



Character Training and Personal Resilience in the Student Regiment of Ahmad Dahlan University, Yogyakarta

Zul Fadhli Sultani*

Universitas Satyagama, Indonesia

*Korespondensi: email: zul.fadhli@satyagama.ac.id

Abstrak

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Students who are involved in organizations tend to experience problems or challenges in interacting with their campus environment. These problems or challenges need to be addressed by participating in organizational activities, especially the Student Regiment. The purpose of this study is to examine the role of the Student Regiment (MENWA) in shaping students' personalities and fostering personal resilience. This study took place at Ahmad Dahlan University, an object within the scope of the MENWA organization. The method used in this study is a qualitative method with a descriptive approach. The descriptive approach is intended to measure the social phenomenon of the student regiment accurately. The data collection techniques and tools used by the author in this study were interviews, observations, and documentation presentations. The results of the study indicate that by participating in MENWA organizational activities, personal characters are formed that are disciplined, honest, responsible, brave to appear and agile. These characters reflect personal resilience that is able to create a mutually supportive environment and foster a sense of kinship with one another. The conclusion shows that MENWA UAD can be a forum for cultivating good character and strengthening students' personal resilience.

Keywords:

Students, Personal Resilience, Student Regiment, MENWA

Pendahuluan/ مقدمة

Students are an integral part of the nation's society (Ananta, 2021).. The progress achieved through their existence reflects the progress of a country. Student achievement is the nation's achievement. Conversely, if universities and students decline, this will negatively impact the nation's condition. Therefore, students are a crucial element in the development of the country and state. Students are seen as the young generation who offer the most hope for the future. Students possess dynamism, militancy, courage, honesty, and a willingness to sacrifice. Furthermore, students have unique intelligence and high-level thinking skills acquired through successive educational experiences.

Regarding campus life, the college years are a crucial time for the fundamental formation of a student's personality. Especially within student organizations, which are chosen, they contribute to the formation of personal identity and the formation of instructions that manifest as political neutrality, opposition, or support within a student organization. These choices significantly influence the personality and behavior patterns of students. A positive organizational environment will support a student's success. However, when the organizational climate is unfavorable, various cases of violence are often practiced by students across time, almost evenly distributed throughout Indonesia (M. Astuti et al., 2024).

In other cases, the Student Regiment has also been involved in many instances. In August 1993, a riot broke out between the Riau University Student Council (Menwa) and local journalists, and at Undip Semarang, a regional campus activist was beaten. Previously, there was a hostage-taking and military-style interrogation by Menwa members against fellow Undip students who distributed leaflets urging them to attend the abstention case trial at the Semarang District Court. More recently, on May 25, 2000, three campus press activists from UPN Veteran, the Deputy Commander of Menwa, were assaulted by Domingus and M.O. Mirzal, a former member of the UPN Veteran Menwa, against UPN Veteran Jakarta.

The incident began when “Aspirasi” magazine, in one of its reports, exposed a corruption case at UPN. The case involved several students whose tuition fees were embezzled by members of the Student Regiment (Menwa) who allegedly collaborated with UPN bureaucrats. The two members then became enraged and beat and assaulted Dody, Agung, and Wiradhi, UPN’s campus press activists. Their eyes were even swollen, and their lips split from being kicked with boots. These acts of violence by the Menwa are part of the military’s repressive measures against anything that offends them.

Reflecting on the phenomena described above, this is where the crucial role of student organizations-outside of campus academic routines-is essential, as they can genuinely help shape students’ personalities, enabling them to make positive contributions to the campus and the surrounding community (Mohammad Rudiyanto & Ria Kasanova, 2023). It is possible that the students involved in these deviant acts have not received comprehensive personality education. The personalities they develop may not stem from integrated and continuous guidance (Sholehuddin et al., 2023).

