

Gratitude And Happiness of Marital Satisfaction on Wives Who Experienced Long-Distance Marriage

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Abstract

Marriage provides benefits to physical and psychological health, sexual satisfaction and extends one's life span, but work or higher education for one partner requires individuals to live in different places or travel for longer durations and make the two partners separate. Every married couple will tend to have a desire to achieve satisfaction in their marital relationship even though they live apart due to work demands. Individuals, especially those who are married, are important to increase happiness and well-being in fostering a grateful household, because gratitude has a relationship with various aspects and components of happiness. The purpose of this study was to determine the gratitude and happiness of marital satisfaction on the wife whose husband left her to work outside the city. The research method uses quantitative methods. The sample in this study were wives who did not work, aged 20-40 years and were left by their husbands to work outside the city with a minimum span of 1 month. Data collection in this method uses non-probability sampling with purposive sampling technique. The measuring tools used in this research are adaptation of The Gratitude Questionnaire-6 (GQ-6), and Happiness Scale Based on Indigenous Psychology Approach and Couples Satisfaction Index (CSI).

Keywords: Gratitude; Happiness; Marriage; Long Distance Marriage

1. INTRODUCTION

Most humans will experience changes in their development, both physical, cognitive, and psychosocial changes. Erikson (in Papalia, Olds, & Feldman, 2008) suggests that when entering adulthood, humans are in a stage of development that will require them to build more intimate relationships with their kind, they will have the desire to be able to form a family, and this can be obtained by marriage. Marriage provides benefits for physical and psychological health, increases income, child development, sexual relationship satisfaction and extends one's life span (Stutzer & Frey, 2006).

Through the marriage process, married couples have hopes and goals they want to achieve. In addition to forming a happy household and producing offspring, another goal is to grow sincerity in trying to find a halal livelihood and increase a sense of responsibility (Harahap, in Mardani, 2011). Finding fortune for a lawful livelihood is done in various ways, one of which is work. Sometimes work or higher education requires individuals to live in different places or require a longer time, and both parties are separated and as a result can reduce physical intimacy (Stafford, 2005). Although, some recent studies have argued that Long Distance Relationships (LDR) can produce the same satisfaction compared to closer partners, we cannot deny the importance of missing physical intimacy and other nonverbal relationships in emotional relationships (Stafford, 2010).

1.1. Marital Satisfaction

Every married couple will have a desire to achieve satisfaction in their marital relationship (Papalia, Olds, & Feldman, 2008). For wives who are in a long distance relationship due to their husbands working outside the city, they certainly have a different quality of marital satisfaction compared to wives who do not

have long distance relationships. The degree of marital satisfaction can also be viewed from several factors. According to Laswell & Lobsenz (in Duvall & Miller, 1985) satisfaction depends on the degree of partner interaction and the extent to which each other's expectations are known, valued and satisfied. This is supported by Duvall & Miller (1985) which states that married couples feel marital satisfaction and happiness when both parties like, appreciate, admire, and enjoy togetherness. From the mental health aspect, husband and wife will not get happiness when marriage is only based on fulfilling biological and material needs without fulfilling affective needs (Sadli in Sanusi, Badri and Syaifuddin, 1996).

A study conducted by Carr, Freedman, et al (2014) regarding marital satisfaction and happiness states that a person's marital satisfaction has a fairly large and significant correlation to life satisfaction and happiness. It is undeniable that the existence of happiness in marriage cannot be separated from the achievement of marital satisfaction. The relationship between marital satisfaction experienced by the husband must have mutual support with marital satisfaction experienced by the wife.

1.2 Gratitude and marital satisfaction

Individuals, especially those who are married, are important for increasing happiness and well-being in fostering a household. One of them is to be grateful for what she does, because gratitude has a relationship with various aspects and components of happiness (Algoe, Gable & Maisel, 2010). According to Watkins, et al (2003), individuals who have a mindset to be continuously grateful are happy individuals. Gratitude can increase individuals to enjoy the benefits they get from a relationship so as to achieve positive emotional benefits for other people and partners (Weiner, in Emmons, et al, 2002).

