



ARTICLE

## Exploring Anchor Personality and True Meaning in Indonesian Young Adults

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### ABSTRACT

Theories of meaning that emphasize only subjectivity can disadvantage individuals and societies. The theory of true meaning attempts to answer these problems by considering human nature. To attain true meaning, an interactive personality theory, such as Anchor Personality Theory, is needed. This study aims to understand the relationship between anchor personality dimensions, namely, materials, self, others, and virtues, and true meaning. This study's subjects are 212 young adults aged 18–34 from different educational and marital backgrounds. This study used a quantitative survey method with regression analysis. The instruments used are the True Meaning Scale and the Anchor Personality Inventory. Results show that virtue anchors positively correlate with true meaning, whereas materials and self-anchors correlate negatively with true meaning. In addition, anchor stability contributes to a significant increase in true meaning. Limitations and suggestions from this research are discussed.

### KEYWORDS

anchor personality dimension, anchor stability, regression, true meaning, young adult

### Introduction

In order for individuals to be able to adapt to and deal with life successfully, they must experience the existence of meaning, which signifies a healthy psychological state. Meaning is a mental representation of the relationship between objects, human relations, and events (MacKenzie & Baumeister, 2014). Meaning helps individuals understand experiences and human behavior and develop plans for

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achieving goals (Park & George, 2013; Steger, 2012). Failure to achieve meaning, called *meaninglessness*, frustrates humans, making them incapable of doing something worthwhile or rendering something valuable (Frankl, 1946/1992). In other words, the concept of understanding life facilitates how individuals accomplish valuable experiences.

Widely researched theories of meaning in psychology refer to how an individual subjectively understands life. People construct their understanding of life to enable themselves to accept, even disadvantageous meanings. In the Meaning in Life Questionnaire (Naghiyae et al., 2020), it can be interpreted that people can have meanings based on their experience and understanding to achieve their goals, without considering consequences of their meanings.

Another view of meaning theory is the meaning of life. Researchers have found that the meaning of life is an objective reality; it is not widely researched in psychology because it assumes that meaning cannot be viewed from a philosophical point of view and it is difficult to research what is wrong or right in psychology (Battista & Almond, 1973). The assumption of Battista and Almond (1973) about the meaning of life is based on their secular background: they assume that there is no authentic meaning of life. Nevertheless, studies from the last decade show the importance of an individual's values or belief systems in the meaning of life (Hanson & VanderWeele, 2021; MacKenzie & Baumeister, 2014; Newton & McIntosh, 2013). Thus, values or belief systems are still essential in discussing life's meaning.

### ***Risk of Subjectivity in Meaning***

Individual life meaning in previous studies shows that subjectivity alone can be detrimental to one's life if not recognized, meaning that as individuals rationalize their actions, a detrimental life may result. Arum (2018) found that extortionists interpreted their own behavior as helping the community with bureaucratic needs. Kinnier et al. (2003) detected a similar meaning: that prominent figures in certain cultures employ several meanings, including "Life is meaningless" or "Life is a joke". Furthermore, this understanding can have implications for a pessimistic attitude toward life because life is meaningless and a risk factor for psychological well-being (Cnen et al., 2020).

### ***True Meaning***

The gap between meaning theories and previous findings shows the importance of theory that can minimize merely subjectivity. Ayuningtyas (2022) puts forward the concept of true meaning, which tries to define meaning so that it is not excessively subjective. The theory of true meaning is an individual's subjective understanding of life that leads to action and includes some characteristics that limit that subjectivity. The nature of true meaning is long-term and motivates never to give up, and at the end of the journey, it involves various emotions and creates a deep impression (Ayuningtyas, 2022). In addition, the true meaning is meaning that is sound for the individual themselves and others. That is to say, true meaning prevents individuals from experiencing a state of meaninglessness, namely the failure to achieve usefulness in life that prevents them from doing something valuable (Frankl, 1946/1992).

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In Riyono's (2020b) meaning theory, the main element that allows humans to reach true meaning is the freedom to choose, which humans naturally have. This freedom to choose has an essential role in controlling urges so that humans can act appropriately in life situations. If an individual fails to control this urge, the resulting meaning is false (called "false meaning"). In other words, it is a meaning that the individual considers correct (Ayuningtyas, 2022), while it is incorrect. False meaning is short-term, self-centered, illusory, triggered by hurts, and shallow (Ayuningtyas, 2022). Extortionists exemplify this false meaning in research conducted by Arum (2018).

### ***"Meaning" in Other Theories***

*True meaning* is a concept responsive to the subjectivity problem of previous meaning theories because it is based on human nature. The implication of human nature in the true meaning theory is that it applies to everyone. According to Razak et al. (2017), human nature means having the potential to provide advantages and to do so responsibly. In addition, the freedom of choice in acting and responding to life situations is also human nature (Frankl, 1946/1992; Riyono, 2011). Freedom to choose can also encourage individuals to choose meanings that can provide benefits.

Meaning in life emphasizes subjectivity; it is less focused on human nature, especially concerning advantages for individuals and communities. On the other hand, when the freedom to choose is not associated with a benefit, there is a risk of false meaning. Therefore, it is essential to research the concept of true meaning.

In other theories, "meaning" is discussed in the "meaning in life" theory. There are limitations to the concept of meaning as meaning in life in previous studies. These studies generally refer to "meaning" as a subjective aspect of individuals. This can be seen in the measurement tools used, for example, several items from the Meaning in Life Questionnaire, namely "I have a clear purpose in life" or "I am looking for a purpose or mission in my life" (Naghiyae et al., 2020). These points have not provided clarity about what meaning of life the individual has or what purpose the individual intends.

