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THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN GRATITUDE AND HAPPINESS

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Abstract. The purpose of this paper was to find whether there is a relationship between gratitude and happiness among the respondents in a study focusing Albania, in the post-pandemic period. Hypothesis was that there is a significant positive relationship between the level of gratitude and that of happiness among the selected population. In order to verify the hypothesis, the paper used a quantitative approach, gathering primary through a survey distributed online. 322 individuals took part in the study. Subjective happiness scale and Gratitude scale were the two main instruments used within the study in order to evaluate the relationship between both. The findings showed that there is a statistically significant relationship between gratitude and happiness within the sample of this study. The positive value of the result tells us that the relationship between the two variables increases exponentially with each other, so the more the gratitude increases the greater the happiness between the group study in Albanian population, which confirms the primary hypothesis raised by the study.

Keywords: gratitude, happiness, relationship, Albania, sample

1. Introduction

Gratitude is known in the field of psychology as a positive response which offers interpersonal benefits, mainly due to the fact that gratitude leads us to display positive emotions. The emergence of positive emotions helps us to strengthen and create healthy individual social relationships, and as we know positive social relationships are an aspect which is closely related to human happiness (Bono & McCullough, 2006). There are a number of studies and authors who support this statement, where among many studies it has been found that gratitude is in fact one of the most important and unique predictors of the psychological well-being of the healthy person (Wood et al., 2009). Basically, gratitude has an additive relationship with happiness, although it may not be directly affected, it is created through certain mechanisms such as gratitude itself. Gratitude by influencing the strengthening of relationships and units of affection and trust then affects the overall happiness of man. In this context, it becomes important to promote gratitude among young people as well, as it is seen as an essential element to maintain a healthy mental state. Individuals who practice gratitude cope with the external stressors of daily life. They even present a higher prevalence to avoid reacting badly to adverse circumstances with negative behavior, or to fall prey to violence or substance abuse (Llenares et al., 2020). They are more inclined to see problems as opportunities for growth. Positive emotions, such as joy, interest, pleasure, and love, are associated with gratitude and are all elements that increase happiness in the individual (Tecson et al., 2019). Therefore, for the above, the purpose of this paper is to analyze whether there is a

relationship between gratitude and happiness among the respondents in a study focusing Albania, in the post-pandemic period. The paper begins with the hypothesis that there is a significant positive relationship between the level of gratitude and that of happiness among the selected population.

2. Methodology

The study uses a quantitative approach, through the processing of primary data. Primary data were collected through a survey distributed online, with a convenience sample of 322 persons. Instrument used to gather primary data, used two main scales, Subjective happiness scale and Gratitude scale.

Subjective Happiness Scale - SHS (Lyubomirsky & Lepper, 1999), is a scale with 4 questions, which are measured with units of measurement from 1-7 likert scales, in which the 4th question has a reverse scale. Two of the questions ask respondents to characterize themselves by an absolute appreciation of themselves and others (mostly peers), while the other two questions provide brief descriptions of individuals themselves. This instrument through its widespread use has shown high internal durability, throughout the samples.

The second measuring instrument used is the **Gratitude Questionnaire** (McCullough et al., 2002) which in turn consists of six questions which aim to measure the level of gratitude of the respondents. The institute questions use a 7-point scale similar to SHS, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree).

On the other hand, the following table provides us with the reliability of the distributed questionnaire. As we can see from the results, Cronbach's Alpha is at the value of 0.770, which tells us that the questionnaire has a scale within the reliability limit.

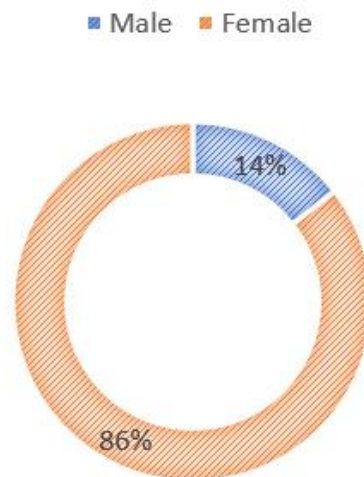
Table 2. Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.770	33

