THE RELATIONSHIPS AMONG GRATITUDE, APPRECIATION, PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING AND RELIGIOUS ORIENTATION: AN EMPIRICAL STUDY WITH TURKISH SAMPLE

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Abstract
Recent researches in psychology have increasingly focused on exploring the psychology of positive emotions. Particularly, gratitude and appreciation have become an important area for researchers. This article aims to investigate the links between gratitude, appreciation, psychological well-being and religious orientation on Turkish sample. Moreover, it is reveals the role of gratitude and appreciation on psychological well-being. Thus, Gratitude Questionnaire (GQ-6), The Appreciation Scale (App-57), Intrinsic Religious Motivation Scale (IRM-10), and Psychological Well-Being Scale (PWB-18) were applied to consist of 611 adults aged between 17 to 60 years. The findings reveal that there are positive correlations among gratitude, appreciation, psychological well-being and religiosity. According to the regression analyses, gratitude is found to be more effective factor than appreciation on the psychological well-being. Moreover the findings indicate that “Gratitude to Parents”, “Gratitude for the Close Relationships” and “Gratitude as Life Satisfaction” are significant predictors of psychological well-being.

Keywords: Gratitude, Appreciation, Psychological Well-being, Religiosity, Life Satisfaction.

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Introduction

Gratitude and appreciation were the "forgotten factors" in happiness researches (Emmons, 2009; McCullough, Emmons, & Tsang, 2002). Therefore, the most part of the researches focus on the negative aspect of psychology has been criticized (Fredrickson 2001; Snyder, & Lopez, 2002). Researches that emphasize the cure and prevention of pathological issues focus on the suffering experiences of person rather than the well-being experiences of person (Fredrickson, 2001). With the positive psychology movement, gratitude and well-being have become a mainstream focus for psychological researches (e.g., Seligman, & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000; Gable, & Haidt, 2000; Watkins et al., 2003; Fredrickson et al., 2003; Bono, & McCullough, 2006; Bartlett, & DeSteno, 2006).

Considerable current empirical works indicate the relationship between gratitude and well-being (e.g., Emmons, McCullough, 2003; Duckworth, Steen, & Seligman, 2005; Kashdan, Uswatt, & Julian, 2006; Wood, Joseph, & Linley, 2007a; Wood, Maltby, Stewart, Linley, & Joseph, 2008a). These studies have been carried out in clinical samples (Duckworth, Steen, & Seligman, 2005), student (Sheldon, & Lyubomirsky, 2006) and adult samples (Seligman, Park, Steen, & Peterson, 2005). Much of the present psychological research into gratitude has focused on the nature of individual differences in gratitude, and the consequences of being a more or less grateful person (Wood, Joseph, & Linley, 2007a).

Throughout religious and philosophical traditions have deal with gratitude as an integral part of well-being, religiosity and spirituality. The recent studies have indicated that religiosity is a motivation feature of human being to be grateful (e.g., Emmons, & Crumpler, 2000; Harpman, 2004). Therefore, those who regularly attend religious services and rituals are more likely to have a greater sense of gratitude in the most part of life (Emmons, & McCullough, 2003; Emmons, & Kneezel, 2005; Krause, 2006).

What is Gratitude?

Gratitude is one of the oldest concepts in the intellectual history. However, it is relatively new in the history of psychology. Indeed, gratitude is a universal part of the human being (McCullough, & Tsang, 2004). There are several ways to conceptualize gratitude, as it has been variously described as an emotion, an attitude, a moral virtue, a habit, a personality trait and a coping response (Emmons, & McCullough, 2003). It is also defined as maintaining events and situations of life that were characterized by positive thinking.
Emmons (2004: 554) so brilliantly defines gratitude as "a sense of thankfulness and joy in response to receiving a gift whether the gift is a tangible benefit from a specific other or a moment of peaceful bliss evoked by natural beauty". This occasion emerges from when a person has intentionally given or taken something to someone (Emmons, & Crumpler, 2000; McCullough, & Tsang, 2004).

