

Difference Between Expressing Gratitude and Quality of Life Among Gen-Z Students

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ABSTRACT

Gratitude is an emotion expressing appreciation for what one has. It is spontaneously generated from within; it is an affirmation of goodness. When you get Grateful for what you have right now you will soon have more to be grateful for. Especially with the teenagers of the current generation are not much aware about the concept of Gratitude or the Power of Gratitude. Being grateful plays an important role in maintaining one's Quality of life and well-being. Thus, the main aim of the study is to find the relationship between Gratitude of Gen -z Students on Quality of Life – Physical, Psychological, Social and Environmental dimensions. A total consisting of 120 members were collected by random sampling method. Mean, S.D, r – Pearson correlation analysis were performed using SPSS 20.0 version. Gratitude Questionnaire –(CQ-6) developed by MC Cullouge, M.E Emmosk A & Tsang. J.A and Quality of Life Questionnaire which was developed by WHO were used to collect the data. The Results shows that, the Gen -z student's Gratitude and Quality of life dimensions (physical, psychological, social relationships and environment) does not have any significant Relationship. It is concluded that, Gen -z has got Low Level of Gratitude but it doesn't relate with their physical, psychological, social relationships, environmental aspects of their Quality of life. Thus, the research also suggests some methods to practice Gratitude in our day to day life.

Keywords: *Gratitude, Quality of life, Gen -z, Physical, Psychological, Social relationships and Environmental dimensions.*

GratITUDE, thankfulness or gratefulness from the latin word “gratus”. Pleasing thankful is a feeling of appreciation felt by or similar positive response shown by the recipient of kindness, gifts, help, famous or other types of generosity towards the giver of such gifts.

Are happy people grateful? Or a grateful people happy? this debate has been present since the time of Socrates. Studies have shown that gratitude is good for both your mental and physical health. What we don't know is why people wait to improve well –being with an intentional improvement of the practice of gratitude.

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Received: March 17, 2020; Revision Received: April 17, 2020; Accepted: May 30, 2020

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Studies show that the connection of gratitude to physical well-being is vital. One study, in particular, showed that gratitude is good for your heart (Mills 2015). Gratitude lowers blood pressure, decreases stress, and improves sleep. Other studies have shown that a successful practice in gratitude can lessen symptoms of depression and anxiety. Improvements in gratitude improve humans. Positive emotions broaden and enable the opportunity to build. Gratitude is a disposition that allows others to improve as well. Perspective-taking and care for others improve when an intentional shift of gratitude is taken. Being aware of one's level of gratitude could be the starting line for someone racing toward improved well-being. Grateful people are less inclined to feel resentment and envy. The higher the level of the experience of gratitude as an emotion, the more likely the instance of higher levels of positive affect.

A comparative study of Gratitude with psychology began in the year 2000, because basically psychology is a subject, which focuses more on understanding distress than on understanding positive emotions.

The concept of gratitude recently has attracted considerable interest in the popular culture. The prevalence of books targeted to general audiences on the topic (Breathnach, 1996; Hay 1996; Miller, 1995; Ryan, 1999; Steindl-Rast 1984; Turner, 1998; Van Kaam & Muto, 1993) testify to the broad appeal of this timeless concept. Following a similar format, these popular books generally consist of reflections on the value of gratefulness, along with strategies for cultivating an attitude of gratitude. The essential message of these volumes is that a life oriented around gratefulness is the panacea for insatiable yearnings and life's ills. Grateful responses to life can lead to peace of mind, happiness, physical health, and deeper, more satisfying personal relationships. Surprisingly, despite the public's fascination with gratitude, this emotion has received relatively little sustained attention in scientific psychology. Although intuitively compelling, many of the general claims in popular books concerning the power of a grateful lifestyle are speculative or empirically untestable. In one popular book on gratitude, for instance, the author asserts, "Gratitude is the most passionate transformative force in the cosmos" (Breathnach, 1996, p. 1). All in all, the contribution of gratitude to health, well-being, and overall positive functioning remains speculative and without rigorous empirical confirmation.

