



## Comparative analysis of the virtue of wisdom proposed by positive psychology in relation to the Aristotelian proposal.

Análisis comparativo de la virtud de la sabiduría propuesta por la psicología positiva en relación a la propuesta aristotélica.

DOI: 10.32870/sincronia.axxv. n80. 3b21

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**Received:** 10/02/2021

**Reviewed:** 30/04/2021

**Accepted:** 16/06/2021

### ABSTRACT

In terms of transdisciplinarity, the contrast between Seligman's positive psychology and Aristotle's theory of virtues will be confronted, since both tend to rescue the central nucleus of the formation of the human being, which are the virtues or strengths of human capital. The confluence that this contemporary theory has with the Aristotelian eudemonist vision will be approached via a comparative hermeneutic, since the summation of virtues understood as second nature –built by good habits– is an original contribution of the Greek philosopher. Noticing this confluent meeting or convergent edge from an analytical point of view, as a common denominator in both theories, allows us to make a connection of historicity that is often eluded in contemporary thought due to ignorance.



**Keywords:** Aristotle. Eudemonist ethics. Positive psychology. Good life. Seligman. Intellectual virtues.

## RESUMEN

En términos de transdisciplinariedad se confrontará el contraste entre la psicología positiva de Seligman y la teoría de las virtudes de Aristóteles, ya que ambas tienden a rescatar el núcleo central de la conformación del ser humano, que son las virtudes o fortalezas del capital humano. Se abordará vía una hermenéutica comparada la confluencia que esta teoría contemporánea tiene con la visión eudemonista aristotélica, ya que la sumatoria de virtudes entendidas como una segunda naturaleza –construida por buenos hábitos– es una aportación originaria del filósofo griego. El percatarnos de dicho encuentro confluyente o arista convergente desde un punto de vista analítico, como denominador común en ambas teorías, permite hacer una conexión de historicidad que muchas veces se elide en el pensamiento contemporáneo por desconocimiento.

**Palabras clave:** Aristóteles. Ética eudemonista. Psicología positiva. Vida buena. Seligman. Virtudes intelectuales.

This article seeks to present and compare the vision that positive psychology and Aristotelian realist philosophy have on the virtue of wisdom. The first argues from a psychological position and the second from a philosophical-anthropological position of realistic cut. Although they are two different disciplines, visions and epochs, the relationship or closeness is in the object of study: wisdom. In our current context, there is virtually no talk of wisdom, but it is certainly implicated in our practices.

Realist philosophy as a Greek philosophical model, has a greater baggage in the knowledge of this virtue, because it has been maturing it for a long time; in addition to the fact that "all classical ethical systems, since Plato and Aristotle, are systems of virtues" (Valenzuela, 2014, p. 23). In the case of Positive Psychology, which is a psychological current of relative recent birth, its baggage comes from the same philosophy, from deep psychology and what it itself by its own research has done regarding the manifestation of this virtue in man.

The ultimate goal of this article will be to determine how much the view of positive psychology on the virtue of wisdom matches that proposed by realist philosophy. To do this, we will analyze the



two proposals that we will then confront in the spirit of clarifying their concept as best as possible, and see how usable they are both.

Since the beginning of its research and writings, around the 1980s, Positive Psychology has had among its fundamental objectives to research, define and develop programs to "increase [and reinforce] strengths and virtues and offer guidelines for finding what Aristotle called the 'good life'" (Seligman, 2002, p. 12). Based on this concern, a series of investigations and studies have been encouraged that have the purpose of promoting the development of a psychological-operational classification of the virtues and strengths of character, which allows: identifying, measuring, cultivating and promoting them, since "the moral and ethical dimension of the human being includes all practical life, all human actions" (Valenzuela, 2014, p. 24). For positive psychology, these virtues and strengths of character, as they manifest themselves, confer a certain quality of human existence. That is, virtues and strengths of character contribute to the full realization of people (Seligman, et al., 2005).

