Gratitude and Life Satisfaction of Hearing Impaired College Students

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Abstract. Life satisfaction is a comprehensive assessment of feelings and attitudes about life at a specific point in time from negative to positive. Everyone often expects perfection in every aspects in life, whether it is physically, mentally or intellectually. But not all of these expectations can be realized. Some people actually had to deal with various limitations or physical disabilities such as hearing impaired. Limitations of hearing impaired peoples make the majority of them have lower life satisfaction than people who are not disability. Students who have low life satisfaction have an impact on low interpersonal success, education, and mental and physical health. The aim of this research is examining the effects of gratitude towards life satisfaction of hearing impaired college students in Center for Disability Studies & Services. GQ-6 and Life Satisfaction Scale are used in this research. Data was collected and formulated with linear regression. The result showed that gratitude gave positive impact towards life satisfaction to hearing impaired college students in Center for Disability Studies & Services, when a student with hearing impaired has good gratitude, it gave an effect on increasing his life satisfaction by 12.2%.

Keywords: Gratitude, life satisfaction, hearing impaired

Introduction

Basically, hearing impaired people are the same as people who have normal hearing in general, they also need love needs, a sense of security, self-esteem recognition, and educational needs. Education itself has a very important role in developing themselves and living their lives. Hearing impaired people who continue their education to college find a lot of obstacles. The obstacles they experience include difficulties in communicating with their environment, especially in terms of adjusting to conditions that they have never experienced. The various obstacles they experienced naturally have an impact on the low life satisfaction of students with disabilities (Pagan, 2010).

Reaching life satisfaction is the hope of every human being, including hearing impaired students. Life satisfaction is a form of overall assessment of a person in assessing satisfaction or not life experienced (Hurlock, 2009). Students who have low life satisfaction have an impact on the low interpersonal success, education, and mental and physical health. So that with increasing life satisfaction, someone can improve better health in the future (Oztop & Kinaci, 2016). People who have good life satisfaction then they have good psychological health (Rathore, Kumar, & Gautam, 2015). Having a low life satisfaction makes hearing impaired students unable to optimize their abilities so that it can affect their success in undergoing the lecture process.

Life satisfaction is obtained when what is expected can be realized and become a positive assessment for oneself, in order to achieve everything that is expected to require diligent and consistent effort. But there are several factors that are can affect one's life satisfaction, one of which is gratitude (Pratama, Prasamtiwi, & Sartika, 2015). Gratitude is a person's experience when receiving something valuable, and is an expression of feelings of someone who receives good treatment from others (McCullough, 2004).

Hearing impaired students with good gratitude are wiser in addressing the surrounding environment. They consider the kindness of those who care for them and the luck he receives as gifts for them. Conversely, if a hearing impaired students lacks gratitude, then they are less able to maintain the existing environmental harmony. They are focused on their shortcomings so they tend to ignore the gifts or goodness around them.

The main purpose of gratitude is to reflect back on the goodness that has been received. A person who be able to increase gratitude can make their welfare better (Nezlek, Newman, & Thrash, 2017). With high gratitude, hearing impaired students are better able to accept themselves as they are, able to build positive relationships with the surrounding people without shame with their physical condition, have a clear purpose in life, and realize their desires through their potential.

Gratitude also has a negative relationship with life satisfaction, those who have a high level of gratitude tend to experience lower life satisfaction levels and also those who have a high level of life satisfaction tend to experience lower gratitude levels. This is influenced by perceptions of cost, value and altruism (Ferrer, 2017). While other studies say gratitude has a positive relationship with life satisfaction by controlling financial satisfaction (Puente-Díaz & Meixueiro, 2016). Although hearing impaired students can be grateful about things other than financial sources, they cannot ignore that income is related to various important life outcomes such
as health, life expectancy, job stability, perceived autonomy are things that can be thankful for.

Based on the description above, researchers are interested in examining the effect of gratitude on life satisfaction in hearing impaired students.

**Review of Related Literature**

Gratitude is a positive emotion that a person feels when someone else is intentionally given or gives something of value to them. Gratitude has been found to be associated with happiness and life satisfaction, but is negatively related to psychological difficulties such as depression, anxiety, and stress (McCullough, Emmons, & Tsang, 2002). Gratitude can also represent a broader attitude toward life, a tendency to see all life as a gift. Gratitude has been conceptualized as emotions, attitudes, moral virtues, habits, personality traits, and response. The word thank you itself comes from Latin gratus, which means grace, grace or gratitude. All derivatives of this Latin root "have something to do with goodness, generosity, gifts, the beauty of giving and receiving, or getting something for nothing" (Lopez, 2009). Gratitude can also help turn negative emotions from the past into feelings of satisfaction in the future (Seligman, Ernst, Gillham, Reivich, & Linkins, 2009).

Life satisfaction is a cognitive evaluation of a person's life based on self-selected criteria (Diener, Emmons, Larsen, & Griffin, 1985). Quality of life has two meanings; in the social level of quality of life is a condition that is considered necessary for a good life, and at the individual level of quality of life is a good practice of life in conditions deemed necessary for a good life (Veenhoven, 1996). Life satisfaction has been conceptualized as a constituent of cognitive subjective well-being. High life satisfaction indicates that the quality of life in the population in question is good and vice versa (Prasoon & Chaturvedi, 2016).

