

## Grit the Main Character in the Novel Guru Aini by Andrea Hirata: A Psychological Study of Literature

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### Article Info

History Articles

Received:

20 September 2023

Accepted:

19 October 2023

Published:

30 December 2023

Keywords:

Grit, Main Character,  
Novel, Guru Aini

### Abstract

Grit is one of the characteristics needed by the current generation. In developing grit in each individual, life experiences are needed. Life experiences can be constructed through reading and appreciating literary works. One literary work (novel) that illustrates grit is the novel *Guru Aini* by Andrea Hirata. Through the research method of literary psychology, this study aimed to describe the dimensions of grit which include consistency of interest and persistence of effort reflected through the main character in the *Guru Aini* novel by Andrea Hirata. The results of this study showed that the consistency of interest reflected in the main character in the *Guru Aini* novel was described through five characters which include 1) consistency towards the goal; 2) the ability not to switch to another goal; 3) the ability to focus on difficult things; 4) commit to the passion; 5) the ability not to be obsessed with other things. The main character's persistence was reflected through the characters; 1) ability to not give up easily; 2) hard work; 3) responsibility; 4) diligence; 5) ability to overcome failure. The fortitude and persistence of the main character in the *Guru Aini* novel were expected to be a representation to convey messages through literary works so the millennial generation grows as a generation that is able to hone the human touch to prioritize the heart as a form of emotional intelligence and building grit as a form of self-consistency effort toward the goal.

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## INTRODUCTION

Movement in every aspect of life brings humans to change and development in each generation. The changes experienced by the current generation require mental readiness in every aspect of change. This cannot be separated from the existence of this generation as digital natives or the generation closest to technology. Developing technological advances provide easy access for this generation to carry out their daily tasks in real time. The comfort and convenience inherent in this generation will form a weak mentality to compete and develop to hone their potential in pursuing a life goal. If this condition is not addressed wisely, it will have an impact on the quality of the generation decreasing.

Looking at this issue, history proves that reading and studying literary works has changed several things. Literary works do not directly provide solutions, but the spirit in which the author writes offers hope to readers. It is that hope that then ignites and becomes the thing that drives change. The problems expressed in literary works through the characters and characterizations that have been written by the author will implicitly provide a picture related to the character, inner state and soul, and mentality of the characters in the novel as a means of the author's activity. In connection with this, there are literary works (novels) that describe perseverance and fortitude in achieving life goals.

The novel *Guru Aini* by Andrea Hirata is a novel with an educational theme set in a remote area on the island of Sumatra. This novel implies the power of interest and persistence in achieving life goals which is reflected through the two main characters, namely Desi and Aini. Desi Istiqomah is an intelligent and idealistic woman. This idealism then led Desi to her life's goal of serving as a mathematics teacher in remote areas of the country and hoping to find intelligent students in mathematics. The reality experienced by Desi teachers is the opposite, Desi teachers have their patience tested by students who are ignorant of mathematics. Aini is a high school student from Desi's teacher who consciously asked Desi's teacher for help to guide her so that

she could become a smart student, especially in the field of mathematics. Aini did this because Aini wanted to become a doctor so she could treat the disease her father was suffering from. This story originates from a family environment with middle to lower economic conditions, so it can be said that awareness of education in the village is still very lacking. Departing from such an environment, teachers Desi and Aini showed perseverance and fortitude in realizing their life goals.

The characters Desi and Aini, who are the main characters in the novel *Guru Aini* by Andrea Hirata, are a reflection of the characters needed by the current generation. High fighting power to achieve life goals in the long term is a reflection of the character of grit. It is hoped that the grit inherent in the main character of the novel *Guru Aini* by Andrea Hirata can be a representation of the current generation's focus and adherence to life goals. As stated by Septania (2020), the internal factor that the current generation must have to achieve success is the character of grit. Grit can make the current generation grow into an active, productive, and developing generation that is focused and oriented toward the future. Grit within a person will form an awareness that interest is a long-term life goal. Grit forms a love for what a person does and is engaged in, so that in every process one goes through it gives birth to happiness and awareness to strive to realize the life goals that have been set. That is, grit makes someone come alive in life.

Jin & Kim (2007) said that someone who has grit has a better chance of achieving their goals and fulfilling their needs or self-satisfaction because they have hard work in facing challenges and are committed to maintaining their business. The same definition was also expressed by Dimenichi & Richmod (2015) who stated that grit is an individual's ability to maintain attention or attention in pursuing predetermined goals. Lucas, et al (2015) stated that grit is an individual's ability to persist in facing difficult challenges and refuse to change direction and goal strategy, even at the risk of failure. Duckworth (2022) further defines grit as passion, perseverance, and hard

work to maintain aspirations at the top level as a long-term goal. Based on the various definitions of grit above, it can be concluded that grit is fortitude which means high perseverance, enthusiasm that never fades, and hard work to conquer all obstacles and obstacles that exist to realize a life goal.

