



INVESTIGATING SUBJECTIVE WELL-BEING ON THE HONORARY EDUCATION STAFF AT MALIKUSSALEH UNIVERSITY, ACEH

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Abstract

This study presents the Subjective Well-Being of honorary employees of education staff at Malikussaleh University. Subjective Well-Being (SWB) as a psychological construct is oriented to the individual's positive appraisal and affection towards the reality of his life journey. Work routines carried out by individuals are the main focus of arising out of SWB in individual reality because work is understood as a mean of forming a decent and prosperous life. The objectivity of this study explains the individual's knowledge of SWB, the meaning of SWB in the reality of work, and the factors that encourage the arises of SWB in individuals. The design of this study used a phenomenological type of qualitative approach. Participants were taken randomly through purposive sampling input, in total 15 people from 25 planned research subjects. Field data searches were carried out by in-depth interviews and FGDs. The findings of this study inform that in general, honorary education staff working at Malikussaleh University have good SWB, even though they are still honorary staff.

Keywords: SWB, Honorary Education staff, Malikussaleh University, Aceh

Abstrak

Penelitian ini mempresentasikan Kesejahteraan Subyektif pegawai honorer tenaga kependidikan (tendik) di Universitas Malikussaleh (Unimal). Kesejahteraan Subjectif (SWB) sebagai konstruksi psikologis dimana afeksi dan penilaian positif individu terhadap menjadi kajian utama munculnya SWB dalam realitas individu karena kerja dipahami sebagai sarana pembentuk kehidupan yang layak (sejahtera). Objektivitas penelitian ini menjelaskan pengetahuan individu tentang SWB, makna SWB dalam realitas pekerjaan, dan faktor-faktor yang mendorong munculnya SWB pada individu. Desain penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif tipe fenomenologis. Partisipan diambil secara acak melalui input purposive sampling, berjumlah 15 orang dari 25 subjek penelitian yang direncanakan. Penelusuran data lapangan dilakukan dengan wawancara mendalam dan FGD. Temuan penelitian ini menginformasikan bahwa secara umum tenaga kependidikan honorer yang bekerja di Unimal memiliki SWB yang baik, meskipun masih berstatus sebagai tenaga honorer.

Kata kunci: SWB, Pegawai honorer tenaga Kependidikan, Universitas Malikussaleh, Aceh



INTRODUCTION

The nature of work is understood by humans as a mean to respond on various life needs, such as self-esteem, social relations, appreciation, and life satisfaction (As'ad, 2004; Westwood, 2008; Snyder & Lopez, 2007; Wiltshire, 2016). Therefore, the reality of work is seen as a concept that is closely related to welfare measures. Wiltshire (2016) mentions the meaning of work for individuals as an opportunity to be competent with their skills, self-development from time to time, the realization of social activities, the individual's way of earning a living, and the dream of a satisfying life. Work in the construction of humanistic psychology is seen as a human effort to fulfill various basic needs in the realities of life to strengthen psychological needs (Carr, 2004; Snyder & Lopes, 2007).

Determinants of well-being and work in psychological understanding are dynamics and contribute to various lines of human life such as mental health, work, education, religion, socio-culture, etc. In the analysis of relativity, well-being is seen as a multi-dimensional mental construction that is perceived and interpreted by people in the reality of global socio-religion-cultural life (Oishi, 2012; Atkinson, 2013; Joshanloo, 2014). The reality of Subjective Well-Being (SWB) is the result achieved by individuals in the psychological realm related to the activities that individuals carry out in their lives.

SWB is a dynamic psychological construction in cognitive and emotional aspects that represents individual efforts in forming positive judgments and feelings which are then expressed subjectively by humans, such as

satisfaction, pleasure, or happiness felt by individuals in the reality of their lives (Schimmack, 2008; Diener, 2009; Badran & Youssef-Morgan, 2015). The information from some theoretical and applied studies provides an understanding that the context of SWB can only be understood if individuals can synthesize two assumptions that interact reciprocally; 1) judgment of life through some specific domains; relationship, mental health or working, etc), and 2) affect balancing where the individual's subjective reality is that there are some positive feelings and a few negative feelings (Schimmack, 2008; Liu, 2014).

