



# The Happiness Concept for Community: A Studying Indigenous Psychology for Melayu Community of Kampar

Masyhuri Masyhuri<sup>(✉)</sup>

State University of Islamic Sulthan Syarif Kasim Riau, Riau, Indonesia  
masuriocu@gmail.com

**Abstract.** This study aimed to seek the meaning, source of Happiness, and unhappiness of the Islamic people of Melayu Kampar Riau. The subject of this research consists of 308 respondents who were affiliated with the people of Melayu Kampar. Data collection used an open-ended questionnaire. In the instrument, the researchers ask three questions: what are the meaning of Happiness, events which make the subject feel happy, and events which make the subject feel unhappy? The data were analyzed using the grounded theory approach, namely open coding, axial coding, and selective coding. The result shows that the meaning of Happiness for the community of Melayu Kampar consists of three components, affection, cognition, and spirituality. The resources of the happy community of Melayu Kampar are related to relationships (relationships) in the family, achievement, having children, religion, marriage, social life, and material. Meanwhile, the unhappiness sources are related to family conflicts, unpleasant relationships, illness, failure, loss, financial problems, and acts that violate religious values.

**Keywords:** Happiness · Melayu people · Kampar

## 1 Introduction

Happiness is the will and the dream that everyone wants to achieve. Both earning a living and other activities are carried out to gain and achieve Happiness. A Muslim philosopher, al-Farabi (1995), stated that Happiness is the life goal. To achieve Happiness is a form of human existence. God created humans to achieve Happiness, which will be achieved when the human soul experiences perfection.

The majority of people think that Happiness is always associated with money. Money or material will be able to provide higher power and social status. The money will be able to improve welfare and life satisfaction. Aristotle said that money is a form of good that can be enjoyed directly, as well as the need for food, sleep, and friendship (Franklin 2010).

However, that assumption is not always true because increasing wealth or material does not automatically increase Happiness. In their research, Van Boven and Richard R Easterlin (2005) revealed that wealth does not positively impact Happiness. However,

that does not mean wealth or material is not needed to get Happiness. Material or wealth only has an impact on pleasure. Seligman (2005) stated that Happiness is a concept that refers to positive emotions felt by individuals and positive activities which are free of negative feelings. These positive emotions are felt by individuals toward the past, present, and future. Diener, Lucas & Oishi defined Happiness as positive emotions or pleasant experiences, low negative moods, and high life satisfaction (Snyder et al. 2011).

Bhagavan Sri Ramana defined Happiness as something subjective. To understand Happiness, one must understand the positive feelings inside (Michael D. & A James, 2012). Robert J. Eger & J. Haavard Maridal (2015), through a meta-analysis of the concept of Happiness, expressed, Happiness is related to health, self-freedom, personal relationships with society, peace, and comfort. Suryomentaraman, in his philosophy study, stated that Happiness is a condition of peace, comfort, no conflict, free from desires which are out of place and not bound to something.

One of the factors which can influence Happiness is the cultural values that people believe. (Oishi and Diener 2001) said that messages or typical cultural values and positive experiences could influence the Happiness and positive behavior of the community. (Uchida and Kitayama 2004), in his research on “the cultural construct of happiness,” revealed that there are differences in the meaning of Happiness for Western culture with Asian people. In western culture, Happiness tends to be friendship and self-achievement, and Asians are more likely to have social relations and positive motivation.

In Indonesia, a multicultural country with many ethnicities and cultures, the concept of Happiness is also interpreted differently by the values adopted by the local community (Gularso et al. 2019). For example, the concept of Happiness in Javanese society is strongly influenced by the Javanese philosophy that internalizes its people. The philosophy becomes a guideline and values in life. Like the Javanese philosophical expression, “*primoing pandemic*” means that in living life, you must be honest, sincere, and work hard (Nanang Budi Utomo, 2017). The primo attitude owned by Javanese people makes them calmer, accept what they are, endure all conditions, relax, and enjoy what they have (Asih Miranti, 2014).