This lack of clarity on the meaning of life is supported by Arum study (2018), as mentioned before. This extortion behavior is also preceded by other factors, namely pressure and opportunity from the environment so that the meaning obtained refers to a meaning that is not based on the truthfulness. Unlike the meaning that directs individuals at risk to face difficult times (Bahari, 2019; Janitra, 2021; Tiilikainen et al., 2021), this meaning which is based on a wrong understanding is at risk of harmful or unethical behavior.

Another finding about individual meaning that shows the vulnerability of individual subjectivity without regard to the boundaries of that subjectivity is from Kinnier et al. (2003). The research seeks to identify the meaning of individuals who are considered influential in certain cultures. The meaning obtained includes "Life is meaningless" or "Life is a joke" (Kinnier et al., 2003). These findings indicate that the meaning understood by individuals can be pessimistic. Furthermore, pessimism itself is a risk factor for individual psychological well-being (Cnen et al., 2020). On the other hand, optimism supports psychological well-being and adaptive coping strategies (Cnen et al., 2020; Rezaei et al., 2015). Thus, the identification of the meaning content that leads to usefulness is important to know because this has implications for the psychological health of individuals.

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**Factors Contributing to True Meaning: Anchor Personality**

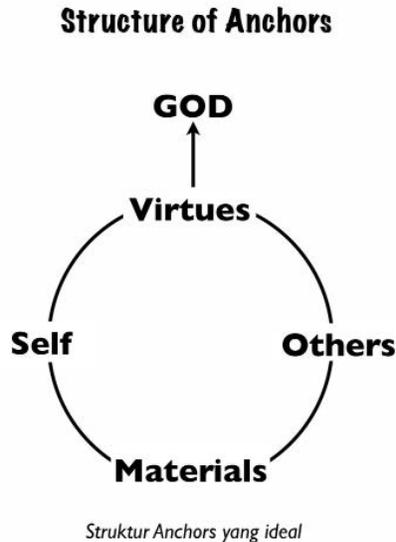
Both external and internal factors contribute to true meaning. External factors include marital status, parental care, and demographic conditions such as education and occupation (Glaw et al., 2020; Shek et al., 2021; Yoon & Cho, 2011). Internal factors include age (Delle Fave et al., 2013), life satisfaction, self-esteem, level of depression, stress, emotional stability, career stability, tolerance for uncertainty, personality, and anxious character (Garrison & Lee, 2017; Jung, 2011; Thomsen et al., 2016; Yoon & Cho, 2011), as well as coping strategies, self-adjustment, self-control, and activities that are considered necessary by individuals (Iwasaki et al., 2018; Jung, 2011; Yoon & Cho, 2011).

Among other factors, personality is a vital contributor to meaning. Personality is the expression of individual differences in behavior patterns, feelings, and thoughts, so personality impacts many areas of human life (American Psychological Association, 2022). Existing personality theories are generally not interactive; for example, in the Big Five Personality (Costa & McCrae, 1988), the implication is that humans are limited in how much they can improve their personal qualities. On the other hand, recent research has shown that personality can change at various ages, even though it dominates early adulthood, mainly due to changes in life situations (Ardelt, 2000; Bleidorn et al., 2021; Boyce et al., 2013; Harris et al., 2016; Roberts & Mroczek, 2008).

Riyono et al. (2012) proposed interactive personality theory, that is, Anchor Personality Theory. This assumes that individual personality can develop along with a learning process because personality results from repetitive behavior (Riyono, 2020b). The anchor is something individuals rely on to deal with problems or as a life guide, which can be divided into four dimensions (Riyono, 2011). These dimensions are materials (material objects such as money or technology), self (self), others (other parties, both individuals and groups), and virtues (universal principles of life). People with “materials” anchor heavily rely on the materials such as money, wealth, or technologies that are not stable and not always available. People with “self” anchor believe that they can do anything and feel no need for help. This anchor also can not be held by individuals because oneself is vulnerable, physically or mentally. People with “others” anchor rely heavily on other parties, despite other parties not always available. People with “virtues” materials rely on the life principles that are universal and always there.

The four anchor personality dimensions form an abstract layer that indicates the priority level. The highest priority is ideally applied to humans to achieve psychological health (Riyono, 2020b). Thus, the ideal priority is virtues, while anchors of materials, self, and others are not ideal because they are in the lower layer. In anchor theory, the highest layer is God. However, humans must go through the principle of virtue to “reach” God (Figure 1); they cannot reach Him directly. Compared to other anchors, God is the perfect support for humans because other anchors such as materials, self, and others are changing in nature. Relying on God provides an unchanging way that can help humans face their lives (Riyono, 2020a).

**Figure 1**  
*Anchor Structure*



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*Note.* Source: Riyono et al., 2012.

Each individual still has an anchor of materials, self, and others, but can still be effective even when they are not the priority (Riyono, 2020b). For example, individuals need social support but must also be aware that social support does not always exist. It is “anchor stability,” a condition whereby individuals make virtues a guide for life and are therefore liberated from the influence of other anchors, that represents the priority of individual anchors. Anchor stability describes a condition where individuals rely on God in their lives. This stability is based on psychological stability, rather than referring to personality persistence.

### ***History of Anchor Personality Theory***

Anchor Personality Theory was first published around 2011 in the dissertation of Bagus Riyono. This theory is about human motivation that is still conflicting in explanations from each researchers, such as motivation theory from Skinner, Maslow, Lewin, and McClelland (Riyono et al., 2012). The anchor theory is based on the point of view that personality is the result of repeated behavioral dynamics (Riyono, 2020a). Riyono et al. (2012) suggest that the overall dynamics of human behavior based on the anchor theory are as follows:

Humans as God’s creatures are given the freedom to choose in their lives in the dynamics of the human motivational model. This human freedom is a clear and natural psychological characteristic of each individual. However, there is

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another side to human nature regarding the existence of the future, which is characterized by risk, uncertainty, and hope. This invisible character in humans shows that humans are helpless creatures. Consciously or not, individuals are aware of the paradox within themselves. This paradox forms an instability in the human psyche that feeds the urge to compensate. In order to compensate for the instability of his creation, man has always sought a guide that guides his daily behavior. Happiness or suffering is determined by how individuals choose and build their hold. (pp. 242–247)

From the explanation of Riyono et al. (2012), anchor theory involves an understanding of human nature and Godhead. This understanding includes the existence and greatness of God, human nature, the nature of life, and how to obtain happiness. In addition, Riyono (2020a) suggests that in anchor theory, there is an “in search” component which refers to human freedom to act. The anchor components have also been described and refer to how individuals respond to situations (Riyono, 2020a).

