

Forgivingness and Subjective Well-Being of the Female Prisoners

Emma Try Daryanti^{1✉}, Dwi Yuwono Puji Sugiharto² & Mulawarman³

¹ Public Senior High School 1 Bawang Banjarnegara, Jawa Tengah, Indonesia

² Universitas Negeri Semarang, Indonesia

Article Info

History Articles

Received:

January 2019

Accepted:

February 2019

Published:

June 2020

Keywords:

female prisoners,
forgivingness,
subjective well-being

DOI

<https://doi.org/10.15294/jubk.v9i1.29126>

Abstract

The meaningless feeling of the female prisoners may give some impacts on their psychological and subjective well-being. The forgivingness is needed so that in the future, the prisoners can feel the happiness physically and mentally to continue their life. The research is aimed at understanding the forgivingness and subjective well-being of the female prisoners as well as the implications to the counseling guidance. The research applied the qualitative research design with a phenomenology approach. The data sources were from 4 female prisoners who were suitable for the research characteristics. The data analysis technique was Miles and Huberman's model of qualitative data analysis technique. The results of the research show that the forgivingness and subjective well-being of the female prisoners were correlated one to another. Both the forgivingness and subjective well-being were built from the surrounding, appearing in various psychological and spiritual responses. Those responses formed perceptions of family acceptance, self-commitment, and life purposes. The research shows that self-perception is very important in the forgivingness and subjective well-being of the female prisoners.

© 2020 Universitas Negeri Semarang

✉ Correspondence address:

Raya Pucang No.134 RT.05/RW.02, Blater, Pucang, Bawang,
Banjarnegara, Jawa Tengah, 53471

E-mail: ematd96@gmail.com

[p-ISSN 2252-6889](#)

[e-ISSN 2502-4450](#)

INTRODUCTION

Not all the female prisoners can accept a condition of them being in prison, as the prison itself is a kind of stress sources for the occupants. The female prisoners are easier to experience unpleasant psychological conditions. The loss of some rights may occur uncomfortable feelings physically and psychologically. For them, being a prisoner is a very bad condition, and it is considered not only a worldly punishment but also God's (Raudatussalamah, and Susanti, 2014).

The inability to accept such conditions can be due to some matters; guilty feeling, regret, and fear of being looked down so that there are also the feelings of shame and oppression, acceptance of verdicts, separation from family, and more. These conditions press the prisoners, let them behave not in better ways, and decrease their psychological well-being.

The life of prisoners during the punishment lets them face some psychological problems including losing family, losing self-control, and losing support. Being in prison deprives their freedom and independence.

The prisoners also experienced some changes in this stage of life where they may lose relationships with their lovers, rights to make decisions, rights of ownership, rights to find services, and senses of security. The problems mentioned above may affect the prisoners physically and psychologically (Syahrudin, 2011).

Meanwhile, the number of female prisoners is increased from time to time. The data obtained from Ditjenpas of the area of Central Java show that there are 626 prisoners registered, for the details, it is seen in Table 1.

Table 1. The Data of Prisoners in Central Java

	Custody	Convicts	Total (%)
Male	2.908	9.548	12.456 (92.4%)
Female	162	464	626 (4.6%)
Boys	39	97	136 (1.1%)
Girls	259	0	259 (1.9%)
Total	3.368	10.109	13.477 (100%)

From the data above, it is known that Indonesia is in a long-term, multi-dimensional

crisis for some recent years. Crimes are considered a solution for some people to solve life problems (Andriany, 2008). Consequently, the prisoners are not able to fix themselves even if they have passed through counseling and skills classes in the prisons.

The meaningless feeling of female prisoners affects their psychological well-being. The forgivingness is needed so that they may feel the happiness physically and mentally to continue their life. Kirmani (2015) stated that females record higher levels of forgivingness than those of males. Females tend to score higher than the males in term of forgiving. Besides, according to Karrenmans et al., in Maulida, and Sari (2016), forgivingness influences the psychological well-being better when the guilty ones previously have a strong relationship with the forgivers.

