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ARADHANA SHUKLA
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Psyche of Asian Society

Edited by
 Aradhana Shukla, Anubhuti Dubey
 Narendra Singh Thagunna

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Narendra Singh Thagunna



Every culture has its own values and, of course, they are different in every walk of life with more or less magnitude. We can see a lot of variation in two cultures in regard to their way of thought, way of behaviour parameters and so many other things. Asia is a big continent and it covers forty eight countries in its roof. These countries are somehow similar in traditions and behaviour performance and vice versa in some other respects of life. But it is quite sure that there is a common thread that links them in one single garland.

The aim of this volume is to collect the gems from entire Asia and bring them on one platform. There are twenty four articles in this volume. They reveal various aspects of the particular country where the work is done. Chapters are in theoretical and /or in empirical mode and we hope that they will provide good insight to the readers to move on their interest and research.

Psyche of Asian Society

About the Editors

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PSYCHE
OF
ASIAN SOCIETY

Edited by
Aradhana Shukla
Anubhuti Dubey
Narendra Singh Thagunna

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In our regular course of life we believe in our observations and dealing with different society we see that every culture has its own values and, of course, they are different in every walk of life with more or less magnitude. We can see a lot of variation in two cultures in regard to their way of thought, way of behaviour parameters and so many other things.

Keeping these views in consideration, this piece of work is planned and it deals with culture and psyche of Asian society. We have taken ample support and co-operation from many people. We are thankful to them and want to place our gratitude on records.

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Sharad Poornima
24-Oct-2018

Aradhana Shukla
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Narendra Singh Thagunna

Contents

<i>Acknowledgements</i>	v
<i>List of Contributors</i>	xi

Section I

Introducton of Asian Psychology

1. Asian Psychology: Contribution can never be Counted 3
Aradhana Shukla, Anubhuti Dubey and Narendra Singh Thagunna
2. Asian Psychology: What Does It Tell Us About Human Cognition? 8
R.C. Mishra

Section II

Grassroots of Religions and Religious Practices in Asia

3. Sufism and Sufi Practices 31
Akbar Hussain
4. Ayodhya: Ramajanmabhumi v/s Babri Masjid Dispute Towards Peaceful Solution 46
Ram Kalap Tiwari

Section III

Hindu Culture and Acculturation

5. Triyoga and Triguna in Bhagavad Gita: An Empirical Validation 59
Anubhuti Dubey and Laxmi Vajpeyi

6. Role of Astropsychology in Personality Making: An Empirical Validation 78
Bhagyashree Joshi and Aradhana Shukla
7. Acculturative Strategies of Nepali Immigrants Living in India 102
Anubhuti Dubey and Radha Maddhesia
8. Culture, Family and Cognitive Behaviour 116
Aradhana Shukla
9. Asian Female Foreign Domestic Workers as Migrants in Hong Kong 134
Diane C. Zelman, Cecile Valantin and Michele Bland
10. Social Identity and Acculturation Attitudes among Different Tribal Groups of Jharkhand, India 154
Dhananjay Kumar

Section IV

Psychological Facilitators of Mental Health in Asia

11. Sources of Happiness: A Qualitative Analysis 169
Anubhuti Dubey and Garima Singh
12. What Does Happiness Mean: An Indigenous Psychological Analysis on College Students' Sources of Happiness in Semarang, Central Java, Indonesia 181
Anggun Resdasari Prasetyo, Erin Ratna Kustanti and Dinie Ratri Desiningrum
13. Influence of Self-compassion on Procrastination 191
Priyanka Pathak and Shobhna Joshi
14. Letting Go Method as Self-Help Alternative Solution to Increase Resilience Ability on People with Lupus 213
Anggun Resdasari Prasetyo, Erin Ratna Kustanti, and Dinie Ratri Desiningrum
15. Empowerment on Resilience and Coping Skills of Frontline Workers of Earthquake Affected Area of Nepal 228
Narendra Singh Thagunna
16. Inner Self Integration: Theory and Therapy 240
Kamal Khurana and Aradhana Shukla
17. Review on "The Dialectical Behavioural Therapy (DBT) with Mindfulness Technique for the Prevention of the Suicide and its Applicability in Nepali Context" 266
Yubaraj Adhikari