Regarding individual development, it is possible to shift anchors, although they are not certain. Riyono (2020b) suggests that a child may have other anchors due to their limited abilities. Furthermore, the anchor can shift to self when the individual has reached a period of focusing on themselves (self-centered) which is generally identical in adolescence. The more mature the human intellectual level is, the stronger the tendency to dominate anchor virtues will be. Even so, it does not mean that children or youth cannot achieve virtues. This group can have anchor virtues when they have an understanding of the priorities of anchor materials, self, and others.

Individuals need to have a stable anchor so that they can adaptively face their lives. Individuals with stable anchors are those who place virtue as the mainstay in their life. This is due to the fact that virtues are long-term and more universal, compared to self, other people, and material things (van Oudenhoven et al., 2014). For example, the virtue of caring for fellow human beings is believed the same in some cultures as it is in others. Anchor stability which refers to reliance on virtues does not mean that individuals leave other anchors. Pratiwi and Riyono (2017) state that individuals with stable anchors also need material things, but these are not priorities and goals. Thus, it can be concluded that anchor personality stability is a condition when individuals make virtue values (virtues) a guide in life while still paying attention to the components of themselves, others, and material things but not as priorities and goals.

The term “stability” in Anchor Personality Theory does not refer to personality persistence over time, but refers to psychological stability. In other personality theories that are deterministic in nature, for example the Big Five Personality (Costa & McCrae, 1988) or those based on psychoanalysis, it can be said that the term “stability” refers to personality persistence. This is also a criticism of these deterministic personality theories because it seems as if humans have limits to be better. New research also show that personality can change at various ages, although it predominates in early adulthood (Harris et al., 2016; Roberts & Mroczek, 2008). On the other hand, in Anchor Personality Theory, anchor dominance can change according to an individual’s understanding of the ideal priorities of the anchor dimensions. Thus, it can be

concluded that the stability perspective on Anchor Personality Theory is different from deterministic personality theory.

According to Anchor Personality Theory, four dimensions that measure anchor materials, self, others, and virtues comprise anchor personality (Riyono, 2020a). Each dimension consists of five aspects, which are explained as follows:

1. Mainstay to choose and decide that support for individuals which can be material, self, others, or virtue in the process of choosing and deciding in certain situations in their lives or around them.

2. Attribution of success that suppose the individual's perception of the source of his success, the individual can interpret their success as a function of materials, self, others, or virtues.

3. Attribution of happiness that describes the source of individual happiness, which means that individuals can feel happiness because of materials, self, others, or virtues.

4. Mainstay to hang on to hope that explains how individuals entrust something in their daily lives, which can be in the form of entrusting materials, self, others, or virtues.

5. Mainstay for interpreting phenomena that clarifies how individuals interpret an event in life or around themselves. Individuals can interpret events because they are related to materials, self, others, or virtues.

### ***Relationship Between Anchor Personality and True Meaning***

Although not explicitly, previous studies have shown that a relationship exists between virtue and meaning. According to Krause et al. (2019), individuals who apply principles of life, such as caring for others, forgiving, and helping others, experience a higher sense of meaning in life. Conversely, the behavior of helping others may not stem from anchor virtues when the individual aims to gain recognition from others (anchor others), demonstrate self-ability (anchor self), or obtain material compensation (anchor materials).

The Value in Action theory and morality studies also help to explain the relationship between anchor virtues and true meaning. One of the virtues in Value in Action (VIA) theory, namely, courage, consists of characteristics that facilitate how individuals train themselves to achieve valuable goals (Ruch et al., 2021). Furthermore, valuable purposes are part of true meaning. In the study of morality, virtue is a disposition that helps individuals maintain good life patterns and goals because virtue helps people face difficulties, dangers, temptations, and disturbances and increases self-knowledge and knowledge of good things (values) (MacIntyre, 1984). Thus, anchor virtues contribute positively to true meaning.

The study of materialism shows a link between anchor materials and true meaning. A reliance on material anchors can be described as materialism. Burroughs and Rindfleisch (2002) found that materialism is more concerned with material objects than people because objects can give people power and control over others. Duh (2015) argues that materialism risks ignoring public interest because it emphasizes personal satisfaction. There is also a negative relationship between the anchor self and true meaning because a self-centered attitude is related to the perception that one has no meaning (Khatami & Khodabakhshi-Koolaei, 2021). In the anchor of others, the relationship with true meaning forms a negative relationship because the

dominance of the anchor of others potentially makes individuals try to meet social demands (Akhtar & Firmanto, 2021).

The true meaning theory, which tries to answer the ambiguity of the theory of meaning, has not been examined much. Previous findings mainly utilized meaning in life theory without exploring how research participants experienced the meaning. On the other hand, the psychological implications of the existing concept of meaning indicate the need for a concept limiting individual subjectivity. In addition, interactive personality theory has not been widely used to achieve true meaning. Therefore, this study will empirically focus on understanding the relationship between anchor personality and true meaning.