A sincere forgivingness requires compassion, kindness, and love to the guilty one alongside with the release of rights for vengeance and ignorance. It is clear that the forgivingness is essential as the repairing mechanism that is possible to happen for all the conflicts within a relationship (Raj, Elizabeth, and Padmakumari, 2016).

Forgivingness is the willingness to leave all the unpleasant things sourced from the interpersonal relationships by growing up and developing a more positive relationship with someone that has made those mistakes (Nashori, 2014). By forgiving, a prisoner has the purpose of developing a better relationship and a more realistic assessment between two people. Besides, it also sets her free from the negative characteristics of the violence toward other people. Next, forgivingness also helps someone to lessen the willingness to punish someone with mistakes.

Forgivingness and subjective well-being have a positive relationship in helping prisoners to pass through their life in the jails. It is along with the finding from Hill, and Allemand (2011) who stated that someone with gratitude and forgivingness found the better positivity, optimism, and life satisfaction as well as lessening the level of negativity and pessimism.

There are also Diener, Biswas-Diener, and Tamir (in Azra, 2017) who said that the high levels of subjective well-being tend to make individuals able to adapt with the more effective coping toward the conditions. This way, they also feel a better life in the future.

This research would be conducted in the IIA female jail in Semarang due to some unique factors that push the researchers to do so. In prison, some prisoners were proven to have some achievements in the field of fashion. It was seen from a fashion show event with their collections. Moreover, those collections were also worn by a famous Indonesian designer, Anne Avantie. This unique thing had been only in the IIA female jail in Semarang.

With the presence of forgivingness and subjective well-being, such achievements are possible to happen. Allemand, Hill, Ghaemmaghami, and Martin (2012) explain that the forgiving people are higher in term of the positive influence, satisfaction of life, and optimism, as well as they are lower in term of the negative influence, and pessimism. From those unique things, the phenomenon in the jail mentioned above was considered good being studied more deeply. The purpose of the research is to understand the forgivingness and subjective well-being of the female prisoners alongside the implications toward the counseling guidance.

METHODS

The research design would be applied in the research is a qualitative method. The research would be aimed at understanding more deeply regarding the forgivingness and subjective well-being of the female prisoners. The qualitative approach model used would be phenomenology with a purpose to describe the meaning of experiences experienced by the female prisoners related to the forgivingness and subjective well-being. The respondents would be chosen with some criteria; prisoners who were failed from paroles, rarely visited by family, and accused of narcotics abuse. There would be four respondents chosen.

Data collection methods would be interview, observation, documentation, and focus group discussion (FGD). The interview would be a semi-structured interview in which the questions given would be opened but limited by the themes and plots determined before. The interview would be conducted to 4 main prisoners, four staff members, and four cell-mates and four co-workers of the foremost prisoners.

The main or primary respondents in the research would be four prisoners chosen based on the research characteristics. To support the results, a focus group discussion would also be conducted with eight other female prisoners as additional or secondary respondents to find accurate information. The eight FGD members would be chosen with the characteristics of cell-mates and co-workers in the jail.

An observation would also be held fully by the researchers to see the daily activities of the respondents to support the results of the interview. In the research, the researchers would take roles as the changeable observers. In the beginning, they would be the non-participants, and when the rapport had been formed, they would be turned into participants. The observations would be conducted by observing the behaviors of the respondents during the counseling class and practicing their skills in the workshops. Documentations would be found from the documents given by the jail's staff members as well as the prisoners including the personal data, schedule, and diary.

To test the validity of the data, researchers would apply the triangulation data with sources and triangulation with methods. In the research, the source triangulation would be done by comparing the results of the interview from all the respondents to check the validity of the information obtained. The checking of the degree of trust would be through the technique of triangulation with methods, testing the interview results, observation, documentation, and FGD so that it would be valid.

For the data analysis technique, Miles and Huberman model of qualitative data analysis technique would be used. It is by collecting the data with the interview, observation,

documentation, and FGD. The data reduction would be via selection, simplification, sorting out of the data as well as they would be summarized to obtain the primary data divided into eight themes and 11 sub-themes. The conclusion would be drawn during the process of data collection and verified until the meaning of forgiveness and subjective well-being was found.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The research was conducted in the IIA female jail in Semarang with the main respondents of 4 prisoners. The respondents of the research consisted of 2 prisoners who were

going to jail twice with the status of parole failed and two other prisoners who were going to jail only once. Those four respondents were jailed for the same case; it was narcotic abuse. They were a crystal meth user, a crystal meth user and seller, a marijuana user, and a narcotic courier with an international network.

