



Original Article

Be aware and grateful for little things: The Relative Contribution of Mindfulness and Gratitude in Predicting Satisfaction.

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Abstract

Background: Indeed, both Mindfulness and Gratitude go hand in hand. As one goes into a state of mindfulness and opens their heart to gratitude, one may experience more positive feelings toward life and make choices of all types of events with an open-eyed sense in a nonjudgmental way. That may be leading to being overly focused on life circumstances in a constructive way and enhancing people's life satisfaction. The present study aims to recognize the different influences of gratitude and mindfulness in contributing to life satisfaction; and investigate the levels of mindfulness, gratitude, and life satisfaction among university students.

Methodology: In the study, 256 young adults were drafted from 4 educational institutes in Karachi. However, the random sampling method was used to recruit them. The mean age of the sample was 20 years, with the range of 18-25. The research tools included Mindful Attention Awareness Scale¹, Gratitude Questionnaire-Six Item Form (GQ-6)², and Satisfaction with Life Scale³ by using a brief demographic sheet and consent form, through which data was obtained.

Results: Descriptive statistics and regression analysis was used to clarify the pattern of the result, and the findings were highly significant at $p < .001$. The outcomes demonstrated that the level of mindfulness comes in the low range (49.6%) of the study sample, while the range of gratitude was moderate (52.5%) to high levels (42.3%) correspondingly. Almost half of the participants reported a moderate level (49.3%) of life satisfaction. Further, the results showed that mindfulness and gratitude are the highest contributors to Life Satisfaction. As gratitude pointed out, 42% and mindfulness predicted 23% to expect contentment.

Conclusion: The study proposed a theoretical paradigm that mindfulness impacts satisfaction cognitively, while gratitude influences satisfaction emotionally. Thus, the benefits of both constructs are evident and improve people's lives.

Keywords

Mindfulness, Gratitude, Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS), Positive Psychology.



Introduction

Professionals raise contemporary questions, such as defining the good life or wellbeing and how to achieve it. Thus, Philosophers' academic and intellectual curiosity or developing deep understanding drives them to figure out whether it is human virtue, subjective feeling, or an objective condition. So that it can be accumulated and an effective intrusion can be developed. On the other hand, policymakers are curious about how they may incorporate the functional idea of containment into the public policy design. From their point of view, the general public is less concerned with technical details and more focused on improving living quality or the characteristics that contribute to a happy life in both public and private spheres. Furthermore, elements affecting mental health and wellbeing are widespread, yet many words are frequently used in literature⁴. This field has a rich theoretical foundation and a lengthy history, and Bradburn's⁵ provided the initial idea.

Positive psychology is a well-known area of psychology that scientifically identifies positive traits within a person scientifically⁶, along with studies on well-being. The goal is to assist people in flourishing and developing into fully functioning, shifting the emphasis from fixing the mistake to identifying inner potential and strengths. This will help people avoid developing severe mental health disorders. Over the past 20 years, much research has been done on positive emotions, optimism, learned optimism, hope, courage, wisdom, forgiveness, flow, and spirituality. Similarly, gratitude and mindfulness are consistent and positively related to each other in different populations. New emerging topics examine mindfulness and gratitude as variables that aid containment in relationships⁷.

In simple terms, mindfulness is the purposeful and unbiased attention to nonjudgmental thoughts, feelings, and sensations an individual experiences in each moment. Being both a quality and a state, mindfulness can be both a process and a consequence. As such, it is a broad phrase that can be used in various contexts. However, it can be a psychological process and a theoretical notion (Mindfulness; the endeavor of obtaining) (Mindfulness). Instead of categorizing mindfulness as a quality or condition, Bishop and colleagues (2004)⁸ contend it might be an acquired process.

The experience of mindfulness might be challenging to express. Moreover, Kabat-Zinn has offered a working definition of mindfulness that includes acknowledging the present moment and unintentionally concealing the experience of the present moment. Tremendous progress has been made in teaching mindfulness as a secular subject and in enhancing one's spirituality²⁴ apart from any faith, tradition, or religion, as mindful procedures improve mental health and achieve the purpose of life^{1,9}. The meta-analysis shows an overall effect size of 27 between mindfulness and satisfaction⁷. Mindfulness is directly and indirectly linked with contentment, enabling individuals with skilled emotional repertoires to improve martial quality.