This research was conducted in the early adult group. This group is assumed to be experiencing early maturity as individuals and has undergone a transition period, such that orientation, worldview, and self-stability have already begun to form (Arnett, 2000; Icenogle et al., 2019). In addition, the early adult group has generally already experienced significant life events. It stimulates the formation of meaning, for example, in work, forming a new family (marriage), or independent processes from parents (Winpenny et al., 2020). Forming meaning successfully during early adulthood is also essential because it becomes a protective factor for the later life development process. On the other hand, the experience of existential problems during this period also has the potential for individuals to experience periods of “bottomless darkness” (Lundvall et al., 2020).

Based on a theoretical review of the relationship between anchor dimensions and true meaning, this study has several hypotheses. Material, self, and other anchors are hypothesized to negatively predict true meaning. On the other hand, virtue anchors positively predict true meaning. Furthermore, anchor stability also has a significant positive role in true meaning.

## Method

### Subject

The subjects of this study were Indonesian citizens, male and female, aged 18–34 years. Early adulthood generally starts from 18–34 years (Cunningham et al., 2020; Franssen et al., 2020). Nonetheless, this study focuses on individuals who have at least entered college because those who have completed schooling, as a demographic, are an important market, among others in early adulthood (Schulenberg & Schoon, 2012).

Subjects were obtained by non-probability sampling using a snowball sampling approach (Creswell, 2012). Snowball sampling was used because it allows the acquisition of many subjects even though generalization of research results cannot be made (Creswell, 2012). Firstly, the authors shared an online poster through the social media and colleagues. Secondly, the authors ask their colleagues to share the poster to each of their colleagues or societies that met the requirements. Responses from the participants were collected in the Google<sup>1</sup> Spreadsheet. This research received ethical approval from the Faculty of Psychology, Universitas Gadjah Mada, with the number 6717/UN1/FPSi.1/3/SD/PT.01.04/2021 on November 12, 2021.

<sup>1</sup> Google™ and the Google Logo are trademarks of Google Inc. in the U.S. and other countries.

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The number of subjects for this study amounted to 212, with an age range from 18 to 34 years, with a mean age of 22.38 years. Of the total, 65 people (30.66%) were male and 147 subjects were female (69.34%). A total of 198 people (93.4%) were not married; two people were married but did not have children (0.94%), and 12 people were married and had children (5.66%). In terms of education, 104 people (49.05%) graduated from high school; four people (1.89%) graduated with a diploma; 94 people (44.34%) graduated with a bachelor's degree; and ten people (4.72%) graduated with a master's degree.

### **Research Instrument**

*True Meaning Scale.* The True Meaning Scale was used to measure true meaning, as constructed by Riyono (2021a, 2021b). This scale consists of 10 items (each aspect of purpose and value has five items) with four answer choices, and one answer indicates true meaning. What I consider the most important in my life is ..." (purpose aspect) and "In my opinion, the essence of Pancasila (Indonesia National principles) is ..." (value aspect). The correct answer was given a score of 1, whereas the wrong answer was given a score of 0. In this study, the True Meaning Scale has reliability with a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.614. The reliability of the True Meaning Scale in the previous studies was 0.711 and 0.793, respectively, when administered to subjects aged 18–68 (Riyono, 2021a, 2021b).

*Anchor Personality Inventory (API).* The API scale was used to measure anchor personality (Riyono, 2020a), which consists of four dimensions that measure anchor materials, self, others, and virtues. Each dimension consists of four aspects: the reliance on choosing and deciding, the attribution of success and happiness, the reliance on hoping, and interpreting phenomena. Each dimension consists of 10 items, and the assessment is in the form of a Likert with five answer options, namely, 1 = *very not appropriate*, 2 = *not appropriate*, 3 = *quite appropriate*, 4 = *appropriate*, and 5 = *very appropriate*.

In this study, the reliability coefficient of Cronbach's Alpha was .791 for material anchors; .751 for anchors of self; .723 for other anchors; and .740 for anchor virtues. Previous research shows the reliability of each dimension in a range from .737 to .852 in the employee group (Dwatra, 2016) and the range from .836 to .919 in the education staff group (Nugrahany, 2017). The construct validity of the API was measured by confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). The CFA results show that each anchor dimension has five items that strongly represent each aspect. CFA with five items produces a model with the majority loading factor above 0.4, but there are two items with a loading factor on the self dimension of 0.368 and 0.399. The model's fit is also indicated by RMSEA .0572 (model fit if < .06) and SRMR .073 (model fit if < .08).

This study used a standardized score for anchor personality dimensions to form a composite variable for anchor stability. This calculation is a correction for the stability of the anchor composite variable formula from previous research that did not use a standardized score (Ashari, 2019; Rohma, 2019; Triatmojo, 2019). Akhtar and Firmanto (2021) mention that mathematical formulas are unsuitable for finding anchor stability because anchor stability is a complex inter-anchor psychological dynamic

in individuals. Nonetheless, Song et al. (2013) stated that standardized scores are usable in forming composite variables included in the averaging type. Using the anchor stability formula with a standardized score can also represent the dynamics of individual anchors, namely, when anchor virtues have been cleaned of the effects of anchor materials, self, and others.

**Data Analysis**

The analysis utilized in this research is multiple regression and simple linear regression performed with JASP software. Before testing the hypothesis, assumption tests were performed for each analysis. Multiple regression analysis was performed on true meaning as the dependent variable and on anchor dimensions as an independent variable. Furthermore, simple linear regression analysis was conducted to observe the role of anchor stability on true meaning. Anchor stability is obtained from the following formula:

$$Anchor\ Stability = ZVirtues - ZMaterials - |ZSelf - ZOthers| \quad (1)$$

**Results**

**Descriptive Data**

Based on descriptive analysis, we can see that on average, the subjects answered incorrectly on the aspects of true meaning, thus indicating low true meaning (Table 1). The results of these anchor dimensions indicate that subjects have higher virtue anchors than materials, self, and other anchors. Overall, these results can be seen in Table 1.

