

ADAPTATION OF THE SATISFACTION WITH LIFE SCALE – CHILDREN (SWLS-C) FOR CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS: INDONESIAN VERSION

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The Satisfaction With Life Scale-Children (SWLS-C) is a self-report instrument measuring the life satisfaction of children and early adolescents aged 9–14. The present study introduced the adaptation and psychometric findings of the Indonesian version of SWLS-C. The six steps of the International Test Commission were used as guidelines for adaptation processes. Three hundred and twelve participants were recruited (63.1% girls; $M = 12.52$, $SD = 1.54$). This study assessed SWLS-C's reliability using internal consistency, construct validity using CFA, and concurrent validity by correlating the scores with established instruments GSES, PANAS, and K-6. The findings show that the Indonesian version of SWLS-C has good reliability and construct validity. In addition, the Indonesian version of the SWLS-C showed positive correlations with self-efficacy and positive affect. The scale correlate negatively with negative affect and psychological distress. In conclusion, SWLS-C is a reliable and valid measure of life satisfaction in Indonesian children and adolescents.

Keywords: life satisfaction; adaptation; SWLS-C; children; adolescent; Indonesia.

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Subjective well-being is the most researched topic (Diener, 2009a, 2009b) under the positive psychology perspective. From 2008 to 2018, 29,831 articles on subjective well-being were recorded in the Scopus database (Akhtar, 2019). Research on this topic continues to increase from time to time. However, research on subjective well-being and life satisfaction has been studied predominantly among adults rather than children and adolescents (Gullone & Cummins, 1999; Huebner, 1991a, 1991b). Lang and Schmitz (2020) stated that measuring well-being is needed not only for adults but also for children and adolescents. Measuring children's well-being is crucial to obtaining accurate conditions of children based on the various situations they face (Ben-Arieh, 2005; Ben-Arieh & Frones, 2007). Therefore, children and adolescents nowadays become the center of attention for measuring mental health dimensions (Shoshani & Steinmetz, 2014), resilience (Baños et al., 2017), and well-being (Savage, 2011). Nowadays, research on life satisfaction is getting much attention and has been applied in various life settings of children and adolescents (Crocker, 2000; Huebner, 1997, 2004). Individuals with a high level of life satisfaction have a positive attitude in the school environment, in dealing with teachers, in interpersonal relations, in joining extracurricular activities, and in achieving academic grades. A high level of life satisfaction positively correlates with the individual's positive attitude (Gilman & Huebner, 2006).

Many scales were developed to measure an individual's subjective well-being, specifically to evaluate the effectiveness of well-being interventions, for instance, Positive Affect Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS; Watson et al., 1988), and the Scale of Positive and Negative Experience (SPANE; Diener et al., 2009). One of the most widely used globally is the Satisfaction With Life Scale (SWLS; Diener et al., 1985). The SWLS is a well-established tool, having strong psychometric properties (Diener et al., 1985; Pavot & Diener, 2008; Pavot et al., 1991), and greatly facilitates research to determine the level of individual life satisfaction with cross-cultural research (Lim, 2015).

The SWLS is used to measure individuals' evaluation of their life satisfaction based on their criteria by measuring the cognitive component of subjective well-being generally (Diener, 1994). It has been translated and validated in various languages since it has excellent potential for measuring an individual's life satisfaction cross-culturally (Pavot & Diener, 2009). For instance, it was translated into Turkish (Durak et al., 2010), Romanian (Stevens et al., 2012), and Lithuanian (Dirzyte et al., 2021). Also, it was and validated in Asia, in such countries as Taiwan (Wu & Yao, 2006), Malaysia (Swami & Chamorro-Premuzic, 2009), and Azerbaijan (Osmanli et al., 2021). In Indonesia, the SWLS was adapted by Akhtar (2019) into the Indonesian version, with good reliability ($\alpha = .83$).

