

# The Analysis of Gratitude on Retired Civil Servants

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Abstract: Every worker, at a certain time will reach the retirement stage, and this period will be responded to differently by each individual, some people deal with it negatively, while others deal with it positively. Gratitude encourages positive emotions associated with the situations experienced by the individual during retirement. This research aimed to identify the difference of gratitude on retired civil servants based on gender. The technique used for sampling was the snowball sampling method with 252 retired civil servants consisting of 126 men and 126 women, all of them were fulfilled with certain criteria. Data was collected using an adapted version of The Gratitude Questionnaire-6 (GQ-6) scale, created by McCullough, Emmons, and Tsang (2002) with a research reliability coefficient of ( $\alpha$ ) = 0,758. The hypothesis which was tested by using an independent sample t-test showed the significance of 0,001( $p < 0,05$ ) and  $t = -3,250$ . The result indicated that there is a difference in gratitude between retired civil servant men and women. Therefore, it is interpreted that men retired civil servant has lower gratitude than women retired civil servant.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

Every individual has needs that must be met in this life, including physiological needs, security needs, compassion needs, self-esteem needs, and self-actualization needs (Maslow, 1970). Besides fulfilling those needs, an individual also has to create harmony and happiness in life by working, an activity involving physical and mental as well as becoming the main daily activity (Nuraini, 2013). Some occupation can be done by an individual are being entrepreneur, private employee, and civil servant (Astuti & Fithri, 2013).

A civil servant or *Pegawai Negeri Sipil* which is later on abbreviated with PNS is Indonesia citizen who fulfills certain criteria to be appointed as state civil apparatus or *Aparatur Sipil Negara* (ASN) permanently by staffing official to officiate in government office (Regulation of The Republic of Indonesia [PPRI] No. 5 paragraph year 2014). PNS as a government officer obtain several facilities like monthly salary, pension plan, healthcare insurance, allowance for partner and children, etc (Putra, 2006; Keban, 2004). According to Trisusanti and Satiningsih (2012), working as a civil servant provides meaning for an individual like happiness, prosperity, and social status. Fanani (2005) explains

that status as a civil servant is appreciated and honored by society.

Status and position as a civil servant will end by the time of retirement (Putra, 2006). A retired civil servant is a civil servant who belongs to functional position and has reached age limit to retire will be dismissed honorably (PPRI No. 21 Year 2014, Paragraph 1 No. 3). Pension limit age for a civil servant is 58 years old, 60 years old and 65-year old depending on the kind of positions of the civil servant (PPRI No. 21 Year 2014, Paragraph 2). Data from Staffing and Human Resource Development (BKPSDM) *Banda Aceh City* (2018), in 2012 the number of pensioners of civil servants was 168, in 2014 they were 150, 104 in 2015, 142 in 2016, 170 in 2017.

Retirement is the end of life pattern or transition era into a new life pattern that corresponds to a change of role, interest, and value, as well as an entire change of one's life pattern (Hurlock, 2009). The end of status as a civil servant is followed by the end of salary, honorarium, and various kinds of allowances that support the life of a civil servant, as the resulting income becomes lower and it is not a pleasant moment for some pensioners (Widyowati & Hadjam, 2012). Furthermore, during retirement, a civil servant worries about losing his role among society, losing

power, social contact, economy and even self-esteem (Rachmawati & Listiyandini, 2014).

For some individuals, retirement is a negative life experience, yet for others, retirement becomes a positive life experience because they see it as growth and development period, the important moment related to lifestyle and opportunity to have fun (Stephan, Evelyne & Fernandez, 2008). One who retires could perceive serenity because one just archives top of the carrier, not bare any duty given by the institution or organization in which one works, as the result one feels peace, relax, and happy (Lesmana, 2014). Pensioners could do various activities which are previously unable to do, one is also able to enjoy time with family (Sanrock, 2011).

According to Atchley (in Sanrock, 2002), there are several phases of retirement as follows, first honeymoon phase, the phase is characterized with happy feeling because of free from routine and duty, one starts to seek a new activity like doing some hobbies and other things related to health, finance, lifestyle, and family, second, disenchantment phase, a pensioner in this phase begins to be depressed and feels empty, for some individuals, feeling of losing, either losing power, dignity, status, income, friends, or some regulations. In this phase, pensioners who are depressed will get into the reorientation phase, the phase in which an individual start to develop a more realistic perception about life alternative by seeking new activities. Once reaching this phase, the pensioners will get into the stability phase in which they start to develop certain criteria related to selecting an activity to make life better in the future.

