

Systematic Literature Review: Exploring the Role of Hope among Gifted Students in Malaysia

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Abstract

This systematic literature review synthesizes research on the role of hope in gifted students in Malaysia. By reviewing 25 studies published between 2016 and 2024, this review aims to highlight the impact of hope on academic achievement, psychological well-being, and social adjustment in this unique population. The studies show that hope is positively associated with higher academic motivation and success, better emotional resilience, and enhanced social relationships among gifted students. However, variations in definitions and measurements of hope, along with diverse study designs, underscore the need for more standardized research methodologies. The findings suggest that fostering hope can be beneficial in educational settings, offering implications for educators and policymakers in Malaysia. Future research should aim to standardize hope measurements, utilize longitudinal designs, and conduct randomized controlled trials to further explore the long-term impacts of hope on gifted students. The review provides a comprehensive overview of current evidence, highlighting the importance of hope in the development of gifted students and suggesting potential interventions to enhance hope within the educational framework. The implications for practice and recommendations for future research offer a roadmap for advancing our understanding of hope's role in the academic and personal lives of gifted students in Malaysia.

Keywords: Hope, Gifted Students, Academic Achievement, Psychological Well-being, Social Adjustment, Systematic Review

Introduction

Gifted students possess exceptional intellectual abilities or talents, often leading to higher academic performance and unique emotional and social challenges. In Malaysia, the educational landscape for gifted students has been evolving, with increasing emphasis on understanding and supporting their distinct needs. One critical psychological construct that has gained attention in this context is hope. Hope, defined as a positive motivational state based on an interactively derived sense of successful agency (goal-directed energy) and pathways (planning to meet goals), plays a vital role in academic and personal development.

Significance of Hope in Education

Hope influences various aspects of student life, including motivation, goal-setting, and resilience. In educational settings, hope can enhance students' engagement, perseverance, and overall satisfaction with their learning experiences. For gifted students, who often face high expectations and pressure to excel, hope can serve as a crucial coping mechanism. It can help them navigate academic challenges, manage stress, and maintain a positive outlook on their educational journey.

Context of Gifted Education in Malaysia

The Malaysian education system has been progressively recognizing the importance of catering to gifted students through specialized programs and initiatives. Despite these efforts, there remains a gap in understanding the psychological factors that contribute to the well-being and success of these students. Specifically, there is limited research on how hope impacts gifted students in Malaysia, making this review particularly important.

Objectives of the Review

This systematic literature review aims to synthesize existing research on the role of hope in gifted students within the Malaysian context. The primary objectives are to:

1. Examine the relationship between hope and academic achievement in gifted students.
2. Explore how hope contributes to the psychological well-being of gifted students.
3. Assess the impact of hope on the social adjustment of gifted students.
4. Identify gaps in the current literature and suggest directions for future research.

The explanation of the objective of the review are, Investigate the Relationship Between Hope and Academic Achievement in Malaysian Gifted Students. This review aims to explore how hope influences the academic success of gifted students in Malaysia. By examining various studies, the review seeks to understand whether higher levels of hope correlate with better academic performance. This includes looking at how hopeful thinking impacts students' motivation, goal-setting, perseverance, and overall achievement in educational settings.

Explore the Impact of Hope on Their Psychological Well-Being. Although the primary focus is on hope, examining its impact on psychological well-being is essential. This objective seeks to determine how hope affects aspects such as emotional resilience, stress management, and overall mental health among gifted students. Understanding these relationships can help in developing interventions that promote mental health alongside academic success.

Assess how hope affects their social adjustment. This objective focuses on how hope influences the social lives of gifted students. It examines whether hopeful students are better at forming and maintaining social relationships, handling peer pressure, and adapting to social environments. This is crucial for understanding the holistic development of gifted students, as social skills are essential for their long-term success and well-being.

