

## Research Article

# Identification of Factors Character Building of Millennial Undergraduate Students in PTKIN Aceh

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**Abstract.**

Basically, a person's character has been built since early childhood. The character can change along with civilization. Technology has a big role in character building of the millennial undergraduate students. Therefore, this research aimed to identify the factors character building of millennial undergraduate students in higher Islamic educational institutions in Aceh. Character is the disposition, behavior, mental characteristics, moral, personality, and character of a person that becomes self-identity. The study was conducted with qualitative research through descriptive research methods that describe the factors of character building. The population and sample of this study were undergraduate students of UIN ar-Raniry, IAIN Langsa, and STAIN Gajah Putih Takengon who represented the entire PTKIN millennial undergraduate students in Aceh. Instrument of collecting data are interviews and observations. The data obtained were analyzed by data triangulation to test the validity of the research data obtained. Based on research data, there are several factors which identify character building of millennial undergraduate students, namely: interference from parents in making choices, the environment during study in higher education, and adversity quotient (ability to overcome various difficulties) through their intelligence.

**Keywords:** Character building; early childhood; millennial

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## 1. Introduction

In Indonesian Law Number 12 of 2012, higher educational institution aimed to develop knowledge and to build the character of the academicians in order to make a nation with dignity [1]. This is not easy. According to Marvin Berkowitz, the majority of people begin to pay less attention to character education which actually has the worst impact on people's behavior change [2]. This will cause the biggest disability in the educational world. Educational institutions considered to have failed in character building of noble. Besides, all efforts have been made. Especially if it is related to millennial generation which is according to the Central Statistics Agency is more fanatical about technology exposure [3]. People of the millennial generation are more accepting of various dimensions: social, economic, political and educational. They are more reactive to environmental changes.

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A research disclosed on Hitt.com shows that the millennial generation believes more in user-generated content (UGC), likes to use non-cash transactions, likes freedom, has high self-confidence, has big ambitions to succeed, thinks practically, and absorbs information through social media. Openness to information makes this generation less loyal, lazy, and consumptive [4]. The question is whether these characteristics were developed due to the emergence of technology or were they formed early on. Character building cannot be formed immediately. Defines character as the characteristic of someone who is rooted in an individual so that it is able to encourage someone to act, or respond [5]. Character is a way of thinking and behaving someone to live and work together in a family, community and state environment. Character as the values of one's behavior related to God Almighty, self, society, and nationality that manifest in thoughts, attitudes, feelings, words, and deeds according to the norms prevailing in cultures, customs, and aesthetic order [6]. By character, humans are able to determine their actions and attitudes according to the identity that has been embedded.

Characters can change depending on how the environment builds them. Everyone has a way of controlling their own characters to be able to blend in and live in the environment[7]. After going to public, someone will develop a character which is on herself based on applicable rules. As a millennial undergraduate student, they should follow the pattern and all activities in higher education[8], [9]. However, Indonesia has experienced of more character degradation in this millennial era. Many facts show the gloomy character of the nation in higher education. Deviate practices of scientific attitudes, plagiarism of scientific research, the sale of school grade, the declining of respect for lecturers, and academic dishonesty.

Academically, character building in higher education can be identified. Character building includes academic and non-academic characters [10]. Both of two characters are interrelated to improve human resources. Academic character is a set of abilities or achievements that can be assessed or measured inside students. Measurements are obtained from standardized tests or tests that already have a standard. The value of honesty is also part of the academic character. So that, parenting who develop honest value is necessary in student's whole life. But in fact, the results prove that there are still many students who commit dishonesty to learning [11]. Cheating habits, lack of awareness, and independence in learning. Meanwhile, non-academic characters emerge from an attitude and moral judgments. The form of this character is how students explore their potential through various campus activities or organizations. Students are able to sort out which organization that must be taken and respond positively without

degrading other organizations. Moral behavior is also needed to maintain harmony, regularity and orderliness of organizations.