**Table 1**  
*Descriptive Data*

| Variable     |           | Xmin | Xmax | Total Average | Item Score Average | SD   |
|--------------|-----------|------|------|---------------|--------------------|------|
| True meaning | Purpose   | 0    | 5    | 2.41          | 0.48               | 1.13 |
|              | Value     | 0    | 5    | 1.73          | 0.35               | 1.22 |
| Anchor       | Materials | 6    | 25   | 17.58         | 3.52               | 4.08 |
|              | Self      | 7    | 25   | 17.53         | 3.51               | 3.48 |
|              | Others    | 6    | 24   | 16.40         | 3.28               | 3.61 |
|              | Virtues   | 11   | 25   | 21.43         | 4.29               | 2.91 |

**Data Categorization**

The data categorization used in this study is based on a hypothetical score (Table 2). We can see that, in the true meaning variable, a majority of subjects fall under the low category. In anchor self and others, most subjects are in the medium group. On the other hand, in anchor materials and virtues, most subjects are in the high group (Table 3).

**Table 2**  
*Data Categorization*

| Variable                                     | <i>N Low</i><br>( $X < \text{Mean} - 1SD$ ) | <i>N Middle</i><br>( $\text{Mean} - 1SD \leq X < \text{Mean} + 1SD$ ) | <i>N High</i><br>( $\text{Mean} + 1SD \leq X$ ) |
|--|---|---|---|
| True meaning                                 | $X < 3.4$                                   | $3.4 \leq X < 6.7$  | $6.7 \leq X$                                    |
| Materials, Self, Others, and Virtues anchors | $X < 11.7$                                  | $11.7 \leq X < 18.3$  | $18.3 \leq X$                                   |

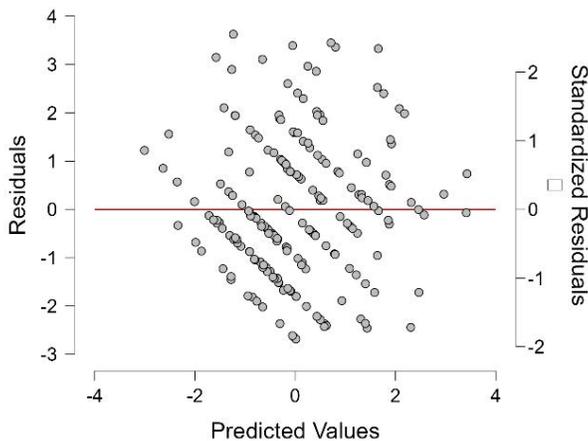
**Table 3**  
*Results of Data Categorization*

| Variable          | <i>N Low</i> | <i>N Middle</i> | <i>N High</i> |
|-------------------|--------------|-----------------|---------------|
| True meaning      | 100 (47.2%)  | 80 (37.7%)      | 32 (15.1%)    |
| Materials anchors | 18 (8.5%)    | 93 (43.9%)      | 101 (47.6%)   |
| Self-anchors      | 13 (6.1%)    | 116 (54.7%)     | 83 (39.2%)    |
| Others anchors    | 21 (9.9%)    | 121 (57.1%)     | 70 (33.0%)    |
| Virtues anchors   | 1 (0.5%)     | 37 (17.5%)      | 174 (82.1%)   |

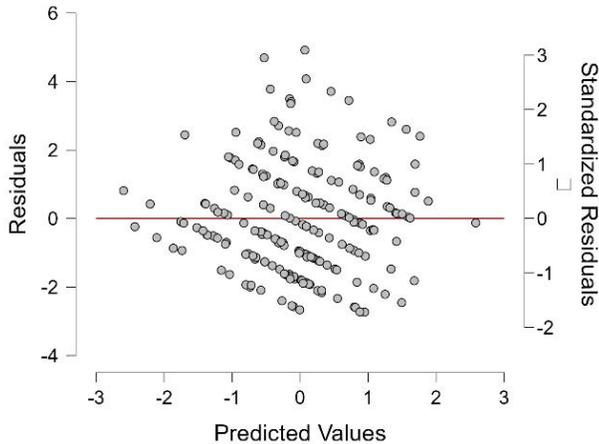
**Assumption Test**

*Linearity and Homoscedasticity.* The data in this study are linear, and there is no heteroscedasticity. It is viewed from the spread of the plots, showing relatively evenly distributed residual data. This linearity and homoscedasticity occur in the data on the relationship between the four dimensions of anchor and true meaning (Figure 2) and on anchor stability and true meaning (Figure 3).

**Figure 2**  
*Scatterplot for Anchor Dimensions and True Meaning*



**Figure 3**  
 Scatterplot for Anchor Stability and True Meaning



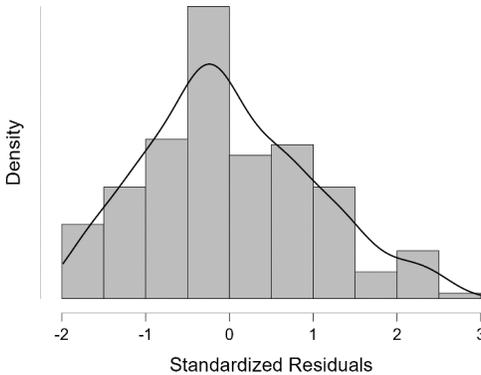
*Multicollinearity.* There is no multicollinearity between the anchor dimensions and true meaning. This can be seen from the variance inflation factor (VIF) value of all anchor dimensions between 1 and 10 and the multicollinearity test tolerance value above 0.01 (Table 4). Although not all VIF and tolerance results are close to 1, the data of this study do not show multicollinearity because factor analysis results show that the anchor model with four dimensions shows the fit of the model.