Gratitude is not only a thought process but also it is a psycho-social and physical activity. So, gratitude is defined as other-oriented emotion, attitude, a habit, personality trait. Agreeing with this conception, Tsang (2006: 139) defines gratitude as "a positive emotional reaction to the receipt of a benefit that is perceived to have resulted from the good intentions of another". Gratitude and appreciation may serve as a way to live a more satisfying and meaningful life as a way of contribution for others (Kashdan et al., 2006). The gratitude definition of Peterson and Seligman (2003) was considered a character strength belonging to the so called "transcendental virtues" with important benefits for both the individual and the society. On the other hand, McCullough et al. (2001) conceptualize gratitude as an affect which guides people's cognitions and behaviors in the moral domain and also argue that gratitude has three moral functions. It is a (a) benefit detector and both a (b) reinforce and (c) motivator of prosocial behavior.

Generally gratitude is comprised of appreciation, thankfulness, and a sense of wonder (Emmons, & Shelton, 2002; Emmons, 2009). However, some researchers accept to gratitude, as a component of the appreciation (Adler & Fagley, 2005). Appreciation is defined being aware of feelings and being grateful, and can also be expressed internally or externally (Arrien, 2011). The definition of appreciation in common dictionaries include "the act of estimating the qualities of things according to their true worth"; "grateful recognition"; "sensitive awareness or enjoyment of something/some-one"; and "an increase in value" (Oxford, 1989: 1135; Dogan, 2009: 1043). Adler and Fagley, (2005: 81) define appreciation as acknowledging the value and meaning of something-an event, a person, a behavior, an object-and feeling a positive emotional connection to it. In addition, Watkins and et al. (2004) suggest the hallmark of grateful persons is the appreciation of the simple things in life.
Gratitude and Psychological Well-being

Grateful emotions and behaviors typically come from the perception that another person has intended to encourage one's well-being (Emmons, & Shelton, 2002; Emmons & McCullough, 2003; Bono, Emmons, & McCullough, 2004). Until this time, gratitude has been examined in terms of the different ways by researchers. Most of these studies revealed that people who are more grateful have higher levels of well-being (e.g., Ortony et al., 1988; Lazarus, & Lazarus, 1994; Watkins, 2003; Emmons, & McCullough, 2003; Wood, Joseph, & Maltby, 2008b, 2008c, 2009; Wood, Maltby, Stewart, Linley, & Joseph, 2008d). According to Emmons, & Shelton (2002) grateful responses to life can lead to peace of mind, happiness, physical health, and deeper, more satisfying personal relationships. Grateful people feel more frequent and intense grateful affect (McCullough, Emmons, & Tsang, 2002; McCullough, Tsang, & Emmons, 2004), have more positive views of their social environments (Tsang, 2006; Wood, Maltby, Linley, & Joseph, 2008b), utilize productive coping strategies (Wood, Joseph, & Linley, 2007a), have more positive traits (McCullough et al., 2002; Wood, Joseph, & Maltby, 2008c; Wood, Linley, Maltby, Baliousis, & Joseph, 2008e), and continually focus on the positive in their environment, with a greater appreciation of their life and their possessions (Wood et al., 2008c). Adler & Fagley (2005) suggest that being appreciative facilitates and enhances subjective well-being. Similarly, McCullough (2002) has also found gratitude to be linked to more helping behaviors, high positive emotion, life satisfaction, increased hope, and lower feelings of depression, anxiety, envy, as well as materialistic attitudes.

The eudemonic tradition of well-being emphasizes on the aspects of human functioning that promote and reflect the pursuit of meaningful life goals (Ryff, & Singer, 2000) and it is strongly associated with pleasant emotions (e.g., Watson, Clark, McIntyre, & Hamaker, 1992; Kashdan, Rose, & Fincham, 2004). Wood et al. (2009) and Kashdan et al. (2006) show that gratitude correlate with autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, purpose in life, and self-acceptance, covering most of the terrain of eudemonic well-being.

