope, happiness, vitality, joy, emotional health, physical health, perseverance, endurance, behavior, longevity, and ability to adapt to change. Individuals with high AQ will face life's challenges with courage and discipline.

From a social psychological perspective, most research on courage has looked at war and its aftermath. In fact, researchers have found that facing challenges often brings out perseverance, ingenuity, mutual cooperation, cohesiveness, and social support in a community. Social psychologists, such as psychoanalysts, have concluded that courage exists as part of a person's everyday ability to face challenges. As the concept of courage evolved over the centuries, it changed gradually from an emphasis on proving oneself in battle to a reward for taking social and economic risks as dictated by conscience (Peterson & Seligman, 2004).

Based on preliminary studies in schools, it was found that some students prefer playing games or scrolling through social media rather than completing academic assignments. This habit indicates their low vitality, which not only hinders academic performance but also affects their ability to face difficulties. Lack of enthusiasm for learning makes students tend to avoid challenges and find it difficult to rise up when faced with failure, which ultimately lowers their adversity quotient.

Students are expected to have courage, perseverance, integrity, spirit and adversity quotient so that they become mature individuals and are able to overcome various problems, challenges and obstacles that may arise in their lives and make them part of their growth and development in order to achieve success in life.

Every student faces various challenges, both academically, socially and emotionally. The character of courage helps them face uncertainty without fear, paving the way to learn from experiences, including failure. Perseverance gives them the ability to keep fighting despite difficult obstacles, while integrity ensures they remain consistent in acting on the values they hold. On the other hand, enthusiasm is the main energy that drives their motivation to keep moving forward.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### ***Adversity Quotient (AQ)***

Stoltz (1997) defines Adversity Quotient (AQ) as a measure of how individuals respond to challenges and adversity. AQ is crucial for adolescent development as it supports resilience, problem-solving, and coping skills.

### ***Courage and AQ***

Courage, or bravery, reflects a willingness to face difficulties. According to Peterson and Seligman (2004), courage is vital for overcoming obstacles, which aligns with AQ dimensions such as control and endurance.

### ***Perseverance and AQ***

Perseverance, or persistence, involves sustained effort toward goals despite setbacks. Duckworth et al. (2007) highlight that perseverance fosters grit, a strong predictor of success and resilience, directly enhancing AQ.

### ***Integrity and AQ***

Integrity, defined as adherence to moral principles, promotes consistency in behavior during adversity. Luthans and Youssef (2007) link integrity with psychological capital, which supports coping mechanisms essential for a higher AQ.

### ***Spirit (Vitality) and AQ***

Spirit or vitality refers to energy and enthusiasm for life. Ryan and Deci (2001) identify vitality as a component of well-being that strengthens resilience, which is closely connected to AQ.

### ***Combined Influence on AQ***

Research suggests that courage, perseverance, integrity, and spirit collectively enhance AQ. Multiple regression analyses, such as those in this study, demonstrate their significant combined effect on adolescent resilience.

## **METHODOLOGY**

This research uses a type of correlational research which is often called correlation research. The main goal of correlational research is to provide answers to three questions related to two variables or two data sets, as stated by Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2000). The aim of this research is to describe the adversity quotient, courage, perseverance, enthusiasm and integrity and the

extent to which these characters influence the adversity quotient of teenagers attending public high schools in Tarakan City.

The location of this research is a public high school in Tarakan City, North Kalimantan Province. The location of this research is a public high school in Tarakan City, North Kalimantan Province. In this study the population includes all students attending public high schools in Tarakan City. The following is a list and number of students in each State High School in Tarakan City:

Table 1. Research Population

No	School name	Class			Number of Students
		X	XI	XII	
1	SMAN 1 Tarakan	432	404	390	1226
2	SMAN 2 Tarakan	425	445	342	1212
3	SMAN 3 Tarakan	363	361	285	1009
4	SMAN 4 Tarakan	362	289	180	831
5	SMAN 5 Tarakan	138			138
Total					4416

The questionnaire method was used in collecting data for this research, which provided a series of written statements for respondents to respond to (Sugiyono, 2005). This research tool quotes Peterson and Seligman's (2004) character strength theory. By taking the variables of courage, perseverance, integrity and enthusiasm. This instrument consists of 42 statement items.