The grit construct is formed from two main dimensions, namely consistency of interest and persistence in trying. Each of these dimensions refers to a person's consistent tendency to work hard even when facing challenges and difficulties to persist in their initial interests and goals. Based on the results of his research, Duckworth (2022) believes that these two dimensions are correlated with each other to success. Consistency of interest is the ability to persist in facing the process of achieving life goals, while persistence in trying is a person's ability to face difficulties and obstacles in the process of realizing life goals.

It is hoped that the example of the main character in the novel *Guru Aini* can motivate future generations to hone their human touch to prioritize the heart as a form of emotional intelligence and foster grit as a form of self-consistency in fighting. Through a novel, which is a work of fictional prose that explains the problems of human life with one of its wise aims, namely to humanize humans, from this research it is hoped that not only messages will be obtained from readers, but also motivation for learning from an inspiring figure.

Based on this background, this research study focuses on the interest and persistence (grit) of the main character in the novel *Guru Aini* by Andrea Hirata as a literary psychology study. The problem formulation in this research is related to the consistency of interest and persistence of the main character in the novel *Guru Aini* by Andrea Hirata. This research aims to describe the character of interest and persistence (grit) of the main character in the novel *Guru Aini* by Andrea Hirata. It is hoped that this analysis can be a representation for students who are the current generation and the wider community in developing the character of grit to achieve predetermined life goals.

## METHODOLOGY

The focus of the study was in the form of written sentence data. The data taken was in the form of viewer speech in the comments column which contained forms, forms of violations of the principle of politeness. The data sources in this study were documents, such as all the utterances of YouTube media viewers Kompas.com, tribunews, metrotvnews, SCTV, CNBC, CNN Indonesia, Detik.com, Indosiar, Viva.Co. The utterances were in written form (comment). Hate speech data was focused on the topic of discourse "Puan Maharani" the number one woman who served as chairman of the house of representative of Indonesia in 2019. The research used techniques in analyzing data with qualitative descriptive, which explained everything that was obtained in an investigation based on facts or phenomena empirically (Sudayanto, 2015).

The data analysis technique in this research was a heuristic analysis technique and a qualitative normative analysis method. The heuristic analysis technique was termed the pragmatic power of a speech through the formulation of a hypothesis and was proven by testing the data obtained (Leech, 2015). In the heuristic analysis, the analysis began with a problem that was filled with background propositions, then the objective hypothesis was formulated by Leech (2015). Heuristic work made an understanding of the literal meaning, the explicit meaning of the actual meaning (Nurgiyantoro, 2007). The technique used to analyze the data in this study was a qualitative descriptive technique that was analysis by describing everything found in research based on empirical facts or phenomena (Sudaryanto, 2015). This study used a documentation study data collection technique where documentation was a strategy when obtaining data and information in the form of books, files, documents, writing, numbers, or pictures in the form of descriptions and information that could support investigations. After that it was done using the listening method to listen to the use of language. The term listening was not only related to the use of spoken language, but also the use of

written language (Mahsun, 2017). Listening included not only the use of spoken language, but also the use of written language. The data that had been collected was then studied thoroughly using the listening technique. The use of the listening technique aimed to understand YouTube videos based on the context of the discussion and note-taking techniques. This data collection technique could be used to obtain accurate and correct research data.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The grit of the main character in the novel *Guru Aini* by Andrea Hirata was focused on discussing the dimensions of grit which consist of consistency of interest and persistence in trying. This is reflected in the character of the main character in the novel *Guru Aini* by Andrea Hirata. In the novel *Guru Aini* by Andrea Hirata, there are two main characters told by the author, namely Desi and Aini.

### 1. Consistency of Interest

Consistency of interest is the ability to maintain interest in one goal. Individuals who have high consistency of interest usually can maintain their interest in the long term, so that their interests are not easily distracted or change at any time and in accompanying circumstances. Consistency of interests is one dimension of grit. The characters Desi and Aini reflect how someone can develop and maintain grit within themselves through the consistency of their interests.

#### 1.1 Consistent with the chosen goals without being easily influenced by other ideas.

The consistency of a person's interests is demonstrated by his ability to remain consistent with the goals he has chosen and ignore ideas that are contrary to the goals he has set. This attitude is shown in Desi's character who dreams of becoming a mathematics teacher. However, this desire did not receive support from the school principal or his mother. Both the principal and Desi's mother often tried to convince Desi to move to a goal other than becoming a

mathematics teacher by presenting several persuasive arguments. The following data shows that Desi is consistent in her chosen goals and is not easily influenced by the ideas of Mrs. Amanah, who is the principal of her school.

(1) "Kau bisa menjadi dokter, insinyur, sarjana hukum, sarjana ekonomi, sarjana apa saja, dengan mudahnya, macam membalik tangan!"