Diener (2009) mentions several good and pleasant feelings are the result of subjective individual assessments through cognitive and affective, where this condition is directly or not able to suppress affection and negative thoughts that are lodged in the individual. When people empower positively (judgments and feelings) and subjectively, they will become reinforcement and give confidence, optimism, and resilience to individuals in the spotlight of the work they do as an effort to increase work productivity (Luthans, 2004; Badran, 2015; Wiltshire, 2016). Therefore, Subjective Well-Being can be understood as a person's perception of the experiences that have been passed in his life and then evaluated as a whole through cognitive and positive human affection so that it gives meaningful meaning in the psychological realm (Pavot & Diener, 2004; Compton, 2005; Snyder & Lopez, 2007).

More studies in Indonesia have been carried out in various contexts of individual activities. Ariati (2012) studied



SWB and the meaning of work for lecturers, which can be concluded that her study had a positive relationship between subjective well-being and job satisfaction. However, there is no significant relationship between the two variables tested on the teaching staff of the Undip Faculty of Psychology. Wulandari (2013) in her study of the tenure and SWB of SLB Bagaskara Sragen teachers concluded that tenure only serves as a benchmark for the work experience of SLB teachers over 5 years, but has no effect on the context of teacher SWB. The individual persists with his profession as an SLB teacher. In addition, when viewed from the aspect of the high work demands of SLB teachers in dealing with children with special needs (ABK), stress conditions arose for these teachers due to the high energy drain. However, this was addressed with enjoyment, because the teachers had a learning strategy that focused on the psychological characteristics of their students.

Furthermore, a study by Wulandari & Widyastuti (2014) which looked at the factors of happiness at work concluded that five factors underlie individual happiness at work; positive relationship with others (47.2%), work performance (22.4%), physical work environment (17%), compensation (12%), and health (1.5%) with a total sample of 407 employees in UIN Suska Riau. Balkis & Masykur (2017) conclude that honorary teachers at State Elementary Schools can enjoy life satisfaction (SWB) because the perspective and resilience of honorary teachers are positive, even though the salary (financial) they get is below the minimum wage. Wicaksana, et al. (2018) conclude their study that in general, the level of

Subjective Well-Being of generation Y tends to be below. The reason is that the results of measuring the five personality types generally fall into the low category. Only one personality type falls into the average category, namely neuroticism.

This study presents Subjective Well-Being (SWB) to honorary employees at Malikussaleh University which highlights individual knowledge of SWB, work interpretation, and the reality of SWB, as well as describes the factors that underlie SWB in individuals in the context of their activities. The findings of this study can be used as an initial reference for policymakers or institutions in identifying issues of human resource development, improving managerial quality, and simultaneously advancing the organizations of world-class higher education institutions.

METHOD

This study was designed in the qualitative approach using phenomenological type. The phenomenological approach is an investigation that seeks to analyze and describe human experiences and consciousness in the reality of their lives (Tuffour, 2017). Field data input was carried out through in-depth interviews and Focus Group Discussions (FGD). This study utilizes phenomenological analysis of Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) to understand how participants interpret their personal and social world (Bayir & Lomas, 2016). The main focus of this phenomenological study is the meaning of various experiences, events, and work statuses that the participants currently have. The participants of this study are honorary employees who work at Malikussaleh



University. Participants were taken randomly in the type of purposive sampling totaling 25 subjects. However, only 15 participants focused on the topics studied. The other 10 participants were eliminated because they didn't meet the requirement for this study, including; being willing to voluntarily become a participant without coercion and a minimum working period of 5 years and over. Furthermore, the data of this study were analyzed by using thematic analysis focused; on understanding the data, coding, and searching the studies' themes.