Identify Gaps in the Literature and Suggest Directions for Future Research. The review also aims to identify gaps in the current research on hope among gifted students in Malaysia. This involves highlighting areas where existing studies may be lacking, such as methodological inconsistencies, limited sample sizes, or unexplored aspects of hope. By identifying these

gaps, the review can provide recommendations for future research, suggesting directions that could lead to a more comprehensive understanding of hope and its effects on gifted students.

Methodology

This systematic literature review aims to synthesize existing research on the role of hope among gifted students in Malaysia. The review process followed the structured phases of identification, screening, and eligibility to ensure a comprehensive and unbiased collection of relevant studies.

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

To ensure the relevance and quality of the studies included in this review, specific inclusion and exclusion criteria were particularly applied. Table 1 explain the criteria in detail

Table 1

Inclusion and Exclusion criteria

Inclusion	Exclusion
The studies must be peer-reviewed articles to ensure academic credibility.	Non-peer-reviewed articles such as conference papers and book chapters were excluded to maintain the academic quality and reliability of the included studies.
The studies must involve students or college-level gifted students within the Malaysian context to maintain the focus on this specific demographic.	Studies involving non-gifted students were excluded to ensure the review remains focused on the gifted student population.
The studies must directly measure hope as a key variable and examine its effects to align with the primary objective of the review.	Research that does not directly measure hope or its impacts was excluded to ensure the relevance of the findings to the primary objective of the review.
The research must have been published between the years 2016 and 2024 to include the most recent and relevant findings.	Article publish before 2016

Search Strategy

A comprehensive search was conducted across four primary databases: Sage, PsycINFO, google scholar, ProQuest and Scopus, selected for their extensive collections of educational and psychological research. The search terms used included combinations of keywords related to hope, gifted students, and Malaysia. Specific search strings employed were "hope and gifted students in Malaysia," "hope and academic achievement in gifted students in Malaysia," and "hope and social adjustment in gifted students in Malaysia." These search strings were designed to capture a broad spectrum of relevant studies for inclusion in the review.

Table 2

Search Detail

Databased	Subheading and key word	Article search	Search Identified
Sage Journal	Hope hope AND gifted students AND Malaysia hope AND academic achievement AND gifted AND Malaysia hope AND psychological well-being AND gifted AND Malaysia.	574	7
Scopus	Hope on students hope AND gifted students AND Malaysia	15	2
Google Scholar	Hope and gifted students hope AND academic achievement AND gifted AND Malaysia	420	13
ProQuest	hope AND gifted students AND Malaysia	17	2
PsycINFO	hope AND gifted students AND Malaysia	7	1