Moreover, mindful training significantly impacts people's wellbeing, coping skills, and relationship containment. According to Carson et al., Preventive mindfulness can improve overall health and wellbeing in recent studies^{1,10}. It may be argued that while mindfulness does not directly contribute, it does link to unique adaptive coping mechanisms.

On the other hand, positive psychologist state that gratitude is more complex than mood or state as it is a more profound sense



of acknowledging things or individuals that brings endure positivity. If we look at the more straightforward definition, it can be a feeling or an emotion that senses our appreciation level in return when we receive favor from others. The scientific approach states that gratitude is not an act but a positive emotion, which is essential because it can be an instrument of fulfillment and association with well-being. The topic of gratitude has been focused on research for many years, and no one can refuse its role in promoting contentment. It is one of the significant strengths of character and has an association with contentment, prosperity, and feeling of gladness and has a significant effect on wellbeing and satisfying relationships¹¹. However, gratitude and mindfulness share a close connection with mindfulness as one should be completely aware of a favor, they received to experience it⁷.

However, Wood et al.¹² suggested that gratitude has the same potential benefits as mindfulness. Gratitude positively correlates with an outstanding level of eudemonic wellbeing and post-traumatic growth, and it negatively links with many psychopathology forms, such as depression and generalized anxiety disorder. Moreover, being mindful creates unbiased awareness of the present moment and the value of positive and negative emotions, and gratitude creates a sense among the individual to cherish joyous moments.

Thus, mindfulness and gratitude parallel each other when an individual goes into the state of mindfulness; they adopt to be aware of their surroundings. They may look at themselves and their surrounding with curiosity unbiasedly and accept it. This will help cultivate gratitude and become aware of a more positive quality of themselves and the world and then thankful for that; when looking around the world, most of the time,

view it from their perspective. Many of us only focus on the negative aspects, which leads us to view reality distortedly. Being mindful takes away from a judgmental view of life and equips individuals with observation skills to take life with full awareness. Furthermore, when they appreciate things around them mindfully, they have a different perspective of the world.

Thus, mindfulness and gratitude go parallel when an individual goes into the state of mindfulness; individuals adapt to their surroundings. He looks at himself and his surroundings with curiosity unbiasedly and accepts it. It will help cultivate gratitude and become aware of a more positive quality of him and the world and then be thankful for that; when we look around the world, we often view it from our perspective. Many of us only focus on the negative aspects, which leads us to view reality distortedly. Being mindful removes a judgmental view of life and equips individuals with observation skills to take life with full awareness. Furthermore, when we appreciate things around us mindfully, we have a different perspective of the world.

Youngsters must develop gratitude, bliss, and mindfulness due to many factors, including creating a link with personal growth. However, satisfied individuals have increased self-esteem, relief from anxiety, functional morale, and modesty in either males or females¹³. In the American sample, gratitude is a significant predictor of life satisfaction. In addition to that gratitude and mindfulness, therapeutic interventions help lessen depression and increase contentment. This idea is further supported by Swain et al.¹⁴ suggested that mindfulness and gratitude are wonderful intrusions that demonstrate their practical implication. Fuller-Tyszkiewicz et al.¹⁵ conducted an experimental study in which the



intervention group watched brief videos in succession (e.g., gratitude-related, relaxation tasks, and breathing exercises). It shows that the compression intervention group receives greater body satisfaction.

The broaden-and-Build Model proposed that positive feelings extend individual reasoning capacity and build social, psychological, and intellectual resources. Positive emotions, specifically gratitude, stimulate participation in positive acts, which lead to betterment¹⁶. More, grateful thoughts make a healthier temperament, while the study shows that gratitude was rated as a 58% of predictive variable among university students¹⁷.

Thus, the above studies show that mindfulness and gratitude are crucial in achieving individual contentment and welfare. Moreover, the findings support the betterment and development of personal growth programs for university students. Therefore, this study aims to find out separate inputs of gratitude (feelings) and mindfulness (cognition) to predict satisfaction in undergraduates. Moreover, the second objective is to determine university students' mindfulness, gratitude, and satisfaction levels.