Statistical analysis is then used to examine data collected in the field. Noor (2012) defines data analysis strategies as research data processing procedures, such as the use of statistical tools appropriate to the type of research. Descriptive statistics and multiple regression models were used in the data analysis of this research, with stage 1). describe data 2). Testing analysis requirements, 3). Data analysis using hypothesis testing and regression testing.

## RESULT

The questionnaire consisting of 11 statement items with a minimum score of 1 and a maximum score of 4 (with four possible answers) was completed by 370 students. Data analysis of the courage variable using the SPSS 26 for Windows program gave the following results: mean value of 29.29; the middle value (median) is 29.00; mode value 29; minimum score 22; maximum score 36; and standard deviation of 2.63.

The percentage of this data can be seen in Figure 1. below:

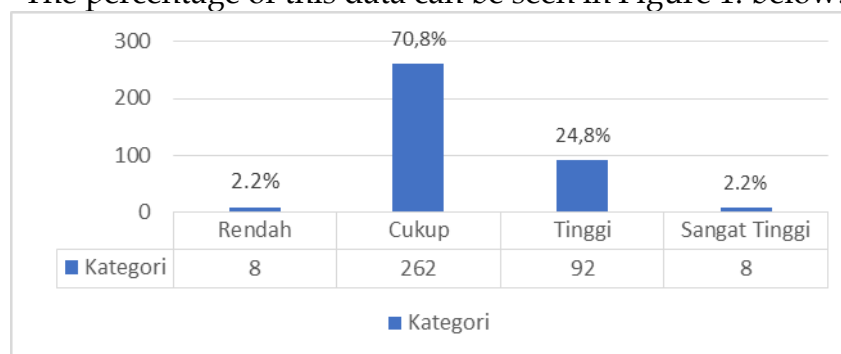
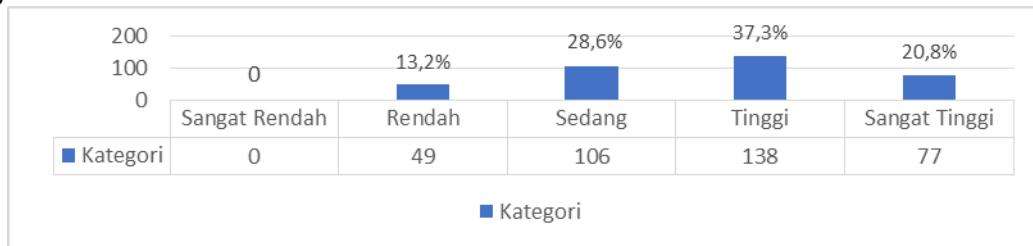


Figure 1. Percentage of Courage Variables

Of the 370 respondents, 8 students or 2.2% were found to be in the category low, 262 students or 70.8% were in the medium category, 92 students or 24.8% in the high category and 8 students or 2.2% in the very high category. The tendency for courage in public high school students in Tarakan City was observed through 3 descriptors, namely: 1) Not feeling afraid of threats, challenges, difficulties and pain, 2) Dare to convey their wishes even though there is resistance, and 3) Dare to look different even though it is not widely accepted.

To determine the tendency of persistence in public high school teenagers in Tarakan City, the ideal average score was used as a comparison. Categorization uses the variable categorization formula according to Azwar (2013). Calculation of the categorization of courage variables can be seen in the attachment.

