

# Psychological Well-Being, Gratitude and Personality Traits: A Comparative Study

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## ABSTRACT

The present study aims to investigate the gender differences in Psychological Well-being and Gratitude of college students. Additionally, the study also attempts to find out the mediating role of Personality traits in influencing Psychological Well-being and Gratitude. Around 154 participants were chosen for the study who were college students falling in the age bracket of 18-25 years residing in Delhi, NCR. Three measures were employed i.e. Ryff's Psychological Well-Being Scale, Gratitude Questionnaire GQ-6 and Big Five Inventory. Data was then subjected to two statistical analysis techniques i.e t-test and correlation. The results of the t-test depicted that females had higher levels of psychological well-being as compared to males. Moreover, females were found to be higher on Personal growth, Purpose in life and Positive relation with others while males were higher on Self-acceptance and Autonomy. No significant difference was found in Environmental mastery. Furthermore, significant gender differences were also observed in Gratitude, with females displaying more gratitude than males. A positive correlation was also found between Psychological well-being and Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness and Openness whereas a negative correlation was found for Neuroticism. Lastly, gratitude displayed a positive correlation with Extraversion, Agreeableness and Openness whereas a negative correlation with Conscientiousness and Neuroticism

**Keywords:** Psychological well-being, Gratitude, Personality, Gender

## 1. Introduction

The most important goal that individuals strive for is well-being. It is the most constructively researched and pervasive construct in the history of psychology. One of the most important components of mental health is well-being and it is often the judgment about a person's quality of life. Sometimes it can be defined as presence of positive emotions as experienced by an individual (e.g., love, joy, happiness) while it can also be termed as absence of the negative emotions one experiences throughout their lifespan (envy, helplessness, worry) along with this it also includes satisfaction as derived from life as well as a feeling of accomplishment and having positive functioning. Before the World War began, well-being was not considered to be a term related to health. Soon after that in 1984, the World Health Organisation (WHO) defined well-being as "a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease and infirmity" (WHO, 1984).

Psychological well-being has been defined as a multidimensional concept that includes many aspects such as confidence, anxiety and self-control (Sinha and Verma, 1992). Whereas (Khanbani et al., 2014) believed that psychological well-being is associated with a wide

range of aspects including life satisfaction, happiness, subjective well-being and adjustment. The construct of psychological well-being includes three different concepts namely, life evaluation, hedonic well-being and eudemonic well-being. The first aspect of life evaluation concerns the individual's views about their quality of life as well as their level of satisfaction related to their lives. The concept of hedonic well-being caters around the everyday moods of an individual which can include happiness, sadness, grief, anger etc. which is often measured by asking them to rate on their experiences based on the several affective adjectives. Lastly, eudemonic well-being focuses more on the judgement made by an individual about the meaning and purpose of their lives. This perspective is broader and diverse in its approach and hence various questionnaires have been formulated so far which tap around the various aspects of meaning.

Gratitude refers to an emotional as well as a cognitive reaction that arises when a person notices and appreciates the benefits one has received in their life. It has been defined as a moral affect that is different from other moral emotions including empathy, sympathy, and guilt (McCullough and Larsson, 2001). Gratitude can take three

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hierarchical levels i.e an affective trait, a mood, and an emotion. In an affective trait, being grateful is directly related to a person's general disposition which means a person might feel gratitude more than others naturally as they are born with an innate capability of being grateful. Gratitude can also depend upon the mood of a person and it might or might not fluctuate with time. Furthermore, sometimes people might just feel or have an experience which inspires them to be grateful.

Every human being has a unique way of exhibiting certain specific patterns of acting, feeling and thinking. These patterns represent an individual as who they are and form a basis for our interaction with the outer world. While interacting with others, individuals tend to form various impressions of one another. For example, some people are very fun-loving and outgoing whereas some people are very aggressive and reserved. These patterns take the personality of an individual into account. Personality has been derived from a Latin word called 'persona' which refers to a mask. It refers to "a dynamic organisation situated within oneself including psycho-physical systems which determine its unique adjustment to the environment" (Allport, 1961). The nature of personality is dynamic and is hence not static in nature.