"Terima kasih, Bu, tapi aku hanya mau menjadi guru." (Hirata, 2020:1)

Data (1) is a form of goal consistency attitude that Desi has regarding his interest in becoming a mathematics teacher. Desi is not easily influenced by Mrs. Amanah's ideas. This is in line with the opinion of Besten (2010) who states that determination (self-consistency) is steadfastness in goals, desires, and interests. As a student with the title of best graduate and the smartest child among his siblings, Desi had to be patient with his mother and principal who continued to bombard him with persuasive ideas. I hope that Desi will reflect on these ideas and forget about his goal of becoming a mathematics teacher. Starting from arguments about his father's business to political commercial persuasion.

The ability to remain consistent with the goals that have been chosen without being easily influenced by other ideas is also possessed by Aini, who is a student of Guru Desi. Aini is a row of students without achievements, that's why Aini is included in the list of students who are in arrears or are repeating first grade. Surprisingly, as a student who is ignorant of all subjects, especially mathematics, Aini wants to enter the class of Guru Desi, who is an idealistic genius mathematics teacher. Aini is ready to bear all the risks and all the worst possibilities in Guru Desi's class. Aini did this because Aini wanted to become good at mathematics. Even though it is impossible, Aini is determined to enter Guru Desi's class amidst the opinions of her friends about Guru Desi's class who are trying to make Aini aware. Sa'diah, who is Aini's friend, tries to make Aini aware of her decision. Aini's initial determination to move to Guru Desi's class made her friends unsure about Aini's decision. Both

Enun and Sa'diah, who are Aini's friends, try to give a realistic assessment of the fact that stupidity cannot be changed by entering the class of even an intelligent teacher.

(2) "Matematika?! Matematika katamu?! Belajar matematika sampai empat kali kiamat, kau akan tetap bebal, Aini!" Spaneng Sa'diah.

"Karena itulah aku mau pindah ke kelas *Guru Desi*, Diah, lelah aku saban hari bergelimang kebodohan saja." (Hirata, 2020:81)

### 1.2 Do not switch to another goal.

Duckworth (2022) states that Grit is about maintaining the same peak-level ideals over a very long period. This is what is meant by the ability to persist in one goal that has been set as the highest ideal by easily moving on to other, different goals. This attitude was shown by Desi who maintained his life's goal of becoming a mathematics teacher in remote areas of the country despite his bitterness in fighting to serve in the Ketumbi village.

(3) "Sesuatu menyundul-nyundul ulu hatinya, ngilu. Betapa mudah semuanya kalau waktu itu dia tak menukar tempat penugasannya dengan Salamah. Sudah berhari-hari yang lalu dia sudah berada di Bagansiapiapi. Namun diyakininya dirinya sendiri bahwa tak seorangpun pernah berkata padanya menjadi guru matematika itu akan membuat hidup lebih mudah. Diingatnya pesan Bu Marlis padanya, bahwa dia takkan menjadi kaya dan takkan selalu mendapat kesenangan dengan menjadi guru." (Hirata,2020:25)

Data (3) shows Desi's ability to persist in the life goal he has chosen. Even though in realizing this goal, Desi had to go through a tiring journey, draining all his energy and putting him in great danger. Something that Desi had never imagined before, but he believed again that in every goal there was a big sacrifice. Even though Desi had thought about his attitude in exchanging the lottery of teaching in the city with the lottery of his friend who got a teaching place in a remote part of the country. He recalled that what Desi

experienced was a form of the initial journey towards realizing his goal of becoming a mathematics teacher who succeeded in turning his students into successful people. This attitude shows that Desi is someone who has high grit.

Aini also can maintain goals over a long period and in all situations. Her goal to become a doctor and pass the entrance test as a medical student makes her determination even stronger. Even though she was faced with a difficult environment, Aini did not lose heart. Her optimism gave Aini the confidence to take the selection test to enter medical school.

(4) "Aini merasa ngap-ngap dan berkecil hati sebab dia tahu siswa-siswa lain berasal dari SMA yang hebat di kota-kota besar dan mereka tampak sangat brilian. Sedangkan dia hanyalah tamatan SMA dari kampung antah-berantah di sudut pulau kecil di selatan sana. Modalnya hanya tekad yang kuat untuk masuk fakultas kedokteran, demi ayahnya, dan seorang perempuan, guru matematika idealis." (Hirata,2020:278)

Data (4) shows Aini's attitude of persisting in her goal of entering medical school, amidst an environment of competitors who are superior in terms of economics and achievements. Aini's consistency of interest is reflected in her ability to stay focused and ignore her initial goals by ignoring things that try to distract her. Even when placed in a difficult situation and a difficult environment, Aini was able to maintain her goals by remembering the reason Aini was there to fight for the medical school entrance selection test. Finally, his struggle resulted in the success he longed for. Aini succeeded in conquering the questions to enter medical faculty which made her name as one of the medical faculty students. Duckworth & Quinn (2009) stated that individuals with high consistency of interest can continue to persist in the goals they have set and do not lose interest even though they encounter failure in the process of their efforts to realize their goals. This is proven by Aini's ability not to move on to other goals.

