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Gratitude and Marital Commitment Among Muslim Adults: The Moderating Role of Assertiveness

Rima Nasir Basalamah[1*], Muhammad Zein Permana[2]
[1]Department of Psychology, International Open University, Gambia
[2]Educational Psychology Study Program, Postgraduate School, Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia, Bandung, Indonesia
e-mail: [*]rimabasalamah@gmail.com

Abstract / *Abstrak*

Marital commitment was identified as a crucial factor in sustaining spousal relationships. Gratitude was found to enhance commitment, while assertiveness was considered important in marital interactions. This study aimed to examine the role of assertiveness as a moderator in the relationship between gratitude and marital commitment among Muslim adults. A quantitative cross-sectional design was employed, involving 311 Muslim adults aged 30–45 years who had been married for more than five years. Research instruments included culturally adapted scales of gratitude, marital commitment, and assertiveness, all of which demonstrated strong validity and reliability. Regression analysis revealed that gratitude significantly predicted marital commitment (Adjusted $R^2 = 0.429$, $p < 0.001$), and assertiveness also had a significant positive effect (Adjusted $R^2 = 0.195$, $p < 0.001$). However, Moderated Regression Analysis (MRA) indicated that assertiveness did not moderate the relationship between gratitude and marital commitment ($\beta = -0.093$, $p = 0.146$). These findings suggested that gratitude and assertiveness independently contribute to marital commitment among Muslim adults.

Komitmen pernikahan merupakan faktor penting dalam menjaga keberlangsungan hubungan suami-istri. Kebersyukuran diyakini meningkatkan komitmen, sementara perilaku asertif dipandang berperan dalam kualitas interaksi pasangan. Penelitian ini bertujuan menguji peran perilaku asertif sebagai moderator dalam hubungan antara kebersyukuran dengan komitmen pernikahan pada dewasa Muslim. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif dengan desain cross-sectional, melibatkan 311 partisipan Muslim dewasa berusia 30–45 tahun yang telah menikah lebih dari lima tahun. Instrumen penelitian berupa skala kebersyukuran, komitmen pernikahan, dan perilaku asertif yang telah diuji validitas dan reliabilitasnya. Analisis regresi menunjukkan kebersyukuran berpengaruh positif signifikan terhadap komitmen pernikahan (Adjusted $R^2 = .429$, $p < .001$), dan perilaku asertif juga berpengaruh positif signifikan (Adjusted $R^2 = .195$, $p < .001$). Namun, uji Moderated Regression Analysis (MRA) menunjukkan perilaku asertif tidak memoderasi hubungan kebersyukuran dengan komitmen pernikahan ($\beta = -.093$, $p = .146$). Temuan ini menegaskan bahwa kebersyukuran dan perilaku asertif berkontribusi secara independen terhadap komitmen pernikahan.

Keywords / *Kata kunci*

Assertiveness;
Gratitude;
Marital commitment;
Muslim adults

*Perilaku Asertif;
Kebersyukuran;
Komitmen Pernikahan;
Dewasa Muslim*

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Introduction

Marriage is widely regarded as a central institution that shapes individual well-being, family stability, and social cohesion. Within family psychology, marital commitment is considered a decisive factor in determining whether couples can sustain their relationship over time. Commitment differs from related constructs such as marital satisfaction, adjustment, or attachment, as it emphasizes the intention and active effort to preserve the marriage despite challenges and external pressures (Johnson et al., 1999; Rusbult et al., 1998).

From an Islamic perspective, marriage is not merely a social contract but a sacred covenant (mitsaqan ghalidza) as described in the Qur'an (An-Nisa: 21). Scholars emphasize that mitsaqan ghalidza represents one of the most binding agreements in Islam, comparable to the covenant between prophets and Allah (Dahliana & Wahab, 2023; Mahdianfar, 2025). Tafsir studies, Islamic law, and family studies all position marriage in Islam as a sacred contract, a divine commitment,

and a bond that carries moral-spiritual responsibility, not merely a social relationship between individuals (Hidayati & Assa'diah, 2021; Hidayati et al., 2026; Meirina, 2023; Siswanto, 2021).