3. Analysis of results

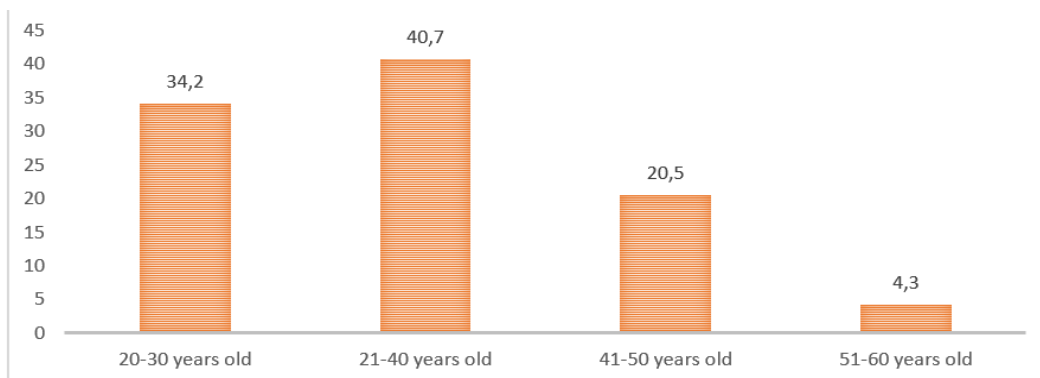
Analysis of demographic data of respondents

Graph 4. Gender



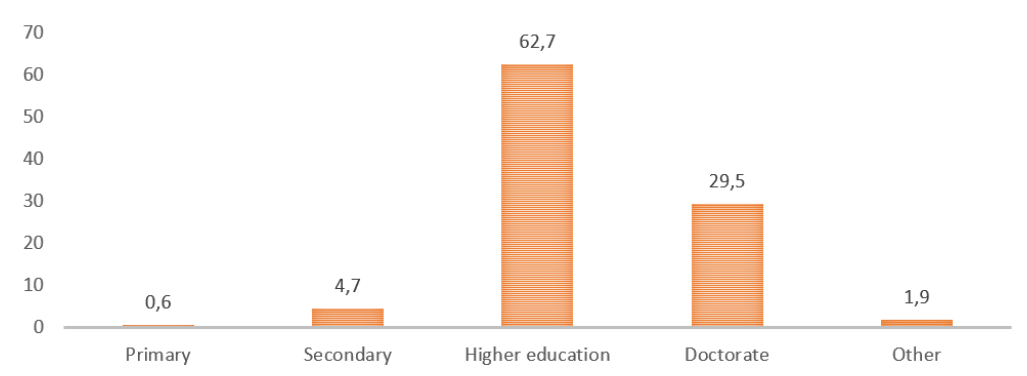
Most of respondents in the study were females, with only 14% of the sample being male.

Graph 5. Age



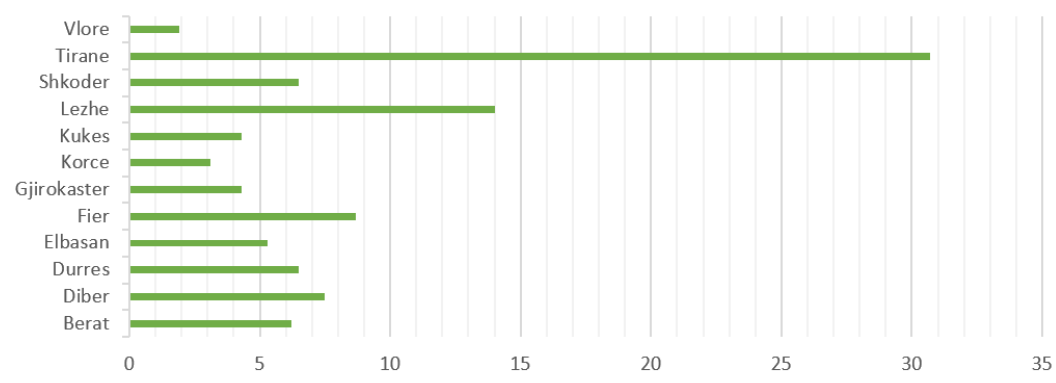
As we can see from the graph, 40.7% of the sample is young, aged from 21-40 years old, followed by 34.2% being from 20-30 years old. 24.7% on the other hand were between 41-60 years old.