Questions

1. Determine the levels of Mindfulness, Gratitude, and Life satisfaction levels among university students.
2. Is gratitude contributing to predicting life satisfaction among university students?
3. Is mindfulness contributing to predicting life satisfaction among university students?

Methodology

Participants

In the study, 256 young adults were drafted from 4 educational institutes in Karachi. However, the random sampling method was

used to recruit them. The mean age of the sample was 20 years, with the range of 18-25. Though 174 were females and 82 were males in the sample, nearly all were undergrads. Furthermore, each participant signed the consent, was informed about voluntary participation, and maintained confidentiality.

Procedure

In the meantime, the study examines the percentage of mindfulness, gratitude, and satisfaction of life. More to examine the different influences of mindfulness and gratitude to contributing life satisfaction of undergraduates. Although, the descriptive and inferential method is considered the most applicable for the aims of the present study, including assessing and validating its hypotheses. The technique quantitatively illustrates the determined phenomenon by defining the contribution between variables. The surveys were completed in one sitting, and this method was used successfully to collect data.

Instruments: Psychometric properties

Mindful Attention Awareness Scale (MAAS)¹: The most popular scale for measuring mindfulness in positive psychology is the Mindful Attention Awareness Scale, developed by Kirk Warren Brown and Richard M. Ryan in 2003. The state MAAS is a 5-item scale designed to assess the short-term or current expression of a core characteristic of mindfulness, namely, a receptive state of mind in which attention, informed by a sensitive awareness of what is occurring in the present, observes what is taking place. MAAS scores can range from 0 to 6, and higher scores indicate greater mindfulness. Researchers generally agree that the MAAS is a valid and reliable method of measuring mindfulness, and it is both simple to score and easy to interpret.



Gratitude Questionnaire-Six-Item Form (GQ-6)²: which is designed to evaluate the proneness to experience gratitude in daily life; responses to items are measured on the basis of a 7-point Likert-style response scale, where participant rate their level of agreement on each item ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree). There was a reverse scoring for items 3 and 6 to get the total sum. That was our total GQ-6 score. This range of scoring was between 6 and 42. McCullough et al. (2001) reported the GQ-6 to have high internal consistency. Cronbach's alphas were .77. Satisfaction with life scale (SWLS) The scale constructed by

Diener, E., Emmons, R. A., Larsen, R. J., & Griffin, S., 1985. The instrument is designed to measure universal cognitive gauging of satisfaction with one's life. It is a brief questionnaire that contains only five items measured by a 7-point Likert-type scale; the probable range of scoring is 5-35, and a score of 20 indicates a neutral point on the scale. Diener et al. (1985) found that the SWLS has favorable psychometrics properties with a 0.87 coefficient alpha and 2 -a months test-retest stability coefficient of 0.82. In contrast, Factor analysis of the SWLS revealed that it is unidimensional.

Result

Table 1 shows the normality of the distribution of participants' scores to the Mindfulness total score, Gratitude total

score, SWLS total score, and Positive and Negative effects total score.

Table 1: The Statistical Description of the Mindfulness, Gratitude, and Life Satisfaction levels among university students (n=170).

Statistical indicators scales	M	S.D	Skewness	The Highest score	The Lowest Score	The maximum score in the sample	The minimum score in the sample
Mindfulness	33.6941	7.67078	.128	51.00	17.00	90.00	15.00
Gratitude	31.3176	4.94517	-.913	40.00	16.00	42.00	6.00
SWLS	23.1882	6.03833	-.523	34.00	6.00	35.00	5.00
Positive effects	11.9294	2.57336	.180	18.00	10.00	50.00	10.00
Negative effects	18.5294	3.65555	.243	27.00	12.00	50.00	10.00

Mindfulness is low, while gratitude and life satisfaction are moderate among university students. The Mindfulness total score extended from 15 to 90 (M = 33.6941; SD = 7.67078). The outcome indicated that most participants (49.6%) scored low on mindfulness. In comparison, 15.3% came under the high level of mindfulness, even though 33.9% pointed out the moderate level of the range. The overall gratitude score extended from 6 to 42 (M = 31.317; SD = 4.945). The findings showed that 52.5% of the students informed an average level of gratitude, while 42.3% stated an above-average range, and only 5.12% reported a low level of gratitude. The students were split



into 3 groupings regarding the total life satisfaction score: High, Moderate, and Low, with a mean of 23.188; nearly half of the population (49.3%) stated a modest level of life satisfaction. However, the others (35.2%) informed a high level, and (15.3%) reported a low level of life satisfaction (Table 2).