Recent studies highlight that this Qur'anic perspective frames marital commitment as both an ethical and spiritual obligation, requiring loyalty, fairness, and mutual respect in daily interactions (Insani & Putri, 2025). Thus, the Qur'anic notion of mitsaqan ghalidza not only reinforces the spiritual dimension of marital commitment but also aligns with contemporary scientific evidence on the protective role of sacred beliefs in sustaining marital stability. Findings also show that some aspects of relationships, such as commitment, act to preserve the pillars of marriage in critical situations (Karimi et al., 2019).

However, contemporary realities reveal that this ideal is increasingly challenged. The approximately 394.000–399.921 divorce cases recorded among Muslim couples in Indonesia in 2024 reflect a persistent erosion of marital commitment, with economic hardship, domestic violence, and infidelity as the primary drivers. cases among Muslim couples in 2024 (Badan Pusat Statistik, 2025; Kusmardani, 2024; Rinaldo et al., 2023; Riyadi et al., 2025). Such figures reflecting the fragility of marital commitment in modern society and underscore the urgent need to examine psychological and relational factors that can strengthen marital bonds.

The urgency of this issue is particularly salient among individuals in established adulthood (ages 30–45), a developmental stage marked by simultaneous negotiation of career progression, intimate partnership maintenance, and child-rearing responsibilities. This "career and care crunch" elevates stress and generates role overload, which in turn produces strain-based work–family conflict that undermines mental health and indirectly threatens relationship stability (Fettro & Nomaguchi, 2018; Kayaalp et al., 2021; Mehta, 2025; Mehta et al., 2020; Mehta & LaRiviere, 2023). Within this context, relational resources such as gratitude and assertiveness become crucial.

Across Islamic-psychology, tafsir, and couple-research literatures, gratitude is treated as worship that appears to support family harmony and relates to marital commitment (QS. Ibrahim: 7; Al-Jauziyah, 2019). Gratitude functions to preserve relational bonds, enhance feelings of being valued, and protect satisfaction and commitment against psychological risk factors (Leong et al., 2020; Park et al., 2019). Gratitude has emerged as one of the most influential internal factors in sustaining relationships. Research in positive psychology demonstrates that gratitude fosters emotional bonding, enhances relational satisfaction, and motivates behaviors that maintain relationships (Algoe et al., 2008, 2010; Gordon et al., 2012; Joel et al., 2013). Individuals who practice gratitude are more likely to perceive their partners as valuable, appreciate sacrifices, and respond to conflicts with constructive strategies. Thus, gratitude functions as both a psychological resource and a spiritual practice that reinforces marital commitment.

Alongside gratitude, communication styles play a critical role in marital dynamics. Assertiveness, defined as the ability to express thoughts and feelings honestly while respecting others, represents a balanced communication style that avoids both passivity and aggression (Mitamura, 2018; Shaffer, 2021). Assertiveness enables partners to express needs, emotions, and disagreements openly while maintaining respect, thereby fostering marital satisfaction and harmony (Anggraeni, 2023; Santri et al., 2022; Weliangan, 2022). Assertive communication enables couples to resolve conflicts constructively, reduce misunderstandings, and build mutual respect. In Islamic teachings, assertiveness resonates with the principle of qoulan sadida (truthful speech), which emphasizes honesty, clarity, and respect in interpersonal interactions. By fostering openness and fairness, assertiveness can serve as an external factor that strengthens marital commitment (Postolati, 2017; Sowa-behtane, 2018).

Despite the theoretical relevance of gratitude and assertiveness, empirical studies have rarely examined their combined role in marital commitment, particularly within Muslim populations. Most existing research has focused on general romantic relationships or mixed religious samples, leaving a gap in understanding how these variables operate specifically in Muslim marriages. Furthermore, while gratitude has been consistently linked to marital commitment, the moderating role of assertiveness remains underexplored.

In addition to prior findings, several studies have examined the role of communication styles as moderators in relationship outcomes. For example, Palmer (2018) and Webb (2020) explored how assertiveness moderated the effects of emotional variables on relationship satisfaction, though results were mixed. Similarly, Barton et al. (2023) highlighted that perceived gratitude

interacted with communication patterns to influence relationship quality. These studies suggest that moderation effects are possible, yet underexplored in Muslim marital contexts, thereby justifying the present investigation.