Section V
Psychological Hazards of Mental Health in Asia

18. Psychological Health of Informal Caregivers of Cancer Patients: The Population at Risk 291
Purnima Awasthi and Kuhu
19. Evaluation of the Friends Intervention for Childhood Anxiety in Hong Kong 310
Parul Batra Sabey, Diane C. Zelman and Christopher D. Tori
20. The Structural Equation Modeling Approach: Future Time Perspective, Un-integrated Personality and Depression of Elderly People in Nursing Home 329
Dinie Ratri Desiningrum, N. Fauziah, Erin Ratna Kustanti, and Anggun Resdasari Prasetyo

Section VI
Parenting Behaviour

21. Parenting Style of the Working and Non-working Mothers: Implications for Cognitive-Emotional Functioning in Offspring 349
Prativa Sanchary, Naima Nigar and A.K.M. Rezea Karem
22. Exclusive Breastfeeding and Motor Development of Children Under Five: Comparative Studies in Toddlers in the Region of Central Java, Indonesia 367
Dinie Ratri Desiningrum, Narendra Singh Thagunna and Anggun Resdasari Prasetyo

Section VII
Work Life Balance

23. Some Representations from Work Life: A Narrative based Study of Indian Immigrants in Paris 383
Jyoti Verma
24. Justice towards Women' Empowerment: Some Reality based Issues 408
Purnima Awasthi

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12

What Does Happiness Mean

An Indigenous Psychological Analysis on
College Students' Sources of Happiness in
Semarang, Central Java, Indonesia

*Anggun Resdasari Prasetyo, Erin Ratna Kustanti and
Dinie Ratri Desiningrum*

Introduction

Scientific study on positive psychology has been increasingly popular to be applied in human development because it observes the positive sides of human being. The paradigm of positive psychology applies more positive perspective compared to psycho-analysis theory. Positive psychology establishes that in the midst of human helplessness, they always have a chance to see life more positively. Human being is seen as a creature that can survive from any helplessness and maximize its self-potential. Positive psychology also sees human being as a figure capable of defining its way to appreciate life. Positive psychology is centred on the meaning of life, the way a human being interprets everything within, in which the meaning is subjective (Seligman & Peterson, 2005). One of the aspects in positive psychology is happiness, since, basically, happiness is one of human's basic needs. Philosophers like Aristotle and psychologist like William James declares that the purpose of life is to seek for happiness. Then, Western scientists like Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi (2000) also conducted a study on happiness, focusing on the aspect of happiness, positive affects and individual optimism. Positive psychology has started as an object of study since, recently, studies on psychology are mainly

focused on psychoanalysis and intervention studies leading to depression, stress, pessimism and negative experience.

Studies on happiness are essential since happiness is the main objective that every human being wants to achieve. Up to now, there are multiple perspectives to define happiness theoretically, while the meaning of happiness can be very subjective and different to everyone. Commonly, happiness is defined as a positive emotion which is experienced by an individual who has a pleasant and meaningful experience that leads to happiness (Rahardjo, 2007). Snyder & Lopez (2006) defined happiness as a state of positive emotion which is subjectively defined by every individual. Happiness is a bunch of feelings that can be felt in the form of feeling happy, peaceful, and have peace (Rusydi, 2007). Happiness according to Biswas, Diener & Dean (2007) is the quality of the whole human life—what makes life good overall as better health, higher creativity or higher income. Furnham (2008) also states that happiness is part of well-being, contentment, to do your life satisfaction or equally the absence of psychology distress. It adds that the concept of happiness is a synonym of life satisfaction or satisfaction with life (Veenhoven, 2000). Diener (2007) also states that satisfaction with life is a real form of happiness or happiness where happiness is something more than an achievement of purpose because in reality happiness is always associated with better health, higher creativity and a better workplace.