The concept of Happiness for Melayu people is very much influenced by the values inherent in the Melayu community, which derive from traditional values and religion from the Qur'an and Sunnah. Traditional and religious values are a guideline for behaving and socializing in society for Melayu people. Melayu custom saying saids “*adat bersandikan syara' dan syara' bersandikan kitabullah*” (Tennas Efendi, 2013). Islamic values are dominant in influencing the lives of Melayu people so that with these Islamic values, they become open-minded and highly upholds the value of politeness, kindness in attitude, compassion, mutual respect, and tolerance. Along with the times and the rapid flow of globalization, religious and customary values, which are a guideline for Kampar Malay people, gradually tend to change. Changes in the society of Melayu Kampar have affected the perspective in interpreting Happiness and the source of Happiness. Thus, it became the focus of this research to review the Concept of Happiness in the Melayu Kampar Muslim Community.

## 2 Methods

This study uses qualitative methods with thematic analysis approaches. The thematic analysis approaches aim to identify and describe the idea center (usually referred to as themes or categories) in the data. The number of participants research was 308. Data collection methods used *open-ended* questionnaires by giving questionnaires to respondents in the form of open sentences, where the respondent is given the freedom to answer each question asked. Open-ended questionnaire in this study consists of three forms of questions, namely: 1) What is the meaning of Happiness According to you, 2) Mention the events that make you feel happiest, 3) Mention the events that made you not happy?

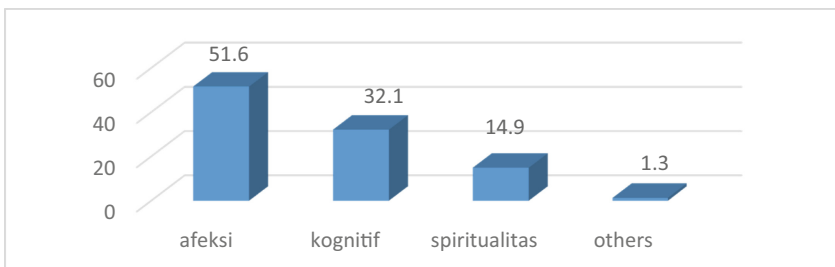
Data analysis uses a technique of *grounded theory* with the following stages: a) open coding, grouping themes based on the similarity of words into small categories, b) axial coding, classifying words that have the same meanings into a larger categorization, c) Selective Coding, final coding which represents small sub-categories that form the main themes giving birth to concepts or theories ( Faturrachman, Faturochman and M, Tabah Aris N. 2017).

## 3 Result

### 3.1 The meaning of Happiness

In this section, the researcher presents the results of data categorization of the meaning of Happiness for the people of Melayu Kampar based on the results of data analysis. The definition of Happiness was obtained through the open question, “*What is the meaning of happiness. According to you?*”. The results of the categorization of research data from this question can be seen in Fig. 1

The graph shows that three main categories reveal the meaning of Happiness according to the people of Melayu Kampar: affection, cognitive, and spiritual. Affection categories were revealed by 159 respondents (51,6%), including peace, pleasure, comfort, togetherness, joy, making other people feel happy, love, mutual trust, and love for each other. The affection category related to tranquillity is the most dominant meaning of Happiness expressed by the respondents, reflected in some examples of the following statements:



**Fig. 1.** The results of the categorization of research data from this question

*Happy, in my opinion, is to live life with family comfortably and peacefully with the foundation of the Islamic religion (S021).*

*feeling happy in living everyday life without any pressure from other parties (042)*

The cognitive category was revealed by 99 respondents (32,1%), including satisfaction aspect, possessing material, and success. The cognitive category is reflected in the example of the respondent's expression as follows:

*Happiness or joy is a state of mind or feeling that is characterized by sufficiency to love, satisfaction, pleasure, or joy (s 032)*

The third category is spiritual, expressed by 49 respondents (14,9%), including aspects of gratitude, peace of mind, worship, and feelings of sincerity. The spiritual category related to gratitude is the most dominant meaning of Happiness expressed by the subject, reflected in the example of the respondent's expression as follows:

*Happy is sincere accepting what we are and grateful for what god has set (s202)*