GRATITUDE AS AN EMOTIONAL RESPONSE TOWARDS LIFE

As a psychological state, gratitude is a felt sense of wonder, thankfulness, and appreciation for life. It can be expressed toward others, as well as toward impersonal (nature) or nonhuman sources (God, animals). Some of the most profound reported experiences of gratitude can be religiously based or associated with reverent wonder toward an acknowledgment of the universe (Goodenough, 1998). The roots of gratitude can be seen in many of the world's religious traditions. In the great monotheistic religions of the world, the concept of gratitude permeates texts, prayers, and teachings. Worship with gratitude to God for his many gifts and mercies is a common theme, and believers are urged to develop this quality. As such, gratitude is one of the most common emotions that religions seek to provoke and sustain in believers. Thus, for many people, gratitude is at the core of spiritual and religious experience. The spiritual quality of gratitude is aptly conveyed by Streng (1989): "In this attitude people recognize that they are connected to each other in a mysterious and miraculous way that is not fully determined by physical forces, but is part of a wider, or transcendent context" (p. 5). Emmons and Crumpler (2000) discuss the theological foundations of gratitude in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam.

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It is possible to feel grateful towards our loved ones, colleagues, animals, mother nature and life in general. This emotion brings positivity that will reach both inward and extends outwards. Practicing daily gratitude can be of great benefits as it can help us to get unstuck and to stay moving forward. In our day to day life gratitude is vital in creating long lasting relationships. It shows our love for human kind and in the long run, people become more trusting and dependable.

How does gratitude transform one's life?

Gratitude like mindfulness, is a term and concept that's become widely trendy over a last few year and the benefits of its practice are regularly written about in a variety of mainstream newspaper, magazines and blogs. The world's prominent researcher and writer Robert Emmons, explains gratitude as "a felt sense of wonder, thankfulness, and appreciation for life". Sonja Lyubomirsky, one of the leading happiness researchers in the world describes gratitude in the following way "gratitude is many things to many people, it wonders, it is appreciation, it is looking at a bright side of a setback, it is fathoming abundance; it is thanking someone in your life; it is thanking god, it is "counting blessing". it is savouring; it is not taking things for granted, it is coping; it is present oriented.

How and why gratitude makes you happier

It may sound corny, but the research has clearly demonstrated that, we would be happier if we cultivate an attitude of gratitude. however, instead of following some advice blindly, it is very important to understand why and how expressing gratitude works to make you happier.

Firstly, expressing gratitude both self-worth and self-esteem. When we realize how much people have done for us or how much we have accomplished, we feel more confident and efficacious. unfortunately, for many people, it comes more naturally to focus on failures and disappointments or on other people's slight and hurts. Gratefulness can help you learn this habit. Instead of automatically thinking "woe is me" in response to any set back, the practice of gratitude encourages your current life or how you are thankful that things aren't worse. Focusing on our gratitude means focusing on the things that makes us happy. As we are trying hard to learn, being happy about the good things in our life won't cause the evil eye to come after us. It just gives us a more optimistic outlook, which will in turn make us feel happier and more grateful. It's a self-reinforcing cycle, and that's a good thing. If our usual attitude is to be grateful for good things in our life and we have a positive, happy outlook, we will be more fun to be around than if you're constantly griping about everything. Most people are drawn to those who are positive happy and optimistic than they are to constant complains. our happy attitude may even prove to be contagious making others happier too.

Three years ago, research confirmed what most of us have already observed, happier people live longer, healthier lives. In a surprising study, researchers divided older people into happy, unhappy, and in-between categories and then tracked them over five years. More of the unhappy group died than either of the other two, and once research had controlled for age, chronic illness, depression, and healthy or unhealthy behaviours, they found that happy people were 35 percent less likely to die than unhappy ones. Practicing gratitude will not only make your life more enjoyable, it could actually give you more life.

Comparing quality of life with gratitude

Although a lot of people are reminded to be thankful on thanksgiving, gratitude shouldn't be reserved for special occasions. showing just a little appreciation for what you have could greatly improve your life – year-round. There 5 ways gratitude can change your life.

