

Meaningfulness of Life Pensioner Civil State Employees in Bengkulu City

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Abstract: Retirement is a transition period from productive to unproductive life. During this period various problems arise, often due to unpreparedness and inability to carry out daily activities far different from working periods. This can cause depression, post power syndrome, loss of influence, and less social relations because the frequency of meeting and gathering with friends decreases. Based on this condition it is necessary to ensure individuals have meaningful lives after retirement. This study aimed at describing the meaningfulness of life of the retired civil servants in the city of Bengkulu. This was a quantitative descriptive study, having a research instrument with a scale of five. The sampling technique used purposive samples with a size of 30 people. Data analysis technique was descriptive statistical. The results showed that retired civil servants in the city of Bengkulu live a meaningful life. This is indicated by the fact that retirees had clear life goals and recognizing their potential, directing them to more positive things.

Keywords: Meaningfulness of life

INTRODUCTION

Generally, retirement is included in the third stage of career development. This is a post occupation phase, a period of decline or the transition from the productivity to less profitable moment caused by age (Yusuf, 2005). These changes often affect the welfare and significance of individuals in various aspects, including household income (Hurd and Rohwedder, 2003; Aguiar and Hurst, 2005; Skinner, 2007), and free time (French, 2005; Laitner and Silverman, 2005). The Indonesian government sets a normal retirement age of 56 years, though the maximum limit for permanent individuals employed after attaining the age of 55 is 60 years. Indonesian Civil Servants (PNS) working in offices retire at the age of 56, while teachers and supervisors' age limit is 60 years old (Peraturan, 2015).

Japan and South Korea have an effective retirement age of 70 despite official limit of 60 years. Denmark, Iceland, Ireland, Portugal, and Switzerland apply pensions to -year-old workers (Stuart-Hamilton, 2011). While retirement age in India is 62, Singaporean taxi drivers goes up to 71 years old (Wahyuningsih, M, 2012). This shows that retirement age in Indonesia is relatively lower compared to other countries. Notably, retirement can make individuals happy because it is free from workload. Nevertheless, it can cause pressure when individuals leave work, reduced income and decreased social participation (McGee and Wegman, 2004).

Every pensioner certainly hopes to live his old age happily. Happiness is the highest goal that everyone need practically, even at an old age (Guttmann, 2008). One way of attaining happiness through self-awareness. The desire to live meaningfully will impart the feelings of happiness. The meaning of life is a motivation brought by individual's finance to make themselves valuable in accordance with the values they believe in (Frankl, 2004; Bastaman, 2007). The desire to live meaningfully is really the main motivation in humans.

From the results of the study (García-Alandete, 2015) it can be concluded that meaningful life is a feeling of worth and sense, satisfied with what has been done, and having clear goals in life. Put differently, happiness is the reward of one's success in realizing the meaning of life. The meaning of life is often referred to as the value or wisdom of life, a great virtue and benefit contained in various events and experiences, both pleasant and unpleasant. (Bastaman, 2007; Frankl, 2004).

Conversely, if the desire is not fulfilled, it result in disappointment and meaninglessness, arid, feeling bored, purposeless and apathetic (Bastaman, 2007). Not a few of the retirees experience this. Old age is lived with a sense unhappiness, causing a feeling of discomfort. in addition, pensioners’ lives face declines, both in physical and psychological functions that can affect mobility as well social contact, decreased self-esteem, , increased isolation and loneliness such that a sense of inattention appears, feeling toe burden to children, isolated and demoralized (Atchley, 2007). This condition causes conditions render life meaningless, especially due to unclear life goals.

The meaninglessness of life sometimes arises by compensations, for example, running away from alcohol, drugs, sex and gambling (Frankl, 2004). The risk of life without meaning not only affects the physical conditions of individuals but also disrupt their psyche. This is in line with the results of the study (Kleftaras and Psarra, 2012; Krause et al., 2016) showing that higher meaningfulness of individual life lead to a positive perceptions of their personal health level.

