

The Effect of Gratitude, and Self-Awareness on the Happiness of Islamic Boarding School Students

Firda Primaheni [✉], Edy Purwanto, Mulawarman Mulawarman

Universitas Negeri Semarang, Indonesia

Article Info

History Articles
Received:
15 August 2021
Accepted:
10 September 2021
Published:
30 October 2021

Keywords:
gratitude; self-
awareness; happiness

Abstract

Teenage students complain about their lives at Islamic boarding schools with limited facilities and busy activities which are certainly different from life when they are at home with their families. An unpleasant life, truant, and not comfortable because they have not been able to adapt. This study was designed to examine the effect of gratitude and self-awareness on the happiness of adolescent students at Islamic boarding schools. A total of 155 teenage students aged 14-19 years from two Islamic boarding schools in Pemalang were selected as participants using a random sampling method. The data were taken using the accumulated gratitude scale, self-awareness scale and adaptation of the adolescent happiness scale at boarding school from Roger Morgan. The data were then analyzed using the SPSS version 25.00 computer program. Statistical results show that there is a positive influence between gratitude on the happiness of adolescent students, and there is a positive influence between self-awareness on the happiness of adolescent students. The findings of this study recommend increasing the happiness of students through gratitude and self-awareness.

[✉] Correspondence address:
Kebagusan No 273, Ampelgading, Pemalang, Jawa Tengah 52364
E-mail: fprimaheni@gmail.com

INTRODUCTION

Adolescent happiness is important to note. Happiness can improve social relationships when feeling bad and lonely (Quoidbach et al., 2019). Students who feel happy in class experience academic progress, creativity, and self-confidence (Gomis Chorro et al., 2017). Roger Morgan (2012) mentions some of the most important things in ensuring adolescent's happiness are feeling safe and protected, achieving basic needs, being treated fairly and respectfully, being able to make independent decisions, being able to do the things they want to do, and getting support from family and friends.

Primasari & Yuniarti (2012) mention three sources of adolescent's happiness, including (1) relationships with other people, consisting of events related to themselves, family, with friends, and matters related to love and being loved, (2) self-fulfilment, consisting of matters related to achievement, use of free time, and money, (3) relationship with God, consisting of spiritual events involving the relationship between youth and God. From these three sources of happiness, teenage students can experience changes in conditions and situations compared to when they are at home with their families. This requires the students to have a sense of gratitude to retain a source of happiness that they will find while at Islamic boarding school.

Nine students of Islamic boarding school A in Pematang (aged 15-19 years) as much as 50% argued for having an unpleasant life, and 80% had life problems. Then, the data collected from the students of Islamic boarding school B in Pematang indicated that from 11 respondents (aged 14-19 years), 50% of them stated that their current lives were unpleasant, and 90% had life problems.

Safaria's study (2014) of Yogyakarta-Indonesian students concludes that gratitude gives the greatest contribution to happiness. Behzadipour et al. (2016) in their correlational research show that there is a relationship between gratitude and individual happiness and

well-being. Then the findings of Witvliet et al.'s study (2018) indicate that gratitude as a practice can increase present happiness and hope for the future.

Algoe et al. (2016) mention that gratitude is joy or happiness when receiving positive results for oneself. However, another argument states that gratitude is not only for positive results, but also for negative ones. Individuals who have a good gratitude disposition will find positive meanings not only in positive events, but also in negative events (Hwang et al., 2015).

Kardas et al. (2019) explain that gratitude can be enhanced by training oneself to notice good things in his life and encouraging interpretations and judgments that have emerged to encourage gratitude, such as making positive social comparisons, focusing on positive aspects of life, expressing gratitude, and acknowledging family and community contributions. People with these characteristics are more satisfied with their lives and happier than people with lower levels of gratitude.

Having grateful mindset can lead to a happier and more optimistic life. In addition, it is easier for grateful adolescents to overcome adversity and form stronger interpersonal bonds. Gratitude can also have other important health benefits such as better sleep and reduced stress (Blabst, 2018). Kardas et al. (2019) state gratitude is accepted as having a strong relationship with measures of well-being. In some experimental studies, gratitude causes an increase in happiness.