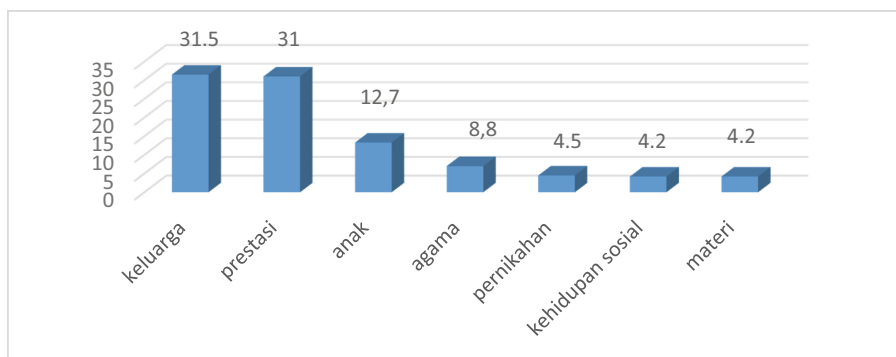
### 3.2 Sources of Happiness

To get an overview of the events that make the people of Melayu Kampar feel happiest, the respondents were given the following open questions: "Mention some experiences when you feel happy," The results of the categorization of this question can be seen in Fig. 2.

Figure 2 shows that most of the 308 subjects assessed that events that make them happy related to family (31.5%), achievement (31%), children (12.70%), religion (8.8%), marriage (4.50%), social life (4.2%), and money (4.2%). The rest respondents (2.60%) were not giving answers.

**Family.** The family theme includes togetherness, Happiness, affection, a healthy family, family vacation, peace, attention, and family support. The following are responses related to family themes, namely:

*A happy experience gathering with family: what is gathering with family is the most valuable treasure in my life (s146)*



**Fig. 2.** Sources of Happiness

**Achievement.** The theme of achievement in this study includes children achieving success in work, completing education, the dream coming true, and family pride. The subject response related to this achievement is:

*When completing education, have a bachelor's degree with good grades (s 078)*

**Children.** Happiness related to children includes childbirth and witnessing the growth of children. The response related to the source of Happiness related to children is:

*We feel happy at the birth of our baby that we hope for (s 037)*

**Religion.** The religious theme in this study includes worshipping God and carrying out religious obligations. Responses to answers about religion include:

*When praying, the heart becomes happy and calm (s 242)*

**Material.** The theme of the source of Happiness related to the material in this study includes fulfillment of needs, no debt, having money, and getting a job. Some responses related to material categories are:

*The happiest experience is when we can meet the needs of children, such as school supplies, and when seeing children happy because they can enter the school they want (s 086)*

**Married.** Marriage is a desire of every person who wants to live a normal life. The response that states that marriage is a happy experience are:

*When married, i want to get a husband who is pious and can be useful to the community, alhamdulillah granted by god almighty (s107)*

**Social Life.** Happiness in social life includes social activities, meeting friends, and social support. The response related to social life is:

*In everyday life, we can meet friends and society in the life of trading because my friends can share (s 240)*

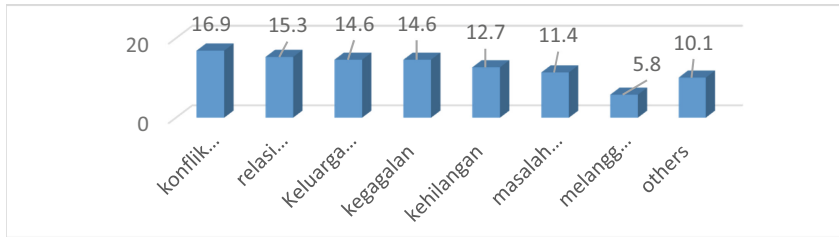
### 3.3 Sources of Unhappiness

To get an idea of the events that made the people of Melayu Kampar feel unhappy, the respondents were given open questions: "Mention some experiences when you feel unhappy." The researcher asked respondents to provide experiences that made respondents feel unhappy. The results of the categorization of this question can be seen in Fig. 3

Based on Fig. 3, the sources of the unhappiness of the people of Melayu Kampar, starting from the highest percentage, are; family conflict (16.6%), unpleasant relationships (14.9%), a family member being sick (14.6%), failure (14.6%), loss (12.7%), financial problem (11.4%), violating religious values (5.8%), and *others* (10.1%). Some responses related to experiences that are the source of unhappiness are as follows:

**Family Conflict.** Some responses expressed by the subject relate to family conflict:

*I am not happy if in my family there are differences of opinion or fights both about small problems and big problems (s 297)*



**Fig. 3.** Sources of Unhappiness

**Illness.** Responses from respondents related to the sick family include:

*I was sick, so no one took care of my child and husband (s 230)*

*When my husband was sick because our family's backbone could not work anymore (s 067)*

**Failure.** Responses from respondents related to failure include:

*A painful experience was when i failed the CPNS test while my family wished me to pass the final test because i was 35 years old. (s 139)*

**Unpleasant Relationship.** The following is a response related unpleasant relationship mentioned by the subject: Some responses expressed by the subject relate to unpleasant relations:

*When other people trample on our rights, we fight, which is ultimately not finished. however, back to the annoying face to cool our hearts. (s 052).*

**Violating Religious Values.** The following is a response related to violating the religious values mentioned by the subject:

*Experience when we leave prayer, if we leave the prayer, we will not feel happy(s 201)*

**Loss.** The following is a response related to the loss mentioned by the subject:

*The experience of feeling unhappy was when my husband left/died, and there was no longer a mate. the spirit decreases (s 131)*

**Financial Problem.** Some responses related to financial problems:

*When the day of payment of the house rent but no money (s 198)*

*When money is a major factor in the household. disagreement (s 235)*

## 4 Discussion

### 4.1 The Meaning of Happiness

Happiness is interpreted differently by every people because Happiness is subjective and strongly influenced by the perspective of how humans understand the world they live in. The meaning of Happiness is also seen as an accumulation of all exceptional situations

and conditions from experiences experienced by humans throughout their lives (Snyder, C., R. & Lopez; S. J, 2007).

A survey conducted by Argyle about the definition of Happiness found in participants' statements stated that Happiness is a state of joy, Happiness, and other positive emotions or is a condition of a happy life (Friendly, 2010). Some people interpret Happiness as a high status of awakening, such as feeling cheerful (joy) or elation, and some people also associate Happiness with satisfaction (contentment), peace (tranquillity), or a peaceful mind (Averill, J.R., & More, 2004). Experts in various scientific literature conclude that at least two components of Happiness exist. Andrew and McKinnell (2001) mention affection and cognition (life satisfaction). Lyubomirsky and Lepper also conclude that affection and cognition determine a person's Happiness or unhappiness (Gerow, 1996).

The affection that arises in humans begins with a process of environmental adaptation that is understood differently. Watkins, McLaughlin, and Parker (2019) mentioned that the reaction to pleasant and unpleasant experiences is beneficial for humans; positive experience is then evaluated as a motive for getting an award as an extension of the individual's response. Conversely, negative experiences provide unpleasant signals that lead to caution and withdrawal.

Cognitive (life satisfaction) is a general consideration in achieving human welfare. Lee et al. (2016) defined life satisfaction as achieving favorable attitudes and experiences as human beings. As one indicator of achieving Happiness, life satisfaction is an embodiment of the overall evaluation of individuals. Mallard, Lance, & Michalos (2017) also argue that life satisfaction is a positive evaluation of the conditions experienced by a person by taking a balanced assessment and measuring by standards or expectations subjectively. Therefore, life satisfaction is a cognitive part that includes the reflection of self-assessment and self-justification of everything that is going on and has been going on.

Happiness in the Melayu Kampar community contains three components: the element of affection, which means Happiness as peace and tranquillity of the heart, pleasure, togetherness, comfort, and Happiness for others. Second, the component of cognition that means Happiness is satisfaction, material, and success. Third, the spiritual component means Happiness with gratitude, peace, and sincerity. In all three components, the affective component is more dominant in the community of Melayu Kampar. This result was also evidenced by the interview results, which revealed that the Happiness of the Melayu Kampar community was more about calmness and peace of mind, which in Melayu Kampar terms is known as "*duck toning*."

## 4.2 Sources of Happiness

**Family.** Family is one source that has an impact on Happiness. Family is a source of love and motivation. The family is a helper and entertainer and accepts family members as they are without conditions. Abbas, Ogoh, and England (2016) state that relations with family are the primary source of Happiness. Hadith no also said the harmony between individuals and their environment, feelings of warmth and peace in the family could provide Happiness and peace in the hearts of family members. On the contrary, if the

family can no longer provide comfort and warmth, it will cause depression (Lukmanul Hakim, Niken Hartati, 2013).