Returning to the ideas regarding the 'good life' defined by Aristotle in his *Nicomachean Ethics* (hereinafter abbreviated as EN), Positive Psychology seeks to define and explain the virtues. Drawing on the ideas of Aristotelian ethics, he tries to explain and classify the virtues and strengths he promotes to achieve the good life and the meaningful life (Lee, A., Steen, T. & Seligman, M., 2005); (Seligman, M., 2002). Understanding the 'good life' as the identification and implementation of positive personal characteristics; that is, the utilization of character strengths and virtues in specific projects, "A life built around those characteristics approaches what Aristotle called 'eudaimonia' or 'the good life'" (Lee, A., Steen, T. & Seligman, M., 2005, p. 635). On the other hand, the 'meaningful life' is understood as committing to one's own strengths and virtues, engaging in what positive psychology calls positive institutions: those that facilitate the improvement of the person. Examples of these can be the family, democracy, religion, among others.

Speaking about character strengths, positive emotions and their implementation in institutions, Lee, Steen and Seligman (2005) point out the following:



We believe that positive characteristics and emotions flourish in the context of positive institutions. As meaning derives from belonging to and serving something greater than oneself, a life led in the service of positive institutions is a meaningful life." (pp. 635-636).

On this very thing, Seligman (2002, p. 382), argues that to achieve a meaningful life it is necessary to direct personal strengths and virtues towards goals and actions that transcend us, using them in the service of something higher than ourselves.

Before presenting the description that positive psychology makes of the virtues and in particular of the virtue of wisdom, let's make a brief review of Aristotelian ethics, and then, in a second moment, review the proposal of positive psychology. In a third final moment, we will make the respective comparison between the two positions in order to determine the closeness or remoteness between the two, a classical philosophical and a psychological one. We follow here that Aristotelian principle that 'from contrast light is born'.

### **The Virtues in Nicomachean Ethics or The Aristotelian Treatment of virtues**

Aristotle expounds his theory of virtues in several works: Eudemic Ethics, Nicomachean Ethics, and Magna Moral. The first seems to be a work of youth from his Platonic period, while the third seems to be a later and somewhat incomplete compendio of matter, appearing at the death of the philosopher. In addition, from the systematic point of view, it is the Nicomachean Ethics the best written, the most harmonious and of the three the most mature in his theses exposed. Reason why in this research we will focus on nicomachea following this philological criterion.

Specifically, let us bring up what for Aristotle is 'good', 'happiness' or 'eudaimonia' and 'virtue'. For Aristotle (1996) the good is "that to which all things aspire" (EN I, 1), and it is in the virtues that this good is concentrated. Speaking about actions, arts and sciences, he states that: "being as they are in great numbers the actions, the arts and sciences, many will be of consequent the ends" (EN I, 1). Relating the above to the good, in EN I 2, Aristotle (1996) writes: "if there is an end of our acts willed by himself, and others by him; and if it is also true that we do not always choose one thing in



view of another [...], it is clear that that ultimate end will then be not only the good, but the sovereign good" (EN I, 2).

In these texts of Aristotle we can see how for him, the good is the end of human things, whether it is an action – theoretical or practical – or a production, from here the three types of action are inferred in Aristotle: theory, praxis and *poiesis*. That there is a scale or hierarchy of goods, where the inferior is subordinated to the superior, the secondary to the primary, and the effect to the cause; and, that there is an ultimate or supreme good to which all men aspire above other goods. Aristotle called this ultimate or supreme end happiness or 'eudaimonia' (which today's translators prefer to use the term 'flourishing'), which is not a concrete end, but a generic end that encourages concrete ends to be achieved as an ultimate end by adding all intermediate ends. That is, to achieve 'eudaimonia' one must accumulate in quantity and quality many good ends of singular or particular virtues.

The logic of the virtues causes them to overlap and help each other so to speak, to further strengthen the action of the subject. This makes it easier for a person who has several virtues to obtain others that he does not yet possess, and it is difficult for him to fall into vice, or at least it is more difficult for him to fail morally since he has in his collection many resources unlike those who do not have them. And *visceversa*, someone who already has other vices is more prone to vice; the result is that he moves away from that end that is the good, and his attempt to be happy is frustrated.

