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PSYCHOLOGICAL FACTORS ENHANCING ADOLESCENT
IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT THROUGH THE
PREMIER YOUTH AWARD PROGRAMME

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SYNOPSIS

The study had three objectives. Firstly, to determine the influence of an adolescent development programme, the Premier Youth Award on identity development. Secondly, to study the relationship between identity development and the psychological variables of self-esteem, social responsibility, attitude towards authority, social skills and goal-setting and thirdly, to ascertain the effect of the demographic variables of gender, race and age on identity development.

Chapter one aims to describe the purpose of the study. The Premier Youth Award is an adolescent development programme that aims to introduce young people to a wide range of worthwhile voluntary activities in the areas of providing service to the underprivileged, recreation and expeditions, skills and innovation and sports and culture. Further it provides opportunities to learn about responsibility, self-reliance, perseverance, challenge and personal achievement. Identity development is influenced by exposure to a wide variety of activities that allow for exploration and give opportunities to make commitments. It is suggested that the programme has the elements of exploration and commitment to influence the identity development of adolescents.

Chapter two aims to explain the variables selected for the study as well as the relationships between the variables in the context of theory, past research and the nature of the Award programme. Erikson suggests that adolescence is a junction in

life, where the main developmental task is to seek a clear identity. With a clear identity there is, he says, a personal sense of well-being. Marcia, building on Erikson's theory developed his four status model, whereby based on the presence or absence of exploration and commitment, an individual's identity status was identified as one of either diffusion, foreclosure, moratorium or achievement. Identity achievement was considered the most adaptive of the four statuses.

Based on Marcia's' model it was suggested that the Premier Youth Award programme would involve relevant activities and programmes as well as the use of skills and provide ample opportunities for exploration and commitment that would facilitate adolescent identity development. The first hypothesis of the study was thus that participants in the programme would be at a higher level of identity development than those not participating in the programme.

It was also suggested that the Award programme could possibly enhance the process of identity development towards achieving optimal psychological functioning. Through the programme it was hypothesised that programme participants would be at a higher level of self-esteem, higher social skills, more liberal towards authoritarianism, higher social responsibility and higher goal-setting behaviour compared to non-participants. Finally, it was suggested that identity development was different for males and females as well as for different races. Also, that identity development was more advanced in older participants compared to younger participants.

In Chapter three, the development of the identity scale as well as the translation and modification of the scales for the other psychological variables are described. All instruments to measure the psychological variables were pre-tested through a pilot study. The instrument to measure the identity status level was developed by the researcher. After the first pilot study produced poor results, the scale was redesigned and a second pilot was undertaken. In the second pilot an acceptable level of reliability and validity was attained and the instrument was used in the actual research. As for the other variables, existing scales were translated and modified before use. Only valid items and reliable scales were used in the final study. Thus in the final study, six variables were measured, that is, identity development, self-esteem, social responsibility, attitude towards authority, social skills and goal-setting. Additionally, in the identity development scale, there were four sub-scales, that is, career, political, religious and interpersonal sub-scales.

Chapter four describes the design of the research as well as the reliability and validity scores of the questionnaire scales used in the actual study. The study was based on the post-test only control design. There were two groups in the study, the experimental group consisting of the programme participants and the control group. The control group was selected on the criteria of age as similar as possible to the group of participants. Altogether, there were 180 participants in the experimental group and 102 participants in the control group. Both groups completed the same

questionnaire and were treated similarly by the researcher. With reference to the reliability of the questionnaire all the six scales were reliable at the p-value of 0.001.

Chapter five presents the results of the study. Firstly, in comparing the distribution of the participants group and non-participants group, both groups appeared comparable with respect to gender, race and age. Secondly, through comparison of means by t-tests, the results indicated that the programme participants were at a higher identity level, that is closer to identity achievement than the control group. Thus the programme possibly had a significant influence on identity development, enhancing participants' movement towards identity achievement.

Pearson correlation analysis also indicated that the strength of identity development was related to higher self-esteem, higher social responsibility, a more liberal attitude towards authoritarianism and higher goal-setting behaviour. No relationship was found between identity and social skills. Further, through regression analysis, it was found that of all the variables, goal-setting contributed most towards identity development. In relation to demographic variables, it was found that increasing age helped advance the movement of identity development. However, the relationship between gender as well as ethnicity and identity development was nonsignificant.

