

DESCRIPTION OF SUBJECTIVE WELL-BEING IN ONLY DAUGHTERS RELATED TO THE NYENTANA TRADITION IN TABANAN

Ni Putu Krisadelia^{1*}, David Hizkia Tobing²

^{1,2} Undergraduate of Psychology Study Program, Faculty of Medicine, Universitas Udayana
E-mail: ¹⁾ krisadelia99@gmail.com

Abstract

Nyentana is a marriage system where the woman proposes to the man, and then the man moves into the woman's family. Nyentana marriage is an alternative for families who have only daughters to continue the descent. Finding a man who is willing to commit to nyentana is not easy, especially for the only daughters in the Tabanan district, which is known for its nyentana tradition. The various problems that only daughters face can cause psychological issues. This study aims to describe the subjective well-being of only daughters in relation to the nyentana tradition in Tabanan. This research uses a qualitative method with a phenomenological approach. Data collection was conducted through semi-structured interviews with five respondents who were only daughters aged 21-24 years and domiciled in Tabanan. The data analysis used theoretical coding. The results found five findings that described subjective well-being in only daughters, such as awareness of responsibility, family love, gratitude, and life principles in the nyentana tradition; challenges in getting nyentana; self-assessment as an only child; dreams for the future; and responses to problems. This study is expected to be a reference for individuals who seek to improve their quality of life..

Keywords: Nyentana, Marriage, Only daughter, Subjective Well-being

1. INTRODUCTION

Subjective well-being is explained as cognitive and affective assessments made by individuals towards their lives. This assessment includes individual emotional reactions to events that occur in life, as well as cognitive assessments of life satisfaction (Diener, Lucas & Oishi in Snyder & Lopez, 2002). Subjective well-being has a major influence on human life. Diener and Chan (2011) explained that having high subjective well-being can bring various benefits, especially to health and endurance, since happy people tend to be healthier, less likely to get sick, tend to have a long life, and have good self-control. Several studies have also shown that besides being beneficial to health and longevity, subjective well-being is also beneficial to better social relationships, work relationships, and resilience (Diener, Oishi, & Tay, 2018).

There are several factors that can affect subjective well-being, one of them is culture. Culture influences many aspects of human life including the subjective well-being of individuals (Mujamiasih, Prihastuty, & Hariyadi, 2013). Regarding the impact of culture on one's subjective well-being, Bali is one place that exemplifies this claim. The *nyentana* marriage is just one example of how strongly held traditions are still practiced in Bali today. *Nyentana* marriage is explained as a marriage in which a daughter is appointed to become a *kapurusa* and will continue her religious and traditional family obligations, and marry a man who is willing to enter the wife's family whose husband will have the status of *pradana* (Budawati Sudantra, Anggreni, & Bemmelen, 2012). *Nyentana* marriage exists as a result of the patrilineal kinship system that is held tightly

to this day by the Balinese Hindu community, in which descendants are drawn from the male line or father (Meta, 2013). That is, offspring can only be passed on by men.

As it relates to carrying out duties and obligations in family and social life, continuing descendants have a significant meaning in the Balinese Hindu community. These responsibilities and obligations are known as *swadharma* (Dyatmikawati, 2011). *Nyentana* marriage can be an alternative for families that only have daughters, especially only daughters, so that they can continue their descent. Tabanan is an area in Bali that is synonymous with *nyentana* marriages. Adnyani (2016) explained that the form of *nyentana* marriage originally developed in the Tabanan community and had been carried out for generations. Due to the moral obligation the child bears as the only daughters in the household and as a result, the only daughter in Tabanan is indirectly bound by the *nyentana* custom.

Finding males who are willing to commit to *nyentana* is difficult in reality. Adnyani (2016) explained that this marriage model still encounters various controversies among the Balinese Hindu community itself. Some individuals also believe that by entering into a *nyentana* marriage, the man will forfeit his right to serve as the family's leader, making him less important than women. Being in this scenario generates its own set of psychological problems for an only daughters in Tabanan, which is known for its *nyentana* tradition, particularly for those who have reached early adulthood. This problem arises as a result of the demands of parents, family and society on circumstances that require the daughter to replace the male role to become the successor in the family. In addition, early adulthood is also a critical period marked by various life events that can significantly impact subjective well-being (Arnett, 2007).

