Relationship Between Gratitude and Marital Contentment Among Working and Nonworking Women

¹Zartasha Munawar
²*Dr. Sajid Mahmood Alvi -Emai- sajidmalvi@yahoo.com (Corresponding Author)
³Dr. Shazia Gul
¹PMS Scholar, Department of Psychology, The University of Haripur, Haripur
²*Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology, The University of Haripur, Haripur
³Principal Government College, Sarh e Saleh, Haripur

Abstract

The goal of this study is to evaluate the relationship between thankfulness and marital contentment among working and non-working women. The sample size of 243 was determined by evaluating the significance (0.95), confidence interval (95%), and power (80%).Thus, a sample of 300 women was chosen, with 150 working in various positions and 150 living in the Hazara division of KPK. Working ladies (n= 150) and nonworking females (n= 150) were chosen using the Non-Probability (Convenience selection) method, with ages ranging from 20 to 60 years and education levels of 16 years or above. The participants were chosen based on their service status at various organisations, educational level (age 16 and over), and willingness to participate voluntarily. Non-working married women were also considered. The GQ6 has acceptable internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha = 0.82) and consists of six assertions, each representing one element. Respondents rate their reactions on a 7-point Likert scale, which ranges from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (7). High scores indicate a stronger level of thanks. The SWML approach was used to measure marital happiness, with a Cronbach's alpha of.84.
Keywords: Gratitude ,Marital Contentment.

Introduction

Being pleased and obliged for one's life experiences is the state of gratitude. Previous investigation has confirmed that a gratitude induction conducted over a number of days could improve the believe game's measure of trusting behaviour (Drążkowski et al., 2017). Gratitude has been described as a moral quality, mentality, feeling, habit, personality characteristic, and means of coping Emerson et al. (2003). The idea of gratitude that is most frequently employed is "the popularity and appreciation of an altruistic offering," per Emmons (2004). According to Fincham (2000) and Worthington & Scherer (2004), the idea of mercy is based on the idea of a voluntarily decided, prosocial drive in which the need for retribution and the urge to stay away from a transgressor are tempered and excellent thoughts, attitudes, and behaviours become more prevalent. Each portrayal emphasizes the social, or interpersonal, aspect of gratitude and forgiveness and provides a conceptual framework that connects these human attributes.

Many scholars define gratitude as an attitude of mind that recognizes the good deeds of others (McCulloug & Larson, 2001). Nevertheless, this concept ignores the real manner in which people express gratitude in their daily encounters. According to Emmons and McCullough (2003), individuals should maintain a thankfulness diary, which is a record of the ordinary things in life for which they are grateful. This practice, sometimes referred to as the "day book method," gives people a way to show thanks.

The term thankfulness, which rhymes with "attitude," comes from the Latin word grates, which means thankful. Even though you are appreciative, you are content with the work that was carried out for you as well as the result. Over the years, appreciation has developed several interpretations. Originally, gratitude was defined as the ability to understand and react, in the best possible circumstances and reports, with fulfilment for someone's altruism. However, additional studies revealed that critical concepts of gratitude could also be defined as a mentality, a moral predisposition, an emotion, a flexible response, or a personality characteristic (Bartlett, 2006).

Those emotions that can kill our happiness, such regret, jealousy, bitterness, and melancholy, are avoided when we are grateful (Emmons, 2002). In reality, gratitude may be one of the most underutilized tools we all use on a regular basis. Reminding someone of a favour not only teaches them to say please and thank you, but it can also lead to new friendships. A new friend is more likely to pursue a long-term relationship if you thank them. Whether you thank a complete stranger for letting you enter a room or a coworker for assisting you with a task, acknowledging the compassion of others can open doors. L. K. Ma et al., 2017). Many negative emotions are diminished by gratitude, including regret, rage, hostility, and obstruction. Robert A. Emmons, Ph.D., is an internationally recognized authority on thankfulness and has carried out studies on the connection between enjoyment and thanks. His research indicates that developing gratitude increases pleasure and decreases depression.

There are many different ways to express gratitude, including thanking someone for something they have been acknowledged for (McCullough et al., 2001), receiving something good as a result of someone else's efforts (Solomon, 1983), reflecting on a successful outcome and holding someone else accountable (Park & McCullough, 2006), and identifying and valuing good things that occur (Seligman et al., 2005).

