

GRATIFICATION PATTERNS AMONG
PEASANTS AND WORKERS IN CENTRAL ETHIOPIA*

Habtamu Wondimu**

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The nature and distribution of gratification patterns (GP) and several related variables were studied in Central Ethiopia. It was hypothesized that white-collar workers, blue-collar workers, more educated persons, older persons, and women would prefer delayed gratification more than peasants and blue-collar workers, peasants, less educated persons, younger persons, and men, respectively. Also, positive relationships were predicted between GP, individual modernity (OM), and future time orientation (FTO).

* This paper is a part of the dissertation submitted to the University of Cincinnati, Cincinnati, Ohio. I thank the dissertation committee members, Dr. L.M. Lansky (Chair), Dr. D. Langmeyer, and Dr. A.K. Burlew for their guidance and valuable suggestions. I also thank AAU and UC for the financial support.

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Seventy peasants, 70 blue-collar workers and 70 white-collar workers, ages 18 to 65, were interviewed and the GP scale completed.

As hypothesized, there were significant ($p < .05$) differences between peasants and workers, blue-collar and white-collar workers, less educated and more educated persons. The latter group of each pair delayed more than the former. No significant differences existed between the two adulthood groups, and men and women in GP score.

Lastly, there were positive and significant ($p < .001$) relationships between GP, OM and FTO.

INTRODUCTION

The tendency to delay voluntarily or to defer immediate desires, urges, or impulses in order to obtain larger, future reward is an important ability or capacity that is valued in many societies (Mischel, 1974; Pollnac & Poggie, 1978). Delay of gratification can be inferred from such valued activities as saving and investment, education and planning. Immediate gratification involves such characteristics as relative readiness to engage in physical violence, minimum pursuit of education, low aspiration level, and free spending.

Cross-cultural researchers (e.g., Doob, 1967; Pollnac & Robbins, 1972; Inkeles & Smith, 1974; Thompson, 1975; Pollnac & Poggie, 1978) have reported that

gratification patterns (immediate and delayed satisfaction) are related to overall (psychological) modernity and future time orientation. According to these and other researchers, psychological modernity, delay of gratification and future time orientation are important personality attributes for socioeconomic development.

The major purposes of this study were to find out the nature of the distribution of patterns of gratification in Ethiopian adults, peasants, blue-collar workers, and white-collar workers; to find out the relationship between gratification patterns and other personality and situational variables; to check the cross-culture applicability of the overall modernity scale and future time orientation scale in Ethiopia; and to study the relationships between gratification patterns, overall modernity and future time orientation.

Researchers of patterns of gratification (e.g., Edelhofer, 1980; Mischel, 1974) tend to view delay and impulsivity as the extreme poles of the same stick or scale. At one extreme is the person who often chooses the larger, delayed rewards and goals. At the opposite pole is the one who predominantly chooses immediate gratification and declines the alternative of waiting or working for larger, delayed goals. According to these researchers neither extreme is healthy.

Factors Associated with Gratification Patterns

Several studies have been conducted to investigate the characteristics which influence the choice to delay. Most of these studies have been done with

children, adolescents or college students. In such investigations, it has been found that preference for delay is positively correlated with age (Melikian, 1959; Mischel, 1958; Mischel & Metzner, 1962), Caucasian race when compared to American Blacks (Zytoskee, Strickland, & Watson, 1971), intelligence (Melikian, 1959; Mischel & Metzner 1962), the female gender (Edelhofer, 1980), accuracy of time concepts and time perspective (Klineberg, 1968; Mischel, 1961b; Mischel & Metzner, 1962), higher academic achievement and high occupational aspirations (Straus, 1962), social responsibility (Mischel, 1961a), mental health (Edelhofer, 1980), and higher social class (Walls & Smith, 1970). Also, self-imposed delay of gratification is positively related to self-control, father's presence in the household, magnitude of the reinforcement, and internal locus of control (e.g., Ainslie, 1975; Mischel, 1974).

Correlates of nondelay behavior have been found to include delinquency and psychopathy (Blanchard, Bassett, & Koshland, 1977; Lefton, 1983), low socioeconomic status (Mischel, 1974; Walls & Smith, 1970), father absence in the home (Mischel, 1961c), lower intelligence (Melikian, 1959), mental retardation and obesity (Bonato & Boland, 1983), and external locus of control (Walls & Smith, 1970).

