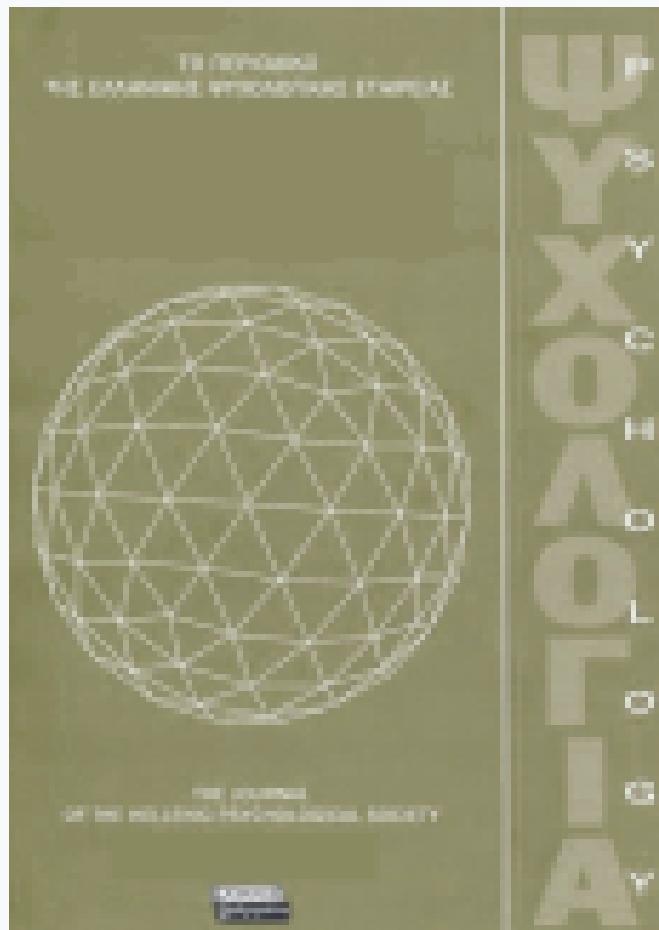


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Happy and shameful experiences among ethnic groups in Indonesia: Cognitive, affective and behavioral Dimensions

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ABSTRACT

The way people experience emotion depends on how they appraise the event. If the event is congruent with the individual's goal and beliefs, she/he is likely to experience a positive emotion, but if it is incongruent, then she/he is likely to experience a negative emotion. Moreover, the process of appraisal is influenced by "what is taught" in a particular culture, so, what is considered shameful in one culture may have little significance for another culture. This study compares happiness and shameful experience in four ethnic groups, the Javanese, the Balinese, the Minang, and the Dayakis, in the islands of Java, Bali, West Sumatera, and South Kalimantan, respectively. Each one of these ethnic groups has unique characteristics in terms of the power system in the family and openness to external world. It is assumed that the norms and beliefs in each group have significant impact on emotional experiences. Each participant was asked to share his/her happy and shameful experience and afterwards to answer several questions in regard to the cognitive, affective, and behavioral dimensions of those experiences. The study revealed that among three of the ethnic groups, the Minang, the Balinese and the Dayakis, there are no substantial differences in happy experiences with only the Javanese differing slightly, but there is an indication that shameful experience seems to be more culture specific than happy experience.

Key words: Shameful Experience, Happy experience, Cognitive dimensions, Affective dimensions, Culture specific differences.

1. Introduction

In day-to-day life individuals encounter many experiences and usually feel some emotion. Following those experiences, for example in positive events, individuals experience positive

emotions such as happiness, joy, etc., whereas negative events lead to negative emotions such as shame, sadness, fear, anxiety, etc. According to appraisal-based emotion theorists, the way people experience emotion depends on how they appraise the event. One of the important elements

1. Address: This manuscript is published posthumously. Lalita Wirawan Djiwatampu (Indonesian Psychological Association -HIMPSI, Jakarta, Indonesia) passed away in October 2007, after a 3-month fight with cancer. Her work will be remembered.

that a process of emotion involves is "appraisal" (Scherer, 1986). Lazarus and Smith (1988) give the distinction between knowledge and appraisal: "... Knowledge, whether concrete and primitive or abstract and symbolic, consists of cognitions about the way things are and how they work. In contrast, appraisal is a form of personal meaning consisting of evaluations of the significance of this knowledge for well being" (p. 282).

