

## Gratitude and Quality of Life in Muslim Early Adulthood

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### Abstract

At the stage of development, individuals will pass the adolescence stage to the adult stage. At that stage, the individual will be in the early adult phase, where the individual will focus on preparing for his future and evaluating his adolescence so that in adulthood individuals have a quality life. In a quality life, there is an element of religiosity, wherein a Muslim's life gratitude is one aspect of religiosity. The objective of this study is to investigate the correlation between gratitude and quality of life in Muslims early adulthood. The subjects in this study were 101 Muslims early adulthood consisting of college students and working individuals. Data collection in this study uses a scale in the form of a questionnaire to reveal two variables, namely WHOQOL-BREF scale from WHO (World Health Organization) and then the scale of gratitude is a scale developed by Rusdi (2016). The results of data processing with Pearson Product Moment correlation on 101 subjects showed that quality of life and gratitude were positively correlated significantly ( $p < 0.05$ ) with  $p = 0.000$  and the correlation coefficient of  $r = 0.450$ . The research had a limitation that the gratitude scale can only be applied to the subject of a Muslim because the measuring instrument used has a value that is trusted by Muslims and on this research only applied to subjects in a number of regions in Indonesia. It is hoped that this research can be a study of psychology, especially in the study of Islamic psychology.

**Keywords:** gratitude, quality of life, early adulthood, muslims

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## *Kebersyukuran dan Kualitas Hidup pada Muslim Fase Perkembangan Dewasa Awal*

### Abstrak

Pada tahap perkembangan, individu akan melewati tahap remaja hingga tahap dewasa. Pada tahap tersebut individu akan berada pada fase dewasa awal, dimana individu tersebut akan fokus mempersiapkan masa depannya dan mengevaluasi masa remajanya sehingga pada masa dewasa individu tersebut memiliki kehidupan yang berkualitas. Dalam kehidupan yang berkualitas terdapat unsur religiusitas, dimana dalam hidup seorang muslim rasa syukur merupakan salah satu aspek religiusitas. Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk mengetahui hubungan syukur dengan kualitas hidup pada umat Islam awal masa dewasa. Subjek dalam penelitian ini adalah 101 umat Islam dewasa awal yang terdiri dari mahasiswa dan pekerja. Pengumpulan data dalam penelitian ini menggunakan skala berupa kuesioner untuk mengungkap dua variabel yaitu skala WHOQOL-BREF dari WHO (World Health Organization) dan kemudian skala kebersyukuran merupakan skala yang dikembangkan oleh Rusdi (2016). Hasil pengolahan data dengan korelasi Pearson Product Pada 101 subjek menunjukkan bahwa kualitas hidup dan rasa syukur berkorelasi positif secara signifikan ( $p < 0,05$ ) dengan  $p = 0,000$  dan koefisien korelasi  $r = 0,450$ . Penelitian ini memiliki batasan bahwa skala syukur hanya dapat diterapkan pada subjek beragama Islam karena alat ukur yang digunakan memiliki nilai yang dipercaya oleh umat Islam dan pada penelitian ini hanya diterapkan pada subjek di beberapa daerah di Indonesia. Diharapkan penelitian ini dapat menjadi kajian psikologi khususnya dalam kajian psikologi Islam.

**Kata Kunci:** kebersyukuran, quality of life, dewasa awal, muslim

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## Introduction

When the future is considered an objective that will be achieved by individuals in young adulthood, individuals can be highly motivated to optimize the future by seeking information and knowledge related to social goals within reach. According to Lang and Cartensen (Allemand & Hill, 2016) compilation of individuals seeing a limited future, the focus will shift from successful optimization in the future by maximizing useful activities and seeking experience in the present. Individuals will be more motivated to achieve the goals to be achieved in the past for the future and future. Early adulthood is important for everyone. These related problems can directly or indirectly affect their physical and psychological health. If an individual is not able to solve the problem then, in the long run, can be caused by depression. Gratitude is a coping change that can form positive attribution and has been proven to relieve stress and depression (Wood, Maltby, Stewart, Linley, & Joseph, 2008). Gratitude can help individuals to enjoy a positive life experience, such as getting something they want in life so that individuals are able to get the most from satisfaction and excitement from the discussion at that time (Lyubomirsky & Kristin, 2013). Gratitude is an important meaning in an effort to obtain happiness. According to Biswas, Diener & Dean (2007), happiness is a reflection of the quality of all human life that is more than achieving goals.