The Student Regiment (hereinafter referred to as MENWA) is an internal campus organization that demonstrates integrity in personality development. Through its various training programs, MENWA encourages its members to be role models for other students and the surrounding community. MENWA is an organization formed during the New Order era and has gone through several stages of change. Currently, MENWA (Menwa) still exists on Indonesian campuses due to the organization’s effective cadre development system, both in terms of student personality development and its beneficial role in maintaining campus order (Anandari, 2022). MENWA can serve as a security element in maintaining campus order. However, regarding the latter point, researchers found a paradoxical situation within MENWA at Ahmad Dahlan University, Yogyakarta (MENWA UAD).

As part of preliminary observations conducted through interviews with several students at Ahmad Dahlan University (UAD), including a UAD Psychology master’s student who is also an activist in the UAD Scout organization and an active member of the UAD Student Regiment (MENWA UAD), researchers learned that in 2013, MENWA UAD members were involved in a joint demonstration against private universities in Yogyakarta. Unfortunately, the demonstration turned violent, with several public facilities being damaged. Furthermore, that same year, several MENWA UAD members were also involved in anarchic demonstrations within the UAD campus itself.

The above condition represents a paradox between the purpose of MENWA’s existence and the reality found in the field recently, including on the UAD campus. In fact, MENWA is one of the organizations that plays a role in the formation of a good personality, so that it can prevent the occurrence of the phenomenon of violence as mentioned above. Departing from the explanation above, the researcher is interested in exploring this phenomenon and putting it into this article to answer several research questions: What is the role of the Student Regiment (MENWA) in shaping the personality of Ahmad Dahlan University students? What are the implications of the role of the Student Regiment (MENWA) in realizing the personal resilience of Ahmad Dahlan University students?

Metode/ منهجية البحث

This research is qualitative. Qualitative research aims to gain an in-depth understanding of a specific organization or event rather than describing the surface features of a large sample of a population. It also aims to provide an implicit explanation of the broader structure and order within a group of participants. Qualitative research is also called ethnomethodology or field research (Rezhi et al., 2023). In the same book, Moleong defines qualitative research as “research aimed at understanding phenomena experienced by research subjects, such as behavior, perceptions, motivations, actions, and so on” (Fariq et al., 2022).

The method used in this study was descriptive. Descriptive methods are research methods used to create a picture of a situation or event (Waruwu et al., 2025). Descriptive research methods aim to describe, record, analyze, and interpret current conditions. Descriptive research is intended to measure certain social phenomena accurately. The purpose of descriptive methods is to describe or explain something as it is, thus providing a clear picture of the actual situation on the ground (Haki et al., 2024).

The data collection techniques and tools used in this study were interviews, observation, and documentation. Interviews lasted a maximum of two hours and were completed at the interview location. The interview questions focused on the role of the MENWA organization in shaping student personality on the UAD campus.

Hasil / نتائج البحث

Instilling Discipline

The process of instilling discipline in students by MENWA UAD is the initial step, whereby new students are given greater emphasis on understanding the meaning of discipline. Discipline is defined as self-monitoring to carry out everything agreed upon or accepted as a responsibility (Hendri Suwarsono, 2025). Discipline is crucial for a student’s personal well-being, both in daily life and outside of the classroom. At MENWA UAD, discipline is a hallmark of the organization, from active members to seniors, down to juniors. Discipline is a crucial aspect of student personality development, especially for those joining MENWA UAD.

The Head of Provost (KAPROV) of MENWA UAD, Doni Sumaryono, who enforces discipline, stated that instilling discipline in MENWA UAD is achieved through an understanding of the meaning of discipline and the subsequent imposition of sanctions on members who fail to practice this discipline. The interview results from November 20, 2014, between 2:00 PM and 2:30 PM stated: “The first step in instilling discipline is to provide an understanding of how important discipline is for individuals. Once they have gained this understanding, we will assess how seriously they apply this discipline. If we find any of them not yet implementing discipline, even though they have been taught about it, we will impose sanctions such as push-ups or cleaning the headquarters. The next day, we will review them again. Suppose they still have not implemented the discipline. In that case, we will impose different sanctions until they truly implement the discipline, in the hope that this discipline will truly be ingrained in them.”