Gratitude is defined as "acknowledging the common daily pleasures of life" (Watkins & colleagues, 2003). Additionally, persuaded persons are more likely to highlight how

important other people are to their satisfaction (Watkins et al., 2003). Furthermore, they are more likely "to prompt thankfulness to their givers and be certain of the significance of communicating thanks to their benefactors." People are more likely to engage in prosocial behaviour later in life if they are aware of its benefits (McCullough et al., 2001). As much as recognizing someone's gratitude encourages them to help you more than they otherwise would (Kilpatrick et al., 2001). Being grateful can help one understand things more deeply and carefully. Gratitude has been linked to increased levels of a variety of qualities, including happiness, life satisfaction, optimism, sanguinity, empathy, religiousness, and hope, according to research (Emmons & McCullough, 2003; McCullough et al., 2004; Watkins et al., 2003).

Those who are grateful can derive greater enjoyment from positive experiences, discover practical strategies for handling difficult circumstances, and stay away from unpleasant circumstances like depression (Watkins et al., 2003). Moreover, three fundamental traits have been suggested to define thankful people: a sense of abundance, a debt of gratitude towards life's ordinary inclinations, and an attitude of gratitude towards the ways in which others contribute to their well-being (Watkins et al., 2003). Additionally, people invest more time and effort in helping others because they believe that others who benefit from their actions would esteem them (Kilpatrick et al., 2001).

As a result, people who are thankful seek to acknowledge and appreciate the value of other people in their own lives. This could drive one party to express gratitude to the other, which could have a big impact on a marriage. When one partner gives appreciation to their spouse and receives praise in return, this could lead to a positive cycle of reciprocity in the marriage by inspiring the other partner to follow suit. Apparently, McCullough et al. (2001) speculate that appreciation is rising. When one partner expresses gratitude to the other, happy feelings occur that may highlight those positive acts of thankfulness and encourage additional expressions of gratitude from one spouse to the other.

Research has shown a strong correlation between trust and marital satisfaction (Atta et al., 2013; Goldberg, 1982). According to Rempel et al. (1985), relationships are marked by expectedness, trustworthiness, and faith. Previous research has shown that positive emotions such as pride, shame, happiness, sadness, anger, and thankfulness can promote early dependence (Angie et al., 2011; Dunn & Schweitzer, 2005). Positive valence feelings like thankfulness and contentment increase trust, whereas negative valence feelings like rage decrease it (Dunn & Schweitzer, 2005). The find-remind-and-bind hypothesis of gratitude states that positive emotions such as appreciation serve evolutionary purposes by helping people bond with cooperative partners (Algoe, Haidt, & Gable, 2008).A relational explanation is provided by the find-remind-and-bind concept. It recognizes that as we are all related, we should consider and comprehend how we relate to other individuals with whom we come into contact. As it happens, your feelings towards someone can be inferred from the way they treat you (Clark & Mills, 1979, for example).

According to Watkins et al. (2003), gratitude increases positive affect, and affectivity and marital satisfaction are significantly correlated (Gordon & Baucom, 2009). Gratitude may foster happiness when a couple is grateful of the positive aspects of their marriage. Couples who are aware of this will be more equipped to focus on their strengths, the ways in they each support their marriage, the ways in which they show consideration for one another, and their amazing outcomes. As a result, optimism levels amongst spouses may positively connect with marital happiness (Gordon & Baucom, 2009).

Method
Sample
The current study examines the relationship between forgiveness, gratitude, and marital satisfaction among working and nonworking women using a cross-sectional research technique. The sample size of 243 was determined by taking into account power (80%), confidence interval (95%) and significance (0.95) (Raosoft, 2011). This led to the collection of a sample of 300 women, 150 of whom were working in various capacities and the other 150 of whom were living in the KPK Hazara division. Using the Non-Probability (Convenience sample) sample technique, 150 working and 150 nonworking females with the relevant age range (20–60 years) and education (16 years and above) were chosen.

Instrument
The GQ6 has an acceptable internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha = 0.82) and consists of six propositions, each of which represents a single component (McCullough et al., 2002). On a 7-point Likert scale, from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (7), respondents provide their answers. Higher ratings indicate a greater level of appreciation. Two negatively formed items are reverse coded, and the item scores are added up to provide a total score that might range from 6 to 42.

The SWML was the tool used to assess marital satisfaction. With a Cronbach's alpha of.84, the internal consistency of the SWML has been demonstrated to have some construct validity evidence, according to a 2006 publication by Johnson et al.

Statistical Analysis
The data was analyses using SPSS version 23. To examine the statistical relationship between the variables, the Pearson correlation coefficient test was used. For parametric data, an independent sample t-test was used to assess the mean difference between two groups.

