

## SUBJECTIVE WELL-BEING OF THE TENGGER TRIBE OF RANUPANI VILLAGE

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### ABSTRACT

*The main issue raised is how the subjective well-being of this community is influenced by unique cultural ties and traditional values, which are often overlooked in economic-based welfare measurements. This study aims to explore the subjective well-being of the Tengger Tribe community in Ranupani Village, East Java, which reflects the balance between material and non-material aspects. With a phenomenological approach and qualitative methods, this study uncovers the meaning of subjective well-being through in-depth interviews and observations of six key informants. The results show that subjective well-being in the Tengger Tribe community includes life satisfaction obtained from farming activities, sufficient income, availability of free time, and the application of traditional values such as Tri Hita Karana and the teachings of Bakti Marang Guru Papat. Spiritual ties, social solidarity, and harmony with nature also become the main pillars in creating well-being. The implication of this study is the need for local culture-based policies to support indigenous peoples' multidimensional well-being.*

**Keywords:** Subjective Well-being, Tengger Tribe, Phenomenology, Tri Hita Karana, Ranupani Village.

### INTRODUCTION

In simple terms, subjective well-being is often associated with how a person feels and thinks about their living conditions (Diener & Sim, 2024; Muñoz & Rentería, 2023), usually defined by life satisfaction (Smith et al., 1989). In various literatures, the definition of subjective well-being focuses on how a person assesses his or her own life, including in assessing life satisfaction and happiness (Mad et al., 2021; Paralta et al., 2023). Various definitions of subjective well-being have been put forward in psychology and social (Dasch-Yee, 2020; Dolan et al., 2008). Previous research noted that a country's progress and increase in human development is closely related to economic indicators such as income, poverty, and economic growth (Casau et al., 2024; Maponya et al., 2024). Research in economics states that income is

significantly related to welfare. High income is directly proportional to better living facilities, and leads to well-being (Lai et al., 2020; L. E. Park et al., 2021; Quispe-Torreblanca et al., 2021). However, economic or income indicators are not enough to represent the development of human development in a country (Fletcher, 2016; Kuykendall et al., 2018). The results of the study also showed that the increase in income was not proportional to the increase in happiness in America. The same thing was also found by Diener et al., (2015) that rapid economic growth in several decades is not in line with the improvement of the quality of life. From some of these studies, experts realized the importance of measuring well-being in different ways, which are not just based on income (Decancq & Schokkaert, 2016; Himmler et al., 2020; N. Park et al., 2004; Satsangi et al., 2024)

Subjective welfare is a number of satisfactions obtained by a person from consuming the income received (Gowdy, 2005; Rambe et al., 2008), welfare is shaped by society through social interaction and is relative. Subjective Well-Being focuses more on the evaluation of individuals towards their lives (Chattu et al., 2020; Stadler et al., 2022). The evaluation referred to in this case includes cognitive and affective aspects (Ariati, 2010). This is reinforced by (Dewi & Nasywa, 2019), who says that subjective well-being is how individuals evaluate their lives. Subjective well-being involves the evaluation of two components, namely cognitive and affective. A high level of subjective well-being is characterized by cognitive evaluation, namely in the form of high life satisfaction (Hariyono et al., 2017) and affective evaluation in the form of high positive affect and low negative affect.

Preliminary findings from the researchers' observations in Ranupani Village show that the majority of the Tengger people live a simple but fulfilling life (Ismail & Hadi Al Asy ari, 2018; Rahayu et al., 2019). Their daily lives are filled with farming activities, attachment to traditional values, and harmonious relationships with the natural environment. In this context, their well-being depends not only on economic measures but also on cultural and spiritual factors (Charan et al., 2020; Hiratsuka et al., 2021; Udayanga, 2021). This shows a gap with previous welfare theories that emphasized economic indicators alone (Fletcher, 2016). Therefore, this research is important to fill the theoretical gap by exploring subjective well-being as a multidimensional concept involving material and non-material aspects.

