

Effects of Gratitude Practice on Relationship Satisfaction and the Role of Perceived Superiority

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Abstract : This repeated-measures experiment explored the effects of six weeks of gratitude practice on college students (N = 67) on relationship satisfaction and perceived superiority. Replicating previous research on gratitude practice, it was hypothesized that after consistent gratitude practice, participants in the experimental group (n = 32) would feel increased levels of relationship satisfaction compared to the control group (n = 35). Of particular interest was whether the level of perceived superiority would moderate the effect of gratitude practice on relationship satisfaction. The gratitude group evidenced significantly higher appreciation and marginally higher relationship satisfaction at post-test than the control group (both groups being equal at pre-test). Significant enhancements in gratitude, satisfaction, and feeling both appreciative and appreciated were found in the gratitude group, as well as significant enhancements in gratitude, satisfaction, and feeling appreciated in the control group. Appreciation for one's partner was the only measure that improved in the gratitude group and not the control group from pre-test to post-test. Perceived superiority did not change significantly from pre-test to post-test in either group, supporting the prevalence and stability of this bias within people's overall perceptions of their relationships.

Keywords : gratitude, relationship satisfaction, perceived superiority, partner appreciation

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