Results
The sample included 300 females. The age range of the participants was 20 to 60. The sample included members of combined and nuclear families. Of the participants, just 24% were from rural regions, while 74% were from cities. Seventy-three percent of the participants hailed from a middle-class socioeconomic background, and fifty percent of them were middle-class by birth. Based on frequency tabulation, the majority of study participants are married for 0 to 5 years (50.5%), have children together (54.5%), belong to a moderate socioeconomic class (73.5%), and reside in urban areas (74%). The majority of research participants are between the ages of 31 and 40 (50%).

The tools Marital Contentment and Gratitude Questionnaire's psychometric qualities are discussed. The results showed that the several scales and their subscales utilized in the study had appropriate Cronbach's alpha reliability, which varied from.65 to.84. Similar to this, the scales' kurtosis and Skewness indicate how the data are distributed normally. Because of this, the scales employed in this study are trustworthy. The gratitude scale and marital contentment have an essential positive link. Gratitude and marital satisfaction had a positive correlation (r=.39, p<.01). Furthermore, the results show that women in the workforce are more grateful than women in the non-work sector (t=3.24). The results show that married women had somewhat greater levels of marital contentment than single women (t=2.93). 38% of spouses are satisfied with their acknowledgement.

Table 1:   *Demographic Characteristics of Study Variables (N= 300)*

Characteristics	F	%
Age		
20_30 Years	129	43.0
31-40 years	151	50.5
41-50 years	17	5.5
Above 50	03	1.0
Years of marriage		
0-5	151	50.5
6-10	43	14.5
11-15	42	14.0
15 and above	66	22.0
Birth order		
First Born	57	19.0
Middle Born	150	50.0
Last Born	75	25.0
Single Born	18	6.0
Family System		
Nuclear	136	45.5
Joint	164	54.5
Socio economic status		
Low	09	3.0
Middle	219	73.5
High	05	2.0
Residence		
Rural	72	24.0
Urban	222	74.0

Table 2:   *Pearson Correlation among Study Variables (N = 300)*

	Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6
5	**GQ**	$.49^{**}$	$.34^{**}$	$.34^{**}$	$.37^{**}$	-	
6	**MC**	$.38^{**}$	$.23^{**}$	$.19^{**}$	$.39^{**}$	$.29^{**}$	-

GQ = Gratitude questionnaire; MC = Marital Contentment, $^{*} p < .05.$ $^{**} p < .01.$

Table 3:   *Multiple Linear Regression Analysis for Effect of Study Variables on Marital Contentment (N = 300)*

Variables	Model 1		
	B	B	SE
Constant	6.11**		3.34
GQ	.30*	.13	.08
R2	.184		

Note. FOS = Forgiveness of Self; FOO = Forgiveness of Others; FOSI = Forgiveness of Situation; GQ = Gratitude questionnaire.

Table 6:   *Mean Comparison of working and non-working women on Study Variables (N = 300)*

	Working Women (100)		Non-working women (100)				
Variables	M	SD	M	SD	t(298)	p	Cohens'd
GQ	33.2	5.5	30.0	5.3	3.24	.04	0.42
MC	25.40	6.63	27.98	5.94	2.93	.02	0.71

Discussion

Both working and nonworking women's levels of marital happiness are impacted by gratitude. One definition of thanksgiving is "being thankful for everything." This study set out to look at the connection between thanksgiving and marital contentment. A sample of 300 working and non-working women was used in this investigation. For every scale and subscale, descriptive analyses have been finished. The investigation's findings demonstrated that each scale's and subscale's alpha coefficients fell within reasonable bounds.

According to the study, marriage fulfilment and thankfulness have a favorable membership. (Listing 3) The study's findings are consistent with earlier research. The authors of a 2019 Sigala study examined thankfulness and mindfulness as possible markers of happiness in marriage among Greek couples. The results demonstrated that, although mindfulness has a moderating role in this relationship, thanksgiving had a much bigger effect on marital happiness than mindfulness for both men and wives. Those who are joyful get showers with blessings. Gratitude for the small things in life brings greater happiness and mental tranquilly to women.

The results show that people are happier in connections as they get older (see table 5). Data from recent investigations supported this notion. The results of this study agree with those of previous studies. In their 2017 study, Sadiq & Mehnaz examined forgiveness in adults, adolescents, and older persons. The findings for the three groups showed a considerable difference. Compared to the teenagers and adults, the senior group reported being more forgiving of others, of themselves, and of the situations. It supports the theory that people become more understanding as they age.