### 1.3 Ability to stay focused on difficult things that require a relatively long time.

The consistency of a person's interest can be measured by his ability to remain focused on difficult things and things that take a long time to complete. This is reflected in Desi's attitude which shows his ability to persist in difficult things that require a relatively long time.

(5) "Bangku-bangku kosong yang ditinggalkan mahasiswa yang gagal sengaja dibiarkan kosong sebagai pengingat bagi mahasiswa tersisa untuk tekun belajar. Akhirnya hanya 80 mahasiswa yang lulus dari pendidikan calon guru matematika bermutu tinggi itu." (Hirata,2020:8)

Data (5) represents the consistency of interest shown by Desi through his ability to complete his education at the D-3 level majoring in mathematics education. Desi's desire to become a mathematics teacher brings her among other intelligent friends. However, many of his friends were unable to complete their studies as prospective mathematics teachers. Initially, there were 180 students in this competitive class, but only 80 of them were Desi who could survive the long struggle. Desi's ability to remain focused on completing her education cannot be separated from the strength of her interest in becoming a mathematics teacher.

As if learning from her teacher, Aini has the same determination to remain consistent in her interests. His success in emerging from the mathematical ignorance that bound him was inseparable from Guru Desi's kindness in guiding him. So, in difficult situations, Aini was able to show a level of focus as a strategy in answering questions on the medical school entrance test.

(6) "Soal-soal itu pun sangat sulit. Semakin sulit sebuah soal semakin Aini menganggap soal itu sakral karena dia tahu masa depannya terletak pada setiap soal." (Hirata,2020:277)

Data (6) shows Aini's ability to focus on difficult questions which require a relatively long time to do compared to other questions. Aini's abilities reflect the consistency of Aini's interest in her initial goal of entering medical school. Aini's attitude in Grit theory is seen as the ability to stay focused and not be easily influenced by anything that makes it difficult to work on these problems. This is in line with the grit theory put forward by

Andrian (2021) which states that students' grit is reflected in their ability to be consistent in the goals they have set so that students can focus on all their tasks even though they are difficult and take longer.

#### 1.4 Interests that never change.

This attitude is reflected in Teachers Desi and Aini in maintaining their interest in a predetermined goal.

(7) "Pernah terpikir menekuni bidang lain selain matematika?" Desi tersenyum."

"Aku bukan Desi, tanpa matematikaku." (Hirata,2020:69)

Data (7) shows the consistency of Desi's interest in mathematics as assessed by the amount of Desi's love for mathematics. Desi's love for mathematics means that her existence with mathematics is an integral part of life that cannot be separated. According to Slameto (2010), interest is a feeling of preference and interest in activities or other things without any coercion from other people. This is reflected in Desi's interest in becoming a mathematics teacher which results from her love for mathematics.

In contrast to Desi, Aini shows a consistent interest in studying mathematics based on personal encouragement as an initial path toward the long-term goals that have been set. The consistency of Aini's interest can be seen in how hard she tries to study mathematics with Desi's teacher to combat her stupidity.

(8) "Sekian lama aku sendiri berusaha agar dapat diterima Guru Desi. Setiap hari aku dimarahinya, setiap hari aku ditolaknya. Aku akan menukar kesempatan apa saja agar bisa disayangi Guru Desi." (Hirata,2020:177)

Data (8) illustrates how hard Aini tried to win Guru Desi's heart. Even though Aini knows, that conquering Guru Desi's heart means conquering his stupidity and all the obstacles that come his way. The several times Aini's arrival was rejected by Guru Desi, this did not stop her steps, her courage receded and her interest in studying mathematics with Guru Desi vanished. The never-ending interest in Aini's seriousness in studying mathematics with Guru Desi means that

Guru Desi can't refuse her, even though Guru Desi doesn't know how to teach Aini to increase her potential in mathematics.

### 1.5 Never obsessed with other things that are more tempting.

Consistency of interest is related to the ability to never become obsessed with other things that are more tempting. In general, interest or desire is described as a form of intense emotion, desire has the same meaning as lust or obsession, but psychologically desire implies a desire that is embedded within a person, not a desire that is tempting or momentary. In this case, consistency of interest is the desire to persist in difficult conditions, winding paths, enthusiasm that is almost extinguished, and intense fear, to arrive at one goal in life.