In the field of psychology, especially positive psychology, social problems that occur in the community regarding the achievement of happiness in life are of concern to current experts. Gratitude is considered to be one of the variables in positive psychology. According to Seligman (2005), gratitude can be interpreted as thank you for a gift. Gratitude can reduce a person's

negative emotions (Sheldon & Sonja, 2006). Meanwhile, according to Breen, Kashdan, Lenser, and Fincham (2010), gratitude can help individuals to avoid symptoms of depression. Research conducted by Emmons and McCullough (Putri, Sukarti, & Rachmawati, 2016) shows that gratitude is a way for someone to thank God. Gratitude can affect physical and psychological well-being. Individuals who have gratitude will have optimism in facing their daily lives.

Al Jauziyah (2006) explains that Islamic religion teaches people to always be grateful in every situation, both when someone is in good condition and when experiencing a disaster. Gratitude is when the individual realizes the blessings and blessings of Allah, by praising Allah Ta'ala (Al-Tirmidzi, 2005). According to El-Bantanie (2009), gratitude is a situation when someone uses the blessings that Allah Ta'ala has bestowed, and obeys in order to draw closer to Allah. According to Wood, Froh, and Geraghty (Mills, et al., 2015), the orientation of gratitude in life has a broader meaning not only about attention and appreciation in aspects of life but these feelings can be attributed to outside resources such as humans, animals, or God. There is research conducted by McCullough, Emmons, and Tsang (2004) stating that one of the factors that influence gratitude is religiosity. Religiosity is a person's understanding of religious values that he believes. Religious values make executing have high hopes and optimism (Ciarrocchi, Liacco, & Deneke, 2008). Gratitude will cause a positive evaluation of life and a desire to maintain and improve positive outcomes (Froh, Yurkewicz, & Kashdan, 2009).

## Quality of life

Quality of life is a concept that is broadly influenced by one's physical health, psychological state, levels of independence,

social relations, personal beliefs and relationships with prominent characteristics or traits in their environment (WHO, 1998). Then, WHO (The WHOQOL Group, 1996) revealed that there are four aspects that affect a person's quality of life, namely physical, psychological, social, and environmental health. The concept of quality of life broadly includes how one measures 'goodness' from various aspects of life (Theofilou, 2013). This evaluation includes a person's emotional reaction to life events, dispositions, a sense of fulfillment and life satisfaction, satisfaction with work and personal relationships.

Ruggeri (2001) explains the good quality of life is something that is expected by every individual. In general, individuals provide images of quality of life as things that are related to ideal or expected life attainment (Kahneman, 1999). Several factors influence the quality of life, namely cultural factors, goals, and standards. Not only that, demographic factors such as gender, age, education, employment, marital status, income, and relationships with other individuals also greatly affect the quality of life (Lia, Fu, & YI, 2005). Moons, Marquet, Budts, and De Geest (2004) explain that gender is a factor that can affect the quality of life. Ryff and Singer (Papalia & Harvey, 2006) explain in general about the quality of life of men and women not much different, but women are more related to aspects of relationships that are positive, while the high quality of life in men is more tied to aspects better education and work.

Then, in terms of development according to Ruggeri, Bisoffi, and Fontecedro (2001) age affects the quality of individual subjective life. In old age, individuals tend to evaluate their lives more positively than when they were young because these individuals have passed the time to make changes in life. Not only in the development of age, but the level of education is also another factor that

affects the quality of life. This is reinforced by research conducted by Wahl, Astrid, Rusteon, Hanestad, and Lerdal (2004) that quality of life will increase along with higher levels of education obtained by individuals. Individuals with a higher level of education then broader knowledge and insights and allow them to control themselves in overcoming the problems faced.

