



Gratitude and Quality of Life among College Students: A Correlational Study

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ABSTRACT

Background: Gratitude is an important construct in positive psychology and has been associated with happiness, emotional well-being, life satisfaction, and positive interpersonal relationships. College students aged 18–25 years experience various academic, emotional, social, and career-related challenges that may influence their quality of life. Examining the relationship between gratitude and quality of life may contribute to a better understanding of psychological well-being among young adults.

Objective: This study aimed to assess gratitude and quality of life among college students aged 18–25 years and to examine the relationship between these variables.

Methods: A quantitative, cross-sectional, correlational study was conducted among **60 college students aged 18–25 years** selected through convenience sampling. Gratitude was assessed using the **Gratitude Questionnaire–6 (GQ-6)**, while quality of life was measured using the **Quality of Life Scale–Revised (QLS-R)**. Descriptive statistics, Pearson's product-moment correlation, independent-samples *t*-test, and simple linear regression analysis were used for data analysis.

Results: Participants had a mean quality of life score of **42.02 (SD = 8.34)** and a mean gratitude score of **4.67 (SD = 0.65)**. Pearson's correlation analysis revealed a **weak negative and statistically non-significant relationship** between gratitude and quality of life ($r = -0.157$, $p = .231$). No statistically significant gender differences were observed in quality of life, $t(58) = 0.48$, $p = .634$, or gratitude, $t(58) = 0.26$, $p = .799$. Simple linear regression analysis showed that gratitude did not significantly predict quality of life, $F(1, 58) = 1.46$, $p = .231$, explaining approximately **2.5% of the variance** ($R^2 = .025$).

Conclusion: Gratitude was not significantly associated with quality of life among the college students included in this study and did not significantly predict quality of life. The findings suggest that quality of life among college students may be influenced by multiple psychological, social, academic, and contextual factors beyond gratitude alone. Further research involving larger and more diverse samples is recommended to clarify the relationship between gratitude and quality of life among young adults.

KEYWORDS: Gratitude; Quality of Life; College Students; Positive Psychology; Well-being; Correlational Study.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 College Students and Psychological Well-Being

College life represents an important developmental stage characterized by significant academic, emotional, social, and personal transitions. Young adults between 18 and 25 years of age experience changes related to identity formation, interpersonal relationships, educational responsibilities, career planning, and future aspirations. During this period, students may encounter academic pressure, examination-related stress, competition, social expectations, uncertainty regarding future careers, financial concerns, and difficulties in maintaining a balance between personal and academic responsibilities. These challenges may influence their psychological well-being and overall quality of life.

In recent years, increasing attention has been given to positive psychological factors that may support young adults in managing such challenges. Positive psychology emphasizes human strengths, positive emotions, resilience, optimism, happiness, and other psychological resources that contribute to flourishing and well-being. Within this perspective, gratitude has emerged as an important psychological construct because of its potential contribution to emotional adjustment, interpersonal relationships, life satisfaction, and psychological well-being.

Understanding the psychological resources associated with quality of life among college students is particularly important for counsellors, psychologists, educators, and educational institutions. Identifying such factors may contribute to the development of interventions and supportive programmes aimed at improving students' emotional health and overall well-being.

1.2 Gratitude

Gratitude refers to a feeling of thankfulness, appreciation, and recognition of the positive aspects of life and the contributions of others. It may be conceptualized both as an emotional state and as a relatively stable psychological disposition. As an emotional state, gratitude occurs when an individual recognizes a positive experience, benefit, kindness, or support received from another person or from life circumstances. As a disposition, gratitude reflects a general tendency to notice and appreciate positive experiences across situations.

Within positive psychology, gratitude is regarded as an important psychological strength associated with positive emotions and adaptive functioning. Grateful individuals tend to appreciate supportive relationships, opportunities, personal achievements, and meaningful life experiences. This orientation may encourage individuals to focus on positive aspects of their lives rather than exclusively on difficulties, deficiencies, or negative experiences.

Previous research has associated gratitude with happiness, optimism, emotional well-being, resilience, social connectedness, and life satisfaction (Emmons & McCullough, 2003; Wood et al., 2010). Gratitude-based practices, including gratitude journaling, gratitude letters, appreciation exercises, and positive reflection, have also been used as positive psychology interventions to promote well-being (Seligman et al., 2005). Among college students, gratitude may be particularly relevant because it may support emotional adjustment and adaptive coping during a period characterized by considerable academic and psychosocial demands.

1.3 Quality of Life among College Students

Quality of life is a multidimensional concept reflecting an individual's perception of overall well-being and satisfaction across different areas of life. It includes aspects related to physical health, psychological functioning, social relationships, environmental circumstances, and overall life satisfaction. Quality of life therefore extends beyond the absence of illness and represents a broader evaluation of how individuals perceive and experience their lives.