It could be said then that, from the Aristotelian view, the good (*tò agathós*) is understood as that to which we all aspire, and in turn, this general good expressed in particular goods are divided into concrete goods that give as a sum the generic, supreme, sovereign, perfect or last good, which will be what we know as happiness as we have just explained above. 'Happiness' or 'eudaimonia', therefore, is a distant longing for which one must strive to achieve; that is, "the most perfect activity, the highest and most excellent, the most beautiful [...] the good for itself [...] life according to reason or virtuous life" (Rodríguez, 2010, p. 116). And therefore virtue will be the perfection of human activity according to reason. In other words, to live in search of virtue or to try to live virtuously will be to live in search of happiness.



If we delve into this ethical vision of Aristotle on happiness, we notice that it is a conception based on the strength of virtues, which added to each other in the personality and actions of a person, propose a morality based on good habits that become second nature in the individuals who possess them. Remember that the virtues are defined by Aristotle as good habits (*hexis*), obtained through the effort and repetition of the same type of actions that end up configuring what today we would call 'the personality' or the *ethos* of a person.

### **The Virtue of Wisdom in Aristotle's EN**

According to the EN (1996) wisdom can be addressed by referring to the most accomplished in each art or knowledge, or as "the most rigorous knowledge among all, so that wisdom will be at the same time intuition and science, as if it were the science of the highest things and head of all knowledge" (EN VI, 7). But this vision in Aristotelian thought is not precisely a knowledge dedicated to practice, but it is through the virtue of prudence '*phrónesis*' that it is what guides man towards good, justice and beauty (Valenzuela, 2014, pp. 34-51).

Wisdom, however, plays a role of guiding virtue in all dimensions of human behavior; indeed, "wisdom is science and intuition of the most illustrious things by nature, and those who know of higher and wonderful and arduous and divine things are wise" (EN VI, 7). And when it comes to applying theoretical knowledge to a practice in the fields of human action, the contest of virtues through prudence is present on the occasion that merits it, or rather, the virtue that comes to the fore will be the one that the concrete situation requires.

For Aristotle there are two types of virtues that operate in synchrony and harmony: the ethical virtues and the Dianoetic virtues, the former are the properly practical or moral, while the latter are those of the mind and knowledge ('*dianoia*'). Some perfect the practical action and the others the thinking action, so they are not exclusive but on the contrary, complementary (Gómez-Robledo, 2001, pp. 319-347).

Wisdom is at the head of this model of Aristotelian practical knowledge since "whoever possesses to the maximum degree the science of the universal, knows in a certain way, at least



virtually, all the particular cases that fall under the universal" (Gómez-Robledo, 2001, p. 379). And the proof of this is that, if we do a retroprojective rereading forward, we will see that all the twenty-four virtues that positive Psychology proposes, Aristotle considers them in different parts of his corpus ethicum. We could perhaps summarize the entire Aristotelian conception in a fragment of Heraclitus, which is expressed aphoristically: "Wisdom is one: to know reason, by which all things are directed by all" (Farre, 1982, p. 119). In short, for Aristotle:

[...] wisdom is the best of the ways of knowing [...] it is intellect and science of the most excellent by nature. Therefore, both by its way of knowing and by its object, wisdom is the kind of knowledge that Aristotle institutes as properlyphilosophical. (Montoya & Conill, 1988, p. 35).

Thus, if we compare the proposal of the following table (Seligman et al., 2005), and its equivalent of the virtues in Aristotle. We have the following correspondences:

VIRTUE	SELIGMAN	CORRESPONDENCES IN ARISTOTLE
1. <i>Wisdom</i> Cognitive strengths involving the acquisition and use of knowledge	1. <i>Creativity</i>	The creative impulse of the <i>poiesis</i> makes the generation of all the arts.
	2. <i>Curiosity</i>	The <i>scholé</i> is the initial search impulse and the beginning of philosophizing.
	3. <i>Judgment or Open Mind</i>	<i>Krinéin</i> or good judgment allows you to anticipate decision-making
	4. <i>Love of learning</i>	La <i>philos</i> (love) <i>sophia</i> (truth) is the main motive of the investigation
	5. <i>Perspective</i>	Good advice is a <i>topos</i> or commonplace of <b>prudent action</b>
2. <i>Bravery</i> Strengths that involve the exercise of the will to achieve goals despite opposition	6. <i>Courage or Bravery</i>	It is the Greek <i>Andreia</i> that tempers us to continue in life and face dangers or pains.
	7. <i>Honesty, Authenticity or Integrity</i>	Speak the truth, present yourself genuinely, <b>and have moral and vital coherence</b>
	8. <i>Perseverance or Persistence</i>	Staying in the ideals outlined and not giving up in the face of difficulties
	9. <i>Enthusiasm or Vitality</i>	Have confidence in the rational order of the cosmos and be partakers of the light of being
3. <i>Humanitarianism</i> Interpersonal strengths	10. <i>Love</i>	The value of <i>philia</i> in all its species better enables us for social relations within the <i>polis</i> .
	11. <i>Kindness, Kindness or Generosity</i>	Magnanimity ( <i>megalopsichia</i> ), being kind and being a benefactor of others gives us back a more generous soul.
	12. <i>Social intelligence</i>	Empathy empowers us to have better relationships



4. <i>Justice</i> Civic strengths that underlie healthy community living	13. <i>Teamwork</i>	Man is by nature a gregarious animal that needs others in order to realize himself.
	14. <i>Equity or Social Responsibility</i>	Equal justice and responding to our loved ones
	15. <i>Leadership</i>	There are lords by nature with high command skills
5. <i>Temperance</i> Strengths that protect against excesses	16. <i>Forgiveness, Mercy or Compassion</i>	Forgiving our loved ones for the offenses received
	17. <i>Humility or Modesty</i>	Shun vainglory and embrace modesty
	18. <i>Self-Regulation or Self-Control</i>	Self-control, continence
6. <i>Transcendence</i> Strengths that forge connections with a larger universe, that give meaning	19. <i>Prudence</i>	<i>Phronesis</i> , deliberate before acting
	20. <i>Appreciation of beauty and excellence</i>	<i>Kalokaghatia</i> , Loving Beauty and Kindness in Actions
	21. <i>Gratitude</i>	To give back with finesse to our bereaved
	22. <i>Hope or Optimism</i>	Hope for the best after the commitment to workor
	23. <i>Humor or Joy</i>	<i>Eutrapelia</i> , ability to be cheerful and play with children
	24. <i>Spirituality or Religiosity</i>	Respect the religious beliefs of the city

Table 1: The virtues with their strengths. Taken up and adapted from Seligman (2005); Aristotle's part is ours.

## The virtues in Positive Psychology

Let us now look at the proposal of positive psychology on human virtues. For this psychological current, virtues are understood as positive psychological and behavioral characteristics of the person, which are well valued by great thinkers and moral philosophers, as well as by a large number of subjects in different cultures and moments of history (Carr, 2007). Confirming the above, for Powelski (2003), Peterson & Seligman (2004) and Seligman et al. (2005), virtues can be conceived as those positive traits or characteristics that differentiate people, are valuable to almost all cultures of the world in all times, and in turn are shaped by a series of particular strengths.

The virtues that Positive Psychology and in particular Peterson & Seligman (2004) designate, – until now, as reported by the research carried out – as the six that make up the character, the following: 1. wisdom or knowledge, 2. courage, 3. humanitarianism, 4. equity, 5. temperance and 6. transcendence. Why these and not others? These virtues were those that, after a long investigation (Seligman, 2002); (Powelski, 2003); (Peterson & Seligman, 2004); (Seligman et al., 2005); (Carr, 2007), were repeated or were common in almost all social traditions, cultures of the world, epochs of humanity and writings of different philosophers and moral thinkers. These virtues are thus the common denominator of thinking traditions and the history of ideas. These virtues can be described as follows:



1. Wisdom or knowledge. This virtue integrates the strengths that help the achievement and use of different knowledge (Peterson & Seligman, 2004; Seligman et al., 2005 and Carr, 2007).
2. Courage. It refers to the strengths that allow to put into practice the will to achieve a goal by overcoming different obstacles, whether intrinsic or extrinsic (Peterson & Seligman, 2004; Seligman et al., 2005 and Carr, 2007).
3. Humanitarianism. It involves the implementation of strengths that help to have good or positive interpersonal relationships (Peterson & Seligman, 2004; Seligman et al., 2005 and Carr, 2007).
4. Justice. In this virtue are manifested the civic strengths that help to have a good life in community (Peterson & Seligman, 2004; Seligman et al., 2005 and Carr, 2007).
5. Temperance. It integrates the strengths of character that protect against excesses (Peterson & Seligman, 2004; Seligman et al., 2005 and Carr, 2007).
6. Transcendence. In this virtue are the group of strengths that connect or link with the universe or a higher being and allow to give meaning to existence (Peterson & Seligman, 2004; Seligman et al., 2005 and Carr, 2007).

It is important to establish the relationship between virtues and strengths of character according to positive psychology. This relationship occurs in two ways: on the one hand, the virtues are integrated by a series of strengths – 24 in particular – (Peterson & Seligman, 2004) and in turn the strengths can be seen as the "ways to achieve the virtues" (Carr, 2007, p. 82). That is, the virtues are integrated by the strengths, and in turn, the latter are the means by which the virtues are achieved and increased.

In the case of strengths or forces of character – as they are also designated – they can be understood in two ways: as the means to achieve and grow in the virtues (Carr, 2007) and as the elements that make up the virtues (Peterson & Seligman, 2004). For Seligman (2002) the development or growth in the virtues occurs through the strengths, since with the former there is a risk of seeing them only in an abstract way. On the other hand, strengths are more measurable; that



is, the latter are observable, so their development in the individual can be visible in concrete behaviors.

Peterson & Seligman (2004, p. 29) and Seligman, et al. (2005, p. 411), define a list of criteria for the drafting of a classification system of virtues and strengths. This classification of virtues and strengths, known as Values in Action (VIA), aims to list each of the six virtues with their respective strengths. Values in action, therefore, is a way of designating the virtues with their particular set of strengths.

The final list of criteria for the classification of the strengths that make up the six virtues is as follows (Peterson & Seligman, 2004):

- It is ubiquitous (universal): it is recognized by many cultures.
- It is satisfying: it contributes to individual fulfillment, satisfaction, and widely understood happiness.
- It is morally valuable: it has value for its own sake, and not as a means to an end.
- It does not diminish others: it elevates those who see it; it produces admiration and not envy.
- It has an unpleasant counterpart: it has an obvious "negative" antonym.
- It is a trait: it is a demonstrable, generalizable and stable individual difference.
- It is measurable: it has been measured by researchers as an individual difference.
- It is distinctive: it is not redundant (conceptually or empirically) with other character strengths.
- It is a parallel: it is incarnated in some individuals in a surprising way.
- It is observed in prodigal subjects: it is found early in some children or young people.
- A selective absence can occur: it is totally lacking in some individuals.
- It seeks to institutionalize: it is the deliberate target of some social practices and rituals that try to cultivate it.



This list of criteria allowed to define the 24 strengths that make up and in turn support the achievement and development of the six virtues.

In this call that Positive Psychology makes to promote research related to these three concepts: character, virtues and strengths, and from a series of investigations, the proposal of Peterson & Seligman (2004), the Values in Action (VIA), and the Values in Action Inventory of Strengths (VIA-IS) emerged, which are described and explained in the book: *Character Strengths and Virtues, a Handbook and Classification*. In this manual you can find the classification and description of the six virtues with their 24 strengths that allow and support human beings to flourish (Peterson & Seligman, 2004 and Seligman et al., 2005).

One of the objectives of this work of classification of virtues and their component strengths is to provide operational definitions, instruments and measures, as well as intervention models for each of the 24 character strengths (Powelski, 2003). These operational definitions, instruments and measures of strengths, allow in turn to corroborate to what extent a person has achieved and developed each of the six virtues with their respective strengths.

In the following table you can see the virtues organized with each of the strengths of character, as well as a description of them (Peterson & Seligman, 2004, p. 29 and Seligman et al., 2005, p. 412).