**Table 4**  
 Results of the Multicollinearity Test

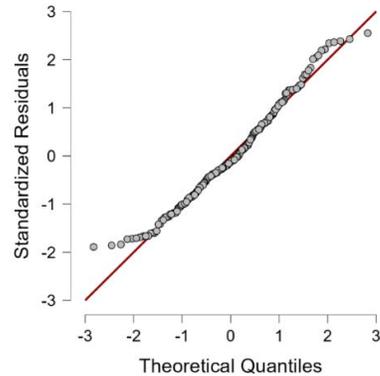
| Dependent Variable: True Meaning | Tolerance | VIF   |
|----------------------------------|-----------|-------|
| Materials Anchors                | .685      | 1.460 |
| Self-Anchors                     | .728      | 1.373 |
| Others Anchors                   | .957      | 1.044 |
| Virtues Anchors                  | .954      | 1.048 |

*Residual normality.* The residual normality test can be seen in the histogram and Normal Q–Q Plot. The standardized residual histogram from the anchor dimensions and the true meaning data, as well as the stability of the anchor and the true meaning data, indicates normality. This is indicated by a bell shape, although there is a slight positive slope (Figure 4 and Figure 6). Furthermore, based on the Q–Q Plot, the residual data on the relationship of the anchor dimensions and anchor stability to the true meaning tend to match the predicted values (Figures 5 and Figure 7). Thus, overall, this study met all the assumptions required in the regression analysis.

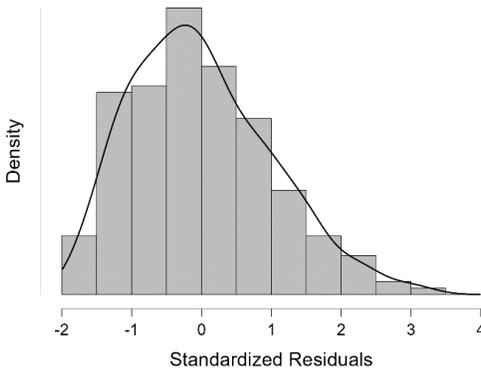
**Figure 4**  
*Standardized Residuals Histogram of the Anchor Dimensions and True Meaning*



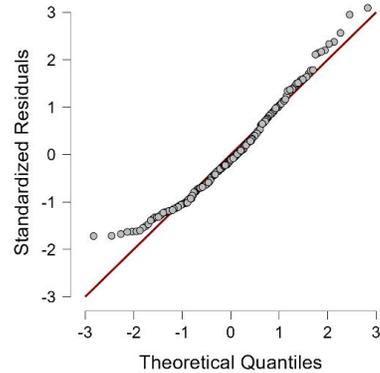
**Figure 5**  
*Q–Q Plot of Standardized Residuals From the Anchor Dimensions and True Meaning*



**Figure 6**  
*Standardized Residuals Histogram of the Anchor Stability and True Meaning*



**Figure 7**  
*Q–Q Plot of Standardized Residuals From the Anchor Stability and True Meaning*



**Hypothesis Testing**

The relationship between the four anchor dimensions and anchor stability is shown on Table 5. Virtue anchors positively predict true meaning among the four anchor dimensions, whereas other anchors have a negative relationship, except for other anchors that have no significant relationship in this regression analysis. In addition, the anchor dimensions computed in anchor stability also have a significant positive relationship with true meaning. The correlation between anchor dimensions can be seen in Table 5.

Based on multiple regression analysis using the forward method, we can see an increase in anchor virtues and a decrease in anchor materials, and a significant increase is self-predicted in true meaning (Model 3). This model is also the best model

for predicting the increase in true meaning compared to the other models; this can be seen in the increase in  $R^2$  (Table 6). The simple linear regression analysis reports show an increase in anchor stability as predicting a significant increase in true meaning.

**Table 5**  
*Correlation Matrix*

| Variable            | 1        | 2        | 3        | 4     | 5       |
|---------------------|----------|----------|----------|-------|---------|
| 1. True Meaning     |          |          |          |       |         |
| 2. Materials        | -.497*** |          |          |       |         |
| 3. Self             | -.460*** | .516***  |          |       |         |
| 4. Others           | -.094    | .178**   | .024     |       |         |
| 5. Virtue           | .396***  | -.202**  | -.125    | .030  |         |
| 6. Anchor Stability | .488***  | -.605*** | -.307*** | -.022 | .710*** |

Note. \*  $p < .05$ ; \*\*  $p < .01$ ; \*\*\*  $p < .001$ .

**Table 6**  
*Regression Analysis Results*

| Variables         | B      | SE B  | $\beta$ | t         | $R^2$ |
|-------------------|--------|-------|---------|-----------|-------|
| Model 1           |        |       |         |           |       |
| Constant          | 3.905  | 0.483 |         | 8.093***  | 0.247 |
| Material Anchors  | -0.222 | 0.027 | -0.497  | -8.307*** |       |
| Model 2           |        |       |         |           |       |
| Constant          | -1.227 | 1.516 |         | -0.810*   | 0.339 |
| Material Anchors  | -0.125 | 0.017 | -0.479  | -7.151*** |       |
| Virtue Anchors    | 0.124  | 0.030 | 0.278   | 4.150***  |       |
| Model 3           |        |       |         |           |       |
| Constant          | -0.406 | 1.489 |         | -0.273*   | 0.391 |
| Materials Anchors | -0.079 | 0.022 | -0.305  | -3.639*** |       |
| Virtues Anchors   | 0.128  | 0.029 | 0.287   | 4.413***  |       |
| Self-Anchors      | -0.076 | 0.023 | -0.272  | -0.272**  |       |
| Model 4           |        |       |         |           |       |
| Constant          | 0.559  | 0.146 |         | 3.821     | 0.251 |
| Anchor Stability  | 0.529  | 0.075 | 0.501   | 7.096     |       |

Note. \*  $p < .05$ ; \*\*  $p < .01$ ; \*\*\*  $p < .001$ . Models 1, 2, and 3 were obtained from multiple regression, whereas Model 4 was obtained from simple linear regression.