Roberts (in Emmons & McCullough, 2004) states that grateful people tend to feel satisfied with what they have and are not prone to experiencing feelings of disappointment, regret, and frustration. Individuals who are grateful will tend to be less angry, resentful, jealous, hateful, and damage good relationships.

1.3 Happiness and marital satisfaction

The purpose of marriage is one of the main characteristics in a successful marriage. Rho (Khan & Aftab, 2013) defines marital satisfaction as an evaluation of individual satisfaction on the level of happiness, pleasure, or fulfillment of experiences in the relationship between a partner and his wife. Over the last decade, research has begun to explore the partner effect, or the extent to which one individual's experiences or traits influence other individuals in one's social network. For example, happily married people can show support and encouragement to them, by increasing their partner's happiness and well-being (Cook & Kenny, 2005).

Studies conducted by Carr, Freedman, et al (2014) regarding satisfaction marriage and happiness mention that one's marital satisfaction has a fairly large correlation and significant on life satisfaction and happiness. It can't be denied that no happiness in marriage apart from achieving marital satisfaction. The relationship between marital satisfaction experienced by the husband there must be support reciprocal with marital satisfaction experienced by the wife.

Individuals, especially those who are married important to increase happiness and prosperity in building a house ladder. One of them is with grateful for what he did because gratitude has a relationship with various aspects and components happiness (Algoe, Gable & Maisel, 2010). According to Watkins, et al (2003), individuals who have a mindset to continue grateful is a happy individual. Gratitude can increase individuals to enjoy the benefits they get from a relationship so as to achieve the emotional benefits that positive for other people and partners (Weiner, in Emmons, et al, 2002).

Roberts (Emmons & McCullough, 2004) states that grateful people tend to feel satisfied with what you have and not prone to feelings of disappointment, regret, and frustration. Individuals who grateful will tend not to be easy angry, grudge, jealous, hate, and destroy good relationships.

In a qualitative research conducted by Prameswara & Sakti (2016) on 3 subjects in the form of husband and wife who live in Semarang and Solo, the findings of the research that was experienced in general from the three of them showed that the wife who underwent a long-distance marriage relationship felt bored with her

loneliness when taking care of the family. The subject's married life has an impact on gratitude as a wisdom in living it, because gratitude can lighten the burden of undergoing a long-distance marriage relationship. So it can also be said that gratitude is closely related to marital satisfaction in couples even though they are in a long-distance marriage relationship.

The purpose of this study was to determine the gratitude and happiness of marital satisfaction on wives who experienced long-distance marriages.

2. RESEARCH AND METHODE

2.1 Participants

This research uses quantitative methods. Respondents in this study had the following characteristics: a) Wives aged 21-40 years. b) Not working c) Married age of at least 1 year d) Left by husband working out of town for a minimum span of 1 month.

2.2 Measures

Data collection in this method uses non-probability sampling with purposive sampling technique. The researcher first recorded the number of wives who experienced long-distance marriages in various regions, after the data was obtained, the researchers then distributed questionnaires.

2.2.1 Marital satisfaction

The marital satisfaction measurement tool used will be adapted from the Couples Satisfaction Index (CSI) measuring tool proposed by (Funk & Rogge, 2007). This measuring tool takes measurements globally so it does not have a specific dimension. In addition, CSI has much better research accuracy and is better able to detect differences in satisfaction levels. This marital satisfaction measurement tool consists of 32 items, but has a short form consisting of 16 items and 4 items. In this study, a short form consisting of 16 items will be used with responses using a varied Likert scale. This short form consists of 16 items consisting of 5 section formats.

2.2.2 Gratitude

The measuring instrument used in this research is the adaptation of The Gratitude Questionnaire-6 (GQ-6) by, Emmons, McCullough and Tsang (2002), the Happiness Scale Based on Indigenous Psychology Approach by Anggoro and Widhiarso which has been modified (2010) and Couples The Satisfaction Index (CSI) proposed by (Funk & Rogge, 2007).