Gold (1967) has shown that urban dwelling Indians in Canada, who were presumably more acculturated to industrial society, showed more deferred gratification than Indians living on reservations. Polnac and Robbins (1972) examined the nature of the relationship of various aspects of modernization to the patterns of gratification among rural Baganda living in Uganda. They found that the tendency for delay tended to increase, level off, then decrease

as degree of modernization increased. This finding was repeated by Pollnac, Gersuny and Poggie (1975) in a New England population. Pollnac, Gersuny and Poggie (1975) surveyed fishermen and millworkers, who were asked to tell what they would do if \$2,000.00 was given to them. They reported that economic gratification patterns were related to occupation and temporal perspective. Those who were economically secure (income, materials) did not delay as much as those who were economically insecure. Those persons with positive perception of the future tended to delay more than those with negative perception of the future. It appears that the socioeconomic development of the society has to reach a certain level for the tendency to delay gratification to decrease.

Most of the studies reviewed used children as their subjects, their sample sizes were small, involved trivial activities, and were done in developed Western societies (e.g., USA, Canada).

From the literature reviewed, we conclude that there is a lack of sufficient information concerning delay of gratification and adult behavior. With few exceptions research is limited to samples of children. There is a need for further study using the normal adult population.

A study in a non-western developing society which is struggling for socioeconomic development and where there is a great need for many persons to learn to delay satisfaction is appropriate.

Hypotheses

The hypotheses were:

1. White-collar workers will tend to manifest a greater preference for delayed gratification than will peasants.
2. White-collars workers will tend to manifest greater preference for delayed gratification than will blue-collar workers.
3. Blue-collar workers will tend to show preference for delayed gratification more than peasants.
4. More educated persons will tend to show delay of gratification more than the less educated persons.
5. Older persons (persons in middle adulthood) will tend to show delay of gratification more than younger persons (persons in early adulthood).
6. Women will tend to show more delay of gratification than men.
7. There will be a positive relationship between patterns of gratification, individual modernity, and future time orientation.

Method

The subjects of this study were 70 blue-collar workers (from Bahir Dar textile and Addis Ababa tobacco factories), 70 white-collar workers (teachers, accountants, administrators), and 70 peasants in Central and North Central Ethiopia. The subjects were men and women, ages 18 to 65 from Addis ababa, Bahir Dar, and Kembatana-Hadiya provinces. The peasants and blue-collar workers were selected to participate

in the study by taking every other name from the organization's list of its members, in cooperation with the industry management and peasant associations' leadership, as the case might be. White-collar workers available in those three days when the questionnaire-interview took place were the subjects. They were from the Addis ababa University, Ministry of Industry, Commission for Higher Education, and three high schools in Addis Ababa.

A questionnaire to measure gratification patterns was developed using some items from other researchers (Pollnac & Robbins, 1972; Mischel, 1974; Rodgers, 1967). The questionnaire consists of two parts. The first part consists of 17 structured items designed to measure "attitudes-values-behaviors" relevant to the patterns of gratification. On each item, the subjects had to choose between a small reward immediately available and a larger reward available after a delay period. An example is, "Would you rather have 10 Birr now or 30 Birr next month?" (One Ethiopian Birr is equal to about \$.54 U.S.). The second part consists of four open-ended questions concerning the reasons and conditions for the delayed or nondelayed responses. The subjects were asked to describe their "main reason" for their decisions regarding each of the four selected items from the structured part of the questionnaire.

The reliability coefficient (alpha coefficient) for the GP scale is 0.65. The mean of interitem correlations for the scale is 0.12.

Inkeles and Smith's "Overall Modernity Scale" (1974), the short form, was used to measure individual modernity. To measure future time orientation, Gjesme's FTO Scale (1979) was used. Both scales are

simple, short, relatively reliable, valid, and cross-culturally applicable. The reliability coefficients are 0.73, and 0.62 for the OM and FTO scales, respectively (Inkeles & Smith, 1974; Gjesme, 1979).

The participants were interviewed individually and privately for about 63 minutes each in their homes or work places. A pilot study with 15 subjects was done to check the applicability of all the measures. All the questionnaires and communications with the subjects were either in Amharic, Ethiopia's national language, or Hadiyigna, a nationality's language.

Results

Occupation and Gratification Patterns

One-way analyses of variance were done on occupation. The data are in Table 1. The means and the standard deviations are in Table 2. The peasants had a mean GP score of 8.42 ($SD = 3.33$), the blue-collar workers had the mean GP score of 10.90 ($SD = 3.23$), and the white-collar workers had the mean GP score of 12.43 ($SD = 2.79$).

From the ANOVA table (Table 1) we observe that there is a significant ($F = 23.17$, $p > .001$) difference between the groups. Therefore, we will compare the means of the groups using the Scheffe procedure, which is relatively robust regarding departure from normality and homogeneity of variance (Ferguson, 1966; Hays, 1981).