Men and women are different in terms of undergoing retirement. According to Hurlock (2009), generally, women are better in undergoing retirement than the men, their role does not radically change because the women in some aspects always undergo a domestic role either at pre-marriage or during marriage, they even undergo the role as workers, in workplace a few of psychological advantages and a little of social support are obtained by the women thus the retirement condition less raises trauma toward the women, moreover, when they work, a few women hold high position so that they have no power and prestige to lose, the women also have more social groups to spend spare time during retirement than the men, in contrary the men only have a few replacing sources which can result in satisfaction usually obtained from the previous job, as the result, retirement becomes a mental burden for the men.

Several issues related to individuals undergoing retirement are a retirement plan, marriage status and member of family's attitude, financial management,

mental condition, social life, acceptance on condition and gratitude (Widyowati & Hadjam, 2012; Hurlock, 2009; Sudarilah, 2012). According to Benso (2005), gratitude is the main pillar in achieving success in retirement. Furthermore, Benso explains that being grateful will create happiness naturally and share with the social, spiritual community as well as with other people.

Gratitude is thankful feeling and happiness by accepting bounty either benefit seen from others or peace which is born from natural beauty (Peterson & Seligman, 2004). According to McCullough, Emmons, and Tsang (2002), gratitude can emerge as a trait, feeling, mood or emotion. Gratitude can be defined as a general tendency to realize and respond by gratitude emotion toward an individual's kindness in a positive experience and what an individual receives. Gratitude can be a solution to various life problems and a way to get a peaceful mind, happiness, physical health, and to improve relationship and welfare (Emmons & McCullough, 2003).

Individuals with much gratitude will show positive emotions like happiness, good health, hope and will obtain satisfaction in life, meanwhile, individuals with a little gratitude will have negative emotions including anxiety, depression, and jealousy or envy (McCullough, et al., 2002). Froh, Kashdan, Ozimkowski, and Miller (2009) say that individuals with gratitude will gain happiness, optimistic, and life satisfaction.

Individual with gratitude tries to see a condition which is experienced with more positive perspective so that one feels no burden with the condition, one even can be motivated to improve performance as thankful feeling for the grace that one receives (Cahyono, 2014). A retired civil servant experiences the same thing, one used to work in a government institution after one retires, one will experience a different situation and condition, thus with gratitude, the individual can see the future positively. As explained by Wood, Joseph, Lloyd, and Atkins (2009) that gratitude is a character from an individual who has positive thinking and creates a better life.

Research by Kashdan, et al. (2009) showed that there was a difference in revealing gratitude between men and women especially in elderhood where women were more grateful than men. Moreover, Kashdan, et al explains that the high gratitude among women is related to the improvement of social relations and the freedom to achieve a goal as well as being able to express feelings openly, the women also intensely communicate toward each other verbally by using a language that can improve their personal

relationship, while men only recognize language as an instrument to give and receive information. Levant and Williams (2009) add that men possibly recognize an experience and gratitude expression as a weakness that can threaten their masculinity and break their social status.

The differences between men and women in expressing gratitude emerge from the difference in appreciating an experienced event (Kashdan, et al., 2009). Also, Wood, et al. (2009) says that gratitude starts from advantageous appraisal toward value or benefit that is received. Compared to men, women particularly tend to consider interpersonal and social care more important so it makes women more enjoy life experience and is possible to improve frequent gratitude feeling (Schwartz & Rubel, 2005).

Based on the phenomenon, there is different gratitude among retired civil servants. Many studies about gratitude among men and women have been conducted previously in other countries, but very few studies from Indonesia. Therefore, the researcher is interested in conducting a study entitled the difference of gratitude on retired civil servants based on gender

## 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

Liyan and Xiaohua (in Rusdi, 2016) explain gratitude as a value, being grateful has a moral function that encourages someone to act prosocially. Gratitude is also a positive psychological function to increase happiness. According to McCullough, Emmons, and Tsang (2002), gratitude can emerge as a trait, feeling, mood or emotion. Gratitude can be defined as a general tendency to realize and respond to a gratitude emotion toward others' kindness in a positive experience and what an individual receives. Later, Emmons, McCullough and Tsang explained that gratitude is variously seen as moral virtue, an attitude that can be seen, an emotion, a habit, a personality trait and even a coping response (in Killen and Macaskill, 2015). Gratitude includes 4 aspects, namely: Intensity, Frequency, Span, Density.