Chapter six presents an explanation of the results of the study in the context of theory, past research and the nature of the Award programme. The study results have generally indicated that the programme possibly influenced identity development towards identity achievement. This may have been made possible through the risk-free environment that provided wide opportunities for exploration and commitment as well as opportunities for interactions with a wide variety of people in various roles that is made available to participants within the context of the programme. Such context probably influenced positively the identity development of the individual.

With reference to the significant improvement in self-esteem, social responsibility, attitude towards authoritarianism and goal-setting in the participants compared to the non-participants, again it is suggested that the programme creates an environment for enhancement of these variables through interactions with peers and adults as well as through the activities and programmes.

In conclusion, it can be said that the Premier Youth Award programme, or any other programme with similar objectives, that can enhance identity development, increases the possibility of developing young people who have a personal sense of well-being and a sense of responsibility to contributing towards nation-building.

SINOPSIS

Kajian ini mempunyai tiga tujuan. Tujuan pertama adalah untuk mengenalpasti pengaruh program Anugerah Remaja Perdana atau ARP terhadap perkembangan identiti remaja. Tujuan kedua adalah untuk mengkaji hubungan di antara perkembangan identiti dan pembolehubah-pembolehubah psikologi, iaitu penghargaan kendiri, tanggung jawab sosial, sikap terhadap autoriti, kemahiran sosial dan penetapan matlamat. Tujuan ketiga adalah untuk mengenalpasti hubungan antara pembolehubah-pembolehubah demografi, iaitu jantina, keturunan, umur dan perkembangan identiti.

Bab satu memperihalkan tujuan kajian. Program Anugerah Remaja Perdana adalah program yang menggalakkan golongan remaja untuk melibatkan diri dalam aktiviti-aktiviti yang positif dalam bidang kebajikan, rekreasi dan expedisi, kemahiran dan inovasi dan sukan dan kebudayaan. Seterusnya, program ini memberi peluang kepada remaja untuk belajar mengenai kepentingan tanggung jawab, ketahanan diri, cabaran dan pencapaian peribadi. Pembangunan identiti dipengaruhi oleh pendedahan kepada aktiviti-aktiviti yang memberi peluang untuk menerokai dan membuat komitmen. Dicadangkan program ini mempunyai ciri-ciri penerokaan dan komitmen yang boleh mempengaruhi pembentukan identiti remaja.

Bab kedua mengurai pembolehubah-pembolehubah yang dipilih untuk kajian serta hubungan antara pembolehubah-pembolehubah ini dalam konteks teori, kajian lepas dan ciri-ciri Program Anugerah Remaja Perdana. Erikson berpendapat bahawa

pada peringkat remaja, tugas perkembangan yang paling penting adalah pembentukan identiti. Identiti yang jelas dijangka membawa kepada kesejahteraan diri. Marcia telah membentukkan model status berdasarkan ciri-ciri penerokaan dan komitmen. Berasaskan dua ciri ini seseorang itu boleh dikategorikan dalam salah satu daripada empat status, iaitu difusi, *foreclosure* (mematuhi ibu-bapa), moratorium dan pencapaian identiti. Pencapaian identiti dianggap sebagai status yang paling tinggi.

Berasaskan model Marcia, dicadangkan bahawa Program Anugerah Remaja Perdana mempunyai ciri-ciri penerokaan dan komitmen yang menggalakan pembentukan identiti di kalangan remaja. Hipotesis pertama kajian adalah peserta-peserta program akan berada pada peringkat perkembangan identiti yang lebih tinggi berbanding dengan remaja yang tidak menyertai program.

Juga dicadangkan Program ini dapat menggerak pembentukan identiti ke arah mencapai ciri-ciri psikologi optima. Melalui program ini dicadangkan bahawa peserta-peserta program akan memperolehi peringkat penghargaan kendiri, tanggung jawab sosial, kemahiran sosial, sikap liberal terhadap autoriti dan penetapan matlamat yang lebih tinggi berbanding dengan golongan bukan peserta. Ketiganya, dicadangkan bahawa faktor-faktor jantina serta keturunan akan mempengaruhi pembentukan identiti secara berbeza. Seterusnya, pembentukan identiti akan lebih tinggi dikalangan peserta yang lebih tua berbanding dengan yang lebih muda.

