

Divorced Couple's Forgiveness in Banda Aceh

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Abstract: Divorce has some impact for family, such as suffering for children and an influx of negative emotion (such as anger, hostility, and hatefulness) between couples. Forgiveness is regarded as one of the very effective ways to reduce said negative emotions. This study aimed to look at gender difference in forgiveness of couples that divorced in Banda Aceh. The sample in this study were 92 subjects consisting of 46 male (mean age 42 years) and 46 female (mean age 36 years) using purposive sampling data collection technique. Data was collected by Transgression-Related Interpersonal Motivation (TRIM)-18. The hypothesis analysis result using Independent sample t-test showed that $t=2.652$ and a significance of $p=0.411$ ($p>0.1$). Based on the analysis result, the proposed hypothesis in this study is confirmed, which is that there is a gender difference in forgiveness. The result of statistical calculation also showed that men's average score is lower than that of women's, which is 51.54 (male) $<$ 58.47 (female). It indicates that men have a higher level of forgiveness than women.

1 INTRODUCTION

Marriage is true pledge bond between wife and husband which contains responsibility of both sides (Kertamuda, 2009). Marriage commonly experiences the change of life style and self-adjustment to role and responsibility as a wife or a husband. However, some individuals feel unable to hold the new role and the new responsibility, so it creates conflict, dispute or even divorce (Dewi & Basti, 2008). Divorce is dissolution of marriage status based on judge's sentence or demand by husband or wife in marriage (Subekti, 2003). Dariyo (2004) explained that divorce was separation between spouse who decided not to run the role and the duty as the wife or husband anymore.

The divorce cases which have been rampant lately also happen in Aceh Province. There is an increasing number of divorces in every year from 2012 to 2015. The divorce cases reached 4,009 cases in 2012, and increased into 4,357 cases in 2013. The next year, the cases raised 4,801 and in 2015 level up to 5,280 cases. The increase happened in several regencies or cities in Aceh Province, including Banda Aceh City. The divorce cases in Banda Aceh City increases to dozens cases every year, which were dominated by contested divorce case (Sharia

Court of Aceh, 2016). Divorce cases in Banda Aceh City can be seen in the table below:

Table 1: Divorce Cases in Banda Aceh City (Sharia Court of Banda Aceh, 2016).

| Year | Total Divorce Cases | | Total |
|-------|---------------------|-------------------|-------|
| | Talaq Divorce | Contested Divorce | |
| 2012 | 60 | 154 | 214 |
| 2013 | 75 | 186 | 261 |
| 2014 | 89 | 191 | 280 |
| 2015 | 68 | 191 | 259 |
| Total | 292 | 722 | 1,014 |

Spouse conflict can be the trigger of divorce if it is not solved properly. Dariyo (2004) stated that the conflicts were influenced by various factors which were probably recorded previously, such as verbal abuse, economy problem or economy abuses, involvement in gambling, involvement in alcohol abuse, and infidelity. Those factors get less serious attention and not solved completely, so that they influence emotional behavior of spouse and result in the divorce.

Yaben (2009) added that divorce had negative impact on several life aspect such as loneliness, economic problem, physical health problem and psychological health problem. The problems arising

after the divorce can be reduced by forgiving the doers' mistakes (Root & Exline, 2011), in this case, the doers are ex wife and husband.

Forgiveness involving emotion, mind, and behavior as motivation to make peace with someone hurt (McCullough, Worthington, & Rachal, 1997). McCullough and Witvliet (2002) added that forgiveness was one of effective efforts to reduce anger, anxiety, fear, and can change emotion and negative behavior to be positive. Forgiving is a condition to accept others mistake, no longer has negative judgement, and deal with whoever hurts (Enright, 1991; McCullough, Root, and Cohen, 2006). Forgiveness process is later on considered as taking lessons process from the event just happened. The violations that occur cause harm to the victim, but if the victim can take lessons from these mistakes, it can encourage forgiveness. McCullough, Root, et al, (2006) explained that forgiveness had three aspects, as follows: avoidance motivation of doer, revenge motivation, and benevolence motivation.

