WHO MAKES ADOLESCENTS HAPPY? AN EXPLORATIVE STUDY USING THE INDIGENOUS PSYCHOLOGY APPROACH

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Abstract. This study is aimed at discovering who the source of happiness is for adolescents and how he or she accomplishes his or her role in creating happiness. A number of 458 senior high school students completed an open-ended questionnaire developed by Kim and Park (2008). An indigenous approach is used to analyse respondents' answers to the open-ended questionnaire. A categorization of respondents' answers and cross tabulation is also conducted. Analysis results show that a majority of adolescences' source of happiness derives from the family (50.1%), and friends (27%). Their role in creating happiness was by supporting (54.3). Acceptance of adolescents (20.8%) was also a source of happiness for adolescents. Providing facilities and prayers was also a role given for adolescents.

Keywords: happiness, family, friends, adolescents

INTRODUCTION

Everybody wishes to achieve happiness. It is without doubt that almost everyone, if not all, wants to be happy (Argyle, 2001). Happiness is achieved when we experience a positive feeling, satisfaction, and avoid negative feelings (Argyle, 2001). Living happily is often described as a wonderful life, filled with enthusiasm and passion. However, throughout the course of life, we are often unable to experience such positive emotions, causing us to suffer from unhappiness. Unhappiness may manifest as the experience of negative feelings (Argyle, 2001) such as sadness, anxiety, stress, illness, etc.

As a study of behaviour, psychology has a primary position in problems related to happiness. It must provide an accurate solution for whatever problems that occur around us, and for that reason, the study of psychology has, for a long time, given immense attention to the topic of happiness. Recently, happiness has also become a more popular topic of study for researchers (Haller & Hadler, 2006).

These studies have contributed into the construct of happiness. Take for instance

the research conducted by Lu and Gilmour (2004), which resulted in a definition of happiness. They concluded that Happiness may be defined as the form of (1) a mental state of satisfaction and joy, (2) a positive feeling/emotion, (3) achievement and expectations, and (4) freedom from illness. Argyle (2001) explains that happiness is often defined as a condition of joy or positive emotions or satisfaction toward life. His statement is in line with Carr (2004), who posits that happiness is a psychological condition marked by the high level of one's satisfaction toward life, the high level of positive emotions, and low levels of negative emotions.

Contextual differences become a difficulty when explaining happiness. The accuracy of studies explaining one's happiness from a number of cultures is questionable for even in a single community there are a variety of different perspectives. Cultural diversity of the people may result in different explanations and interpretations (Kim, 1993). The study by Lu et. al. (2001) states that Americans, who are culturally individualists, are happy if they have to strive to create a meaningful life for themselves. Self-autonomy or the aspiration

of personal freedom to establish one's self-potential, fulfil one's wants, and become one's true self. However, in China, whose culture is streaked heavily with collectivism, happiness is achieved along with a sense of harmony, calm, and a peace of mind that can only be understood by the self. For the Chinese, self-autonomy is more than controlling one's own fate; happiness is conceptualized as harmony within an individual, as well as between an individual and his or her environment (Lu & Gilmour, 2004).

Previous studies have indicated that there is indeed a difference in the concept of happiness within differing cultures. In a study by Lu et. al. (2001) conducted on Taiwan and British students, it was established that cultural values become a predictor toward students' happiness. For Taiwanese students, a positive correlation between the quality of social interaction and happiness was observed, yet for British students, the correlation was negative. This shows that cultural differences do influence students' happiness. In his book, Seligman (2005) states that happy people uses the past as something that satisfies him or herself, sees the future as an event that can be passed optimistically, and makes the present an enjoyment.

Seligman (2005) explains that happiness is perceived from an individual's own view of how to obtain it. However, Argyle (2001), in his book states that a happy individual has higher frequencies of social interaction, spends more time with others, and is more fun than unhappy individuals. Moreover, happy people are also more open, warm, friendly, and empathic.