Whether or not an event will be processed further, it depends on how the individual gives meaning to the event, how important the events are for his/her welfare. An event is felt as important when it affects beliefs, expectations to what might happen in life, and interactions with others (Manstead, Frijda, & Fischer, 2004); for instance, an event that is perceived as threatening or humiliating oneself, becomes an important event to be processed further and such a kind of events are usually appraised as negative.

Smith and Lazarus (1993) explain that there are six appraisal components that people use to appraise an event: "Motivational relevance: is the event personally relevant?", "motivational congruence: is the event consistent with one's goals?", "Accountability: who or what is to receive the credit or blame?", "Problem-focused coping potential: evaluations of the ability to act", "emotion-focused coping potential: perceived prospect of adjusting psychologically by altering interpretations, desires, or beliefs", and finally "future expectancy: possibility of being changed in actual or psychological situations". Points 1 to 3 are the primary appraisal levels where individuals try to evaluate events according to his/her welfare and points 4 to 6 are the secondary appraisal levels for better or worse appraisal, where the individual evaluates whether he/she has the appropriate means to deal with specific events. Secondary appraisal also serves to regulate emotion that is produced by the event, whether to accentuate or to reduce the emotion. There are additionally two dimensions of emotion regulation: Problem-Emotion focused dimension and Cognitive- Behavioral dimension (Garnefski,

Kraaij, & Spinhoven, 2001) which show that there are adaptive and non-adaptive cognitive-emotion regulation, all covering 9 types of emotion regulation that people use whenever they encounter an event. The result of the appraisal produces physiological changes, propensity of action, subjective feeling, and when the procedure is facilitated by the ability to act and is supported by the appropriate mood, the individual responds to the event (Frijda, 1986; Scherer, 1986). Each event leads at least to four kinds of responses: cognitive (appraisal), physical, affective, and motor responses.

Appraisal is usually operated at the earlier stage of emotion process. Levenson (1999) states that every one has a Core Emotional System and a Control System. The Core Emotional System is our basic mental processes that evaluates, transforms, adds or reduces information that comes to our mind, including information from every event that has been appraised. The Control System comes from the culture setting that becomes part of our life through child rearing practices and education. This Control System operates before the execution of our response to a specific event. Both systems are believed to be responsible for managing our reactions to the environment. These systems help us understand why the same event leads to different reactions for different persons, as it depends on how somebody appraises an event and how deeply he/she internalizes rules or norms from cultural setting and confronts them as "the standard level of conduct". Thus, culture is an important factor to be considered in relation to emotion, as culture is defined as: "...a dynamic system of rules, explicit and implicit, established by groups in order to ensure their survival, involving attitude, values, beliefs, norms and behaviors, shared by a group and harbor differently by each specific unit within the group, communicated across generations, relatively stable but with the potential to change across time" (Matsumoto & Juang, 2004, p. 10). The aims of cross-cultural psychology and cultural psychology studies are

to explore the “universality” of psychological knowledge, as well as to discover cultural-specific phenomena within a particular culture. Several results show that culture influences emotion, expression, perception, and appraisal of antecedents of experiences, and other aspects of behavior (Matsumoto & Juang, 2004).

In the international literature happiness has not been dealt with to a wide extent. It is connected with social order, it involves values, it is subjective and dynamic and it is never completed or integrated (Strongman, 2003). Usually, happiness is motivationally relevant, motivationally congruent, and self-accredited. It is also pointed out that “happiness is the result of optimal levels of goal fulfillment across different domains: self, others, self plus others” (p. 385). Several studies have shown that age, education, health and physical attractiveness have low correlations with subjective reports of happiness, and that marriage is a weak predictor of happiness (Power & Dalgleish, 1997). Heider (1991) has investigated happiness in Minang ethnic. One of the most important conclusions is that happiness is a result of luck or “gift” for these Minang who speak the minang language, but happiness is a result of personal achievement for those Minang who speak the Indonesian language. Based on such a result we can assume that happiness is less related to demographic factors and more related to cultural factors; thus, culture matters seem to influence highly the perception of happiness.