Philpot (in Gani, 2010) stated that the forgiveness was considered as the process containing the change of feeling and attitude toward the doer. Most individuals who feel hurt tend to be difficult to forgive. Miller, Worthington, and McDaniel (2008) stated that the women are more asier to forgive than the men. Another study by Root and Exline (2011) also showed that the women more willing to forgive than the men. Shackefold, Buss, and Bennet (2002) stated that comparing to the women, the men were more difficult to forgive related to sexual infidelity than emotional infidelity and tend to end the relationship if the partner performs sexual infidelity. Forgiveness can influence individual's happiness, because forgiveness is one of the most important factors in the quality of interpersonal relationship both in men or women. Forgiveness can be understood as motivation change to be better relationship after the hurting event. (McCullough, Worthington, et al, 1997).

According to the explanation above, the divorce cases in Banda Aceh increase every year, which the divorce in Banda Aceh can reduce the individual's life satisfaction. A way to bring back the life satisfaction is through forgiveness. Therefore, the researcher was interested in studying the difference of forgiveness in the divorced spouse in Banda Aceh City in term of sex.

2 RESEARCH METHOD

This study used quantitative research with comparative research. The population in the research was divorced spouse. The samples were chosen by using purposive sampling which was sampling technique. In addition, the sample criterias in this study were: a) domiciled in Banda Aceh, b) divorce, c) receiving divorce by ruling of Sharia Court in Banda Aceh ranging from 2013 to 2015, and d) not having remarriage yet during the research. The number of involved subjects in this research was 92 persons containing 46 men and 46 women.

2.1 Collecting Data Method

Forgiveness in this study measured by using psychological scale, i.e. TRIM-18 (Transgression-Related Interpersonal Motivations) which was developed by McCullough, Root, et al. (2006) and has been adapted into Bahasa Indonesia. Adapting instrument was conducted through translation and back-translation process and tried out first to 50 samples.

2.2 Data Analysis Technique

Data analysis technique used independent samples t-test.

3 RESULT

The categorization of forgiveness consists of three categorizations that can be seen in table 3.

Table 2: Forgiveness Categorization in Divorced Spouse).

| Score | Score Cate-gorizati-on | Forgiven-ess Categori-zation | Sex | | Percentage (%) | |
|-------------|------------------------|------------------------------|-----|----|----------------|-------|
| | | | W | M | W | M |
| X < 48 | Low | High | 11 | 19 | 23.91 | 41.30 |
| 48 ≤ X < 60 | Non-catagorized | Non-categoriz-ed | 10 | 13 | 21.73 | 28.26 |
| X > 60 | High | Low | 25 | 14 | 54.34 | 30.43 |
| Total | | | 46 | 46 | 100 | 100 |

Hypothesis test result showed the significance score $t=2.652$ and $p=0.009$ ($p<0.1$), it means the proposed hypothesis was accepted which there was the difference of forgiveness between divorced men and women in Banda Aceh City.

4 DISCUSSION

This present study aimed to see the difference of forgiveness in term of sex on divorced spouse. According to statistical analysis, there was the significant difference of forgiveness on divorced women and men. The result supported meta-analysis conducted by Miller, et al (2008) that there was the difference of forgiveness between men and women. According to the result, the forgiveness of men was higher than women. It was proven with average score of forgiveness of men at 51.54 and women at 58.47. The higher the score obtained by individuals on TRIM-18, the lower the forgiveness, and vice versa. This is caused by two aspects of TRIM-18 indicating negative motivation (revenge and avoidance) and one aspect that indicates positive motivation (benevolence).