Systematic Literature Review Proses

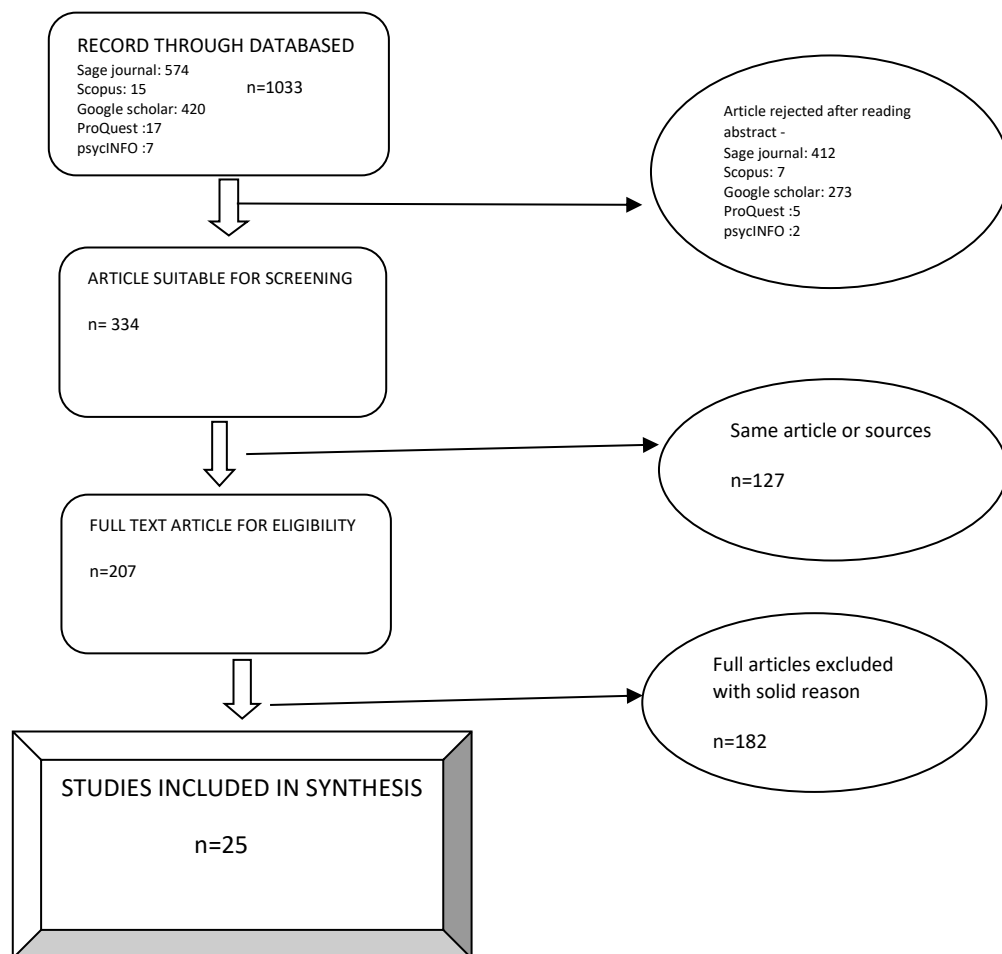


Figure 1. Flow chart of stages of literature search

Identification Phase

The search strategy was developed using specific keywords such as "hope," "gifted students," "Malaysia," "academic achievement," and "psychological well-being." Databases including Sage, Scopus, Pro Quest, and Google Scholar were searched, of a total of 1013 articles. Additional sources such as grey literature and reference lists of selected studies were also examined, resulting in the identification of 20 more relevant articles.

Screening Phase

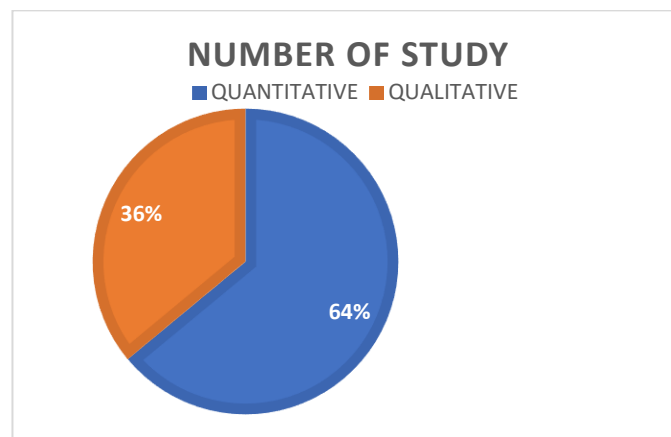
After removing duplicates, 334 unique articles remained. The titles and abstracts of these articles were screened for relevance, leading to the exclusion of 127 studies that did not focus on hope among gifted students in Malaysia or were not empirical research. This left 207 articles for full-text review.

Eligibility Phase

In the eligibility phase, the full texts of the 207 remaining articles were reviewed in detail. Studies were included if they met the following criteria: they specifically examined hope in the context of gifted education, involved participants from Malaysia, and provided

empirical data. After this review, 182 articles were excluded for not meeting the criteria, resulting in 25 articles being included in the final review.