Another emotion that is explored in the present study is shame. According to Strongman (2003), shame is the most important of the “social emotions” where the social control is strong. Shame, among the negative emotions, is one of the self-conscious emotions, gives a painful feeling that has negative influences to our thought and behavior; it usually leads to strong tendency to escape or to hide from others’ view and urges to strong motivation to get rid of it (Tangney & Fischer, 1995). The ashamed person feels bad, because another person disapproves of an aspect or behavior or the self. Additionally, shame

is built on reciprocal evaluation and judgment (Tangney & Fischer, 1995). For example, an individual feels ashamed because he/she assumes that other persons (friends or family members) make a negative judgment to his/her activity or look down to his/her characteristics. A judgment that a negative event cannot be overcome may lead to sadness or shame, and a judgment that somebody cannot escape a painful situation may lead to fear or to shame. Thus, shame, as a subjective feeling the individual feels when he/she has not conformed to social rules or has misbehaved, always involves other people (Amalia, 2002). The difference between emotions of shame and embarrassment is that the latter is less intense (Strongman, 2003). Several studies that have been performed in Indonesia reveal that shame is related to an embarrassing situation that happen when somebody falls down in front of other people and in the situation of mistaking somebody for somebody else (Amalia, 2002).

The present study’s aims were to compare happy and shameful experience in several ethnic groups. Specifically, it explored for what makes people from different ethnic groups in Indonesia feel happy and ashamed, and what is the effect of those emotions on, affective and behavioral dimensions of life experiences. Four ethnic groups are involved in this study: Javanese (from central Java), Balinese (from Bali), Minang (from West Sumatera), and Dayakis (from South Kalimantan). These ethnic groups have several, unique characteristics. It is assumed that their norms and beliefs have significant impact on their perception and appraisal of events, as well as on the ways they handle the subjective feelings produced by those events, for each group separately. The empirical data collected were, in these respects, addressed within the groups and then were evaluated across the four ethnic groups. Below, the four groups involved in this study are described briefly:

The *Minang* (Heider, 1991): Minangkabau is located in West Sumatera, a prosperous area due to rich agriculture lands and industry, with high rate of out-immigrants to study or work (mainly

in Java). It has the characteristics of a matrilineal society: women own the land and wealth, they have strong voice on social and political affairs and the clan membership follow the female line. Men are leaders of the clans and manage their property. The Minang ideology is egalitarian; each group should be governed by one person. The Minang culture values are tolerance, loyalty, fairness, being thrifty, alertness, courage, diligent, wisdom, modesty, and high solidarity. Decision is achieved through "musyawarah mufakat" (Consensus). Shame is associated with intermarriage, that is for members of the same clan, with underachieving, change of religion and misbehavior.

The Balinese (Amalia, 2002): Bali is a small island located next to Java island with a society that is divided into 4 social castes: the Brahmana, the Satria, the Wesia, and the Sudra (the upper three castes are called gentry, whereas sudra are commoners). Each caste has a leader, a liaison, and a set of written rules. Most of the Balinese observe the Hindu religion. The Balinese believe in God, "karma-pala" (consequences of an action), rebirth of a soul and freedom of soul. Bali culture values are based on religion and the social system consists of rituals and ceremonies that conform to authority, avoid conflicts, engage some other, specific activity coping styles and usually use non-verbal expression of emotions such as escape/avoidance, suppression etc.

The Dayakis (Boulanger, 2002) is an ethnic group who live in several regions in Borneo (Kalimantan); Dayak means indigenous. They are non-Muslim and following the traditional way of life, they usually reside in big jungle longhouses, while a number of them have their own houses. Missionaries, urbanization, intermarriage are some "anti-values" they share that provoke terrible consequences to their culture. Most of the Dayakis engage in agriculture, collecting the sap of rubber tree. The Dayak culture values are the environmental conservation, the ecosystem provision, the family atmosphere maintainance and the "gotong royong" (teamwork).

The Javanese (Heider, 1991). Java Island is

the densest populated island in Indonesia. Java is prosperous due to its rich agriculture land. The island is divided into four provinces. The participants of the present study live in central Java. Part of the central Java province, i.e., the Yogyakarta region, is ruled by a Sultan (King) who is respected by all people living in the region. The "Javanese society is concerned with status, rank and respect" (Heider, 1991, p. 312) and the Javanese mostly tend to conceal themselves and suppress their feeling. The emotion of shame is associated with politeness in interpersonal relationships and with breaking the culture norms.