RESULT

Rationality of Studies

This research was conducted in three locations at Malikussaleh University; the main campus of Reuleut Aceh Utara, Bukit Indah and Uteunkot campus, Lhokseumawe City. The initial step of this study begins with a field assessment to get an overview of the work units on which the research subject is focused. This situation analysis is intended, in addition to "stay in touch" with the research subjects, as well as facilitating the realization of the next data sampling. After receiving general information about the subject's work post, the research team held operational technical work in three small groups for all realizations of this empirical activity starting from July to the end of November 2021 at the research locations of the subject working.

Descriptions of Participants

The subjects of research or participants of this study were honorary employees who worked as educational staff at Malikussaleh University, Aceh more than 150 people (Interview, 13-07-2021). The research participants are distributed

according to the needs of the office unit within this university, such as in the general department, equipment, administration, finance, and the academic section of the head office (rectorate). Further, the honorary employees are also scattered in agency offices, such as UPT public relations, libraries, computer centers, language centers, LPPM, LP2M, SPI, PKM centers, MIGAS, and Career guidance/Tracer study offices (Observed, 15-07-2021).

The rest, honorary employees spread across various faculties and study programs within the Malikussaleh University environment. The display of participants in this study was given an initial code (subject) to maintain the ethics of this research, and it can be analyzed in the following table 4:

Table 4: Describes research of participants

Subject (S)	Aged (years)	Gender (sex)	Education	Working period
RF	42	Male	S1	5
MW	35	Male	S1	10
BD	33	Male	SMA	6
NT	33	Female	D3	7
FO	30	Female	S1	8
GR	28	Female	S1	5
JI	28	Male	S1	7
ZD	29	Male	S1	7
MD	30	Female	S1	8
AZ	29	Male	S1	8
FZ	29	Female	D3	7
CR	32	Male	S1	7
RA	31	Male	S1	7
SU	32	Male	SMA	6
YA	34	Male	S1	8

Sources: Research, 2021

The Data Collection and Analysis

This research field data collection was carried out in ways by entering data naturally (qualitative approach) through; general observations, in-depth interviews, and FGD activities. Field data



input is carried out by visiting participants at the work unit from July to October 2021. Furthermore, for data analysis, this study utilized thematic analysis, the implementation of which; understanding the data that has been collected, coding the data, and finding the focused theme (Braun & Clarke, 2006). To make the field findings reliable, this study uses data collection triangulation; observations, interviews, and FGDs.

Finding of Studies

The real situation experienced by individuals of honorary employees working at the Malikussaleh University is interesting for scientific discourse, as well as provides important input in efforts to develop the institution's managerial. In addition, positive feedback is also felt by individual workers, both from the aspect of integrity, loyalty, or cooperation in the success of the vision, mission, and programs of the institution in a sustainable manner that has been tested, in which they can interpret the meaning of work and inner satisfaction in the place where they work. If the honorary staff is analyzed from a financial point of view, the income is (sometimes) below the regional minimum wage for workers such as employees in private companies.

Description of Subjective Well-Being Knowledge of the Honorary Employees

Every human being naturally will respond to the reality he played. Therefore, knowledge is the main thing. There is an assessment process (both positive and negative) psychologically the life of the self-life individual study of the Subjective of this analysis. The participants see the SWB context as a reality that can

be fulfilled in their lives as a form of daily activities.

This view is expressed by several participants in this study [SU, RA, MD, FO, FZ, NT, YA, BD, & MW]. *"I think... There is a sense of contentment and peace in my life. I'm all human-like that... Moreover, our daily activities are clear. In my experience at working, there are some pleasures, Yeah... there is happiness, but sometimes not, depending on the mood at work"* [Interview, 04-07/08/2021]