The results of a preliminary study conducted on three respondents who are only daughters in Tabanan aged 20-23 years found that being in the midst of the *nyentana* tradition raises various psychological problems. Feelings arise such as indecision as a result of being faced with choices regarding the future of marriage, feelings of sadness due to the end of a relationship, worries about the uncertainty of getting a partner who is willing to enter *nyentana* marriage, and feelings of being differentiated because of stereotypes from society that assume that an only daughters from Tabanan is definitely looking for a partner who are willing to enter into a *nyentana* marriage (Krisadelia, 2020).

Based on the explanations that have been presented, the various emotions or feelings experienced by the respondents describe how the respondents evaluate their lives affectively. Affective evaluation according to Diener (2000) is one component of subjective well-being. Respondents as an only daughter have different emotional experiences and dynamics related to their life in the midst of the *nyentana* tradition. Therefore, it is necessary to conduct more in-depth research on how the subjective well-being of only daughters is described in relation to the *nyentana* tradition in Tabanan. Subjective well-being is an important thing to study because it can describe a person's quality of life. This research is expected to be a reference that can lead individuals to become someone who has subjective well-being and a better quality of life related to *nyentana* marriage.

2. RESEARCH METHODS

2.1. Research Type

This study uses a qualitative method with a phenomenological approach. Qualitative methods can be used when you want to see and express a situation or object in its context, such as finding meaning or a deep understanding of a problem encountered in a natural setting (Yusuf, 2014). Therefore, the selection of qualitative methods in this study is in line with the research objective, which is to gain an in-depth understanding of the overview of subjective well-being in only daughters related to the *nyentana* tradition in Tabanan. The phenomenological approach is an approach that focuses on exploring phenomena that appear in one's consciousness subjectively (Kahija, 2017). This approach is used with the aim of gaining an in-depth understanding of the personal experiences of the respondents.

2.2. Respondents

Respondents in this study were five people collected through a purposive sampling technique. Purposive sampling is a sampling technique for data sources with certain considerations (Sugiyono, 2016). The criteria for the respondents in this study included, among other things, an only daughter with Hindu religion, domiciled in Tabanan Regency, and were in the early adult age range of 18-25 years (Santrock, 2011).

2.3. Data Collection Technique

In this study, the data were collected through interview and supported by field notes. Interviews were carried out by meeting directly with respondents and online via video conference. Salmons (2015) explains that online interviews can be used by researchers as an alternative so that they can easily talk face-to-face with research participants anywhere and anytime. The type of interview used is a semi-structured interview.

2.4. Data Analysis Technique

The data analysis technique used in this study refers to Strauss and Corbin (1990), theoretical coding which consists of three steps including open coding, axial coding, and selective coding (Strauss & Corbin, 1990).

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Awareness of Responsibility, Family Love, Gratitude, and Life Principles in the *Nyentana* Tradition

a. Awareness of Responsibility

Respondents have an awareness of the responsibility they have in living life as an only daughter in the middle of the *nyentana* tradition. However, at the current age of the respondents, the five respondents were not required to carry out their obligations as children nor were they subject to material demands from their parents. In addition, as an only daughter who is attached to the *nyentana* tradition, four out of five respondents also did not receive demands or coercion to later have to carry out *nyentana* marriages. This gave rise to positive affect felt by respondents such as feelings of comfort, happiness, and satisfaction. Positive affect felt by respondents is an important part that describes the achievement of subjective well-being. This is in line with Diener (2000) which states that

subjective well-being contains dimensions of life satisfaction, high positive affect and low negative affect.

b. Family Love

Family love refers to the attitude of the family which always gives love and attention to the respondent as the only daughters in the family. The five respondents received full affection, always prioritized, and received support from their families, especially from their parents. Various attitudes that show family love for the respondent raise the respondent's satisfaction with life with his family. Satisfaction with living with family is one of the sources of life satisfaction felt by respondents.