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1. People will start liking you more: The simple act of saying, “thank you” inspires people to seek ongoing relationships, according to 2014 study published in emotions. Showing some appreciations is an easy way to start a conversation and over time, it can deepen your friendships.
2. You’ll sleep better: Thinking about the things you re grateful for improves your quality of sleep, according to a 2009 study published in the journal of psychosomatic research. Additionally, being thankful helps. You sleep longer and you’ll feel better rested when you wake up.
3. Your physical health will improve: Being appreciative has powerful effects on your body. Research have linked gratitude to lower blood pressure fewer aches and pains, and improved immunity. A 2015 study published in spirituality in clinical reactive found grateful people even have healthier hearts.
4. You ‘ll feel better about yourself: Numerous studies, including a 2015 study published in personality and individual differences, have linked gratitude with higher level of self – esteem. some studies report gratitude reduces social comparisons. So rather than feel emotions of people who have more them you do, you may be better equipped to appreciate their accomplishment when you re thankful for the things you have in your own life. The feeling of being loved, desired and grateful brings immense refinement to us. It brings beauty, sense of dignity and sense of freedom. This simple feeling that you are nothing and the whole universe is available.

Significance

In recent times, especially students do not know the importance of expressing gratitude and how much it has an impact on themselves. This study will help us to know how much difference that expressing gratitude makes in one ‘s life. Expressing gratitude not only gives us momentary happiness but it also plays a vital role on oneself. It also helps us to understand, how to cultivate the habit of expressing gratitude and the importance of it.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

1. Serife isik et.al (2017) examined a study on effects of gratitude journaling on first year college students, adjustment, life satisfaction and positive affect. Students who scored high 9 (ie. scores between 35 and 56) on the perceived stress scale (cohen et .al in journal of health and social behavior, 24, 385-396,1983) and low (ie. scores between 48 and 144) on the university life scale (aladaget.al in turk psikolojik danis, mave rehberlik dergisi, 2(20),41-47(2003) were invited to participate in the study. Among 24 students who met the criteria, 21 volunteered to participate. They separated them into two groups experimental (1) and control group. Students in the experimental group (11) kept a gratitude journal for 3 weeks, while those in the control group (10) were not involved in any gratitude related activity. The results explained that the students in the experimental group had significantly higher post –test scores on gratitude. Greater adjustment in university life and life satisfaction .
2. Elisa A Mercon –vargas et.al (2016) has gratitude of students from private and public schools. they examined social class (measured by attendance in public on private schools), gendr and age – related variations in the expression of wishes and gratitude of 430 students of the age groupn7 to 14 years. the main aim of the study was to analyses whether expressing gratitude helps them in their cognitive development, such as taking others into account and thinking about the future etc. the tools which were used by authors were used by the authors for the study includes : Baumgarten-tramer’s 1938 , gratitude type (a) verbal, (b) concrete (c) connective and (d) others. The results indicate that students from private schools expressed significantly more

