

RELIGIOUS COPING STRATEGY MANAGEMENT ON SOCIAL CULTURAL PRESSURE IN SINGLE MOTHER

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Abstract

Becomes a single parent for a woman is not an easy task. Being a single mother holds a very big responsibility because she has to take care of the children alone, work to meet their needs economically, and giving children the education they deserves, as well as having social responsibility as a member of the community. Single mother usually have to deal with a lot of responsibility within themselves, family and society and having lots of burden that cause them to have internal conflict and suffer from psychological pressure. They also have to face stigma from society, violence, satire and views of society based on myths, stereotypes, prejudices regarding on their status. To manage, reduce or eliminate these various pressures, the efforts made called religious coping strategies. The purpose of this study was to examine religious coping strategies carried out by single mothers. This study used a qualitative approach with five subjects to single parent, which are civil servants (PNS) in the field of education in Bali. Data collected by semi-structured interviews and document studies. The results of the study show that in a stressful situation, religious coping strategies management used by single mothers are highly dependent on individual needs, age and influence of cultural background. For this reason, individuals use religious coping strategy management by combining strategies: (1) Self-directing coping strategy, (2) Deferring coping strategy, and (3) Collaborative coping strategy.

Keywords : *Religious Coping Strategy Management, Socio-Cultural Pressures, Single Mothers.*

BACKGROUND

There is a phenomenon in our society nowadays, where single mother when they have to struggle and face their problem in their daily life the cope with it through praying. Being a single mother or a widow is a situation where every woman would like to avoid. It's a common sense for every woman for wanting to have a normal or complete family with husband and kids, but somehow it can be difficult to achieve.

Based on the observation and interview conducted to several woman (mother) which are single mother in Bali, they stated that society tends to give negative stereotype for them when they become a single mother, whether it's because of divorce or become a widow. Society also tends to give negative stereotype because single mother or widow choose to remarry or choose to focus on their career or find a job and not become a housewives instead. Single mother usually feels lonely, and find

it difficult to cope with a duty as a head of the family, taking care of her children or trying to fulfil the family economically. All complex problems faced by single mothers from negative perceptions of the community, feeling lonely, difficulties in carrying out their duties as head of the household, taking care of children, until problems in meeting economic needs for the family, become a source of complex stress in the lives of single mothers. (interview to single mother on February 27 2019).

Single parent usually portrayed as a strong woman, because she borne everything related to the household alone. Start from cleaning the house, taking care of the children and making a living by themselves. It is become even harder when a single parent becomes the backbone for raising their children (Layliyah, 2013: 89).The research results show that more than seventy percent of single parents experience by women. Increase in divorce rates, living together without marriage, increasing children out of wedlock, and increasingly free sexual relations have added to various household problems (Santrock, 2002:123).

From psychology perspective, there is a way to coping with this difficult situation for single mother using religious approach, known as coping religious method. Koenig (2004) mentioned that coping religious technique is a way where someone practically use their faith to facilitate the process of problem solving in preventing or alleviating the negative psychological impact of stressful situations and this helps individuals to adapt to pressing life situations. This religious coping technique involves the use of cognitive or behavioral strategies that are based on religious beliefs or practices to help manage emotional stress or individual physical discomfort.

This coping strategy views that there is a very large force in life, where the power is associated with the element of God(Wong & Wong, 2006).Religious coping technique often arises at critical moments / negative situations that are being experienced or that have been experienced by someone such as an accident, the death of the closest person, being hit by a critical illness, and failure to achieve a great desire where all these things will gives a stressful effect.The greater the stress experienced by someone, the greater the level of religion used to handle it (Ward, 2010).

Religious coping strategies tend to be used when an individual wants something that cannot be obtained, and finds himself unable to face reality.Therefore, the individual shifts his weaknesses to an infinite power in order to get the strength to deal with this reality. Ellison also found in his research that prayer is often used for coping related to the problems and crises of life experienced by individuals (Pargament, 1997).