The results of the research found the forgiveness and subjective well-being were built up from the correlations among the conditions of the surrounding, psychological responses, spiritual responses, perception towards family acceptance, self-commitment, and life purpose. The correlations were described in the following Figure 1.

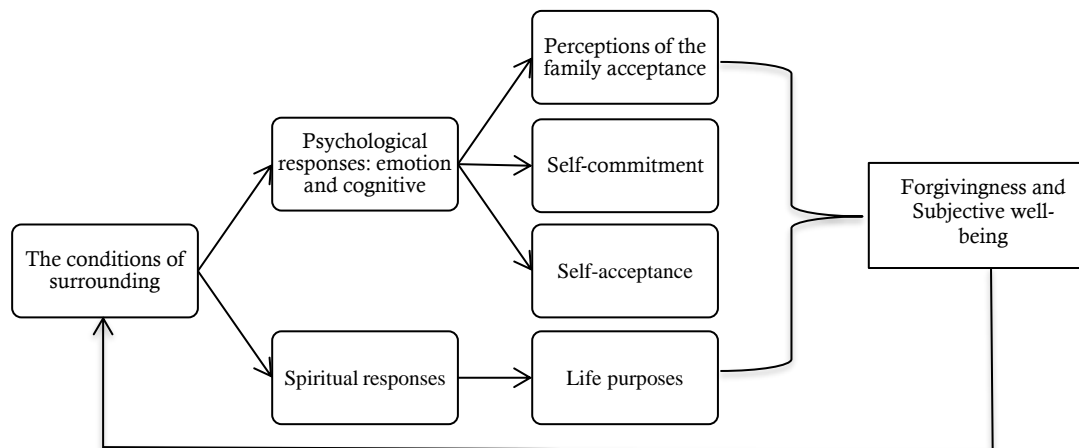


Figure 1. The Theme of Forgiveness and Subjective Well-Being

The forgiveness and subjective well-being of the female prisoners in the IIA female jails in Semarang were built up from the correlations among the themes that had appeared. The forgiveness and subjective well-being were also established from the conditions of surrounding experienced by the prisoners that produce various psychological and spiritual responses.

The limited environment, as well as the movement and sight, tended to influence the prisoners in forming the psychological responses. The counseling in the jail, whether personal or skill counseling, influenced the psychological responses as well. Those responses were emotional and cognitive responses. The

psychological responses were in line with the finding of Meilina (2003), the life of prisoners during their time in the jail let them be able to face various psychological problems including losing family, self-control, models, and supports.

Meanwhile, the emotional responses shown by the prisoners were sadness, anger, and resentment for being far from family, not being able to communicate freely, and the limitation of the movement space. The happiness due to the counseling made was because they had new experiences and skills to be mastered.

The sadness, anger, and resentment also produced cognitive responses; it was a thought that they would not be accepted by the society after the jail, fear of not being accepted by family,

and worry of not finding a proper job. Those showed the feeling of meaningless that affects their psychological well-being. The findings were in line with the results of the research by Frankl (in Raudatussalamah, and Susanti, 2014) that stated that the physical effects experienced by the prisoners tend to make them feel meaningless, signed by the emptiness, drain, boredom, and despair.

The sadness, anger, and resentment also produced cognitive responses; it was a thought that they would not be accepted by the society after the jail, fear of not being accepted by family, and worry of not finding a proper job. Those showed the feeling of meaningless that affects their psychological well-being. The findings were in line with the results of the research by Frankl (in Raudatussalamah, and Susanti, 2014) that stated that the physical effects experienced by the prisoners tend to make them feel meaningless, signed by the emptiness, drain, boredom, and despair.

Those psychological responses experienced by the female prisoners also produced a perception regarding the family acceptance toward them. The fear of not being accepted by the family was an extremely sad thing and unacceptable. A perception of embarrassing the family, making troubles, and negative views from others also makes the prisoners very sad and afraid of their existences not being accepted by their family in the future. Parents and children became the main sources of happiness for those female prisoners. Being visited and communicating through the phone were priceless happiness for them.