Asians have a very contrasting view of happiness from western societies because there is also a difference in understanding the concept of the self. Asians see themselves as related, changing, flexible, and tied with one another. This is why Markus and Kitayama (cited in Lu, 2004), calls it as a dependent or interdependent self. This interdependent view derives from the belief in a connection between individuals and the need for dependency with one another. Kim (1995) termed it as Collectivism. Collectivism is defined as a group that explicitly has strong outside boundaries. This is more than just a number of individual characteristics or contribution. In a collective society, social habits, institutions and media all work together to exist by building relationships with others, emphasizes on roles, status, and group membership. Therefore, many Asian cultures put a strong importance on group welfare and self control, performing a satisfactory role, and strict self cultivation. Other studies such as the one conducted by Uchida et. Al. (2004) also explains the construct of happiness by using a cultural approach. In western cultures, happiness tends to imply personal fulfilment, whereas in eastern cultures, happiness is more related to interpersonal relations. It was found that the western society has a strong belief in independence and self autonomy. The self was believed to be the crux in thinking, performing, and motivating. When explaining the predictors of happiness, Uchida et. Al. (2004) stated that the factor most often correlated with happiness in western countries was personal achievement and self esteem, whereas predictors of happiness for Asian people were social harmony and relations with others. In other words, self esteem and social harmony are predictors of happiness. This concept is in accordance with Lu, Gilmour & Kao (2001), who also stated that a harmonic relationship has big implications toward life satisfaction in a collective society.

Indonesia is an example of a collective society (Hofstede in Kim, 2005). Indonesian

people greatly value social interaction with others. A classic example is the arisan (social gathering) conducted routinely in almost every RT (Rukun Tetangga) or RW (Rukun Warga). There is also the term gotong-royong, or community work, which is often conducted by Indonesian society when someone is need of other people's help in completing a certain piece of work. People in a collective society have strong ties with the group; they become more and more cohesive and integrated with other individuals in the group. An individual will take care of him or herself and his or her group for life; creating an unquestionable bond of loyalty. Such strong cohesiveness makes it possible for one member of the group to create happiness for another (Hofstede in Kim, 1995).

The theories of happiness must be studied further due to the different results from previous studies upon the construct of happiness and also because of the influence of culture in the formation of the construct of happiness. The construct of happiness in Indonesia may differ from the existing theories of happiness. An indigenous approach is without doubt the most suitable approach in exploring a psychological construct according to the context of the area. Kim and Berry (1993) defined indigenous psychology as a scientific study of native human behaviour and mentality; not brought from other areas, and designed for its own society. Indigenous psychology questions the concept of universality in existing psychology theories, and attempts to discover a universal psychology in terms of social, cultural, and ecological context (Kim & Berry, 1993). Therefore, the indigenous approach must be used to understand the concept of happiness according to the cultural context of Indonesia.

The researcher is interested in conducting a study regarding happiness with a focus on

who makes an adolescent happy, and what is his or her role that makes the said adolescent happy. It is important to conduct a research of who contributes toward an adolescent's happiness, for the adolescent years are an era filled with storm and stress (Santrock, 1998). We can see two types of movement in adolescents' social development; a movement away from parents, and a movement toward peer groups. These two movements are not consecutive but connected one to the other (Monks et. Al., 2006). Horrock and Benimoff (cited in Hurlock, 2004) states that when with peers, the norms in play are not norms created by parents, but those determined by the peer group. A study by Lee, Park, Uhlemann, and Patsula (1999) found teens feel happy if they have support from family and friends. Another study by Demir (2006) explains that close friends can be a benchmark of an adolescent's happiness. In a study by Natvig, Albrektsen, and Qvarnstro (2003), it was concluded that support from classmates can make a student happy. We are interested with this for we see that with studies on sources of happiness for adolescents, we may find ways to help adolescents overcome unhappiness. It would be most interesting if we could find the source of adolescent happiness in Indonesia as well as their role in making adolescents happy. The indigenous approach is used in explaining results of the research to discover how happiness is perceived by Indonesian adolescents.

METHOD

This study applies the indigenous psychology approach. Data is obtained through an open-ended questionnaire developed by Kim and Park (2008). A number of 458 senior high school students (189 male; 41. 3% and 269 female; 58.7%) answered questions regarding who makes them feel

happy and what that person does that makes them feel that way. Data analysis uses a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods.

DATA ANALYSIS

1. Adolescents' Source of Happiness

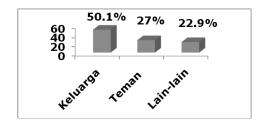
A categorization of respondents' answers is conducted in order to find the people who are the source of happiness for adolescents. Answers to the first question in the questionnaire ("Is there anyone who makes you happy?") can be seen on table 2.