For college students, quality of life may be influenced by several interconnected factors, including physical health, emotional stability, academic experiences, family relationships, peer support, financial circumstances, social adjustment, environmental conditions, and future career prospects. Students experiencing difficulties in these areas may experience anxiety, emotional imbalance, reduced self-confidence, poor concentration, or dissatisfaction with life.

Conversely, positive psychological strengths, effective coping strategies, supportive interpersonal relationships, and emotional stability may contribute to better quality of life. Understanding factors associated with quality of life among college students is therefore important for promoting their academic, psychological, emotional, and social development.

1.4 Gratitude and Psychological Well-Being

Gratitude has been increasingly recognized as a positive psychological resource that may contribute to psychological well-being. Individuals who experience gratitude tend to report more positive emotions and may demonstrate greater optimism, emotional stability, resilience, and social connectedness.

Gratitude may influence psychological functioning by directing attention toward positive experiences, supportive relationships, and meaningful aspects of life. Such an orientation may help individuals develop healthier emotional responses and adaptive coping strategies when confronted with difficulties.

Among college students, gratitude may be particularly relevant because students frequently experience academic pressure, social comparison, career-related uncertainty, and emotional fluctuations. **Previous research has associated gratitude with positive affect, adaptive coping, psychological well-being, and greater life satisfaction among adolescents and young adults (Emmons & McCullough, 2003; Froh et al., 2009; Wood et al., 2010).** These findings suggest that gratitude may serve as a valuable positive psychological resource for supporting emotional adjustment and well-being among college students.

1.5 Relationship between Gratitude and Quality of Life

Gratitude and quality of life are conceptually related because gratitude may influence how individuals interpret and evaluate their experiences. Individuals with higher levels of gratitude may be more likely to recognize positive aspects of their lives, appreciate supportive relationships, and derive meaning from everyday experiences. These psychological processes may contribute to emotional well-being and greater satisfaction with life.

Previous research has generally reported positive associations between gratitude and various indicators of well-being. **Emmons and McCullough (2003)** found that gratitude-focused practices were associated with greater well-being and positive affect, while **Seligman et al. (2005)** reported that gratitude-based positive psychology interventions could contribute to increased happiness and reduced depressive symptoms. Furthermore, gratitude has been associated with psychological well-being, positive social relationships, and life satisfaction, suggesting that it may play a meaningful role in individuals' overall well-being (**Wood et al., 2010**).

However, quality of life is a **complex and multidimensional construct** and may be influenced by numerous factors beyond gratitude. Academic stress, financial circumstances, social support, family relationships, physical and emotional health, career uncertainty, and environmental conditions may all contribute to students' perceptions of their quality of life. Therefore, the relationship between gratitude and quality of life requires further empirical examination, particularly among **college students and within specific cultural and educational contexts**.

1.6 Research Gap

Although previous research has examined gratitude, psychological well-being, and life satisfaction, **relatively limited research has specifically examined the relationship between gratitude and quality of life among college students in the Indian context.** In particular, further evidence is needed regarding how gratitude relates to the broader construct of quality of life among young adults aged 18–25 years.

Existing research on gratitude and well-being has frequently employed **self-report measures and cross-sectional research designs**, and much of the established literature has been derived from populations outside the Indian context. Cultural, educational, social, and environmental differences may influence both the experience and expression of gratitude and individuals' perceptions of quality of life.

Therefore, further investigation among Indian college students is warranted to determine whether gratitude is significantly associated with quality of life within this population. Addressing this research gap may contribute to the literature on **positive psychology and student well-being** and provide contextually relevant evidence regarding gratitude and quality of life among young adults.

1.7 Rationale of the Study

College students encounter multiple academic, emotional, interpersonal, and career-related challenges during early adulthood. Understanding positive psychological factors that may contribute to their well-being is therefore important for both research and practice.

Gratitude is considered a potentially valuable psychological resource because it encourages appreciation of positive experiences, supportive relationships, and personal strengths. Examining its relationship with quality of life may provide a better understanding of whether gratitude contributes meaningfully to students' overall well-being.

The findings of the present study may be useful for counsellors, psychologists, educators, and educational institutions in developing psychological well-being programmes for young adults. The study may also contribute to the existing literature in positive psychology, counselling psychology, and student mental health.

1.8 Objectives of the Study

The present study aimed to:

1. Assess the level of gratitude among college students aged 18–25 years.
2. Assess the quality of life among college students aged 18–25 years.
3. Examine the relationship between gratitude and quality of life among college students.
4. Examine gender differences in gratitude and quality of life among college students.
5. Determine whether gratitude significantly predicts quality of life among college students.