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## Discussion

This study aims to determine the role of anchor personality dimensions (materials, self, others, and virtues) and the composite form of anchor dimensions, such as anchor stability, on true meaning. Results indicate that virtue anchors and anchor stability play a significant role in increasing true meaning. On the other hand, self and material anchors contribute to a significant decline in true meaning. In contrast, anchors of others do not contribute to a significant decrease in true meaning.

Contradictions are found in the data, namely, high virtues but also high materials accompanied by low true meaning. The relationship between anchor materials and true meaning is theoretically negative, while anchor virtues and true meaning ideally have a positive relationship. This contradiction can occur because the items in these anchor virtues contain universal values, so individuals are prone to social desirability. On the other hand, items in the dimensions of materials, self, and others tend to be neutral.

Item characteristics and measurement results can help to identify items with social desirability potential. Items with evaluative values, namely, good or bad according to individuals, can encourage individuals to give high ratings (Konstabel et al., 2006). Furthermore, this evaluative value is identifiable from the average rating above the median value of the scale used (Bäckström & Björklund, 2013). For example, if the scale used is Likert (1–5), then items with high social desirability tend to average above 3.

The potential for social desirability on the virtues dimension in the Anchor Personality Inventory has been anticipated by composite variables and variations within the item context. The composite variable obtained by reducing the virtues anchor score with materials, self, and other anchors produces virtues that have been “cleansed” of the three dimensions. It is necessary to clean the virtues anchor because, within the individual, there are also anchor materials, self, and others. The resulting anchor stability shows the strength or weakness of individual virtues because the resulting score goes from a negative to a positive score range. However, this composite variable in the Anchor Personality Inventory requires evaluation by conducting further research, especially regarding the suitability of the formula used with the measurement principles and theory used (McKenna & Heaney, 2020).

The subsequent anticipation is related to the variation of item context. Bäckström and Björklund (2013) suggest that a high average rating is essential to identifying critical personality dimensions. Furthermore, Bäckström and Björklund (2013) also explain that compared to using items with variations in the average rating, it is better to use context or behavior variations on the same personality dimension. Aspects in the Anchor Personality Inventory themselves take various forms in individual contexts in dealing with everyday situations. These aspects include reliance on choosing and deciding, attribution of success and happiness, reliance on hoping, and interpreting phenomena.

The low true meaning score is attributable to the characteristics of most of the subjects in this study. For example, most of them have not married yet. Social relationships such as marriage can be one way for individuals to achieve meaning because in marriage, some experiences are stressful (Frankl, 1946/1992; Park & George, 2013). In the meaning-making model, stressful situations motivate individuals to

find meaning (Park & George, 2013). However, marital status is not a certainty by which individuals achieve true meaning because true meaning can also be achieved through individuals making active efforts such as reflective thinking (Czyżowska & Gurba, 2021).

Virtues are individual characteristics that can apply values within various contexts (Kristjánsson, 2010). The thinking process is a component of virtues that contributes to true meaning. The tendency to act on virtues requires understanding the appropriate context in which to apply them in terms of time and place (Root Luna et al., 2017). This understanding can then encourage the formation of mature decisions (Kristjánsson et al., 2021). This decision is formed because of substantive moral aspirations and cognitively guided moral emotions (Kristjánsson et al., 2021). Therefore, in general, actions based on virtues can provide benefits to individuals.

Virtues can manifest in various forms, including those related to the process of personal understanding, namely, intellectual humility, which is related to acquiring knowledge, including reflective thinking, the need for knowledge, involvement in intellectual activities, curiosity, open-mindedness, and knowledge (Krumrei-Mancuso et al., 2020). This idea is supported by Al-Attas, who argues that personal knowledge is a sign that he has achieved meaning (Wan Daud, 1998). Thus, virtues' contribution to true meaning is based on how virtues encourage individuals to attempt a comprehensive understanding of their life situations.

The existence of science encourages individuals to choose and decide, to attribute success and happiness, and to hope and interpret phenomena based on knowledge so that individuals can have ideals and values that are essential to be lived and believed. The knowledge component in these virtues is essential in every other aspect of the other anchor dimensions, namely materials, self, and others. Previous research has also shown that reflection on life, especially about oneself and the future, facilitates individuals to find their purpose in life (Schippers & Ziegler, 2019). On the other hand, relying on materials, self, and others indicates that individuals do not maximize their potential to seek essential knowledge and direct their actions based on knowledge.

The role of virtues anchor on true meaning has not been found in previous research, but other findings represent it. Meaning, which leads to true meaning, was found more within the group of subjects who believe in God than it did within the group of non-believers (Duggal & Basu, 2012). The meaning found by groups who believe in God includes self-understanding and serenity, pro-social attitudes and responsibility, and higher life goals (Cranney, 2013). On the other hand, the meaning found by non-believers includes believing that events in the world are coincidences and that there is no real purpose in life. That is, reliance on God, which marks an individual's anchor virtues, encourages individuals to find true meaning.

Worldview implies a belief in God which is internalized in life (Hackney & Sanders, 2003). With worldview, individuals follow patterns in how they respond to life, which can lead to true or false meaning, depending on the individual's level of reliance on God. Reliance on God can encourage the formation of true meaning because of one's worldview. Worldview contains life's basic philosophy and principles (Ng & Tay, 2020), but the general public is unfamiliar with this concept (Gulliford et al., 2021). This shows

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how the learning process is essential to individuals' gaining knowledge about life and its meaning (Wan Daud, 1998), especially those that lead to true meaning.

