



e-ISSN: 2319-8753 | p-ISSN: 2347-6710

IJRSET

International Journal of Innovative Research in
SCIENCE | ENGINEERING | TECHNOLOGY

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF INNOVATIVE RESEARCH

IN SCIENCE | ENGINEERING | TECHNOLOGY

Volume 12, Issue 7, July 2023

ISSN INTERNATIONAL
STANDARD
SERIAL
NUMBER
INDIA

Impact Factor: 8.423

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 6381 907 438

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A Study of Gratitude as a Predictor of Well-Being among College students

*Karnika Rai, **Dr. Saba Farheen

M.A., Department of Psychology, Patna University, Patna, India

Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology, Patna University, Patna, India

ABSTRACT: Gratitude is an emotion that is typically evoked when one receives costly, unexpected, and intentionally rendered benefits, and is thought to play a key role in regulating the initiation and maintenance of social relationships. The present study was undertaken with the purpose to assess the level of gratitude and wellbeing among youths. Also, it was attempted to find the correlation between gratitude and well-being among youths. 50 male and 50 female college students were selected as the sample between the age of 18-30 years. Gratitude scale by Anas, Hussain, Aijaz and Khan (2016) and Psychological well-being scale by Devendra Sisodia and Pooja Chaudhary (2012) have been used in this study. Purposive sampling technique was applied in determining the sample. Results have revealed that the youths with high level of gratitude are high in psychological well-being where as those youths with low level of gratitude are low in well-being. Also, gratitude and well-being have been found positively correlated among the youths.

KEYWORDS:-Gratitude; Well-being; College youths

I. INTRODUCTION

Gratitude is an emotion that is typically evoked when one receives costly, unexpected, and intentionally rendered benefits, and is thought to play a key role in regulating the intention and maintenance of social relationships. Gratitude improves interpersonal relationships at home and work.

Psychological wellbeing can be explained as the feeling of happiness, life satisfaction and of work role, achievement motivation, love, peace, belongingness and no distress, dissatisfaction or worry, etc. The subjective well-being shows some extent of correlation with quality of life, general satisfaction level, sense of accomplishment etc. and negatively connected with mental disorder, and different such variables. According to **Ryff (1989)** the construct of psychological or emotional Well-being was originally taken as a challenge in overcoming the hedonic construct of Well-being in psychological science and with the aspiration of making life happy and satisfied.

Gender difference in wellbeing is more prominent than in Gratitude. **Akhter (2015)** found that females were higher in psychological well-being than males. Also, **Lu (2000)** in his study found that both males and females are different on the measure of wellbeing.

In many previous studies, Gratitude and Psychological well-being have found to be positively correlated. **Froh, Kashdan, Ozimkowski, Miller (2009)** and **Wood, Joseph Maltby (2009)** found that grateful people had greater life satisfaction. **Wood, Joseph Maltby (2009)** also found that gratitude and psychological wellbeing have positively related. The same findings have been seen in the study of **Newman and Thrash (2017)**.

In another study by **Toepfer & Walker, (2019); Van de Creek, (2002); Kerr, O'Donovan, Pepping, (2015); Ghalesefidi, Maghsoudi & Pouragha, (2018)**, it was found that Gratitude develops well-being and quality of life. **Kerr, O'Donovan, & Pepping, (2014); Deng, 2019; Jackowska, Brown, Ronaldson and Steptoe, (2016)** found that Gratitude reduces aggression, anxiety and stress.

Need of the Study:- In the present era, people are so materialistic and it hampers their social growth and maintaining personal relationships. People are living in distress and not being happy. Since Gratitude is an essential factor in positive functioning among human beings. Being grateful can be beneficial in cultivating positivity in life. The present study tried to explore the role of gratitude for a happy and meaningful life. The positive effects will be facilitated and negative effects will be obstructed.

Objectives of the study: This research has been carried out with following broad objectives:

- (i) To assess the level of gratitude among youths.
- (ii) To analyse how they show gratitude to others.

- (iii) To assess the level of well-being among youths.
 (iv) To explore the effect of gratitude on wellbeing among youths
 (v) To find the correlation between gratitude and well-being among youths.