Table 2. Is There Anyone who Make You Happy?

A	Total	
Answer -	Frequency	%
Yes	441	96,3
No	9	2
Unanswered	8	1,7
Total	458	100

Source: Data Happiness CICP 2009 (Happiness Data CICP 2009)

"Yes" indicates that the respondent has someone who is a source of his or her happiness. A "no" answer indicates that they do not. An "unanswered" response implies that the respondent did not give an answer to the question. The answers collected are "yes" responses. Respondents answering thus are gathered and a small as well as large categorization is conducted. As shown in graphic 1 and table 3, family (keluarga) remains as the party whose role most greatly influence adolescents' happiness with 221 students (50.1%). The following party who plays a significant part in adolescents' happiness are friends (teman), with 119 students (27%). "Others" (lain-lain) are placed in third position in making adolescents' happy with a percentage of 22.9.



Graphic 1. People who make an adolescent happy

Table 3.

Item 1.4. People who make adolescents happy

Category	Total	
	Frequency	%
Family	221	50,1
Friends	119	27
Others	101	22,9
Total	441	100

Source: Data Happiness CICP 2009 (Happiness Data CICP 2009)

1) Family

Table 4 shows that out of all the people who are able to make an adolescent happy, the nuclear family, which consists of parents and brothers/sisters, as well as the extended family, has the most impact.

Table 4.
Smaller Categories of Family

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Category	Frequency
Nuclear Family	
Parents	160
Brothers/Sisters	9
Extended Family	61

Source: Data Happiness CICP 2009 (Happiness Data CICP 2009)

2) Friends

For adolescents, a "friend" is one of the people that can make them happy. For that reason, they are placed in the second position in the large category with a total of 119 answering respondents, as can be seen in table 5.

Table 5.
Smaller Categories of Friends

Category	Frequency	_
Close friend	32	
Friend	28	
Boy- or girlfriend	24	
Acquaintance	35	

Source: Data Happiness CICP 2009 (Happiness Data CICP 2009)

"Friends" were clustered into other smaller categories; best friends, close friends, boyfriend/girlfriend and friends. Friends were the people who are most able to make adolescents happy with a total of 35 respondents answering, followed by best friends with 32 respondents. Close friends and boyfriend/girlfriend also contributed to adolescents' happiness with consecutively a total of 28 and 24 students answering.

3) Others

Another category was "others", which indicates that the respondent's answer did not belong in any of the other previous larger categories (table 6). Any other smaller categories scoring beneath 2% were also placed in the larger category of "others".

Table 6. Smaller Categories of Others

Category	Frequency
Not relevan	94
Other answere	7

Source: Data Happiness CICP 2009 (Happiness Data CICP 2009)

In this category were other smaller categories; anyone, professionals, myself, irrelevant, and unanswered.

"Others" represented 23.8% of the entire respondent population, or approximately 101 students who answered a question outside the four large categories.

2. The Role Fulfilled by the People who Make Adolescents Happy

People who are the source of adolescents' happiness certainly do something to make them happy. Table 7 consists of what it is they do that becomes the source of happiness for adolescents.

Table 7.
Initial Large Categories

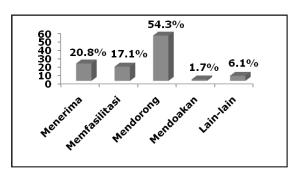
Category	Total	
	Frequency	%
General Support	32	7,3
Special Support	409	92,7
Total	441	100

Source: Data Happiness CICP 2009 (Happiness Data CICP 2009)

Table 7 shows that what people do that stimulates adolescent happiness the most was by giving support. Support is divided into two; general support and special support. General Support was understood "support" perceived universally by respondents. This was previously determined through respondents' answers, which indicated "support" as an action that makes them happy.

Special support was perceived as respondents as a more specific action. The types of actions can be seen in graphic 2 and table 8. Special support found through respondents' answers were divided into 4 large categories; "acceptance" (menerima), "facilitation" (memfasilitasi), "encouragement" (mendorong), "praying" (mendoakan), and "others" (lain-lain).

Encouragement held the highest position as a role of people that instigated adolescent happiness (222 students; 54.3%), followed by "acceptance" (85 respondents or 20.8%), "facilitation" (70 students; 17.1 %), and "praying" (7 students, 1.7%).