The knowledge about SWB felt by the participants in the reality of the activities as honorary employees of the education staff that they did was also expressed by other participants [GR, JI, ZD, CR, AZ, & RF]. *"In my opinion, prosperous life is very important, because what we are looking for... yeah happiness in this world and also in the hereafter. I can feel it, for example... when I manage to do my homework on time, or I can provide for my family.... I'm very happy even though I work hard. There's a lot...while at Unimal I was satisfied and happy, even though the salary was small, but Yeah...happy to be able to work at a state university. Yeah...especially if the task that I do is appreciated by the leader...we are quite happy.* [Interview, 19-21/08/2021]

On the other hand, a small number of participants deepen their knowledge by seeing the full condition of their activities so that they bring out subjective well-being. This was conveyed by several participants [RF, GR, MD, NT, BD, CR & SU] *"Yeah... I feel grateful because I have a permanent job even though it is still an honorary one... and there is only if the income is mediocre, even though it can't be relied on... just be patient... maybe my luck is here. I feel my life isn't so difficult, I*



feel that with my life so far. [FGD activity, 23/08/2021].

The field data information gives an understanding that most of the participants can describe the experience of inner satisfaction (SWB) that they have done well.

Description of the Meaning of SWB in the Reality of Working

The understanding of Subjective Well-Being (SWB) of individual honorary employees in the reality of their work is actually in line with the reality of their affective assessment, namely in positive and negative forms that are felt by individuals in their lives as reinforcement towards the success of their work.

This empirical reality is similar to the responses of several participants [MW, ZD, BD, AZ, YA, NT, MD, SU & CR] in this study. *"For me, work is an obligation for humans to be able to provide for myself and my family to avoid the difficulties of life. The meaning of work is simple, Yeah... the duty of a human being to live. Work is to be able to meet the needs of life or the way we make a living... Yeah, so that our state of mind is calm... So that we are well-being in this life. As far as I know... people feel happy or satisfied... Sometimes people get a lot of luck, steady work. At other times...we also feel happy because we can gather with old friends, family, or other situations. but in my opinion, what is quite important is...our inner happiness."* [Interview, 12-15/08/2021]

It provides information that honorary employees at Malikussaleh University generally have positive judgments and affections. Some participants have different views and understandings, but the context of the difference becomes the

reality of subjective well-being that is more varied in understanding and interpreting, and this is seen as having a greater positive assessment of cognition, and a smaller negative effect rating. As the result this reality from a theoretical point of view is categorized as a perspective in which the individual's positive meaning of the reality of his life, in this case is in the reality of the individual's work.

This interpretation was expressed by several other honorary employees [FO, NT, GR, RA, JI, FZ, & RF]. *"I think...everyone has a happy life, but...isn't it differently, It's nice to be able to get together with my wife and children, and to be able to give something... Able to provide children's needs or to visit parents. There is... yeah, I'm not a hypocrite... there is an inner satisfaction in me while working here. Sometimes I also feel dissatisfied. Sometimes I also wonder, Yeah, I have been working for a long time... the status is still honorary. Some have just entered for a year...have become civil servants... There are indeed many forms, piling tasks that can be completed. Sometimes we meet high school classmates, we can drink coffee together... we are happy"*.

Furthermore, participants also interpret the reality of SWB in work situations based on the length of work they have done. This was revealed from the FGD activities carried out by researchers [FZ, MW, YA, ZD & FO] at a food stall stated that where their interpretations were still intact (positive-negative). *"I think...there are, but some of it...because it's still honorary, but now it's good enough, the salary is fixed and it's a little better. I'm hoping there will be attention from the leaders... I will become a civil servant someday. Yeah..to be*



honest,...I have worked at Unimal for more than 6 years, there is a feeling of happiness... It depends on each of us personally in my opinion. [FGD activity, 25/08/2021]

Description of the Factors that Underlie SWB in Honorary Employees at Unimal

If it is traced to the factors that underlie or influence the arising of mental well-being (subjective) in individual workers there are several dominant factors from many factors (6 factors) called Diener (2000). In this study, only four factors were analyzed, which according to the researcher were more in line with the context and theme being studied. This information was obtained that participants generally had positive experiences. This is based on the context of his belief (religion), life goals, circumstances, and good interaction behavior in his life.