Bab ketiga memperihalkan bagaimana skala perkembangan identiti dibentuk serta bagaimana skala pembolehubah-pembolehubah psikologi lain diterjemah dan diubahsuai sebelum digunakan. Semua alat ukuran diuji melalui prakajian untuk menentukan kesahan dan kebolehpercayaan skala-skala yang digunakan.. Alat ukuran perkembangan identiti dicipta oleh penyelidik. Setelah prakajian menghasilkan keputusan yang kurang memuaskan, alat ukuran identiti diubahsuai dan diuji melalui kajian kedua. Pada kajian kedua, tahap kesahan dan kebolehpercayaan yang memuaskan didapati dan skala tersebut digunakan dalam penyelidikan akhir. Bagi pembolehubah-pembolehubah lain, skala-skala yang sedia ada diterjemah dan diubahsuai sebelum digunakan. Hanya skala yang mempunyai kesahan serta kebolehpercayaan yang memuaskan digunakan dalam kajian. Dalam kajian ini, enam pembolehubah diukur, iaitu perkembangan identiti, penghargaan kendiri, tanggung jawab sosial, sikap terhadap autoriti, kemahiran sosial dan penetapan matlamat. Seterusnya dalam skala perkembangan identiti, terdapat empat sub-skala, iaitu bagi bidang kerjaya, politik, agama dan perhubungan antara perseorangan.

Bab keempat memperihalkan rekabentuk kajian serta kesahan dan kebolehpercayaan soalselidik yang digunakan dalam kajian ini. Dua kumpulan dibentuk, iaitu kumpulan yang dianggotai peserta program dan kumpulan yang bukan peserta program, iaitu kumpulan kawalan. Kumpulan kawalan dipilih berdasarkan umur, supaya sama dengan kumpulan peserta program. Terdapat sejumlah 180 subjek dalam kumpulan peserta dan 102 subjek dalam kumpulan kawalan. Kedua-dua kumpulan

dikehendaki mengisi soalselidik yang sama dan diberikan layanan yang sama. Didapati semua skala yang digunakan dalam kajian ini mempunyai kebolehpercayaan yang memuaskan.

Bab lima mengemukakan keputusan kajian. Pertamanya, dalam membandingkan kumpulan peserta dan bukan-peserta, didapati kedua-dua kumpulan ini mempunyai kesamaan taburan bagi kriteria jantina, keturunan dan umur. Keduanya, bersadarkan ujian-t, didapati kumpulan peserta adalah diperingkat identiti yang lebih tinggi berbanding dengan kumpulan bukan-peserta. Oleh itu, disimpulkan bahawa program ARP dapat mempengaruhi secara positif pembentukan identiti peserta.

Analisis korelasi Pearson menunjukkan bahawa keteguhan perkembangan identiti mempunyai hubungan yang signifikan dengan penghargaan kendiri, tanggung jawab sosial, sikap liberal terhadap autoriti dan penetapan matlamat yang lebih tinggi. Hubungan di antara identiti dan kemahiran sosial didapati tidak signifikan. Seterusnya, melalui analisis regresi didapati pembolehubah yang paling banyak menyumbang kepada variansi pembentukan identiti adalah penetapan matlamat. Merujuk kepada pembolehubah demografi, didapati dengan peningkatan umur, pembentukan identiti juga meningkat. Tetapi tidak terdapat hubungan yang signifikan antara jantina, keturunan dan pembentukan identiti.

Bab keenam menerang keputusan kajian berdasarkan teori, kajian lepas dan ciri-ciri program yang dikaji. Secara am didapati program ini telah mempengaruhi secara positif pembentukan identiti remaja. Ini mungkin kerana wujudnya peluang-peluang untuk penerokaan dan komitmen yang terdapat secara luas dalam konteks program. Keadaan seperti ini mungkin mempengaruhi pembentukan identiti seorang individu secara positif.

Merujuk kepada peningkatan penghargaan kendiri, tanggung jawab sosial, sikap terhadap autoriti dan penetapan matlamat di kalangan peserta berbanding dengan bukan-peserta, dicadangkan bahawa persekitaran yang membolehkan interaksi secara luas, menyediakan pelbagai cabaran serta aktiviti-aktiviti program mungkin dapat meningkat pembolehubah-pembolehubah psikologi tersebut.

Akhirnya dicadangkan program Anugerah Remaja Perdana atau pun program-program sepertinya, iaitu yang mempunyai objektif-objektif yang sama, boleh meningkatkan perkembangan identiti remaja dan boleh membantu melahirkan golongan remaja yang sejahtera dan sedar akan tanggungjawab mereka terhadap proses pembangunan negara.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ARP	Premier Youth Award (<i>Anugerah Remaja Perdana</i>)
DISI-O	Dellas Identity Status Inventory- Occupation
EOM-EIS	Extended Objective Measure of Identity Status
OBS	Outward Bound School