Sumner (in Veenhoven, 2006) describes happiness as “having a kind of positive attitude toward life, which is entirely a form of possession of cognitive and affective components. The cognitive aspect of happiness consists of a positive evaluation of life, measured either by standard or expectation, in terms of affective happiness consisting of what we refer to in general as a sense of well-being, finding a living or favourable wealth or feeling satisfied or fulfilled by these things.”

Schimmel (2009) clarified that happiness is individual assessment of quality of life. According to Schimmel (2009), sometimes happiness can be described as subjective well-being. While Diener & Ryan (2009) mentioned that happiness relates to positive emotions, whereas subjective well-being includes both positive and negative emotions. However, both terms refer to individual assessment of quality of life. From these definitions, human being is expected to be more active in making efforts to seek for and gain happiness.

The effort or activity done in achieving happiness can vary from individual to individual, relating to the understanding and concept of the happiness orientation that each individual has. Martin Seligman (2002)

in his research on orientation to happiness states that there is a tendency for one to depend on one orientation of happiness over another. In addition, the orientation of happiness can also affect the actions and choices of the activities undertaken by individuals (Peterson, Park, and Seligman, 2005). The so-called happiness orientation by Seligman (2002) is one's preference for achieving happiness.

Myers (2010) suggests four characteristics of happiness, namely self-respect, high optimism, open minded, and self-control. While in study conducted by Diener (Franken, 2002), people who obtained high scores experienced issues like : (1) showing positive emotions; (2) showing less negative emotions; (3) having the tendency to get involved in fun activities; and (4) feeling satisfied with their life. The second thing to notice happiness is by paying attention to diversity in culture (Franken, 2002). Diversity in culture influences the level of happiness of people in their life. Specifically, in the context of Western Culture, happiness tends to relate to personal achievement. In this context, an individual acts based on the motivation to maximize the experience of positive affects. Self-esteem is the best prediction for happiness. On the other hand, in Eastern Asia, happiness is closely related to interpersonal relation achievement. In this context, individual performs actions based on the motivation to maintain the balance of positive and negative affects. For people with this cultural background, like in Indonesia, an individual prefers to have considerations from family and friends as well as other people to evaluate his/her life (Suh, Diener, Oishi & Triandis dalam Franken, 2002).

Based on the research conducted by Frontier Consultant Group in 2007 (Wijayanti & Nurwiyanti, 2010), the result shows that from six provinces in Indonesia, the happiest people settled in Central Java. The index of happiness in Central Java was recorded as 48,17, better than average index of happiness in Indonesia. The next places were North Sulawesi (47,95), West Java (47,85), East Java (47,19), DKI Jakarta (46,20), and North Sumatra (46,12). In fact, if observed from the income level, people in Central Java have less income compared to people living in DKI Jakarta. People living in Central Java have a higher level of happiness because, probably, they do not have a high expectation. Besides that, the attitude of accepting things, which has been the character of Javanese, contributes to their acceptance to life so that they feel more relaxed and enjoy what they already have.

Based on the survey of happiness in Indonesia, the study on the definition of happiness has become more interesting, especially on college

students in Semarang which represents the community living in an area of Central Java. Semarang is the Capital City of Central Java which holds the Javanese traditions and ways of life. According to Ismawati, the Javanese, in terms of cultural anthropology, are people who speak in Javanese as well as its various dialects from generation to generation. People living in Semarang are characterized as the Javanese who are known as polite, friendly, respectful, subtle, upholds ethics and manners, and conserve the values of culture and traditions from generation to generation and highlight the principles of harmony as well as apply the sense of kinship in their daily life. According to Achidsti (2009), being friendly, empathetic, generous, unadorned, feeling bad, and other manners that are identical to Javanese.