All relationships offer such potential for the experience of gratitude (Arrien, 2011). Gratitude may serve important functions in human beings' social and emotional lives (Emmons, 2004). Watkins (2004:172-184) suggests a series of mechanisms to explain how gratitude may influence subjective well-being. He mentioned that perceiving positive events as "gifts" might intensify well-being and gratitude may counteract the adaptation to satisfaction that
usually occurs as human responses. Then, the practice of gratitude may work as a coping mechanism in situations of adversity by providing a helpful perspective on life that assists in mood repair following a stressful event.

**Gratitude and Religiosity**

Gratitude has multiple dimensions. One of the most important of its dimensions is the theological aspect. The thought of gratitude is an essential and functional part of the world religions (Emmons, & Crumpler, 2000; Emmons, & Hill, 2001). Gratitude is shaped by the basic attitudes, events and prayers in the life (Emmons & McCullough, 2003). The Hebrew Scriptures, the New Testament, and the Qur’an frequently mention gratitude as a central virtue. Christianity, Judaism and Islam teach that one of the purposes of human being is gratitude to God. In Judaism, gratitude is a vital component of worship and permeates every aspect of the daily life of worshiper. In Christianity, God is the giver of all gifts and the ultimate fountain for thankfulness (Emmons, & Hill, 2001). In Islam, it is the teaching that one should praise and be thankful to God in every circumstance (Uddin, 2002). The Holy Quran mostly is filled with the expressions and ideas of gratitude. God is called the greatest grateful (ash-Shakûr). The same as in Islamic thought, the patience is the half of the faith and the other half is gratitude (Quran, 2/276).

Gratitude is the appropriate response to the benevolence of a creator in all religions, (Emmons, & Kneezel, 2005). Thus, gratitude is related to spiritual and religious experience and psychological well-being. The previous research revealed that there was a relationship between religiosity, spirituality, psychological well-being and gratitude (e.g., McCullough et al., 2002; Watkins et al., 2003; Adler, & Fagley, 2005; Emmons, & Kneezel, 2005; Krause, 2006). Watkins, Woodward, Stone and Kolts (2003) found that trait gratitude correlated positively with intrinsic religiousness and negatively with extrinsic religiousness. Additionally, there are some studies investigated a significant negative correlation between religiosity and anxiety (Baker, & Gorsuch, 1982; Bergin et al., 1987; Sturgeon, & Hamley, 1979) and lower scores on depression measures (Genia, 1996; Genia, & Shaw, 1991; Koenig et al., 2008).

**The Statement of Problem**

The researchers have conducted several researches that investigate the relationship between gratitude and psychological well-being. These researches have been carried out by the analysis from the Judeo Christian
samples from western societies. In this sense, the researchers do not have any remarkable information about the role of gratitude for the different societies such as Turkey. Thus, the main aim of this study is to open a door for future studies. So, we need to some local researches to gain a deep understanding for Turkish case because of the insufficient researches. As far as we can see, this topic was not studied till our research.

The main aim of this study is to examine the relationships among gratitude, appreciation, psychological well-being, and religiosity in the case of the Turkish-Muslim sample. First, this study attempts to investigate the effects of a grateful outlook on psychological well-being and religiosity. For this reason, in this study we focused on the following main questions and following hypotheses constructed for addressing research aims. (1) What are the relationships between gratitude, appreciation, psychological well-being and religiosity? (2) Which factor is more effective in predicting psychological well-being? Appreciation or gratitude? (3) Which factors of appreciation is more effective in predicting psychological well-being?

- \(H_1\): There are positive strong relationships among gratitude, appreciation, psychological well-being and religiosity. Furthermore, relationship between religiosity and appreciation is stronger than relationship of between religiosity and gratitude.
- \(H_2\): Appreciation is a more effective factor on psychological well-being than gratitude.
- \(H_3\): Subscales of appreciation (gratitude as ritual, gratitude to parents, gratitude as life satisfaction, expressing of gratitude, gratitude for the close relationships, gratitude as possessions and gratitude as self/social comparisons) encourage to psychological well-being of person's.