Based on these considerations, the present study formulates the following hypotheses:

1. Gratitude has a positive relationship with marital commitment among Muslim adults.
2. Assertive behavior has a positive relationship with marital commitment among Muslim adults.
3. Assertive behavior moderates the relationship between gratitude and marital commitment among Muslim adults.

Method

Research Design

Marital research consistently shows that assertiveness relates to marital outcomes, including marital satisfaction, adjustment, and communication quality (Anggraeni, 2023; Erwinda & Adri, 2023; Weliangan, 2022). MRA was being used because the moderation model was theoretically and empirically plausible as the variable that changes how gratitude as independent variable relates to marital commitment as dependent variable (Montoya, 2018). This study employed a quantitative, non-experimental correlational design. Moderated Regression Analysis (MRA) was used to examine whether the effect of gratitude on marital commitment on Muslim adults depends on assertiveness.

Participants

The population consisted of married Muslim adults aged 30–45 years (established adulthood) who had been married for more than five years. Using convenience sampling, 337 respondents completed the questionnaire; 311 met the inclusion criteria and were included in the final analysis. Inclusion criteria were: (1) legally married Muslim couples, (2) aged 30–45 years, (3) married for more than five years, and (4) Indonesian citizens residing in Indonesia. Of the 337 respondents, 26 were excluded from the final analysis. The reasons for exclusion included incomplete responses (n = 14), failure to meet the age criteria of 30–45 years (n = 7), and marital duration less than five years (n = 5). After applying these criteria, 311 participants remained eligible for inclusion in the study.

A priori sample size estimation was conducted using GPower 3.1 (Faul et al., 2009). For multiple regression analysis with three predictors, assuming a medium effect size ($f^{2*} = 0.15$), $\alpha = .05$, and desired power $(1 - \beta) = .95$, the minimum required sample size was 119. For moderation analysis, with the same parameters, the required sample size was 107. Thus, the final sample of 311 participants substantially exceeded the minimum requirement, ensuring adequate statistical power to detect medium effects and enhancing the robustness of the findings.

Variables and Instruments

Prior to statistical testing, all instruments underwent expert judgement by specialists in psychology and Islamic counseling. The experts assessed item clarity, cultural relevance, and alignment with Islamic values. Descriptively, they confirmed that the adapted items preserved the theoretical essence of the original constructs while remaining contextually appropriate for Indonesian Muslim couples. Inferentially, this process established content validity, ensuring that the scales measured gratitude, marital commitment, and assertiveness accurately without cultural bias.

Marital Commitment (Y) was measured using the Investment Model of Commitment Scale originally developed by Rusbult et al. (2009). The modified version consisted of 15 items across three components: intent to persist, attachment, and long-term orientation. Responses were rated on a six-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree). Construct validity was confirmed through Principal Component Analysis (PCA), with all items showing loadings above .400 and $\chi^2 = 642.215$, $p < 0.001$. Reliability was high, with $\omega = 0.909$ and $\alpha = 0.910$. An example item is: "I am determined to maintain this marriage even when facing difficulties."

Gratitude (X) was measured using the Gratitude Scale developed by Rusdi et al. (2021). The modified version comprised 10 items measuring extrinsic and intrinsic gratitude, with responses rated on the same six-point Likert scale. PCA results indicated that all items had loadings above .400, $\chi^2 = 297.577$, $p < .001$. Reliability was excellent, with $\omega = .903$ and $\alpha = .907$. An example item is: "I feel grateful for the support given by my spouse."

Assertiveness (M) was measured using the Assertiveness Scale originally proposed by Mitamura (2018). The modified version consisted of 12 items across two dimensions: objective effectiveness and pragmatic politeness. Responses were rated on a six-point Likert scale. PCA confirmed validity, with all items showing

loadings above .400 and $\chi^2 = 614.538$, $p < .001$. Reliability was strong, with $\omega = .892$ and $\alpha = .892$. An example item is: "I can express my opinion to my spouse clearly and politely."