The majority of Ranupani residents work as farmers. The work of farmers is the main work of the Tengger Tribe people in meeting their living needs. Growing crops on land that has a slope of 45 degrees, the Tengger people have a fairly high work ethic. The Tengger tribe, as one of the indigenous ethnic groups of East Java, in the village of Ranupani on the slopes of Semeru has a unique cultural and traditional richness. Their lives are closely related to nature and belief in ancestors has formed a distinctive identity. Subjective well-being, which is contained in feelings of happiness and satisfaction with life, is a relevant concept to understand the quality of life of the Tengger people. Subjective well-being for the Tengger people is not only limited to fulfilling material needs. Spiritual attachment to Mount Bromo, harmony with the environment, and a sense of community are the main factors that affect their happiness. Moral and spiritual values such as mutual

cooperation, deliberation, arts and ceremonies also contribute significantly to the subjective welfare of the Tengger Tribe. Despite facing various challenges, the Tengger people show extraordinary cultural resilience. They have the ability to adapt to changing times while still retaining ancestral values. Based on the thinking and results of initial observations, this study wants to reveal the subjective welfare of the Tengger Tribe in Ranupani Village.

Several relevant previous studies have tried to examine subjective welfare in East Java. One of them is from a study entitled "Psychology of Businessmen and Subjective Welfare; The Upheaval of Strategic Management of MSMEs for Livestock and Agricultural Products in East Java in Facing Business Dynamics", implies that subjective welfare in the MSME sector can be achieved with the belief in the success of businessmen (Suryawan et al., 2024). Subjective welfare has also been researched in Madura with a focus on ethnic women with early marriage (Bawono, 2020). As a result, they can still achieve subjective well-being. Meanwhile, in other areas, (Ngangi et al., 2018) in their research said that subjective welfare also involves the contribution of women in which supports the economic welfare of families in the village by participating in an ecotourism business. Quantitatively, it is also known that there is a negative relationship between subjective welfare when associated with economic coping (Sahariantono et al., 2022). In the discussion of traditional communities, there is research that examines the relationship between traditional culture and subjective welfare, namely "Community Subjective Welfare: Conceptualization of the Welfare of the Traditional Community of East Sumba" As a result, subjective welfare is formed at the community level and not at the individual level (Sahariantono et al., 2022).

With the context of existing research, it can be known that there is a research gap in the form of no research that thoroughly examines subjective welfare with various cultures and traditional values, especially the Tengger Tribe in Ranupani Village in Lumajang, East Java. This gap is essential to be filled to strengthen the empirical evidence of the concept of subjective well-being with different population characteristics. This study offers novelty in a qualitative context through a phenomenological approach to understand how the Tengger people interpret their subjective well-being based on unique local values.

The main contribution of this research is to be able to strengthen the theoretical understanding of objective welfare by enriching empirical evidence in related areas so as to expand knowledge for researchers. In particular, this research has a crucial contribution to the relevant local governments as one of the considerations for formulating more effective policies to empower the welfare of the community with a unique local culture.

## RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses an inductive approach with qualitative methods and phenomenological strategies, which aims to reduce the experience of a phenomenon into a description that explains the universal essence of the life of the Tengger people. The inductive approach was chosen because this research started from empirical facts found by researchers in the field. In addition, the

approach is effective in exploring the deep meaning of community experiences (Ginanjari et al., 2024; Mäcklin, 2021; van Manen & Adams, 2009), namely the Tengger Tribe regarding their subjective well-being. Through in-depth study using qualitative methods, the main focus is on the objectivity of the phenomenon as well as the thoughts and behavioral attitudes of the research subjects. The results of this study will reveal the categories of meaning given by the research subjects to their lives, social environment, and values that apply in the Tengger Tribe community, especially in Ranupani Village, Lumajang Regency.

The target or subject of this research is some of the Tengger Tribe of Ranupani Village, Lumajang Regency and the village head (Alm.) Subjects are randomly taken, but through observation and several times of direct communication. The informants in this study were 6 (six) people, all of whom had their main profession as farmers and some had side professions other than farmers. The key informants in this study are village office workers and community leaders of the Tengger Tribe of Ranupani Village.