## 2. Review of literature

Akhter (2015) investigated the gender differences in the psychological well-being of 100 students studying in 10th standard belonging to Jamshedpur city. The study employed the Ryff's 54 item scale of psychological well-being developed by Carol Ryff (1989). Further, t-test was employed and it was found that the t-value was 5.68 which was found to be significant at 0.01 level of significance. Since the mean scores of females were found to be higher than males, it was concluded that female students reported higher levels of psychological well-being as compared to male students.

Similar study was conducted by Sharma, Jyotika & Tankha, Geetika. (2014) to explore the differences in psychological well-being of male students studying in their first year of science and commerce streams. The sample of the study included 102 first year male students belonging to a private university in Jaipur falling in the age bracket of 18 to 20 years. Results of the study revealed that male students belonging to the science stream were found to be significantly higher on four factors of psychological well-being namely, environmental mastery, positive relations with others, purpose in life and self-acceptance as compared to students from commerce stream.

The research conducted so far on examining the gender differences in gratitude has shown mixed results. One of the studies conducted by Froh et al. (2009) measured gratitude using the Gratitude Adjective Checklist and asserted that the levels of gratitude are not significantly different between males and females.

Another study conducted by Sood & Gupta (2012) has also found that there are no significant gender differences in gratitude levels among adults. It has also depicted significant differences in gratitude levels between males and females that are a result of interpersonal cues.

Algoe et al. (2010) reported that thoughtful gestures perceived by partner's in a relationship also affect a person's expression of gratitude. The study found that women who perceived that their partner's gestures are thoughtful, were likely to express gratitude more than men who did not perceive the same. They asserted that this can be attributed to the fact that since women are higher on sensitivity to interpersonal cues compared to men they were more likely to express gratitude towards their partner, also men generally experience mixed emotions while reacting towards benefits received by their significant other (Algoe et al., 2010).

Research has shown a significant link between personality and psychological well-being. Most of the researches have emphasised over extraversion, neuroticism or emotional stability and openness to be the major predictors in influencing the well-being of an individual. A study was conducted by Ullah F (2017) on determining the role of Personality factors as determinants of Psychological Well-Being among students of Aligarh Muslim University and it was found that neuroticism and conscientiousness were one of the major predictors of well-being in both males and females, depicting the fact that neuroticism was negatively correlated with psychological well-being and so an increase in neuroticism would result in a decrease in their sense of psychological well-being. Furthermore, openness was found to be another important predictor of psychological well-being in females but not in males. Lastly, extraversion was found to be a significant predictor signifying the fact that individuals with close and strong relationships with significant others have an increased amount of psychological well-being as compared to introverts.

Another study was conducted by Siegler and Brummett (2000) to analyze the relationship between personality traits and Psychological well-being in a sample of 2,379 middle-aged adults, primarily focusing on the Big Five personality traits. The results of the study indicated that there was a strong positive correlation of psychological well-being with extraversion, openness and a significant negative correlation with neuroticism and lastly a less intense correlation with the other personality traits i.e, conscientiousness and agreeableness.

According to the moral effect theory the gratitude of an individual is related to personality variables which are linked with pro-social emotion and behaviour (Emmons and McCullough, 2004). Most of the studies have used the Big Five personality inventory to measure personality characteristics, in order to understand the relationship of gratitude and personality.

A study was conducted by Wood et al. (2009) in order to examine the role of gratitude in predicting psychological well-being above the domains and facets of the Big five personality traits. The study included 210 participants and in order to assess psychological well-being and personality the participants completed three scales namely, NEO PI-R measure of the 30 facets of the Big Five personality traits, the GQ-6 measure of trait gratitude. and Ryff's psychological well-being. The results indicated that all big five traits including extraversion, neuroticism, conscientiousness, openness, and agreeableness represent personality at the highest level and are highly correlated with gratitude.

### 3. Relevance of the present study

Sustainable well-being doesn't always require that a person feels happy and good all the time, it takes account of the fact that feeling negative emotions such as grief, sadness, failure are normal and valid for functioning efficiently, individuals who are able to manage these negative emotions are more likely to experience long-term psychological well-being. Recently there has been a shift in the literature from focusing on to disorder or dysfunction, researcher are more inclined towards paying emphasis on well-being and mental health of individuals. Psychological well-being and gratitude are further influenced by many other factors, one of the most important however is the personality and dynamics of an individual therefore the present study further explored the possible relationship that personality traits could play in shaping an individual and hence influencing their well-being and expression of gratitude in return.

