

The Optimism Observed by Workers of Javanese and Non-Javanese Cultural Background

Fuad Ardiansyah

University of Muhammadiyah Malang
fuadpsikologi@gmail.com

Fathul Hidayah

University of Muhammadiyah Malang
uulhidayah95@gmail.com

Abstract. Optimism becomes a resource in the workplace that is impact on increasing worker productivity but also must be seen from the geographical location in the cultural background case of the workers. The purpose of this study was to see the differences in the optimistic attitudes from the Javanese and non-Javanese workers. The study was conducted on public and private institutions with a total of 133 subjects who were vulnerable to ages 19 to 57 years. Data collection techniques using simple random sampling and independent sample test data analysis. The results showed that the average optimistic attitude of Javanese and non-Javanese cultural background workers had no difference, while the average pessimistic attitude between the two had differences

Keywords: Optimism, pessimism, worker, culture

Introduction

Organizations around the world both private and public depend on workers to optimize productivity and produce efficiency for the organization (Inuwa, 2016). Performance improvement needs to be done for the effectiveness of the organization by encouraging organizational behavior from the management itself. Management must be able to direct and involve its employees in any matter to improve productivity and performance, employee involvement in work can improve employee and organizational performance, this is in line with the research conducted by Dajani (2015) that involvement has a direct relationship with performance.

However, whether the performance of the employees only arises from the involvement of employees or is there something else. Research conducted by Muda, Rafiki, & Harahap (2014) that performance is influenced by stress, motivation, communication and is largely influenced by other unknown variables. Other variables that affect work are optimism. This was stated by Beheshtifar (2013) that optimism is a strong indicator of good performance. Optimism can be a positive force in the world of work such as providing motivation and satisfaction in the workplace (Malik, 2013).

Youssef & Luthans (2007) suggests that optimism is a resource in a workplace environment that has a good impact on worker productivity. Optimism itself is an individual difference variable that explains the extent to which individuals hold hope that is beneficial to themselves in the future (Carver, Scheier, & Segerstrom, 2010). Some evidence explains that optimism provides benefits and is related to perseverance from employees. Optimists have an influence on quality, where workers or individuals who have high optimism have high quality (Conversano et al., 2010). Likewise, what was conveyed by Mishra (2014) that optimists provide individual quality and satisfaction for individual workers.

Optimism is not only stand alone, but must be harmonized with the geographical location in this culture. Research conducted in the United Kingdom suggests that in increasing or raising an optimistic attitude, it is necessary to harmonize culture by creating programs to improve the function of optimism itself (Pykett & Enright, 2016). Chang & Asakawa (2003) in their research on European and Japanese Americans found that there were optimistic differences between the two, this was seen from the cultural differences between the two groups. This is also stated by Klassen (2004) that optimism does not always predict that workers have good performance, seen from the culture of each worker.

Based on various punctuations, researchers want to see how optimism of Indonesian workers with two different cultural backgrounds namely Java and non-Java. The purpose of this study was to see the optimistic attitude of workers with the background of Javanese and non-Javanese culture.

Literature Review

Optimism

Optimism is a hope, where it can be felt by all individuals by holding hopefully the future will bring things that are good for themselves (Scheier & Carver, 1992). Optimism is linked prospectively to well-being. Optimistic individuals are said to be more proactive than individuals who are not optimistic (Carver, 2001). Optimistic as the context of self-regulated actions to achieve goals with the belief that optimistic individuals are able to achieve their goals. Purpose as an action that is adjusted to the behavior of the desired thing and trying to stay away from what is not desirable. If the individual is confident he will bring action. Optimism is often referred to as a resource or possible resilience to maintain and even develop in difficult situations.

The hypothesis of this study is that there are differences between workers with Javanese cultural background and workers with non-Javanese backgrounds.

Method

This study uses a descriptive quantitative research design, where to determine the value of independent variables and instruments in this research in the form of questionnaires. This study is intended to see how the role of optimism in workers who have Javanese and non-Javanese cultural backgrounds. Subjects in this study were taken from public and private organization workers as many as 133 subjects who were vulnerable to ages 19 to 57 years. In determining the subject, researchers used simple random sampling technique, where subjects were taken randomly without regard to level such as positions.

This study examines one variable, namely optimism. Optimism itself is a hope that individuals take action to get the future in accordance with its goals. The instrument used in this study is the Likert scale which is a psychometric scale and is usually used in questionnaires and is widely used in survey research. This study uses an instrument adopted from the Carver instrument (2001) which has 10 items. The scale used is five answer options, namely 1 (Very Not Compliant / STS), 2 (Not Compliant / TS), 3 (Neutral / N), 4 (Suitable / S), 5 (Very Suitable / SS).

Researchers used three stages in this study namely, preparation, implementation and analysis of data. At the preparation stage, the researcher first looks for what theme is used as research material and then looks for instruments to measure what is the goal of the researcher, besides the researcher also determines the subject to be studied. Second, researchers conducted online questionnaires for workers from Javanese and non-Javanese cultural backgrounds in public and private organizations. This research was conducted for 10 days from 20 May to 29 May 2018.

The last stage the researcher entered the data analysis stage where the researcher analyzed the results of the entire intervention process. The data that has been obtained from scoring scales is then brought to Excel, which is then analyzed using SPSS for Windows version 22. In analyzing the data, the researcher uses independent data analysis techniques, sample t test.