Currently, research on children and adolescents' life satisfaction is still often investigated by adult measuring instruments, such as the adult version of the SWLS. For instance, a study was conducted among adolescents aged 11–16 in China (Leung & Leung, 1992) among 14–17-year-old adolescents in Portugal (Neto, 1993), among 11, 13, and 15-year-old adolescents in Spain (Atienza et al., 2000), among adolescents aged 11–19 in Hong Kong (Shek, 2007), and among adolescents and children aged 8–16 in France (Bacro et al., 2020). In Indonesia, the SWLS has also been used to measure children's and adolescents' life satisfaction (Ismail, 2015). Only a few instruments were developed for children and adolescents (Gilman & Huebner, 2000; Huebner, 1991a, 1991b). For instance, the Student's Life Satisfaction Scale (SLSS; Huebner, 1991a, 1991b), the Personal Wellbeing Index-School Children (PWI-SC; Cummins & Lau, 2005), the Brief Multidimensional Students' Life Satisfaction Scale (BMSLSS; Huebner et al., 2011). However, the only equivalent to the SWLS is the Satisfaction With Life Scale-Children (SWLS-C; Gadermann et al., 2011).

The SWLS's original version has limitations when applied to children and adolescents. Those limitations were that the original form of SWLS is challenging to be understood by children and early adolescents (Gadermann et al., 2010). Satisfaction With Life Scale-Children (SWLS-C) was developed by changing the items to be more familiar and easier to understand (Gadermann, 2009; Gadermann et al., 2010). Furthermore, the SWLS-C was simplified to a 5- from 7-point Likert-type scale (Gadermann et al., 2010). Thus, the SWLS-C can fulfill the urge to research life satisfaction across ages over time. A previous study showed the SWLS-C could represent the same validation for various children, regardless of their gender, grades, and first language (Gadermann et al., 2010). It is a self-questionnaire that is generally easy to be understood by children and adolescents. Additionally, the SWLS-C has the advantage of being easy to apply and cost-effective (Álvarez et al., 2018).

The SWLS-C was translated and validated in Korea (Lim, 2015), Chile (Álvarez et al., 2018), and Germany (Lang & Schmitz, 2020). However, an Indonesian version of the SWLS-C has not been validated yet. Considering the essential adaptation of the instruments to diverse cultural backgrounds (Ingarianti & Purwono, 2019), this study aims to validate the Indonesian version of SWLS-C in children and adolescents aged 9–14 years.

METHOD

Adaptation Procedure

The SWLS-C adaptation process was performed based on the International Test Commission (2017) Guidelines for Translating and Adapting Tests. There are six steps, as follows.

Pre-condition Stage

In this stage, we secured the necessary permission to adapt the SWLS-C scale. Written permission for this adaptation was obtained from <http://labs.psychology.illinois.edu/~ediener/scales.html> and confirmed by email. The initial format was sourced from Gadermann et al. (2010).

Test Development Stage

The SWLS-C was originally in English and developed in the Canadian context. Therefore, the forward translation was performed into Bahasa Indonesia to produce commensurate and valid translations with the original context (Tyupa, 2011). The forward-backward translation was performed, involving two forward and two backward translations. The translations were made by certified translators who had TOEFL and IELTS certificates with a score minimum of 550, or an IELTS score of a minimum of 8. They were Indonesians who know the culture in the country, they had an academic psychology background, and life experience of at least 1 year in English-speaking countries. Those translators did not know the original items, which ensured the blindness of the method. Thus, the outcome of the translation has an equivalent meaning to the original form of the scale and fits with the psychological and cultural context.

Synthesis Stage

The results of the translation were synthesized into one form. Next, three experts (one clinical psychologist and two child psychologists) reviewed the items, resulting in a content validity index (CVI; Polit & Beck, 2006). In the review process, some words were changed to be easier for children and adolescents aged 9–14 years old. Despite the alteration, the same meaning is retained. The CVI was used to identify the content validity of all items in the SWLS-C version of Bahasa Indonesia. Based

on Polit and Beck (2006) and Davis (1992), the indicator used a 4-point rating scale (1 = *not relevant*, 2 = *somewhat relevant*, 3 = *relevant*, and 4 = *highly relevant*). All translated items were scored 3 or 4 by reviewers. Based on CVI calculations using the I-CVI and S-CVI, the values obtained were 1.00, identified as having excellent content validity (Polit & Beck, 2006), and can be used (Lynn, 1986; Polit & Beck, 2006).