**Religion.** The study of religion and Happiness proves that great religious beliefs in individuals independently can provide Happiness faster (Leslie J. Francis, 2007). This statement is by other literature, which all lead to a positive result of the relationship between religion/spirituality and Happiness. Indicators of religious adherence to spirituality are the presence of five daily prayers in mosques is positively related to Happiness among adults, adolescents, and children. The explanation for this source of Happiness is that the values taught in religion can create a framework in which each will strive to understand their daily lives and experiences, even more so themselves, and the existence of other life after death.

Most of the research based on national samples shows that Happiness correlates significantly to (even though the effect is not significant) religion, individual strength, relationship with God, and prayer experiences, even after controlling for age, income, and marital status. Religious experience, besides being able to provide meaning in everyday life, also provides social fulfillment through relationships to social networks consisting of people with the same attitudes and values.

**Achievement.** Subjects perceived achievement as an achievement in terms of children who have achievements, success in work, completing education, wishes realized, and boast of the family. The achievement makes the subject happy because achievement can be used as a means of gaining pride and getting a special place in social status, and affirming social relations (Oksana Yakushko., Eva Blodget, 2018). Achievement is also considered a means of repayment or reciprocity for the family because they feel they can make their family proud if they are accomplished. This phenomenon implies reasonable family expectations.

**Children.** Indonesian people feel the presence of children is important. Children are considered to have various functions. Among others, children are considered one of the needs of parents, both economic, social, and psychological (Hans-Peter Kohler, 2015). In addition, Massive (2015) stated that children have several values for their parents. These several values are children become a place for parents to devote love, children as a source of Happiness for parents, children as a consideration for married couples when they want to divorce, children as a place to socialize values in the family, family wealth inherited to children, and children as a mean for parents to reach the expectations.

**Material.** Research conducted by Matz, Gladstone, & Stillwell (2016) found that people who think money is higher than other goals will feel less satisfied with their standard of living. It was also found that greed can be a negative predictor of Happiness because it interferes with prosocial and self-actualization. Rich people are only rather happy than poor people in rich countries, even though rich countries are much happier than emerging countries. Moreover, income changes may sometimes have a negative effect (Andres Fossas, 2018).

**Marriage.** The positive relationship between marriage and Happiness is consistently reported in the United States in international research (Elizabeth M Lawrence, 2016).



This large-scale survey shows that married people are happier than those who have never been married or divorced, separated, or widowed. Khodarahimi (2015) found that marriage offers more significant benefits to men than women in terms of positive emotions, but married men and women have no difference in life satisfaction. In a longitudinal study conducted by Whisman and Li (2015), it was found that among the six domains of life that they learned (e.g., work or health), only marital satisfaction had a significant causal influence on global life satisfaction.

Andrew and Withey (in Diener, 2009) state that married individuals have higher levels of Happiness than those who are not married. Glen (in Diener, 2009) found that even though married women have higher stress levels than unmarried women, married women have a higher level of Happiness. Marriage status correlates positively with Happiness. Among subjective satisfaction, the role of marriage and family life is the most powerful predictor of Happiness. The point is that if the individual has a satisfying family life, surely he will be happy.

**Social Life.** Research conducted by Piff and Moskowitz (2015) found that social life is predicted to affect adult happiness with the number of controls set. Baumeister (2018) found that social life affects Happiness through exercising, which can increase Happiness and reduce depression and anxiety. Also, exercise can reduce the adverse effects on heart rate and blood pressure due to stressful tasks.

### 4.3 Source of Unhappiness

**Family Conflict.** Family conflict is defined as role conflict that arises between the expectations of two different roles owned by individuals (Josephine Fernandez et al., 2018). In addition, conflicts within the family can also occur because of family obligations that are disrupted, resulting in an impact on household harmony. If the conflict in the family is not resolved healthily, it will cause disappointment, tension, and dissatisfaction. This conflict can endanger the family's survival, especially for married couples.