c. Gratitude

Being grateful is another thing that describes how the five respondents live life as an only daughter. The existence of gratitude allows respondents to interpret happiness based on the point of view of each respondent. Besides that, there are certain factors, family, which is a source of gratitude in the respondent's life. Being grateful in this case helps respondents live a happier life. Research results by Putri et al. (2021) found similar things, gratitude can increase positive emotions and provide life satisfaction.

d. Life Principles

The five respondents have life principles related to the future of each respondent, especially in the case of *nyentana*. Respondents revealed that currently they are trying to find partners who are willing to *nyentana*, but do not force themselves or make *nyentana* marriage a must when this is no longer possible. Whatever path they will take, the respondent is determined to remain responsible and care for both parents. Respondents also chose to live life according to their own will without any coercion from others. The existence of a life principle helps respondents not to be burdened by having the status of an only daughter in the midst of the *nyentana* tradition, so that respondents can achieve subjective well-being.

3.2. Challenges in Getting *Sentana*

a. Parents Expectations

The respondents understood that, despite the fact that their parents did not pressurize them, their parents had dreams for them to one day have a *nyentana* marriage. The respondents attempted to obtain *sentana* because they did not want to let their parents down and were aware of these expectations. On the other hand, the majority of men do not favor *nyentana* marriage. This gave rise to various negative affect felt by four out of five respondents. Diener, Suh, & Oishi (1997) explained that negative affect is a reflection of unpleasant moods or emotions as well as the negative responses experienced by individuals as a reaction to life, health, circumstances or events encountered. In this instance, the respondents experienced negative consequences, such as anxiety and dread that they would disappoint their parents if they were unable to live up to expectations in the future. However, the existence of guiding principles that have been covered in earlier findings aids respondents in avoiding being overly concerned about the future.

b. Stereotype

Another challenge that respondents felt in getting *sentana* was the stereotype of other people who saw that an only daughter from Tabanan was definitely looking for *sentana*. When men were about to approach the respondent, they commonly decided against it because they didn't want to enter *nyentana* marriage. Atmaja (2008) states the same thing, finding *sentana* is somewhat difficult due to a mistake in interpreting the term

nyentana. According to Adnyani (2016), society views that men who are generally the head of the household, will be replaced by women when enter to *nyentana* marriage. Due of this, many Balinese Hindus, particularly men, are hesitant to conduct *nyentana* marriages. Respondents had negative affect such emotions of disappointment, hurt, and felt played by males as a result of stereotypes' existence. However, because respondents see similar stereotypes frequently, they have grown accustomed to it.

c. Lack of Commitment

The lack of commitment became a challenge especially when the respondent was in a dating relationship. This was felt by four out of five respondents. The lack of commitment can be seen from the lack of certainty regarding the future of the relationship that the respondent has with his partner. One of the respondents even broke up after having an on-and-off relationship because their partner was not willing to enter *nyentana* marriage. Lack of commitment raises negative affect, concern about the continuation of the relationship with a partner. However, respondents and their partners were both aware of the risks in their relationship, so they had prepared themselves and reduced expectations in the relationship.

d. Rejection by the Male's Family

Rejection by the male's family was a challenge experienced by two respondents in getting *sentana*. The rejection occurred because the man's family did not allow his son to enter *nyentana* marriage in the future. The rejection made the respondent and his partner had to end the relationship. This had caused feelings of sadness and disappointment felt by respondents. However, respondents have been able to make efforts to overcome negative affect by interpreting the problem positively or by other efforts such as looking for activities.

3.3. Self-assessment as an Only Child

a. Feel Valuable

Two out of five respondents have a self-assessment as a valuable individual. The feeling of worth that the respondent has grows from self-love and also from the attitude of the family towards the respondent. Respondents as the only daughters also felt valuable because they saw that they would one day become the family backbone.

b. High Self-esteem

One other respondent has high self-esteem. The feeling of pride arises because the respondent perceives that having a status as someone who is looking for *sentana* makes the respondent more exclusive. Apart from that, a feeling of pride is also felt because the respondent is able to see good things in themselves which until now the respondent has been able to maintain. The positive self-assessment that has been described reflects that the respondent has high self-esteem. Triwahyuningsih (2017) states that someone who has high self-esteem will show acceptance, self-confidence, feeling needed by the environment, and proud to be themselves. Research conducted by Kuswara and Izzati (2022) found that there is a positive correlation between self-esteem and subjective well-being.