Then, to evaluate the readability, we conducted a cognitive interview with five participants who were four girls aged 11, 12, 13, and 14, and one boy aged 9. The technique used in the cognitive interview followed the original the SWLS-C validation process from Gadermann et al. (2011). Therefore, the Think-Aloud Protocol, a precisely concurrent verbalization based on Ericsson and Simon (1980), and verbal probing based on Willis et al. (1999) were performed. The data collection process for cognitive interviews was carried out two hours after the children came home from school. First, the Think-Aloud protocol was processed in the quiet room. Three item questions adapted from Cremeens et al. (2007) with the same Likert scale from the SWLS-C Indonesian version were used as a verbal exercise, aiming to provide an overview and increase children's self-confidence. After the exercise exemplified by the researcher, the researcher repeated the instructions, like "Read each word and answer it out loud. Everything you were thinking about when choosing an answer should also be voiced or say it out loud." If there were no responses for more than 10 seconds, then the researcher reminded the child by saying, "Remember, whatever you are thinking right now must say it out loud. What are you thinking about?" After the demonstration was implemented, the three items for practice and the actual SWLS-C Indonesian version were completed by the children. Then asked questions based on the model commonly used in cognitive interviews from the Tourangeau Cognitive Model. Based on this model, the interviewer measured four processes of the respondent when answering each item, comprehension, retrieval, decision, and response (Willis, 2006). In the end, the researcher asked which words were difficult and the difficulty level of the SWLS-C (Indonesian version), based on the child's perspective. Overall, this cognitive interview session lasted about 25 to 35 minutes per child and, as a gesture of appreciation, chocolates were given to them.

The five tested children agreed that the SWLS-C Indonesian Version could be understood well. No words were considered difficult. This SWLS-C version (see Table S1 in the Supplemental Material) was considered ready to be used for the next stage.

Testing of Measuring Tools

The administration of the SWLS-C through an online survey was conducted.

Examining the Psychometric Properties

The psychometric properties were examined using Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) and testing concurrent validity, by correlating the SWLS-C with the General Self-Efficacy Scale (Schwarzer & Jerusalem, 1995) validated in Bahasa Indonesia (Novrianto et al., 2019), the Positive Affect Negative Affect Scale (PANAS; Watson et al., 1988) validated in Bahasa Indonesia by Akhtar (2019), the Kessler Psychological Distress Scale Indonesian Version – 6 items (K6, Kessler, et al., 2002) validated in Bahasa Indonesia by Tran et al. (2019).

Documentation of Adaptation Process

In this final stage, the user manual was written for people who will be using the Indonesian version of SWLS-C in practical assessment settings.

Participants

In the fourth step, 312 participants were recruited (63.1% girls and 36.9% boys), aged 9–14 years ($M = 12.52$, $SD = 1.54$). Before data collection, the official permission letter from Universitas Padjadjaran to survey the particular school, with a short briefing, informed consent, and an explanation of the research's aim, was given beforehand to the teachers. Then, the responsible teachers helped to gather the students in every class and gave a short briefing regarding the research. The confidentiality of this study was emphasized through a short briefing for the students and teachers. The demographic distribution of the sample and detailed information about the students who participated are shown in Table S2 (Supplemental Material).

Procedure

Ethical clearance was obtained from the Ethical Committee of Universitas Padjadjaran (129/UN6.KEP/EC/2022). Particular teachers distributed the online survey link through WhatsApp group classes from grades 3–9. Data was collected through an online questionnaire via Google Forms. Parent- and student-informed consent forms were also attached. To fulfill their participants' rights, establish their privacy, and guarantee confidentiality, participants were allowed to withdraw anytime, and the demographic information form was anonymous. This survey took about 15 to 20 minutes, depending on the participant's reading ability. Participants were given compensation in the form of a snack a day after filling out the online survey.

Measures

Adapted Scale: Satisfaction With Life Scale – Children (SWLS-C)

SWLS-C – Indonesian version is a unidimensional instrument in Bahasa Indonesia consisting of 5 items to measure life satisfaction in children and adolescents, especially those aged 9–14 years, adapted from the Satisfaction With Life Scale-Children (SWLS-C; Gadermann et al., 2010). The original SWLS-C has good internal consistency (Cronbach's $\alpha = .86$) and good concurrent validity (Gadermann et al., 2010). The responses are given on the 5-point Likert scale (1 = *strongly disagree*, 2 = *slightly disagree*, 3 = *neutral*, 4 = *slightly agree*, 5 = *strongly agree*). The total score is in the range of 5 to 25 items. The greater the score, indicates the higher level of life satisfaction.