When a person is at a high level of education, he hopes that the individual will have a decent job. Wahl, et al (2009) stated that in the field of work which includes salaries, benefits, and a decent work environment can create life satisfaction that will affect the quality of life. Then at the adult stage, the individual will think about his future to build a family beginning with marriage. Marital status is a factor that affects the quality of life, where married men and women have a better quality of life than individuals who are not married, divorced, or widowed by a deceased partner (Moons, et al., 2004). Not only relationships with families, but individuals also need to build relationships with others. According to Myers (1987) found a demographic network in the form of social network factors with subjective quality of life, which is characterized by an increase in the quality of life both physically and emotionally because of social support from other people outside the family environment.

One psychological aspect has an indicator, namely religiosity (The WHOQOL Group, 1996). Watkins, Woodward, Stone, and Kolts (Rusdi, 2016) explain that intrinsic religiosity is related to grateful behavior. In the teachings of Islam, the understanding of grateful behavior is explained in the Qur'an as an expression of gratitude for the blessings and gifts that Allah Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala has given so that gratitude can be a means of worshipping Him.

## Methods

Respondents in this study were 101 Muslims early adulthood consisting of college students and working individuals. The average respondent is 21 years old with 66 female and 35 male. The sampling technique used convenience sampling. This research was conducted in a quantitative method to determine the relationship between gratitude and quality of life. Methods of data collection in the study used the scale of quality of life in this study is WHOQOL-BREF scale from WHO (The WHOQOL Group, 1998) with the reliability on the original scale was 0.9 and then the scale of gratitude is a scale developed by Rusdi (2016) with Cronbach Alpha reliability is 0,855. This study used Pearson Correlation test to examine the relationship between gratitude and quality of life.

## Result and Discussion

Data analysis was carried out after assumption tests which included distribution normality test and relationship linearity test. Based on the results of the normality test, it was found that the variables of quality of life, and gratitude can be said to be normal, because the quality of life variables found Kolmogorov-Smirnov values and significance  $p = 0.200$  ( $p > 0.05$ ) and in the gratitude variables  $p = 0.074$  ( $p > 0.05$ ).

Tabel 1  
*Normality test*

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov <sup>a</sup>		
	Statistic	df	Sig.
QoL	,063	101	,200*
Gratitude	,084	101	,074

The purpose of the linearity test is to find out the correlation between independent variables and the dependent variable is linear or not. Based on the table above, the value of  $F = 15,670$  with a significance level of 0,000

is obtained. So that it can be seen that all variables have a significant value smaller than 0.05 (sig <0.05), this indicates that all research variables are linear.

Table 2  
*The correlation test*

		QoL	Gratitude
QoL	Pearson Correlation	1	,393**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		,000
	N	101	101
Gratitude	Pearson Correlation	,393**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000	
	N	101	101

The results of data processing with Pearson Product Moment correlation on 101 subjects through SPSS, showed that quality of life and gratitude. Quality of life and gratitude were positively correlated significantly ( $p < 0.05$ ) with  $p = 0.000$  and the correlation coefficient of  $r = 0.393$ .

Based on the table above, it can be seen that in every aspect of the quality of life variables are significantly positively correlated with the gratitude variable. The gratitude variable has a correlation with psychological aspects of 0,000. This can be interpreted that the psychological aspect has a significant positive relationship with gratitude. Psychological aspects are aspects that have the strongest correlation compared to other aspects that are in the variable quality of life. Furthermore, the correlation between social relations and gratitude is 0.004. This means that the aspect of social relations has a significant positive correlation with gratitude. However, among the four aspects of quality of life, aspects of social relations have the weakest correlation between psychological, physical, and environmental aspects. Then in the third aspect, namely physical health, the correlation with gratitude is 0.001. This means that the aspect of social relations has a significant positive correlation with gratitude.

In the fourth aspect, namely environment, gratitude correlation has a score of 0.001. This means that environmental aspects have a significant positive correlation with gratitude.

Tabel 3  
*The categorization of gratitude*

Category	Norm Formula	Total	%
Very low	$x < 61.4$	20	19.80
Low	$61.4 \leq x < 65$	15	14.85
Moderate	$65 \leq x < 69$	19	18.81
High	$69 \leq x < 73$	22	21.78
Very high	$X \geq 73$	25	24.75
Total		101	100%

In addition to the results of the analysis based on SPSS there is a level of categorization of gratitude and quality of life. The categorization of gratitude and quality of life measures is divided into five categories. In table 5 shows that 19.80% of the subject belong to the very low gratitude category, 14.85% of the subject classified as low, 18.81% of the subject classified as moderate, 21.78% of the subject belong to high category and 24.75% subject belong to very high category.