3.4. Dreamed Future

a. Happy Family

Family has an important meaning in the lives of the five respondents. This raises the desire of respondents to give happiness to the family. The five respondents have their own ways and views on how to make their family happy. Success in making their family happy will lead to happiness in the respondent. Research conducted by Oishi and Diener (2001) Asian Americans also found that pursuing life goals such as a happy family was able to maintain subjective well-being.

b. Career Advancement

The desire to improve careers arises from the respondents' feelings of dissatisfaction with current achievements. Respondents who are now in their early adulthood feel they have to be responsible for their own life and are responsible for family life in the future. Therefore, career advancement is the future that respondents dream of in order to have a more financially prosperous life. Four out of five respondents currently wish to focus on a career before thinking about *nyentana*. The respondents' optimism can be seen in their ambition and tenacity to advance their careers. As Patton et al. (2004) explained that someone who has high optimism shows a higher level of future career decision making and career goals. Research conducted by Gomes and Izzati (2021) showed a positive relationship between optimism and subjective well-being.

c. Preparations for the Ideal *Nyentana* Marriage

The preparation for an ideal *nyentana* marriage is how the respondent prepares before finally feeling worthy to seek *sentana* and get married. Two out of five respondents are determined to improve their self-quality and achieve all targets in life before seeking *sentana*. This is what the respondent does so that as a woman who seeks *sentana*, the respondent still has self-esteem and is worth fighting for. Respondents' efforts to improve self-quality illustrate one aspect of well-being put forward by Ryff (1989), namely personal growth. The ability to have a plan in life as well as the motivation to improve self-quality is a thing that describes the achievement of subjective well-being of respondents.

3.5. Response to Problems

a. Positive Interpretation

Experiencing various unpleasant events is something that respondents can't avoid. Most respondents reported having issues with romantic relationships, which led to a range of unpleasant emotions like despair and disappointment. However, respondents can interpret each of these events positively. The ability to interpret problems positively can be called positive reappraisal. Folkman and Moskowitz (in Rood et al., 2012) states that positive reappraisal is a type of coping that can be defined as reinterpreting events or situations positively. Folkman (in Finkelstein-Fox et al., 2020) explained that positive reappraisal can lead individuals to greater positive moods and reduce the impact of negative affect.

b. Avoidance

Another problem that is often faced by respondents in the midst of the *nyentana* tradition is when the environment around them starts to comment and remind respondents to look for *sentana*. This often makes respondents feel uncomfortable. Avoidance is the response shown by three out of five respondents when dealing with conversations related to *nyentana*. Pickens, McKinney, and Bell (2019) explain that avoidance is needed in the

short term to have positive effects that help individuals reduce stress, but in the long term avoidance coping may be ineffective.

4. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the subjective well-being of the respondents can be described by five key findings, such as, awareness of responsibility, family love, gratitude, and life principles in the *nyentana* tradition; challenges in getting *sentana*; self-assessment as an only child; dreamed future; and response to problems.

Awareness of responsibility, family love, gratitude, and life principles in the *nyentana* tradition describes the subjective well-being of the five respondents in which the respondents feel various positive effects such as happiness, gratitude and satisfaction in life. On the other hand, four out of five respondents were also faced with various challenges in getting *sentana* which then gave rise to various negative affect. However, respondents have been able to make efforts to overcome these negative affect in their own way.

Three out of five respondents have a positive self-assessment which reflects high self-esteem and this is one of the predictors of achieving the subjective well-being of the respondents. Dreamed future is also another finding that describes the subjective well-being of the five respondents, which represents a purpose in life and optimism within the respondents. Lastly, the response to problems provides an overview of the subjective well-being of the respondents, in which the respondents can interpret the various problems faced positively and is able to take a stance to address an unpleasant situation.

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