Furthermore, the aim to analyse the meaning of happiness in college student was based on the consideration that, theoretically, college students are in the stage of early adulthood (transitional stage from late adolescence). They have experienced their first quarter of life and, surely, their characteristics have been developed and still undergo a process to be independent and productive individuals. The statement above refers to the theory defined by Hurlock (2004) that early adulthood is a transitional stage to new patterns of life and new social expectations. People in early adulthood are expected to play new roles like being a husband or wife, parents, or breadwinner as well as developing more mature attitudes, desires, and values according to their new role. The transition has become the crucial and challenging period of one's life span since, as an adult, they are expected to perform individual transition independently. So, happiness can act as the foundation of positive character building of college students.

Differing views on what matters most to one can affect one's own meaning toward happiness, so there is a diversity of things that make a person happy [Jersild (1982) in Oetami & Yuniarti, 2011]. In the academic and social life of the students, it was found that the orientation of happiness has a positive correlation with various aspects such as achievement motivation, student involvement with community and extracurricular activities, and clarity in career planning (Walker, Winn, & Lutjens, 2012). But not all happiness orientations can be positively correlated with aspects of student's academic life. The happiness orientation of meaning and engagement can be a positive predictor of adolescent career development, while orientation towards pleasure has no significant effect on career development (Hirschi, 2011). Some of these results suggest that a tendency towards a certain happiness orientation can be beneficial in a student's

academic life. In this study, researchers want to examine the trend of happiness orientation at students of Faculty of Psychology, in a University of Semarang, Central Java, Indonesia.

Method

The research design used in this research is descriptive method, where the research tries to describe a phenomenon, event, or situation. The aim is to systematically, factually and accurately describe the facts under investigation. The data related on happiest moments experienced by respondents were obtained through open-ended questionnaires. The questions were to reveal the moments that make the respondents happy and the characteristics of happy individuals according to the respondents.

Sample

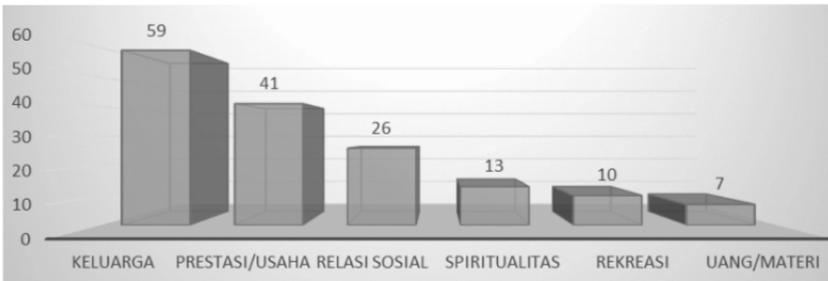
The respondents in the research are college students. College students were considered in the research since they are in the transitional stage between late adolescence and early adulthood (Hurlock, 2004) and they are already in the stage of living the values of life. The number of respondents was 156 psychology college students of a university in Semarang, Central Java, Indonesia. The respondents' age was between 18 to 22 years old.

Analysis

To get an idea of the events that make the college students the happiest, then the respondent is given an open question as follows: "Write the event that makes you happiest! Respondent's answer to this question varies greatly. This can be seen from the large categories of responses shown in Graph 12.1. Based on the data obtained from 156 psychology college students in a state university in Semarang, the overview or happiness orientation on those students is shown in Graph 12.1.

Discussion

This research is a preliminary study and the form of support obtained respondent to the formation of happiness orientation. Nevertheless, preliminary research conducted by indigenous psychology method is at



Graph 12.1: Happiness of college students

least able to reveal the typical information of the respondents. Nevertheless, preliminary research conducted by indigenous psychology method is at least able to reveal the typical information of the respondents. It is also hoped that this research can be a trigger for further research which is done more deeply by using indigenous psychology method so that it can contribute to the development of psychology science and also for the benefit of education and social life.