2. Method

Participants

The participants of this study were 200 Indonesians adults; 81 of them were Javanese who live in central Java, 40 were Minang in West Sumatera, 40 were Balinese in Bali, and 39 were Dayakis living in South Kalimantan.

Procedure, materials, and data analysis

Data were collected through structured interviews held at the participant's house or other places depending on the participant's preference. The data were described across the four ethnic groups and compared through non-parametric statistics. The participants were interviewed through an open-ended questionnaire designed to assess their happy and shameful experiences ("under which situations are you happy/ashamed?") and several information concerning the cognitive, affective, and behavioral dimensions of those experiences. Thus, each of these two main questions was followed by several other questions, on the respondents' thoughts, intentions and actions when happy/ashamed and on their reasons for feeling so. One last main question was asked, specifically what types of life goals the respondents pursued, although the categories for this question were also partly theory driven. For

Table 1
Happy events reported by each group of the respondents

Happy Events	Javanese %	Minang %	Balinese %	Dayakis %
Gift/wish fulfilled	17.6	37.5	33.3	33.3
Personal Achievement	10.4	30.0	30.0	20.5
Family	60.4	17.5	30.0	41.0

all questions, answers were taxonomized and organized into broader categories. For instance, many responses to the first main question referred to child birth, having grand children, and being married, that is family events. Other responses to the same question referred to personal achievement, and others referred to having a wish fulfilled, such as receiving a gift. The criteria employed to identify the categories in the data demanded clearly distinguishable categories from each other and repeatedeness of at least 10% in the overall pool of responses.

The data were analyzed as follows: (a) for each question in each section (happiness, shame, goals) statistical criteria would be computed only within each ethnic group, across the categories present in the data for all groups, and (b) not all answers would be analyzed, as for each of the groups some of them were forming incompatible categories across groups. Thus, only the compatible categories in the responses provided by *all* four groups are presented and analyzed within each group. This last fact is also the reason that the percentages for the answers-categories within each group add up to less than 100% in many columns in the Tables presented hereon.

3. Results

Happiness

Three – compatible across the four groups – events (amongst a few other, non-compatible ones, not reported here for reasons of brevity) made the participants happy, namely gift/wish fulfilled,

personal achievement, and family events. There are proportional differences in perceiving the positive effect of these three events within each ethnic group (percentages reported in *Table 1* refer to each group separately). The Javanese and the Dayakis are the ones who proportionally differentiated events in the family from other events as sources of happiness (however, for the respective oneway χ^2 criteria for 2 degrees of freedom, only for the Javanese statistical significance was reached, with $\chi^2=41.44$, $df=2$, $p<0.001$). These happy events, amongst a few others, refer to child birth, having grand children, and being married. Although happiness for the Minang, as Heider (1991) has mentioned, is associated more with “gift” and personal achievement the respective χ^2 criterion was not statistically significant. For the Balinese as well, the percentages were almost similar for feeling happy with their “gift”, their personal achievement, and their family events. Let us mention that “gift” or fulfilled wishes are associated with getting a job, being promoted, becoming a government employee/official (especially for the Minang and the Dayakis), whereas personal achievement means pursuing educational goods and high achievement at work.

Following the initial question on happiness, a second question, namely “what do you think when you are happy?” was asked, in order to study the cognitive dimension of the happy experience. The Minang, the Balinese and the Dayakis were the ones who – in comparison to other feelings – mostly referred to positive feelings (51.3%, 53.3%, and 60.5%, respectively) and also praised God for giving them happiness (the respective oneway χ^2 criteria within each ethnic group, for 2 degrees of

Table 2
Shameful experiences by ethnic groups of respondents

Shame Experiences (events)	Javanese %	Minang %	Balinese %	Dayakis %
Embarrassing accident	41.0	45.0	20.0	13.2
Accused to break the rules	14.3	22.5	40.0	36.8
Interpersonal	19.9	15.0	30.0	18.4
Economic	17.6	3.3	3.3	23.1

freedom were 17.01, 11.89, and 23.03, all significant at the 0.001 level). These feelings were not present in the Javanese answers as they were mostly interested (32.2%) in increasing their achievement ($\chi^2=18.2$, $df=2$, $p<0.001$).