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- social – oriented wishes and connective gratitude where as those from public schools expressed significantly more oriented wishes.
3. Kerry Howells et. Al (2016) conducted a study on the role of gratitude in enhancing the relationship between doctoral research students and their supervisors. The main aim of this study is to investigate the effects of gratitude practices, prosing it brings both focus and intentionality to the student’s supervisor relationship resulting in better research out comes and by implication, a positive impact on attrition rates. This quality case – study includes eight ph.D students and their two supervisors in the schools of physical sciences, and medicine over a six – week period of focused attention on practices of gratitude . in this study an Inductive exploratory approach was used to analyses the interview data for themes, beginning with NVIVO coding the preserve the lived experience of gratitude interventions of the participants (saldana 2019) and to allow for central meanings of the data to surface. The findings of this study revealed that, all the participants noted a positive impact in the area of communication, social and emotional well-being, as well as on the research process itself.
 4. Christina Nicole Armenta (2017) studied about the impact of expressing gratitude and grade students from 4 different high schools. These were prompted to write weekly letters to express gratitude either for a kind act, help with them for academics or help with their health. The main aim of the study is to provide an evidence that gratitude is activating & energizing. The results indicated that, after expressing gratitude, participants felt more motivated, more capable of improving themselves and expressed greater intentions to muster effort towards self-improvements.
 5. Ahu Aricioghu (2016) conducted a study to understand the effects of gratitude in the relationship between forgiveness and life satisfaction among university students. The sample consisted of 396 students of which 234 (59%) was females 162 (41%) were males. These were recruited from a university in denizli turkey. The ages ranged between 18 to 27 years. The tools used were the gratitude Questionnaire, heartland forgiveness scale and satisfaction with life scale from which the data was collected and analyzed. Gratitude was measured by gratitude Questionnaire (GQ) by MC coullogh, Emmons and T sang (2002). The results showed that gratitude partially mediated the relationship between forgiveness and life satisfaction.
 6. Jeffery j froh, Charles yurkewicz, todd B kashdan (2015) conducted a student Gratitude and subjective well-being in early adolescence. The sample consisted of 154 students to identity benefits from its experience and expression, positive associations were found between gratitude and positive affect, global and domain specific life satisfaction optimism, social support, amd pro –social behavior. The tools used in this study was gratitude adjective checklist (GAC, MC Coullough et. al 2002) to asses gratitude. The results indicate that Gratitude in early adolescents was related with social, emotional and physical benefits.

METHODOLOGY

The current study attempts to understand the Difference between expressing gratitude on quality of life among gen z students and this chapter discusses the details of the study regarding the objectives, sampling tools and procedure.

Aim: The main aim of the study is to find out the Difference between expressing gratitude and quality of life among gen- z students.

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Objective

To find out the Difference between gratitude of gen z on quality of life – physical, psychological, social and environmental dimensions.

Alternative hypothesis

1. There is a significant difference between gratitude and quality of life dimension physical aspects at 0.05 level of significance.
2. There is a significant difference between gratitude and quality of life dimension psychological aspects at 0.05 level of significance.
3. There is a significant difference between gratitude and quality of life dimension social aspects at 0.05 level of significance.
4. There is a significant difference between gratitude and quality of life dimension environmental aspects at 0.05 level of significance.

Participants

The sample consists of gen-z students. One hundred and twenty participants in the age Range of 16-22 years were selected in this study. Random sampling technique was used to collect the data. The data was collected randomly from school students as well as college students in and around Coimbatore which includes Sri Krishna Arts and Science college.

Inclusion Criteria	Exclusion Criteria
Students of age range 16-22 years.	Students below the age of 16 or above 22 years.

Tools Used

- The **demographic details** of the participants such as initial, gender, date of birth, marital status, family income and student background.
- The **Gratitude questionnaire** developed by **Mc Cullough**, 2002 is one of the most frequently used assessments in gratitude. It was initially developed for use in research to measure people 's experience of gratitude as an emotion or affect. The scoring and norms showed various ranges of experience.
- This tool is a self-report questionnaire that measures the tendency to recognize, respond and experience gratitude. participants respond based on a 7 -point likert scale that ranges from (1) strongly disagree to (7) strongly agree. There are two negatively formulated items that are reverse coded. The scores range from 6-42, the higher number being correlated with higher gratitude disposition.
- The **W.H.O(world health organization) Quality of life scale –brief (WHOQOL-brief)** still in field trials, is a subset of 26 items taken from the WHOQOL-100. The WHOQOL-Brief (field trial version) produces a profile with four domain scores and two individually scored items about an individual's overall perception of quality and health. The four domain scores are scaled in a positive direction with higher scores indicating a higher quality of life.

Procedure

A Total number of 130 data have been collected from some schools and colleges in Coimbatore city, among which only 120 data was included in the study and 10 were excluded they did not satisfy the inclusion criteria. The subjects were asked to provide information on specific socio-demographic details. the data have been collected by using of life scale – brief questionnaire: The Gratitude questionnaire developed by Mc Cullough (2002) and the WHO

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quality of life scale – brief (WHOQOL-BREIF) and was also collected online using google form.

Statistical Analysis

The data was coded for SPSS.20 analysis. Description Statistics like mean, standard deviation and t-test were performed.