Discipline is so important for every individual, especially students. Bahrudin, an alumnus of the UAD Menwa, has his own impression of the discipline he acquired during his time at the UAD Menwa. He was previously difficult to manage and follow rules, but after joining the UAD Menwa, he... transformed into someone easy to manage and able to obey rules (Hasanah et al., 2022). The following is a quote from an interview on November 20, 2014, from 4:30 PM to 5:40 PM WIB: “I was a student who, at the time, lived as a homeless person for almost two years, living on the veranda of a Malioboro shop because I did not have a place to live (boarding house). Because I was from a low-income family, I had to struggle to find food and afford college. I helped sell clothes at Malioboro Market because my location was one of the places where I could freely do whatever I pleased, making me one of those people

who were difficult to manage and far from disciplined, both personally and towards the environment.”

Instilling discipline in students, especially those who come from undisciplined backgrounds, is not an easy task. Although MENWA UAD alums were once considered unruly, over time, their seniors have continued to take steps to shape the personalities of their members for the better. In this regard, MENWA UAD continues to strive to shape its members through various means. Therefore, MENWA UAD has played a role in shaping the personalities of students (especially those who join) by fostering discipline, with the hope that what has been instilled in students can be applied in their daily lives, both on campus and off, once they are no longer students (Isma Mahdalena et al., 2023).

Cultivating Honesty and Responsibility

Students, as the nation’s future generation, are expected to integrate into their environment quickly. Furthermore, they are expected to capitalize on and create opportunities, and compete in a healthy and sporting manner. Students, as part of the younger generation responsible for shaping the nation’s future, must thoroughly prepare themselves during their time as students. Students must undertake numerous steps to prepare themselves to become worthy and worthy members of the younger generation who will shape the nation’s future. One of the most crucial and essential preparations for students is preparing themselves to be honest and responsible (Siti Maryam, 2023).

The Commander of the UAD Menwa, Sapto, stated that honesty and responsibility are essential for the nation’s future progress. The following is an excerpt from an interview held on December 14, 2014, from 9:00 a.m. to 9:45 a.m. WIB: “To make Indonesia a better nation in the future, we need a young generation, one of which is students. Students are truly prepared and possess a sense of responsibility and honesty deeply rooted in them. If these two qualities are instilled in them, God willing, they will be able to make the nation a better nation in the future.”

Added Abdul Fadlil, Vice Rector III for Student Affairs at Ahmad Dahlan University. Honesty and responsibility are also essential for individuals, especially students, both in their daily lives on campus and in the community outside of campus, so that they can be respected by others in their environment. The following is an excerpt from an interview on November 20, 2014, from 1:00 p.m. to 1:40 p.m.: “A sense of responsibility and honesty are essential for a student’s personal development. After graduation, students will be respected and viewed with importance by others if they demonstrate a sense of responsibility and honesty, both in daily social relationships and in the workplace.”

In this regard, the UAD Student Regiment (MENWA) instills honesty and a sense of responsibility in students to shape their personalities into role models for other students and the general public. The UAD Menwa has its own method, as explained by the Head of the Provost of the UAD Menwa, Doni, regarding instilling honesty and responsibility. This is achieved by providing them with understanding and routine daily tasks, such as cleaning the headquarters, delivering mail, and attending seminars. This understanding is provided continuously, so that personnel will not become bored or lazy about carrying out these tasks. From this method, it will also be seen that those who are honest or who act responsibly, and if they are found to be dishonest and irresponsible in the tasks given, they will receive sanctions in the form of push-ups or writing articles (Siregar et al., 2024).