Result

This study used 51.1% of subjects from Javanese tribes and 48.9% from non-Javanese tribes. Then workers who work in public institutions were 58.6% more than those who work in private institutions.

Table 1. Results of data analysis

Aspect	N	Mean	SD	t	p
Optimistic					
Java	68	12.7	1.9	-	0.673
Non-Javanese	65	12.8	1.9	0.423	
Pessimistic					
Java	68	9.6	2.1	2.660	0.009
Non-Javanese	65	8.6	2.4		

The data above showed that the optimistic p value was 0.673, so the Javanese and non-Javanese groups have no difference, while the pessimistic value is 0.009 and it is certain that the two groups have differences. Mean optimism in the Java group is 12.7 and non-Java is 12.8, this shows that the optimistic attitude of the non-Javanese group is higher. Then the pessimistic mean of the Javanese group is 9.6 higher than the non-Javanese group 8.6.

Discussion

This study showed the optimistic attitude of workers with Javanese and non-Javanese cultural backgrounds with a p value of 0.673. So it can be interpreted that there was no difference in optimistic attitudes between the two groups of workers. When optimistic brings hope to all individuals, this will have an impact on the individual. Both groups of workers with different cultures have good hopes by bringing prosperity to them. It happens depending on the individual in dealing with events (Chang & Asakawa, 2003).

This study also obtained data that the optimistic level of workers with non-Javanese culture was higher seen from the mean value of 12.8 compared to workers with Javanese cultural background, although the previous results had explained that there were no optimistic differences in the two cultural groups. This can happen because of one of the influencing factors, namely self-improvement (Rose, Endo, Windschitl, & Suls, 2008). This self-improvement arises due to the underlying event.

The events that underlie the occurrence of an optimistic attitude not only on positive events but negative events are also able to bring up an optimistic attitude. In the face of these negative or adverse events, individuals and cultures that have an explanatory style related to it make negative events as motivation and support in raising an optimistic attitude (Malik, 2013). In addition to influential events, as for biological problems that affect optimism, and vice versa that optimism affects health and may be a recovery for individuals who experience health problems (Kivimäki et al., 2005).

In agency demographic data, there were differences where workers who work in public institutions are more than those who work in private institutions. In fact this can affect the emergence of optimism because of differences in the work environment of each agency. The work environment has the potential to be a strong indicator of an optimistic attitude for the success of agencies (Beheshtifar, 2013). Although there are only a few studies on optimism at work.

Basically various studies have been conducted to find out the optimistic differences in some cultures. Most previous studies revealed differences in optimism from each culture. This is of course different from this research. Where previously it was explained that there was no difference in optimism in the two groups of workers with different cultures. As stated by Fischer & Chalmers (2008) that there is no fundamental influence of cultural differences on the emergence of optimism because this is based on self-construal, thinking style and

past life history. However, it should be because there are differences in thinking styles or self-construal that start from the surrounding environment in this case the cultural background can be a difference.

Alic, Ceric, & Habibovic (2018) based on the results of their research concluded that the differences in optimistic attitudes of each culture were due to several factors: family background despite having the same cultural background. Besides that, the level of empathy that individuals have and the sensitivity between cultures. Chang & Asakawa (2003) also in his research linking western and eastern cultures and produce that both have different levels of optimism but lead to self-criticism in both cultures.

But the pessimistic attitude raised by workers with these two cultures has a difference, where the p value obtained is 0.009. This occurs because of the emergence of negative events at work (Rose et al., 2008). The existence of negative events in the work due to the distribution of thoughts of anxiety or fear that comes from pressure for change that leads to pessimistic thinking (Leahy, 2002). But pessimism does not always lead to or come from negative things. One of the causes of pessimism arises because of low expectations and prepare for the risk of failure that occurs (žuzul, 2008).

Similar to Alic et al., (2018) related optimism that differences in pessimistic attitudes are influenced by differences in family background, level of empathy and inter-cultural sensitivity. Support for differences in optimistic attitudes departing from different cultures is thought to increase self-culture between (Chang & Asakawa, 2003). Pessimistic attitude based on the level of empathy leads to introverted individuals. Introverts are closely related to pessimistic attitudes, where when workers who have an introverted personality will emerge pessimistic (Mahasneh, Al-Zoubi, & Batayeneh, 2013).

Although linked to culture, gender is also one of the things that influence the occurrence of pessimism. Based on the results of previous studies it was found that the sex that influenced the emergence of pessimistic attitudes was the female sex (Mahasneh et al., 2013). Indirectly it can be concluded that individual differences without seeing culture are related to pessimism.

Based on various previous explanations that are optimistic that workers with a background in Javanese and non-Javanese culture have no differences seen from the value of 0.673. But data analysis also resulted in pessimistic differences between the two groups. In this study does not mean there is no shortage. The deficiencies obtained in this study are not seeing any gender differences, the existence of individual differences even though it is collided with a cultural background.

Conclusion

Keeping in mind that optimism is a thought but not a character of the individual. This study aims to see optimistic differences between workers with Javanese and non-Javanese cultural backgrounds. The conclusion that can be drawn from the research results is that there is

no optimistic difference between workers with Javanese and non-Javanese cultural backgrounds, in other words two groups of workers bring hope for themselves and lead to prosperity. While there are differences between the two groups of workers in seeing pessimists. As already stated that there are some deficiencies in conducting this research and for further researchers it is advisable to take into account other things in doing research such as seeing sex in others.

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