Table 1.
Description of the Research Participants

Category	Frequency	%
Gender		
Male	20	6.4
Female	291	93.6
Age		
30-35 years	124	39.9
36-40 years	119	38.3
41-45 years	68	21.9
Length of Marriage		
5-9 years	85	27.3
10-14 years	129	41.5
>15 years	97	31.2
Children		
None	21	6.8
1-2 children	144	46.3
>2 children	146	46.9
Joint Income (with Spouse)		
< IDR5.000.000	101	32.5
IDR 5.000.000-10.000.000	94	30.2
> IDR 10.000.000	116	37.3
Employing Household Assistants		
Yes	65	20.9
No	246	79.1

Procedure

Data were collected online via Google Forms between November 26 and December 6, 2025. Participants provided informed consent and anonymity was ensured. Ethical approval was obtained from the IOU Directorate of Research and Publications under Ref. No. ETHIC 53/01-26.

Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using JASP version .9. Descriptive statistics and Pearson correlations were computed, followed by simple regression to test the direct effects of gratitude and assertiveness on marital commitment. Moderated Regression Analysis (MRA) was conducted to examine whether assertiveness moderates the relationship between gratitude and marital commitment.

Results

Participant Characteristics

Table 1, a total of 311 participants were included in the final analysis. The participants in this study were predominantly female (93.6%), with only a small proportion male (6.4%). Most were between 30–40 years old, with 39.9% aged 30–35 and 38.3% aged 36–40, while 21.9% were 41–45. In terms of marital duration, the largest group had been married for 10–14 years (41.5%), followed by those married more than 15 years (31.2%) and 5–9 years (27.3%). Family composition showed that nearly half of the participants had more than two children (46.9%), another 46.3% had one to two children, and only 6.8% had none. Regarding economic background, 37.3% reported joint household income above IDR 10,000,000, 30.2% between IDR 5,000,000–10,000,000, and 32.5% below IDR 5,000,000. Finally, only 20.9% of families employed household assistants, while the majority (79.1%) did not. This demographic profile reflects a relatively mature, family-oriented population with diverse economic conditions, yet largely characterized by high female participation.

Descriptive Statistics

Table 2 summarizes the descriptive statistics for the three study variables: Marital Commitment, Gratitude, and Assertiveness. Each variable is presented with its hypothetical range and mean, derived from the scale design, alongside the observed range and mean obtained from participants' responses. Standard deviations are included to indicate the degree of variability in scores. This overview provides a clear picture of the central tendency and dispersion of the data before moving into inferential analyses.

The results show that Marital Commitment reached an observed mean of 77.9, which falls within the moderate category. Gratitude recorded an observed mean of 55.6, reflecting a relatively low level compared to the hypothetical expectation. Meanwhile, Assertiveness produced an observed mean of 58.8, also categorized as moderate. Taken together, these descriptive statistics suggest that, although participants generally maintain moderate levels of marital commitment and assertiveness, their gratitude scores tend to be lower, indicating an area that may warrant further attention.

Categorization of Variables

Table 3 presents the distribution of participants across three categories—Low, Moderate, and High—for each variable. This classification, based on observed mean scores and standard deviations, enables a more nuanced understanding of how participants' responses are spread across levels.

As shown in Table 3, the majority of participants demonstrated moderate marital commitment (88.1%), with only 11.9% in the low category and none in the high category. Gratitude followed a similar pattern, with 83.9% classified as moderate, 16.1% as low, and no participants

classified as high. Assertiveness, however, displayed greater variation: 65.9% of participants were moderate, 14.5% low, and 19.6% high. This indicates that assertiveness is more differentiated among participants, with a notable proportion achieving high scores.

Interpretation

Overall, the findings highlight that marital commitment and gratitude are largely concentrated in the moderate range, suggesting stability but limited strength in these domains. In contrast, assertiveness is more widespread, with some participants demonstrating strong assertive behavior. This profile underscores the importance of examining assertiveness not only as a predictor but also as a potential moderating factor in the relationship between gratitude and marital commitment.

Normality Testing

Normality was assessed using histograms and Q–Q plots in JASP. After removing six outliers, the histogram displayed a bell-shaped curve with residuals clustering around zero, while the Q–Q plot showed data points closely aligned with the diagonal line. These results confirm that the distribution of scores for marital commitment, gratitude, and assertiveness met the assumption of normality.