RESULTS

The present chapter focused on results and discussion to test the study hypothesis. Descriptive statistics like mean, standard deviation and t-test were performed for five variables. The results are as follows:

Table 1 shows that the t –value for gratitude and dimension physical aspects of quality of life.

Variables	Mean	Standard deviations	t-value
Gratitude	30.9	5.7	0.070
Physical	31.9	5.1	

$p = 0.05$

As shown in table 1 mean value for gratitude is 30.9 and for physical aspect is 31.9 which shows that the physical aspect is slightly more than the mean of the gratitude. In terms of standard deviation, the score for gratitude is 5.7 and for physical aspect is 5.1. the derived value is higher than the table value that is 0.07; hence there is no significant difference between gratitude and physical aspect. therefore, hypothesis one is rejected.

Table 2: shows the t – value of gratitude and dimension psychological aspects of quality of life.

Variables	Mean	Standard deviation	t-value
Gratitude	30.9	5.7	0.302
Psychological	20.9	3.3	

$p = 0.05$

As shown in table 2 table mean value for gratitude is 30.9 and psychological aspect is 20.9 which shows that, the score of gratitude is higher than the psychological aspects. In terms of standard deviation, the score for gratitude is 5.7 and psychological aspect is 3.3.the derived value is higher than the table value that is 0.07, hence there is no significant difference between gratitude and psychological aspects. Therefore, hypothesis two is rejected.

Table3: shows the t value of Gratitude and dimension social aspects of Quality of life.

Variables	Mean	Standard deviation	t-value
Gratitude	30.9	5.7	0.357
Social	11.1	5.3	

$p = 0.05$

As shown in table 3, the mean value for gratitude is 30.9 and social aspect is 11.1 which shows that the score of gratitude is higher than social aspects. In term of standard deviation, the score for gratitude is 5.7 and social aspect is 5.3.the derived value is higher than the table value that is 0.357, hence there is no significant difference between gratitude and social

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aspect. Hence there is no significant difference between gratitude and social aspect. Therefore, hypothesis three is rejected.

Table 4: shows the t value of gratitude and dimension social aspect of quality of life.

Variables	Mean	Standard deviation	t value
Gratitude	30.9	5.7	0.14
Environmental	28.5	5.9	

$p = 0.05$

As shown in table 4, the mean value for gratitude is 30.9 and environmental aspect is 28.5 which shows that the score of gratitude is higher than environmental aspect. In terms of standard deviation, the score for gratitude is 5.7 and for environmental aspect is 5.9. The derived value is higher than the table value that is 0.14, hence there is no significant difference between gratitude and environmental aspect. Therefore, hypothesis four is rejected.

Bar Diagram



The above bar diagram shows the level of gratitude among gen z students. The results show that more than 80% of the students have scored low level of gratitude and 20% have scored moderate level of gratitude and only 1 % have scored high level of gratitude.

DISCUSSION

The current study was done to assess the difference between expressing gratitude and quality of life among gen z students. The study also aimed to find the difference between gratitude with four dimensions of quality of life (physical, psychological, social and environmental). The data was collected through questionnaire and online forms, from 120 students who met the criteria.

From the overall analysis, among 120 students only 1 (8%) had high level of gratitude 22(18%) had moderate level of gratitude and 97 (80%) had low level of gratitude.