(9) "Tradisinya, lulusan terbaik mendapat keistimewaan untuk dapat memilih lokasi penempatan kerja. Bisa memilih di kota besar, boleh di kota kelahiran, boleh dimana saja sesuai pilihan. Bahkan langsung diterima kalau ingin menjadi dosen di pendidikan ini" Desi tersenyum. Kenyataannya Desi adalah lulusan cumlaude pertama dari pendidikan itu"

"Terima kasih banyak, Bu, aku mau ikut undian saja seperti kawan-kawan lainnya." (Hirata,2020:9-10)

Data (9) shows a consistent attitude of interest which is reflected in his ability not to be tempted by the privileges given to those who successfully graduate cum laude. In his first steps to becoming a mathematics teacher, Desi could have asked to be placed in a big city or moved to another destination to become a lecturer. Desi's consistent interest in becoming a mathematics teacher and her goal of teaching in remote areas of the country did not make her interested in the offers made. For Desi, the commitment to become a mathematics teacher is a fixed price, and casting his fate is the beginning of freedom and satisfaction.

## 2. Persistence in trying

Persistence in trying or perseverance is one of the dimensions of grit development which is

related to the individual's perseverance to try harder to achieve the goals that have been set. Persistence in trying shows the ability that an individual has to complete the work that has been started. Individuals with persistence in trying will not be afraid to face challenges and obstacles, are diligent, and try hard to achieve long-term goals. There are five indicators on the grit scale proposed by Duckworth (2022) which include: (1) the ability not to give up easily and remain enthusiastic even when experiencing difficulties; (2) hard work; (3) responsibility for tasks or work; (4) diligent and never give up; (5) the ability to overcome failure to conquer more important challenges. Each of these attitudes is depicted through characters that are reflected in the main character in the novel *Guru Aini* by Andrea Hirata. The author describes how persistent the characters Desi and Aini are in realizing their respective goals.

### 2.1 The ability to not give up easily and remain enthusiastic even when experiencing difficulties.

Persistence in trying is manifested in the form of an individual's ability not to give up easily and remain enthusiastic even though they experience difficulties in the process of realizing their life goals. In line with the concept of Grit put forward by Hochanadel & Finamore (2015) which states that Grit is about how a person can overcome obstacles, challenges, and difficulties in the process of achieving life goals. This is reflected in Desi's attitude of being able to overcome the difficulties encountered on his way to the work placement location. A place that Desi had never visited, even the name seemed foreign to him. It turned out that Desi's goal of teaching in remote areas of the country led her to become tired of traveling by land and sea.

(10) "Desi berbalik pula, dan kali ini, meskipun masih sangat lelah, berantakan mual, dan pening, dia tersenyum lebar. Karena setelah malang-melintang 6 hari 6 malam menempuh perjalanan yang amat berat, akhirnya dia bisa menaklukkan Tanjong Hampar, nun jauh di mata, jauh di peta."

“Dilihat lagi kapal kayu yang sekarang tampak hebat dimatanya. Dia merasa megah karena dilanda perasaan yang dahsyat itu, bahwa apapun yang tak dapat membunuhmu, akan membuatmu semakin kuat.” (Hirata,2020:28)

Data (10) shows Desi's persistence in trying which is a manifestation of his Grit attitude. Desi's persistence in trying has brought him to the end of a long journey on Tanjong Hampar Island to Ketumbi Village where Desi teaches as a mathematics teacher. Even though the journey was very difficult, tiring, and drained his physical and mental energy, for Desi it was a valuable experience. His ability to endure difficult things does not make him a person who easily gives up, because the hardships, and the difficulties that Desi goes through make him grow as a stronger person.

Perseverance in trying, which is manifested in the ability not to give up easily and enthusiasm for experiencing difficulties, is also reflected in Aini's character. Aini is a village child with a lower-middle economic condition. Aini's family's economy became increasingly difficult when Aini's father lay ill for years. Aini, who is the first child, was forced to take over her father's responsibilities. This makes Aini's life even more difficult because she has to go to school and work and also try to understand science, namely mathematics. Her desire to be good at mathematics makes Aini always study, and try hard to study mathematics with Guru Desi.

(11) “Sejak kecil dia telah mengalami banyak kesulitan. Ekonomi keluarga morat-marit. Semakin berat cobaannya sejak ayahnya jatuh sakit. Tak ayal sesekali dia gembira, gembira karena keluarga dan sahabat setia, namun memahami suatu ilmu memberinya bentuk kegembiraan yang tak pernah dibayangkannya sebelumnya.” (Hirata,2020:207)

Data (11) shows Aini's ability to overcome all the bitterness that occurs in her life. This made Aini grow into a strong and resilient person. Aini's personality reflects someone who has grit in him. His strength to overcome all difficulties

and hardships in life seems to have followed him since childhood.

## 2.2 Hard work

The sincerity possessed by individuals with high perseverance is the ability to try hard and never give up on everything that is being attempted. A person's persistence in trying is manifested in his efforts to achieve something. This is illustrated by the hard work that Desi has done to realize his dream of becoming a mathematics teacher in remote areas of the country.