Data collection is predominantly carried out through in-depth interviews and observation techniques. Interviews are conducted individually and sometimes in groups selling in the rest area or huddling in front of the house in the afternoon. Observations were made when they were carrying out farming activities, as well as when the informants carried out routine activities to manage the household. Observation as a complementary data collection technique was carried out in order to match the results of the interviews with the daily economic behavior of the people of Ranupani Tengger Village. Meanwhile, the study of documents is used to obtain supporting data, so that efficiency in data collection can be carried out.

Data analysis was also conducted using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA), which emphasizes on in-depth interpretation of individual experiences in their social and cultural contexts. This method is suitable for revealing in detail how the informant interprets his personal and social world by emphasizing the individual's personal perception or opinion about events or objects. IPA tries to understand "what" from the participant's point of view to be able to stand in their position. "Understanding" in this case has two meanings, namely understanding-interpretation in the sense of identifying or empathizing and the second meaning of understanding in the sense of trying to interpret. Science emphasizes meaning-formation from both the participant and the researcher side so that cognition becomes the central analysis, this means that there is an interesting theoretical alliance with the cognitive paradigm that is often used in contemporary psychology that discusses mental processes.

Triangulation is carried out to increase the validity of the data (Meydan & Akkaş, 2024; Nightingale, 2019). This is through three main approaches: 1) Triangulation of Data Sources: Data obtained from interviews with key informants, such as village heads, community leaders, and farmers, are compared and confirmed to find the suitability of the finding patterns; 2) Triangulation Methods: The researcher combines the results of in-depth interviews, direct observations in the field, and documentation studies. Observations were made while the informants were active in the field, while the documentation study included supporting literature and local records; 3)

Triangulation Theory: The findings of this study are compared with the theory of subjective well-being by (Diener et al., 2015) and the concept of culture-based economics as proposed by (Gowdy, 2005). This helps to strengthen the interpretation that the subjective welfare of the Tengger community in Ranupani Village is influenced by interrelated material and non-material aspects. With this triangulation, the data collected has higher validity and can be trusted as the basis for interpreting the research results.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the results of the research, subjective well-being according to (Diener et al., 2015) when measured based on life satisfaction refers to cognitive assessment based on life with criteria set by the community itself. If reviewed based on analysis, the life satisfaction of the Tengger people can be examined based on material and non-material.

### Material Aspects

#### *Feel happy with the activities carried out*

One of the feelings of happiness that appears when they do activities is when working. Jobs in Ranupani Village are limited when compared to the opportunity to work on the middle or lower slopes. The main jobs carried out were farming and trading. There are other activities that can be done when natural conditions are not problematic, but in 2023 the condition of Mount Semeru which is on alert makes the climb closed. This situation further narrows the opportunity to work in other fields (becoming a potter). However, even though the unfortunate situation occurred and they could only work in the fields as their main job, the Tengger people still felt happy. Because their purpose in life is to be grateful for the condition of their natural wealth so that they work with joy, it will be even more difficult if they do not work because even though the type of work is small, they feel happy. Their minds are simple and think that working in the fields is a pleasant job when compared to the work of office workers who occupy a lot of minds. In fact, activities in working in the fields involve children (Prima et al., 2023) and introduce them to the children of the Tengger Tribe from the age of 6. Children have gone to the fields to help their parents in planting crops according to their abilities (Masithoh et al., 2016). So, without coercion, the children of the Tengger Tribe have prepared their personal needs when they are going to the fields.