The findings indicate that happiness in marriage can be positively predicted by appreciation (see table 4). Present studies have provides evidence in favorable to this theory. This study's findings are consistent with those of earlier investigations. Studies has

shown a connection between thankfulness and tighter connections (Algoe, Haidt, & Gable, 2008). The degree of appreciation that an individual feels and expresses is substantially connected with their level of personal marriage happiness, according to a 2011 research by Gordon C. L., Arnette R.A. M., and Smith R. E. It's interesting to note that cross-partner analyses reveal that while an individual's felt gratitude does not predict the other person's contentment, it does predict their satisfaction.

Working women will be more appreciative than nonworking women. Recent studies offered evidence in favor of this idea (see table 6). Chand P., & Gautam A. (2014) carried out an experiment to look into the levels of appreciation among working and non-working women. The study's conclusions show that there are significant disparities in the degrees of gratitude between working and non-working women.

Working women will be happier in their marriages than non-working women. Current studies did not support this idea (see table 6). According to Theda Renanita and Jenny Lukito Setiawan's (2018) research, working and nonworking women differ in the factors influencing marital satisfaction. Married couples who were working wives were impacted by communication, nearness, and financial relationships; married individuals who were not working wives were impacted primarily by financial ties and communication.

Conclusion

According to the study, people's marital satisfaction increases with age. The study also examined the frequency with which working women compared to non-working women express because of and thankfulness. According to the study, women who do not work report higher levels of marital satisfaction than those who do.

References

Algoe, S. B., Haidt, J., & Gable, S. L. (2008). Beyond reciprocity: Gratitude and relationships in everyday life. *Emotion, 8*(3), 425-429.

Atta, M., Qadir, F., & Khan, I. (2013). Relationship between trust and marital satisfaction among couples. *Journal of Behavioral Sciences, 23*(1), 45-58

Bartlett, M. Y. (2006). Gratitude and prosocial behavior: Helping when it costs you. *Psychological Science, 17*(4), 319-325

Benson, C. K. (1992), Forgiveness and the psychotherapeutic process, *Journal of Psychology and Christianity*, Vol. 114, pp. 76-81.

Darley, J. M., & Pittman, T. S. (2003), "The psychology of compensatory and retributive justice", Personality and Social Psychology Review, Vol. 7, pp. 324–336

Davidhizar, R. E., & Laurent, C. R. (2000), The art of forgiveness, Hospital Materiel Management Quarterly, Vol. 21, No. 3, pp. 48-53.

Chand, P., & Gautam, A. (2014)**.** Gratitude levels among working and non-working women: A comparative study. *Indian Journal of Psychology, 56*(2), 123-130

Drążkowski, D., Kaczmarek, L. D., & Kashdan, T. B. (2017). Gratitude pays: A weekly gratitude intervention influences monetary decisions, physiological responses, and emotional experiences. *Journal of Positive Psychology, 12*(6), 625-634

Friedman, P. H. (1998). Friedman affect scale. Plymouth Meeting PA: Foundation for Well-Being.

Gordon, C. L., Arnette, R. A. M., & Smith, R. E. (2011). Gratitude and marital satisfaction: The role of stress and social support. *Journal of Family Psychology, 25*(5), 678-688.

K. I. Pargament, & C. E. Thoresen (Eds.), Forgiveness: Theory, research, and practice (pp. 17-40). New York: Guilford Press. Elizondo, V. (1986), "I forgive but I do not forget", Concilium, Vol.184, pp. 69-79.

McCullough, M. E., Emmons, R. A., & Tsang, J.-A. (2002). The grateful disposition: A conceptual and empirical topography. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology,* 82, 112–127.

Sadiq, A., & Mehnaz, S. (2017). Forgiveness across the lifespan: A comparative study of adolescents, adults, and older adults. *Journal of Gerontology,* 72(4), 512-520

McCullough, M. E., Rachal, K. C., Sandage, S. J., Worthington, E. L., Brown, S. W., & Hight,

Seligman, M. E. P., Steen, T. A., Park, N., & Peterson, C. (2005). Positive psychology progress: Empirical validation of interventions. American Psychologist, 60, 410–421.

Sigala, M. (2019). Gratitude and mindfulness as predictors of marital happiness: A study of Greek couples. *Journal of Positive Psychology,* 14(3), 345-356.

Theda Renanita & Jenny Lukito Setiawan (2018). Factors influencing marital satisfaction among working and non-working women. *Journal of Family Studies,* 24(2), 210-225.

Ward, Peter J., Lundberg, Neil R., Zabriskie, Ramon B. and Berrett,Kristen. (2009).'Measuring Marital Satisfaction: A Comparison of the Revised Dyadic Adjustment Scale