(12) “Selanjutnya dia turun naik bus silih berganti dari satu kota ke kota lain. Setiap melihat kendaraan umum yang akan ditumpangnya, dia tertegun melihat penumpang yang sesak, atau sebaliknya, bus yang kosong melompong. Berbagai hal dialaminya. Dia telah naik bus yang mogok di jalan sehingga para penumpangnya dipindah ke bak truk. Dia telah naik bus mini yang dipenuhi anak sekolah, dipenuhi anggota grup dangdut, atau dipenuhi pria berpakaian rapi macam orang kantoran dan tak seorangpun menawarinya tempat duduk.” (Hirata,2020:20-21)

Data (12) describes the hard work that Desi made to get to the location where he taught as a mathematics teacher. His interest in mathematics makes Desi aim to teach as a mathematics teacher in remote areas. Desi's goal, as stated by Lam (2019), is that clear goals emphasize goal-directed hard work that continuously shows consistency of effort which is related to mental toughness. Desi's goal to become a mathematics teacher has taken Desi on a long, very tiring journey. It takes a lot of effort to get to Desi's placement location. Desi's hard work was demonstrated when Desi had to get on and off various types of vehicles, in varying conditions. Hard work is only owned by people who are serious about carrying out their activities. This is what people who have grit always describe. Desi's grit describes her tenacity in trying which is manifested by her hard work and enthusiasm for traveling at her teaching placement location to become a mathematics teacher.



The hard-working attitude is also reflected by the character Aini. Despite her family's difficult economic conditions, Aini tries hard to study mathematics with Guru Desi. A mathematics teacher who is known to be an intelligent and strict idealist. Aini is determined to fight her ignorance, especially in mathematics. This was done because Aini wanted to realize her dream of becoming a doctor to treat her father. As if she had become friends with a hard life, every afternoon after selling children's toys, Aini went straight to Guru Desi's house to study mathematics.

(13) “Setiap hari setelah pulang dari sekolah dan bergantian dengan ibunya menjaga ayahnya yang sakit dan berjualan mainan anak-anak. Aini langsung ke rumah Guru Desi. Tak peduli panas, mendung, hujan, banjir, guruh, petir, dia pasti ke rumah Guru Desi untuk belajar matematika, dan pasti kena damprat.” (Hirata,2020:169)

Data (13) shows Aini's hard work studying mathematics with *Guru Desi*. Even though she has been studying every afternoon, Aini has not shown any progress in understanding mathematics. This condition is inversely proportional to Aini's persistence in trying hard to realize her dreams. Her hard efforts to study mathematics with *Guru Desi* so that Aini could become a smart student in mathematics made Aini closer to her goal. After graduating from high school, Aini went to the city to take the student entrance test at medical school. Even though Aini's math skills are now much better, this doesn't make her complacent enough to stop studying. Aini understands the current situation, taking the entrance test for medical school students is something valuable, so Aini doesn't want to waste this opportunity.

(14) “Hari-hari selanjutnya Aini tak henti belajar untuk persiapan tes masuk fakultas kedokteran di sebuah universitas negeri. Kaki menjadi kepala, kepala menjadi kaki. Dia fokus menghadapi puncak ujian atas jerih payahnya selama bertahun-tahun.” (Hirata,2020:277)

Data (14) shows Aini's persistence in trying to realize her dream of becoming a doctor. This

persistence is reflected in his hard work studying in preparation for the medical faculty entrance test at one of the state universities. Aini's grit makes her able to always work hard with maximum effort as a manifestation of her persistence in trying to make her dreams come true. Aini's attitude shows that someone who has persistence in trying will not be afraid of facing challenges and obstacles, is diligent, hardworking, and tries to achieve long-term goals.

### 2.3 Responsibility for task or work

High grit makes individuals have high standards and focus on fulfilling responsibilities. Grit which is formed from the dimension of persistence is manifested in the form of fulfilling responsibility for tasks and work. As reflected by Guru Desi in carrying out his duties and work as a teacher.

(15) “Sebaliknya, dalam waktu singkat nama Bu Desi langsung kondang sebagai guru matematika brilian. Usianya paling muda diantara guru lainnya, baru masuk 18 tahun. Namun dia dianggap sebagai guru bagi guru matematika lainnya. Jika ada pelatihan peningkatan mutu guru matematika, Bu Desi adalah guru besarnya. Begitu lancarnya ilmu menghitung itu ditangannya sehingga dia dijuluki ibu Desi Mal.” (Hirata,2020:45-46)

Data (15) shows that *Guru Desi* is responsible for his work. This is proven by *Guru Desi's* ability as a mathematics teacher who is aware of his professional responsibilities. It is reflected in the expertise of Desi Teachers who have mastered mathematics perfectly. This is shown by the name *Guru Desi* who is known as an intelligent mathematics teacher so *Guru Desi* is considered a teacher by other mathematics teachers. The character of Desi Teacher is an embodiment of persistence in trying as part of the Grit character. Grit not only correlates with failure and disappointment, but Grit also correlates with a person's ability to be responsible for their duties and profession.