### 4. Objectives of the Study

The following objectives were formulated:

- To examine the gender differences across the six domains of psychological well-being among college students of the Delhi/NCR region.
- To find the relationship between psychological well being and personality traits.
- To examine the gender differences in gratitude among college students.
- To find the relationship between personality traits and gratitude in college students.

### 5. Hypothesis of the Study

$H_0$  = There will be no significant gender differences in the psychological well-being.

$H_0$  = There will be no significant relationship between personality traits and psychological well-being.

$H_0$  = There will be no significant gender difference in the overall gratitude of the college students.

$H_0$  = There will be no significant relationship between personality traits and gratitude.

### 6. Method

A pilot study was conducted before conducting the actual study in order to check the validity of measures employed which can be further used in the final study. A sample of 10 participants was chosen including 6 females and 4 males. The participants informed consent was taken along with this their demographic details were also considered. No changes were made in the final study as the participants did not report any difficulties in understanding and answering the items. The participants chosen for the pilot study were not included in the main study due to the familiarity and the purpose of study being disclosed.

#### Design

The study adopted a cross-sectional approach to study the gender differences in psychological well-being and gratitude. A quantitative approach was used for data collection which included self-report measures and for data analysis involving t-test and correlation. The data for the present study was collected using Google forms and the data was analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. For analyzing the data IBM SPSS Version 28 was used.

#### Sample

The sample for the final study consisted of 154 participants, where females and males were equally distributed with numbers being 77 respectively. The sample consisted of both undergraduate and postgraduate students of the Delhi/NCR region falling in the age bracket of 18-25 years. For selecting the sample non-probability sampling techniques such as purposive, convenience and snowball sampling methods were employed.

#### Tools Used

The present study included three self-report measures namely, Psychological well-being 18 item scale (Ryff, 1989 & Keyes, 1995), Gratitude questionnaire GQ-6 (McCullough, 2002), and Big Five Inventory (John & Kentle, 1991 and John et al., 2008).

#### Ryff's Psychological Well-Being Scale

The psychological well-being scale was constructed to assess the psychological well-being of individuals (Carol Ryff, 1989). This scale is a shortened version of the original scale and is developed by Ryff(1989) & Keyes(1995), consisting of six dimensions of psychological well-being. It is a 7-point Likert scale consisting of 18 items with three items from each of the six dimensions ranging from 1- strongly agree to 7- strongly disagree. Few items are reverse-scored from each domain in order to inhibit response bias The reliability for the short version of this scale was found to have an alpha value of 0.88, whereas the aggregated subscale alphas ranged from 0.72 to 0.88, except for autonomy which was found to be 0.57. Along with this, good criterion-related and construct validity was found for the same.

*Gratitude Questionnaire*

Gratitude questionnaire GQ-6 is a self-report measure developed to measure the disposition of an individual to experience gratitude (McCullough, 2002). This scale is short with six items rated on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1- strongly disagree to 7- strongly agree. Two items are reverse scored in order to inhibit response bias. It has good internal reliability with values ranging from 0.82 to 0.87. It also displayed a good convergent validity as it is positively associated with life satisfaction, optimism and hope while negatively associated with depression, anxiety and envy.

*Big Five Inventory*

Big Five Inventory was originally developed by John & Kentle(1991) and further was revised by John et al.(2008). The value of alpha reliability was found to be 0.86 for Extraversion, 0.85 for Neuroticism, 0.84 for Openness, 0.83 for Conscientiousness and 0.82 for Agreeableness.

**7. Procedure**

The objective of the study was to examine the gender differences in psychological well-being and gratitude in college students of the Delhi NCR region and to find the mediating role of personality influencing psychological

well-being and gratitude of an individual. The data for the study was collected from students of the Delhi NCR region belonging to the age group of 18-25 years, either pursuing their undergraduate or postgraduate studies. The data collection was done online through Google forms and the participants were asked to fill out the questionnaire with their informed consent taken at the start. The form also consisted of some basic demographic questions such as age, gender, city/state of residence, qualification, and family type. After this descriptive statistics were employed for the analysis of data. The percentage was calculated for the same. Furthermore, inferential statistics including t-test and correlation was carried out using IBM SPSS Version 28. Lastly, the data was interpreted and a conclusion was drawn.

