

An Overview of the Meaning of Life for Widows through Photovoice Study in Kupang City

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Abstract. The event of losing a spouse will be even heavier when seen by women. This made a woman have to assume a new status as a widow. This changing status and role led to major changes in his life. A person who experiences disappointing events in life will feel the emptiness in the meaning of life. And creating a meaningful life is the responsibility of the individual and cannot be entrusted to others because she must feel and experiences it. This study aims to obtain a picture of the meaning of life for widows by using a voice photo study with thematic analysis. Participants who are members of 10 widows with divorce and death who are in Kupang, Indonesia. The method in this research consists of the validity of the data through the credibility test (member check) and the data dependability test (audit trail). The results of the thematic analysis show that the meaning of life for a widow is related to the following four things, namely the dynamics of the meaning of spiritual life, the risk of being a widow, the challenges of being a widow, and support for a widow.

Keywords: *The meaning of life, Widows with divorce, Photovoice*

Abstrak. Peristiwa kehilangan pasangan hidup akan terasa lebih berat ketika dialami oleh perempuan. Hal ini membuat seorang perempuan harus menyanggah status baru sebagai janda. Perubahan status dan peran ini menyebabkan perubahan-perubahan besar dalam hidupnya. Seseorang yang mengalami peristiwa yang mengecewakan di dalam hidup akan merasakan kekosongan dalam makna hidupnya. Dan menciptakan kebermaknaan hidup menjadi tanggung jawab individu dan tidak dapat dipercayakan kepada orang lain sebab dia sendiri yang merasakan dan mengalaminya. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk memperoleh gambaran kebermaknaan hidup pada janda dengan menggunakan studi photovoice dengan analisis tematik. Partisipan yang terlibat berjumlah 10 orang janda cerai mati yang berada di Kupang, Indonesia. Metode dalam penelitian ini terdiri dari uji keabsahan data dilakukan melalui uji kredibilitas (*member check*) dan uji dependabilitas data (*audit trail*). Hasil analisis tematik menunjukkan bahwa makna hidup pada janda berkaitan dengan empat hal berikut yakni dinamika makna hidup spiritual, resiko menjadi janda, tantangan menjadi janda dan dukungan kepada janda.

Kata kunci: *Kebermaknaan Hidup, Janda Cerai Mati, Photovoice*

Article history:

Received: 5 March 2021

Received in revised form: 13 April 2021

Accepted: 13 April 2021

Available online : 8 June 2021

Introduction

The Meaning of Life

According to Frankl, the meaning of life is a process of discovering the essence that is very meaningful for the individual. The search for the meaning of life for each individual is different, this is the basic reason for each individual, where the state of life is full of meaning that makes individuals feel happier, more valuable, and has a noble purpose to fulfill (Bastaman, 2007).

Frankl (2019) explains that the meaning of life is something that is considered important, true and desirable and provides special value for someone, eating life is also personal and unique. This is because individuals are free to determine their way of finding and creating meaning. So the discovery and creation of the meaning of life is the responsibility of the individual himself and cannot be left to others, because only the individual is capable of feeling and experiencing the meaning of his life.

Widows with Divorce

A widow means a woman who is no longer married because of a divorce or because her husband has died (Big Indonesian Dictionary, 2020). Widows who are divorced are women who do not have a partner and have a status of solitude because they are separated from their husbands because they have died. The status of a widow is not a favorable position for women biologically, psychologically, or sociologically. This condition often invites a bargaining position when dealing with men. Widows are sometimes positioned as helpless, weak, and do not need to be pitied so that in a patriarchal socio-cultural condition there is often justice against women, especially widows (Listya, 2011).

Based on the definition above, it can be concluded that a widow with a divorce is a woman who does not have a partner and a status of solitude because she is separated from her husband because she is dead. Furthermore, the author will describe the characteristics of the meaning of life, the sources of the meaning of life, the meaning of life, the meaningful components of life, and the dynamics of the meaning of life for widows.

Characteristics of the Meaning of Life

To get a clearer picture, it is necessary to understand some of the special characteristics of the meaning of life according to Bastaman (2007):

1. The meaning of life is unique, personal, and temporary. That is, what someone considers meaningful does not necessarily mean to others. What is considered important or meaningful today may not mean the same to that person at another time. So, the meaning of life and what is meaningful to someone is special, not the same as other people, and can change from time to time (Bastaman, 2007). Frankl (2019) says that what is important is not the meaning of life in general but the specific meaning of a person's life at a certain moment.
2. The meaning of life is specific and real. That is, the meaning of life can be found in experiences and real-life every day. It does not need to be linked to idealistic goals, academic achievements, or the results of creative philosophical musings (Bastaman, 2007).
3. The meaning of life provides guidelines and direction for the activities undertaken so that the meaning of life is challenging for someone to fulfill. Once the meaning of life is found by a person, it is as if he is called to implement and fulfill it. The activities carried out have become more focused (Bastaman, 2007).