As for the description of the dominant factors that underlie the occurrence of SWB in individual education staff with honorary status at Malikussaleh University, as stated by AZ, BD, GR, YA, NT, RF & MD, as follows: *"All I know....that religion is the light of all things, dimming our evil desires. Yeah... working everywhere is the same....for me the most important thing is halal and provides comfort for our souls. I think the religion we profess plays a very important role in shaping our personality to be better. If there is no religious guidance, maybe we will continue to be stressed. For me... religion is a medicine for a restless heart, right.... So I think that religion must have a great influence in shaping human happiness."* [Interview, 03-06/09/2021)

On the other hand, the purpose of life of having harmonious relations with other people is also an urgent matter to be understood and interpreted by the individual honorary staff at Malikussaleh University. This fact is conveyed by other participants [MW, SU, FZ, ZD, CR, JI, FO & RA]

"Our life goals are different, right... For me, the purpose of life and happiness blends well in human itself. It just depends on us, at any time... Yeah. There must be a value of satisfaction in our lives. There's also a connection...yeah. Because every action we do depends on our intentions. If our intentions are good... I'm sure we will achieve good results... delicious and very enjoyable. Yeah, it's very necessary to build a good relationship ... we will have many friends, especially in the same office with our daily routine. We will also be more social, and help each other." [Interview, 10-13/09/2021]

Judging from the several factors that make up individual SWB, it turns out that the typical habits which are practiced by individuals are also implemented in their daily work routines. Thus, this energy makes individuals also feel SWB in the reality of their work, even though their employment contract status is still honorary at the same time. However, they enjoy their work with full of satisfaction and pleasure feeling.

DISCUSSION

This study found that the reality of mental welfare (subjective) of individual honorary employees at Malikussaleh University can be explained from individual knowledge about mental welfare. Most of the participants stated that welfare or life satisfaction is the main focus of individuals



who want to be achieved from the activities they do. For the meaning of SWB in the reality of work, most of the participants have a positive understanding of daily routines. Furthermore, the driving factors of SWB in the individuality of individual life which are influenced by religious beliefs, life goals, individual personal conditions, and good social interactions. Those factors become meaningful for individuals to support the activities they choose.

Based on these field findings in general, it can be said that honorary employees at Malikussaleh University can feel a state of satisfaction or subjective well-being (in the positive appraisal or good experience) in the reality of their chosen work routine even though they are still honorary employees. Others have complex experiences, but they have good judgment and influence the conditions around them. Therefore, it can be said that the findings of this study which took samples of honorary employees who working as education staff at Malikussaleh University have good mental processes and this condition in theoretical discussion is seen as experience and the way individuals view usefully life.

The findings of this study, conceptually agree with the views of Diener (2000), but are applied differently from some previous studies. Especially in terms of field data input (method approach), where previous studies focused more on testing the concept of SWB in the reality of workers with statistical models, including several studies that utilize a qualitative approach in Indonesia. However, previous empirical studies have made valuable contributions to further research discussions on similar topics on

the reality of SWB. This study can be regarded as an initial study related to SWB in the reality of Aceh with the scalpel of indigenous psychology, which focus is based on an individual perspective based on various absorptions (knowledge, understanding, and implementation of behavior) of the local community.

CONCLUSION

The study of Subjective Well-Being (SWB), actually must be analyzed and explained as a dynamic psychological discourse, in line with the adoption of values and norms that apply in social realities, beliefs, and cultural contexts that develop in a society (where the research is conducted). The SWB investigations on honorary education staff at Malikussaleh University provided information that in general, the participants of this study had good knowledge and interpretation of SWB in the realities of work. In addition, the reality of SWB is also seen as not independent but supported by various demographic factors that surround individual reality. Study findings can contribute to future policy making, empowering human resources, and developing quality organizations. In addition, the findings of this research can also be discussed in various other humanities social science analyses, and are open to being studied from the same or different perspectives.

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