**Method**

**Participants**

The sample of this study consists of the Turkish-Muslim people who have different social, economic, and educational status in Istanbul. They also were chosen by the cluster sampling method. This study is conducted with 611 participants and ages 17 to 60 years. The average age of the study is 34 (SD = 9.66). 327 participants are female (53.5 %) and 284 are male (46.5 %). According to the marital status of the participants, 403 % (n = 246) are single
and 57.1 % (n = 349) are married. According to working status, 16.0 % (n = 98) are students, 15.9 % (n = 97) are academicians, 12.8 % (n = 78) are housewives, 9.2 % (n = 56) are officers, 8.7 % (n = 53) are workers, 6.2 % (n = 38) are health professionals, 4.9 % (n = 30) are chaplains and 6.9 % (n = 42) are tradesmen. With respect to the education level of the participants, 19.5 % (n = 119) are graduates of primary school, 9.8 % (n = 60) are graduates of secondary school, 15.5 % (n = 95) are graduates of high school, 43.0 % (n = 263) are university graduates, and 12.1 % (n = 74) are post-graduates.

Measures

The gratitude of respondents is measured by the Gratitude Questionnaire (GQ-6) and the Appreciation Scale. The questionnaire consists of the sections of demographic information (such as age, gender, education level, social-economic status, working status), gratitude, appreciation, religious motivation and psychological well-being.

Gratitude Scale

The measure was developed by McCullough et al. (2002). The GQ-6 focuses on emotional experience of gratitude. Items are rated on a 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree) scale. It has six items that measure the four facets of the grateful disposition (i.e., intensity, frequency, span, and density). The items probe gratitude intensity ("I feel thankful for what I have experienced in life"; "If I had to list everything that I felt thankful for, it would be a very long list") and span ("I sometimes feel grateful for the smallest things; I am grateful to a wide variety of people"). The Turkish adaptation of the GQ-6 was done by Gocen (2012). Gocen (2012) used the study designed for interpersonal relationships domain in a study on adult samples. She reveals that the internal reliability coefficient of the Gratitude Scale (Cronbach alpha) was (α = .72) and test-retest reliability was (α = .71) in her study.

The Appreciation Scale

The measure is developed by Adler and Fagley (2005). It contains 57 items, and 8 sub-scales: (1) appreciation of people, (2) possessions, (3) the present moment, (4) rituals, (5) feeling of awe, (6) social comparisons, (7) existential concerns, and (8) behavior which expresses gratitude. The Turkish adaptation of The Appreciation Scale was done by Gocen (2012) and Cronbach's alpha coefficient of total scale was reported, as (α = .93) and found to be test-retest reliability as (α = .90). The Cronbach's alpha
coefficient of the scale in total was found as ($\alpha = .90$) in the present study which is consistent with the one found by Gocen (2012).

The scale has also 8 sub-scales in Turkish version also and the Cronbach's alpha coefficients score of subscales are ranging from (.60) to (.90): as Gratitude as Ritual (.90), Gratitude to Parents (.60), Gratitude as Life Satisfaction (.74), Expressing of Gratitude (.73), Gratitude for the close relationships (.73), and Gratitude as Possessions (.63), Gratitude as Social Comparative (.84) and Awe (.60). Likewise, Adler and Fagley (2005) also report that alpha score of subscales were found to be appreciation of people (.76), possessions (.83), the present moment as (.77), rituals (.84), feeling of awe (.74), social comparisons (.62), existential concerns (.78), and loss/adversity (.73). As seen, the alpha coefficients of the present study and the study of Adler, & Fagley (2005) study are similar.

**Psychological Well-being**

In this study, respondents' psychological well-being is measured using the Ryff's Psychological Well-being Scale (RPWS). Psychological Well-being Scale was developed by Ryff (1989) in order to represent and assess these components. Originally, each component includes 20 items but in order to accommodate time, the scale was shortened (Ryff, & Keyes, 1995). In the present study, the 18-item shortened Psychological Well-being Scale was used. It has five subscales. Items are assessed "self acceptance, positive relationships with others, personal growth, purpose in life, environmental mastery and autonomy". Participants responded on 5-point scale that ranges from "strongly disagree" (1) to "strongly disagree" (5). Certain items are reverse coded.