## 3 RESEARCH METHOD

This study is comparative quantitative research. The population of the study is the 252 retired civil servants in Banda Aceh city consisting of 126 men and 126 women. The sampling used is snowball sampling. The snowball sampling is a technique to select a

sample from a smaller number to higher by continuously identifying, selecting and taking the sample in a network or relationship chain (Sugiyono, 2013). The sample criteria of this study are: a) retired civil servant, b) retired based on Retirement Age Limit (RAL), and c) willing to be respondent.

### 3.1 Methods of Collecting Data

The method of collecting data in this study is The Gratitude Questionnaire-6 (GQ-6) instrument by McCullough, et al. (2002). The scale includes six items with a Likert style and consists of a favorable and unfavorable question group with 7 choices.

### 3.2 Method of Analyzing Data

The collected data was analyzed by using a one-sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov test to test data normality and test homogeneity using oneway ANOVA. Also, the hypothesis test was conducted by applying a parametric technique i.e. independent sample t-test using SPSS version 20.0 for Windows.

## 4 RESULT

### 4.1 Data Description of Gratitude

General description about data of gratitude variable is in the table below:

Table 1: Data Description of Gratitude Research Variable

Gratitude Variable	Hypothetical Data				Empirical Data			
	Xmax	Xmin	Mean	SD	Xmax	Xmin	Mean	SD
Men	42	6	24	6	42	14	32.13	4.748
Women	42	6	24	6	42	17	34.06	4.670
Total	42	6	24	6	42	14	33.09	4.798

According to statistics, hypothetically descriptive analysis shows that minimum response is 6 and the maximum response is 40. The mean is 24 and the standard deviation is 6. Meanwhile, the empirical data shows that the minimum response is 14 and the maximum is 42, with the mean is 33,09 and the standard deviation is 4,798.

According to the description above, the division of categorizing subjects includes three categories as follows low, moderate, and high. Subject category classification used by the researcher is categorizing method based on a normal distribution with level category because the subject score in population is normally distributed (Azwar, 2013). Categorizing will use interval formula as follows:

Table 1: Gratitude categorization

Score	Category	Men		Women	
		Total	Percentage	Total	Percentage
$X < 18$	Low	1	0,8%	1	0,8%
$18 \leq X < 30$	Moderate	43	34%	22	17%
$\leq 30 X$	High	82	65%	103	82%
TOTAL		126	100	126	100

Based on the table above, it can be seen that the majority of retirees, both men and women, feel a high level of gratitude. Only 0.8% or only 1 man and woman who have low gratification.

**4.2 Assumption Test**

The result of the assumption test shows that data are normally and homogeneously distributed. Result of normality test from gratitude variable is ( $p=0.139$  with  $p>0.05$ ) and result of homogeneity test shows score of significance at 0.851 ( $p>0.05$ ). The result shows that data are normally and homogeneously distributed.

**4.3 Hypothetical Test**

Hypothetical test implements Independent Sample T-Test because the data were normally distributed. The analysis result shows that the significance score of this study is 0.001 which is lower than the significance level, at  $0.001 < 0.05$ . The analysis result shows there is different gratitude among retired civil servants based on gender. According to the result, the hypothesis is accepted.

**5 DISCUSSION**

The study conducted to see different gratitude among retired civil servants based on gender. The result shows that gratitude among men retired civil servants are significantly different from women retired civil servant. It shows the score (Sig. 2-tailed) is lower than

the significance level, which is 0.001 ( $p < 0.05$ ), which means that the gratitude is different among retired civil servants based on gender.

According to the result, women have a higher gratitude level than men. It is showed by the mean score of gratitude scale in which the women retired civil servants obtain a mean score for 34.06 and men for 32.13.

This study is supported by the previous study by Khashdan, et al., (2009) who says that gratitude among women higher than men. Froh, Kashdan, Ozimkowski, and Miller (2009) also find that women tend to show higher gratitude levels than men. The different gratitude between men and women emerges from the difference of seeing an experienced event (Khashdan, et al., 2009). Wood, Maltby, Linley, and Joseph (2008) explain that gratitude is started with advantageously valuing the obtained benefit.

Men and women are different in recognizing retirement. Hurlock (2009) states that men recognize working as the most important thing in life, so that the retirement becomes a burden and usually makes men difficult to adapt with the changing role during retirement, moreover, men only have a few of replacing sources which they obtained from the previous job, on contrary, women do not recognize working as the only way to achieve their identity, even though women go to work, they still consider family as the main priority, so that the retirement does not create major change in development of identity because there are more other things that women can do inside or outside the household. Women do not experience a radically changing role, moreover, the job only provides a few psychological benefits and supports as the result the retirement does not result in trauma, moreover women who hold high positions are so small numbers so that they do not feel losing prestige.