From the description of academic and non-academic characters above, the investigation by identifying the character building embedded in students actually needs to be questioned. Are these characters formed from the higher education environment or have they existed before? Therefore, this research explores how to identify the character building of millennial undergraduate students.

## 2. Methods

This research applies Mixed Method Research. The application of both types of approaches: qualitative and quantitative to extract more in-depth data. This research design uses a convergent parallel design in order to produce comprehensive data. This type of qualitative approach with the phenomenological method explores the cases under study so that the way of working emphasizes the deepening of the data. This study applies triangulation to observe, interview, and analyze the lives of the millennial generation who are currently undergoing college education. Quantitative research is used to investigate information relating to respondents and the variables studied. Thus, this study uses a survey method of what is happening now.

The descriptive method is used to describe the character-building factors of millennial students. PTKIN in Aceh served as the study population. The samples of this study were students of UIN ar-Raniry, IAIN Langsa, and STAIN Gajah Putih Takengon who represented all PTKIN millennial students in Aceh. Sampling was carried out based on the western, central, and eastern boundaries with the intention of generalizing the three regions. The main data source of this study were students who were taken randomly from each sample. In qualitative sampling, researchers used the purposive sampling technique, namely purposive sampling. Samples were taken at UIN ar-Raniry as many as 8 people, 6 people at IAIN Langsa, 6 people at STAIN Gajah Putih Takengon. Meanwhile, the stratification sampling technique was used for quantitative samples. Researchers enrolled 220 people by coding: 100 students of UIN ar-Raniry (L - S), 80 students of IAIN Langsa (G - K), and 60 students of STAIN Gajah Putih Takengon (A - F).

Instruments for retrieving data using interviews and observations. The interview was conducted in an in-depth unstructured manner for information. Aspects that were explored included decision making, independence, kinship, the suitability of majors and ideals, and organizational activeness. Interview questions when finding information that confronts data. Researchers used recording tools when conducting interviews. The

recording was done during observation. Observations can be in the form of attitude, language, and character. Techniques are performed by categorizing data, describing, synthesizing, and making conclusions. The data were then analyzed for data triangulation to test the validity of the research data.

### 3. Results

After conducting research, researchers found various images regarding the character building of millennial undergraduate students from the three samples. The researcher organized six assessment categories, namely the ability to determine majors, independence including whether or not work during college, family relations, relationships between friends, lecturers, and the community, suitability of ideals with the courses taken, and organizational activeness. Researchers classify the ability to determine the major and the suitability of ideals with the courses taken as academic characters, while independence, work experience, family relations, and community relations, and organizational activeness are grouped into non-academic characters.

Students of STAIN Gajah Putih Takengon with coding A, B, C, D, E, and F indicate two students whose academic character is less prominent than non-academic characters. In terms of determining majors, A, B, E, and F have strong reasons to enroll as students at STAIN Gajah Putih. The desire in yourself and thanks to the support of parents makes confidence in attending lectures. Parents fully give freedom to choose the future for their children and still support decisions. Meanwhile, C and D only followed the wishes and suggestions of their parents. Both of them are not able to show their true identity in choosing majors. With the inability, they have lacked ambitions in undergoing lectures. This seems to be less in sync between the ambitions and majors being pursued. Non-academic characters are shown both of them which are less active in the organization. A strong determination and thinking of a way of life ahead has not been reflected in their minds. Therefore, the ability to survive facing challenges during college is lacking. They are more dependent on their parents' distribution. On the other hand, other students highly emphasize the nonacademic character of being organized in several activities, working while studying and being able to independently face life's challenges.

Five undergraduate students at IAIN Langsa have a varied character. From five students, there were three people who highlighted the balanced academic and non-academic character. G, I, and K have very satisfied academic values. The three of them always attend lectures in the upper semester class. They are very enthusiastic and ambitious to finish college as soon as possible. They hope to get a job that is

in accordance with their educational background so that their competence increases. Relationships among family members, friends, lecturers, and the community can be said to be very good. They also play an important role in the organizational activities. They have positions in class, campus organization, and society. Meanwhile, H is not very good in academic character. He does not have a future of achieving his ambition so that he is unable to determine his own college major. His sister provides some opinions for H and he is supported by his parents. This left H with no ambition to succeed. The non-academic character is also not possessed by H. The lecture activity, for him, is just learning without having a good relationship on campus and the community, as well as organizational activities. It is similar with H, J also lacks readiness to face life's challenges. However, he is more active in campus activities than H.