1.9 Hypotheses of the Study

Research Hypotheses

H1: There is a significant relationship between gratitude and quality of life among college students.

H2: There is a significant difference in quality of life between male and female college students.

H3: There is a significant difference in gratitude between male and female college students.

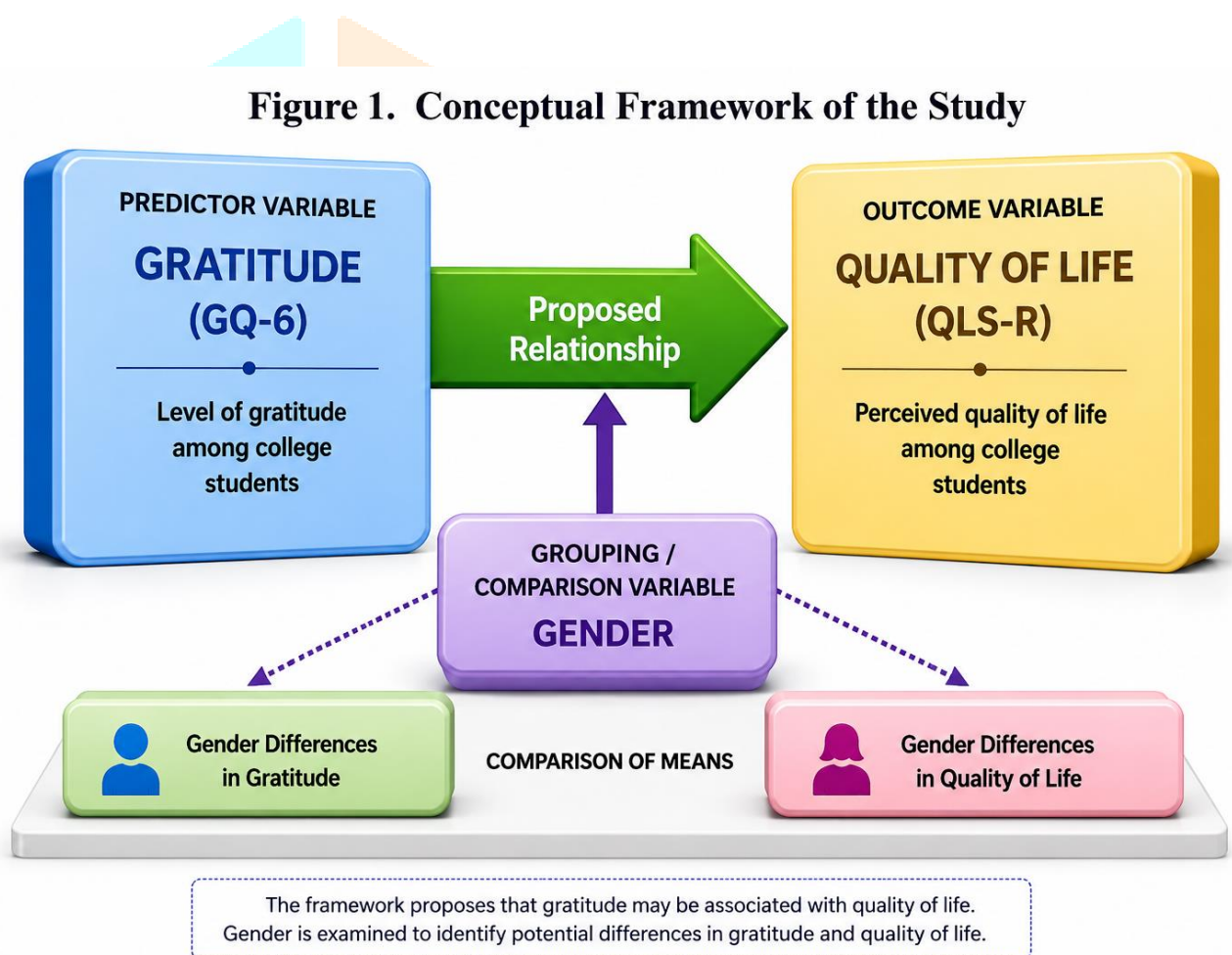
H4: Gratitude significantly predicts quality of life among college students.

1.10 Conceptual Framework of the Study

The present study is grounded in the principles of positive psychology, which emphasize positive emotions, psychological strengths, resilience, and factors that contribute to human well-being and flourishing. Gratitude is conceptualized as a positive psychological resource that may be associated with individuals' perceptions and evaluations of their quality of life.

The conceptual framework proposes **gratitude as the predictor variable and quality of life as the outcome variable**. It assumes that differences in gratitude may be associated with differences in quality of life among college students. This proposed relationship was empirically examined using Pearson's product-moment correlation and simple linear regression analysis.