The Turkish adaptation of short form of the original scale was done by Imamoglu (Imamoglu, 2004, see Beydoğan, 2008: 82-83). Cronbach’s alpha internal consistency coefficient for the complete scale was reported as (.79) (Imamoglu, 2004). The original scale has been revised to an eighteen item version which has been found to have internal consistencies between alpha (.70) and (.89). This short version of the scale provides enough psychometric criteria to meet psychological well-being of person’s (Ryff, & Keyes, 1995). The Cronbach’s alpha coefficient of the scale in total is found as (.75) in the present study. This result is consistent with the finding of Imamoglu (2004). Furthermore, in this study Cronbach’s alpha coefficients of the subscales are found as (.77) and (.86) respectively.
Intrinsic Religious Motivation Scale

This scale is used to determine the level of religious orientation of participants. The Intrinsic Religious Motivation Scale was developed by Hoge. The measure is focused only on the intrinsic religious orientation (Hoge, 1972). The Scale IRM consists of ten items, such as (“One should seek God’s guidance when making every important decision”) and (“Although I believe in my religion, I feel there are many more important things in life”). Items are rated on a 5 point Likert-type scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. The Intrinsic Religious Motivation Scale was adapted to Turkish by Karaca (2000; 2001). He has found Cronbach’s alpha of general intrinsic religiosity as (.76) (Karaca, 2001). In the present study, the Cronbach’s alpha value of the scale was found as ($\alpha = .83$) which is similar to the one which is found by Karaca.

Procedure

The data of the study were collected by the researcher between March-April 2010 in Istanbul, Turkey. After explaining the aim of the study, some of the volunteer participants were given self-report questionnaires papers and some of them received the questionnaire by e-mail was sent by e-mail to the volunteer participants. The process of filling out the questionnaire has taken approximately 15 minutes. The quantitative data were coded and prepared to statistical analysis using the SPSS 15.0 program. Descriptive statistics include standard deviations, means, the Pearson correlation analyses and stepwise regression analyses.

Results

Correlations between gratitude, appreciation, religious orientation and psychological well-being

Correlations between the gratitude, appreciation, psychological well-being and religious orientation are presented in Table 1. The findings show that each of the variable are significantly correlated ($r = .25$ to $.64$, $p < .005$).

According to Table I, gratitude correlates most strongly and positively with appreciation ($r = .64$, $p < .001$). There is a medium correlation between gratitude and religious orientation ($r = .47$, $p < .001$); on the other hand, there is a large correlation between appreciation and religious orientation ($r = .49$, $p < .001$).
There is another significant correlation between religious orientation and psychological well-being (r = .26, p < .001). Even with relatively low correlation, there is a positive relationship between religious orientation and psychological well-being. Table I show that appreciation (r = .46, p < .001) and gratitude (r = .45, p < .001) have a medium correlation with psychological well-being. The finding demonstrates that they have a positive impact on person's being grateful and gratitude which is an important predictor of religious orientation and psychological well-being. All finding in Table I supported the first hypothesis of the study (H₁) research that "There are positive strong relationships between gratitude, appreciation, psychological well-being and religious orientation." (see Table I). And this supports our claim "Relationship between religious orientation and appreciation is stronger than relationship of between religious orientation and gratitude."

Which factor is more effective in predicting psychological well-being? Is appreciation or gratitude?

To answer this question, the effects of gratitude and appreciation on psychological well-being needed to be assessed (see Table II). Thus, psychological well-being is used as dependent variable; appreciation and gratitude are used as independent variables. In Step 1, the factor ‘gratitude’ is entered alone. In Step 2, two predictors, ‘gratitude’ and ‘appreciation’ are

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Table I: Coefficients of correlations of appreciation, gratitude, psychological well-being and religious orientation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Religious Orientation</th>
<th>Appreciation</th>
<th>Gratitude</th>
<th>Psychological Well-Being</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Religious Orientation</td>
<td>r -</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appreciation</td>
<td>r .493**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gratitude</td>
<td>r .471**</td>
<td>.643**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychological Well-Being</td>
<td>r .257**</td>
<td>.451**</td>
<td>.455***</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level
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entered simultaneously. The multiple regression analysis is presented in Table II.