Graphic 2. The Roles Fulfilled by People who Make Adolescents Happy

These larger categories were further clustered into smaller categories, which can be seen through tables 9 to 13.

Table 8.
The Roles Fulfilled by People who Make
Adolescents Happy

	Total	
Category	Frequency	%
Acceptance	85	20,8
Facilitation	70	17,1
Encouragement	222	54,3
Praying	7	1,7
Others	25	6,1
Total	409	100

The Roles Fulfilled by People who Make Adolescents Happy

1) Acceptance

Acceptance was used as a larger category due to the fact that when an individual feels accepted by others, it makes him or her happy. People who are able to accept others tend to give support, are willing to spend time with,

listen to, and share with others, as well as give surprises, converse, and make proud and protect them. People who accept others are able to care for, respect, and understand them. When a person praises, smiles at, and greets another, it can be said that he or she accepts that person. These smaller categories can be seen in table 9.

Table 9. Smaller Categories of Acceptance

Category	Frequency
Give Attention	22
Accompany	15
Listen	12
Understand	9
Care	8
Share	5
Give Surprises	3
Converse	3
Appreciate	3
Make proud	1
Praise	1
Smile	1
Greet	1
Protect	1

Source: Data Happiness CICP 2009 (Happiness Data CICP 2009)

The smaller category give attention was highest in the larger category of "acceptance", followed by accompany, listen, understand, care, share, give surprises, converse, appreciate, make proud, praise, smile, greet, and protect.

2) Facilitation

Facilitation is one role that may be fulfilled that leads to adolescent happiness. An adolescent may feel happy if the people closest to him or her provides the proper facilities. The word "facility" itself according to *Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia* (Indonesian Dictionary) was defined as a medium to ensure the fulfilment of a certain function with relative ease, as well as to ease the accomplishment of a certain goal (1988). Facilitating as a larger category has the subcategories: *facilitate* and *assist*. Facilitating is a more dominant role than assisting, which can be seen through the number of respondents answering the smaller category *facilitate* (36 students), compared to the 34 students answering *assist*. Table 10 presents the smaller categories under "facilitation".

Table 10.
Smaller Categories of Facilitation

Category	Frequency
Facilitate	36
Assist	34

Source: Data Happiness CICP 2009 (Happiness Data CICP 2009)

3) Encouragement

Encouragement was used as a larger category because what people do to stimulate happiness in adolescents may push them to a more positive direction. Encouraging consists of advising, motivating, comforting, supporting, and guiding, which are all forms of encouragement that may lead to adolescent happiness.

Table 11. Smaller Categories of Encouragement

Category	Frequency
Advising	60
Motivating	54
Comforting	51
Supporting	48
Guiding	9

Source: Data Happiness CICP 2009 (Happiness Data CICP 2009)

"Encouraging" consists of the aforementioned smaller categories, with the highest *advising* achieving the highest response number of 60 students, followed by *motivating* with 54, *comforting* with 51, and the last two subcategories *supporting* and *guiding* scoring 48 and 9 respondents consecutively.

4) Praying

Adolescents can experience happiness if a person prays for them. This can be seen through the number of respondents indicating "praying" as an answer. There were a total of 7 responses.

Table 12.
Category of Praying

Category	Frequency
Praying	7
Source: Data Happiness CICP 2009 (Happiness Da	
CICP 2009)	

5) Others

"Others" was a category compiled by grouping together responses that did not belong to any of the other 5 existing categories. This category was further divided into smaller subcategories: *irrelevant, cooperation,* and *hard work*, which can be seen in table 13.

Table 13.
Smaller Categories of Others

Category	Frequency
Irrelevant	23
Cooperation	1
Hard Work	1

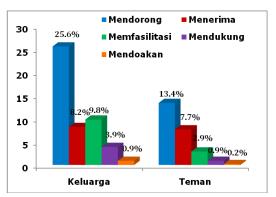
Source: Data Happiness CICP 2009 (Happiness Data CICP 2009)

There was an approximate number of 25 students whose responses could not be clustered into any of the other 5 categories, hence fulfilling the "others" criteria.