Concurrent Validity: General Self-Efficacy Scale (GSES)

The Indonesian version of GSES (Schwarzer & Jerusalem, 1995) was validated by Novrianto et al. (2019). With a Cronbach's α coefficient of .89, the internal consistency in the present scale is considered satisfactory. It has 10 unidimensional items that measure overall self-efficacy in various situations. The responses are given on the 5-point Likert scale (1 = *not at all true*, 2 = *hardly true*, 3 = *neutral*, 4 = *moderately true*, and 5 = *exactly true*). The higher the score, the greater the individual's perceived general self-efficacy.

Concurrent Validity: Positive Affect Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS)

PANAS was developed by Watson et al. (1988) and validated in Bahasa Indonesia by Akhtar (2019). The Indonesian version of PANAS has 20 items: 10 items measure positive affect, and 10 items measure negative affect. The responses are given on the 5-point Likert scale (1 = *almost never*, 2 = *rarely*, 3 = *sometimes*, 4 = *often*, 5 = *always*). This version has good internal consistency (Cronbach's $\alpha = .74$). The negative and positive affect scores ranged from 10 to 50 per subscale (positive and negative). A higher positive affect score indicates a greater individual's positive experienced feelings in the past month. Meanwhile, the higher negative affect score indicates the greater individual's negative experienced feelings in the past month.

Concurrent Validity: Kessler Psychological Distress Scale-6 (K-6)

K6 is the short form of K-10, developed by Kessler et al. (2002) and validated in Bahasa Indonesia by Tran et al. (2019). The Indonesian version of K-6 has 6 items. The responses are given on the 5-point Likert scale (0 = *none of the time*, 1 = *a little of the time*, 2 = *sometimes*, 3 = *most of the time*, 4 = *all the time*). With a Cronbach's α coefficient of .88, the internal consistency in the present study is considered satisfactory. The total scores range from 0 to 24. An individual with a score between 0–12 indicated does not have serious mental health problems, and a score between 13–24 indicated potentially serious mental health problems (Kessler et al., 2010).

Data Analysis

Data analysis was performed using Statistical Packages for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25.0 and Jeffrey's Amazing Statistics Program (JASP) version .16 software. Calculated descriptive statistics were mean, standard deviation, skewness, and kurtosis. The internal consistency was calculated using Cronbach's α (Sullivan, 2011)—based on indicators from Taber (2018) the α coefficient $> .70$ indicated good reliability. The CFA was analyzed to determine the validity of this adapted SWLS-C. This technique compares the hypothesized theoretical model with data acquisition to evaluate the measurement model (Brown, 2006). This study analyzed model fit index, based on indicators from Hooper et al. (2008)—six criteria: Comparative Fit Index (CFI) = .90, Bentler-Bonett Normed Fit Index (NFI) = .90, Goodness of Fit Index (GFI) $\geq .90$, Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) $< .08$, and Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR) $< .08$. The current study also analyzes factor loading, which shows the relationship between indicators (observed variables) and factors (latent variables). Accordingly, construct validity and significance levels can be determined from the SWLS-C. The criteria used are based on Hair et al. (2014), by looking at the factor loading coefficient values obtained $> .50$ and $p < .01$. Pearson's product-moment correlation was used by SPSS Statistics 25.0 to analyze the concurrent validity of SWLS-C correlation to GSES, PANAS, and K-6. The interpretation effect sizes were performed based on the Cohen (1992), which categorized as .10–.30 = small, .30–.50 = medium, and $> .50$ = large effect size.

RESULTS

Reliability

Table 1 shows that Cronbach's coefficient $\alpha = .86$ overall (for the particular items, coefficients were between .66 and .71). The intercorrelations of the SWLS-C, ranging from .51 to .61, are presented in Table 1. According to Flora and Curran (2004), these values indicate a high degree of correlation among all SWLS-C items.

Table 1

Reliability, Mean, Standard Deviation, Skewness, Kurtosis, and Item-Correlation of SWLS-C

Item number	α	M	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis	Correlation				
						1	2	3	4	5
1	.70	3.26	1.04	.05	-.60	–				
2	.70	3.46	1.00	-.05	-.75	.61**	–			
3	.71	3.83	1.10	-.63	-.22	.59**	.59**	–		
4	.66	3.58	1.06	-.30	-.61	.58**	.54**	.56**	–	
5	.66	3.06	1.35	.02	-1.18	.54**	.56**	.58**	.51**	–
Total	.86									