The Gratitude Questionnaire-6 (GQ-6) consists of 6 statement items arranged in English, so that in this study the adaptation process into Indonesian was carried out. The adaptation process starts from translation into Indonesian and then the Indonesian version is validated through an expert review process which aims to check the suitability of the language used. The Gratitude Questionnaire-6 (GQ-6) uses a Likert scale consisting of a group of favorable statements with answer choices and scoring assessments, namely: strongly disagree given a value of 1, disagree given a value of 2, less agree given a value of 3, neutral given a value 4, slightly agree was given a value of 5, agreed was given a value of 6, and strongly agreed was given a value of 7. Meanwhile, the unfavorable statement group with answer choices and scoring assessments, namely: strongly disagree was given a value of 7, disagreed was given a value of 6, less agree was given a value 5, neutral was given a score of 4, slightly agreed was given a score of 3, agreed was given a value of 2, and strongly agreed was given a value of 1.

2.2.3 Subjective Happiness

The Subjective Happiness Scale consists of 4 items. This scale uses an interval scale consisting of numbers 1 to 7 with 1 indicating unhappy to 7 very happy with the fourth question counted backwards. The

data analysis method used in this study was using a non-parametric method, namely Spearman. This analysis was used because one of the research variables was not normally distributed.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Based on table 1 using the Kormogorov-Smirnov normality test, it can be seen that the results of the third variable, namely gratitude, happiness and marital satisfaction, have abnormal data because they have a significance of $p > .05$.

When viewed from a total of 42 participants, the average score for partner satisfaction is 77.14, which means that almost all participants are satisfied with their relationship with their partner. The average score for gratitude is 36.04, which means that almost all participants feel quite grateful. Meanwhile, the average score for happiness is 23.66, which means that almost all participants feel happy (Table 2).

Table 1

Tests of Normality						
	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	Df	Sig.
CSI_Total	.173	42	.003	.900	42	.001
GQ_Total	.196	42	.000	.859	42	.000
SHS_Total	.136	42	.048	.911	42	.003

Table 2

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
CSI_Total	42	45.00	90.00	77.1429	11.05545
SHS_Total	42	14.00	28.00	23.6667	3.77842
GQ_Total	42	22.00	42.00	36.0476	3.64225
Valid N (listwise)	42				

4,186 (Table 3). The description of the results of this study can be used as a limitation in the categorization of the research sample, namely the classification of early adults with an age range of 25 to 40 years.

Table 3

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Marital Age	42	3	16	7.50	4.186
Age	42	25	40	32.55	5.119
Valid N (listwise)	42				

Table 4

			CSI_Total	GQ_Total
Spearman's rho	CSI_Total	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.334*
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.031
		N	42	42
	GQ_Total	Correlation Coefficient	.334*	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.031	.
		N	42	42

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 5

	CSI_Total	SHS_Total
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Spearman's rho	CSI_Total	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.574**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	42	42
	SHS_Total	Correlation Coefficient	.574**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	42	42

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

From the results of the correlation test using the Spearman correlation test between the variables of gratitude and marital satisfaction, the result is that the probability (sig) of Spearman's Rank is $0.03 > 0.05$, so H_0 is accepted, which means that there is a significant relationship between gratitude and marital satisfaction. Likewise, between the variables of happiness and marital satisfaction, the result is that the probability (sig) of Spearman's Rank is $0.00 > 0.05$, then H_0 is accepted, which means that there is a significant relationship between happiness and marital satisfaction (Tables 4 & 5).

The results of this study indicate that happiness and gratitude have a significant effect on marital satisfaction even with the condition of the wife left by her husband to work out of town for at least 3 months. Subjective happiness felt by one of the partners turned out to also lead to happiness and satisfaction with the condition of the marriage. Happiness itself, according to Rusydi (2007), is a feeling that can be felt in the form of feeling calm, peaceful, and having peace. While subjective happiness is happiness that comes within a person and bases that happiness on the level of self-satisfaction. In this study, marital happiness and satisfaction have a significant correlation of 0.00, which means the higher the individual's level of happiness, the higher the satisfaction of the couple.