**8. Result**

The scores were subjected to t-test as well as correlation and the results were found between psychological well-being, gratitude and personality traits. There were 154 respondents, out of which males and females were 50% each. The data was collected from Delhi as well as NCR region, around 77.9% of respondents belonged to Delhi whereas 22.1% were from NCR region.

*Table 1: Gender differences in six dimensions of psychological well-being of the college students*

	<b>Gender</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>t-value</b>	<b>P</b>
<b>Self acceptance</b>	Females	77	14.20	3.4	-3.962	0.034*
	Males	77	16.57	3.9		
<b>Environment mastery</b>	Females	77	14.35	2.7	-0.995	0.056
	Males	77	14.81	3.5		
<b>Autonomy</b>	Females	77	14.02	3.3	-2.313	0.021*
	Males	77	15.37	3.4		
<b>Personal Growth</b>	Females	77	17.42	3.3	4.894	0.041*
	Males	77	13.20	4.1		
<b>Positive relations with others</b>	Females	77	15.20	3.5	3.631	0.039*
	Males	77	13.82	4.0		
<b>Purpose in Life</b>	Females	77	15.00	3.4	4.085	0.033*
	Males	77	13.71	3.4		

Table 2: Correlation between personality traits and psychological well-being

Psychological well being	
Extraversion	0.42***
Agreeableness	0.37***
Conscientiousness	0.44***
Neuroticism	-0.51***
Openness	0.39***

Note: \*p < 0.05 level, \*\*p < 0.01 level, \*\*\*p < 0.001 level (2-tailed)

Table 3: Gender differences in gratitude among the college students

	Gender	n	Mean	SD	t-value	P
Gratitude	Females	7 7	35.12	8. 6	4.822	0.049*
	Males	7 7	27.11	8. 3		

Note: N= 154, \*p < .05

Table 4: Correlation between gratitude and personality traits

Gratitude	
Extraversion	0.52***
Agreeableness	0.38***
Conscientiousness	-0.21***
Neuroticism	-0.53***
Openness	0.23***

Note: \*p < 0.05 level, \*\*p < 0.01 level, \*\*\*p < 0.001 level (2-tailed)

Table 1 depicts the gender differences in the six dimensions of psychological well-being as displayed by the respondents.

Table 2 depicts the correlation of Psychological well-being and the Big five personality traits.

Table 3 depicts the gender differences in the expression of gratitude as reported by the respondents. It was found that females displayed more gratitude as compared to males.

Table 4 depicts the correlation of gratitude with the five personality traits.

## 9. Discussion

This study attempted to analyze the gender differences across the various six dimensions of psychological well-being as displayed by the college students as shown in Table 1. Self-acceptance refers to the awareness and acceptance of one's strengths and weaknesses in a positive way and hence is a type of self-evaluation. The results depicted that males (M = 16.57) had higher self-acceptance as compared to females (M = 14.20). The  $t_{obtained}$  value further calculated was found to be -3.962 ( $p < 0.05$ ). It was found to be higher than  $t_{critical}$  which was 1.976, signifying the fact that both males and females differed significantly with respect to self-acceptance. Women are biologically more considerate about the views and opinions of others. Along with this they are also nurtured in an environment where they are expected to perform certain gender based norms in order to be looked at and referred to as women. despite the advancements and modernisations they are expected to perform according to the rules set by the society. This creates a pressure on their self identity and acceptance towards themselves. Even if a woman is working she is expected to perform all the household duties alone, take care of children and she is also sometimes forced to bear children. These reasons influence their ability to accept themselves in a positive manner, since they are always forced and controlled to behave in a certain way which they may or may not like. The results are supported by studies depicting similar findings where lower scores for women were seen in self-acceptance and autonomy in the United States (Ahrens C.J.C., 2006) and in Japan (Karasawa, 2011). Another study conducted to find out the gender differences in psychological well-being also supports the present study where males were found to be higher in the self-acceptance domain as compared to females (Matud et al., 2019).