Gender was also examined as a demographic variable to determine whether male and female college students differed significantly in gratitude and quality of life. The framework therefore provides the conceptual basis for examining the relationship, predictive association, and gender differences relevant to the study variables.



2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

2.1 Research Design

The present study employed a **quantitative, cross-sectional, descriptive correlational research design** to examine the relationship between gratitude and quality of life among college students aged 18–25 years. The descriptive component was used to assess the levels of gratitude and quality of life, while the correlational component was used to determine the direction and strength of the relationship between these variables. Data were collected at a single point in time using standardized self-report psychological measures. In addition, independent-samples *t*-tests were used to examine gender

differences in gratitude and quality of life. Furthermore, simple linear regression analysis was performed to determine whether gratitude significantly predicted quality of life among college students.

2.2 Study Area

The study was conducted among college students studying at **Career College, Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh, India**. The college setting provided access to young adults within the specified age range of 18–25 years. College students represent an important population for examining psychological well-being because this developmental stage is characterized by academic responsibilities, career planning, interpersonal changes, social adjustment, and other psychosocial demands that may influence gratitude and perceived quality of life.

2.3 Participants and Sampling Technique

The study included **60 college students aged 18–25 years**. Participants were selected using a **convenience sampling technique** based on their availability and willingness to participate in the study.

The final sample consisted of **20 male students (33.3%) and 40 female students (66.7%)**, with all participants belonging to the 18–25-year age group. Students were informed about the purpose of the study and participated voluntarily after providing consent.

2.4 Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Inclusion Criteria

Participants were included if they:

- Were college students;
- Were between **18 and 25 years of age**;
- Were available during the period of data collection;
- Were able to understand and respond to the questionnaires; and
- Voluntarily agreed to participate in the study.

Exclusion Criteria

Participants were excluded if they:

- Were below 18 or above 25 years of age;
- Were not enrolled as college students;
- Were unwilling to participate in the study; or
- Submitted incomplete questionnaires that could not be used for statistical analysis.

2.5 Research Instruments

Data were collected using standardized self-report measures together with basic demographic information.

Part I: Socio-demographic Information

Basic demographic information was collected from the participants, including **age and gender**. All participants were between 18 and 25 years of age. Gender information was used to describe the sample and to examine differences in gratitude and quality of life between male and female students.

Part II: Gratitude Questionnaire–6 (GQ-6)

Gratitude was assessed using the **Gratitude Questionnaire–6 (GQ-6)**. The GQ-6 is a six-item self-report instrument designed to assess **dispositional gratitude**, reflecting an individual's general tendency to recognize and experience gratitude in everyday life.

The items are rated on a **7-point Likert scale**, ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. Higher scores indicate greater dispositional gratitude. The instrument has been widely used in positive psychology research and has demonstrated satisfactory psychometric properties in previous studies.

Part III: Quality of Life Scale–Revised (QLS-R)

Quality of life was assessed using the **Quality of Life Scale–Revised (QLS-R)** developed by **B. L. Dubey, Padma Dwivedi, and S. K. Verma**. The QLS-R is an Indian self-report measure developed for assessing quality of life in normal populations.

The instrument evaluates an individual's perception of well-being and satisfaction across different aspects of life relevant to students and adults. Higher scores indicate a better perceived quality of life.

2.6 Reliability and Validity of the Instruments

The Gratitude Questionnaire–6 (GQ-6) and Quality of Life Scale–Revised (QLS-R) were selected because they are standardized psychological instruments with established psychometric properties. The GQ-6 has demonstrated satisfactory reliability and validity in previous psychological research and is widely used to assess dispositional gratitude. Similarly, the QLS-R has been used for assessing perceived quality of life in psychological and educational research.

2.7 Data Collection Procedure

Prior to data collection, permission was obtained from the concerned college authorities. Participants were informed about the purpose and nature of the study, and rapport was established to facilitate cooperation.

Informed consent was obtained before administration of the research instruments. Participants were provided with the Gratitude Questionnaire–6 and Quality of Life Scale–Revised along with appropriate instructions for completing the questionnaires. Participation was voluntary, and respondents were encouraged to provide honest responses.

After completion, the questionnaires were collected by the researcher and checked for completeness. Responses were subsequently scored according to the prescribed scoring procedures of the respective instruments, coded, organized, and prepared for statistical analysis.

2.8 Ethical Considerations

Participation in the study was voluntary, and informed consent was obtained from all participants prior to data collection. Participants were informed about the purpose of the study and were free to withdraw from participation at any stage.

Confidentiality of participants' information was maintained throughout the study. The collected data were used exclusively for academic and research purposes. The dignity, privacy, and rights of the participants were respected throughout the research process.