The psychological responses raised a self-commitment to change and not to repeat the same mistakes. The self-control was important to do by all of them so that they would not fall one more time in the narcotics environment, make friends with other drug users, and they would commit to correct their mistakes. This was in line with Diener, Suh, Lucas, and Smith (1999) opinion in which the self-control involves the process of deciding, knowing, understanding, and solving the consequences from the decision as well as looking for the meaning of the events.

The feeling of guilt, regret, anger, and resentment made the prisoners tend to blame themselves regarding the problems they experienced. The personal counseling given by the jail's staff members were able to make the prisoners able to accept their current conditions and forgive themselves. Therefore, those raised the willingness to be a better and processed person.

The conditions of the environment around also produced spiritual responses in which they tended to be more religious. Due to the feeling of being a sinner, guilty, and regretful, they just wanted to repent. The Muslims were more diligently and routinely to join the Islamic events in the mosque. Meanwhile, the Christians were also more diligently going to the church available in the jail area. Hopes appeared along with the improvement of their spiritual quality. Besides, a big sincerity in accepting their conditions became a factor the prisoners were able to live their life inside the jail. Diener, Biswas-Diener, and Tamir (in Azra, 2017) stated the high level of subjective well-being makes the individuals can adapt and do the coping more effectively toward their conditions for the better life in the future.

The spiritual responses established formed the prisoners to have life purposes in the future. The sincerity to accept their conditions inside the jail also formed them into strong and optimistic personalities in living their life. This was explained in research that gratitude and forgiving individuals reported the presence of positive influences, optimism, and higher life satisfaction, as well as they, decrease the negative influences and pessimism (Hill, and Allemand, 2011).

The life purposes formed by the female prisoners were not separated from the counseling given by the jail's staff members. The skill class was the provision for them while finally being outside. The skills were expected to apply to have a better life. Sewing, cooking, Batik making, and beauty skills were the classes followed by the prisoners. The directed activities were efforts to do consciously to develop their positive potentials for the relation utilization among people to support the achievement of meaning and purposes of life (Bastaman, 2007).

The forgivingness and subjective well-being of the prisoners that were formed in the jail were also related to the conditions of surrounding that seem to be not conducive and limited as well as the other people's perspectives toward them were gradually able to be accepted sincerely through a set of responses and the self-commitment. Generally, people who are optimist regarding their future tend to be happier and satisfied with their life. Individuals who evaluate themselves through positive ways also have better control toward their life so that they have more positive dreams and wishes for the future. Schneider (in Compton, 2005) also stated that the subjective well-being would be created when the optimistic behaviors owned by the individuals are real.

The forgivingness and subjective well-being of the prisoners in the jail could be optimized through some help from the professional counselors. The prisoners needed the services of counseling guidance as it was shown by the statement of the respondents that they needed a companion from the expert one. The counseling guidance that has been known in the education world, in reality, is not limited in the school areas but also various fields beyond with informal educative motives and nuance for the development of the human resources and society (Prayitno, Wibowo, Marjohan, Mugiarto, and Irdhil, 2015).

During the research, the respondents felt comfortable with and could share their problems faced with researchers. They did not have enough trusts to their mates in jail so that they needed counseling guidance to share their problems. Counseling and guidance play important roles in facing the problems of society that are getting more complex (Kibtyah, 2015).

CONCLUSION

The results of the research show that forgivingness and subjective well-being of the female prisoners were formed from the correlations among the themes. The forgivingness and subjective well-being of the female prisoners were also built from the

conditions of surrounding experienced by the prisoners that raised various psychological and spiritual responses. Those responses formed the perception of acceptance from family, self-commitment, self-acceptance, and life purposes.

Based on the results, it is suggested for the counselors to give some services in the jail in the form of both individual and group counseling using cognitive approaches. For further research, the researchers may use male prisoners as the respondents as in this research; there were female prisoners as the respondents.