There is a significant ($p < .05$) difference between the means of peasants and blue-collar workers, peasants and the white-collar workers, and blue-collar

workers and the white-collar workers. The white-collar workers delay more than the blue-collar workers and the peasants. The blue-collar workers delay more than the peasants. The first three hypotheses are confirmed.

Table 1
Summary of One-way ANOVA of GP on Occupation

Source	SS	<u>df</u>	<u>Ms</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>P</u>
Between groups	453.27	2	226.63	23.17	.001
Within groups	2024.71	207	9.78		
Total	2477.98	209			

Note.

SS = sum of squares; df = degrees of freedom;
 MS = mean of squares; F = F ratio; P = probability.

Table 2
The Means and Standard Deviations of GP Scores for the Three Occupational Groups

Group	<u>N</u>	Mean	<u>SD</u>
Peasants	70	8.84	3.33
Blue-collar workers	70	10.90	3.23
White-collar workers	70	12.43	2.79

Note.

N = numbr of subjects; SD = standard deviations.

Education and Gratification Patterns

One way ANOVAs were done on education. Refer to Tables 3 and 4 for the ANOVA summary ($F = 11.11$, $p < .001$) and the means and standard deviations, respectively. The mean GP score of the illiterates is 8.87 ($SD = 3.30$), those with elementary education is 10.28 ($SD = 3.61$), those with secondary education is 10.45 ($SD = 3.38$), and those with higher education is 12.27 ($SD = 2.86$).

From Table 3 we noted that there is a significant ($F = 11.11$, $p < .001$) difference between the different educational level groups. Therefore, we compared the means of the four different educational level groups applying the Scheffe procedure.

There is a significant ($p < .05$) difference between those persons with higher education and those who are illiterate, those with higher education and with elementary education, and those with higher education. Differences between the pairs were not significant at $p > .05$. Overall, however, the fourth hypothesis was supported.

Table 3
Summary of one-way ANOVA of GP on Education

Source	SS	df	Ms	F	P
Between groups	345.07	3	115.02	11.11	.001
Within groups	2132.91	206	10.35		
Total	2477.98	209			

Table 4
The Means and Standard Deviations of GP Scores for
 Different Educational Level Groups

Group	<u>N</u>	Mean	<u>SD</u>
Illiterates	46	8.87	3.30
With elementary education	25	10.28	3.61
With secondary education	65	10.45	3.38
With higher education	74	12.27	2.86

Age and Gratification Patterns

One-way ANOVAs were done on age. Refer to Tables 5 and 6 for the ANOVA summary ($F = 3.76$), and the means and standard deviations, respectively. The mean GP score for those persons in the early adulthood is 11.01 ($SD = 3.14$), while for those in the middle adulthood is 9.98 ($SD = 4.08$).

Table 5
Summary of One-way ANOVA of GP on Age

Source	SS	<u>df</u>	<u>Ms</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>P</u>
Between groups	44.00	1	44.00	3.76	.06
Within groups	2433.98	208	11.70		
Total	2477.98	209			

Table 6
The Means and Standard Deviations of GP Scores for
the Two Stages of Adulthood

<u>Group/Stage</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>SD</u>
Early adulthood(18-40)	152	11.01	3.14
Middle adulthood(41-65)	58	9.98	4.08

There is no significant difference between those in early adulthood and those in middle adulthood stages of life. From Table 6 we should note that those in the early adulthood stage have a higher GP mean score than those in the middle adulthood stage of life. This is not in the hypothesized direction. Therefore, the hypothesis is not confirmed.

Gender and Gratification Patterns

One-way ANOVAs were done on gender. Table 7 contains the ANOVA summary ($F = 3.24$); Table 8 contains the means and standard deviations. Men have a mean GP score of 10.98 (SD= 3.50) and women have a mean of 10.02 (SD= 3.20).

Table 7
Summary of One-way ANOVA of GP on Gender

Source	<u>SS</u>	<u>df</u>	<u>Ms</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>P</u>
Between groups	38.06	1	38.06	3.24	.07
Within groups	2439.92	208			
Total	2477.98	209			

Table 8
The Means and Standard Deviations of GP Scores for
 Men and Women

Group	<u>N</u>	Mean	<u>SD</u>
Men	154	10.98	3.50
Women	56	10.02	3.20

There is no significant difference between the sexes in the GP scores. It should be noted that the men have a little higher GP mean score than the women. The hypothesis of difference between the sexes is not supported by the data.

The Relationships Between GP, OM, and FTO Scales

Hypothesis 7 was that there would be a positive

relationship among gratification patterns, individual modernity and future time orientation. The Pearson product-moment correlation was done. The coefficients are given in Table 9. There is a positive and significant relationship between GP and OM ($\underline{r} = .34$, $\underline{p} < .001$), between GP and FTO ($\underline{r} = .25$, $\underline{p} < .001$), and between OM and FTO ($\underline{r} = .36$, $\underline{p} < .001$). The hypothesis is confirmed.

