The International Journal of
INDIAN PSYCHOLOGY

Research Paper

Resilience, Gratitude, and Life Satisfaction: A Comparative Study of Students Who Volunteer at NGOs and College Students Who Don't Volunteer

Saradha S[1]*, Udhayshri K R[2], Poorvajaa KVS[3], Abbirooban S[4]

ABSTRACT

Volunteerism has been associated with positive psychological outcomes and promotes overall well-being of an individual. This research aims to investigate whether engaging in volunteer work specifically at NGOs has a distinctive impact on Resilience, Gratitude and Life satisfaction when compared to college students who do not engage in volunteering. The study will be carried out among 200 college students using the Purposive sampling method. The participants included in the study will be between the age group of 18-24 years. Nicholson McBride Resilience questionnaire, The Gratitude Questionnaire - Six Item Form (GQ-6) and The Satisfaction with Life Scale will be used to measure resilience, gratitude, and life satisfaction. The findings from this study will contribute to our understanding of the potential benefits of volunteering at NGOs for students' psychological well-being and overall life satisfaction. The data will be further subjected to descriptive and inferential statistics. The results and the conclusions drawn will be discussed in the presentation. The results may inform educational institutions, NGOs, and policymakers about the positive effects of volunteering on student development and well-being, highlighting the importance of promoting and supporting volunteer opportunities in college settings.

Keywords: *Volunteering, Students, Resilience, Gratitude, Life satisfaction*

Volunteering is the act of an individual giving time, resources, effort, and skills to a cause or objective without expecting anything in return. (Musick & Wilson,2007). By promoting youth education, social inclusion, employment, and the development of the health of marginalized people, volunteerism plays a crucial role in society. Astin & Astin (2000) found that volunteering increases students' self-confidence and helps them enhance their soft skills (Llenares & Deocaris, 2019). Volunteerism tends to have overall physical, social and mental well-being.

---

[1]II Year M.Sc. Clinical Psychology, Department of Psychology (SF), PSG College of Arts & Science, Coimbatore, India
[2]II Year M.Sc. Clinical Psychology, Department of Psychology (SF), PSG College of Arts & Science, Coimbatore, India
[3]II Year M.Sc. Clinical Psychology, Department of Psychology (SF), PSG College of Arts & Science, Coimbatore, India
[4]Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology (SF), PSG College of Arts & Science, Coimbatore, India.
*Corresponding Author

Resilience, Gratitude, and Life Satisfaction: A Comparative Study of Students Who Volunteer at NGOs and College Students Who Don't Volunteer

Resilience is a dynamic process in which individuals display positive adaptations despite their negative experiences (Masten, 2009). A sense of resilience would follow from service-learning programs or merging of community service with pedagogy and research (Bourner & Millican, 2011). Resilience, as outlined by Masten (2001), encompasses several key components that contribute to an individual's ability to adapt and recover from adversity. One essential component is the presence of protective factors, which can include personal attributes, relationships, and environmental resources that buffer against the negative impact of stressors (Masten, 2001). Another component is the development of effective coping strategies, as highlighted by Tusaie and Dyer (2004). Coping strategies enable individuals to manage and regulate their emotions, thoughts, and behaviors when faced with challenges, ultimately promoting resilience. Furthermore, self-efficacy and optimism, as discussed by Connor and Davidson (2003), are important components of resilience. Believing in one's ability to overcome difficulties and maintaining a positive outlook can enhance resilience in the face of adversity. These components collectively contribute to an individual's ability to navigate and overcome challenges, fostering resilience.

One of the important factor contributing to mental health is gratitude. Gratitude is a strong emotion that can change our lives and improve our general wellbeing. It is the act of recognizing and celebrating all of life's blessings, no matter how minor. (Kausar, 2018; Algoe et al., 2008). Gratitude has been conceived as a dispositional quality or attribute phenomenon as well as a state phenomenon (i.e., an emotional response to a current experience or event). (Roberts, 2002). Engaging in volunteer work offers a unique opportunity to experience and express gratitude. Service, Appreciation, Witnessing the Impact of Small Acts, has an impact of cultivating gratitude in students.

Life satisfaction serves as both an important predictor and determinant of adult's well-being. Diener, Suh, Lucas, and Smith (1999) identified several key components of life satisfaction, including positive affect and emotions experienced in daily life, the absence of negative affect and emotions, and overall cognitive evaluations of one's life. These authors emphasized the importance of subjective well-being and the individual's perception of their own life. Pavot and Diener (2008) further expanded on the components of life satisfaction by including domains such as social relationships, health, and achievement. They highlighted the role of social connections and the quality of interpersonal relationships in contributing to overall life satisfaction. In addition, they emphasized the significance of physical and mental well-being, as well as feelings of accomplishment and fulfillment in various life domains.

Student volunteerism and its impact on well-being is relatively under-researched in India. The impact volunteerism has on well-being of the health of college students can help in developing volunteering and community outreach programs, which is emphasized has major need of the study.

METHODOLOGY
Aim:
To study the relationship between resilience, gratitude and life satisfaction among college students and the difference between those who volunteer at NGOs and college students who don't volunteer

Resilience, Gratitude, and Life Satisfaction: A Comparative Study of Students Who Volunteer at NGOs and College Students Who Don't Volunteer

Objectives
- To assess the level of resilience, gratitude and life satisfaction among college students who volunteer at NGOs and college students who don't volunteer
- To assess the gender difference in resilience, gratitude and life satisfaction among college students
- To understand the relationship between resilience, gratitude and life satisfaction among college students
- To understand the difference in college students who volunteer at NGOs and college students who don't volunteer for resilience, gratitude and life satisfaction.