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From the analysis done using t-test, gratitude was compared with four dimensions of quality of life that is, physical, psychological, social and environmental. It was ha that all the four dimensions did not have any significant difference and all the hypothesis was rejected. In all the four dimensions, it was found that the students have scored high in quality of life which means, they are leading a good life. But most of the students had either moderate level (18%) or low level of gratitude (80%). This shows that, the students are still not aware about the importance and benefits of gratitude. Somewhat surprisingly, it was found that there was no relation between gratitude and quality of life. Based on the evidence reviewed in this research, the students must start cultivating the practice of gratitude and thankfulness that will definitely have a greater impact in their life in positive way. The study carried out by Chesterton claimed that gratitude was the key to happiness. Recently conducted research (reviewed in Emmons & crumple 2000) provides an empirical test of these assertions. Undergraduate students enrolled in a health psychology class were asked , for 10 weeks, to complete a weekly Undergraduate students enrolled in a health psychology class were asked, for 10weeks, to complete a weekly log of their emotions, physical symptoms, health behaviors (exercise, alcohol consumption, and aspirin usage),and predominant coping behaviors. They rated the extent to which they felt each of 30 different mood states and noted their experience of physical symptoms (headaches, runny nose, sore throat, etc.). Six items assessed their approach avoidance coping tendencies with the most serious problem encountered during each week. I subject received social support for help with this problem, they were asked to rate their feelings toward the support provider on eight adjectives (including grateful, angry, embarrassed, and understood). The weekly log also included two global judgments where participants were asked to evaluate their life as a whole during the past week along with their expectations for the upcoming week. In addition, one-third of the research participants were asked to record up to five major events or circumstances that most affected them during the week, another third were asked to write down five hassles or minor stressors that occurred in the past week, and the final third were asked to write down five things for which they were grateful or thankful. Was there an effect of these different attentional manipulations on emotional and physical well-being? Results indicated significant differences between the three groups. Relative to the hassles and events group, participants in the gratitude condition felt better about their lives as a whole and were more optimistic regarding their expectations for the upcoming week. In other words, the focus on blessings appeared to influence both concurrent well-being and anticipated affect. Looking at physical symptomatology, a similar pattern emerged. The thankful group reported fewer physical complaints overall than the hassles group, although it did not differ from the neutral condition. The largest difference on the outcome measures between the groups also was one of the most interesting Subjects in the gratitude condition spent significantly more time exercising than did subjects in the other two groups. Specifically, they spent 4.38 hours in exercise compared with 3.01 hours for the hassles group. Although in need of replication, when combined with the differences seen in physical symptom reporting, this finding suggests that the emotional and mental benefits of thankfulness may extend to the somatic realm. Somewhat surprisingly, we did not find that the practice of gratitude buffered individuals from the experience of unpleasant emotions. In fact, persons in the thankful group reported higher levels of the agitation-related emotions (irritability, nervousness, anger) than did people in the other two conditions. Gratefulness does not appear to be equivalent to a Pollyannaish state where suffering and adversity are selectively ignored, but it might induce the requisite psychological resources to successfully weather unpleasant emotional states.

CONCLUSION

With the emergence of positive psychology movement, now is the time for a renewed focus on gratitude as a valued subjective experience, a source of human strength and an integral element promoting the civility requisite for flourishing of families and communities. Gratitude provides life meaning, by encapsulating life itself as a gift.

The current study showed that there is no difference between expressing gratitude and quality of life. The study also reported that considerable portion of the population is having a good quality of life. The results further revealed that, the majority of the population has low level of gratitude (80%) and rest has moderate level (22%) and high level of gratitude. Hence, the study suggests that the participants can be provided some ways to cultivate the practice of expressing gratitude in day to day life which helps them to lead a happy and a optimistic life.

Strengths

1. This study helps to gain an insight regarding the importance of gratitude.
2. The study can aid in cultivating the practice of gratitude in our everyday life.

Limitations

1. The study was a cross-sectional study.
2. The geo-graphical location of the study was limited.
3. There was no equal distribution of males and females in the total population to determine the relationship among them.

Future Directions

1. The study can be done for a larger population over a longer period of time for extensive results.
2. The sampling method used in this study was random sampling method and future researchers can consider adopting different method for more desirable outcomes.

Implications

The present study implies that it is necessary to know the importance of gratitude which can dominate one's entire life outlook in a optimistic way. This study would help to get an idea of how an individual should cultivate the practice of gratitude in one's life.

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Acknowledgements

The author appreciates all those who participated in the study and helped to facilitate the research process.

Conflict of Interest

The author declared no conflict of interest.

How to cite this article: Sreenandhini. S (2020). Difference Between Expressing Gratitude and Quality of Life Among Gen-Z Students. *International Journal of Indian Psychology*, 8(2), 046-056. DIP:18.01.286/20200802, DOI:10.25215/0802.286