The relationship between material anchors and true meaning can be discerned from the representative concept of materialism. Material anchors are individuals' reliance on material objects such as money or other property in the manner they deal with life (Riyono, 2020b). Materialism is values and goals that focus on wealth, possessions, self-image, and social status (Kasser, 2016). Individuals with material anchors tend to be oriented toward materialism because of the manner they rely on the material objects they get in life. However, no studies have empirically tested the relationship between these two concepts, so further studies are needed.

As a theoretical concept related to material anchors, materialism is negatively related to meaning in the form of meaning in life (Kashdan & Breen, 2007). Parker and Ivtzan (2016) also found that individuals with high material aspirations tend to have lower eudaimonic well-being. Eudaimonic well-being describes the presence of personal and social abilities, including meaning in life, which contribute optimally to psychosocial functioning (Ryff, 2018). Thus, the results of this study indirectly support that material anchors contribute negatively to the true meaning.

The relationship between the anchor of others and true meaning differs from the role of social relations contributing to the formation of meaning. According to Frankl (1946/1992), social relationships are one factor in forming meaning in life. However, not just social relations form meaning, especially true meaning but more so the processes that occur within them. Social relations are aspects that individuals generally own, but how individuals place their social relations needs to be explored further to form meaning. Therefore, in reviewing social relations in the context of anchors, the thing that needs to be the focus is how individuals rely on other people for their lives.

In anchor of others, social relations or other parties are very reliable in dealing with life, for example, relying on happiness or success in others. This is illustrated by emotional dependence on others, characterized by excessive emotional demands, narrow, unbalanced interpersonal relationships, or excessive need for others (Petruccioli et al., 2014). Another study found that anticipated and social support were associated with more profound meaning in life (Krause, 2007). Machell et al. (2014) also found that positive everyday events in one's social environment were associated with increased meaning. However, in the results of these studies, meaning is not within the scope of the concept of true meaning, and the dynamics of social relations are not explored much, so the level of social dependence cannot be known.

In other studies, the relationship between the anchor of self and true meaning can be represented in Self-Determination Theory (SDT) components autonomy and competence (Ryan & Deci, 2017). Autonomy is the feeling that action can be done by dint of self-reliance. Competence is a feeling that one can do something, complete work, and achieve goals. Kukita et al. (2022) found that autonomy contributed to meaningfulness in a quadratic relationship. The meaning is higher at low to moderate autonomy, but at a high level, there is no increase. It also confirms the importance of placing priority on anchor dimensions. In this case, the anchor self is not suitable as the main priority to form meaning because it will cause a decrease in meaning.

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The three anchor personality dimensions not contributing to the increase in true meaning can be explained in terms of their relationships. Individuals with low well-being tend to be self-centered and motivated only to fulfill their needs and pleasures (Wissing et al., 2021). On the other hand, individuals with high levels of well-being tend to focus on benefits for others and the greater good (Wissing et al., 2021). Other research shows an increase in materialism in the young generation aged 18–25 years, which is influenced by several factors, including self-centeredness and the development of a false personality to be accepted by the social environment (Masood et al., 2016). Thus, individuals who prioritize anchor materials tend to have a high level of self and other anchors but not virtues anchor.

Results of multiple regression analysis show that other anchors do not contribute significantly. However, this does not affect the use of the formation of composite anchor stability variables. Previous studies on measuring well-being have found different interpretations of composite variables when their components are separated. The well-being instrument, COMPAS-W, consists of six components; from these components, the overall well-being of individuals can be formed (Gatt et al., 2014). In this study, measurements were also made based on composite variables and well-being components, namely, composure (calm), own-worth (self-esteem), mastery, positivity (positive attitude), achievement, and satisfaction. The interpretation of anchor stability and separated anchor dimensions is also different.

This research contributes to a new understanding of the relationship between true meaning and anchor personality. However, some limitations can be used as improvements in future research. First, the distribution of subjects is not balanced. It occurs in the unbalanced proportion of gender, age, last education, and marital status. According to Frankl (1946/1992), marital status is essential in forming meaning. It can be explored further by comparing statuses were there to be a more even distribution of subjects.

Second, the instrument for measuring true meaning is relatively new and needs improvement. In this study, the reliability of the True Meaning Scale is quite good for an instrument still under development as indicated by its Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of around .6 (Ursachi et al., 2015). On the other hand, in general, a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of .7 is considered quite applicable (Taber, 2018). Improvement of this item also makes it possible to conduct a validity test involving a group of experts.

Third, this study uses the concept of adulthood, which is still influenced by cultural bias, namely, the concept of early adulthood from Scales et al. (2016) and emerging adulthood from Arnett (2000). Early adulthood still refers to the condition of Western society, where social norms are different from those in Indonesia. For example, the culture of leaving home as an assessment of maturity or living together between women and men is not always in the form of marriage (cohabiting). Thus, further research is expected to be able to use the True Meaning Scale after going through psychometric testing and selecting subjects that represent the intended community.

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## Conclusion

This study shows that an increase in anchor virtues, a decrease in self, and a decrease in materials contribute to an increase in true meaning. Anchor personality in the form of anchor stability also predicts an increase in true meaning. In addition, this study's results indicate that for individuals to achieve true meaning, they can glean in depth the principles of life (virtues) from the learning process not limited to education. On the other hand, by failing to apply the principles of life, individuals risk being led to false meaning.

## Implications

This research has implications for developing the concept of meaning directed at the individual's advantage. The theory of meaning, which explains true meaning, can be used by mental health practitioners to determine an individual's freedom to choose to achieve true meaning. In addition, mental health practitioners can also see the psychological stability of individuals in terms of their anchors. Furthermore, strengthening the freedom to choose and anchor virtues is accomplished by encouraging clients to be involved in the learning process, which can be conducted in various settings, formally or informally, and at any time.

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