Table II: Regression Analysis for Gratitude and Appreciation on Psychological Well-being

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step 1</th>
<th>Gratitude</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>β</th>
<th>SHs</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>R²</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>642</td>
<td>.455</td>
<td>.051</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>12.62</td>
<td>.455</td>
<td>.207</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 2</td>
<td>Gratitude</td>
<td>397</td>
<td>.282</td>
<td>.065</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>6.14</td>
<td>.500</td>
<td>.250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Appreciation</td>
<td>077</td>
<td>.270</td>
<td>.013</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>5.88</td>
<td>.500</td>
<td>.250</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to the results of the regression analyses, the factors ‘gratitude’ and ‘appreciation’ are significant predictors of psychological well-being. As Table II, shows in Step 1, gratitude alone accounts for 20.7 % of the variance in psychological well-being. However “gratitude” and “appreciation” is also together account for 25 % of the variance in psychological well-being. The gratitude made a serious contribution during predicting of psychological well-being with standardized regression coefficients of (β = .46, p = .000). The results indicate that gratitude and appreciation increases as psychological well-being increases. Additionally, Table II shows that gratitude is more effective than appreciation on the psychological well-being. But as a result of that, this finding does not support the second research hypothesis (H₂) that “Appreciation is a more effective factor on psychological well-being than gratitude”.

Which of the factors of appreciation have more effective in predicting psychological well-being?

After testing the relationships between gratitude, appreciation and psychological well-being, the study examines the relations of between the factors of appreciation and psychological well-being. According to Table III, the regression analysis is employed to find out the effect of the psychological well-being on the factors of the appreciation.

The finding shows that three factors of the appreciation are more significant predictors of the psychological well-being. First of all, “Gratitude to Parents” quite highly influences psychological well-being (Step1: β = .451; t = 12.48; p = .000). In step 1, the variable of Gratitude to Parents explains the 20.4 % of
psychological well-being by itself. Secondly, “Gratitude to Parents” and “Gratitude for the Close Relationships” explains the 27.1% of psychological well-being in Step 2. Thirdly, “Gratitude in Life Satisfaction” explains the 29.7% of psychological well-being all. As regards Beta coefficients, the positive correlation is found between factors of appreciation (gratitude to parents, gratitude for the close relationships, gratitude as in life satisfaction) and psychological well-being (Step 3: $\beta = .319; t = 8.60; p = .000$; Step 2: $\beta = .208; t = 5.27; p = .000$; Step 3: $\beta = .183; t = 4.71; p = .000$). These findings support partly the third research hypothesis ($H_3$) “Sub-scales of appreciation (gratitude as ritual, gratitude to parents, gratitude as life satisfaction, expressing of gratitude, gratitude for the close relationships, gratitude as possessions and gratitude as self/social comparisons) encourage to psychological well-being of person’s”.

**Table III: Stepwise Regression of the Scales for Appreciation as Dependent Variable**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DV: Psychological Well-being</th>
<th>$B$</th>
<th>$SH_0$</th>
<th>$\beta$</th>
<th>$t$</th>
<th>$p$</th>
<th>$R$</th>
<th>$R^2$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Step 1 Gratitude to Parent</td>
<td>.884</td>
<td>.071</td>
<td>.451</td>
<td>12.48</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.451</td>
<td>.264</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 2 Gratitude to Parent</td>
<td>.689</td>
<td>.073</td>
<td>.352</td>
<td>9.50</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.521</td>
<td>.271</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 2 Gratitude for the Close Relationships</td>
<td>.597</td>
<td>.079</td>
<td>.278</td>
<td>7.51</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 3 Gratitude for the Close Relationships</td>
<td>.625</td>
<td>.073</td>
<td>.319</td>
<td>8.60</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 3 Gratitude as Life Satisfaction</td>
<td>.445</td>
<td>.084</td>
<td>.208</td>
<td>5.27</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Discussion**