Multicollinearity Testing

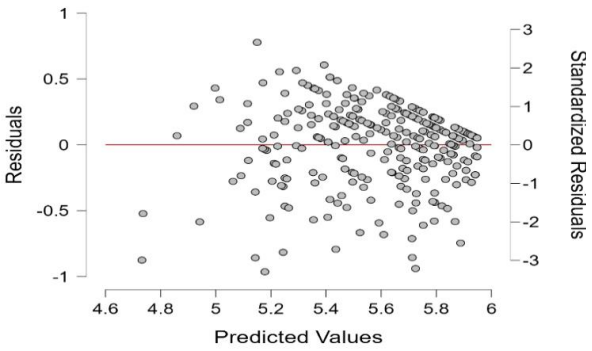
Multicollinearity was assessed using tolerance and Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values. As shown in Table 4, both gratitude and assertiveness had tolerance values of .718 (>.1) and VIF values of 1.393 (<10). These results indicate that the regression model is free from multicollinearity, meaning the independent variables are not excessively correlated and can be reliably included in the analysis.

Heteroscedasticity Testing

The scatterplot of standardized residuals against predicted values (Figure 1) revealed that residuals were randomly dispersed above and below the zero line, without forming clusters or funnel-shaped patterns. This confirms that the regression model satisfies the assumption of homoscedasticity, ensuring that error variance is constant across levels of the predictors.

Figure 1

Heteroscedasticity Testing



Linearity Testing

Linearity was tested through partial regression plots. The relationship between marital commitment and gratitude (Figure 2), as well as between marital commitment and assertiveness (Figure 3), showed data points scattered along the diagonal line. This pattern indicates that both relationships are linear, fulfilling the assumption required for regression analysis.

Figure 2

Partial Regression Plots of Marital Commitment and Gratitude

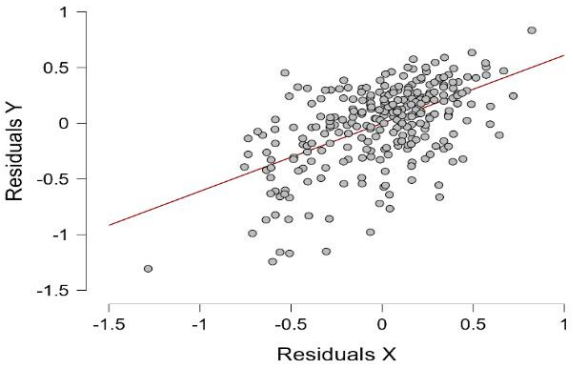


Figure 3

Linearity Test of Assertive Behavior on Marital Commitment

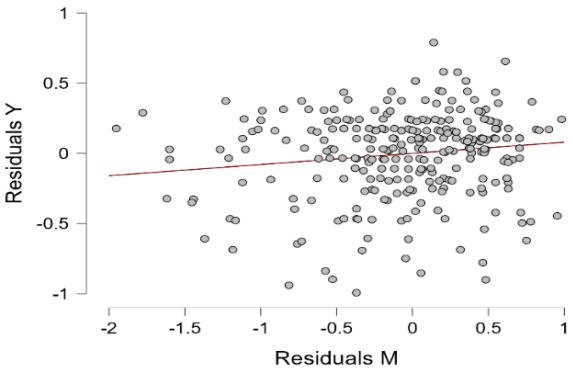


Table 2.
Classification of Variables

Variable	Hypothetical Range	Hypothetical Mean (SD)	Observed Range	Observed Mean (SD)	Interpretation
Marital Commitment	15-90	37.5	14-84	77.9	Moderate
Gratitude	10-60	25.0	10-60	55.6	Low
Assertiveness	12-72	30.0	30-72	58.8	Moderate

Table 3.
Descriptive Statistics and Variable Levels

Variable	Category	Score Range	Frequency	%
Marital Commitment	Low	< 70.75	37	11.9
	Moderate	70.75 - <85.12	274	88.1
	High	≥ 85.12	0	0
Gratitude	Low	< 70.75	50	16.08
	Moderate	70.75 - <85.12	261	83.92
	High	≥ 85.12	0	0
Asertiveness	Low	< 50.75	45	14.47
	Moderate	50.76 - <66.77	205	65.92
	High	≥ 66.77	61	19.61
Total			311	100

Table 4
Multicollinearity Testing

Model		Unstandardized	Standardized	T	P	Tolerance	VIF
M_1	(Intercept)	1.807		7.216	< .001		
	X	.611	.586	11.567	< .001	.718	1.393
	M	.080	.133	2.626	.009	.718	1.393