REFERENCES

- Allemand, M., Hill, P. L., Ghaemmaghami, P., & Martin, M. (2012). Forgivingness and subjective well-being in adulthood: The moderating role of future time perspective. *Journal of Research in Personality*, 46(1), 32-39. Retrieved from <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0092656611001607>
- Andriany, M. (2008). Rencana narapidana wanita menghadapi kebebasan di lapas wanita kelas iia semarang: koteks *correctional nursing*. *Idea Nursing Journal*, 2(2). Retrieved from <http://www.jurnal.unsyiah.ac.id/INJ/article/view/6363>
- Azra, F. N. (2017). Forgiveness dan subjective well-being dewasa awal atas perceraian orang tua pada masa remaja. *PSIKOBORNEO Jurnal Ilmiah Psikologi*, 5(3). Retrieved from [http://ejournal.psikologi.fisip-unmul.ac.id/site/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/jurnal%20fatima%20nur%20azra%20\(11-08-17-10-52-20\).pdf](http://ejournal.psikologi.fisip-unmul.ac.id/site/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/jurnal%20fatima%20nur%20azra%20(11-08-17-10-52-20).pdf)
- Bastaman, H. D. (2007). *Logotherapy: psikologi untuk menemukan makna hidup dan meraih hidup bermakna*. Jakarta: Penerbit Raja Grafindo.
- Compton, W. C. (2005). *Introduction to positive psychology*. New York: Thomson Woodsworth.
- Diener, E., Suh, E. M., Lucas, R. E., & Smith, H. L. (1999). Subjective well-being: three decades of progress. *Psychological Bulletin*, 125(2), 276-302. Retrieved from <https://media.rickhanson.net/Papers/SubjectiveWell-BeingDiener.pdf>
- Hill, P. L., & Allemand, M. (2011). Gratitude, forgivingness, and well-being in adulthood: Tests of moderation and incremental

- prediction. *The Journal of Positive Psychology*, 6(5), 397-407. Retrieved from <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/17439760.2011.602099>
- Kibtyah, M. (2015). Pendekatan bimbingan dan konseling bagi korban pengguna narkoba. *Jurnal Ilmu Dakwah*, 35(1). Retrieved from <http://journal.walisongo.ac.id/index.php/dakwah/article/view/1252>
- Kirmani, M. N. (2015). Gratitude, forgiveness and subjective well-being among college going students. *International Journal of Public Mental Health and Neurosciences*, 2(2). Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/308994611_Gratitude_Forgiveness_and_Subjective_Well-being_among_College_going_Students
- Maulida, M & Sari, K. (2016). Hubungan memaafkan dengan kesejahteraan psikologis pada wanita yang bercerai. *Jurnal Psicendekia*, 1(4). Retrieved from <http://www.jim.unsyiah.ac.id/Psikologi/article/view/1406>
- Meilina, C. P. (2013). Dampak psikologis bagi narapidana wanita yang melakukan tindakan pembunuhan dan upaya penanggulangannya (studi di lembaga pemasyarakatan kelas ii a wanita malang). *Jurnal Hukum*. Retrieved from <http://hukum.studentjournal.ub.ac.id/index.php/hukum/article/view/227>
- Nashori, F. (2014). *Psikologi pemaafan*. Yogyakarta: Safiria Insania Press.
- Prayitno, Wibowo, M. E., Marjohan, Mugiarto, H., & Ihdhil. (2015). *Pembelajaran melalui pelayanan bk di satuan pendidikan: pengembangan manusia seutuhnya*. Yogyakarta: Paramitra Publishing.
- Raj, P., Elizabeth, C. S., & Padmakumari, P. (2016). Mental health through forgiveness: Exploring the roots and benefits. *Cogent Psychology*, 3(1). Retrieved from <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/23311908.2016.1153817>
- Raudatussalamah, & Susanti, R. (2014). Pemaafan (forgiveness) dan *psychological well-being* pada narapidana wanita. *Marwah: Jurnal Perempuan, Agama dan Jender*, 13(2). Retrieved from <http://ejournal.uin-suska.ac.id/index.php/marwah/article/view/890>
- Syahrudin, (2011). Dampak psikologis seorang narapidana (online). Retrieved from <http://balance04.blogspot.com>