Marital Satisfaction in Multi-Ethnic Couples (Chinese-Javanese)

Rahaju, S., Dewi, Y., Yuwanto, L.
Department of Psychology, University of Surabaya
Raya Kalirungkut Street, Tenggilis, Surabaya, East Java, Indonesia
E-mail: riantini@ubaya.ac.id

ABSTRACT
In Indonesia, multi-ethnics marital, especially with Chinese, still not fully accepted because of the stereotype. These conditions make some multi-ethnics couples get trouble to marriage or became afraid to continue their marriages. This study intended to analyze the influence factors of multi-ethnics marital satisfaction. From 86 subjects (whose already married and became multi-ethnics couples) found that there were eight major factors which influenced multi-ethnics marital satisfaction; (1) love and intimacy, (2) couples interactions, (3) marriage readiness, (4) family support, (5) religious and nationality background, (6) pre-marital relation, (7) personal hope of marriages, and (8) relation with partner’s family. The three most dominant factors were (1) love and intimacy, (2) pre-marital relation, and (3) relation with partner’s family. In this study, pre-marital relationship was also time for each couple to learn about the other cultures and could accept it. Results from this study suggested that pre-marital multi-ethnics couples should learn about the cultures of their partner and make a good pre-marital relation, not only with the partner but mostly with the partner’s families. For marriage couples, they should concern about eight factors that could influence their marital satisfaction.

Key words: Marital satisfaction, multi-ethnics couples (Chinese-Javanese)

1. Introduction
Creating marital happiness and satisfaction is the dream of every people when they are married. Marital satisfaction is a feeling positive that couples can get from marriage (Ponzetti, Jr., 2003). Indonesia as a country with pluralistic society that consists of various ethnicities. Plurality is shown by the number of ethnic groups in Indonesia reached 300 ethnic groups inhabiting different places and spread in various islands in Indonesia (Tjio, 2009). Largest ethnic groups in Indonesia are, among others, Javanese, Sundanese, Malay, Balinese, Batak, Dayak, Bugis, and Chinese. Because of these pluralistic society, it is possible that there were inter-ethnic marriages.
Inter-ethnic marriage, between Chinese and Javanese, could link with prejudice between them. One of the causes of prejudices between Chinese and Javanese due to historical legacy of the past (Dutch divisive political). In the past, Dutch divided the population into three groups; the European group, Eastern group foreign such as Chinese, Indian and Arabic, and the group of Natives. Among these three groups, the natives were very far behind, both economically and socially, than the two others. Chinese were described as exclusive, stingy and economic wolves (Winarta, 2008). For the natives, Chinese are opportunities, because they just making money, not patriotic, do not have commitment, exclusive. For the Chinese, natives are lazy, stupid, just looking for fun, would like making profit without sweat (Dahana citations in Susetyo, 2010). Chinese have negative stereotype about Javanese daughters in law. They believe that Javanese daughter’s in law