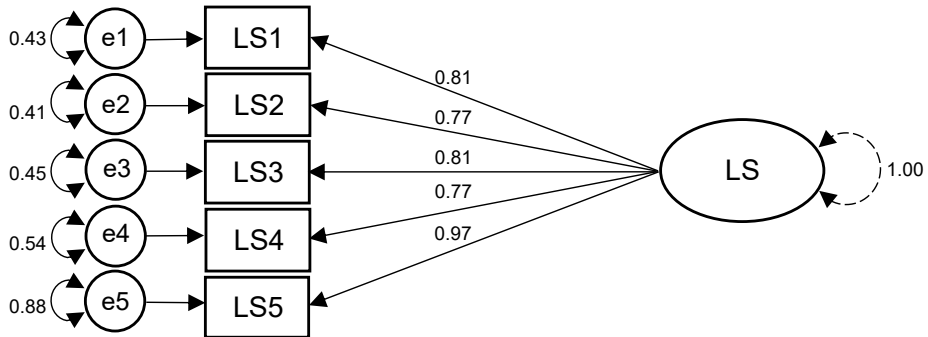
** $p < 0.01$.

Validity

Figure 1 presents the CFA analysis of the SWLS-C Indonesian version. The following results were yielded: $\chi^2 (5) = 4.21$, $p > .05$; RMSEA = .00 ($< .08$), GFI = 1.00 ($\geq .90$), SRMR = .01 ($< .08$), NFI = .99 ($\geq .90$), and CFI = 1.00 ($\geq .90$).

Figure 1

Confirmatory Factor Analysis Model of the Indonesian Version of SWLS-C



Factor Loading

The factor loadings of the SWLS-C version Indonesian, as determined by the factor analysis performed (see Table 2), which was based on Hair et al. (2014). The factor loadings ranged between .77 and .97 (all $ps < .001$). Hence, all items of the SWLS-C have a significant and robust relationship with life satisfaction factors. Therefore, the Indonesian version of SWLS-C has sufficient construct validity.

Table 2

Factor Loading of SWLS-C

Factor	Item	Factor Loading	p
Life satisfaction (LS)	In most ways my life is close to the way I would want it to be.	.81	< .001
	The things in my life are excellent.	.77	< .001
	I am happy with my life	.82	< .001
	So far I have gotten the important things I want in life.	.77	< .001
	If I could live my life over, I would have it the same way.	.97	< .001

Gender Differences

Life satisfaction differed significantly between gender, Mann–Whitney’s $U = 9393.5$, $p < 0.05$, with boys reporting higher levels of life satisfaction ($M = 18.017$, $SD = 4.716$) than girls ($M = 16.695$, $SD = 4.223$).

Concurrent Validity

Concurrent validity was tested by correlating the total score of the SWLS-C with the total score of the Indonesian version of the GSES (Novrianto et al., 2019), the Indonesian version of the PANAS (Akhtar, 2019), and the K-6 (Tran et al., 2019). The SWLS-C showed statistically significant correlations to self-efficacy, $r = .50$, $p < .001$. Furthermore, there were statistically significant correlations between SWLS-C and positive affect, $r = .45$, $p < .001$, negative affect, $r = -.34$, $p < .001$, and psychological distress, $r = -.46$, $p < .001$.

DISCUSSION

The present study aims to adapt and validate the Indonesian Version of the SWLS-C for children and early adolescents aged 9–14 years old in Indonesia. The key finding in this study is that the Indonesian version of SWLS-C for children is a valid and reliable scale to measure life satisfaction in Indonesian children and adolescents. The internal consistency in the present study ($\alpha = .86$) is the same as in the original instrument ($\alpha = .86$; Gadermann et al., 2010) and slightly higher than that of the SWLS-C adapted in Chile ($\alpha = .82$; Álvarez et al., 2018). The lowest reliability is in items 4 and 5, while the highest is in item 3. This finding is consistent with the original SWLS-C (Gadermann et al., 2010) and also with the Chilean adaptation and three comparative studies (Álvarez et al., 2018).

Based on the results of the CFA analysis, the Indonesian version of SWLS-C shows the same factor structure as the original version. This result is similar to SWLS-C adapted into the German version (Lang & Schmitz, 2020). The finding indicates that the SWLS-C Indonesian version factor loadings have sufficient construct validity (.77–.97). The result in this study was slightly higher than the original SWLS-C (.70–.87; Gadermann et al., 2010) and much higher than the SWLS-C German version (.38–.77; Lang & Schmitz, 2020). In the current version, the lowest is item 2, “The things in my life are excellent (Berbagai hal di hidupku berjalan

dengan sangat baik),” and the higher is item 5, “If I could live my life over, I would have it the same way (Jika bisa mengulang hidupku kembali, aku ingin tetap hidup seperti ini).”