The Sources of the Meaning of Life

The meaning of life can be found in life itself, Frankl explained that the search for meaning in life is one of the human characteristics. The meaning of life can be found in both pleasant and difficult circumstances. There are activities in life that potentially contain values that enable a person to find meaning in life (Bastaman, 2007), namely:

1. Creative Values (creative values), namely the activities of working, creating, creating, and carrying out duties and obligations as well as possible with full responsibility. Through work and, work we can find the meaning of life and live life. However, the work in question is only a means of allowing people to discover and develop the meaning of life, the meaning of life lies not in work but the person concerned.
2. Experiential Values (values of appreciation), namely belief and appreciation of the values of truth, virtue, beauty, faith, religion, and love. Some people find the meaning of their life from the religion they believe in and some spend most of their age pursuing certain arts. Love makes a person live a meaningful feeling in his life. Loving and being loved makes a person feel that his life is full of happy life experiences.
3. Attitudinal Values (attitude values), namely to accept with full fortitude, patience, and courage all forms of suffering that cannot be avoided. Humans cannot change circumstances, but humans can change their attitudes in dealing with every situation. The right attitude can still be developed. Under any circumstances, the meaning of life can still be found, provided one can take the right attitude in dealing with it.

Apart from the values above, other values can make life more meaningful, namely hope. Hope is the belief that good things will happen or change in the future. Hope (although not necessarily the case) provides a new opportunity,

solution, or goal that can make someone optimistic and enthusiastic (Bastaman, 2007).

Living a Meaningful Life

Bastaman (2007) explains that those who live a meaningful life show a lively and passionate style of life and are far from feeling empty in their daily lives. The purpose of life, both short-term and long-term goals, is clear to them so that the activities carried out are more focused. They can adapt to their environment but still determine for themselves what is right to be done and are aware that the meaning of life can be found in pleasant situations and times of suffering. For them, the ability to set personal goals and find meaning in life is essential to fulfilling responsibly. Living a meaningful life is a gateway to the satisfaction and happiness of life.

Components of the Meaning of Life

According to Bastaman, six components determine the success of the change from living a meaningless life to meaning. The six components include:

1. Self-understanding (self-insight), namely the emergence of an awareness of one's shortcomings and a strong desire to change this. Individuals have the right to make decisions and attitudes for themselves, regarding the various events they face.
2. The meaning of life, namely important and very meaningful values for a person's personal life, functions as a life goal that must be fulfilled and directs his activities. If this is successfully fulfilled it will cause a person to feel a meaningful life and in the end, will cause a feeling of happiness.
3. Changing attitudes (changing attitudes), namely changes from initially being negative and then changing to positive and more appropriate in facing problems and being able to make good decisions.

4. Self-commitment, which is a person's commitment to the meaning of life that is found and the purpose of life that is set. A strong commitment will lead individuals to achieve a deeper meaning in life.
5. Directed activities, namely efforts made consciously in the form of positive personal potential development (talents, abilities, skills) and the use of interpersonal relationships to support the achievement of meaning and life goals. This directed activity aims to develop the potential that exists in the individual and direct the potential that the individual has to find the meaning of life.
6. Social support, which is the presence of other people who are familiar, trustworthy, and always willing to assist when needed.

The six components above can be grouped into three groups based on the source of these components, namely:

1. Personal component groups (self-understanding & attitude change)
2. The social component group (social support)
3. Group of value components (the meaning of life, self-commitment, directed activities)

The components of the success of the meaning of life and the dimensions of the meaning of life are the benchmarks for achieving the meaning of a person's life according to the characteristics possessed by that individual. According to Bastaman (2007), several stages are needed to achieve the success of the meaning of life, namely:

1. The stage of suffering, namely the tragic experience of living life without meaning. Besides, a tragic event in a person's life can lead to a meaningless life which is marked by feelings of emptiness, apathy, boredom feeling that they no longer have a purpose in life.

2. Self-acceptance stage, namely the individual begins to accept what is happening in his life, self-understanding, and changes in attitude. The emergence of self-awareness is usually driven by a variety of factors. For example, self-reflection, consultation with experts, getting the views of someone, praying, worship, learning from others, and so on.
3. The stage of discovering the meaning of life, which is marked by the individual's awareness of the valuable values that are very important in his life. The things that are considered valuable and important may be in the form of creative values, values of living, values of attitude, and values of expectations.
4. Meaning realization stage, namely individuals will experience enthusiasm and passion in their lives, then consciously commit themselves (self-commitment) and carry out real activities that are more focused to fulfill the meaning of life.
5. A meaningful life stage, namely success in finding and fulfilling the meaning of life will cause a person to feel meaning and in the end will lead to a sense of happiness.