In respect to the question "What do you intend to do when you are happy?", all referred to four behaviors, at least: to increase achievement, give attention/love to others, inform others, and be grateful to God. There are differences in priority of actions that follow the happy event. The prominent action-to-be for the Balinese is to share their happiness with other people, as 65.5% of the Balinese participants answered that happy events are to be shared with others, with families and friends ($\chi^2=35.46$, $df=3$, $p<0.001$). The Minang emphasized attention and love to others and increasing achievement of whatever they are doing at that particular of time or situation; praising God was prominent for the Javanese (37.5%).

In response to a further question ("Do you actually do what you intend to do when you are happy?"), a question intended to explore the respondents' behavioral elements of their experience, they all confirmed (to a very high percentage of 95%) that they actually do what they had intended-to-do. Although theoretically all intentions do not manifest in behaviors, it is interesting that the percentage for their positive answers was so high; this finding possibly means for all groups that if they are happy, they usually

express their feeling of happiness in accordance to what they intend to do. In other words, the participants presented a positive relationship between intention and behavior, despite the fact that there is variation in the four ethnic groups answers.

Shame

The specific events (amongst a few others, not reported here for reasons of brevity and compatibility levels across the four groups) making the participants feel ashamed are presented in *Table 2*. The Minang group, for whom the power distance is low (Hofstede 1980), report some embarrassing accidents which were perceived as shameful experience by 45% of them. Their answers of embarrassing accidents were: to fall in front of other people, to be late for school, take the wrong transportation, mistake somebody for somebody else, join a party with improper dressing, etc. These embarrassing accidents can cause less intense shameful experience compared to other causes; this result also holds for the Javanese group (Strongman, 2003). The respective statistical criteria for these two groups (the Minang and the Javanese groups) and three degrees of freedom were statistically significant at the 0.001 level ($\chi^2=16.3$, and $\chi^2=17.4$, respectively). For the Balinese and the Dayakis for whom the power distance values are higher than in the Minang, 37% and 40% of the participants,

respectively, answered that they felt ashamed in case they were accused of breaking the rules. Distinguishing that event from others was statistically significant for the Balinese ($\chi^2=13.04$, $df=3$, $p<0.01$, with interpersonal shameful events following [30%]) and marginally statistically significant for the Dayakis ($\chi^2=6.75$, $df=3$, $p=0.08$). For the Dayakis, economic problems were also claimed as an event that can cause shameful experience (to a lesser extent though [23.1%]). The Dayakis who live in a remote area in Southern Kalimantan and earn their living by collecting the sap of rubber tree, seem to value the economic factor and bring it closer to the center of their attention than the other three groups.

The participants' answers in respect to the question "Why do you feel ashamed?", were also analyzed. Due to some inconsistencies, the Javanese data did not enter this analysis. Approximately 50% in each of the three remaining groups, the Minang, the Balinese and the Dayakis, reported that they feel ashamed for what they have done (e.g. breaking an interpersonal relationship), or for what other people did to them (e.g. being accused of breaking the rules), because these events might have negative impact on their reputation. All three respective χ^2 statistical criteria computed within each group ($df=3$) were statistically significant: for the Minang, $\chi^2=17.96$, $p<0.001$, for the Balinese, $\chi^2=19.23$, $p<0.001$, and for the Dayakis, $\chi^2=9.32$, $p<0.05$.

In respect to the question "What do you think when you are ashamed?", many participants (ranging from 37% to 49%) reported – amongst four other reflections – negative thoughts of being sad, unsatisfied, and ashamed about that experience. For all four groups, these thoughts and feelings (sadness, along with being unsatisfied and ashamed) differed significantly ($df=4$) from the remaining thoughts reported (for the Javanese, $\chi^2=36.25$, $p<0.001$, for the Minang, $\chi^2=25.23$, $p<0.001$, for the Balinese, $\chi^2=25.32$, $p<0.001$, and for the Dayakis, $\chi^2=18.44$, $p<0.001$). Some subordinate indications are worth considering: the Balinese

seemed to blame other people of their misery (25%); the Minang reported escaping from the shameful situation by 25.6%, as they generally feel ashamed when others think of them as underachievers (Heider, 1991); finally, the Javanese and the Dayakis reported trying to adapt to the situation by accepting it and through efforts to solve the problem (18% and 19%, respectively).

