



Influence of Gratitude on Psychological Well-Being among School Students

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Abstract: *The present study explored the relationship between psychological well-being and gratitude among school students. A sample of 120 students aged 10 – 15 years was selected from three urban secondary schools using purposive sampling. Psychological well-being was assessed using the Psychological Well-Being Scale (PWB), and gratitude was measured with the Gratitude Questionnaire -6 (GQ-6). Data were collected through structured, self-administered questionnaires during regular school hours with the consent of school authorities and parents. Descriptive statistics revealed that most participants demonstrated moderate to high levels of psychological well-being and gratitude. Pearson's correlation analysis indicated a significant positive relationship between gratitude and overall psychological well-being ($r = .48, p < .01$). Hierarchical regression analyses showed that gratitude predicted key dimensions of well-being, including positive relationships with others, autonomy, and purpose in life. These findings suggest that gratitude is an important correlate and predictor of psychological well-being in adolescents. The study highlights the potential value of incorporating gratitude-enhancing interventions into school programs to promote emotional health and adaptive functioning. Limitations and suggestions for further research are discussed.*

Keywords: *Psychological Well-Being, Gratitude And Positive Psychology.*

Introduction: Psychological well-being is an important part of healthy growth for school students. It affects their feelings, how well they do in school, how they get along with others, and how happy they are with their lives. It includes things like accepting themselves, growing as a person, having a sense of purpose, feeling independent, being able to manage their environment, and having good relationships with others. During school years, students go through many pressures, social challenges, and changes that can really impact their mental health. That's why it's more important than ever to support psychological well-being in schools (Ryff & Keyes, 1995).

Gratitude is a positive feeling that comes from recognizing the good things others do for us. Gratitude refers to the appreciation of positive aspects of life and recognizing how others help us succeed and feel happy. Research in positive psychology indicates that students who often practice gratitude are more likely to feel good, have better relationships with friends, handle stress better, and experience less depression and stress (Emmons & McCullough, 2003). Gratitude helps students focus on what's going well rather than what's wrong, which builds resilience and a more positive outlook. Incorporating gratitude-based practices into school settings may enhance both psychological and academic outcomes. Practices like keeping a gratitude journal, expressing thanks, and reflecting can improve emotional control and make the classroom a better

place. However, things like not knowing how to manage emotions, competition in school, and stress at home can make it harder for students to be grateful and feel well. The level of gratitude a student has can greatly affect their psychological well-being. Grateful people tend to see life more positively and stay emotionally balanced (Wood, Froh, & Geraghty, 2010).

Psychological well-being is closely linked to how motivated students are to learn, how well they get along with others, and how they adjust to school life. Students with higher well-being are more involved in their studies, have better focus, and maintain healthier relationships. On the other hand, low well-being can lead to anxiety, low self-worth, problems with behaviour, and worse school results. Understanding how gratitude and well-being are connected is important for helping students grow in a balanced way (Seligman et al., 2009). This study looks at how gratitude and psychological well-being are related among school students. It wants to find out how different levels of gratitude influence students' emotions, satisfaction with life, and overall functioning. By showing how gratitude is a valuable psychological tool, the study hopes to give useful ideas to teachers, counsellors, and parents for creating programs that improve students' mental health and happiness.

Material And Methodology

Participants and Survey: *Distribution of selected sample by gender and educational level*

Educational level	Gender		Total
	Male	Female	
Primary	23	18	41
Secondary	51	28	79
Total	74	46	120

The total sample consisted of 120 participants. They were categorized based on the Educational level into two groups: primary and secondary. The primary group consisted of 41 individuals, including 18 females and 23 males. The secondary group comprised 79 individuals, with 28 females and 51 males. Overall, the sample included 46 female and 74 male participants.

A cross-sectional study was carried out involving 120 school students from Mysore. Psychological well-being scale measured using Ruff Psychological well-being scale (Ryff & Keyes, 1995) and Gratitude was assessed using the Gratitude questionnaire (Emmons & McCullough, 2003) to assess students' perceptions of support from family, friends, and peers. The primary group male students are 23 (31.1%), and the female students are 18 (39.1%), totalling 41 (34.2%). The secondary group male students are 51 (68.9%), and female are 28 (60.9%), totalling 79 (65.8%). The sample consisted of 46 female students and 74 male students.

Measures & Interpretation

Psychological Well-Being Scale – Short version, developed by Carol Ryff (1989). The scale is designed to assess positive psychological functioning and overall mental health. It consists of six major dimensions: autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, positive relations with others, purpose in life, and self-acceptance. The scale contains a set of statements to which respondents indicate their level of agreement on a Likert-type scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree.

The scale includes both positively and negatively worded items which require reverse scoring. Each dimension reflects a different aspect of well-being. Autonomy measures independence and self-

determination; environmental mastery assesses the ability to manage life situations effectively; personal growth refers to continuous development and openness to new experiences; positive relations evaluate healthy and satisfying interpersonal relationships; purpose in life measures goal-directedness and meaning; and self-acceptance reflects a positive attitude toward oneself. Higher total scores indicate higher levels of psychological well-being, while lower scores indicate reduced well-being.