Happiness that leads to satisfaction in marriage is proven not to always involve close distance. Other studies have also shown that couples who communicate well and exchange displays of affection frequently with their partners report higher satisfaction and gratitude for the most important relationship needs (Gottman, 1998).

Happiness is also born from accepting all the shortcomings possessed by a partner. As well as research conducted by Chudori, (2000) which shows that there is a relationship between adjustment to a partner is true happiness in a marriage, not only because of beauty, enjoyment and mere intimacy, but the main thing is if both are able to overcome the problems that arise in the marriage.

The distance that separates the two married couples is a problem for both husband and wife. However, true happiness is not only based on the sweetness of life in the household, but also when experiencing problems in the household, happy because they can accept each other's shortcomings between partners (Chudori, 2000). Individual marital satisfaction is determined by how the individual faces conflict in their household (Olson & DeFrain, 2003).

In addition to happiness, gratitude is also closely related to marital satisfaction. This study shows that there is a significant correlation, which is equal to 0.03. This means that there is a significant relationship between gratitude and marital satisfaction. This is in line with the results of research conducted by Algoe, Gable, and Maisel (2010) which found that gratitude is predicted to increase satisfaction in a relationship, both for those who give kindness and those who receive it. The higher the gratitude of a wife, the higher the level of marital satisfaction she has. Roberts (Emmons & McCullough, 2004) states that grateful people tend to feel satisfied with what they have and are not prone to experiencing feelings of disappointment, regret, and frustration. Individuals who are grateful will tend to be less angry, resentful, jealous, hateful, and damage good relationships.

Someone who has high gratitude will tend to use various positive coping strategies such as seeking emotional and instrumental support from others, and making plans to resolve conflicts in her life (Wood, Joseph, & Linley, 2007). Gratitude is one of the positive emotions, while positive emotions will encourage

individuals to build creativity, individual cognitive abilities, and encourage individuals to be able to think using common sense and act rationally when facing problems (Fredrickson, 2004).

Wood, Joseph, and Linley (2007) also revealed that individuals who have high gratitude will see the world as a pleasant place, therefore they will see more positive aspects that occur in their lives. This perception will make individuals more willing to face problems that occur in their lives and try to use positive actions to solve them.

4. CONCLUSION AND LIMITATION

4.1 Conclusion

This study aims to determine the relationship of gratitude and happiness to marital satisfaction in women who are left to work outside the city. The results of this study indicate that there is a relationship between gratitude and happiness on marital satisfaction. This means that the higher the gratitude, the higher the marital satisfaction and also happiness. The higher the happiness, the higher the marital satisfaction. The results of this study also showed that almost all participants aged 25 to 40 years had high gratitude and happiness.

As is known, every married couple wants to achieve marital satisfaction, and distance is an obstacle in the household that can affect marital satisfaction. The existence of this study can see that, a wife who has high gratitude and happiness tends not to worry about the distance from her partner and can still achieve marital satisfaction.

It is recommended for women who are left behind by their husbands to work outside the city to be able to maintain a high level of gratitude in order to be happy so as to achieve marital satisfaction even with the distance. Researchers can reveal other factors that might affect gratitude and happiness on marital satisfaction in women whose husbands leave their jobs outside the city or country.

4.2 Limitation of the study

This study also has limitations in the form of data in the study being analyzed using non-parametric statistical techniques so that the results of the study cannot be generalized in general. Demographic data revealed in this study are still related to marital satisfaction issues such as age of participants, age of marriage, length of time left by husband to work outside the city / country, husband's occupation, and place of residence. However, other data were not disclosed such as the number of children, working women and others that may be related to the measured variables.

Another thing that is of concern to researchers is the limitation of the criteria for participants, including women who do not work. The results showed that almost all participants were satisfied with their relationship with their partner, felt quite grateful and felt happy. This proves that the possibility of work on the wife does not affect the marital satisfaction of the wife whose husband left her to work outside the city. The same thing was described in several studies which found that working and non-working women reported no difference in happiness with their lives (Wright, 1978).

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