In respect to the question "What do you intend to do when you are ashamed?", there were at least three answers reported by the overall sample: avoiding the situation, improving oneself, and solving the problem. The Minang and the Dayakis significantly differentiated improving themselves from other strategies ($\chi^2=7.47$, $df=2$, $p<0.001$, and $\chi^2=6.43$, $df=2$, $p<0.001$, respectively for the two groups who reported the strategy by 45% and 46.2%, respectively). As underachieving and misbehavior seem to be the main reasons for the Minang to be ashamed, and as their ideology is somehow an egalitarian one (Heider, 1991), the 45% of the Minang participants answering that they intended to improve themselves when they were ashamed may be explained. The Dayaki 46.5%, self-improvement intention may be related to their economic status improvement, as a way to maintain their family atmosphere and good conduct for themselves.

A separate but related question was also asked: "Do you actually do what you intend to do when you feel ashamed?". 82% of the overall participants confirmed that they actually do what they intend-to-do. Almost half of the Minang and the Dayakis participants actually did something to improve themselves, but the participants from Java and Bali tried to solve the problem that made them feel ashamed. These results show that there is a tendency to "cultivate" a positive relationship between intention and behavior (Strongman, 2003; Tangney & Fischer, 1995) stated that shame is a negative emotion and gives a painful feeling, and that is why, this negative feeling has to be managed, or, if possible, to be erased from the conscious.

Table 3
Goals in life by ethnic groups of respondents

Goals	Javanese %	Minang %	Balinese %	Dayakis %
Family	30.2	22.9	33.3	25.6
Personal Development	28.2	62.9	46.7	38.5
Improve physical characteristics	21.9	14.2	20.0	35.9

Goals in life

One's goals influence the appraisal of an event as negative or positive. Each person may pursue three kinds of goals: personal goals or self goals, goals of others, and shared goals (Power & Dalgleish, 1997). The Balinese (46.7%), the Dayakis (38.5%), and especially the Minang goals (62.9%) seemed to be personal ones such as one's personal development in the field of education and in the area of vocational process (Table 3). However, only the comparison for the Minang percentages reached statistical significance ($\chi^2=15.69$, $df=2$, $p<0.001$).

4. Discussion

The results of the study reveal that there are no substantial differences among the four ethnic groups in appraising happy experiences, with the slight exception of the Javanese, but there is an indication that shameful experiences seem to be more culture specific. In most cases, people use to appraise an event through its relevance and consistency to their goal (Smith & Lazarus, 1993). For instance, in case that somebody's goal is personal development, then the component of happiness is related to one's personal development and fulfillment; and that holds mainly for the Minang and the Balinese. When somebody's goal is to have nice, material things like houses, or being rich or fancy, then happiness component is consistent to events that fulfill this goal, as happened mostly for

some of the Minang who tended to gain money and nice material goods. In regard to goals related to family, the happiness component is family welfare, and this holds true for the Javanese and to a lower degree for the Dayakis.

When one's goal is perceived to be incongruent to his/her goal, negative emotions follow. One of these negative emotions is shame "called as the social emotion" (Strongman, 2003). Experiencing the feeling of shame lets one assume that other people are making judgmental evaluation of his/her behavior (Tangney & Fischer, 1995). According to the current study results, participants, and especially the Minang and to some extent for the Balinese, felt ashamed because of an embarrassing accident, while the Balinese and the Dayakis felt ashamed if they are accused of disobeying rules and norms. This result is interesting in terms of the power distance evaluating dimension, as the Minang are assumed having lower power distance than the Balinese and the Dayakis.

Further research is necessary to study why and how power distance differences are related to different event appraisals, especially when an event is potentially producing a negative emotion such as the one of shame.

These results also revealed that when people felt happy, they usually had positive feelings, such as the feeling of being grateful to God followed an "action of approach", such as of increasing achievement, giving more attention to others, informing others, and celebrating. In contrast, when they felt ashamed, mostly the Balinese, they usually had negative feelings and tended to blame others;

sometimes they accepted the situation, but there was also a tendency mostly to the Minang to "avoid actions" such as to avoid the embarrassing situation, to suppress the relative emotion, or just to accept the situation and be engaged to other activities, as happened to the Javanese and the Dayakis. These reactions have been mentioned by Strongman (Strongman 2003; Tangney & Fisher, 1995) focusing that the feeling of shame leads to a strong tendency to escape or to hide from others' view or to get rid of it.

