

THE ROLE OF ADULT ATTACHMENT AND SPIRITUAL WELL-BEING ON WIFE'S HAPPINESS

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Abstract

Disharmony in husband and wife relationship often relates to low level of happiness among them. This is pertinent, especially for wives who are considered to carry more domestic chores (and work outside home), and some of which are performed almost in a 24-hour cycle, e.g., raising a child. Previous studies have shown that individual's adult attachment and their spiritual well-being help couples achieve high level of marital happiness until the end of their lives, especially for wives, w. This study aims to investigate the relations between adult attachment and spiritual well-being on one hand, and wife's happiness on the other. By using previously established scales of adult attachment, spiritual well-being, and subjective happiness, the study collected data from wives who have been married for at least two years in a monogamous marriage agreement. The results show that adult attachment and spiritual well-being are positively related to wife's happiness. In specific, we find that the avoidance-attachment dimension is positively related to happiness, while the anxiety attachment dimension shows no relation to wife's happiness. In the spiritual well-being, religious well-being is found to positively relate to happiness, while existential well-being shows no relation. The findings suggest that by reducing factors related to avoidance-attachment and increasing religious well-being, through routine daily religious activities, may in turn, increase a wife's happiness.

Keywords: *Adult Attachment, Spiritual well-being, Happiness*

INTRODUCTION

Conflicts between husband and wife are shown to be related to low quality of marriage. This indicates an unhealthy relationship with a partner, shown by lack of intensive communication and unhappy feelings when being with the partner, A healthy relationship with a partner can be formed through secure attachment. Hazan and Shaver (in Brennan, 2009) argued that emotional bonding (adult attachment) developed through romantic relationship with a partner has the following characteristics: (1) a feeling of security when being close to each other, (2) both have closeness, intimacy and physical contact, and (3) feelings of insecurity when the other person does not accept it.

In detail, there are two dimensions of adult attachment, i.e., avoidance and anxiety. These two dimensions will determine whether one's adult attachment falls in a category of secure or insecure attachment. If the two dimensions have a high score, then the adult attachment is considered a secure attachment, whereas if score of one or both is low, then the adult attachment is considered an insecure attachment.

Further, studies suggest that increasing marital happiness may require spiritual well-being (SWB). The current findings show that a high level of SWB is related to positive self-perception, life purpose and meaning, self-confidence, physical health, emotional adjustment, and self-control. Conversely, low level of SWB is associated with *distress*, poor health, low ability to adjust emotions, dissatisfaction in life and lack of purpose in life (Phillip et al., 2006).

SWB is defined as an individual's subjective perception of the quality of life related to spiritual life through two dimensions, namely *the religious well-being (RWB)*, a vertical dimension that refers to well-being in relation to God or a higher power, and the *existential well-being (EWB)* dimension, a horizontal dimension that refers to purpose and satisfaction in life (Monad in Darvyri et. al., 2014). Paloutzian and Ellison (in Darvyri, et. al., 2014) explained that

SWB is positively related to life purpose, intrinsic religious commitment and *self-esteem*, and it is negatively related to individualism, individual freedom and loneliness.

In relation to happiness, according to Lyubomirsky, King and Diener (in Lopez and Synder, 2009), happiness is also determined by the accumulation of a person's life success, which includes good health, a large income and strong relationships with others. Based on the research suggestion from Lyubormisky (2008) that we not only learn practical ways to make people happy, but also learn how and why people become happy. This is the basis for conducting research in looking for other factors that determine happiness beyond the factors that have been described by Lyubormisky. Compton (2005) highlights the role of *spiritual factors of well-being and relationship-attachment* as a way to achieve happiness.

This research needs to be carried out to get an overview of the relationship model between *Adult Attachment, Spiritual well-being and happiness to the wife*. This will be a strong foundation for improving good health and welfare in the future because wives are the basis for shaping the nation's generation.

METHOD

The respondents of the study were wives who had been married for at least 2 years and monogamous marriages living in the city of Bandung. The measuring tools used for this study are the appropriate measuring tools for this study, namely the measurement of *adult attachment* using a questionnaire developed by Brennan, Clark and Shaver, namely the *Experiences in Close Relationships (ECR) Inventory – Adult Attachment Questionnaire*, the *Spiritual well-being Scale* from Ellison and Paloutzian, and the *Subjective Happiness Scale* from Lyubomisky and Lepper. Data processing using the *Multiple Regression statistical test* to test the research hypothesis by obtaining a model of the relationship between the role of *adult attachment and religious coping* on the happiness of wives. The translation process to these 3 measuring tools was carried out by Yuspendi (2019) with a *back translation* process by Virgo Handojo from California Baptist University and has been tested for reliability and validity that has met the requirements.

The research hypothesis proposed in this study is as follows:

- a. *Adult attachment and spiritual well-being play a simultaneous role in the happiness of the wife.*
- b. *Adult attachment plays a role in the happiness of the wife.*
- c. *Spiritual well-being plays a role in the happiness of the wife.*

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the results of a study on 399 respondents of wives who participated in Muslim community activities in the city of Bandung. A complete description of the data will be presented in the following section, including an overview of research respondents related to demographic data and the results of statistical tests from data processing in accordance with the research hypothesis.