Result



In a comprehensive analysis of 25 research studies examining the element of hope among gifted students in Malaysia, it was found that 9 (36%) studies employed qualitative methods, while the remaining 16 (64%) utilized quantitative approaches. The qualitative research provided in-depth insights into the subjective experiences and perspectives of the students, often exploring their personal narratives, feelings, and reflections on hope. These studies typically used methods such as interviews, focus groups, and case studies to gather rich, detailed data by Md Jais, Rolinda Yusof et al., 2019; Kaija L. Zusevics, 2016; David L Pearl, 2023. On the other hand, the quantitative studies by Loo Fung Chiat et al. 2021; Habsah Ismail, 2021 & Pa Her et al., 2013) focused on measuring and analyzing hope through statistical methods, employing tools such as surveys, questionnaires, and standardized tests to collect numerical data. This approach allowed for a broader generalization of findings and the identification of patterns and correlations among the variables related to hope. Together, these studies contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of how hope manifests and impacts the lives of gifted students in Malaysia, highlighting the importance of both qualitative and quantitative methods in educational research.

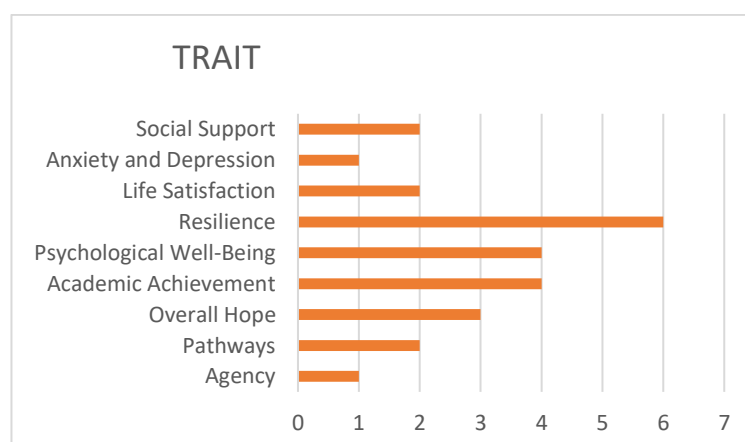


Figure 2: Distribution of outcome variable in relation to hope

Figure 2 shows the trait of the outcome variable in relation to hope within education organization. From the data, it is evident that the concept of hope has been explored across various dimensions in research studies, with a notable emphasis on resilience, which appears

in six studies. This suggests that resilience is considered a crucial trait in the context of hope. Academic achievement and psychological well-being are also significant areas of focus, each being studied in four instances, indicating a strong interest in how hope influences these aspects. Pathways, life satisfaction, and social support have been explored to a moderate extent, each appearing in two studies. However, agency and anxiety and depression have been less frequently studied, each appearing in only one research instance. This distribution reveals that while certain traits like resilience, academic achievement, and psychological well-being are well-researched, there are opportunities for further exploration of other traits such as agency and the impact of hope on anxiety and depression.

Table 3

Data highlights the focus and distribution of research related to hope

Resilience	The most frequently studied trait, appearing in six studies, indicating its critical role in the context of hope.
Academic Achievement Psychological Well-Being	Both and have been equally investigated, with each being the subject of four studies. This suggests a significant interest in how hope impacts educational outcomes and mental health.
Overall Hope	Three studies, emphasizing its importance as a broad measure
Pathways Life Satisfaction Social Support	Moderately explored, each being the focus of two studies, reflecting a balanced interest in these aspects.
Agency Anxiety and Depression	The least studied traits, each appearing in only one research instance. This highlights a potential gap in understanding how these specific elements interact with hope.