Environment mastery basically involves the ability to deal with one's surrounding environment effectively. There was no significant gender difference in environment mastery as females scored (M = 14.35) more or less equally as males (M = 14.81). The  $t_{obtained}$  value calculated for environmental mastery was found to be -0.995 ( $p > 0.05$ ) which is less than  $t_{critical}$  value of 1.976. This signifies the fact that there exists a very negligible difference or no difference at all between males and females in the dimension of environment mastery. This depicts the fact that both males and females face similar difficulties in managing their external world, and are unaware of the opportunities available to them. (Perez J., 2012). depicted in a study where no significant gender differences were found in the following aspects; environment mastery, personal growth, self acceptance, negative affect, teacher relationship and positive affect among the college students of Filipino.

Autonomy refers to the sense of determination and the ability to take one's decisions on their own. In the present study males ( $M = 15.37$ ) were found to be more autonomous than females ( $M = 14.02$ ). The  $t_{\text{obtained}}$  value further calculated was found to be  $-2.313$  ( $p < 0.05$ ) which was again found to be statistically greater than  $t_{\text{critical}}$  value of  $1.976$ . This means that males are more independent than females and hence have a high sense of self-determination. One of the most prominent reasons for this could be the fact that despite all the advancements and modernisations, females are still not given the right to choose or take their decisions on their own primarily because of the male dominant society we all are residing in. Females are nurtured in an environment where they are taught to be dependent on their fathers first and then their husbands later on. Even though the sample belonged to a metropolitan area, the fact that these values still prevail in our country could possibly affect why females are still not given the authority to make decisions as males. These results are in line with the previous research conducted by Ahrens C.J.C. (2006) in the United States and by another study done in Japan by Karasawa (2011) where women scored lower than males in self-acceptance and autonomy.

Personal growth refers to the development of a person and the sense of self-realisation about one's needs along with openness to new experiences. Females ( $M = 17.42$ ) scored more on personal growth as compared to males ( $M = 13.20$ ) depicting the fact that when it comes to accepting changes or realising one's potential, females tend to be higher than males. The  $t_{\text{obtained}}$  value calculated for the same was found to be  $4.894$  ( $p < 0.05$ ) which was again found to be greater than the  $t_{\text{critical}}$  value of  $1.976$ . Females are more considerate about their strengths and weaknesses from the very beginning makes them more open towards themselves and hence display a higher sense of self-realisation as compared to males. Males are predisposed towards having a perfect masculine body shape and hence spend their maximum time building a perfect body. Positive relation with others basically involves the sense of possession of having and maintaining positive relationships with others. Such individuals are found to be more compassionate, empathetic and warm towards others. Females ( $M = 15.20$ ) were found to be more on this dimension as compared to males ( $M = 13.82$ ), depicting the fact that females are generally more empathetic towards others and hence value each and every relationship as compared to males. The  $t_{\text{obtained}}$  value as calculated for positive relation with others was found to be  $3.631$  ( $p < 0.05$ ) which was higher than the  $t_{\text{critical}}$  value of  $1.976$ . (Gilligan, 1982), concluded that there exists a significant difference between males and females with respect to the dimensions of positive relation with others. Males are generally nurtured towards mastery and exploration whereas females are taught to be more

oriented towards maintaining interpersonal relationships. Females ( $M = 15.00$ ) scored yet again more than males ( $M = 13.71$ ) in the dimension of purpose in life. Purpose of life describes how an individual is oriented towards finding the purpose and meaning of life. These individuals are goal-oriented, and hence have a sense of direction in life. The  $t_{\text{obtained}}$  value was found to be  $4.085$  ( $p < 0.05$ ), greater than the  $t_{\text{critical}}$  value of  $1.976$ . The findings therefore depict the fact that females are more clear in setting their goals and have a sense of purpose in life as compared to males.