From the results of interviews with several retired civil servants in the city of Bengkulu in March 2018, there were symptoms that they felt confused about what to do because they did not have plans of activities anymore, felt lonely since the children were grown and left home, and health conditions. This renders them burdensome to children and insignificant in the family. Therefore, with this problem, it was necessary conduct a research on retirees related to the meaningfulness of life.

RESEARCH PURPOSES

The purpose of this study is to describe how meaningful the life of retired civil servants in the city of Bengkulu.

METHOD

This was a quantitative descriptive study that aimed to describe the life of civil servants in the city of Bengkulu. The populations in this study included retired civil servants recorded in August 2018 and amounted to 30 people. It used purposive sampling technique because of a specific purpose involving 30 people. Research instruments had a scale of five, and data analysis using descriptive statistics in categories (Winarsunu, 2002).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results Description of the Meaningfulness of Life

The description of the meaningful life of retired civil servants in the city of Bengkulu was as seen in Table 1.

Table 1. Meaningfulness of life in retired civil servants

No	Meaning-fulness of life	Ideal score	Mean	SD	%	Category
1.	Self-understanding	20	17.53	1.54	87.65	Height
2.	Purpose of life	70	59.83	4.82	85.47	Height
3.	Changing attitudes	35	29.3	1.95	83.71	Height
4.	Self-reliance	15	13.03	1.60	86.86	Height
5.	Directional activities	10	8.00	0.94	80	Quite high
6.	Social support	25	21.33	2.07	85.32	Height
	Overall	175	149.03	10.24	85.1	Height

From the table above, it can be seen that the meaningfulness of life is high, reflected in aspects of self-understanding, life goals, attitude changes, self-reliance, and social support and directed activities.

Discussion

From the outcome of data analysis, the meaningfulness life of retired civil servants in Bengkulu city is high. This can be attributed their ability to manage themselves well. The satisfaction and meaningfulness of

the retirement life also depends on how the individuals face and handles the transition period (Lauritzen, Pedersen and Bjerrum, 2013; Jenkins and Latoche, 2004). This is closely related to managing impassioned intelligence in individuals. Based on the results of research by Slaski and Cartwright, 2002; in the United Kingdom, zealous intelligence has a causal relationship with the stress level of an individual. Those who are able to manage their emotional intelligence positively attain satisfaction in their lives (Löckenhoff, Terracciano and Costa Jr, 2009). Sentimental intelligence is the ability to see, produce, understand and manage emotion (Hanson, 2004; Ioannidou F, Konstantikaki, 2012; Cherniss, Roche and Barbarasch, 2015)

Feldman and Snyder, 2005 emphasize the importance of self-control, it allow individuals to feel capable of managing their lives and achieve their crucial goals. Although in pursuing the meaningfulness of life there are anxieties and worries, whether it will be well can direct individuals to live well.

In addition, the high living standards of these pensioners can also be influenced by public support from the environment, attaining life satisfaction (Anne Taylor et al., 2008). Social support is defined as a helping action obtained through public relations (Busza et al., 2012). Community support has a positive influence on the meaningfulness of the lives of individuals (Dobříková et al., 2015), especially family support (Lambert et al., 2010). It can be in the form of emotional and information support (Bennett et al., 2001). Social support can come from various sources, including family, spouse (husband, wife, or boyfriend), friends, counselors, doctors and paramedics (Lepore, 2012; Bianco, 2001; Ri- Hua et al., 2010; McMahan, Felix and Nagarajan, 2011). The results of the study indicated that personal relationships are important sources of meaningfulness (Schlegel et al., 2011). The presence of marriage, family, friendship networks and group affiliation all play a role in improving the well-being of individuals (Kim and Moen, 2001).