From a number of studies, related to religious coping strategies concluded that the type of religious coping is most often used to overcome a number of negative conditions and events such as the loss or death of nearby people, accidents, poverty, failure, and various stressful conditions (Pargament, 1997). This proves that religious coping is effective in dealing with acute stressors.

The effectiveness of religious coping in overcoming problems is also proven by McMahon and Biggs (2012) in their research, showing that people with high levels of religiosity and spiritualism and using religious coping in their lives tend to be calmer and not easily experienced anxiety.However, due to differences in each person and the uniqueness of the problem at hand, the type and implementation of religious coping are used differently. According to Pargament (1997), there are three types of religious coping, namely self-directing, deferring, and collaborative, as well as two patterns (positive and negative).Every pattern and type of religious coping, according to Pargament has different approaches and methods.This indicates that religious coping is a multidimensional coping strategy with a different subareas.Different uses of religious coping in each person will produce different effects, both positive and negative.One example of the impact of religious coping can be feeling abandoned by God and feeling injustice, so that the person tend to feels more stressed than before.

The management of religious coping strategies used by single mothers is certainly different from one another, because they have different personalities, differences in problems or socio-cultural pressures, and different in perceived stressors.Until now, researchers still have not found much research especially in Bali that discusses the management of religious coping strategies in single mothers who works as PNS (civil servants) in the field of education in Bali.Based on this, the

researcher proposed a problem statement, "how is the management of religious coping strategies conducted by PNS (civil servants) single mothers who works in the education sector in Bali to overcome the problem of socio-cultural pressure".

RESEARCH METHOD

This research is a type of qualitative research because the results of the findings are not obtained through statistical procedures or other calculations and more require a series of words, not numbers (Bogdan & Taylor, 1992: 67). Qualitative research essentially uses natural settings, with the intention of interpreting phenomena that occur and are carried out by involving various existing methods (Williams in Moleong, 2004). Qualitative researchers also try to understand symptoms from respondents (Poerwandari, 2005), and tend to build relationships with research subjects, so they can see the world from the subject's point of view (Strauss & Corbin, 2015).

The approach used in this research is a multi-perspective approach namely phenomenology, psychological and sociological to reveal the management of religious coping strategies to socio-cultural pressure on single mothers in Bali, who are civil servants in the field of education. The subjects in this study were five single mothers who were selected by purposive sampling, whose voting technique was not taken randomly but was chosen using predetermined criteria or characteristics, namely single parent with civil servant occupation in the field of education (teacher), who have children living in one house and are willing to be informants. The reason for choosing the subject with these characteristics, because it is assumed that the subjects have very complex problems, where Balinese women are also part of the custom actors, and Balinese cultural traditions are sometimes still binding.

Data was collected by in-depth interview techniques (semi-interview) semi-structured and assisted with recording equipment, non-participation observation and document study. These three techniques are commonly used in qualitative research (Sukmadinata, 2013: 34). In this study the researcher himself was a key instrument. In order to obtain credible data, it is recorded as carefully and in detail as possible, documenting in full and neat collected data, and checking data again with researcher triangulation and method triangulation. Data analysis was carried out through data organization steps, coding and analysis, testing of expectations, and stages of interpretation. Reporting is written in descriptive narrative.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

1. Religious Coping Management Strategy

Management comes from the word "manage" which means: managing, managing, controlling, and trying. Management according to Terry is a process that consists of actions planning, organizing, mobilizing and controlling carried out to achieve the goals that have been set (Sagala, 2007: 128). So management means managing actions to achieve the set of goals.

While strategy is a procedure or alternatives at various stages or steps (Soekamto, 1993: 484). Jauch & Glueck (1999: 12), interpreting strategies as tactics, tips, the art of implementing activities to achieve an ultimate goal. So strategy means tactics, tips or procedures for implementing alternative activities to achieve the final goal.