In avoidance motivation toward the doer aspect, showed that men were easier to keep the distance, without withdrawal, and face the hurting person than the women. The individual who keeps away from the person who hurts him/her is not able to forgive yet. However, when the individual decides to forgive, the motivation to avoid the doer, self-withdrawal, and keeping away from the doer will be lower. (McCullough, Fincham, & Tsang (2003). Furthermore, on revenge motivation aspect, it was known that the men are more able to keep the emotion to revenge the one who hurted him than the women. When the individual decides to forgive the one who hurts him/her, the motivation to revenge the one who hurts him/her will be lower (McCullough, Fincham, et.al, 2003). While on benevolence motivation aspect showed that the women showed more desire to do good deeds and re-build the relationship with the one who hurted her than the men. The drive to do good deeds makes the individual capable to abolish the motivation of revenge and avoidance the hurting individual (McCullough, Fincham, et al, 2003).

In this research, 41.30 per cent of divorced men in Banda Aceh had higher forgiveness level than women who had only by 23.91 per cent. The research result is confirmed by Miller, et al (2008) which mentioned that men easier to forgive than women. The difference of forgiveness level between

men and women can be influenced by the group of age. According to the study held by Ghammaghami, Allemand and Martin (2011) on forgiveness in several group of ages (early adulthood, middle adulthood, and late adulthood) in term of sex, the forgiveness on women group tended to be more stable in every group of age, while men tended to change in a row with age. The study explained that men in middle adulthood group were easier to express the forgiveness than the men in early adulthood. It was because the early adulthood men had motivation to revenge higher than the middle adulthood men. The influencing factor to individual in forgiving was the way of thinking in facing the proble. According to Ghammaghami, et al, (2011) the men tended to be more difficult to forgive if it was about working problem, while women tended to be more difficult to forgive if it was about intimate relationship-related problem.

Many factors could influence individual to forgive, such as how great the result of event is. The divorce is an event which can create negative effect like anger, anxiety, fear and hatred (Kertamuda, 2009), which can be reduced through forgiveness (McCullough & Witvliet, 2002). According to the data of this study, the factor which caused the divorce to men subject was dominated by infidelity (24 per cent) while the factor which caused the divorce to women was dominated by domestic violence (17 per cent). McCullough, Rachal, Sandage, Worthington, Brown, and Hight (1998) stated that the less hurt which was suffered as the conducted punishment (*transgression*) and also accepted the forgiveness of the doer (*transgressor*), the easier the individual to forgive. According to Olson, DeFrain and Skogrand (2010), the purpose of individual to marry is to have life-span sharing friend and have a family (*companionship*). Commonly, Asian people tend to have strong family orientation and build high education value in the family. However, divorce in the marriage cannot be avoided.

Olson, et al (2010) stated that several things causing disharmony of household and ending with divorce was bad communication, the difficulty of making decision and dishonesty. Dishonesty is the problem which often occurs in household. Dishonesty in marriage is kind of infidelity or couple manipulation, however, in several cases were found that there were wives did not forgive on infidelity done by the husbands and kept standing with their household without demanding the divorce because of financial factor like economic dependency, and having child (Sari, 2012).

According to study by Dewi and Sudhana (2013), spouse's interpersonal communication was influencing factor on harmony of marriage. According to Nancy (2013), harmony in household can be realized through forgiveness made by the spouse, by the presence of forgiveness, conflict between husband and wife can be solved well and can create harmonic family.

In research process, the researcher realized that there were shortcoming and limitation in this research. First, data in this research was taken by using purposive sampling technique, so that the total of obtained data was unproportional in every sub-district, therefore the result cannot be generalized. Second, it was difficult for the researcher to find the subject who met the characteristics of the research. Third, collecting data technique was not conducted directly by the researcher, however the data was collected by the enumerator. It caused there were three subjects did not fill the questionnaire because of divorce, thus this study was not able to reveal the divorce reason of all subjects.

5 CONCLUSION

This study aimed to see the difference of forgiveness on divorce spouse in Banda Aceh City. The result showed that there was the difference of forgiveness between divorced men and divorced women in Banda Aceh City. The result showed that divorced men was able to more forgive than divorced women because men tended to face the pressure of working-related problem while women tended to feel stressed in facing intimate relationship-related problem. Another factor which made men easier to forgive was age factor, middle adulthood men was easier to forgive than early adulthood men.

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