VIRTUE	STRENGTHS	DESCRIPTION
1. <i>Wisdom</i> Cognitive strengths involving the acquisition and use of knowledge	1. <i>Creativity</i>	Think of productive and innovative ways of doing things
	2. <i>Curiosity</i>	Take an interest in all experiences
	3. <i>Judgment or Open Mind</i>	Think and analyze things from different perspectives
	4. <i>Love of learning</i>	Mastery of new skills, topics and bodies of knowledge
	5. <i>Perspective</i>	Be able to give wise advice to others
2. <i>Bravery</i> Strengths that involve the exercise of the will to achieve goals despite opposition	6. <i>Courage or Bravery</i>	Do not run away from threats, challenges, difficulties or pain
	7. <i>Honesty, Authenticity or Integrity</i>	Speaking the truth and presenting yourself genuinely
	8. <i>Perseverance or Persistence</i>	Finish what you start
	9. <i>Enthusiasm or Vitality</i>	Approaching life with excitement and energy
3. <i>Humanitarianism</i> Interpersonal strengths	10. <i>Love</i>	Value close relationships with others
	11. <i>Kindness, Kindness or Generosity</i>	Doing favors and good works for others
	12. <i>Social intelligence</i>	Be aware of your own and others' motives and feelings



4. <i>Justice</i> Civic strengths that underlie healthy community living	13. <i>Teamwork</i>	Work well as a member of a group or team
	14. <i>Equity or Social Responsibility</i>	Treat everyone the same according to notions of fairness and justice
	15. <i>Leadership</i>	Organize group activities and make sure they take place
5. <i>Temperance</i> Strengths that protect against excesses	16. <i>Forgiveness, Mercy or Compassion</i>	Forgive those who have wronged us
	17. <i>Humility or Modesty</i>	Let achievements speak for themselves
	18. <i>Self-Regulation or Self-Control</i>	Regulate what one feels and does
	19. <i>Prudence</i>	Taking care of options, not saying or doing things we will later regret
6. <i>Transcendence</i> Strengths that forge connections with a larger universe, that give meaning	20. <i>Appreciation of beauty and excellence</i>	Notice and appreciate beauty, excellence and/or skillful performance in all domains of life
	21. <i>Gratitude</i>	Be aware of and be thankful for all the good things that happen
	22. <i>Hope or Optimism</i>	Hope for the best and work to achieve it
	23. <i>Humor or Joy</i>	The taste for laughter and play, making others smile
	24. <i>Spirituality or Religiosity</i>	Have consistent beliefs about the ultimate end and meaning of life

Table 1: The virtues with their strengths. Taken up and adapted from Seligman (2005); Aristotle's part is ours.

Positive psychology supporting actions related to character, virtues and strengths of character has driven a series of investigations, emerging from these the proposal of Peterson and Seligman (2004), the Values in Action (VIA), and the Values in Action Inventory of Strengths (VIA-IS), which are described and explained in the book: *Character Strengths and Virtues, a Handbook and Classification*. In this manual you can find the classification and description of the six virtues with their 24 strengths that allow and support human beings to flourish (Peterson and Seligman, 2004 and Seligman et al., 2005).

One of the objectives of this work of classification of virtues and their component strengths is to provide operational definitions, instruments and measures, as well as intervention models for each of the 24 character strengths (Powelski, 2003). These operational definitions, instruments and measures of strengths, allow in turn to corroborate to what extent a person has achieved and developed each of the six virtues with their respective strengths.

### The Virtue of Wisdom in Positive Psychology

In particular, the virtue of wisdom or knowledge, as observed, is defined in this psychological current that we are analyzing, as the set of strengths of character that help the acquisition and use of different knowledge. The character strengths that make up this virtue are: 1. Creativity, thinking about



productive and innovative ways of doing things; 2. Curiosity, take an interest in all experiences; 3. Judgment or Open Mind, thinking and analyzing things from different perspectives; 4. Love of learning, mastery of new skills, topics and bodies of knowledge; and 5. Perspective, being able to give wise advice to others (Powelski, 2003 and Peterson & Seligman, 2004).

Analyzing the above from the perspective of Brennan (1969), in his book *General Psychology*, speaking about intellectual life and the human mind – which can be directly related to the virtue of wisdom – he affirms that the highest degree on the scale of consciousness of beings in the universe is found in man, since it can think and desire, its intellectual production being the highest form of knowledge, at the same time it is able to choose and carve out its own function in the context in which it lives.