According to Sumra and Schillaci (2015), the pressure on family conflicts is felt more by women, especially women who have become wives and mothers. Especially for women who work and simultaneously take on the role of homemakers. However, it is also possible for men to experience pressure in domestic life. It is suspected that this conflict arises from pressure on work and the obligation to be able to provide for the family, as well as other roles that are obligatory for a family head to fulfill. Conflict in the family hurts the household and the individual itself. The negative impact arising from the conflict is that individuals will feel increased stress, depression, decreased life satisfaction, emotional instability, and the worst is divorce (Misty Bennett. et al., 2018).

**Unpleasant Relationship.** Establishing relationships is action-oriented. According to Knobloch and Miller (2008), the purpose of creating relationships is to socialize with others harmoniously, get to know themselves, recognize phenomena that exist in the outside world through information obtained from the communication process, and help others who have problems. Through relationships, we can make ourselves agents who can change ourselves. In addition, establishing relationships is a learning process toward a better chance.

Social relations can also affect human life, including individual mental health, so all parties need to understand this issue as a form of mental health investment (Jess Haines et., 2016). It was also stated that good social relations also affect longevity. On the contrary, bad social relation has the potential to damage if it contains tension, conflict, and hurt and are full of problems. One study stated that variations between age, race, gender and marital status greatly affected the quality of relationships.

**Failure.** Common failures are also referred to as obstacles. According to Jackson and Coltheart (2015), failure is the omission of expected or required action. Failure is an obstacle to a need or an urge. Whereas Maxwell, Lau, and Howard (2015) define failure as a process in which individual behavior is hindered by a need, individual acts to achieve a goal to meet the needs that are by the impulse (failure is a process in which our behavior is blocked). Also, Cacciotti et al. (2016) added that failure is a feeling accompanied by an obstacle process.

According to mental health sciences, individuals who experience a situation where a need cannot be fulfilled, then the goal cannot be achieved, which leads to disappointment and reflects the individual's failure (Edward L. Deci., Joseph Porac, 2016). A failure is a process that results in individuals feeling an obstacle to fulfilling needs or a presumption that there will be obstacles in achieving the desire. Every human being needs to be fulfilled immediately, but sometimes these needs cannot be met directly due to the emergence of certain obstacles.

**Loss.** Dying or being abandoned by family members is a common event experienced by any family with different causes and backgrounds (e.g., death or divorce). Feifel (2017) stated that death is the most painful event for a family to be able to adapt again and adjust to new conditions. The death of one family member is an experience that is perceived as painful because familiarity in a family raises the interdependence between its members.

Doka and Morgan (2013) stated that the death of one family member was a massive shock for the family left behind. Living in the family will change drastically if the deceased is a father. Father is a figure of the head of the household and has the task of ensuring his family's survival. If the deceased is a mother figure, the impact will be on the child's development in the future. A study by (Adamsons and Pasley 2013) found that motherhood is important in child development. The role of mothers, in addition to giving affection, is also responsible for the care and various vital moments in child development.

**Financial Problems.** John F. Helliwell (2018) said that Families always want to achieve a happy life, both materially and spiritually. Happiness in life can be indicated in various sizes, for example, career paths, positions, wealth, the fulfillment of daily needs, education that has been achieved, and preparation for the next generation. Families can be happy and successful if they have achieved financial independence. This success can be achieved if the individual can manage his income wisely. From an economic perspective, the higher the income, the higher the expenditure. Current economic developments require individuals to be smart in managing finances.

Someone who behaves wisely in financial management tends to have better financial knowledge when compared to individuals who have low financial knowledge. Financial

knowledge or financial literacy emphasizes the ability to understand the basic concepts of economics and financial sciences and can apply them appropriately. The ability of individuals to assess and make the right decisions about personal finance is one of the economic behaviors that are useful in regulating family finances (Carmela Aprea et al., 2016).

## 5 Conclusion

Attention to the government of Kampar and the traditional institution of Malay of Kampar to develop the values of local wisdom that exist in the community because these values become a source of Happiness for the Malay community of Kampar. The source of Happiness for the Kampar Malay Community is related to relationships in the family, achievement, having children, religion, marriage, social life, and material. The sources of unhappiness in the Kampar Malay community are conflicts in the family, unpleasant relationships, illness, failure, loss, financial problems, and worship that violates religious values.

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