

The Happiness Level of Javanese Mother

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Abstract. Happiness is an important aspect for all people, there is no exception for a mother. Another study showed that happiness was determined by the origin culture of an individual. Hence, the purpose of the study was to examine the happiness level of mothers from Javanese ethnic. The study applied a quantitative descriptive design. The subjects involved in this study were 45 mothers coming from Javanese ethnic aged 25-40 years old using purposive sampling technique. The data were collected using the Oxford Happiness Questionnaire with a reliability value of 0.844. Then, the data were analyzed using T-test statistical analysis. The results of the study showed that the classification of happiness level of mothers was high (42%) and low (58%).

Keywords: Happiness, mother, Javanese ethnic

Introduction

In a family, the mother's role has traditionally been to raise the children and take care of household duties (Almani, Abro, & Mugheri, 2012), to meet basic needs of children, such as nutrition food, clothing, attention, and affection (Fitriyani, Nurwati, & Humaedi, 2016; Werdiningsih & Astarani, 2012). A mother plays an essential role in providing informal education (Pidarta, 1997; Rianawati, 2014) and stimulus (Maulina, Makhfudli, & Ulfiana, 2006), and building children's character (Munirah, 2014; Nurlina, 2016). Furthermore, she is responsible to enhance family income by earning a living (Liana, 2016).

In playing those roles, a mother surely needs a psychological aspect, which is happiness. The purposes of being happy are creating harmony between couples, opening self-perception, and reducing stress (Veenhoven, 1998). Happiness strongly influences individual health, welfare, and productivity (Commission, 2014; Meherunissa, 2016; Oswald, Proto, & Sgroi, 2014; Veenhoven, 2009). If the happiness of an individual is supported by positive emotions, an individual behavior will be followed by positive experiences. The products of happiness are very important for a mother due to their positive effect on social and family interactions.

A previous study stated that mother's happiness is not only affected by her status and role (Hamplová, 2018; Okulicz-Kozaryn & Valente, 2017), but also the social context, background, and culture (Jr., 2012). According to (Melalatoa, 1995), the selection of Javanese ethnic is because its the highest population in Indonesia. Based on this statement, the researcher would like to analyze the different level of happiness between career women and housewives from Javanese ethnic.

Literature Review

Happiness consists of cognitive components, namely self, family, peer, healthy, finance, occupation, and spare time. Meanwhile, affective components are positive and negative effects. Here, affective aspect is defined as a satisfaction of an emotional experience due

to affection (love), acceptance, and achievement. Similarly, cognitive aspect is defined as a satisfaction of affection, acceptance, and achievement from life aspects, such as self, family, peer, healthy, finance, achievement, and spare time (Baumgardner & Crothers, 2010).

Method

The subjects involved in this study were 45 mothers aged between 25-40 years old coming from Javanese ethnicity in Malang City, East Java. The research was conducted using purposive sampling technique. The data were collected using the Oxford Happiness Questionnaire consisting of 29 items with a reliability value of 0.844.

Results

Based on the data collection, the range of age was from 26 to 40 years old with an average of 33 years old. As of 45 participants, 27 (60%) of them were career women and 18 (40%) of them were housewives. Based on the number of children, 9 of them (20%) have a child, 31 (69%) have two children, and 5 (11%) have three children. Based on educational level, 10 persons (22%) are Senior High School graduates, 4 persons (9%) are Diploma I graduates, 7 persons (16%) are Diploma III graduates, 1 person (2%) are Diploma IV graduates, 21 persons (47%) are Bachelor's degree graduates, and 2 persons (4%) are Master's degree graduates. After analyzing the data using T-score, the data was categorized into two levels, high and low levels. It was found that 58% of the participants who were ethnically Javanese mothers had a low level of happiness.

Discussion

(Compton, 2005) confirmed that every person has a different way to obtain the happiness according to the culture. (Oishi & Diener, 2000) revealed that there is a different factor of happiness on individualistic and collectivistic cultures. The people with individualistic culture, feel happy if their pride increased and they have the freedom to do anything. Javanese ethnicity is

considered collectivistic culture which emphasizes on communal work. There are sayings of Javanese people which state *'saiyegsaekoprayagotong-royong'* and *hapanjang-hapunjunghapasir-wukirloh-jinawi, tata tentremkertaraharja'*. These teach us to live in this world relying on each other (mutual cooperation). This ethnicity teaches its people to help each other. According to the data, 58% of participants are categorized into low level of happiness.

Based on the discussion above, collectivistic culture showed that the mothers from Javanese ethnicity always engage in social activities by prioritizing togetherness. In Javanese term, there is word *'sungkan'* which means being shy not to accept an invitation or offer in social activities (Kurniawan & Hasanat, 2006). Emerging affection and relations with other people is an attempt to promote happiness (Lama & Cutler, 2009). On the other side, affection and relations will possibly bring some negative effect, such as prejudice and conflict which decrease the happiness level of a mother. In short, the collectivistic culture of the mothers from Javanese ethnic actually plays a role as a factor that increases and decreases mothers' happiness.

One of the important principles of Javanese ethnic is *nrimo* (willing). It explains that the Javanese people should be satisfied with what they have. *Nrimo* means that do not want what people have and not being jealous of other people's happiness (Herusatoto, 2008). This principle leads to the high level of happiness of Javanese people, especially in Semarang City – Indonesia (Murwani, 2007). On the other side, the happiness of a mother depends on era or time period (Hartung et al., 2014). Based on this condition, in the digital era, most of the people surely have a gadget with social media as a communication tool, learning device, and entertainment feature.

In Javanese term, *uripsawangsinawang* means that we and other people can easily see each other and the happiness level based on property, family, social status, etc. Modestly, we can see uploaded photos and status on social media. Likewise, the use of social media tends to apply social comparison (Panger, 2014). Its use allows the mothers to compare self-condition with what they see in form of happy pictures and happiness status of other people.

In Javanese culture, a father plays an important role as the head of the family and earns living for his family members. Meanwhile, a mother plays important roles in raising, feeding, and educating the children. As stated in Javanese saying, *sumur, dapurlankasur* means woman's nature is to serve her husband and provide foods for her family. The duty of women who become a mother in a household is to beautify herself for her husband, to give birth and care for children and prepare food for the family (Hermawati, 2007). The adage in Javanese culture is still believed to be the principle for most Javanese mothers and families. So that in relation to childcare, maternal involvement has a large enough percentage than fathers. This also can be a cause of parenting stress experienced by mothers today. According to the number

of children, 69% of participants have two children. Stress and guilt in parenting can reduce a mother's level of happiness (Findler, Klein Jacoby, & Gabis, 2016). Stress and guilt are also related to the level of maternal acceptance of children (Benny, Nurdin, & Chundrayetti, 2014). Positive acceptance of the child's condition will cause the mother to be more grateful and happy. In addition, families and couples are also involved in childcare and other household activities.

Conclusion

Based on the results of the study, it was found that 58% of the participants who were ethnically Javanese mothers had a low level of happiness. The next researcher is expected to add the number of subjects, different cultural backgrounds, and other variables so that the study on mother's happiness will be more diverse.

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