*"... Uwong, sing metu teka kene, Uwong Bodo...."(MN)*

*"Jadi walaupun kecil ya pake sepatu boot ya pake yang penting kita kalo kerja aman itu seperti apa. ya pake topi, ya sudah dengan sendirinya dan bersemangat ke ladang. wis isuk, kita hanya bilang budal. marine nang nggagah endi. maksudnya ke ladang mana. o sana. mereka ya sudah tau dengan sendirinya...."(NR)*

#### *Job availability*

The opportunity to get a job in Ranupani Village has been relatively high until now. With the existing opportunities, most of the residents feel calm because when there is a job, income also follows. This is one of the reasons for

the low migration of the Tengger Tribe outside the area: they feel safe in their work and decide to stay in Ranupani village. The limited workforce in Ranupani with wide job opportunities also attracts local residents who need jobs to work in Ranupani Village. Based on statements from informants, not a few residents from other villages came to Ranupani to work. The types of jobs available are farm laborers/colliers, motorcycle taxis, porters, and traders. Jobs are open to anyone who wants to move. The informants said it was impossible not to eat if they lived in Ranupani village as long as they wanted to move. Therefore, workers from other villages are not found in Ranupani village. The income received is also not small from the small working hours.

*"Wes mulai cilik mbak, arek arek kene nang tegalan. Wis pokoke (dari) TK iku turut tegalan...."*(MN)

*"Nang kene akeh penggawean mbak. Iki lo nang kono guruh ditanduri, sik akeh...."* (SI)

*"Ndak, enak ndelek peces nang kene, nyaman kene mba, krasan nang kene. Ndelek duik guampang nang kene. Nang kene masio ga due ijazah yo iso kerjo, sewidak sedino. Nang kene ndelek penggawean gampang. Nang kene akeh penggawean mbak. Iki lo nang kono guruh ditanduri, sik akeh. Dadi TKI dadi TKW iku orang bodo"*(MN).

### ***Income certainty***

The majority of the people of Ranupani Village grow horticultural crops, namely potato plants with varieties of flower granola seedlings so that Ranupani village gets the nickname "Potato Paradise". The product produced is a potato plant, where this plant is a characteristic of Ranupani village. According to the statement of one of the residents of Ranupani village, the potato plants produced are recognized for their quality by consumers from various cities. In addition to having characteristics and good quality, potatoes have a fairly stable price with a fairly expensive price. The average total revenue of potato farmers in the Ranupani area is approximately 30 million per quarter hectare and the net result is approximately 20 million from the sales of potatoes. This shows that the yield from the potato harvest is profitable and large enough, so farmers are trying to take care of it so that the yield remains maximum.

In addition to agricultural products from their own fields, the people of the Tengger Tribe also do several other jobs such as laborers / colliers in people's fields, porters when Mount Semeru was opened, traders, and from homestay income. The residents of the Tengger Tribe in Ranupani Village are among the "tenacious" residents. When the private fields have been planted, they will work as colliers or laborers in their neighbors' gardens. Work starts at 7 am to 2 pm. The wage received in one day of the hour is 60 thousand. In addition to working as a daily coli, sometimes Ranupani farmers also work as water motorcycle taxis and manure to be brought to the fields. The results obtained are many in one day, especially during the harvest season. Koli can pick up the remaining potatoes that are still buried in the "luru" land. One day can earn up to 500 thousand rupiah or even more if you work during the harvest season.

### ***Availability of free time***

Leisure time has a big role in human life. Activities done during leisure time can be beneficial for physical health, life satisfaction, and psychological development. The problem that is done with free time is not just the existence or absence of time, but tends to be how individuals fill their free time. The way a person uses their free time can have a positive or negative impact on an individual's life. The availability of free time can also be used as a way to chat with family or neighbors. Good socialization and communication can provide a positive impact on the welfare of the community. As the people of Ranupani did. Observations and observations made by researchers show that residents have free time that can be used to hang out with neighbors. They often gather in the afternoon because the weather is still bright and not too cold. In contrast to the habits of people on the lower slopes who can gather with friends or neighbors at night. The cold temperature makes residents lazy to go out of the house and gather in the pawon with their families to warm up. Gathering with family and neighbors around is the need of the people of Ranupani village which is fulfilled in the afternoon after work.