Based on the above understanding it can be concluded that life satisfaction is the extent to which an individual's cognitive abilities in assessing happiness in his life, namely an assessment of the feelings and attainments of desires and experiences experienced in individual life. Life satisfaction has been shown to be negatively related to various risky behaviors such as alcohol and drug use, free sex, aggressive behavior, victimization, and unhealthy eating and exercise behavior. Life satisfaction reflects the extent to which basic needs are met and the extent to which various other objectives are seen as achievable. So that by realizing more goals, life satisfaction will also increase (Lopez, 2009).

**Methods**

The research was conducted at Center for Disability Studies & Services of Brawijaya University Malang which built many facilities and infrastructures that were friendly to people with disabilities in various faculties and other public facilities. Characteristics of the research subject were hearing impaired active students. The number of participants in this study was 47 students.

The Gratitude Questionnaires Six Item Form (GQ-6) (McCullough et al., 2002). Consists of 6 items. This instrument measures satisfaction as a dispositional trait and assesses four aspects: intensity, frequency, density, and range of gratitude that is felt and given. GQ-6 uses 4 alternative answer choices, 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = agree, 4 = strongly agree. There are two unfavorable items (3 "When I see the world, I don't see much to be grateful for," and 6 "Long periods of time can pass before I feel grateful for something or someone").

Life Satisfaction Scale (Diener et al., 1985). This scale contains 5 items that evaluate cognitive judgment of one's own life. Items use 4 alternative answer choices, 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = agree, 4 = strongly agree; example item, "I am satisfied with my life").

This study consisted of three procedures, initial preparation, data collection and data analysis. At the initial stage of the research, the researcher determined the research participants who were in accordance with the criteria set in this study, namely the hearing impaired student of Center for Disability Studies & Services of Brawijaya University Malang. Then the researchers prepared a scale and distributed it to 47 students. After obtaining the data, the data was analyzed with the SPSS 23 for Windows program. This study uses quantitative methods, the analysis test uses statistical techniques with Simple Linear Regression test.

**Result**

From the results of data analysis, Gratitude (X) had a positive and significant effect on life satisfaction (Y) indicated by $\beta = 0.35$ and $p = 0.02$ ($p <0.05$) so that the hypothesis is accepted. It meant that the higher the gratitude, the life satisfaction was higher too. The results showed that gratitude gives a positive effect on life satisfaction in students with hearing impaired at the Center for Disability Studies & Services at 12.2%. It meant that when a student with hearing impaired has good gratitude, it gave an effect on increasing his life satisfaction by 12.2%.

**Discussion**

Gratitude proved to have a positive and significant effect on life satisfaction (Y) indicated by $\beta = 0.35$ and $p = 0.02$ ($p <0.05$) so that the hypothesis is accepted, meaning that the higher the gratitude, the higher the life satisfaction, and the lower the gratitude, the lower the life satisfaction.

The results showed that there was a positive and significant effect between gratitude on life satisfaction. So that when individuals have a high sense of gratitude, they will feel good life satisfaction too. This is influential because gratitude can help transform negative emotions from the past into feelings of satisfaction in the present (Seligman et al., 2009). The main goal of gratitude is to
reflect back on the kindness that individuals have received. Individuals who are able to increase gratitude can make their welfare better (Nezlek et al., 2017). So with high gratitude, hearing impaired students are better able to accept themselves as they are, able to build positive relationships with the surrounding people without shame with their physical condition, have a clear purpose in life, and realize their desires through their potential.

Gratitude is an appreciation of what is valuable in life and seeing all life as a gift. Hearing impaired students who have good gratitude are wiser in responding to the surrounding environment. They consider the kindness of those who care for them and the luck he receives as gifts for them. Conversely, if a Hearing impaired student lacks gratitude, then they are less able to maintain the existing environmental harmony. They are focused on their shortcomings so they tend to ignore the gifts or goodness around them. This result is supported by previous research which states that there is a positive effect between gratitude on life satisfaction (Robustelli & Whisman, 2018). Gratitude is typically only related to relationship satisfaction and overall life satisfaction both past life satisfaction and current life satisfaction. Hearing impaired students usually get more attention from the surrounding people who make some of them feel grateful. If individuals have a tendency to feel greater social support from those around them, be it friends, family or siblings that can contribute to increasing their life satisfaction (Kong, Ding, & Zhao, 2014).

Contribution of effectiveness of gratitude with life satisfaction is 12.2%. It means that there are other variables that make it possible to have a greater contribution to life satisfaction. Many researchers do research on life satisfaction, but researcher focus more on samples of hearing impaired students. Other studies also examine the effect of gratitude on life satisfaction and many researchers examine life satisfaction with other variables. This shows that life satisfaction can connect and be linked to various variables.

**Conclusion**

Based on the results of research conducted, it can be concluded that gratitude can increase the life satisfaction of hearing impaired students. Gratitude in this case is related to relationship satisfaction and overall life satisfaction both past life satisfaction and current life satisfaction. If hearing impaired students have a tendency to feel greater social support from those around them, be it friends, family or relatives that can contribute to increasing their life satisfaction which can also affect interpersonal success. Suggestions for further researchers who want to explore the variables in this study are expected to increase the literature and the number of participants and pay attention to the weaknesses found in this study.

**References**