Living conditions are meaningless (the meaningless life) in connection with certain tragic events experienced (the tragic event) arise self-awareness (self-insight) to change the condition of the self for the better. Based on self-understanding and the discovery of the meaning of life, there has been a change in attitude (changing attitude) in dealing with problems. After that, usually the enthusiasm for life and passion for life increases, then consciously commit themselves to carry out various real activities that are more focused (directed activities) to fulfill the found meaning of life and the goals that have been set. And if this stage is successfully passed, it will lead to changes in living conditions for the better and develop a meaningful life with happiness (happiness).

The Dynamics of Meaning in a Widow's Life

Setyowati (2014) stated that losing a partner is a significant life event that has a strong impact on social and personal life on adjustment, health, and life satisfaction. When she loses a spouse, a widow must learn to adjust to the loss of a partner, to manage day-to-day decisions and responsibilities that were previously managed together. A widow must take on a new role such as earning a living or a leadership role in life.

Research conducted by Setyowati (2014) on six women who were widows in the Masaran sub-district explained that widows have different meanings of life, where the meaning of life is interpreted by a widow with feelings of pleasure and enjoying her daily life. As for the widow who interprets her life by seeing that life as a good life, always accepts her life's destiny, feels life is fun, accepts sincerely, does not give up on current conditions, keeps trying to live better, and keeps working for the happiness of herself, her children and family. Besides, the problems faced in life make life more meaningful, life without a partner does not make the subject give up and give up on existing living conditions.

Previous research

Previous research related to the meaning of life has been carried out, including:

1. Setyowati (2014) discusses the meaning of life for widows, in which this research is a descriptive study with a qualitative approach with a total of six partitions and has characteristics, namely widows who are divorced, widows have children and do not have children, workers, and housewives. This study aims to understand the meaning of life for widows. This study uses qualitative methods, namely using data collection methods by interview and observation. The results of this study indicate that the background of widowed women does not affect the factors regarding the meaning of life. The meaning of life is felt by a woman who is a widow based on the experiences and events experienced during this life, including being able to

accept the current circumstances and conditions of life, sincerely not complaining, always being grateful, always getting closer to Allah, and living a life full of happiness with family.

2. Prasetyawati, Sri, and Ika (2016) conducted research related to the relationship between self-efficacy and social support with meaningful life in PLWHA which aims to determine self-efficacy in PLWHA, a description of social support for PLWHA, a description of the meaning of life in PLWHA, the relationship between self-efficacy with the meaning of life for PLWHA, the relationship between social support and meaningfulness of life for PLWHA, and the relationship between self-efficacy, social support and meaningfulness of life for PLWHA. This study used a quantitative approach, using a descriptive correlational research design and multiple linear analysis. The research subjects were thirty people with characteristics that were diagnosed as HIV / AIDS sufferers, male and female, were adult patients (aged 25-35 years), had been diagnosed with HIV / AIDS for about five years, and were hospitalized patients, the road at RSSA Malang. The results of this study indicate that the self-efficacy of PLWHA is in the high category, the social support received by PLWHA is in the high category, the meaningfulness of PLWHA's life is in the meaningful life category, there is a significant positive relationship between self-efficacy and meaningfulness of life, there is a significant positive relationship. between social support and meaningfulness of life and there is a significant positive relationship between self-efficacy and social support and meaningfulness of life.
3. Putri, Ifdil, Yusri, and Frischa (2020) discussed the profile of the meaning of the life of truant students by surveying 800 adolescent respondents aged 15-22 years in Jakarta, Yogyakarta, Medan, Surabaya, and Makassar. The research method used is a literature study with data collection techniques used, namely observation and interviews. The result of this research is that students who play truant have a low meaning in life. This shows that the