Girls are given equal opportunities now and are hence just not seen as playing the role of a good housewife, rather they contribute significantly towards the income of the family and have clear goals for their career and development. The study also attempted to explore whether there is any relationship between psychological well-being and the personality traits of college students. Each trait was assessed for its association with psychological well-being and it was concluded that traits such as extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness and openness were positively correlated with psychological well-being whereas neuroticism was found to be negatively correlated with psychological well-being as depicted in Table 4. Extraversion is a trait associated with sociable, talkative and assertive individuals. It was observed that extraversion had a positive correlation ( $r = 0.42^{***}$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) with psychological well-being. This depicts the fact that individuals high on extraversion are more likely to have higher psychological well-being than others. This could possibly be because of the fact that extroverts are sociable individuals and stay happy by communicating with others and developing more social skills as compared to introverts. The present study however depicts that the correlation is near to moderate and not so high, this could possibly be an indicator that since everyone was restricted almost for two years to meet each other physically and interact with one another, extroverts could have faced major concerns regarding sociability which could have in turn affected their psychological well-being. However, a positive relationship has still been observed depicting that extroversion is a major contributor to an individual's well-being.

A significant positive correlation ( $r = 0.37^{***}$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) was also found between agreeableness and psychological well-being. Agreeableness basically measures the trust and bonding between individuals. Individuals high on this dimension are usually very understanding and cooperative and hence indulge in more prosocial behaviours than others. The findings of the present study depicted that individuals who are more cooperative with others, those who value relationships and those who believe in building trust are more likely to experience higher levels of psychological well-being.

Conscientiousness also had a significant positive relationship ( $r = 0.44^{***}$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) with psychological well-being. This dimension basically assesses the achievement as well as the organisation of an individual. Individuals who are goal-oriented, organised in their lives, have control over their impulses are said to be high on conscientiousness. This throws a light on the fact that those who have a clear sense of purpose in life will eventually score higher in psychological well-being as compared to those who are unorganised and are unaware of their goals and how to achieve the same.

Moreover, since conscientiousness is related to some of the qualities and behaviours among university students it significantly contributes to their successful performance, enhances tasks achievement and hence results in decreased amount of pressure on them. This in turn enhances their psychological well-being and results in enhancing their ability to handle their concerns and aspirations effectively. Therefore, since the university atmosphere was generally free from extra-academic consideration especially during the pandemic, it can be concluded that conscientiousness is a major predictor of success and hence psychological well-being.

A significant negative correlation was found between neuroticism and psychological well-being ( $r = -0.51^{***}$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). Neuroticism or emotional instability often refers to the ability to manage negative emotions such as anger, anxiety, depression etc. Individuals on one hand are said to be very neurotic as they don't have much control over their emotions, while on the other hand some individuals are very calm and composed and have good control over their emotions. It was found that there was a moderate yet significant negative correlation between neuroticism and psychological well-being depicting the fact that people who are neurotic and have problems staying calm are more likely to experience lower psychological well-being as compared to others who are calm and composed. This also depicts the fact that neurotic people are more predisposed towards developing mental health concerns such as depression, anxiety etc which in turn affects their psychological well-being.

A significant positive correlation was also found between openness to experience and psychological well-being ( $r = 0.39^{***}$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). The correlation was found to be not too high yet positive depicting the fact that individuals who are imaginative, curious, open to new ideas are more likely to experience greater psychological well-being. This is because the people who are open to new experiences, ideas and changes are more likely to adapt easily and experience a sense of personal growth as compared to others who are rigid and are unlikely to adjust according to the environmental situations. These individuals display high coping skills and hence face the situations with open and clear minds.

Therefore, since each personality trait reported either a positive or negative significant correlation with psychological well-being, it can be concluded that the null hypothesis just formulated ( $H_0 =$  There will be no significant relationship between personality traits and psychological well-being) stands rejected. As it can be clearly observed that personality plays a significant role in influencing the psychological well-being of an individual.

Gratitude is an emotional and cognitive reaction that arises when one appreciates the benefits one has received in life. The present study attempted to understand whether individuals differ with respect to experiencing and displaying gratitude. It was found that females ( $M = 35.12$ ) were more likely to express gratitude as compared to males ( $M = 27.11$ ) as shown in Table 5. This depicts the fact that females are more thankful and appreciative about their blessings and hence are more likely to recognise what they have and feel content and grateful about it as compared to males.