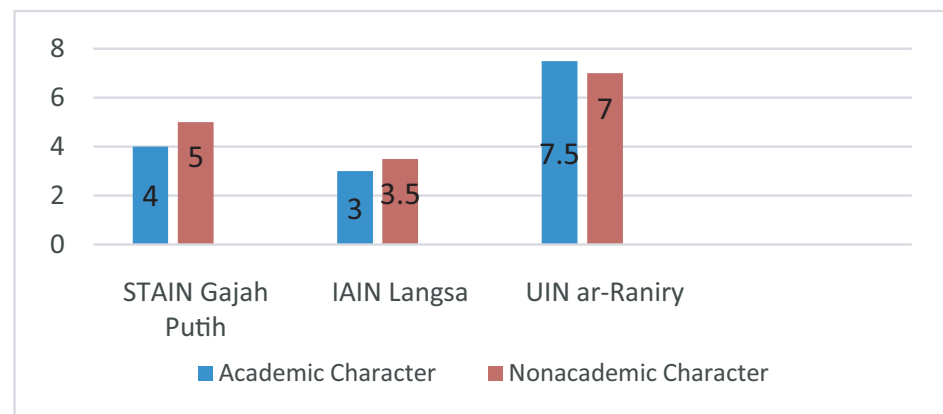
Undergraduate students of UIN ar-Raniry have more homogeneous characters. Of the eight responses from interviews, seven highlighted a balanced academic and non-academic character. Academically, these seven are able to determine the future that will be achieved. Parents fully support their decisions. Good lectures and organization are obtained by them with great responsibility. The only one is M, his major is chosen by parents. Indeed, to overcome financial challenges, his parents still support his studies. M did not use his college opportunities to add to his organizational experience. While other friends are very active in campus and community activities.

To clarify the different aspects of the academic and non-academic characters of the three higher educational institutions can be described in the following table:

TABLE 1: the Differences in Character Aspects of Millennial Undergraduate Students.

No	Character	Aspects	Higher Education		
			STAIN Gajah Putih Takengon	IAIN Langsa	UIN ar-Raniry Banda Aceh
		<b>Ability to determine majors</b>			
1.	Academic Character	Ability to determine majors	4	3	7
2.		Suitability between ambitions and majors	4	3	8
3.	Non-academic Character	Family Relations	6	5	8
4.		Friends, Lecturers, and Community Relationships	6	3	8
5.		Ability to Face Challenges	4	2	6
6.		Organizational Activity	4	4	6

From the table above, it can be seen the number of students who have identified in determining the character after entering college. Graphically, the differences between the academic and non-academic characteristics of the three higher educational institutions above can be illustrated:



**Figure 1:** the Differences in Character Aspects of Millennial Undergraduate Students .

From the graphics above, the researcher found that the non-academic character of the STAIN Gajah Putih Takengon, IAIN Langsa, and UIN ar-Raniry, Banda Aceh more dominated the millennial undergraduate students. The millennial generation in Aceh is more active in community and organizational relations. Various activities were followed to show who they are as a generation that follows civilization. By the discovery of the character classification of millennial generation students, it will encourage researchers to find out the factors causing the emergence of these characters. The identification of the causal factors that dominate the academic and non-academic character of millennial undergraduate students in Aceh is discussed in the discussion section.

## 4. Discussion

After finding out the characters that dominate students in each of the higher educational institutions, the researcher identifies the factors of character building in millennial undergraduate students. The findings in this study are:

### 4.1. Parental Interference.

From the interviews conducted, researchers obtained a description that the character of the students begins with how parents embed the character. It is true to say that children are white paper, parents who give them color, whether forming good or bad characters.