Graph 6. Education



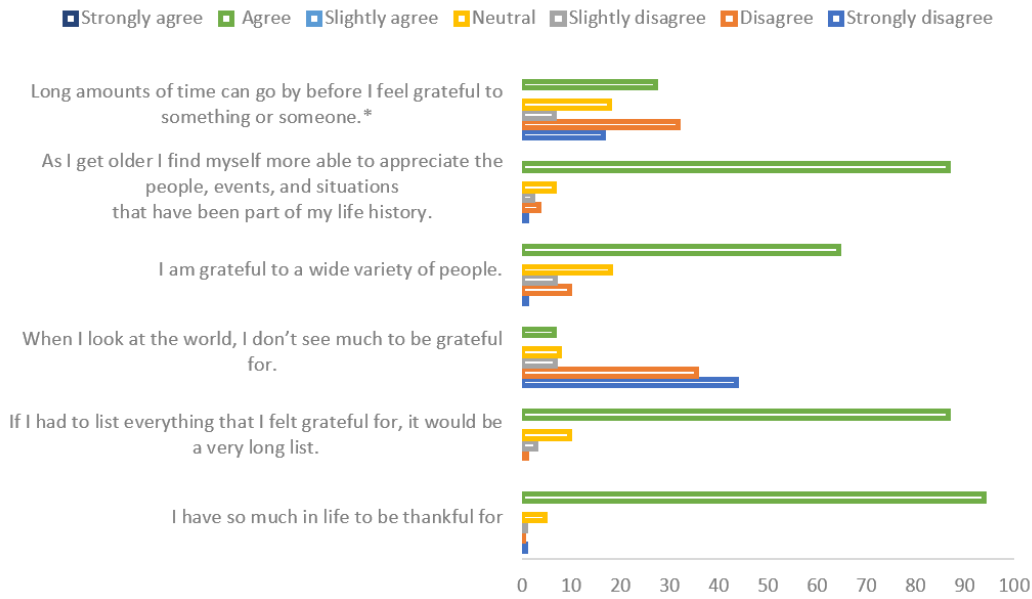
Most of the sample had a higher education diploma, or at least were getting a higher education degree, whereas 29.5% of the sample had a doctorate degree. We can see that the sample had a high education profile.

Graph 7. Region



The results show that most of the participants in this study were from the capital of Albania, Tirana. Followed by the region of Lezha and Fieri. As we can see from the graph above, we have a sample of distribution from every region of Albania.

Graph 8. Level of gratitude among respondents



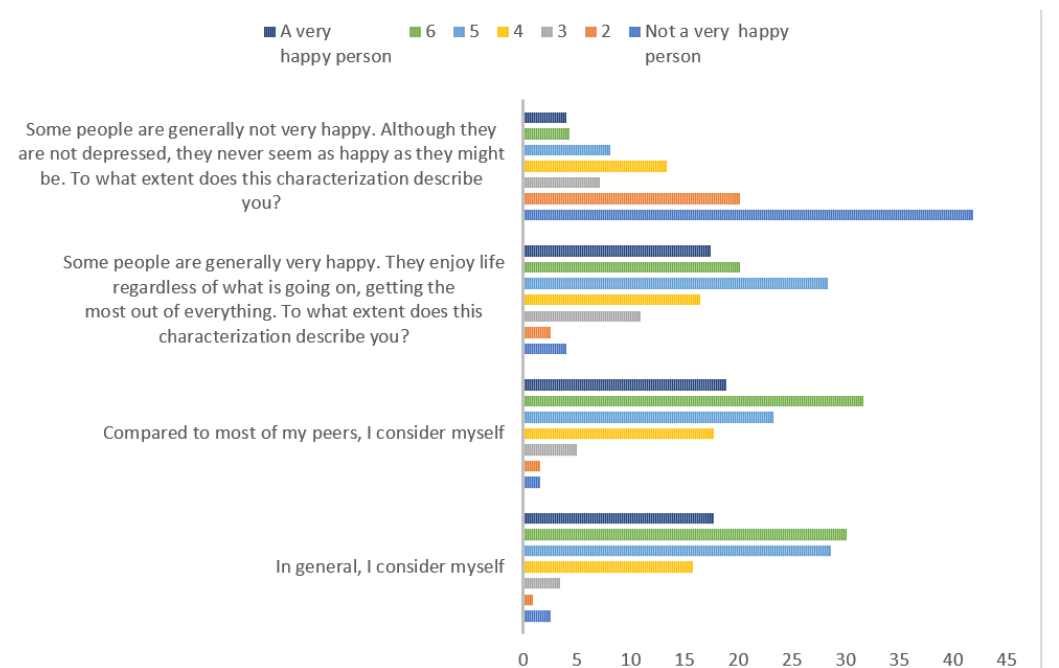
The results above show the answers gathered from the participants regarding their self-perceived gratitude levels. Most of participants felt that they agree that they almost everyone had much in life to be thankful for, and that it would be a long list of things if they ever had to come up with it. They felt that they were grateful to a lot of people and as they got older, they found themselves more able to really appreciate all the people, events, or situations that had been part of their life. But answers were rather different when the question was posed whether they needed long amounts of time before they felt grateful for something or to someone.