### **Non-Material Aspects**

#### ***Able to implement the concept of Tri Hitta Karana***

##### *Parahyangan*

Parahyangan emphasized the importance of human spiritual connection with God Almighty (Sang Hyang) which is carried out through worship as a form of gratitude with the aim of achieving inner peace and peace of life. Parahyangan has no form, but for the Tengger people the manifestation of Parhyangan can be found in their lives. One form of gratitude carried out by the Tengger Tribe community in Ranupani is by holding a Kasada ceremony. The Kasada ceremony is one of the traditional ceremonies carried out by the Tengger Tribe community which is carried out once a year in the 12th month (kasada) on the 15th day based on the Tengger Tribe calendar (Adam & Liana, 2020; Rahmawati & Suseno, 2021; Sazjiyah, 2020). At the Kasada ceremony, the Tengger Tribe people will present their agricultural products and livestock to Sang Hyang Widhi and their ancestors by being banned in the crater of Mount Bromo (Zurohman et al., 2022). The produce and livestock offered are called offerings. The offering was given a spell and then thrown in the crater of Mount Bromo. The community believes that by giving produce and livestock as offerings, then Sang Hyang will give blessings to the universe and its contents.

*"...ini adalah persembahan kepada Sang Hyang, hasil panen saya melimpah dan jauh dari musibah"* (MN)

##### *Pawongan*

Pawongan is a teaching in relating to fellow humans. The Tengger Ranupani community has a harmonious relationship between religious people who always have a harmonious relationship through Sima Krama Dharma Santhi (Silaturahmi) activities. The value of mutual cooperation is very inherent in people's daily lives (Nor et al., 2022) Almost in every activity, from building houses, agriculture, to organizing traditional ceremonies, the

community always works together in mutual cooperation. This strengthens the sense of togetherness and social solidarity. The social structure of the Tengger community is still very strong in large families. The relationship between family members is very close, and they support each other. The customs that prevail in the Tengger society govern the relationships between individuals in various aspects of life, such as marriage, death, and conflict resolution. The Tengger people also coexist harmoniously with various tribes and religions. Tolerance between religious communities is an important value in maintaining harmony living together in Tengger.

*"....trus mau panen ya seperti itu. kalo panen waktu jagung itu gotong royong. kalo setelah panen mau panen tanem jagung tetangganya ikut semua. itu bondolannya yang kecil kecil diambil sendiri udah. suruh ambil. bonus. nanti disana pun seperti itu...."*(MN)

### *Palemahan*

Palemahan is the third concept of Tri Hitta Karana. Palemahan is the relationship between humans and nature. Humans are considered dependent on nature so they are required to be able to maintain a good relationship with nature through environmental conservation. The value of weakness is also applied to the Tengger Tribe community of Ranupani Village. In order to preserve the environment, the Tengger Tribe people are familiar with the concept of "take one get five back". This concept does not only apply to fellow humans who have given good to the Tengger Tribe community, but also applies to the natural environment. The Tengger Tribe people are taught to plant 5 (five) trees if they take 1 (one) tree. The purpose of the values taught is to preserve the environment by reforesting through cutting down one plant five. The Tengger people realize that they depend on nature in their daily lives. For example, to warm the body. Ranupani's high location has an impact on the cold temperature when compared to other areas. Therefore, the majority of residents of Ranupani Village need firewood as a fireplace to warm themselves. This condition is carried out every day, so that in order for the environment to be maintained, they must preserve it with the values that have been taught from generation to generation. So that the value taught is considered higher when compared to the religion adhered to. In addition, giving offerings to nature is a form of community gratitude to nature (Sapir et al., 2014)

*".....dengan dengan tindakan saya. perbuatan saya o sampe seperti ini, seperti ini. tapi sedikit sekali waktu itu. dengan sendirinya mereka pindah. perpindahan urusan peradaban. mereka itu ndak tau bagaimana se ajaran itu. kitabnya apa se? tuhannya siapa se? Apalagi kakek saya. diajarkan akhlaknya lebih tinggi daripada diajarkan agama. jangan kamu ambil punya orang lain. kalo ambil 1 balikin 5. jadi kalo dikasi 1 balikinnya 5....."*(SU)

### ***Carrying out the Teachings of Bakti Marang Guru Papat***

The tradition of Bakti Marang Guru Papat is a tradition of obedience to four types of teachers. If the community is obedient and obedient (bakti) to these four types of teachers, then the person concerned will live safely and prosperously.