Table 5
Correlations Among Variables

Model	R	R^2	Adjusted R^2	RMSE
M_1	.657	.431	.429	.296
M_2	.444	.197	.195	.352

Correlation Analysis

Table 5 illustrates the correlation coefficient for Model M_1 indicated that gratitude had a strong positive relationship with marital commitment (r = .657), consistent with the classification of a strong correlation (Sugiyono, 2021). In contrast, the correlation coefficient for Model M_2 showed that assertiveness had a moderate positive relationship with marital commitment (r = .444), which falls within the range of a moderate correlation (Sugiyono, 2021). These results suggest that both gratitude and assertiveness are positively associated with marital commitment, although the strength of their relationships differs.

Regression Analysis

Simple regression analysis was conducted to examine the direct effects of gratitude and assertiveness on marital commitment. The first regression analysis examined the direct effect of gratitude on marital commitment. Results showed that gratitude significantly predicted marital commitment ($\beta = .684$, $p < .001$), with an adjusted R^2 of .429. This indicates that gratitude accounted for approximately 42.9% of the variance in marital commitment. The regression equation was:

$$Y = 1.786 + .684X$$

A second regression analysis tested the effect of assertiveness on marital commitment. Assertiveness also emerged as a significant predictor ($\beta = .266$, $p < .001$), with an adjusted R^2 of .195. This suggests that assertiveness explained 19.5% of the variance in marital commitment. The regression equation was:

$$Y = 4.301 + .266M$$

indicating that each unit increase in assertiveness contributed to a 0.266 increase in marital commitment.

Together, these findings highlight that both gratitude and assertiveness independently exert

positive and significant influences on marital commitment among Muslim adults.

Moderation Analysis

Moderated Regression Analysis (MRA) was conducted to test whether assertiveness moderated the relationship between gratitude and marital commitment. The results showed that the interaction term was not significant ($\beta = -.093$, $p = .146$), indicating that assertiveness did not moderate the relationship.

Summary of Findings

The findings demonstrate that gratitude and assertiveness independently contribute to marital commitment among Muslim adults. However, assertiveness does not strengthen or weaken the effect of gratitude on marital commitment, suggesting that these two psychological factors operate independently.

Discussions

The present study revealed that gratitude significantly predicts marital commitment among Muslim adults, explaining 42.9% of the variance. This finding supports previous research showing that gratitude fosters emotional bonding and relationship maintenance (Nurjanis, 2024; Sururin et al., 2026; Zuliana & Kumala, 2020). In the Islamic perspective, gratitude (shukr) is not only a psychological strength but also a spiritual practice that sustains harmony in marriage (QS. Ibrahim: 7; Al-Jauziyah, 2019). Empirical evidence further supports that sanctifying marriage as a divine covenant enhances resilience against stressors (Firmansyah et al., 2026). Thus, gratitude emerges as a central internal factor that reinforces marital commitment.

Assertiveness also demonstrated a positive effect, accounting for 19.5% of the variance in marital commitment. This result aligns with Mitamura's (2018) framework, which emphasizes assertive communication as a relational skill that enhances adjustment and satisfaction. Empirical studies likewise confirm that assertiveness contributes to marital satisfaction and conflict resolution (Adyshaphira et al., 2022; Anggraeni, 2023). Yet, other findings suggest that excessive assertiveness may escalate conflict if not balanced with empathy and cultural sensitivity. Shaffer (2021), indicating that cultural norms influence whether assertiveness is perceived as constructive or confrontational. Within Islamic teachings, assertiveness resonates with qoulan sadida (truthful speech), highlighting the importance of respectful and honest communication in strengthening marital bonds. This integration of psychological skill and Qur'anic principle underscores assertiveness as both a relational and moral virtue.

Interestingly, the moderation analysis showed that assertiveness did not strengthen or weaken the effect of gratitude on marital commitment. The interaction term was non-significant, suggesting that while both gratitude and assertiveness independently contribute to marital commitment, their combined effect does not produce additional benefits. This finding diverges from some Western studies that suggest communication styles can amplify the effects of positive emotions on relationship outcomes (Palmer, 2018; Webb, 2020).

