

It is Fear, Not Disgust, That Enhances Memory: Experimental Study on Students in Bandung

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A number of research findings have found the impact of emotion on memory. Some researchers stated that disgust has more impact on memory, however according to the current study the effect of fear cannot be ignored. Both disgust and fear are examples of negative emotion that may have a significant influence on behavior, such as in the attempt of creating a healthy lifestyle. The current study involved an experiment where participants were asked to memorize and recall four randomly displayed picture categories that elicit emotions of disgust, fear, joy, and neutral emotion. They also filled out a DS-R (Disgust Scale-Revised) questionnaire and a supporting questionnaire about healthy lifestyle. Analysis of the results showed that disgust did not show an effect on memory, but fear instead did. This is related to the fact that most participants showed a low degree of disgust, and so it was not considered a significant emotion that affected memory compared to fear. In addition, physiologically fear and disgust are managed by different parts of the brain and thus it was assumed that they will have a different impact on memory. The findings implied that, in campaigning for a healthier lifestyle, fear emotion need to be instilled in people.

Keywords: disgust, memory, fear, emotion

Sejumlah penelitian yang menemukan bahwa emosi berdampak pada ingatan. Ada yang menyebutkan kemuakan lebih berdampak terhadap memori, namun menurut studi ini dampak ketakutan tak dapat diabaikan. Kemuakan dan ketakutan merupakan contoh emosi yang bersifat negatif dan dapat memiliki dampak yang besar terhadap tingkah laku, seperti dalam membangun perilaku hidup sehat. Penelitian ini dilakukan secara eksperimental dan partisipan diminta menghafal dan mengingat kembali masing-masing empat kelompok gambar yang memberi efek emosi kemuakan, ketakutan, kesenangan, dan netral, yang ditampilkan secara bergantian dan dipilih secara acak. Mereka juga melengkapi kuesioner DS-R (*Disgust Scale-Revised*) dan kuesioner pendukung yang berkaitan dengan gaya hidup sehat. Pengolahan hasil eksperimen menunjukkan bahwa bukan kemuakan yang menimbulkan efek pada memori, melainkan ketakutan. Hal ini tampaknya berkaitan dengan derajat kemuakan responden yang mayoritas berada dalam kategori rendah, sehingga kemuakan bukanlah emosi yang signifikan terganggu dibanding dengan ketakutan untuk meningkatkan ingatan. Selain itu, secara fisiologis tampaknya ketakutan dan kemuakan dikelola oleh bagian otak yang berbeda, sehingga penulis mengasumsikan akan membuat perbedaan dalam ingatan. Implikasi penelitian ini, demi mengampanyakan pentingnya hidup sehat, maka masyarakat perlu digugah emosinya, dalam arti emosi ketakutannya.

Kata kunci: kemuakan, ingatan, ketakutan, emosi

From an evolutionary perspective, emotion is considered as an adaptation process that helps individuals adjust their physical functions (Nesse & Ellsworth, as cited in Arch, 2011). In other words, emotion can be a piece of information for someone to protect them-

selves from environmental hazards. For example, when encountering a large scary dog, fear arises and makes someone run the other direction as a way to protect themselves.

There is a set of processes to assign meaning to information to elicit emotion. According to Schultz et al. (cited in Hascher, 2010), emotion is depicted as ways of being, and a holistic episode involving phy-

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