Furthermore, coping, according to Lazarus and Folkman (1984), is all forms of effort, thoughts, and actions to overcome aversive situations (unpleasant situations) and full of pressure. Coping according to Lazarus and Folkman's view as a factor that determines human ability to make adjustments to stressful life events. Weiten and Lloyd argue that coping is an attempt to overcome, reduce or tolerate the threats and burdens of feelings created by stress (Hidayanti, 2013). So the way or behavior carried out by individuals to avoid or divert a stressful or stressful feeling of the heart is called coping.

While the coping strategy, according to Carlson (2007), is a plan that can be used in anticipation of situations that cause stress or in response to stress that is happening. Coping strategies

are also referred to as psychological defense responses, ie all efforts are either action-oriented or intrapsychic to manage the environment and internal demands and conflicts among them.

According to Lazarus and Cohen (1997) the purpose of doing coping is to reduce things that are harmful from environmental conditions and conditions, increase the possibility of recovery, resolve oneself with negative events found in real life, maintain emotional balance, continue satisfying relationships with others, and maintain a positive self-image. According to Carver coping strategies carried out by individuals are influenced by several components consisting of personality variables such as optimism, locus of control, neuroticism, self-esteem and extraversion. (in Taylor, 2003: 221). Lazarus & Folkman (1985) classifies the coping strategies used, namely emotional focused coping which is a strategy to relieve individual emotions caused by stressors, without trying to change a situation that is a direct source of stress, and problem focused coping is a coping strategy to deal with problems directly through actions aimed at eliminating or changing the sources of stress, support and input given by others can help individuals in solving problems.

Furthermore, religious coping is one of the coping methods using religious aspects with significant impacts on life that are commonly found in various settings, one of which is for single mothers when facing socio-cultural pressures that disturb them psychologically. Religious coping is a coping strategy that involves religion in solving problems by increasing religious rituals.

2. Single Parent/Mother

In a family where only a mother or father plays a role without the support or assistance of a husband or wife figure, it is referred to as a single parent (Yenjeli, 2010: 1). Sager argues that single parents are parents who individually raise their children without the presence, support and responsibility of their partners (Duva, et. Al. 1985: 362).

Single parent is a condition where a woman has two roles together, namely as a mother who is her main position and also as a father, it can happen because of separation or death and then decide not to remarry and then raise her children alone. Acting as a single parent is certainly not easy, because it runs daily life alone without the presence of a spouse. For a woman who is a single parent, solitude is felt heavy. They don't have anyone to exchange ideas and share the burden with, they must now face it themselves (Ahsyari, 2015).

As in the subject of this study, the subject (NP.S.), subject (NW.S.), and subject (A.A.T.) who must bear as a single mother because they were left alone by their husband death.

The subject (NP.S) her husband suddenly died of a heart attack, subject's husband (NW.S) her husband finally died because he had long suffered from kidney disease which must always went through dialysis, while subject (A.A.T) husband died of stroke. This is as expressed by Papalia, et al. (2008) that the death of a husband causes women to experience deep grief and try to overcome their own problems by raising children, fulfilling all the needs of the school and the household economy.

Different with subject (NM.K) and subject (M.Ay.) who experienced disappointment and hurt because their husband was not responsible and decided to remarry another woman and leave the subject with children and live in other districts and provinces (interview, 23-02-19). Anger and hurt were felt because the marriage was actually approved by the in-laws. As stated Papalia, et al. (2008), that separation made his wife experience profound disappointment, a crisis of self-confidence, trauma due to separation and experiencing many problems with the environment and family.

Based on the story of the five subjects above, that they "Often feel anxious about their future and children where there is no more support from a partner, they feel lonely and begin to feel a loss of hope for something that has been planned with their partner when they still live together" (Interviews, 20, 21, 25, 27, and 30-02-19). This certainly makes it difficult for the single mother, especially economically, her husband does not leave a guarantee of life for his ex-wife and children as experienced by subject (NW.S.) and subject (M.Ay). Even though they became civil servants (teachers), their income was not enough to pay for their children's schooling, to eat, for themselves, not to

mention social, religious, Hindu holidays and Hindu customs in the community. The problem of Balinese women who are single mothers is very complex and dimensional.