Social support is very important in various aspects of individuals' lives, considering that they are communal beings that always interact with one another. The existence of public support will give experience to individuals whom they are loved, valued, and cared for. Conversely, lack of friendly support will make individuals feel worthless, isolated, undermined self-meaning, lack of belonging, self-esteem and low self-control (Williams, 2002; Lewandowski et al., 2011; Kleiman & Beaver, 2013).

Attention and support from others can foster hope for a more meaningful life while reducing individual anxiety. This shows this aspect of life serves as a sign that the environment is harmonious and stable (Baumeister and Vohs, 2002; Heintzelman, Trent and King, 2013). The meaning of life is related to understanding its related events. Individuals who lack the meaning of life are easily threatened by events that full of stress than individuals with a sense of meaningful (Park and Baumeister, 2017). The meaningfulness of life correlates with stress reactions (Steger et al., 2008).

Every individual has the will to live meaningfully (Frankl, 2004). The meaning of life can be realized in a desire to be someone useful to others, whether it is children, wives, close family members, community, state, or even humanity (Frankl, 2004). This is a guideline and direction for individual activities in life. Persons with meaningful lives show vibrancy and have a passion for lives, always far from being empty in life their daily life. Thus a meaningful life is a decent life (Heisel and Flett, 2004; Henry et al., 2014; Kleiman et al., 2013; Kleiman and Beaver, 2013).

To realize the meaningfulness of life, individuals must have clear life goals, both short and long-term ones. It is claimed that meaningfulness of life is rooted in the four basic aspects: sense of purpose, efficacy, value, and sense of positive self-worth (Baumeister and Vohs, 2002; Thoits, 2012). This is the basis for an individual to achieve meaningfulness in his life. With clear objectives to help focus on distinctive activities that are more focused and feel the progress has been achieved on. Tasks and daily work are sources of satisfaction and pleasure that helps people work with enthusiasm and responsibility. This condition impart feelings of happiness. When the meaning of life has been found and fulfilled, the individual will realize such a significant, precious and prized life that will lead to happiness (happiness), because basically individuals have found their lives goals with certainty. When the meaningfulness of life has been realized by an individual, it will affect his or her physical health and well-being (Sirgy and Wu, 2009; Gowan, Kirk and Sloan, 2014; Bae et al., 2017). Conversely, individuals who do not have clear goals get swayed in activities that render their lives meaningless, empty, and apathetic (Hirsch, Floyd and Duberstein, 2012; Doka, 2002; Ventegodt, Andersen and Merrick, 2003). Individuals who do not find meaningfulness in their lives are often stressful (Mascaro and Rosen, 2006; Glazer et al., 2014), depressed (Mascaro and Rosen, 2005; Cohen, 2010), and often contemplate suicide (Frankl, 2004).

To attain a sense of meaningfulness in life, people have diverse strategies. Therefore, everyone has a sense of meaningfulness depending on the variation in the age. This is consistent with the Bijelić and Macuka, 2018, that the sense of meaningfulness in an individual's life varies with age. Individuals who have entered late adulthood often find meaning in their lives (Steger, Oishi and Kashdan, 2009). The discovery of life meaning is related to personality and religiosity (Steger et al., 2006), and has a positive effect on well-being (Steger, Oishi and Kashdan, 2009; Park, Park and Peterson, 2010). A meaningful life will function as

an inner processes in an individual that controls him or her (Baumeister and Vohs, 2002; Heine, Proulx and Vohs, 2006; Heintzelman and King, 2014; Heintzelman, Trent and King, 2013).

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Conclusion

From the results of the study, it can be concluded that the significance of the life of a former civil servant in the city of Bengkulu is high. This was evidenced by self-understanding, life goals, changing attitudes, attachments, directed activities, and the existence of social support.

Suggestion

Based on the results of the study, it is suggested that retired civil servants should strive to maintain and improve their ability to realize meaningfulness in themselves in self-understanding, life goals, and self-commitment. There is need to put more consideration on directed activities, specifically the ones related to planning and changing attitudes. The family and the community as well as other significant people are expected to provide support by establishing communication and continue to develop social relations.

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