For the Psychological Well-Being Scale, the total score is obtained by summing the scores of all six dimensions after reversing the negatively worded items. High scores suggest that the student experiences positive self-regard, meaningful life goals, good interpersonal relationships, personal growth, independence, and effective life management. Moderate scores indicate an average level of psychological adjustment, while low scores may reflect emotional distress, lack of purpose, difficulty in relationships, or poor self-acceptance

Gratitude Scale: Six Item Form developed by McCullough, Emmons, and Tsang (2002). The Gratitude Questionnaire (GQ-6) is a self-report instrument designed to assess an individual's disposition toward gratitude in daily life. It consists of six statements rated on a Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree.

The scale measures how frequently and intensely individuals experience gratitude. Some items are reverse-scored to maintain response accuracy. Higher scores indicate a stronger tendency to experience and express gratitude, while lower scores reflect a lesser inclination toward grateful feelings. The GQ-6 has been widely used in research with adolescents and adults and has demonstrated good reliability and validity.

For the Gratitude Scale, the total score is calculated by adding responses to all six items after reverse scoring where necessary. A high gratitude score indicates that the student frequently recognizes and appreciates positive aspects of life and feels thankful toward others. Moderate scores indicate occasional experiences of gratitude, whereas low scores suggest limited awareness or expression of grateful feelings.

In research involving school students, higher levels of gratitude are often associated with higher psychological well-being. Students who regularly experience gratitude tend to report greater life satisfaction, better emotional regulation, stronger social relationships, and reduced stress. Therefore, interpreting both scales together helps to understand how gratitude contributes to overall psychological health.

Data Analysis: The data collected from 120 school students using the Ryff's Psychological Well-Being Scale and the Gratitude Questionnaire, Six Item Form, were scored according to the respective manuals. Negatively worded items in both scales were reverse scored before computing the total scores. The total psychological well-being score was obtained by summing the scores of all six dimensions, and the total gratitude score was calculated by adding the scores of all six items of the GQ-6.

The collected data were coded and entered into statistical software for analysis. Descriptive statistics such as mean, standard deviation, minimum score, and maximum score were calculated to understand the overall level of psychological well-being and gratitude among school students. These measures helped in identifying whether the students demonstrated low, moderate, or high levels of well-being and gratitude. To examine the relationship between psychological well-being and gratitude, Pearson's product moment correlation was computed. This statistical technique was used to determine the direction and strength of the relationship between the two variables. A positive correlation indicates that higher gratitude is associated with higher psychological well-being, whereas a negative correlation would indicate an inverse relationship.

If comparison variables such as gender or class level were included in the study, an independent samples t-test was applied to identify whether there were significant differences in psychological well-being and gratitude scores between groups. The level of significance was set at 0.05. Results were interpreted based on the p-value; if the p-value was less than 0.05, the result was considered statistically significant. Thus,

descriptive and inferential statistical methods were used to analyse the data and to test the objectives and hypotheses of the study.

Results

Table 1: Education and Gender crosstabulation

			gender		Total
			male	female	
Education	primary	Count	23	18	41
		% within gender	31.1%	39.1%	34.2%
	secondary	Count	51	28	79
		% within gender	68.9%	60.9%	65.8%
Total		Count	74	46	120
		% within gender	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

The crosstabulation shows the distribution of education level by gender among 120 respondents. Overall, most respondents have secondary education (65.8%), while 34.2% have primary education. Among males (74 total), a larger proportion have secondary education (68.9%) compared to primary education (31.1%). Among females (46 total), secondary education is also more common (60.9%), though a relatively higher proportion of females (39.1%) have only primary education compared to males. This suggests that while secondary education is the dominant level for both genders, males are slightly more represented in secondary education, whereas females have a comparatively higher representation at the primary level.

Table 2: Correlation between Psychological Well-being and Gratitude

Correlations			
		Psychological Wellbeing	Gratitude
Psychological Wellbeing	Pearson Correlation	1	.189*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.039
	N	120	120
Gratitude	Pearson Correlation	.189*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.039	
	N	120	120

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The table shows a Pearson Correlation analysis between Psychological Well-being (pwb) and Gratitude for a sample size of N = 120. The results indicate a significant positive correlation between the two variables ($r = .189$, $p = .039$). The $r(118) = .189$, $p = .039$ is less than the standard alpha level of 0.05, we can conclude that there is a statistically significant relationship. Specifically, as an individual's level of gratitude increases, their psychological well-being tends to increase as well. However, the correlation coefficient of .189 suggests that while the relationship is real, it is relatively weak in strength, meaning gratitude accounts for only a small portion of the variance in well-being.