This study reveals statistically significant differences in SWLS-C scores between boys and girls, corroborating previous research conducted by Al-Attiyah and Nasser (2016), Dost (2007), and Goldbeck et al. (2007), which consistently reported lower life satisfaction among girls compared to boys. The observed lower life satisfaction in girls can be attributed to a developmental phenomenon commonly encountered during adolescence (Goldbeck et al., 2007). Furthermore, Wittchen et al. (1998) described girls as being more susceptible to the elevated risk of developing internalizing disorders, such as anxiety disorders, eating disorders, and affective disorders, highlighting a greater vulnerability among girls compared to boys.

On the evidence of concurrent validity, the Indonesian version of SWLS-C shows a strong negative correlation between life satisfaction and psychological distress, which is in line with previous studies (Álvarez et al., 2018; Funk et al., 2006; Gadermann et al., 2010; Proctor et al., 2009). Moreover, it shows a positive correlation with self-efficacy, which is in line with previous studies (Álvarez et al., 2018; Gadermann et al., 2010; Lang & Schmitz, 2020). All the results of the correlation confirm the expected correlations and provide evidence of concurrent validity.

This study has several limitations. First, the participants of this study were recruited by convenience sampling, which limited the variability of the participants. Future research is expected to investigate larger contexts and populations based on cultural backgrounds and socioeconomic status using probability sampling. Hence, further research can investigate to what extent the findings presented in the SWLS-C Indonesian version can be generalized to other contexts and populations in Indonesia. Second, this study measures the reliability using internal consistency. The test–retest reliability also needs to be explored in the future.

CONCLUSIONS

The Indonesian version of SWLS-C has good psychometrical aspects. As the initial screening, it is relevant to assess Indonesian children and early adolescents’ life satisfaction. The results of this study provide evidence of the validity scores on the SWLS-C for children aged 9–14 years. Therefore, in the future, it can provide data to facilitate the intervention and enrich the literature on mental health and life satisfaction among them.

CRediT Author Statement

SYEHA NAFISAH BUSUBUL (33.4%): conceptualization, data analysis, interpretation, writing.

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SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIAL
Table S1*English and Indonesian Version of the SWLS-C*

	Original	Bahasa Indonesia	Back Translation
Instruction	For each of the following statements, please circle the number that describes you the best. Please read each sentence carefully and answer honestly. Thank you.	<i>Di bawah ini ada 5 pernyataan, silahkan kamu lingkari angka yang paling sesuai dengan kondisimu. Bacalah tiap kalimat dengan teliti dan jawablah dengan jujur. Terima kasih</i>	Circle one value on the scale that is most relevant to you for each statement. Carefully read each statement and answer honestly. Thank you.
Item 1	In most ways my life is close to the way I would want it to be.	<i>Sebagian besar hidupku, sudah seperti yang aku inginkan.</i>	For the most part of my life, it has been the way I wanted it to be.
Item 2	The things in my life are excellent.	<i>Berbagai hal di hidupku berjalan dengan sangat baik.</i>	Things in my life are going very well.
Item 3	I am happy with my life.	<i>Aku merasa bahagia dengan hidupku.</i>	I am happy with my life.
Item 4	So far I have gotten the important things I want in life.	<i>Sejauh ini, aku sudah mendapatkan hal-hal penting yang ku inginkan dalam hidup.</i>	So far, I have all the important things I want in life.
Item 5	If I could live my life over, I would have it the same way.	<i>Jika bisa mengulang hidupku kembali, aku ingin tetap hidup seperti ini.</i>	If I were to live again, I would like the same life I have now.

Table S2
Demographic Distribution of the Sample

<i>N</i> = 312	<i>n</i>	%
Gender		
male	115	36.9
female	197	63.1
Age (years)		
9	10	3.21
10	41	13.15
11	28	8.97
12	49	15.70
13	66	21.15
14	118	37.82
Education level (grade)		
3	3	1
4	22	7.1
5	51	16.3
6	11	3.5
7	67	21.5
8	63	20.2
9	95	30.4
Type of school		
private	234	74.3
government	80	25.7