2.9 Statistical Analysis

The collected data were coded, organized, and analysed using **Microsoft Excel**. Descriptive statistics, including frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation, were used to summarize participant characteristics and the major study variables. **Pearson's product-moment correlation coefficient** was

used to examine the relationship between gratitude and quality of life. **Independent-samples *t*-tests** were employed to examine gender differences in gratitude and quality of life. Furthermore, **simple linear regression analysis** was performed to determine whether gratitude significantly predicted quality of life. Statistical significance was determined at the **0.05 level**.

3. RESULTS

The results of the study are presented in the following sections. Descriptive statistics were used to summarize the demographic characteristics of the participants and the study variables, namely **gratitude and quality of life**. Pearson's product-moment correlation analysis was conducted to examine the relationship between gratitude and quality of life among college students. Furthermore, independent-samples *t*-tests were performed to examine gender differences in gratitude and quality of life, while simple linear regression analysis was used to determine whether gratitude significantly predicted quality of life.

The overall methodological framework adopted in the present study is summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. Summary of Research Methodology

COMPONENT	DESCRIPTION
 Research Approach	Quantitative
 Research Design	Cross-sectional, descriptive correlational design
 Study Population	College students aged 18–25 years
 Study Area	Career College, Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh, India
 Sample Size	60 college students
 Sampling Technique	Convenience sampling
 Male Participants	20 (33.3%)
 Female Participants	40 (66.7%)
 Study Variables	Gratitude and Quality of Life
 Gratitude Measure	Gratitude Questionnaire–6 (GQ–6)
 Quality of Life Measure	Quality of Life Scale–Revised (QLS–R)
 Data Collection Method	Self-report questionnaires
 Statistical Software	Microsoft Excel
 Descriptive Statistics	Frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation
 Relationship Analysis	Pearson's product-moment correlation
 Group Comparison	Independent-samples <i>t</i> -test
 Predictive Analysis	Simple Linear Regression Analysis
 Sample Characteristics	College students within the age range of 18–25 years

3.1 Demographic Characteristics of the Participants

A total of **60 college students aged 18–25 years** participated in the study. Of these, **20 (33.3%) were male and 40 (66.7%) were female**. Female students therefore constituted the majority of the study sample.

Table 2. Demographic Characteristics of the Participants (N = 60)

Characteristic	Category	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Age	18–25 years	60	100.0
Gender	Male	20	33.3
	Female	40	66.7

3.2 Descriptive Statistics of Quality of Life and Gratitude

Descriptive statistics were calculated to summarize the quality of life and gratitude scores of the participants. The mean quality of life score was **42.02 (SD = 8.34)**, while the mean gratitude score was **4.67 (SD = 0.65)**.

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics of Quality of Life and Gratitude (N = 60)

Variable	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
Quality of Life	60	42.02	8.34
Gratitude	60	4.67	0.65

These findings provide an overall description of the distribution of quality of life and gratitude scores among the participating college students.

3.3 Relationship between Gratitude and Quality of Life

Pearson's product-moment correlation coefficient was used to examine the relationship between gratitude and quality of life. The analysis revealed a **weak negative correlation** between the two variables ($r = -0.157$); however, the relationship was **not statistically significant** ($p = .231$).

Table 4. Correlation between Gratitude and Quality of Life (N = 60)

Variables	Quality of Life	Gratitude
Quality of Life	1.000	-0.157
Gratitude	-0.157	1.000

Note: $r = -0.157$, $p = .231$.

The findings indicate that gratitude was not significantly associated with quality of life among the participating college students. Therefore, **H1 was not supported**.

3.4 Gender Differences in Quality of Life

An independent-samples *t*-test was conducted to determine whether male and female college students differed significantly in their quality of life scores. Male participants had a mean quality of life score of **42.75**, whereas female participants had a mean score of **41.65**.

Table 5. Gender Difference in Quality of Life

Gender	N	Mean Quality of Life
Male	20	42.75
Female	40	41.65

Although male participants had a slightly higher mean quality of life score than female participants, the difference was small.

3.5 Gender Differences in Gratitude

Gender differences in gratitude were also examined. Male students had a mean gratitude score of **4.70**, whereas female students had a mean score of **4.65**.

Table 6. Gender Difference in Gratitude

Gender	N	Mean Gratitude
Male	20	4.70
Female	40	4.65

The descriptive results showed only a small difference in gratitude scores between male and female students.

3.6 Statistical Significance of Gender Differences

Independent-samples *t*-tests were used to determine whether the observed gender differences in quality of life and gratitude were statistically significant.