Men are more likely to express emotions after an achievement-related event, whereas women might look for the immediate and long term benefits from gratitude. The  $t_{\text{obtained}}$  value for the same was found to be 4.822 ( $p < 0.05$ ) therefore, the null hypothesis ( $H_0 =$  There will be no significant gender difference in the overall gratitude of the college students) was rejected as the  $t_{\text{obtained}}$  value was found to be greater than  $t_{\text{critical}}$  value and it is concluded that there is gender difference in expression of gratitude among the college students. Each trait was assessed for its association with gratitude and it was concluded that traits such as extraversion, agreeableness, and openness were positively correlated with gratitude. whereas neuroticism and conscientiousness was found to be negatively correlated with gratitude.

Extraversion being a personality trait is interpersonal in nature and usually describes individuals as outgoing, expressive, energetic in various social situations. It was found to have a significant moderate positive correlation with gratitude ( $r = 0.52^{***}$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). This depicts the fact that extroverts are more likely to recognise and be thankful for what they have in their lives than others. It was further observed that people who are extroverted tend to be warm and sensitive towards the rewards received and are more likely to reply to significant others with gratitude. A significant yet low correlation was also observed between agreeableness and gratitude ( $r = 0.38^{***}$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). Individuals high on this trait are usually very cooperative and prefer developing positive interpersonal relationships with significant others.

Conscientiousness was found to have a very low yet significant negative correlation with gratitude ( $r = -0.21^{***}$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). This signifies the fact that individuals who are conscientious are less likely to experience

gratitude as compared to others. study conducted by Singh (2009), Halama (2005) and Ruiz (2005) on understanding the influence of personality traits on psychological well-being also concluded the fact that conscientiousness is a major predictor of psychological well-being and hence is positively associated with it.

Another trait which was found to have a significant negative correlation with gratitude was neuroticism ( $r = -0.53^{***}$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). It displayed a moderate yet negative relationship with gratitude signifying the fact that neurotic individuals, who lack control over their impulses are less likely to experience gratitude as compared to others. Emotionally stable individuals on the other hand are able to handle stressful situations well and also welcome negative feedback with positive mindset. Similar findings have been depicted (Headey & Wearing, 1989; Hotard et al., 1989; Argyle & Lu, 1990) where it was found that neuroticism is negatively correlated with psychological well-being.

Openness to experience was also found to have a positive yet weak correlation with gratitude ( $r = 0.23^{***}$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). Openness can be defined by its various facets including curiosity, awareness and having an open mindset. This positive relationship can be attributed to the tendency of positive appraisal among individuals scoring substantially higher in this dimension (Mori et al., 2015). Therefore, these individuals evaluate their benefits favorably and hence feel grateful for the same. Therefore, the last null hypothesis thus formulated ( $H_0 =$  There will be no significant relationship between personality traits and gratitude) is rejected and it is concluded that there exists a clear relationship between gratitude and personality traits. It was observed that extraversion, agreeableness and openness had a positive relationship with gratitude whereas neuroticism and conscientiousness had a negative relationship with gratitude.

## 10. Conclusion

It can be concluded that females were found to be higher on the sub-domains of psychological well-being namely personal growth, positive relation with others and purpose in life. Whereas, males were higher on self-acceptance as well as autonomy. Additionally, no significant difference was observed for the domain of environmental mastery. The study also found that significant positive correlation exists between psychological well-being and extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness and openness and a significant negative correlation with neuroticism. Significant gender differences were also observed for gratitude, where females were found to be more grateful than males. Lastly, the study depicted a significant positive correlation of gratitude with extraversion, agreeableness and openness while a negative correlation with neuroticism and conscientiousness.

## 11. Limitations of the present study

The present study also had some limitations. The first limitation of the study was that the sample collected was not large enough due to time and resource constraints. The questionnaire included self-report measures there are high chances of the responses getting influenced due to social desirability. Lastly, since the study included the data that was collected using quantitative self-report based measures and no qualitative data was put into consideration therefore no triangulation was observed.

## 12. Suggestions for further researches

The sample can also be collected from urban as well as rural areas of the country in order to make the sample representative of the entire Indian population. Lastly, data can be triangulated with some specific qualitative methods which can also be applied including case studies and interviews to get an in-depth understanding of various aspects of psychological well-being, gratitude and personality traits.

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