The results of this study indicate that there are six categories of events that make students feel the happiest:

(a) Bond or sense of kinship

Bond or sense of kinship is reflected on material and immaterial supports from family. The sense can be strengthened through harmony or family gathering, which is in line with what was stated by Miranti (2014) who believes that family serves as the foundation for forming happiness. Similar concept was also stated by Fuad (2005) saying that an ideal family of every human being is a family that has healthy mental characteristics: *sakinah* (tranquility), *mawaddah* (love) and *rahmah* (mercy). Family members should practice love and affection to generate a family unity. Happiness experienced from family contributes to college students' positive characters. The statement was based on the theory of Eddington & Shuman (2005) stating that the frequency of positive experiences correlates to positive effects. For example, a person who frequently undergoes some situations which create happiness within him/her tends to possess a high level of happiness. Besides that, Gunarsa (2003) stated that family is the smallest social unit in community which contributes to social development especially at the early stages which becomes the foundation for further personality development. The welfare of the community is highly dependent on the

family in the community. If the whole family is prosperous, then the community tends to be prosperous too.

(b) Achievement

The achievement stated in the result of the research is the personal achievement of college students, academically or non-academically. Personal achievement also includes accomplishment or progress to accomplish personal needs in general such as goals, prosperity, or life satisfaction. Achievement-related experience contributes to optimism as the source of happiness (Seligman, 2005).

(c) Social Relations

Social relations as one of college students' sources of happiness can be described as retaining best friends, acquaintances or supporting environment. Social relations refer to the relation between an individual and others in their social environment. A good social relation is characterized by being adaptive in one's social environment, able to perform social activities, sociable, supported by close friends, having a sense of togetherness and supported by one's social relations. According to a research conducted by Cheng and Furnham (2002), having friends at the same age is essential to a teenager's happiness since they gain benefits such as social support, sharing opportunities, and enjoying similar favourite activities as well as getting positive feedback. During the application, social support functions as: 1. Coping mechanism to reduce the negative effects of stress and conflicts (Calson & Perrewe in Gantari, 2008); 2. Providing satisfaction to the environment that provides social supports (Calson & Perrewe in Gantari, 2008); 3. Supporting individual health, mentally and physically (Argyle in Gantari, 2008).

(d) Free Time

Free time as the source of happiness of college students consists of making jokes, playing games, going on vacations and watching movies.

(e) Money

The ownership of money or certain materials either derived from the work itself or obtained from the provision of others.

(f) Spiritual Needs

Spiritual experience as the source of happiness is when religious orders are obeyed well. It is in line with what was stated by Al-Ghazali (2003) about happiness. Happiness is one's ability to fight over desire and control excessive behaviour. Basically, happiness is closely related to spiritual education since the objective of spiritual education is to obtain happiness, both in the world and in the hereafter. Therefore, for an individual, true happiness includes both physical and spiritual happiness, and then the positive mental and physical attitude will support individuals to achieve success in life.

Conclusion

Based on the study, it can be concluded that:

1. The main source of happiness of college students living in Semarang is family, so family attachment has become the priority to increase happiness of college students. Family attachment could be obtained by applying an open communication pattern and increasing the quality as well as the quantity of family gatherings. Family, especially parents, might start the attachment with college students through simple things, such as arranging a regular family gathering, organize recreational activities or familiarize themselves to share stories of fellow family members.
2. One of the components that generate happiness is positive perception towards the future or the needs of achievement, so, in order to increase happiness of college students, they should be given opportunities to actualize themselves. With the opportunity to actualize their potential, college students will be more self-respecting so that they will have a positive perspective on themselves and their environment.
3. The sources of happiness of college students need to be followed up as a basis for further research by designing a scale or a special measure of happiness for college students and a programme to reinforce the character of happiness for students so that their positive characters can be strengthened.

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