Courage to Perform and Agility

The courage to perform is crucial in shaping a student’s personality. Not everyone possesses the courage to perform. The purpose of courage to perform is to build self-confidence to do good (Rizka et al., 2022). Lilis, Company Commander of the UAD Student Regiment,

stated that students must possess the courage to perform, especially those joining the Student Regiment, who must be able and brave enough to perform in front of a large crowd. If they are brave enough to perform, they will at least be the center of attention, reducing the likelihood of inappropriate behavior. In other words, if a member of the Student Regiment persists in engaging in inappropriate behavior, everyone will easily recognize their bad behavior. Thus, the behavior of a member of the Student Regiment can be easily monitored by the community.

The following is an excerpt from an interview conducted on December 12, 2014, between 11:00 and 11:40 AM. "Someone who dares to appear before a crowd without the slightest hesitation and who feels no sense of inferiority toward others or the environment in which he or she is located will attract the attention of many people, not only when appearing in front of a crowd, but also in his or her daily life." Hanin, Head of Intelligence at the Ahmad Dahlan University Student Regiment, added that the courage to appear before a crowd without the slightest hesitation is one of the seeds of becoming a leader who can advance the nation for the better in the future (Parata Manalu et al., 2024). The following is an excerpt from an interview on December 11, from 9:00 PM to 9:45 PM WIB: "The courage to perform must be mandatory for all students, especially those in the Student Regiment. They are truly trained to be able to perform in front of crowds. Students will become the future leaders of the nation. If students, who will become national leaders, dare not appear in front of crowds, they will not be trusted to communicate with leaders of other nations. Where will our nation be led?"

According to the Company Commander (DANKI) of the UAD Menwa, Lilis, to instill the students' courage to appear in front of crowds, the UAD Menwa implements two concepts: the concept of setting an example and the concept of emphasizing. The purpose of the concept of emphasizing is that, initially, members will be shown how to appear in front of a crowd without the slightest hesitation. After the concept of emphasizing, the concept of emphasizing is introduced. In the concept of emphasizing, members will be given the opportunity to do the same thing as the example given. If members are unable or still hesitant to perform in front of a crowd, they will be forced to do so. If they remain unable or still hesitant, they will be punished. This process is repeated over and over until the MENWA members become accustomed to performing (Maghfirotun, 2023).

Diskusi / مناقشتها

Family-Friendliness

The personality development process undertaken by MENWA UAD is not only focused on instilling discipline, honesty and responsibility, and a courageous attitude. It also incorporates a distinctive personality-building concept, namely the concept of "family-friendliness" (J. S. Astuti, 2021). Regarding the military atmosphere of MENWA, MENWA UAD Commander Sapto stated that many students who are not members of MENWA UAD assume that the MENWA organization is closely associated with the military, which tends to appear rigid and arrogant in daily life. This assumption by students outside of MENWA UAD membership is actually incorrect.

The following is an excerpt from an interview held on December 14, 2014, from 9:00 AM to 9:45 AM WIB: "Many students say that the Student Regiment (MENWA) is an organization that tends to have a very military feel, using violence and being somewhat rough in its daily activities. This is the perception of other students, but in fact, we at Ahmad Dahlan University Student Regiment implement a very close-knit family system. We could say that this organization is our second family, besides our families in the village or at home."

Menwa UAD alumnus Bahrudin stated that the implementation of the family concept is aimed at shaping the personality of students, as implemented by MENWA UAD (Ibrahim & Pratiwi, 2025). One very distinctive concept is that alums, while still joining MENWA UAD, truly create a family-like atmosphere at home. Although they come from different backgrounds and regions, MENWA UAD strives to create a family atmosphere in the unit just like the family

atmosphere at home (Stanley & Kuo, 2022). The following is an excerpt from an interview on November 22, 2014, at 4:30 PM to 5:40 PM WIB: “What is very unique in the Ahmad Dahlan University Student Regiment in terms of shaping student personality is the very close family atmosphere, apart from the side of discipline formation and others, which are components in personality formation. Why do I say it is very unique? When I joined Menwa, I had a second family besides my family in my village. Actually, I come from the Lampung area, indirectly far from my family environment. However, my longing felt healed when I felt the family atmosphere that I missed when I was in Menwa “.