We have paid our attention to gratitude as an important positive trait. We specifically attempted to conduct a field study to examine the role of gratitude in terms of the Turkish sample. The study aims to determine whether gratitude and appreciation have any effective factors on psychological well-being. The western-oriented researches shows that there is a positive relationship among psychological well-being, gratitude, religiosity or spirituality (McCullough, Emmons, & Tsang, 2002; Seligman, 2005, Sheldon, & Lyumbomirsky, 2006, Watkins, 2004; Watkins, Woodward, Stone, & Kolts, 2003). Likewise, with regard to the first research hypothesis ($H_1$), the result of this study indicates that gratitude, appreciation, religious
motivation and psychological well-being have significant positive correlations on (see Table I).

Gratitude is both a psychological and a theological virtue (McCullough et al. 2001). Gratitude is typically seen as a religious concept and considering it within religion is important for the Turkish-Muslim sample. According to most of religious person, presenting gratitude for given blessings can be a way to know and honor God. Thus, many religious traditions consider worships and rituals as a gratitude for God. Moreover, the results of analysis of correlation indicate that appreciation has stronger relationship with religious orientation than gratitude (see Table I). As a result of this, we notice that appreciation had a strong relationship with the religious orientation of people. Similarly, our findings are supported by the models of Adler and Fagley's (2005) and McCullough et al., (2001, 2002). The research of Adler and Fagley (2005) found that "gratitude as ritual" was an important factor on spirituality. The structure of gratitude involves social interaction that does not include only culturally specific features but it has also a multiple dimensions. For this reason, the research of the west and the east has similar contexts and results in terms of gratitude studies. In conclusion, it is possible to say that having perceived gratitude as a dept or a forced responsibility to God, contribute to person's religious orientation and well-being less. One might also conclude that, in the Muslim model, appreciation, including subscale of ritual and awe, is inter-related with a sacred dimension (see Table 1).

Gratitude is the parent of virtues, which motivates people to be pro-social and enhances well-being (McCullough et al., 2001). Grateful outlook can produce other virtues such as generosity, humility, empathy, wisdom, happiness, integrity, trust and hope. Several studies have shown that religiosity and spirituality contribute to grateful feelings, attitudes and behaviors (Emmons, Kneezel, 2005; McCullough et al. 2002; Krause, 2006; Adler, & Fagley, 2005). There is a significant relationship between religiosity and well-being (Yohannes, Koenig, Baldwin, & Connolly, 2008; Abdel-Khalek, 2007; Koenig et al. 2004). The study has shown that the relationship between religious orientation and psychological well-being substantially is shaped by the cultural context.

This relation could be explained with the interaction of religious orientation on behaviors, emotions and cognitive circumstances. Being grateful to God is essential to the psychological well-being of religious persons in the life (Vergote, 1996) and many people state that the expressing of gratitude
brings happiness to their life (Rind, & Bordia, 2005; Algoe, Haidt, & Gable, 2008). According to the Islamic faith, coping with the life of difficulties is considered gratitude (Kara, 2008). That is why He tests those who will remain grateful to him. For instance, Pargament (1990) suggests that the relationship between religiosity and psychological well-being might be better explained by a religious coping model. Religiosity and spirituality add a meaning to life and spiritual growth (Koenig, George, & Titus, 2004). There is obvious evidence indicating that gratitude plays a critical role to connect people during the hardships and motivates people to cope with these situations (Fredrickson, Tugade, Waugh, & Larkin, 2003; Wood, Joseph, & Linley, 2007b). Gratitude awakens the presence of other people in the world. This awakening nurtures the heart and helps to create a meaning and purpose for life. Emmons and McCullough (2003; 2004) and Watkins (2004) suggest that the gratitude increases pleasant feelings and it diminishes unpleasant emotions in life.