Regarding gratitude, the Javanese philosopher, Suryomentaram believes that self-awareness in Indonesia society can be one's path to happiness. Sugiarto (2015) states that the path to happiness is to be introspective. According to Smart (2004) consciousness is an ability to feel and know or observe an object (for example, sensation, feeling, thought, and imagination) in the spectrum of consciousness and subconscious awareness. These processes then result in the acquired knowledge being stored as memories and used for decision making.

With self-awareness, adolescents can be tough, optimistic, and patient. Self-awareness

can also make adolescents happy because those who are introspective can judge and make decisions about the right attitudes or actions. Sandu et al. (2015) from the results of a correlational research found that self-awareness is related to the development of self-image which is a crucial psychological structure obtained during adolescence. The next research is Dariyo (2017) which examined the effect of self-awareness on life satisfaction.

Several previous studies have linked gratitude with happiness. In this study, the researchers continued to examine the effect of gratitude on subjective happiness with different respondents, namely teenage students who live in dormitories or boarding schools, namely Islamic boarding schools in Pemalang. Then from several previous studies, there have been no researches that specifically discussed the relationship between happiness and self-awareness. There were only studies that discussed the correlation between self-awareness and life satisfaction. Thus, the researchers wanted to focus on discussing the effect of self-awareness on the subjective happiness of teenage students of Islamic boarding schools in Pemalang.

Guidance and Counseling through its services can provide an effort aimed at helping students to develop towards how they should become and be so that their potential will develop optimally. As with teenage students who are in a period of character formation and self-discovery, this is the part that becomes the concern of the counsellor or Guidance and Counseling teachers. Positive emotions need to be instilled in every provision of counselling service to achieve the happiness of teenage students.

METHODS

This research was a correlational study. The sample was 155 teenage students (aged 14-19 years) who studied in Islamic boarding school

Table 1 shows the mean value of happiness gained (M = 60.36; SD = 18.87), so it

in Pemalang, Central Java sampled using a random sampling technique.

The instrument used was a boarding school adolescent happiness instrument by Roger Morgan which consists of 20 statement items. The instrument adaptation from English to Indonesian was done through back-translation by two experts. The first step of the instrument adaptation was translating the English version into Indonesian followed by the second step that was translating back from Indonesian into English. The difference in the results of the two steps was discussed to get a good Indonesian version of the instrument.

Furthermore, the researchers compiled a gratitude scale consisting of 20 statement items. The results of the reliability test showed that the gratitude scale had an alpha coefficient of 0.72. Then, the researchers compiled a self-awareness scale consisting of 20 statement items. The results of the reliability test showed that the self-awareness scale had an alpha coefficient of 0.71.

The respondents were asked to answer honestly the instruments, while in turn, any personal information data collected would be confidential.

There were several data analysis techniques used in this study including descriptive analysis, and multiple linear regression hypothesis testing. Meanwhile, several prerequisite tests must be carried out as a condition for further testing in data analysis, including data normality test, heteroscedasticity test, and multicollinearity test.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table. 1 Descriptive Statistical Analysis Results

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Hap	155	60.36	18.87
Grat	155	59.12	16.98
SA	155	64.10	19.61

INFORMATION. HAP = HAPPINESS; SA = SELF AWARENESS; GRAT = GRATITUDE; P < .01 (N = 155)

was included in the medium category. Then, the mean value of gratitude was (M = 59.12; SD =

16.98), so it was included in the medium category. Furthermore, the mean value of self-awareness was (M = 64.10; SD = 19.61), so it was included in the medium category. The results of descriptive statistics on all research variables indicated that the mean (M) was greater than the standard deviation (SD). Higher mean value can be interpreted as a good representation for the distribution of data.

Furthermore, to determine the effect of gratitude and self-awareness on the happiness of teenage students, the researchers used multiple regression analysis. This analysis was used to measure the strength of the relationship between

The results of the multiple linear regression equation above can be interpreted as $t = 0.30, P < 0.01$ and $t = 0.033, P < 0.01$ positive which meant that the higher the gratitude, the higher the happiness of adolescents. The higher self-awareness indicated the increase in adolescents' happiness. In addition, since R^2 gained 0.10, it meant that 10% gratitude and self-awareness affected the happiness of teenage students and the rest was other effects that were not present in this study.