(16) “Beban guru semakin berat karena dia merasa berutang budi pada negara yang

telah memberinya beasiswa pendidikan D-3 Guru Matematika itu. Dia ingin membalas budi itu sekuat kemampuannya. Dia ingin menjadikan dirinya keniscayaan. Dia ingin berarti sebagai pribadi, sebagai muslimah, sebagai seorang guru. Dia tak ingin pendidikan matematika di Kampung Ketumbi tak ada bedanya, dengan atau tanpa Desi Istiqomah.” (Hirata,2020:68)

Data (16) shows the Desi teacher's persistence in trying, which is manifested in the form of his ability to become a teacher who is responsible for his profession. This is reflected in the character of Desi Teachers who consciously understand their responsibilities as a teacher, namely developing the potential of their students. The Desi Teacher character shows the character of someone who has high Grit. A person's perseverance, fortitude, and perseverance can be assessed by their ability to be responsible for their duties, obligations, and themselves. As a teacher, *Guru Desi* feels responsible for his achievements and profession. The attitude shown by *Guru Desi* shows that Grit is correlated with a person's awareness of their work and responsibilities. As expressed by Izzulhaq (2023) who states Grit will bring a person to commitment to responsibility for their duties and work.

A responsible attitude is also found in Aini's character as a form of a student's responsibility towards his duties. In this case, Aini realized that as a student, Aini had the awareness to be responsible for the tasks given to her by the teacher. This is reflected in the figure of Aini, who is a student of *Guru Desi*. Aini is a responsible student.

(17) “Esoknya pagi sekali, Guru melihat sebuah buku di atas meja di ruangnya. Dibukanya buku itu, merinding sekaligus terharu dia melihat Aini telah menjawab 1 dari 3 soal kalkulus itu dengan benar, dengan sangat benar.” (Hirata, 2020:193)

Data (17) shows that Aini is a person who is responsible for every task given. As a student with character, Aini understands that appreciating and respecting a teacher is part of her responsibility as a student. This means that as a student, Aini has the responsibility to complete

every assignment requested by her teacher. This is a form of respect for a student towards his teacher. Even though Aini had only finished working on one question, as a student who always obeyed what her teacher said, Aini immediately handed in her work.

#### 2.4 Be diligent and never give up.

Perseverance is manifested in the form of a diligent attitude and never giving up on realizing long-term goals. The attitude of being diligent and never giving up is reflected in people who have grit in their lives. This can be seen from Desi's attitude, who was very enthusiastic about becoming a mathematics teacher on her first day of teaching. Mathematics teaching is a profession that he has been interested in for a long time, and becoming a mathematics teacher has always been his dream. Teaching mathematics in remote areas of the island is his life's goal.

“Esoknya pagi-pagi, Desi berangkat ke sekolah mengayuh sepeda itu.” (Hirata,2020:36)

Data (18) shows that Desi is a diligent person. Even though just yesterday Desi experienced an extraordinary journey that made her energy weak and drained on the way to her work placement location. This didn't bother Desi. She woke up in the morning to get ready to go to work on her first day. His enthusiasm exploded so high that he forgot all the personal fatigue he experienced yesterday due to the journey, the next day Desi pedaled his bicycle too early in the morning to school. Desi spent her days as a mathematics teacher feeling happy.

Passion, diligence, and never giving up are also reflected in Aini's character. Aini, who has no potential in mathematics, is aware of her low mathematical abilities, so her desire to become a smart student makes Aini study hard. Every night Aini also studies next to her father who is sick.

(18) “Malamnya, di samping dipan ayahnya yang terbaring sakit, Aini menggempur buku-buku matematika itu. Tentu saja sebagian besar tak dipahaminya. Namun terus dicobanya menghitung-hitung.” (Hirata,2020:141)

Data (19) shows that Aini's strength of determination makes her a student who studies diligently every day. Unfortunately, even though she has tried to understand everything about mathematics from various learning sources (books, radio, teachers, and friends), Aini is still unable to understand mathematics. This did not make her afraid and give up, Aini remained a student who studied and read diligently even though she did not absorb any knowledge. At least by reading, there are terms in mathematics lessons that he remembers.

### **2.5 The ability to overcome failure and to conquer more important challenges.**

Persistence in trying is manifested in the form of a person's ability to overcome failure to conquer more important challenges. The process of achieving life goals is not a smooth journey. In general, someone who is struggling to realize their life goals does not rule out the possibility of being accompanied by failure and disappointment in the process. Grit in a person teaches persistence over failure. The reality of human life sometimes presents itself as an unwelcome fate. This is what happened to the Desi teacher who had a gap between the goals and destiny that came into his life. Desi's goal as a mathematics teacher was to wait for students who were smart in mathematics, but in reality, the person who came to see Desi's teacher was Aini binti Syafrudin. Students who are left behind in class 1 with mathematics test scores of 0 and 1. Aini was accepted as a student because of Aini's sincerity in wanting to study with Guru Desi to become someone good at mathematics so she could enter medical school. He tutored Aini every day, in class and at his official residence, but it was as if ignorance of mathematics had enveloped Aini so that trying all learning methods did not make Aini understand mathematics. Desi's teacher's hard efforts did not make Aini understand mathematics more, but instead made her even more confused. Aini showed no progress in the learning process with the Desi teacher. This made Desi's teacher angry and annoyed. Teaching Aini mathematics is like

seeing the stupidity of mathematics in all the country's children.