A total of 49 students were in the low category, 106 students were in the medium category, 138 students were in the high category, and 77 other students were in the very high category. The percentage of this data can be seen in Figure 2 below:

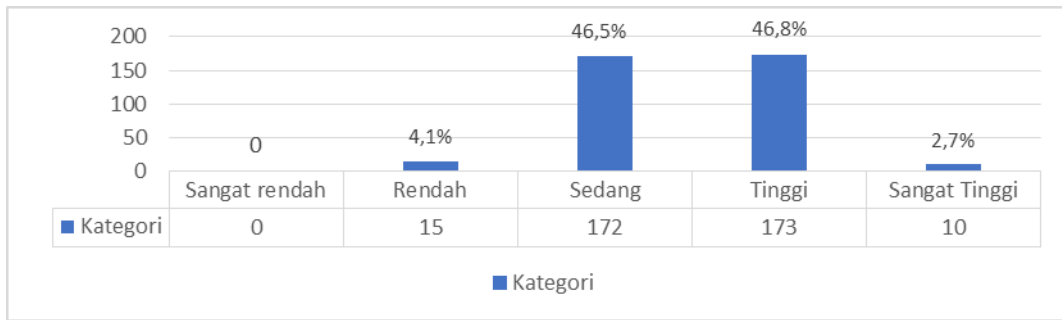


**Figure 2. Percentage of Persistence Variable**

Of the 370 respondents, there were no students (0%) who had very low persistence, 49 students (13.2%) were in the low category, 106 students (28.6%) were in the medium category, 138 students (37.3%) included in the high category, and 77 students (20.8%) were in the very high category. The tendency for courage in public high school students in Tarakan City is observed through 4 descriptors, namely: 1) Completing all work that has been started, 2) Persisting in carrying out activities even though there are obstacles, 3) Consistent-Optimistic, and 4) Commitment.

To determine the integrity trend of State High School students in Tarakan City, the ideal average score was used as a comparison. Categorization uses the variable categorization formula according to Azwar (2013). The calculation of the categorization of integrity variables can be seen in the attachment. Below is presented data on the distribution of the integrity variable trend categories:

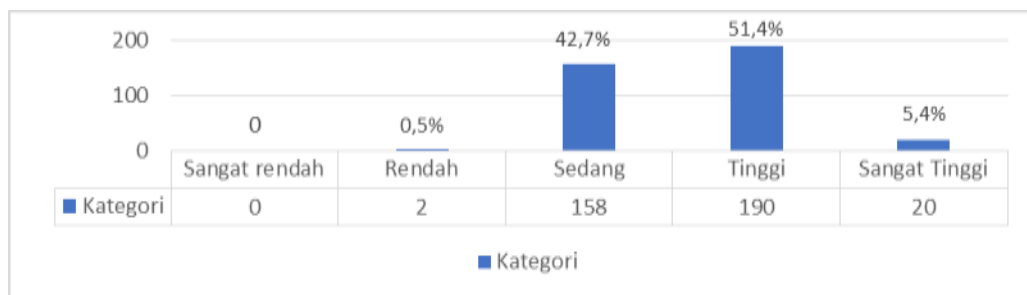
Category of integrity score for State High School students in Tarakan City. referring to the data presented in the table it can be concluded that there are no students in the very low group, 15 students are in the low category, 10 students are in the very high category, 172 students are in the medium group, 173 students are in the high category, Figure 3 below shows the percentage data:



**Figure 3. Percentage of Integrity Variables**

Of the 370 respondents, there were no students or 0% who had very low integrity, 15 students or 4.1% were in the low category, 172 students or 46.5% were in the medium category, 173 students or 46.8% were in the high category and 10 students or 2, 7% are in the very high category. The integrity tendencies of State High School students in Tarakan City were observed through 3 descriptors, namely: 1) Being honest with oneself, 2) showing moral intensity, 3) being responsible for feelings and behavior.

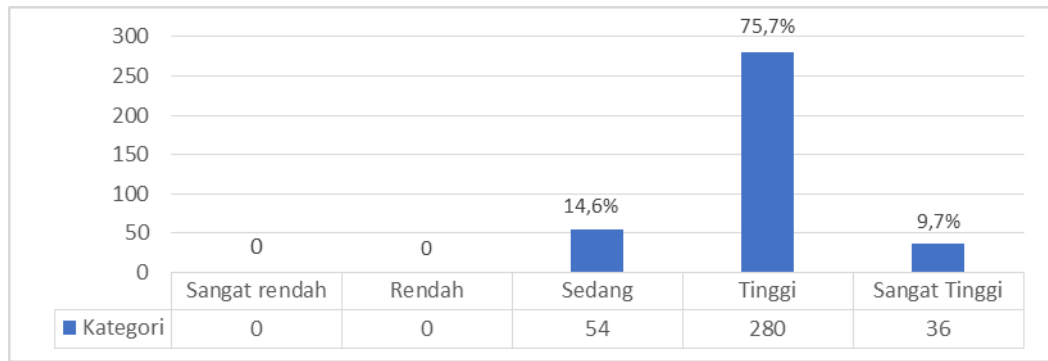
Trends in the spirit score categories of State High School students in Tarakan City. Based on this table, it is known that there are no students in the very low category, 2 students in the low category, 158 students in the medium category, 190 students in the high category and 20 students in the very high category. Furthermore, the percentage of data can be seen in Figure 4 below:



**Figure 4. Variable Percentage of Spirit**

Of the 370 respondents there were no students or 0% had very low enthusiasm, 2 students or 0.5% were in the low category, 158 students or 42.7% were in the medium category, 190 students or 51.4% were in the high category and 20 students or 5.4 % very high category. The enthusiasm trend of State High School students in Tarakan City is observed through 3 descriptors, namely: 1) Full of enthusiasm/active, 2) Doing things with all seriousness, 3) Filling life with various fun activities.

Trends in adversity quotient score categories for public high school students in Tarakan City. Based on this table, it is known that there are no students in the very low and low categories, 54 students are in the medium category, 280 are in the high category and 36 are in the very high category. Next, the data is presented in Figure 5 below:



**Figure 5. Percentage of the Adversity Quotient Variable**

Of the 370 respondents, 54 students or 14.6% were in the medium category, 280 students or 75.7% were in the high category, 36 students or 9.7% were in the very high category, and there were no students or 0% who had adversity quotient is very low. To observe the tendency of the adversity quotient of public high school students in Tarakan City, four factors were used, namely: 1) Control, 2) Origin and ownership, 3) Reach, and 4) Endurance.

## DISCUSSION

Based on the results of the analysis, courage has a significant and positive effect on the adversity quotient of Tarakan City High School students. Of the 370 respondents, 70.8% of students were in the medium courage category, while 2.2% were in the low and very high categories. This data illustrates that courage among high school level teenagers in Tarakan City is generally quite moderate, with a small number of students at low and very high levels.

Courage can predict a person's ability to face difficulties in life (adversity quotient), namely the individual's ability to survive, overcome, and ultimately succeed in overcoming challenges and making it easier to achieve his life goals. Thus, the results of this research underline that courage plays an important role in increasing students' adversity quotient, thereby helping them to become more resilient and adaptive individuals in facing life's challenges.

The results of the research show that persistence has a significant influence on the adversity quotient (AQ) of high school level teenagers in Tarakan City. Of the 370 respondents, 37.3% of students showed a high level of persistence, while 20.8% were in the very high category, which shows that the majority of students have quite good persistence.

This student's perseverance is measured through four main indicators, namely: completing all the work started, persisting despite obstacles, being consistent-optimistic, and having commitment. Based on the results of statistical tests, it was found that the t value was -27,904 and the significance level (*p*-value) was 0.000 (*p* < 0.05), which shows that there is a significant influence between persistence and adversity quotient (AQ). This means, the higher a student's level of perseverance, the greater his ability to face and overcome life's challenges.

Based on the research results, it can be concluded that integrity has a significant influence on the adversity quotient (AQ). Integrity has a positive and significant influence on the adversity quotient (AQ) of high school teenagers in

Tarakan City. Of the 370 respondents, the majority of students were in the medium and high integrity categories, 46.5% and 46.8% respectively, which illustrates that the majority of students have fairly strong moral integrity.

Based on the results of statistical tests, a *t*count value of 2.558 was obtained which was greater than the *t*table value (1.966) at a significance level of 5%. With a significant value of 0.000 ( $p < 0.05$ ), these results indicate that integrity has a significant influence on the adversity quotient (AQ). These results support the theory put forward by Peterson and Seligman (2004), which states that integrity is a deeper moral quality than just honesty or authenticity, and includes self-unity or self-harmony. Integrity enables students to act consistently in various domains of life, both in public and in private environments, without deviating from the moral principles they believe in.