3. Relationship Between the Source of Happiness with their Role in Adolescent Happiness

Results from cross tabulation conducted between the people who were the source of adolescent happiness with their role in creating said happiness can be seen in table 14 and graphic 3. In the family (keluarga) category, the most generally conducted role was giving encouragement (mendorong). There were approximately 113 respondents (25.6%) who answered encouragement. Adolescents receive encouragement from family in the form of advice, motivation, comfort, support or guidance. Facilitation (memfasilitasi) and assistance by the family also influences happiness in adolescents. There were approximately 43 students (9.8%) within the "family" category who responded. A further role conducted by the family that promotes happiness was by accepting (menerima) adolescents as a part of the family. Acceptance took the form of listening, giving attention, accompanying, understanding, caring, sharing, giving surprises, conversing, appreciating, make prouding, praising,

smiling, greeting, and protecting. 36 students (8.2%) within the "family" category who responded with *acceptance*. 17 students (3.9%) answered support (*mendukung*) as a role that stimulated happiness, and 4 students (0.9%) answered praying (*mendoakan*).



Graphic 3. Relationship Between the Source of Happiness with their Role in Adolescent Happiness

Furthermore, within the friend (teman) category, it is evident that the most influential role was encouragement, with 59 responses (13.4%), followed by acceptance (34 students, or 7.7%), facilitation (13 respondents or 2.9%), and finally through support and praying (4 students or 0.9% and 1 student or 0.9% consecutively).

Table 14.
Relationship Between the Source of Happiness with their Role in Adolescent Happiness

	Family		Friend		Others	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Encouragement	113	25,6%	59	13,4%	50	11,8%
Acceptance	36	8,2%	34	7,7%	15	3,4%
Facilitation	43	9,8%	13	2,9%	14	3,2%
Support	17	3,9%	4	0,9%	11	2,5%
Praying	4	0,9%	1	0,2%	2	0,5%
Others	8	1,8%	8	1,8%	9	2%

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

1. Family

According to a majority of adolescents, one's family is the most influential party related to his or her happiness. For respondents

choosing *family*, the family itself consists of an extended family and the nuclear family. The nuclear family is built up of parents and brothers or/and sisters, whereas the nuclear family further added further constituents such

as uncles, aunts, cousins, and grandparents. Parents were the most influential part of adolescent happiness, with almost 45% of the respondents claiming them responsible for his or her happiness. This percentage was the largest of all the other smaller categories.

Parents are the closest figure to an adolescent. From their earlier years, an adolescent has been raised by his or her parents. This makes them close and attached to them. Family has a large influence toward an adolescent for they are the people who are closest to the teen's environment, making them more likely to be the ones giving familial support. Family is a system with functions that make it possible for members to support adolescents (Levin et. al., 1993). A study of university students in Canada and Korea by Lee, Park, Uhlemann and Patsula (1999) found similar results. Their study was able to demonstrate the family as the biggest influence toward an adolescent's happiness. Within a family, parents were the most influential figure in an adolescent's happiness. They still hold an important role in an adolescent's life; according to Santrock (1998), parents are the model an adolescent uses to build their construct of relationships with other people.

In this study, family was the main source of adolescent happiness. This was apparently not found in European societies. Larson (cited in Argyle, 2001) found that for adolescents in Europe, their happiness mainly derives from friends, not family. Likewise, studies by Demir et. al. (2006) of friends as a predictor of adolescent happiness shows that friends were the largest factor of adolescent happiness. However, in Aquilino & Supple's (2001) study of adolescents in America, it was shown that adolescents' upbringing provides a long-term effect on adolescent happiness.

In achieving happiness, adolescents require support from various social relations. This was also revealed in Mahon & Yarcheski's (2002) study of American adolescents, which concluded that social support has a positive correlation to happiness. The type of support most often given within a family that stimulates adolescent happiness was by giving encouragement in the form of advice, motivation, support, comfort and guidance. This is possibly because adolescents are still emotionally reliant on his or her family, specifically parents, throughout his or her adolescent years. As a close figure to adolescents, parents may provide input and opinions, for instance those related to their child's education. Parents give advice to their children in the hopes that they will grow up respectably and away from negative behaviour. They guide their children to overcome problems. When feeling down, an adolescent will be happy if their parents or siblings cheer them up. These are some of the things that can make an adolescent happy in his or her family.