(19)“Guru kembali ke tempat duduknya, dadanya naik turun karena jengkel. Perlu waktu baginya untuk menenangkan diri. Kekesalannya pada Aini, sekaligus kasihan, dan kemarahannya pada diri sendiri karena merasa gagal, mencapai puncaknya malam ini. Saat itulah, diantara tumpukan buku di atas meja, dia melihat buku tua Principles of Calculus yang dulu dibawanya Ketika berangkat merantau untuk mengajar.” (Hirata,2020:183)

Data (20) describes a teacher's failure due to the ignorance seen in his students. An intelligent teacher does not necessarily guarantee that his students are intelligent. This is what Guru Desi experienced with Aini because he was a mathematics teacher who had worked hard to guide his students but had not shown the slightest progress. Guru Desi felt like she had failed as a mathematics teacher when she saw Aini's ignorance of mathematics. Aini also felt this failure in everything she tried to achieve her goals. Her goal as a doctor began with Aini's failure as a medical faculty student. This failure was not due to Aini's ability to not be able to complete the medical school entrance test questions, but because of her inability to pay the down payment to enter the medical school.

(20)“Aini berdiri memandangi Gedung rektorat universitas yang megah itu. Hampa hatinya melihat begitu banyak calon mahasiswa bersukacita di sebelah sana. Aini dilanda ironis yang getir. Dia tahu dia telah berhasil masuk fakultas kedokteran namun dia juga tahu dia telah gagal masuk fakultas kedokteran. Semangatnya runtuh. Sulit dia menerima kenyataan bahwa jurusan-jurusan tertentu hanya untuk anak-anak orang yang mampu, bukan untuk anak seorang penjual mainan di kaki lima seperti dirinya. Bukankah undang-undang menjamin setiap warga negara mendapat pendidikan? Begitu tanyanya lugu dalam hatinya. Dengan lulus tes masuk yang sangat sulit dan kompetitif, Aini merasa telah mendapat hak pendidikannya dan kini dia merasa hak itu

dirampas darinya. Seorang anak miskin yang sangat cerdas, yang telah berusaha setengah mati untuk mengejar mimpi-mimpinya, hari ini telah patah hati pada pendidikan di negerinya sendiri.” (Hirata,2020:284)

Data (21) shows Aini's natural attitude as a human being who is disappointed by her failure. In reality, Aini's academic abilities can be compared to the abilities of genius children in big cities. However, Aini lost because of her family's economic condition. Such a situation in the grit concept is seen as a condition where grit is correlated with failure. A person who has consistent interests does not guarantee that he will always be successful in whatever he tries, but someone who has grit will be able to remain consistent in his interests even though failure will occur in his efforts. Persistence plays a role in increasing opportunities to succeed but cannot guarantee success. This means that someone who has persistence in trying will be able to rise above every failure they encounter.

## CONCLUSION

The conclusion of this research produced the character of grit which is reflected by the characters Desi and Aini through consistency of interest and persistence in trying. The consistency of Desi's character's interests is reflected through his five characters, namely; (1) Desi's consistency in her goal of becoming a mathematics teacher by not being easily influenced by other ideas; (2) Desi's ability not to move on from his goal of becoming a mathematics teacher and finding intelligent students in mathematics; (3) Desi's ability to stay focused on difficult things; (4) Desi's interest in mathematics has never changed; and (5) Desi's ability not to be obsessed with other things that are more tempting. Aini's consistency is shown through her four characters, namely; (1) Aini's consistency in her goal of studying mathematics with a Desi teacher so that she can become a mathematically intelligent student; (2) Aini's ability to stick to her goal of becoming a doctor; (3) Aini's ability to focus on difficult things for work that requires a relatively long time; and (4) Aini's ability to stay true to her

interest in becoming a math-savvy student so she can become a doctor.

The tenacity in trying that is reflected by Desi's character is illustrated through four characters which include; (1) Desi's ability not to give up easily and remain enthusiastic even when experiencing difficulties; (2) hard work to realize his goal of becoming a teacher and finding students who are intelligent in mathematics; (3) Desi's responsibilities as a teacher; and (4) Desi's ability to overcome his failures as a teacher to find and guide intelligent students in mathematics. Perseverance in trying is also reflected in Aini's character which includes; (1) Aini's ability to realize her goal of becoming a doctor and remain enthusiastic despite experiencing difficulties in learning mathematics; (2) Aini's hard work in fighting her ignorance to achieve her life goal, namely becoming a doctor; (3) Aini's responsibilities as a student; and (4) diligent and not giving up easily.

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