Tabel 4  
*The categorization of quality life*

Category	Norm Formula	Total	%
Very low	$x < 86.4$	20	19.80
Low	$86.4 \leq x < 92.8$	20	19.80
Moderate	$92.8 \leq x < 99$	18	17.82
High	$99 \leq x < 106$	21	20.79
Very high	$X \geq 106$	22	21.78
Total		101	100%

In table 4 show the category of quality of life that shows that 19.80% of the subjects belong to very low and low category, 17.82% of the subject classified as moderate, 20.79% of the subjects belong to high category and 21.78% of the subject belong to very high category.

The results of this study found that the gratitude is known to have a positive correlation with the quality of life in Muslims early adulthood. In the early adult age range according to Santrock (1999), these young individuals have entered a period of transition both physically transition intellectual transition, and transition to social roles. Strengthened by the opinion of Erikson (1963) that in the early adult phase individuals will have the need to make a commitment by creating a close and stable interpersonal relationship and being able to actualize themselves fully to maintain that relationship. Developmental aspects faced by individuals in early adulthood, one of which is cognitive development (Santrock, 1995). This cognitive development can be a process as a representation of efficiency in acquiring new information, changing from seeking knowledge to applying the knowledge that is owned. Then the second aspect of adult development is socio-emotional development. In socio-emotional development can be described through an individual social relationship with its environment which consists of three phases, namely the first phase by becoming an adult and living independently, the second phase by becoming a new partner forming a new family, and the third phase by becoming a family as parents and have children (Carter & McGoldrick, 1989).

Not only in terms of cognitive and socio-emotional development, but the lives of individuals in the early adult stage are also influenced by the level of religiosity especially in this study which specifically involves the subject, namely a Muslim. In the life of a Muslim, being a religious individual is very important. This religious attitude can be said as a faith that must exist in every Muslim self. One of the foundations of faith is gratitude. Gratitude can be interpreted as behavior in using the help they have to take

actions that are liked by Allah Ta'ala (Shobihah, 2014). Besides the definition of gratitude according to Al Munajid (2006) is to show the influence of God's goodness on the heart through faith, on oral through praise, and on members of the body through worship activities. So that gratitude can be interpreted as a behavior that is carried out when someone gets good from both God and others, then the good is strengthened in the heart, verbally, and in daily life.

Gratitude is not only used when getting a favor from God or someone else, but gratitude can be used as one of the stress-coping for a Muslim, especially when getting a problem in life. Maybe most of the individuals will prefer and more often mention the difficulties that are being faced even not often complain about it to other people such as when being exposed to an illness or when being hit by a problem. But in fact, the grateful person more often mentions the pleasure that Allah has given, as with the word of Allah Ta'ala namely "And the blessings given by your Rabb, multiple call it" (Surah Adh-Dhuha: 11).

A Muslim should reproduce gratitude rather than complain about the problem at hand. By increasing gratitude, individuals can be more positive in looking at a problem. Nisfiannor and Rostiana (2004) state that when individuals are unable to overcome problems, unpleasant emotions will emerge, to the point of feeling dissatisfied and unhappy for the life they live. This shows that unpleasant emotions can lead to a low quality of life in the individual. Therefore, in the life of a Muslim, gratitude can be done both in a state of happiness and in a state of deterioration. So, if the individual is grateful, the quality of his life will be even higher.

### Conclusion

Based on the results of the study shows that there is a positive correlation

between gratitude and quality of life in Muslims in early adulthood. The higher the gratitude possessed by the respondents, the higher the level of quality of life. Conversely, the lower the gratitude possessed by the respondents, the lower the level of quality of life.

The following are suggestions for future research:

- a. The researcher was able to make a measuring instrument that has low social desirability so that it can better reveal the actual state of the subject.
- b. In further research, researchers are expected to be able to make a gratitude training so that they are able to measure further as much as gratitude contributions to the quality of life in Muslim's life.

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