Likewise, children, who are educated in a family environment that prioritizes planned education will be better able to learn more in the environment and be able to master the demands in formal schools [12]. Academic and non-academic characteristic readiness has become a habit of life from an early childhood. In this case, it can be said that interference relates to parenting parents to their children. This is similar with Baumrind's expression that looking at parenting for children is parental control [13]. Children who are equipped with good and positive things will develop in a good and productive direction. The way how parents control, assist and guide children to achieve their development towards the maturation process determines their future. Rahmat's research also confirms that parenting plays a role in determining character in the digital era [14]. The views of these experts are proven in this study. Students who have academic and non-academic character readiness receive assistance in parenting.

Parents' intervention with full support for what the children will undergo forms the character of self-confidence. Democratic nurture is urgently needed for millennial generation children. They explore self-competence according to the times that are full of technology. The age difference between parents and children makes parents educate their children according to their times. Parents provide support and control in family discussions. Children who are given the confidence to determine their future will easily socialize with the environment. Conversely, very deep parental interference makes children less able to think and act in determining life goals. This can be seen from the admission of students who start lectures starting from the inability to determine the department, the inability to get along in the campus environment and the community, not being involved in organizations, to determining hopes and aspirations.

## 4.2. Environment

The development experienced by students is inseparable from the social environment. Directly or not, students will be able to put themselves in relationships, both in the family, campus, and community. Harmonious relationships that are fostered in the family will make the students to socialize easily in their environment. Likewise, the various activities chosen by students will be an opportunity for them to explore their potential. The self potential realized by the students themselves will later have an impact on their developments. They will be able to realize their talents and interests. Self potential will build the character of self confidence and independence. Environment shape a sense of belonging [15]

Friendly character or the ability to communicate well with others includes one of the character education proclaimed by the Indonesian government. This friendly character indicator is in the form of a character of mutual respect, appreciation, and good communication without discriminating on social levels [16]. The activity of UIN ar-Raniry, IAIN Langsa, and STAIN Gajah Putih Takengon students in campus and community organizations shows that they are able to communicate well with the environment. They develop self-potential in the wider community so as to form a reflection of character. The environment has a major influence on character development. 850 pairs of twins have also been proven in the National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test of 1962 with the results of personality and interests reflecting the initial environmental factors [17].

### 4.3. Adversity Quotient (AQ)

By various financial and conflict difficulties during college, students were formed to be able to control and maintain the most comfortable conditions. Most of students are confused with financial problems. Among of them can cope with working. It is still related to parenting that teaches independence. The person not only needs IQ, EQ, and SQ, but also AQ [18]. To achieve success, a person must be able to survive and find solutions to the difficulties. Likewise other define parenting as a way for parents to guide their children to be able to live independently [19]. According to him, with the certain parenting style, they want their children not only to have good moral character, but also to be able success with their own capability. Mental endurance is built with infinite intelligence [20]. AQ is directly proportional to a student's career level [21].

The resilience of students in this sample was mostly looking for a way out by doing business, both by selling online and offline. Selling online is an option because you can anticipate time with class schedules. This form of intelligence is able to overcome economic difficulties that are being felt by some students, namely by teaching at dayah or religious education in the community[22]. Similar to the AQ of PGMI (Teacher Education for Elementary School) students in Rahmawati's research, namely the ability to overcome difficulties and persistence in facing life's challenges [23].

From the findings, this study answers the supporting factors for character building of millennial undergraduate students, namely the interference of parents, the environment, and Adversity Quotient (AQ). In fact, the supporting factor that dominates the character of students is how parental care of parents from early childhood. Parental care patterns are embedded in students' character, so it becomes a habit until they mature. The



parenting will build students' characteristic that are able to respond to the environment and challenges.

## 5. Conclusions

To explore this research, it will be better if the next research explores parenting patterns relating to the character building of undergraduate students. This will help parents who apply parenting care for millennial generation, even the alpha generation that faces technological development.

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