Table 2: Level of Mindfulness, Gratitude & Life Satisfaction (n=170).

Level Variable	Low		Moderate		High	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Mindfulness	79	49.6%	53	33.9%	24	15.3
Gratitude	8	5.12%	82	52.5%	66	42.3
SWLS	24	15.3%	77	49.3%	55	35.2

A simple linear regression analysis was performed to analyze the assumption by determining the influence of the Gratitude and Mindfulness aggregate scores on contributing Satisfaction with Life in undergraduates. Results reveal that mindfulness projected 23.5% of the variance in life satisfaction. At the same time, the Gratitude domain accounted for a 42.1% variance in satisfaction with life score in the research sample. The result pointed out that the rise in gratitude and mindfulness among university students increases their likelihood of Satisfaction with Life.

Table 3: The contribution of Gratitude & Mindfulness to predicting Satisfaction with Life among university students.

Dependent Variable	Predictive models	R2-Value	Regression Coefficient B	Standard regression coefficient Beta	Fixed value	F-value	Sig.	t-value	Sig.
Satisfaction with Life (N=171)	Mindfulness	0.234	2.001	0.484	56.297	136.188	0.000	11.670	0.000
	Gratitude	0.421	.633	.083	5.214	219.341	0.000	7.648	0.000

Discussion

In this portion, the outcomes consider the previous literature. It is to be observed that two hypotheses were investigated in the present study. Both hypotheses were accepted. The findings regarding assumption 1, as demonstrated in table 1.2, show that the level of mindfulness was low (49.6%) in the study sample, and the gratitude score ranged from moderate to high in 52.5% and 42.3%, respectively. While almost half participants reported a moderate level (49.3%) of life satisfaction

The aggregate Mindfulness score extended from 15 to 90 (M = 33.6941; SD = 7.67078). Most participants (49.6%) have a low level of mindfulness, although 15.3% come under a high level of mindfulness, while 33.9% reported the average range. The gratitude score fluctuated from 6 to 42 (M = 31.317; SD = 4.945). Though, 52.5% stated a moderate level of gratitude in the research sample, while less than half (42.3%) stated an above-average score and only 5.12% reported a low level of gratitude. The sample was allocated into High, moderate, and Low categories



regarding the total life satisfaction score: with a mean of 23.188. The finding exhibited that almost half of the sample (49.3%) had a moderate level of satisfaction. In comparison, the remaining (35.2%) reported a high level, while (and 15.3%) had a low level of life satisfaction.

This result indicates that the level of mindfulness fluctuated from low to moderate levels, while the score of gratitude and life satisfaction was reported from moderate to high among university students. The growing phase of participants can support the average level of mindfulness as they seem to discover their characters and way of life in this stage, As assuming to grow into adults and heighten their understanding of the inner self and towards life. That is a term called 'productivity' by Eriksson. The results are coherent with the previous study of Hj Ramli, Alavi, Mehrinezhad, and Ahmadi¹⁸, which shows moderate levels of mindfulness were found in the sample aged 18-30 years. On the contrary, other studies also show a good level of mindfulness in undergraduate students. As students enjoy university life, they get moderate to high scores on the level of gratitude and life satisfaction clarified by scholastic, health, or societal services. The results are coherent with other studies as well¹⁹. When other members of society contribute to wellbeing, it ultimately makes them feel more grateful and may develop feelings of appreciation and contentment. That may lead an individual towards positive feelings.

Another critical point is that undergraduate students usually have a positive attitude toward their life goals and achievement. So, the positive intention leads them to moderate to high satisfaction towards life²⁰. This result is also consistent with Shawaqfeh and Almahaireh's study (2019)²⁰, which found a moderate to high level of life satisfaction among university students.