Apart from giving encouragement, a family that supports an adolescent also promotes happiness. Acceptance can be in the form of attention by listening to the teen, accompanying and understanding them, caring and sharing, make prouding and appreciating them, giving surprises, and greeting them. At times, adolescents may have different needs or opinions. A family that is able to understand their needs and thoughts will help an adolescent feel accepted. When an adolescent has a problem, he or she may share it with his or her family or siblings. Simply ready to listen may make an adolescent feel happy. When an adolescent obtains a certain achievement, his or her family feels a sense of pride and speaks of it to others. This also may create a sense of acceptance and stimulate feelings of joy.

Facilitation of adolescents' needs and assisting them in fulfilling those needs will make an adolescent feel much aided. When an adolescent requires something to fulfil a certain need, he or she will ask his or her family, specifically parents. Parents ready to facilitate for their children will instigate that feeling of happiness in adolescents. When in trouble, the first people an adolescent turns to is his or her family, whether it is parents or siblings. The willingness to help is meaningful for an adolescent and encourages happiness. A family that prays for the adolescent is also a simple act that may yet endorse happiness.

2. Friends

Friendship can be defined as a voluntarily interdependent relationship between two people from time to time, with the purpose of facilitating socio-emotional needs, and may involve various types and degrees of friendship, intimacy, care and cooperation (Hays cited in Demir, 2007).

Results of the study indicate that the second person most able to produce adolescent happiness is friends. We have clustered "friends" into the subcategories of best friend, boyfriend/girlfriend, friend, and close friend. This is inherent with the study conducted by Argyle and Lu (1990), who stated a number of activities that were able to stimulate adolescent happiness, including belonging to a group and gathering with his or her group, joking around with others, etc. (Argyle, 2001). Diener & Seligman (2002) and Lyobomirsky, Tkach & DiMatteo (2006) then illustrated the relationship between closeness and satisfaction with friends, with happiness.

According to research conducted by Davis & Todd; Wright; and Mendleson &

Kay (in Demir, 2007), the difference between a close friend and a best friend lies on the level of closeness within the friendship. Best friends have a higher quality of in the relationship compared to close friends.

Almost 27% of respondents experience happiness from relations with their best friends, boy- or girlfriend, or their close friend. This indicates that friendship also influences adolescent happiness even if their main happiness derives from their parents. A similar implication was concluded from a study by Lee, Park, Uhlemaan and Patsula (1999) of university students in Canada and Korea. Their research showed that close friends held an influential part in an adolescent's happiness after family, in their case, parents. However, the study by Argyle (2001) proved that friends were the most influential source of adolescent happiness followed by family, and the self.

For adolescents, happiness through close friends mostly came from their support, in the form of encouragement. This typical to behaviour within friendship, for close friends generally share similar mindsets hence make it easier for them to understand one another and give appropriate advice.

The second most influential behaviour within friendship that leads to adolescent happiness is by giving support in the form of acceptance. During the stages of adolescence, when an adolescent begins to develop his or her relationship with peers, there is a need for acceptance. Close friends who are willing to share the good times and the bad becomes a valuable necessity for adolescents. A similar description was also stated by Argyle, who asserted that happiness fostered through friendship may depend upon the frequency of pleasant communication an adolescent has with his or her friends. When an adolescent uses his or her time on hobbies or simply to

play, close and/or best friends are generally the people he or she invites to share it with.

There are other forms of support received by an adolescent from his or her friends, such as *facilitation* and *assistance*. When an adolescent suffers a problem where he or she does not want to share with members of his or her family, friends become a relief. A friend who is willing to help in times of need is very valuable to an adolescent. They make an adolescent happy. Furthermore, friends who genuinely pray for you will make an adolescent feel very happy.

3. Others

In this study, a minority (2%) of respondents state that there was no party that contributed to his or her happiness. Argyle (2001) also found in his research that after being with close friends and family, an individual may also experience happiness when they are alone. There were only an extremely small percentage of 2% who

answered as having no body as their source of happiness. There were others who also responded as achieving happiness through the self, meaning they feel as if they could make themselves happy.

In this study, there were a large number of respondents whose answers were irrelevant to the question on the questionnaire. These data could not be processed and thus submitted into another category. This can be seen in the number of respondents whose answers were irrelevant, which reached almost 20%. This relatively large number shows the possibility of a misunderstanding while reading the questions. The first question in the questionnaire simply asked of the respondent's relation to the people that make him or her happy. Almost 20% answered "my relationship to him/her is fine." However, the purpose of the question was to see how the respondent was related to the person. This misconception of the question was largely at fault for the number of irrelevant responses.

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