In this research, it was found that enthusiasm had a significant effect on the adversity quotient (AQ) of high school level teenagers in Tarakan City. The statistical test results show that the *t* value for the enthusiasm variable ( $X_4$ ) is 5.409, which is greater than the *t* table value of 1.966 at the 5% significance level. With a significance value of 0.000 ( $p < 0.05$ ), these results indicate that there is a significant influence between enthusiasm and AQ, so the alternative hypothesis ( $H_a$ ) is accepted. Based on these findings, it can be concluded that the higher a student's level of enthusiasm, the higher their AQ. Passion plays an important predictor in increasing students' resilience to the life challenges and difficulties they face.

The *F* test results show a calculated *F* value of 206,475, which is greater than the *F* table of 2,396, with a significance level of 0.000 ( $p < 0.05$ ). This shows that the variables of courage, perseverance, integrity and enthusiasm together have a significant influence on the adversity quotient of high school level teenagers in Tarakan City. This means that courage, perseverance, integrity and enthusiasm can predict the adversity quotient of State High School teenagers in Tarakan City.

Overall, the results of this research can be concluded that courage, perseverance, integrity and enthusiasm have a significant influence on the adversity quotient in adolescents. Courage and enthusiasm provide a greater positive influence, while excessive persistence can cause stress and hinder the adversity quotient.

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on data from 370 respondents, the description of the variables of courage, perseverance, integrity, enthusiasm and adversity quotient shows overall positive results. Most of the students (70.8%) were in the medium courage category, while 2.2% were in the low and very high categories. The majority of students showed a good level of persistence, with 37.3% in the high category and 20.8% in the very high category. Most students are in the medium (46.5%) and high (46.8%) integrity categories, reflecting strong morality in decision making and overall student behavior. Spirit: In terms of enthusiasm, the majority of students (51.4%) are in the high category, followed by 42.7% in the medium category. There are no students who have a very low or low adversity quotient. Most of the students (75.7%) were in the high category,

while 9.7% were in the very high category, and 14.6% were in the medium category.

### **ADVANCED RESEARCH**

Given the overall positive results observed in the respondents' courage, perseverance, integrity, enthusiasm, and adversity quotient, future research should explore the longitudinal impact of these traits on academic and personal success. Investigating the role of external influences such as family support, educational environment, and peer relationships on AQ development could provide a more holistic understanding of its determinants. Additionally, qualitative studies focusing on students' personal experiences in overcoming adversity may reveal deeper insights into the psychological mechanisms behind resilience. Expanding research to include students from different demographic backgrounds and regions may also offer comparative perspectives on the variability of AQ and its influencing factors.

## **REFERENCES**

- Azwar, S. (2021). *Penyusunan Skala Psikologi edisi 3*. Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar
- Cohen, L., Manion, L., Morrison, K. (2000). *Research Methods in Education*. New York: Routledge Falmer.
- Mulyasari, P., & Maryam, E. W. (2023). The Relationship Between Emotional Intelligence and Adversity Quotient in Working Students. *Indonesian Journal of Innovation Studies*, 21(1), 1-10. <https://doi.org/10.21070/ijins.v21i.799>.
- Papalia, D. E., Olds, S. W., dan Feldman, R. D. (2009). *Human Development: Perkembangan Manusia, Edisi 10*. Jakarta: Salemba Humanika.
- Peterson, C., & Seligman, M. E. (2004). *Character strengths and virtues: A handbook and classification*. New York: Oxford University Press, and Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.
- Stoltz, P. G. (2004). *Adversity quotient: Mengubah hambatan menjadi peluang*. Jakarta: Grasindo
- Sugiarti, R., Nurlaili, A., Febrian, U.F. (2020). Pengaruh Adversity Quotient Terhadap Motivasi Berprestasi Pada Siswa Cerdas Istimewa. *Philanthropy Journal of Psychology*, 4 (1), 82-92. <http://journals.usm.ac.id/index.php/philanthropy>
- Sugiyono. (2005). *Statistika Untuk penelitian*. Bandung. PT. ALFABETA.