Table 7. Independent-Samples *t*-Test Results for Gender Differences

Variable	Male Mean	Female Mean	<i>t</i>	df	<i>p</i>	Interpretation
Quality of Life	42.75	41.65	0.48	58	.634	Not significant
Gratitude	4.70	4.65	0.26	58	.799	Not significant

Both *p*-values were greater than .05, indicating that **there were no statistically significant gender differences in either quality of life** $t(58) = 0.48$, $p = .634$, **or gratitude** $t(58) = 0.26$, $p = .799$, among the participants. Therefore, **H2 and H3 were not supported**.

3.7 Simple Linear Regression Analysis

Simple linear regression analysis was conducted to determine whether gratitude significantly predicted quality of life among college students.

Table 8. Simple Linear Regression Analysis Predicting Quality of Life from Gratitude

Predictor	Outcome	R ²	F	df	p	Interpretation
Gratitude	Quality of Life	.025	1.46	(1, 58)	.231	Not significant

The regression model was not statistically significant, $F(1, 58) = 1.46$, $p = .231$, and explained approximately 2.5% of the variance in quality of life ($R^2 = .025$). Thus, gratitude did not significantly predict quality of life in the present sample. Therefore, **H4 was not supported**.

Accordingly, the findings suggest that quality of life among college students may be influenced by factors beyond gratitude, including academic, psychological, interpersonal, financial, and environmental conditions.

4. DISCUSSION

The present study examined the relationship between **gratitude and quality of life among college students aged 18–25 years**. It also investigated gender differences in gratitude and quality of life and examined whether gratitude significantly predicted quality of life. The findings revealed a **weak negative but statistically non-significant relationship** between gratitude and quality of life. No statistically significant gender differences were observed in either quality of life or gratitude. Furthermore, gratitude did not significantly predict quality of life in the present sample.

4.1 Gratitude and Quality of Life among College Students

The descriptive findings showed that the participants had a mean quality of life score of **42.02 (SD = 8.34)** and a mean gratitude score of **4.67 (SD = 0.65)**. These findings provide an overall description of gratitude and quality of life among the participating college students.

College students experience various academic, interpersonal, emotional, financial, and career-related demands that may influence their overall quality of life. Therefore, quality of life should be understood as a multidimensional construct that may be influenced by several psychological and contextual factors rather than by a single positive psychological characteristic.

4.2 Relationship between Gratitude and Quality of Life

Pearson's correlation analysis revealed a **weak negative relationship between gratitude and quality of life ($r = -0.157$)**. However, the relationship was not statistically significant ($p = .231$). Thus, **H1 was not supported**.

This finding differs from several previous studies that have reported positive associations between gratitude and indicators of psychological well-being. Emmons and McCullough (2003) found that gratitude-related practices were associated with positive affect and well-being. Similarly, Seligman et al. (2005) demonstrated that positive psychology interventions involving gratitude could contribute to increased happiness. Wood et al. (2010) also highlighted the broader positive relationship between gratitude and well-being.

The present finding, however, indicates that **higher gratitude scores were not significantly associated with higher quality of life in this particular sample**. The weak negative coefficient should not be interpreted as evidence that gratitude adversely affects quality of life because the relationship was small and statistically non-significant.

Several factors may account for this result. Quality of life among college students may be influenced by academic pressure, financial circumstances, physical and emotional health, family relationships, peer support, career uncertainty, and environmental conditions. Such factors were not directly assessed in the present study and may have contributed more strongly to variations in quality of life.

The relatively small sample size and use of convenience sampling may also have influenced the findings and limited the ability to detect a statistically significant association.

4.3 Gender Differences in Quality of Life

Male participants had a mean quality of life score of **42.75**, compared with **41.65** among female participants. Although male students had a slightly higher mean score, the difference was not statistically significant, $t(58) = 0.48, p = .634$. Therefore, **H2 was not supported**.

The findings suggest that gender was not a significant differentiating factor in quality of life within the present sample. Although male and female college students may experience different social, academic, and emotional challenges, these differences did not translate into statistically significant differences in overall quality of life.

The unequal gender distribution of the sample—**20 males and 40 females**—should nevertheless be considered when interpreting these findings. Studies involving larger and more balanced samples may provide stronger evidence regarding possible gender differences in quality of life.

4.4 Gender Differences in Gratitude

The mean gratitude score was **4.70 among male students and 4.65 among female students**. The difference was very small and was not statistically significant, $t(58) = 0.26, p = .799$. Thus, **H3 was not supported**.

These findings indicate that male and female participants demonstrated broadly comparable levels of gratitude. Within the present sample, gender therefore did not appear to play a substantial role in dispositional gratitude.

The absence of a statistically significant gender difference should, however, be interpreted in relation to the relatively small and gender-imbalanced sample. Future studies involving larger and approximately equal numbers of male and female participants would provide a more robust assessment of potential gender differences.