### *Guru Sing Kuwoso*

In the Tengger tradition, obedience and obedience must first be addressed to Guru Sing Kuwasa, namely God Almighty who is referred to as the Almighty, Hyang Widhi, or Hyang Widhi Wasa. Guru Sing Kuwasa is a place to take refuge and plead. The Tengger people always seek to realize harmony between themselves and the Almighty, the will of the gods, the spirits of the spirits, and the spirits of the ancestors they believe reside around them. If this harmony is not realized, then disruption or disaster is believed to come. Therefore, the teacher is seen through the kasada ceremony which is carried out every year as a form of gratitude to God for the blessings given.

### *Guru Wong Tuwa*

The second teacher that the Tengger Community obeys is Teacher Wong Tuwa. What Teacher Wong Tuwa means is the biological elder community who have nurtured and raised their children. The Tenger people are very obedient to their parents, for example, the children of the Tengger Tribe will not do things that have been forbidden by their parents such as stealing and lying. Parents are role models for the children of the Tengger Ranupani Tribe. So that the work ethic that has been inherited to this day is still applied by the Tengger Tribe people because they see that parents who work in the fields also have a high work ethic. Then obedience is also shown in the belief of the Tengger children in saving money. Unlike the children of the lower slopes who save in banks, the children of Tengger Ranupani prefer to entrust the money from their work to their parents. The savings will usually be taken when buying goods.

### *Guru Pemerintah*

The third obedience and compliance is aimed at Government Teachers. Obedience to the government is shown in their daily behavior. In the Tengger area, there have never been protests against the government. The political color is also adjusted to the village head who is in office. Obedience to the government is also shown through their attitude towards taxes, some villages in Tengger often receive awards from the local government because they are recorded as diligent villages that pay PBB (Land and Building Tax). In addition, obedience to the government is not to sell land to people outside the village. The regulation has not been recorded and has been in effect since the reign of Mr. Untung (Alm). The village chief forbade the Tengger tribe to sell their land or land to people outside Ranupani village. The reason is that the population of Ranupani is increasing every year, while the land in Ranupani Village is limited. Then employment is also not as varied as the lower regions. With these various considerations, the village head issued the regulation and until now it is still obeyed by the people of the Tengger Tribe of Ranupani Village.

### *Guru Ngaji atau Guru Pasinaon*

The fourth teacher obeyed by the Tengger Community is Guru Ngaji or Guru Pasinaon. The so-called Guru Ngaji is a Tengger shaman who masters

tradition and religious knowledge, while Guru Pasinaon is a person who masters science and teaches at school. The two teachers are knowledgeable people. Guru Ngaji teaches about the traditions of the Tengger Tribe and religious science, it is useful for preserving the Tengger tradition and instilling a religious soul. Meanwhile, Teacher Pasinaon teaches Tengger children to read, write, and count useful to respond to the changing times. This local wisdom contains values that reflect the nobility of ethics that can be used as a reference to grow and develop a harmonious and peaceful community situation (Arsal et al., 2023; Diab et al., 2022). These noble values include fear and shame of committing crimes, worshipping the Almighty, respecting teachers, respecting rulers, and so on. It can be seen that the fear of committing crime is seen through the low crime rate and even close to non-existent. There has never been a theft found in Ranupani village until now. The shame of crime is so high that it makes the area safe.

## CONCLUSION

This research reveals that the subjective welfare of the Tengger Tribe community in Ranupani Village includes material and non-material aspects. Materially, their well-being is shown through job satisfaction, income stability, and the availability of free time for social activities. Non-materially, cultural values such as Tri Hita Karana and Bakti Marang Guru Papat are the main elements that support their welfare. The implication of this study is the importance of a local culture-based approach in designing welfare policies. This approach can reinforce spiritual, social, and environmental dimensions that are often overlooked in purely economic-based policies. Furthermore, these findings could serve as a reference for future research to explore subjective well-being in the context of other indigenous peoples.

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