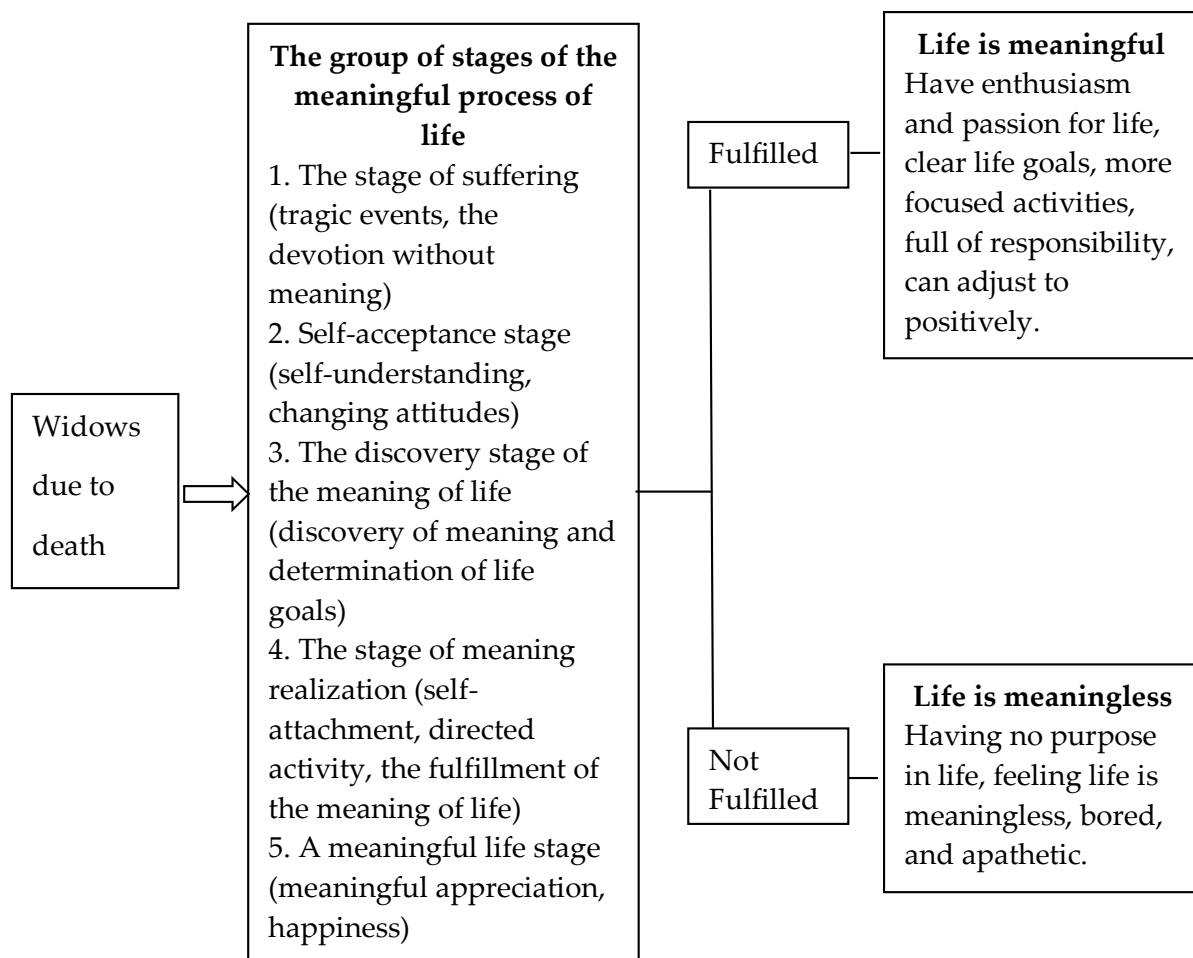
meaning of life is very important for students to have good behavior that aims for their future. The provision of counseling services by guidance and counseling teachers in schools can help students to have meaning in life.

4. Djudiyah (2019) conducted research related to avoidance coping and the meaning of life in the elderly at the Nursing Home. The purpose of this study is to determine the relationship between avoidance coping strategies and meaningfulness of life in the elderly at the Nursing Home. The research data was collected by distributing the avoidance coping scale and the meaningfulness scale of life to 25 elderly living in the Mojopahit Nursing Home, Mojokerto Regency, East Java. The elderly who were selected as respondents in this study were determined by the purposive sampling technique. The results of the analysis show that avoidance coping does not have a significant relationship with the meaning of life in the elderly in nursing homes
5. Nalle, Nikita, and Christiana (2020) conducted a study related to the description of the psychological well-being of the widowed elderly which aims to determine the description of psychological well-being in elderly widows after the death of their partner and what factors affect their welfare. psychological well-being in elderly widows after the death of their partner. This research was conducted on elderly widows using a phenomenological qualitative approach. Data were analyzed using interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA). The location of this research is located in Kupang, East Nusa Tenggara. This study was successful in identifying aspects of psychological well-being. Both participants were able to accept their condition as elderly widows and overcome their bad experiences in the past, by getting social support from children, participating in positive activities outside the home, and continuing to build a relationship with God. The death of a spouse in an elderly widow was initially difficult for both

participants. But then you can feel psychological well-being, although not completely.

Based on the research description described above, the author has not found a discussion about the description of the meaning of life for widows using the photovoice technique which was carried out in Kupang City. Research with this method will be carried out by taking pictures and photos by participants who will then be interviewed regarding the reasons for choosing the image or photo and what the meaning of the image and photo can describe the participants' meaning of the picture the meaning of their life. Research related to the description of the meaning of life in widows with divorce has not been found using the photovoice technique in Kupang City, so this study is different and unique compared to previous studies.

Framework of Thinking



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