The positive emotions of adolescents showed in the form of gratitude and self-awareness affected happiness. It is similar to what Hwang et al. (2015) state that true happiness can be defined as happiness of enjoying positive emotions of joy and meaningful value, ability to change negative thought patterns into positive ones, showing how to change one's life. Adolescents can achieve happiness through their efforts, and therefore, it is necessary to pay attention to positive inner characters of individuals as a form of psychological characteristics that can increase their happiness.

When adolescents can apply gratitude in their lives, happiness can be achieved. Hwang et al. (2015) state that true happiness can be defined as happiness of enjoying positive emotions of joy and meaningful value, ability to change negative thought patterns into positive ones, showing how to change one's life.

two or more variables and show the direction of the relationship between the dependent and independent variables. Here are the results of multiple linear regression analysis presented in table 2.

Table 2 Multiple Linear Regression Analysis Results

Predictor	β	t	p
Grat	.300	3.30	<0.01
SA	.033	.36	<0.01

$R = .102, F = 8.602 = 3.06, P < 0.05$

Personal gratitude can increase happiness, cognitive development, independence, generosity, awareness of responsibility, enable to face challenges faced. Meanwhile, social and grateful conditions can encourage adolescents to easily help each other, work together, and be able to face the challenges of social life. In addition, being spiritually grateful can increase youth's closeness to God.

Teenage students who have self-awareness tend to be happy in dealing with every problem and lesson in their lives. Dariyo (2017) states that self-awareness influences life satisfaction which is included in the psychological realm of adolescent happiness.

Guidance and Counseling, has several services, one of which is developmental group counselling services. According to Wibowo (2005) group counselling service is an effort to help individuals in a group atmosphere that is preventive and curative and is directed at providing convenience in the context of change and growth. For teenage students with low levels of happiness, it is necessary to provide developmental group counselling services. The topic of gratitude and self-awareness can be included in the counsellor stage of group counselling.

With group counselling services, adolescents who are in a period of searching for identity and character building are important to be instilled positive emotions in their lives. It can be done by giving trainings to instil gratitude and self-awareness in group counselling services with

hope to develop perspectives, thoughts, and emotions on behaviour that can increase happiness of adolescents. It is expected to meet specific objectives of group counselling which according to Prayitno dan Erman Amty (2004) cover the development of feelings, thoughts, perceptions, insights, and attitudes that lead to behaviour and solving group member problems.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the analysis of the research data related to gratitude, self-awareness, and happiness of teenage students of Islamic boarding schools in Pemalang, it can be concluded that gratitude has a positive effect on the happiness of the teenage students of Islamic boarding schools in Pemalang. This means that the better the gratitude of teenage students, the higher happiness of teenage students of Islamic boarding schools in Pemalang. Then self-awareness has a positive influence on the happiness of teenage students at Islamic boarding schools in Pemalang. This means that the better the self-awareness of teenage students, the higher happiness of the teenage students of Islamic boarding schools in Pemalang. Furthermore, there is a positive effect between gratitude and self-awareness on the happiness of the teenage students of Islamic boarding schools in Pemalang. The more grateful the teenager, the more happiness will increase, and the more self-awareness of the teenager, the more happiness will be gained by adolescents.

Gratitude and self-awareness have one thing in common, namely positive emotions that need to be trained throughout life. Not only teenagers, but all levels of life are also important to instil these positive emotions. Likewise, happiness is the goal of almost all humans and is not limited to a certain age. This is what makes these emotions an interesting aspect of research from time to time.

In helping increasing the happiness of teenage students, counsellors of Islamic boarding schools need to understand the sources of happiness in adolescence so that in they can

provide proper and appropriate interventions for students' problems.

For further researchers, it is hoped that they can provide novelty of the three aspects of positive emotions, of course, with discussions that are more adapted to human needs relevant to the times. This research needs to be further developed for future researchers so that they get a more specific discussion not only on the age range but also on the type of gender.