With regard to the second research hypothesis (H2), the findings indicate that appreciation and gratitude are two independent predictors of well-being, but gratitude is the best predictor. But, the linking between gratitude and well-being may have been different for gratitude interventions (Wood, A. M., et al., 2010). As for the results of the regression analyses, gratitude is more effective on the psychological well-being (see Table III). Accordingly, it might be said that gratitude strongly promotes psychological well-being. Other researchers have discovered that the higher levels of trait gratitude has lead to more frequent and more intensive episodes of state gratitude (McCullough, Tsang, & Emmons, 2004; Wood, Maltby, Stewart, Linley, & Joseph, 2008b). Moreover, most psychologists report that trait gratitude is a vital predictor of well-being (Emmons, & Crumpler, 2000; McCullough, Emmons, & Tsang, 2002; Emmons, & McCullough, 2003; Watkins, Woodward, Stone, & Kolts, 2003; Wood, Maltby, Gillett, Linley, & Joseph, 2008a). People who take high scores from the measures of gratitude are tend to experience a high life satisfaction and positive affects such as happiness, vitality, and hope.

Gratitude is a pro-social behavior (Seligman et al., 2005; Watkins, Scheer, Ovnicek, Kolts, 2006; Lyubomirsky et al., 2009; Grant, & Gino, 2010), inspires pro-social reciprocity (McCullough et al., 2002) and encourages on friendships and other social bonds. Relating to the third research hypothesis (H3), the findings indicate that “Gratitude to Parents”, “Gratitude for the Close Relationships”, and “Gratitude as Life Satisfaction” are significant predictors of psychological well-being respectively. This finding indicates that there is an
important relationship between psychological well-being and the factors of appreciation (see Table III). The ability to be grateful develops in the context of family and social relationships, and gratitude acting an essential role in establishing and retaining all relations. The study shows that grateful people make a contribution to others' lives and this makes them happy. Similarly, the findings of previous studies have showed that grateful people who has a strong gratitude skill have an understanding capacity for the perspective of others (McCullough, Emmons, & Tsang, 2002; McCullough et al., 2001; Bartlett, & DeSteno, 2006; Tsang, 2006; Dunn, & Schweitzer, 2005). In addition, grateful persons are more generous and helpful to other people in their treatment (McCullough et al., 2001; Bartlett and DeSteno, 2006). The understanding of gratitude from this perspective is important because it cultivates social resources (Fredrickson, 2004; McCullough et al., 2002). The fact is that, in terms of Turkish society, social relations and social support are more valuable than individualist traits. Consequently, this finding supports to the claim of the study that gratitude serves as a social motivation (McCullough, Kilpatrick, Emmons, & Larson, 2001), because gratitude is a moral, psychological, and social and divine power. Gratitude and appreciation contribute positively to psychological well-being.

Limitations and Directions for Future Research

The research has a few limitations. For example, the big sample size, generalizability of issue and the comprehension ability of participations. We used the state gratitude that based on self-report questionnaires to measure the gratitude of participants. We experienced some difficulties to carry out the study. Defining of gratitude in terms of the intercultural aspects is very difficult. In fact, there are a few adjectives in English for stating grateful feeling. Such as, the Turkish-Muslim culture has several words such as hamd, kanaat, şukur, minnet to state of gratitude. Indeed, these differences between two languages show the importance of gratitude in terms of cultures.

Future studies might focus on the convergence of self-report instruments and structured clinical interviews. Especially, age groups, sex e.g. can be comparatively examined. Future studies may include smaller, special and different samples which would enable more profound analysis of existing relations between intervening or moderating gratitude and psychological well-being variables. Future investigations can be interested in to comparing the effect of time discrepancy and to cultivate gratitude in terms of the most effective long-term ways of kindling grateful thoughts and actions. Research questions might be asked such as; which personality characteristics may
facilitate or inhibit gratitude interventions’ effects? Which thoughts and attitudes block grateful thinking? Which gratitude measure has a big impact on Turkish-Muslim people?

To sum up, we attempted to evaluate the effects of gratitude on Turkish-Islamic culture and society by focusing on grateful thoughts, religious motivation and psychological well-being. Furthermore we aimed to examine the related construct and literature in terms of the cross cultural studies. In spite of the vital of gratitude within Islamic theology and practice, very little research has explored the relationship between religiosity and gratitude. The study was carried out on Turkish sample first time. For this reason, we hope we could make a contribution to developing gratitude psychology studies in Turkey.

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