As Turner (1990) stated that common problems that are usually faced by single mothers are stress and health problems, overload role, decreased income, declining standard of living, solitude and isolation, negative views of society, and feeling trapped in their situation. The public's view of changing status as a single mother is inseparable from negative imagery, public gossip, and the existence of some people who consider single parent status to be a bad thing so they do not respect them (Akmalia, 2003). This is experienced by subject (N.P.S.), subject (A.A.T) and subject (M.Ay) as they say: "I am often highlighted by the community, especially mothers who are always suspicious of my appearance. They were afraid that their husband would glance and will be physically attracted with me. I was often gossiped which making my life uncomfortable because it was ridiculed by incited neighbors. I feel the socio-cultural pressure is really hard." (Interviews, 02 and 05-03-19).

Being a single mother has greater responsibility because she has to fulfill the psychological needs of her children, which includes providing security, giving love and attention and also fulfilling the physical needs of their children, including clothing, education, health and other related to material needs, which means that a single mother must be able to divide their time between homework and outside the house so that children can feel the love of their parents and also able to fulfill their children life needs. But sometimes there is internal conflicts that occurred when single mothers have to divide their time between their mothers as well as fathers for their children. This can happen because the mother who takes care of all household needs and on the other hand also has to work to support her children (Akmalia, 2013).

The roles and responsibilities that must be felt by single mothers to themselves and their children are certainly not an easy things, this can cause single mothers to be depressed by their new responsibilities. The perceived pressure from various things can be a source of stress. Single parent who is very hard thinking about who will be responsible for their health and well-being, children and other family members (Hashim, Azmawati, Endut, 2015).

A single mother is often faced with assumptions from a cornering environment. Moreover, in times when the environment is impartial, sometimes a mother is afraid if it can affect the development of her children, so that a strong attitude is needed towards every challenge of her life as an example for her children. For mothers who are not prepared for their solitude, they may be feel heavier at heart later on to answer children's questions about their father's whereabouts when they grow up. The amount of anxiety and worry makes the mother feel fear, loneliness and distress so that sometimes single mothers experience physical disorders.

In an effort to try to protect the feelings of children, single mothers were forced to lie to their children by saying their father was out of town or for various reasons that impressed his father to leave for a while. But when the mother is ready, they have to give the child an explanation / understanding of their father's whereabouts.

Single mothers in continuing their lives have succeeded in passing without a life partner; but not a few are not successful. Many women are weak when they become single parents, such as forcing them to get married again so that they are far from the bad view of the environment, experiencing mental and physical disorders, being involved in various escapees, such as drugs and alcohol and even abandoned their children.

Feelings of despair and loss of spirit often haunt the single mother. When a severe ordeal is experienced a person will try to withdraw from the situation and experience stress. But all these things are not found in individuals who begin to live their days sincerely and they choose to say that they are better resilient and accepting rather than having to blame their situation. The ability of individuals to deal with various life events is needed by single parent mothers, one of them is hardiness (toughness, fortitude).

When single mothers feel depressed about the problems they faced, and they do not have hardiness in themselves, then the burden of life will be felt more severe, and this results to problems

in the family and lack of love for their children. In order to avoid undesirable things, single mothers need to take action to deal with the problem with coping strategies, one of which is religious coping strategies.

3. Management of the Religious Coping Strategy for Single mothers

Based on the narrative of the single mothers who are became the subjects of this study, when they experience problems and feel pressured by the social environment, where they are unable to overcome their own problems or help from others, the only way they cope is by praying, or pray to merajan (family temple). This method is called a religious coping strategy, where problems are overcome by religious methods, praying, begging and getting closer to God.