Table 9
Intercorrelation Matrix of GP, OM, and FTO for
all Subjects (N = 210)

	OM	FTO
GP	.34*	.25*
OM		.36*

* Significant at 0.001 level (two-tailed test).

Discussion

Kohn (1977) states that there is a consistent and meaningful relationship between people's social class positions, their values, orientations, and behaviors. The conditions of life, occupation, social class, religion, and education greatly determine one's values, orientations, and behaviors.

We have found that there are a number of dif-

ferences between the three occupational groups. But, the differences between the peasants and blue-collar workers (proletariates) are not as large as the differences between the white-collar workers (petty bourgeoisie) and the other two groups taken together or separately. Although one attribute does not necessarily lead to the possession of another attribute, it seems that higher education leads to urban residence and white-collar jobs which brings in high income. And such persons seem to have some attribute desired for persons in a modern and industrialized society. For example, Triandis (1984) lists a number of attributes that are likely to be helpful in economic development: concern for time and for the future, willingness to defer gratification, interpersonal trust, moderate risk taking, self-control, and hard work.

In congruence with the findings of Rogers (1969), Gold (1967), Doob (1960) and others, we found that urban residents (workers) and more educated persons tend to delay gratification and be more modern and future time oriented than rural residents (peasants) and less educated persons. Less educated persons are the peasants who have the lowest income and reside in rural areas. Peasants tend to be impulsive, less modern and less future time oriented. Blue-collar workers seem to fall between the white-collar workers and the peasants in gratification patterns, over-all modernity, and future time orientation.

There were 154 men and 56 women in this study. We interviewed only 14 peasant women, 25 blue-collar and 17 white-collar women. In each group the women are the less educated, and the less paid. Considering these factors, it is not surprising to find

that there is no difference between the sexes in gratification patterns.

Given the works of Melikian (1956), Mischel (1958), and others, a difference was expected between the younger and older persons in gratification patterns. But there was no significant difference between these two age groups. The peasants are the oldest, least educated, and with the least income. Peasants seem to have lowered the GP, FTO, and OM scores of the persons in the older group (middle adulthood era) since most of them are in this age group.

Due to the researcher's interest on the main effects, and due to the too small numbers in some cells, analysis of interaction effects is not done.

It appears that there are several variables which are operating at the same time on each individual subject. What Inkeles (1983) called "the institutional forces that make individuals more modern" (p. 308) are operating more on the white-collar workers than the blue-collar workers and the peasants. These forces are schools, factories, mass media, cities, and mass markets. White-collar workers have some college education (average of 14.56 years of education, $SD = 3.1$), watch TV and read the newspaper, and live in Addis Ababa (the capital and the largest city of Ethiopia).

Most blue-collar workers are basically peasants working in factories and living in cities (Addis Ababa and Bahir Dar in the case of this sample). They were raised on the farm or were themselves peasants before moving to the cities. But still factory work, urban

residence, and education (average of nine years of education, $SD = 1.73$) seem to have had some impact on them. They are more modern, more future oriented, and less impulsive than the peasants.

Ethiopian society is a peasant society and 85% of the population resides in rural areas (CSO, 1982). Perhaps only 10%-15% of the population is engaged in administration, manufacturing, trade, and social services. In such traditional societies, relatively stable personality characteristics are common and socioeconomic changes are slow (Redfield, 1967; Foster, 1967).

Often, a "traditional man" is characterized (Inkeles & Smith, 1974; Inkeles, 1983) by passive acceptance of fate and a general lack of efficacy, fear of innovation and distrust of the new, isolation from the outside world and lack of interest in what goes on in it, dependence on traditional authorities (elders, religious leaders), extreme preoccupation with personal and family affairs, exclusive identification with purely local and parochial groups, rigid and hierarchical relations with subordinates and others of low social status, and underevaluation of education, learning, and research. Such attributes are pervasive in traditional and peasant societies like Ethiopia.

Often the social, emotional, and personal security of each peasant or worker lies in the reference group (relatives, friends, neighbors, and work groups). The family, school, and the reference group to a great extent shape the personality of each individual. Marx (1967), Parsons (1964), Kohn (1977), and others, using different methods of societal analysis, have stated that the social system (relation

to the means of production, class position, occupation, educational level, religion, etc.) determines the characteristics of individuals. The individual (through education, mass media), the group (through discussions, training, family), and the social structure (policies) are each the targets and the agents of change. Any attempt to change the personality of peasants and workers in Ethiopia has to address the individual, reference groups, the educational and other institutions, traditions (culture), and the general social structure.

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