Research Variables-**Independent variable** – Gender (Male, Female)**Dependent variables** – Gratitude and Well-being**Research Hypothesis:-** Following hypotheses have been framed for being tested in this research:

- i. “Male and female subjects will differ on the level of Gratitude.”
- ii. “There will be difference between male and female students on the measure of well-being.”
- iii. “Youths with high Gratitude will have high well-being.”
- iv. “Youths with low Gratitude will have low well-being.”
- v. “There will be a positive correlation between Gratitude and well-being among the college students”

Research Method:**(A) Sample-** The study was conducted on a sample of 100 youths. Among them, 50 were male and 50 were female. They were selected from the Patna district of Bihar.**(B) Research Tools-** There were two tools used in this study-**Gratitude scale-** This scale is developed by Mohammad Anas, Akbar Husain, Asiya Aijaz and Shah Mohd. Khan. It consists 26 items.**Well-being scale-** This scale is developed by Dr. Devendra Singh Sisodia and Ms. Pooja Choudhary. It consists of 50 items.**(C) Research Design-** The between-group design has been used in the present study.**(D) Procedure of Data Collection-** Subjects have been approached individually as well as in the groups. The details about objective of the study to fill up the scales were explained to them. The participants responded without any fatigue. Youths filled the scales, which were collected with thanks.**(E) Data Analysis-** The obtained data was analyzed statistically with the help of Mean, SD, t-ratio and Pearson r.**Results:** The results of the present study have been presented in Tabular forms with the help of Table 1, 2, 3 and 4.**Table-1****Mean Scores of Male and Female Subjects on Gratitude Scale**

Subjects	Mean	SD	t-ratio
Male (N=50)	104.76	14.87	1.62
Female (N=50)	110.6	10.51	Not Significant at 0.05 level

Table 1 presents the mean scores of males and females on the gratitude scale as 104.76 and 110.6 respectively. The standard deviation of males and females is 14.87 and 10.51 respectively. It can be seen here that females have displayed higher level of gratitude than male. The t- ratio between them is 1.62 which is not significant. This finding does not support the first hypothesis of the study.

Table- 2**Mean Scores of Male and Female Subjects on Well-Being Scale**

Subjects	Mean	SD	t-ratio
Male (N=50)	172.84	22.15	2.85
Female (N=50)	191.08	23.18	Significant at 0.05 level

Table- 2 illustrates the mean scores of males and females youth on the well-being scale. Here, we can see that the mean score of males is 172.84 and females is 191.08 respectively. The standard deviation of male is 22.15 and female is 23.18 respectively. The t-ratio between them is 2.85 which has been found significant at the level of 0.05. From the results of Table B, the second hypothesis of the study has confirmed.

Table- 3
Mean Scores of subjects with high and low Gratitude on Well-Being Scale

Groups	Mean	SD	t-ratio
Subjects with high Gratitude (N=35)	195.7	26.73	2.18 P<.05
Subjects with Low gratitude (N=25)	174.38	20.88	

Table 3 illustrates the mean scores of subjects with high and low Gratitude on the scale of wellbeing. Here we can see that subjects with high level of gratitude have secured high mean score than the subjects with low level of Gratitude. These findings fully support the third hypothesis of the study. It is clear from the table that both groups are significant from each other. The level of Gratitude of a person affects the level of wellbeing he or she is experiencing. So, it can be said that Gratitude is a determinant of wellbeing among youths.

Table- 4
Showing correlation between Gratitude and wellbeing

Variables	Score	N	r	DF	Level of significance
Gratitude vs Well-being	14482	100	0.28	98	Significant at 0.05 level

Table-4 presents the correlation between gratitude and well-being among youths. The table clarifies that both variables have been positively correlated. High level of gratitude leads to high well-being and low level of gratitude leads to low well-being. This finding fully supports the fourth hypothesis of the study. These findings have been supported by earlier studies by Cheng (2015) and Froh JJ, Yurkewicz C, and Kashdan TB (2009).

Discussion:- In the present study, Gender is not a factor in gratitude. Earlier studies have displayed that gratitude is a self evolved emotion which can be in both males and females. It has social effect as well because gratitude depends on the social norms. Gratitude can also be a result of personality factors. But the gender difference has been found in psychological well-being which has support of some previous research studies, Akhter (2015) and Lu (2000). Gratitude enhances well-being as it builds social connections and positive relations with others. Grateful people experience happiness and satisfaction with their lives. All of these add a sense of well-being among the grateful people.

Conclusion:- On the basis of findings of the present study, the main conclusions that can be derived are below-

- Females showed high level of well-being than males.
- Female youths showed high level of gratitude than male youths.
- Subjects with high and low gratitude tend to differ from each other on the measure of wellbeing.
- Gratitude and well-being are positively correlated.

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