4.5 Predictive Role of Gratitude in Quality of Life

Simple linear regression analysis was conducted to determine whether gratitude significantly predicted quality of life. The regression model was **not statistically significant**, $F(1, 58) = 1.46, p = .231$, and gratitude explained approximately **2.5% of the variance in quality of life ($R^2 = .025$)**. Therefore, **H4 was not supported**.

The small proportion of explained variance indicates that gratitude alone accounted for very little of the variability in quality of life among the participating students. This finding is consistent with the weak and non-significant correlation observed between the two variables.

Importantly, this result should not be interpreted as indicating that gratitude has no psychological value. Rather, it suggests that **gratitude alone was not a significant predictor of quality of life in this particular sample**. Quality of life is likely influenced by multiple interacting factors, including

psychological health, academic experiences, social relationships, socioeconomic circumstances, physical health, and environmental conditions.

Future studies could therefore examine gratitude together with variables such as perceived stress, resilience, social support, self-esteem, emotional regulation, academic stress, and socioeconomic status to develop a more comprehensive explanatory model of quality of life among college students.

4.6 Comparison with Previous Research

The findings of the present study differ from much of the literature reviewed in relation to gratitude and well-being. Previous research has generally demonstrated positive associations between gratitude and psychological well-being, happiness, optimism, and life satisfaction.

Emmons and McCullough (2003) reported beneficial effects of gratitude-related practices on well-being, while Seligman et al. (2005) found that gratitude-based positive psychology interventions could enhance happiness. Froh et al. (2009) identified associations between gratitude and subjective well-being among younger populations, and Wood et al. (2010) provided broader evidence supporting the relationship between gratitude and well-being.

In contrast, the present study found a weak negative and statistically non-significant relationship between gratitude and quality of life. Differences between the current findings and previous research may be related to **sample size, participant characteristics, cultural context, measurement instruments, educational setting, and research design.**

Another important consideration is that **quality of life and psychological well-being are related but distinct constructs.** Some previous studies examined happiness, subjective well-being, life satisfaction, or psychological well-being rather than the specific quality-of-life measure used in the present study. Differences in outcome measurement may therefore partly explain variations across studies.

The present findings contribute to the literature by demonstrating that positive relationships between gratitude and well-being reported in previous studies may not necessarily be reproduced in every population or setting.

4.7 Interpretation of the Overall Findings

Taken together, the findings indicate that **gratitude was neither significantly associated with nor a significant predictor of quality of life among the college students included in the study.** Gender differences in both quality of life and gratitude were also statistically non-significant.

The results emphasize the **multidimensional nature of quality of life.** Although gratitude is recognized as an important construct within positive psychology, the present findings suggest that students' quality of life may depend on a broader combination of psychological, academic, interpersonal, social, economic, and environmental circumstances.

The study therefore highlights the importance of examining gratitude within a broader framework of student well-being rather than considering it as an isolated determinant of quality of life. Larger, more diverse, and longitudinal studies incorporating additional psychosocial variables may provide a clearer understanding of the conditions under which gratitude contributes to quality of life among young adults.

5. LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

5.1 Limitations of the Study

The findings of the present study should be interpreted in light of several limitations. First, the study included a relatively small sample of **60 college students**, which may limit the statistical power and generalizability of the findings to the broader college-student population.

Second, participants were selected using **convenience sampling** from a single educational institution, **Career College, Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh**. Consequently, the sample may not adequately represent college students from different institutions, geographical regions, socioeconomic backgrounds, or cultural settings.

Third, the study employed a **cross-sectional correlational design**, with data collected at a single point in time. Therefore, although relationships between the variables could be examined, causal conclusions regarding the influence of gratitude on quality of life cannot be established.

Fourth, both gratitude and quality of life were assessed using **self-report questionnaires**. Such measures may be influenced by social desirability, individual interpretation, response tendencies, and other forms of self-report bias.

Fifth, the gender distribution of the sample was unequal, comprising **20 male (33.3%) and 40 female (66.7%) participants**. This imbalance should be considered when interpreting the findings concerning gender differences in gratitude and quality of life.

Finally, the study focused primarily on **gratitude and quality of life**. The regression analysis showed that gratitude explained only **2.5% of the variance in quality of life ($R^2 = .025$)**, indicating that other factors not examined in the present study may contribute substantially to students' quality of life.

5.2 Future Research

Future studies should include **larger and more diverse samples** drawn from multiple colleges and universities to improve the representativeness and generalizability of the findings. Probability-based sampling methods may also be considered to reduce potential sampling bias.

Future investigations should aim for a more **balanced gender distribution** to provide a stronger assessment of possible gender differences in gratitude and quality of life.