Creating a sense of camaraderie within the UAD Menwa is not easy, especially given the diverse family and regional backgrounds that can foster apathy or selfishness among members of the Student Regiment (Astutik & Pujiyanto, 2024). In this regard, if seniors discover an apathetic UAD MENWA member, they quickly take action to prevent it from recurring and spreading to other members. UAD MENWA alumnus Bahrudin stated that swift action is aimed at preventing apathy and preventing it from spreading to other members by imposing overall sanctions. Even if only one member is apathetic, the punishment is still given to all members. This is done to foster a sense of awareness within members that when only one member commits a mistake, the others will also be subject to the same punishment.

Quote from an interview on November 22, 2014, at 16.30 to 17.40 WIB: “If our seniors find out that one of us is apathetic or selfish, our seniors will give us all sanctions, so not just one person, but also friends who are not apathetic will receive sanctions. The purpose of giving sanctions as a whole is like what my senior said before, “One person who causes trouble, everyone gets punished,” so that the person who made the mistake is truly touched because of his mistake, the other friends also get punished,” so that we really maintain personal relationships with each other like the relationship between siblings in a family.”

The implementation of the family-like concept by MENWA UAD does not necessarily make MENWA members appear spoiled. The implementation of this family-like concept is adapted to situations and conditions outside of MENWA UAD’s official hours, such as after training or when there are no official hours. The purpose of the family-like concept applied in MENWA UAD in terms of developing student personality, where members are required to know how each other is doing every day and also to be open with one another, is to facilitate interaction. If a member has a problem, the other members can help resolve it (Zahran et al., 2022). It is all like the image of a brother and sister, where the older brother must be aware of the younger brother’s condition. When a problem arises, the older brother must be able to help resolve the problem.

The results of an interview with the Alumni of MENWA UAD Bahrudin on November 22, 2014 at 16.30 to 17.40 WIB stated: “the implementation of the sense of family that exists in Menwa which is outside of our Menwa official hours is like siblings who have a very close relationship and understand each other where we are required to know each other’s news every day then every day we ask each other whether they have eaten or not and if not we give each other then we are also required to know the condition of each other’s friends whether they have obstacles or problems whether it is a personal problem or a study problem and if there is a problem between one of our friends we must help how the problem can be resolved and one more thing that is most demanded is that we must be open to each other from juniors to seniors so there are no boundaries between each other like when it is difficult we both suffer and when it is happy we both are happy “. Still related to the concept of family within the UAD Menwa, the Head of the Provost of the UAD Menwa, Doni, stated that in the UAD Menwa, no member should feel exclusive with another member, such as when eating together in one place, eating a friend’s unfinished meal, and also drinking from the same glass. These are all examples of the family atmosphere that exists within each family’s home.

The following is an excerpt from an interview held on November 20, 2014, from 2:00 PM to 2:30 PM: “To create a truly close-knit family atmosphere, we also implement this in our routines after training. Within our family, we should not feel disgusted by our siblings, including our fathers and mothers. For example, when we eat food that our siblings have not finished, we finish it without the slightest feeling of disgust. Similarly, when an older sibling feeds us food with their hands, we do not feel disgusted.”

The process of implementing the concept of family is deeply ingrained in the members of the UAD Menwa, just as it is in their respective families back home. However, the only difference is the method of implementation. The Head of the Provost of UAD Menwa, Doni, stated that the implementation of the concept of family in MENWA places greater emphasis on eating and drinking. During meals, both male and female members must feed each other, and neither member is allowed to feel disapproval. This rule also applies to drinking from fellow members; one glass for each male and one for each female.