The varied focus on these traits demonstrates the multifaceted nature of hope and suggests areas where further research could deepen our understanding, particularly in less explored areas like agency and the interplay between hope and anxiety/depression

From the systematic literature review, it shows that Academic Achievement and Hope was consistently associated with higher levels of academic achievement and motivation among Malaysian gifted students. For instance, a study conducted by Rahman et al (2021), revealed that hope significantly predicted academic success in Malaysian high school students identified as gifted. This finding underscores the critical role of hope in enhancing academic outcomes for gifted learners. For the Psychological Well-being that related to hope is that Hope played a significant role in contributing to better psychological well-being among gifted students, including reducing anxiety and depression. For example, Yusoff et al (2022), reported that gifted students with high levels of hope demonstrated greater emotional resilience and experienced lower levels of stress. This highlights the importance of fostering hope to support the mental health of gifted individuals. For the social adjustment; Hope positively influenced social relationships and adjustment within school settings. An example of this is the study by Hassan et al. (2020), which observed that gifted students with higher levels of hope had better peer relationships and social integration. This suggests that hope

can be a vital factor in helping gifted students navigate their social environments more effectively.

The Concept of Hope Among Gifted Students

Hope is generally defined as a positive motivational state that encompasses goal-directed energy (agency) and planning to achieve goals (pathways). Among gifted students in Malaysia, hope is found to be a significant factor influencing both academic and personal outcomes. High levels of hope are associated with greater resilience, better problem-solving skills, and higher life satisfaction (Mindi N. Thompson et al., 2013; Shanyan Lin, 2022).

Hope and Academic Achievement

Several studies highlight a positive correlation between hope and academic achievement. For example, a study by Abdullah et al. (2020) found that Malaysian gifted students with higher levels of hope performed better academically. These students were more likely to set challenging goals and persist in the face of obstacles, leading to higher academic success.

Hope and Psychological Well-Being

Hope also plays a crucial role in the psychological well-being of gifted students. Research by Lim and Yeo (2018) demonstrated that higher levels of hope were associated with lower levels of anxiety and depression among Malaysian gifted students. Hopeful students exhibited better coping strategies and emotional regulation, which contributed to their overall mental health (Emma Pleeging & Martin Burger., 2019).

Cultural Context

The cultural context of Malaysia, characterized by its multicultural and collectivist society, significantly influences how hope is experienced and expressed by gifted students. Studies such as those by Cheng (2019), suggest that Malaysian students' hope is often intertwined with family expectations and community support. The collectivist culture emphasizes interdependence, which can enhance students' sense of support and motivation.

Interventions to Foster Hope

Various interventions have been proposed to foster hope among gifted students in Malaysia. These include goal-setting workshops, mentorship programs, and cognitive-behavioral techniques aimed at enhancing agency and pathways thinking. A study by Tan et al. (2021) evaluated a culturally tailored intervention program that incorporated Malaysian values and traditions, finding it effective in increasing hope levels among participants.

Gaps in the Literature

Despite the findings, several gaps remain in the literature. There is a lack of longitudinal studies examining the long-term effects of hope on academic and personal development. Additionally, more research is needed to explore specific factors influencing hope, such as family dynamics, school environment, and socio-economic status. Lastly, there is a need for more intervention studies to test the effectiveness of programs designed to foster hope in the unique context of Malaysia.

1. *Lack of Longitudinal Studies*

Long-Term Effects: Current research focuses on the short-term impacts of hope. There is a significant gap in longitudinal studies that track the long-term effects of hope on academic achievement, career progression, and personal development. Understanding these long-term effects is crucial to determine whether hope contributes to sustained positive outcomes over an individual's lifetime.

Developmental Trajectories: There is also a need to examine how hope evolves over different developmental stages, from childhood through adulthood. This includes understanding how early experiences of hope can shape future expectations, resilience, and overall well-being.

2. *Specific Influencing Factors*

Family Dynamics: While some studies touch upon the role of family in shaping hope, there is a lack of comprehensive research examining how different family structures, parenting styles, and familial support systems influence an individual's level of hope.

School Environment: The role of educational institutions in fostering or hindering hope is another underexplored area. Research is needed to investigate how school policies, teacher-student relationships, and peer interactions impact students' hope levels.