Longitudinal research may help determine how gratitude and quality of life change over time and clarify the temporal relationship between these variables. Experimental or intervention-based studies may also examine whether structured gratitude practices, such as **gratitude journaling, gratitude letters, or appreciation exercises**, produce measurable changes in quality of life.

Since gratitude accounted for only a small proportion of variance in quality of life in the present study, future research should examine additional psychological and contextual factors, including **perceived stress, resilience, social support, self-esteem, emotional regulation, academic stress, socioeconomic status, physical and mental well-being, and family relationships**.

Future studies may also investigate whether variables such as **social support, resilience, or perceived stress mediate or moderate** the relationship between gratitude and quality of life. Such analyses may provide a more comprehensive understanding of the mechanisms through which positive psychological characteristics are associated with student well-being.

Finally, comparative studies involving students from different **educational institutions, geographical regions, and cultural backgrounds** may help determine whether the relationship between gratitude and quality of life varies across different populations and contexts.

6. CONCLUSION

The present study examined the relationship between **gratitude and quality of life among college students aged 18–25 years**, along with gender differences in these variables and the predictive role of gratitude in quality of life.

The findings revealed a **weak negative and statistically non-significant relationship between gratitude and quality of life** ($r = -0.157$, $p = .231$). No statistically significant gender differences were observed in either quality of life, $t(58) = 0.48$, $p = .634$, or gratitude, $t(58) = 0.26$, $p = .799$. Furthermore, simple linear regression analysis showed that gratitude did not significantly predict quality of life, $F(1, 58) = 1.46$, $p = .231$, explaining only **2.5% of the variance in quality of life ($R^2 = .025$)**. Thus, the hypotheses proposing significant relationships, gender differences, and predictive effects were not supported in the present sample.

These findings suggest that **quality of life among college students is a multidimensional construct** and may be influenced by a combination of psychological, academic, interpersonal, social, economic, and environmental factors rather than gratitude alone. Although gratitude is recognized as an important positive psychological characteristic, its significant association with quality of life was not demonstrated in the present study.

The findings should not be interpreted as indicating that gratitude lacks psychological importance. Rather, they highlight the need to examine gratitude within a **broader framework of student well-being** and alongside other relevant psychosocial factors. Future research involving larger, more diverse, and representative samples and additional psychological and contextual variables may provide a clearer understanding of the role of gratitude in the quality of life of young adults.

Overall, the study contributes to the existing literature by providing evidence from an Indian college-student sample and emphasizes the importance of adopting a **holistic approach to understanding and promoting quality of life among young adults**.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the present study, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. **Educational institutions should adopt a holistic approach to student well-being** by addressing psychological, academic, social, interpersonal, and environmental factors that may influence students' quality of life.
2. **Counselling and student-support services should be strengthened** to help college students manage academic pressure, emotional difficulties, interpersonal concerns, and career-related uncertainty.
3. Although gratitude was not significantly associated with quality of life in the present study, **gratitude-based activities may still be explored as part of broader positive psychology and well-being programmes**, rather than being considered an independent means of improving quality of life.
4. Colleges may organize **mental health awareness, resilience-building, stress-management, and emotional well-being programmes** to support students during the transition to adulthood.
5. Future research should examine additional factors such as **perceived stress, social support, resilience, self-esteem, emotional regulation, academic stress, and socioeconomic conditions** to better understand the determinants of quality of life among college students.
6. Further studies should use **larger, more diverse, and gender-balanced samples**, preferably involving students from multiple colleges and geographical regions, to improve the generalizability of the findings.
7. **Longitudinal and intervention-based studies** are recommended to determine whether changes in gratitude over time or structured gratitude interventions have any measurable influence on students' quality of life.

8. CONFLICT OF INTEREST: No conflict of interest.

9. SOURCES OF SUPPORT: NIL

10. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT:

The authors express their sincere gratitude to **Prof. (Dr.) B. K. Pandiamani, Director, Value Education Programmes, Brahma Kumaris, Mount Abu**, for his academic inspiration, guidance, and encouragement in promoting research and value-based education.

The authors sincerely acknowledge **Manipur International University** for providing the academic framework and support necessary for undertaking the present research. The authors also acknowledge the **Education Wing, Rajyoga Education and Research Foundation (RE & RF)** for fostering a supportive environment for academic learning, research, and scholarly inquiry.

The authors are sincerely thankful to **Career College, Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh**, for facilitating the data collection process. Special appreciation is extended to all the **college students who voluntarily participated in the study** and generously contributed their time and responses. Their cooperation and participation were essential to the successful completion of this research.

The authors also express their heartfelt gratitude to their **family members, friends, and well-wishers** for their continuous encouragement and support throughout the research journey.

Finally, the authors express their deepest gratitude to the **Supreme Soul (God)** for providing strength, wisdom, guidance, and inspiration throughout every stage of this research.

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