Table 1. Demographic Overview of Respondents

Variables	Respondents (n=399)	
	Mean	SD
Age	36.22	8.37
Marriage Duration	16.00	1.87
Education	2.83	1.22
Socio-Economic Status	2.67	0.87
<i>Religious Attendance</i>	4.87	1.27
<i>Religious Activity</i>	3.76	1.32
<i>Subjective Religious</i>	4.22	1.29

Table 1 shows that respondents are generally between 36 years old (Mean = 36.22, SD = 8.37) with a marriage length of about 16 years (Mean = 16.00, SD = 1.87) and the respondents' education level is generally at the junior high and high school levels (Mean = 2.83, SD = 1.22) which is in the lower middle socioeconomic status (Mean = 2.62, SD = 0.87).

Respondents from this Muslim community participated in activities at the mosque at least once a week (Mean = 4.87, SD = 1.27) and carried out *religious* activities such as reciting two to three times a week (Mean = 3.76, SD = 1.32) with the level of spirituality appreciation at a moderate level (Mean = 4.22, SD = 1.29).

Based on the results of statistical tests on 3 research hypotheses, the following results were obtained:

Adult Attachment and Spirituality Well-Being simultaneously/together play a role in the happiness of the wife.

Table 2. *Adult Attachment and Religious Coping Towards Wife's Happiness* (N=399)

Variables		Happiness	
		β	Sig.
Adult Attachment	Avoidance-Attachment	-.174**	.007
	Anxiety-Attachment	-.118	.069
Spirituality WB	Religious Well-Being	.218**	.000
	Existential Well-Being	-.045	.446
R Square		.053	

Note. * $<.05$ ** $<.01$

Table 2 shows the analysis per path of the *Adult Attachment and Spirituality well-being* then the results of the dimensions are obtained *avoidance-attachment* plays a significant role in the happiness of the wife with a coefficient of $\beta.174$, Sig.000, while the dimension *anxiety attachment* does not play a significant role in the happiness of the wife with a coefficient of $\beta.118$, Sig.069. This means that the closer the wife is to her partner, the happier her family will be, compared to not feeling anxious. On the dimensions *Spirituality well-being* seem *Religious well-being* plays a significant role in the happiness of the wife with a coefficient of $\beta.218$, Sig.000, while *existential well-being* does not play a significant role in the happiness of the wife with a coefficient of $\beta -.045$, Sig.445. This means that the relationship of closeness with God as the creator will make the wife happier than just pursuing goals and satisfaction in life in this world.

The results of the analysis per path from the *adult attachment* dimension obtained the result of *the avoidance-attachment* dimension plays a significant role in the happiness of the wife with a coefficient of $\beta.174$, Sig.000, while *the anxiety-attachment* dimension does not play a significant role in the happiness of the wife with a coefficient of $\beta.-.118$, Sig.069. This shows that the closer the wife is to her partner, the happier she will be. This condition, if supported by a lack of anxiety in the wife, will make her happier, although not too significant.

In the results of the per-path analysis of the spiritual well-being dimension, it was obtained that *the religious well-being dimension* played a significant role in happiness with a coefficient of $\beta.218$, Sig.000, while *existential well-being* did not play a significant role in the happiness of the wife with a coefficient of $\beta.045$, Sig.445. This means that the *dimension of religious well-being (RWB)* as a vertical dimension that refers to well-being in relation to God or a higher power has a significant effect on the happiness of the wife, rather than the *existential well-being (EWB)* dimension as a horizontal dimension that refers to purpose and satisfaction in life. Paloutzian and Ellison (in Darvyri, et. al., 2014) explain *that* spiritual well-being is positively related to life

purpose, intrinsic religious commitment and *self-esteem*, while it is negatively related to individualism, individual freedom and loneliness.

The respondents from the Muslim community participated in activities at the mosque at least once a week (Mean = 4.87, SD = 1.27) and carried out religious activities such as reciting two to three times a week (Mean = 3.76, SD = 1.32) with the level of spirituality appreciation at a moderate level (Mean = 4.22, SD = 1.29). Religious activities will help in improving the emotional well-being of the wife because it is related as one of the factors that strengthen spiritual well-being in the *dimension of religious well-being*.

The limitations in this study are related to the sample that only involves wives because it is difficult to collect data from husbands who are busy working and lack of time to fill out the questionnaires given.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the discussion above, it can be concluded that *adult* attachment and spiritual well-being simultaneously play a significant role in the happiness of the wife. In addition, each of the pathways shows that the *avoidance*-attachment dimension plays a significant role in the happiness of the wife, while *the anxiety*-attachment dimension plays a less significant role in the happiness of the wife so that the closeness with the partner in the wife will make her happier.

In the *dimension of religious coping*, the results of *the spiritual well-being dimension* showed that *religious well-being* played a significant role in the happiness of the wife, while *existential well-being* did not play a significant role in the happiness of the wife. This shows that closeness to God is more important to a wife than just pursuing life goals and satisfaction.

This is strengthened by *the religious activities* carried out by the wife in her daily life. Based on the above results, it shows that *religious well-being* has a greater role than the *avoidance-attachment dimension* in increasing the happiness of the wife.

The implications of the results of this study are in an effort to increase the happiness of wives by lowering *avoidance-attachment factors* and increasing *religious well-being*, through daily *routine religious activities*.

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