Larger percentages of positive reaction to the shameful experience, in their effort to improve themselves were evident for the Minang and the Dayakis; this might be due to their intention to overcome the feeling. Especially for the Minang, this reaction is consistent with their goal, which is to reach a higher personal development and also consistent with their culture. Although the Balinese also value personal development, their cultural context "teach" them to conceal their emotion in order to avoid conflict with others. According to Bali values, the Balinese should avoid conflict, should try to accept what is happening in their life, and they are expected to suppress their feelings and to be engaged in another activity to avoid negative feelings. This might be the reason they choose to suppress their feeling and try to distract their attention by being engaged in another activity.

Additional variables, potentially related to shameful experiences are underachieving, inter-clan marriage, economic problems and interpersonal problems, as the present study showed. These indications may help in minimizing their on-set in life by providing oneself with the suitable coping strategies. Future research is needed to confirm the importance of the above parameters to the subjective feeling of happiness and shame.

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Βιώματα ντροπής και ευτυχίας μεταξύ εθνοπολιτισμικών ομάδων στην Ινδονησία: γνωστικές, συναισθηματικές και συμπεριφορικές διαστάσεις

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ΠΕΡΙΛΗΨΗ

Ο τρόπος με τον οποίο οι άνθρωποι αντιλαμβάνονται τα συναισθήματά τους συναρτάται με το πώς αξιολογούν το σχετιζόμενο γεγονός. Εάν το γεγονός αυτό βρίσκεται σε συμφωνία με τους στόχους και τις πεποιθήσεις του ατόμου, τότε είναι πιθανό το άτομο να βιώσει θετικά συναισθήματα, αλλά εάν το σχετιζόμενο γεγονός δεν βρίσκεται σε συμφωνία με τους στόχους και τις πεποιθήσεις του ατόμου, τότε τα συναισθήματα που βιώνονται είναι, πιθανώς, αρνητικά. Επιπροσθέτως, η διαδικασία της αξιολόγησης ενός γεγονότος συναρτάται με το τι «διδάσκει» κάθε συγκεκριμένο πολιτισμικό πλαίσιο, επομένως, αυτό που μπορεί να θεωρείται «ντροπιαστικό» σε έναν πολιτισμό, είναι πιθανό να θεωρείται «ασήμαντο συναισθηματικά» σε έναν άλλο. Στην παρούσα μελέτη συγκρίνονται το συναισθήμα της ευτυχίας και της ντροπής σε τέσσερις επιφέρους εθνοπολιτισμικές ομάδες, τους Javanese (κατοίκους Ιάβας), τους Balinese (κατοίκους Μπαλί), τους Minang (Δυτική Σουμάτρα) και τους Dayakis (Νότιο Καλιμαντάν). Καθεμία από τις τέσσερις αυτές εθνοπολιτισμικές ομάδες διαθέτει μοναδικά χαρακτηριστικά ως προς τους ενδοοικογενειακούς ρόλους ισχύος και ως προς την «ανοιχτότητά» της στον έξω κόσμο. Προϋποτίθεται επίσης ότι οι τυπικές συμπεριφορές και οι πεποιθήσεις σε κάθε ομάδα έχουν σημαντική επίπτωση στα συναισθηματικά βιώματα. Κάθε συμμετέχων στην παρούσα έρευνα κλήθηκε να αναφέρει εμπειρίες ευτυχίας καθώς και εμπειρίες ντροπής και κατόπιν να απαντήσει σε σειρά ερωτημάτων που αφορούσαν τη γνωστική, συναισθηματική και, συμπεριφορική διάσταση των εμπειριών αυτών. Η μέλετη ανέδειξ μικρές διαφορές των κατοίκων Ιάβας ως προς τις ευτυχισμένες τους εμπειρίες σε σχέση με τις υπόλοιπες τρεις ομάδες συμμετεχόντων, οι οποίες και δεν δέφεραν μεταξύ τους, αλλά οι εμπειρίες ντροπής φάνηκαν να σχετίζονται περισσότερο με το πολιτισμικό πλαίσιο στο οποίο αυτές παρατηρούνται.

Λεξις-κλειδιά: Εμπειρίες ντροπής, Εμπειρίες ευτυχίας, Γνωστική διάσταση, Συναισθηματική διάσταση, Πολιτισμικά συναρτώμενες διαφορές.

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