The following is an excerpt from an interview on November 20, 2014, at 2:00 PM to 2:30 PM: “When eating, they have to feed each other rice, the girls feed each other with their girls and the boys feed each other with their boys, and we continue to make it a habit in between when they finish their food in every training routine. Likewise, with drinking, we occasionally tell them to drink only one glass of water. It must be enough for all of them, no matter how many they are. Indirectly, when they really consider their friends as their brothers and sisters, just like their siblings, they will definitely drink by considering their friends who have not had a drink, so that the one glass of water is enough for all of them.”

The Company Commander of the UAD Regimental Military Training Corps (Menwa UAD), Lilis, added that one truly unique practice, particularly in the implementation of the family concept implemented by the UAD Regimental Military Training Corps (MENWA UAD), is drinking water from the same glass. What makes it different is the method of drinking. In one training session, each member is required to take a sip of water, rinse their mouth, and then pour it back into the same glass. Only then is the water in the glass drunk together. The following is an excerpt from an interview held on December 12, 2014, between 11:00 and 11:40: “After training, when they were thirsty, we gave them all a glass of water. However, we slightly modified the way they drank it. We had them drink it one by one, but instead of swallowing it immediately, we held it in their mouths for a moment. After everyone had had a drink, we had them pour the water back into the glass. After that, we had them drink it again one by one until the water was gone.”

The purpose of this treatment was to encourage the members to be less arrogant toward each other after they graduated from college and became successful individuals. The following is an excerpt from an interview with the Company Commander of the Ahmad Dahlan University Student Regiment, Lilis, on December 12, 2014, from 11:00 to 11:40: “We created this drinking style with the goal that when they graduate from college, let us say one of them becomes a Minister and the other only becomes a Sub-District Head, when they meet, if the Minister feels superior, then the Sub-District Head can say, ‘Mr. Minister, do not think you are superior, because we have both been through hardships before, and you have also drunk the water, which was in my mouth first; then you drank it, indirectly, you drank my saliva. That is our goal in making them like that, and whenever and wherever they meet, they will be like brothers and sisters who miss each other.”

The formation of student personality through the concept of family implemented by MENWA UAD is also carried out by forming a shared perception, namely equalizing the way of educating members, as each member was educated by their parents (Halim et al., 2023). Just as parents who educate their children at home always have high hopes, so they strive to provide the best for their children in their education, so too does MENWA UAD apply the concept of family in the personality development process (Chaudhry et al., 2024).. This is done with the hope that the members will feel the same way their parents educated them at home. If members

receive punishment at MENWA UAD, they can easily understand that the punishment they receive is like the punishment their parents give them at home. One thing that is truly ingrained in the members is striving to be the best and make the organization proud, just as they strive to be the best and make their parents proud at home.

Based on the interview results above, the overall process of student personality development, in this case MENWA UAD, has played a role through the implementation of several stages of personality development, such as instilling discipline, honesty and responsibility, courage and agility, and creating a family atmosphere. All of these aim to develop students who can serve as role models for others and also prevent immoral acts.

Kesimpulan/ الخلاصة

The UAD Student Regiment (MENWA UAD) has played a role in the personality development of students through several stages: instilling discipline, honesty, and responsibility, instilling courage and agility, and instilling a sense of family. The results of this personality development process are evident in the individuals of UAD MENWA alums, who are now experiencing and applying the results of this personality development process in their workplaces, families, and communities.

UAD MENWA has played a significant role in the personality development process. However, this has not been well-received by students who are generally displeased with MENWA UAD. They believe the personality development process fails to prioritize matters, such as treating male and female members equally. This is evident in the female members' daily behavior, often in their walk and speech styles, as if they were men. Furthermore, UAD MENWA cannot communicate effectively with the current student body, which appears relaxed and humorous. Meanwhile, UAD MENWA appears stiff. This is a significant factor in the formation of MENWA UAD's arrogant image.

From the two conclusions above, in this case, the researcher concludes that the personality formation process carried out by MENWA UAD. However, it has gone according to what they expected, still has shortcomings. So there needs to be a follow-up to be able to overcome these shortcomings, so that there are no negative assumptions from other students in the Ahmad Dahlan University environment.

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