The high gratitude among women is also related to social relationship and freedom to achieve the goal as well as openness to express their feeling, women are more intense to communicate toward each other in form of detail verbal expression, women more enjoy using a language that can build personal relationship, meanwhile men recognize a language as a tool to share and receive information, so that women obtain more benefits from expressing gratitude because it manages the feeling and improve freedom to act consistently based on believed values (Khasydan, et al., 2009).

Generally, women tend to put up an interpersonal relationship and social care which require them to act more passively than men, it makes women more enjoy life experience that can improve the frequency

of gratitude, on the other hand, men more appreciate power and authority than women (Schwartz & Rubel, 2005). Men tend to perceive help from others as threats against their autonomy and authority, hence the consideration becomes negative perception which can decrease the level of gratitude (Khashdan, et al., 2009). Moreover, women tend to express emotion to a higher level than men (Khashdan, et al., 2009; Timmer, Fischer & Manstead, 2003).

It is emphasized by analysis data result based on categorization in this study, high category gratitude is obtained by the women retired civil servants for 82% of 126 total, moderate is at 17% and low is at 0,8%, meanwhile only 65% of men retired civil servants are at high category of 126 subjects, 34% are at moderate, and 0,8% are at low.

The study by McChullough, et al. (2002) shows one of the factors that affect the gratitude is religiosity. An individual with religious faith has higher gratitude (Rosmarin, Piruntinsky, Cohen, Galler, & Krumrei, 2011). Ulina, Kurniasih, and Putri (2013) explained that religion teaches its followers to consistently make an effort and pray, uneasy to desperate, think positively, and grateful. Religion makes the followers have hope and high optimism (Ciarrocchi, Liacco & Deneke, 2008; Biswas, Diener & Dean, 2008).

The study by McChullough, et al (2002) finds that there is a relationship between religiosity and disposition (tendency) of gratitude and improving daily gratitude. Being grateful in performing religion influences the emerging of other positive variables, lie being grateful to God which can decrease the negative effect of health and poverty among American adult women (Krauss in Tsang, et al., 2011). Lambert, et al. (in Tsang, et al. 2011) also finds that an individual who consistently performs religious teaching is more grateful than an individual who does not.

Another study by Mutia, Subandi, and Mulyati (2010) shows that by giving gratitude therapy, an individual will be calmer when facing a problem. This study shows that 65% of men and 82% of women have high gratitude, it is because the gratitude is related to religion, faith, and God (McChullough, et al., 2002), and the total subjects in that study, 252 subjects (100%), are the followers of Islam.

According to data description about the length of retirement, there are 161 subjects are at range 1-5 years, 74 subjects are at 6-10 years, and 17 subjects are at 11-16 years. Santrock (2011) states that the more adult an individual is, the wiser and the more religious one will be, therefore the longer the retirement they undergo, the more they can improve



their gratitude focus on positive things or aspects in their environment. It is different from individuals with depressive tendencies who see their environment negatively and focus on negative things of the world, of themselves, or the future (Wood, 2008).

This study shows that there is significantly different gratitude between both genders, it is obtained after conducting analysis using Independent Sample T-Test to test hypothesis of gender, however, the researcher realizes that there are many limitations when the study is conducted as follows data analysis is statistics and number, so that it cannot be reviewed more deeply, because of limited time and cost, so that the study is only conducted in Banda Aceh, and the subject is only based on Limit Retirement Age (LRA), so that not all individuals can be involved as sample, moreover the researcher could not conduct the research in some institutions so that the study runs longer than it was planned

## 6 CONCLUSIONS

This study is to see the different gratitude among the retired civil servants based on gender. The result shows that there is different gratitude between men and women, in which women have higher gratitude than men. Based on the result, it can be concluded that gender has a role in the level of gratitude among the retired civil servants.

The retired civil servants in Banda Aceh city should keep and improve their gratitude, either when they get little grace or much grace to enjoy life more positively and well so that they will not be jealous of what others have. The retired civil servants' family in Banda Aceh city should care, accompany, support and give motivation to pensioners so that they keep feeling appreciated, needed and passionate in undergoing their old age. The future researcher who is interested in conducting a research about gratitude should use qualitative method through observation and in-depth interview to enlarge the result, if using quantitative method, one should relate with other variables like psychological well being, post power syndrome, self-adaptation, happiness or something that can influence gratitude of retired individuals in Banda Aceh

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