Table 3. Gratitude Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Gratitude	322	10.00	30.00	23.8292	2.61055
Valid N (listwise)	322				

Regarding gratitude, the results show that the level among respondents varies between a minimum of 10 and a maximum of 30 with an average of 23.8, which shows that the level of gratitude among our respondents is above average, so respondents have high levels of gratitude. in life.

Graph 9. Level of happiness among respondents



Regarding the results on the level of happiness from the respondents, we see that most of them consider themselves a happy person, especially where they compare themselves with other peers. They felt that they were able to enjoy life in advance of what might be happening, and that they were able to get the best out of every situation.

Table 4.Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Happiness	321	4.00	28.00	18.0405	3.82037
Valid N (listwise)	321				

The results of the descriptive analysis show the same, which show that the respondents' express values above the average in terms of the level of happiness. Moreover, in the following table presents the bivariate correlation analysis, in which some of the study variables that we analyzed above in addition to the region are taken into account, in order to better understand the relationship between them.

Table 5. Correlations

		Gratitude	Happiness	Gender	Age	Education
Gratitude	Pearson Correlation	1				
	Sig. (2-tailed)					
	N	322				
Happiness	Pearson Correlation	.188**	1			
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001				
	N	321	321			
Gender	Pearson Correlation	.030	.011	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.592	.844			
	N	318	317	318		
Age	Pearson Correlation	.068	.087	.011	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.226	.119	.847		
	N	321	320	317	321	
Education	Pearson Correlation	-.051	.081	-.055	.017	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.363	.148	.024	.765	
	N	320	319	316	319	320

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

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

The results of the correlations show that we have a statistically significant relationship between and in the positive value of $r = .188$, between gratitude and happiness values of the respondents. The positive value of the result tells us that the relationship between the two variables increases exponentially with each other, so the more the gratitude increases the greater the happiness between the group, which confirms the primary hypothesis raised by the study. No relationship was found between demographic variables and gratitude or happiness among study respondents.

4. Conclusion

The purpose of this paper was to find whether there is a relationship between gratitude and happiness among the respondents in a study focusing Albania, in the post-pandemic period. Hypothesis was that there is a significant positive relationship between the level of gratitude and that of happiness among the selected population. In order to verify the hypothesis, the paper used a quantitative approach, gathering primary through a survey distributed online. 322 individuals took part in the study. Subjective happiness scale and Gratitude scale were the two main instruments used within the study in order to evaluate the relationship between both. The findings showed that there is a statistically significant relationship between gratitude and happiness within the sample of this study. The positive value of the result tells us that the relationship between the two variables increases exponentially with each other, so the more the gratitude increases the greater the happiness between the group, which confirms the primary hypothesis raised by the study. Therefore, we can conclude that there are tendencies somehow after post pandemic period in Albania which has impacted positively the gratitude levels as well as the general happiness within the population. Further studies should evaluate more in depth this relationship with more variables taken into account.

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