REFERENCES

- Algoe, S. B., Kurtz, L. E., & Hilaire, N. M. (2016). Putting the "You" in "Thank You": Examining Other-Praising Behavior as the Active Relational Ingredient in Expressed Gratitude. *Social Psychological and Personality Science*, 7(7), 658–666.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1948550616651681>
- Behzadipour, S., Sadeghi, A., & Sepahmansour, M. (2016). A Study on the Effect of Gratitude on Happiness and Well Being. *Journal of Health Psychology*, 1(2), 65–72.
http://ijohp.journals.pnu.ac.ir/article_3949_e40a894c5c907806fce89bd12973b4eb.pdf
- Blabst, N. (2018). *New Forms of Recording Gratitude: Benefit of a Gratitude Journal App and an Exploration of Appreciated Design Features*. 2, 1–11.
www.nationalwellbeingsservice.com/journals
- Dariyo, A. (2017). Peran Self-Awareness Dan Ego Support Terhadap Kepuasan Hidup Remaja Tionghoa. *Psikodimensia*, 15(2), 254.
<https://doi.org/10.24167/psiko.v15i2.991>
- Gomis Chorro, E., Ángela Morales Fernández, M., & Gilar Corbí, R. (2017). Happiness and Values in the Formation of Personal Identity in Students of the Fifth and Sixth Grade at Primary School. *Universal Journal of Educational Research*, 5(5), 881–890.

- <https://doi.org/10.13189/ujer.2017.050520>
- Hwang, H., Kang, H., Tak, J., & Lee, S. (2015). Impact of Self-Esteem and Gratitude Disposition on Happiness in Pre-service Early Childhood Teachers. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 174, 3447–3453.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2015.01.1017>
- Kardas, F., Cam, Z., Eskisu, M., & Gelibolu, S. (2019). Gratitude, Hope, Optimism and Life Satisfaction as Predictors of Psychological Well-Being*. *Eurasian Journal of Educational Research*, 2019(82), 81–100.
<https://doi.org/10.14689/ejer.2019.82.5>
- Morgan, R. (2012). *Measuring happiness a Consultation with Children from Care and Children Reported by the Children 's Rights Director for England*. 18.
- Prayitno dan Erman Amty. (2004). *Dasar-dasar Bimbingan dan Konseling*. Jakarta: Rineka Cipta.
- Primasari, A., & Yuniarti, K. W. (2012). What make teenagers happy? An exploratory study using indigenous psychology approach. *International Journal of Research Studies in Psychology*, 1(2), 53–61.
<https://doi.org/10.5861/ijrsp.2012.v1i2.80>
- Quoidbach, J., Taquet, M., Deseilles, M., de Montjoye, Y. A., & Gross, J. J. (2019). Happiness and Social Behavior. *Psychological Science*, 30(8), 1111–1122.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0956797619849666>
- Safaria, T. (2014). Forgiveness, Gratitude, and Happiness among College Students. *International Journal of Public Health Science (IJPHS)*, 3(4), 241.
<https://doi.org/10.11591/ijphs.v3i4.4698>
- Sandu, C. M., Pânișoară, G., & Pânișoară, I. O. (2015). Study on the Development of Self-awareness in Teenagers. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 180(November 2014), 1656–1660.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2015.05.060>
- Smart, J. J. C. (2004). Consciousness and Awareness. *Journal of Consciousness Studies*, 11(2), 41-50+2.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/b978-0-12-816484-6.00001-4>
- Sugiarto, R. (2015). *Psikologi Raos Saintifikasi Kawruh Jiwa Ki Ageng Suryomentaram* Yogyakarta: Pustaka Ifada.
- Wibowo, M. E. (2005). *Konseling Kelompok Perkembangan*. Semarang: Unnes Press.
- Witvliet, C. van O., Richie, F. J., Root Luna, L. M., & Van Tongeren, D. R. (2018). Gratitude Predicts Hope and Happiness: A Two-Study Assessment of Traits and States. *Journal of Positive Psychology*, 14(3), 271–282.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/17439760.2018.1424924>