Religious coping strategies tends to be used when individuals want something that cannot be obtained from humans, and find themselves unable to face reality. So that in this case the individual diverts his weaknesses to an unlimited power in order to get the strength to face this reality through prayers. The use of religious activities such as prayer is not only done by normal individuals, but individuals with certain pressures, including illness, the majority also tend to use prayer as coping (Tepper et al., 2001).

The most common religious elements or religions are often used by many people to deal with problems that they find it difficult to bear alone. That is, religion or religion is a source of coping in the face of a crisis. Praying and trusting in God are seen as the most common things often found as a source of religious coping.

Subject (NP.S.), subject (NW.S) and subject (AAT) stated that "If they surrender to God (Ida Sanghyang Widhi) when they are unable to overcome the problems and social pressures they face, then they are sure that God will protect them "(interviews, 02, 03, and 07-03-19).As stated by Pargament (1997), that in praying individuals who wear religious coping will believe that God has a purpose for the disaster that befell them.Religion provides guidance, support, and hope for someone, and provides an atmosphere of peace and quiet (Rinasti, 2012). This is important, given the psychological burdens caused by the socio-cultural pressures experienced by single mothers in the above subjects.

People who have strong spiritual beliefs usually have life satisfaction. Religious practices such as prayer and meditation can increase the sense of control over stressful events.Religion gives a sense of purpose and meaningfulness to events that cannot be understood / unexpected.This is acknowledged by the five informants (the subject of this study) who summarized their statement with the following formulations: "When feelings of stress are felt, and they are unable to overcome them alone or with others, the only place they went to complain the safest is to God (ancestors) in Merajan (family temple). In their talk they conveyed all the feelings of being depressed sometimes accompanied by tears of hope they begged so that the problem could be solved "(interview dated 20, 21, 25, 27, and 30-02-19). According to them by this religious coping method, at least they feel calmer, and they believe that God (his ancestors) will help them".

Based on the description above, religious coping is divided into three types, namely: (1) Self-directing, is a method of religious coping by focusing and relying on oneself rather than God. Focusing on yourself does not mean forgetting God, only the intensity is different.(2) Deferring, tends to delay and surrender everything to God passively. Then (3) collaborative which is a combination of self-directing and deferring where individuals and God become partners.In this coping, individuals and God work together actively to solve problems, as do the subjects of this study.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the study, it can be concluded that the single parent causal factors of the research were due to being left behind by the husband death, namely the subject (NP.S.), subject (NW.S.), and subject (AAT), and another reason is because the husband remarried by leaving his wife and children. There are various problems that are experienced by single parent mothers in the

field of education (teachers) in Bali in living their life without the presence of a husband, including social problems such as the existence of some people who demean their status, the existence of differences in behavior from the society when their husbands is still alive and after they passed away. Economic problems were felt to be heavy because there was a decline in family inclusion which was only produced by single mothers as teachers, the cost of education which was quite expensive, health and recreation were no longer enjoyed as before. Social cultural responsibility, Hindu customs and Hinduism must be undertaken alone without being able to share the duties and responsibilities with the husband as before, both as members of the traditional community system (banjar) and as a Hindu custom. The weight of the burden that must be borne by the single mother produces the same coping, but there are also coping that differ between subjects with each other. The selected religious coping strategies to solve their problems by combining three strategies, namely: (1) Self-directing religious strategy coping, namely by focusing and relying on oneself rather than God. Focusing on yourself does not mean forgetting God, only the intensity is different; (2) Deferring religious strategy coping, tends to delay and surrender everything to God passively; and by way of (3) Collaborative coping strategy which is a combination of self-directing religious strategy coping and deferring religious strategy coping where individuals and God become solution partners focusing on problems. But of the three strategies, the third strategy is mostly carried out by single parent mothers, because it is based on belief, it is also felt the safest place to use for ranting about their problem.

Based on the results of these studies, it is suggested that single mothers can share stories or exchange ideas with children, with family members and with people who are trusted, so that psychological burdens, will be felt more socially. For other researchers it is recommended to conduct further research on things that have not been reached in this study.

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