Unlike beings inferior to him, he is able to know the essence or nature of things and of himself; all of the above allows you to build a systematized set of knowledge, unified from your experience, which will allow you to face new experiences with previous knowledge and method. This ability to think and act voluntarily will largely constitute the contents of your mind (Brennan, 1969, p. 289).

Reaffirming the above, Shute (1946), speaking about human behavior from the Aristotelian view, states that "in the rational soul of man, we find thought, which constitutes a factor of domination of human behavior" (p. 93). In other words, we can affirm that, in man, his behavior or acting, is not only guided by his instincts or by his response to those external stimuli that affect him, but that he goes further, that his reasoning and his thinking allow him to behave differently from the animal, his actions will have the possibility of making him grow in knowledge, skills and abilities, in making him more of a person, in growing in virtues, and among these in "Wisdom".

In other words, we would say, the conformation and development in man of the virtue of wisdom, that which allows him to acquire, build and use the different knowledges by means of or relying on the following competences: in his creativity, proposing and carrying out his tasks in an innovative way; in their curiosity, leaning towards seeking new learning experiences; in their judgment or open mind to face and transform objects, events and events from different approaches;



in their love or taste for learning, seeking to know, build and master new skills; and in his perspective, being able to share with others that knowledge and skills he has developed.

Brennan himself (1969, p. 290), recognizes that the acts of thought and will are difficult to study, since observation is not enough to be able to fully understand them. Vegetative processes and the simplest reactions of the senses can be largely measured by experimental observation, but in topics such as judgment, decision, analysis or the conformation of an abstract thought, the process of understanding is greatly complicated, for example: The way perceptions or emotions are studied or abstract thinking each require a different method of study.

Related and supporting the above, Shute (1946) states that "In man, the mind and desire, working together, produce movement" (p. 100), that is, in man unlike the animal, his action begins by the affectation produced by the stimulus, this leads him to want to reach or move away from said stimulus, but it does not stop there, in him his action goes further, his mind will allow him to take much more complex paths, such as approaching or looking for what he dislikes at first or on the contrary, desiring and looking for what he dislikes at first.

## Conclusions

The ultimate goal of this article was to determine how much the vision of positive psychology on the virtue of wisdom matches that proposed by realist philosophy, in relation to its theory of virtues. We see that, despite the distance and disparate and distant contexts of both positions, the concept of virtue and its parts (particular virtues) in essence remains in concordance.

The result of both theories is happiness understood as a natural achievement of virtues (Montoya & Conill, 1988, pp. 126-142), and within its order for the life of individuals represents a good and an end both personal and social. Here, the virtue of wisdom, somehow summarizes all the others, and allows us to know which one to choose in a certain situation and context.

Despite the turns of idiomatic expression and the theoretical and methodological frameworks in each case, the categories of the ethicum corpus of the Stagirite are indirectly reborn in the positive Psychology of Seligman and other authors, since their coincidences seem to be in the background and



not in the form. Whether from a behavioral perspective or an ethical perspective, virtues make the difference in people's lives between the development they require to reach the good that is their own.

Regardless of the place and hierarchy that the virtue of wisdom occupies in both theories, its priority is manifest as a guiding virtue that allows individuals to reach happiness, since its presence is of its own determinant for the best use of the resources that people in particular have in life. In short, intelligence is the determining key to human action, because it is, as Aristotle says, what distinguishes us specifically from other living beings.

In contrast to the realist philosophy, we note that Positive Psychology constitutes in part an innovative and renewing proposal for our present, as far as a contemporary language is concerned; for with a new light and a focus on these new investigations it seems to reclassify what classical Aristotelian philosophy had proposed more than 2400 years ago with perennial validity, and it does so under a modernized perspective and in open dialogue with a very complete humanist approach. And it is that "it is difficult to do justice to this Aristotelian thesis, due to the profound change that ethical reflection has experienced from Aristotle to the present day. Change that is certainly not accidental, but due to profound political, social and cultural transformations" (Montoya & Conill, 1988, p. 143).

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