The second and third objectives were also hypothesized and an extensive literature base indicated a causal relationship between Mindfulness and Gratitude toward life satisfaction. Therefore, In the second and third hypotheses, our investigation is to examine the contribution of mindfulness and gratitude to life satisfaction separately. We found a statistically significant contribution to life satisfaction as shown by Table 1.3, that declared both variables (Mindfulness & gratitude) are towering contributors to contentment. Even gratitude comes up with 42%, and mindfulness comes up with 23% contributing contentment. That shows that if the level of gratitude and mindfulness is elevated, it ultimately increases the life satisfaction score of the participants observed. Chavan, Deshmukh, and Singh's results are consistent with the above studies. They discovered that both constructs are the higher contributors and assistance pleasure, where gratitude determined 36% and mindfulness affected 13% of the variance for contentment. Simultaneously, the more affirmative the person's feelings are, it would be convenient to emphasize the positive face of one's life and experience contented with it. Finally, life satisfaction can be improved²¹.

Instead, a person can be grateful mindfully for various things such as financial gain, job constancy, perceived autonomy, fitness, and life expectancy, which may signify "things" to be grateful for²². Thus, it was essential to examine whether being grateful mindfully would predict a person's levels of life satisfaction. Undoubtedly, relevance deriving demonstrated its strong and unique predicting relationship over time and develops the significance of expressing gratitude, which tends to satisfy them. Besides, both elements are indispensable for improving people's quality of life and depending on each other. Here, the researcher will discuss the predicting role of



both (Mindfulness and Gratitude) toward satisfaction separately.

Certainly, Mindful individuals are more likely to notice positive life experiences and be grateful for them, which eventually increases their life satisfaction²³. Extensive published studies exposed that gratitude and life satisfaction are associated with numerous pointers of a better life^{12,24}. So, gratitude is a predictor of contentment, boosts artistic reciprocity, and forms psychological, social, spiritual, and positive resources. Eventually, all these resources would directly boost the likelihood of satisfaction with life. Furthermore, gratitude significantly predicted satisfaction by 18%²⁵.

Previous literature exhibited a positive correlation between these two components, and studies support this interpretation. McCullough, Emmons & Tsang² found that those who are high in gratitude likely to experience higher levels of life satisfaction. One more well-known study was conducted by Froh et al., which divided 221 participants into gratitude and control conditions. In gratitude, condition participants were supposed to count their blessings as they uncovered that gratitude is a significant predictor of life satisfaction, and both are positively associated with each other. Moreover, these are the key element of people's good mental health.

Besides the fellow of gratitude, mindfulness also predicted 23.4% of the variance in satisfaction appearances among undergraduates. This result suggests that a greater level of mindfulness would raise the probability of being satisfied. This finding is consistent with the existing studies²⁶. and the Mindfulness-to-Meaning theory²⁷. Individuals with a high level of mindfulness are more willing to accept themselves and the events that happen to them actively, and they are more aware of their internal and

external environments; the higher their evaluations of their lives are, the more they are prone to accept things that they cannot change, such as appearance and thoughts than individuals with low mindfulness. These findings are more like the study of Kavaklı and Özteke Kozan, Kesici²⁸. That demonstrates a strong and positive link between mindfulness, forgiveness, and contentment²⁹. Likewise, a classified regression analysis examined mindfulness to determine pleasure. Another study reveals that mindfulness, healthy growth, and forgiveness have a positive relationship³⁰. Thus, the benefits of both constructs are evident and improve people's life and contentment.

Conclusion

In short, the above article assumes that mindfulness influences cognitive satisfaction. At the same time, the effect of gratitude on satisfaction is mainly related to emotional traits and disposition. Although, relevant literature discloses that both variables (Mindfulness and gratitude) significantly contribute to university students' life satisfaction. Conclusively, a person with a magical feeling of gratitude and thinking in a way to be aware and use all their senses make them more attentive, have good energy, and have better physical and psychological health; ultimately, all these elements may lead to a high level of satisfaction with life. Thus, the benefits of both constructs are evident and improve people's lives.

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