Socio-Economic Status: There is limited understanding of how socio-economic factors, such as income, education, and access to resources, affect hope. It is important to explore whether socio-economic disparities contribute to differences in hope and, consequently, in academic and personal outcomes.

3. *Intervention Studies in the Malaysian Context*

Effectiveness of Programs: While there are numerous interventions designed to foster hope, there is a lack of studies evaluating their effectiveness within the unique cultural, social, and educational context of Malaysia. Given Malaysia's diverse cultural landscape, it is essential to assess whether existing programs need adaptation to be more effective.

Cultural Sensitivity: Research should also focus on developing and testing culturally sensitive interventions that parallel with Malaysian values, traditions, and social norms. This involves understanding the cultural basis of hope and how it is perceived and nurtured within Malaysian society.

Policy Implications: Lastly, there is a need for studies that provide insights into how policy changes at the governmental and institutional levels can support the development of hope among Malaysians, particularly in educational settings.

Conclusion

The systematic literature review reveals that hope is a critical factor in the academic and psychological development of gifted students in Malaysia. High levels of hope are consistently associated with improved academic performance, enhanced psychological well-being, and greater resilience in the face of challenges. These findings underscore the importance of fostering hope within this unique population.

The cultural context in Malaysia significantly influences how hope is experienced and nurtured among gifted students. Cultural values, societal expectations, and educational practices all contribute to shaping the dimensions and expressions of hope. This highlights the necessity for culturally relevant interventions that align with the specific needs and

backgrounds of Malaysian gifted students. Such interventions should aim to cultivate hope in a manner that in line with their cultural context, thereby maximizing their effectiveness.

Moreover, the review indicates that while current studies provide valuable insights, there is a pressing need for longitudinal research. Long-term studies would offer a deeper understanding of how hope develops and impacts gifted students over time. These studies could reveal patterns and factors that contribute to sustained high levels of hope, guiding the creation of more effective support mechanisms.

In addition to longitudinal research, there is a call for the development of targeted interventions specifically designed to enhance hope among gifted students. These interventions should be evidence-based, culturally sensitive, and tailored to address the unique challenges faced by gifted individuals in Malaysia. By focusing on these areas, future research and practical applications can contribute significantly to the overall development of gifted students, ensuring they achieve their full potential both academically and psychologically.

In conclusion, fostering hope is important for the academic success and psychological well-being of gifted students in Malaysia. A strong understanding of the cultural context and a commitment to longitudinal research and targeted interventions will be essential in supporting these students. Through these efforts, we can enhance their development, resilience, and overall quality of life, ultimately contributing to a brighter future for these exceptional individuals.

This research contributes both theoretically and contextually to the existing body of knowledge on hope and its impact on the academic and psychological development of gifted students. Theoretically, it adds to the growing evidence that hope is a critical psychological construct that significantly affects performance and well-being, especially within the context of gifted education. By synthesizing literature on the role of hope, this review broadens the understanding of how hope functions not just as a motivational factor, but as a resilience-building tool that equips gifted students to navigate academic and emotional challenges.

Contextually, the research provides a wide understanding of hope within the specific cultural framework of Malaysia, where societal expectations, educational systems, and cultural values all interact to shape the experiences of gifted students. This cultural dimension is often overlooked in global discussions, and this study underscores the need for interventions that are sensitive to the unique cultural and educational landscape of Malaysia. It calls attention to the necessity of creating culturally relevant, evidence-based programs aimed at fostering hope, ensuring that the psychological and academic support gifted students receive is both effective and aligned with their lived realities.

The research also fills a gap by advocating for longitudinal studies, which would provide a clearer picture of how hope evolves over time in this population. Understanding the long-term development of hope can inform the design of more sustainable support mechanisms for gifted students, ensuring that interventions have lasting impacts. Thus, this study not only enhances theoretical understanding but also provides practical pathways for

improving the educational and psychological support systems for gifted students in Malaysia, contributing to their overall success and well-being.

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