One possible explanation is that in Muslim marital contexts, gratitude and assertiveness are both valued independently as moral and relational virtues, but they do not necessarily interact. Prior studies suggest that perceived gratitude may be more influential than expressed gratitude in sustaining relationship quality (Barton et al., 2023), which may explain why assertiveness did not amplify the effect of gratitude. This finding diverges from the initial hypothesis and indicates that gratitude operates as a direct emotional and spiritual resource, independent of communication style. Prior studies suggest that perceived gratitude may be more influential than expressed gratitude in sustaining relationship quality (Chang et al., 2022), which may explain why assertiveness did not amplify the effect of gratitude.

From a theoretical standpoint, the findings can be explained through the lens of Investment Model Theory (Chandler et al., 2024; Rusbult et al., 1998), which posits that commitment is shaped by satisfaction, investments, and alternatives. Gratitude enhances satisfaction and perceived investments, while assertiveness facilitates constructive conflict resolution, thereby reducing the appeal of alternatives. In Islamic psychology, the concept of mitsaqan ghalidza (An-Nisa: 21) frames marriage as a sacred covenant, reinforcing that commitment is not merely relational but also spiritual. Integrating these perspectives suggests that gratitude operates as a spiritual-emotional resource, while assertiveness functions as a behavioral-ethical resource, both contributing to marital resilience.

Practically, the findings highlight the importance of fostering gratitude and assertiveness in marital counseling and Islamic education programs. Encouraging spouses to

express gratitude and communicate assertively may strengthen marital bonds and reduce relational conflicts. Future research should explore whether other variables, such as religiosity, forgiveness, or empathy, play a moderating role in the relationship between gratitude and marital commitment (Khotimah & Mujiono, 2025; Zuhdi, 2025). Longitudinal studies could also examine how these constructs evolve in established marriages.

Strengths and Limitations

This study contributes to the integration of positive psychology and Islamic perspectives by adapting established instruments to cultural and religious contexts. The large sample size (n = 311) and strong psychometric properties of the instruments enhance the reliability of findings. Moreover, the study highlights the independent contributions of gratitude and assertiveness, offering practical implications for marital counseling and Islamic education.

Despite these strengths, several limitations should be acknowledged. First, the cross-sectional design restricts causal interpretations, as relationships among variables were observed at a single time point. Second, the sample was predominantly female (93.6%), which may limit generalizability to male populations. Third, the reliance on self-report measures may introduce social desirability bias. Finally, the non-significant moderation effect suggests that other variables (e.g., religiosity, forgiveness, empathy) may play a more substantial moderating role, warranting further investigation in future studies.

Conclusion

This study demonstrated that gratitude and assertiveness are significant predictors of marital commitment among Muslim adults. Gratitude accounted for a larger proportion of variance, reflecting its dual role as both a psychological strength and a religious obligation in Islam. Assertiveness also contributed positively, emphasizing the importance of respectful and clear communication in sustaining marital bonds.

However, the moderation analysis revealed that assertiveness did not strengthen or weaken the effect of gratitude on marital commitment. This suggests that gratitude and assertiveness operate independently, each reinforcing marital commitment through distinct pathways. The findings highlight the need to consider both spiritual and communicative dimensions in understanding marital relationships within Islamic contexts.

Theoretically, these findings enrich the literature by integrating positive psychology with Islamic perspectives, showing that gratitude functions as a spiritual and emotional resource, while assertiveness serves as a relational skill. This research contributes to the integration of Western psychological constructs with Islamic perspectives by modifying established instruments for cultural and religious relevance. Practically, the results underscore the importance of fostering gratitude and assertiveness in marital counseling and Islamic education programs, as these virtues can enhance relational stability and strengthen family resilience.

Declaration

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Author Contributions

Conceptualization: RNB; Methodology: RNB; Data collection and investigation: RNB; Data analysis: RNB; Writing—Original Draft Preparation: RNB; Writing—Review & Editing: RNB; Supervision: MZP.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

Use of Artificial Intelligence

The authors used Microsoft Copilot to assist in refining the English translation and polishing academic language. All interpretations, analyses, and conclusions remain the responsibility of the authors.

Ethical Clearance

The study protocol was approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of the International Open University (Approval No. ETHIC 53/01-26). All participants provided informed consent prior to participation.

Data Availability

The data supporting the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

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