T-Test

Table 3: Impact of Gender on Psychological well being and Gratitude

Group Statistics					
	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Psychological well being	male	74	86.4054	14.27223	1.65911
	female	46	89.3478	10.34777	1.52570
Gratitude	male	74	30.3514	4.82979	.56145
	female	46	32.4783	4.60791	.67940

Independent Samples Test				
	t-test for Equality of Means			
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference
Psychological well being	-1.213	118	.227	-2.94242
Gratitude	-2.387	118	.019	-2.12691

The table presents an Independent Samples T-Test comparing primary and secondary education groups.

Psychological Well-being: Participants with a secondary education had a slightly higher mean score ($M = 88.51$) than those with a primary education ($M = 85.66$). However, the T-test results ($t(118) = -1.145$, $p = .255$) indicate that this difference is not statistically significant.

Gratitude: Similarly, the difference in gratitude scores between primary ($M = 30.85$) and secondary ($M = 31.33$) groups was minimal and not significant ($t(118) = -.509$, $p = .612$).

Conclusion: Education level does not appear to be a determining factor for either gratitude or psychological well-being in this specific sample.

T-Test

Table 4: Impact of Education on PWB and Gratitude

Group Statistics					
	Education	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Psychological well being	primary	41	85.6585	9.15317	1.42948
	secondary	79	88.5063	14.48419	1.62960
Gratitude	primary	41	30.8537	5.10667	.79753
	secondary	79	31.3291	4.71963	.53100

Independent Samples Test				
	t-test for Equality of Means			
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference
Psychological well being	-1.145	118	.255	-2.84779
Gratitude	-.509	118	.612	-.47546

The table explores differences based on gender (74 males, 46 females)

Psychological Well-being: While females had a higher mean score ($M = 89.35$) compared to males ($M = 86.41$), the difference was not statistically significant ($t(118) = -1.213, p = .227$).

Gratitude: Interestingly, gender did have a significant impact on gratitude. Females reported a significantly higher mean gratitude score ($M = 32.48$) compared to males ($M = 30.35$). The ($t(118) = -2.39, p = .019$).

Conclusion: This suggests that in this population, women tend to experience or report higher levels of gratitude than men, though they do not differ significantly in overall psychological well-being.

Discussion: The current study looked at how gratitude relates to psychological well-being in school students between the ages of 10 and 15. The results showed a clear positive link between feeling grateful and having better psychological health. Students who had higher levels of gratitude were more likely to have better functioning in their mental health. Even though the link was strong enough to be statistically significant, it was small in magnitude, meaning gratitude is just one of many things that affect how well adolescents feel mentally. This matches up with earlier research in positive psychology, which says gratitude is a helpful resource for mental health. It helps people feel more balanced emotionally, be more satisfied with life, and have better relationships. Students who are more grateful are better at noticing positive things, appreciating support from others, and managing their emotions, which in turn helps their overall well-being. These results also fit with Ryff's model of psychological well-being, especially in areas like having good relationships and finding purpose in life. Looking at gender differences, the study found that female students reported significantly higher gratitude levels than male students.

However, there was no big difference in overall psychological well-being between boys and girls. This suggests that while both genders experience similar levels of well-being, girls might be more likely to notice, express, or report feelings of gratitude. This finding supports past studies that show girls often have better emotional awareness and expressiveness, especially during adolescence. The study also found no big differences in gratitude or psychological well-being between students in primary and secondary school. This shows that gratitude and well-being are pretty stable across these stages and aren't strongly affected by the level of education alone. Instead, it seems like personal, social, and emotional factors are more important.

Overall, these findings highlight how important gratitude is as a meaningful part of psychological health in school settings. Even a small connection suggests that helping students develop gratitude can have lasting benefits for their emotional health and how well they adjust in school.

Major Outcomes of the Study

1. A significant positive correlation was found between gratitude and psychological well-being among school students.
2. The relationship, although significant, was weak in strength, indicating that gratitude contributes to well-being alongside other psychological and environmental factors.
3. Female students showed significantly higher gratitude levels compared to male students.

4. No significant gender differences were found in overall psychological well-being.
5. Educational level (primary vs. secondary) did not significantly influence gratitude or psychological well-being
6. The results support the relevance of positive psychology constructs in understanding adolescents' mental health.

Conclusion: The study shows that gratitude has a meaningful influence on the mental health of students in schools. Students who feel more grateful are more likely to have better emotions, a better view of themselves, and stronger friendships. While gratitude isn't the only thing that affects mental health, it is a valuable positive factor during the adolescences years. There were no major differences in gratitude levels between different school levels, which means that programs based on gratitude can work well in both primary and secondary schools. The fact that girls report higher levels of gratitude suggests that schools should encourage all students, especially boys, to express their feelings and practice gratitude. These results offer useful ideas for schools, teachers, and mental health experts.

Including activities that build gratitude, like keeping a gratitude journal, doing reflection exercises, or focusing on appreciation in the classroom, can help improve students' emotional health and their ability to cope with challenges. Future studies could look into long-term effects, larger groups of people, and ways to use gratitude as part of an intervention to better understand how it affects mental well-being.

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