Hypothesis
- There will be no significant gender difference in resilience, gratitude and life satisfaction among college students.
- There will be statistically significant relationship between resilience, gratitude and life satisfaction among college students.
- There will be statistically significant difference on resilience, gratitude and life satisfaction among college students who volunteer at NGOs and college students who don't volunteer.

SAMPLNG METHOD
The population of the study was between the ages of 18-24 years old college students. The size of the sample was 57 adults, consists of 45 college students who volunteer at NGOs and 32 college students who don't volunteer. Purposive sampling technique was used to collect the data both the gender, from 18 to 24 years, who are able to comprehend English language were included. People with chronic illness were excluded from the study.

Research Design
Comparative Correlational Research Design

Tools Used
- Brief Resilience questionnaire
- The Gratitude Questionnaire - Six Item Form (GQ-6)
- The Satisfaction with Life Scale

Brief Resilience questionnaire (Smith et al., 2008)
Brief Resilience questionnaire consists of 12 items with 5 point Likert scale. The scoring scheme is between 1 and 5, with 1 indicating strongly disagree and 5 indicating strongly agree. The score ranges between 12 to 60. The internal consistency reliability measured through Cronbach alpha was 0.93.

The Gratitude Questionnaire – Si x Item Form (McCullough et al.,2001)
The GQ-6 comprises of 6-items with 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1, indicating strongly disagree, to 7, indicating strongly agree. It is a measure of the student's disposition to experience gratitude (McCullough et al., 2002). The GQ-6 has internal consistency reliability measured through Cronbach α was 0 .81.

The Satisfaction with Life Scale (Diener et al.,1985)
The Satisfaction with Life Scale consists of consists of five items with seven points rating scale ranging from 1, indicating strongly disagree to 7, indicating strongly agree. The internal consistency reliability, measured through Cronbach's alpha was 0.87.

Procedure
The informed consent was obtained from the participants. The procedure to complete all three questionnaires were explained. . The questionnaires with needed instructions were circulated to the students in Google forms The Socio demographic data from the participants were collected (initials, age, gender). After completion the responses were collected and the data were tabulated, analyzed and discussion and conclusions were drawn.

Statistical Design
Statistical Analysis was conducted using SPSS version 26. Descriptive Statistics was used to find frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation of the study variables. Karl Pearson product moment correlation and linear regression analysis was used to find the relationship between three variables. Independent sample t-test was used to determine the gender difference and between the two groups i.e. students who volunteer at NGO and students who don't volunteer.

RESULTS
Table 1 shows sociodemographic data

Sociodemographic variables	Frequency	Percentage
Age		
18-21	42	73.6%
22-24	15	26.3%
Gender		
Females	37	64.9%
Males	20	35.08%
Volunteerism		
College students who volunteer	25	43.85%
College students who don't volunteer	32	56.14%

Table 1 depicts the frequency and percentage of sociodemographic details, age and gender. The sample size of the study includes 42 adults. In the study 73.6 % of the participants were 18- 21 years old, while 26.3% of the participants were of 22-24 years old. 35.08% of the participants of the study were males and the rest 64.9% were females. The female population dominates the male population in the study. In this study, 43.85% of college students had volunteered in NGOs, while 56.14% of college students had not volunteered in NGOs.

Table 2 shows the descriptive statistics for the study variables

Descriptive	Life satisfaction	Resilience	Gratitude
Maximum	31	53	42
Minimum	5	29	19
Shapiro-wilk	.031	.208	.193
Kolmogorov-Smirnov	.200	.072	.199
Mean	21.67	41.37	30.84
Standard deviation	5.617	5.304	5.706

Table 2 depicts the descriptive statistics for the study variables, Resilience, Gratitude and Life Satisfaction among college students. Maximum score obtained in Resilience is 53, Gratitude is 42 and life satisfaction is 31. Minimum score obtained in Resilience is 5, Gratitude is 29 and life satisfaction is 19. Mean value for Resilience was 41.37 with standard deviation of 5.304. For Life satisfaction, the mean value was 21.67 and the standard deviation was 5.617. The mean value of gratitude was 30.84 and the value of standard deviation was 5.706. Shapiro-wilk and Kolmogorov-Smirnov test of Normality indicates the normal distribution of the sample.

Table 3 shows correlation between Resilience, Gratitude and Life satisfaction

Study Variables	Gratitude	Life satisfaction
Resilience	.398**	.128
Life satisfaction	.108	1

*Note: **correlation is significant at 0.01 level*

Table 3 indicates that there is a significant positive correlation between Gratitude and Resilience among college students, (r= .398, p=.01).

Table 4 indicates gender difference in resilience, gratitude and life satisfaction among college students

Study Variables	Gender	Mean	Standard deviation	t value	*P*
Resilience	Male	44.20	3.764	-3.198	0.002**
	Female	39.84	5.424		
Gratitude	Male	30.45	4.454	.378	.707
	Female	31.05	6.329		
Life Satisfaction	Male	20.45	4.925	1.207	.232
	Female	22.32	5.916		

*Note: **correlation is significant at 0.01 level*

Table 4 depicts the t value for study variables as for Resilience, gratitude and life satisfaction. t test values of the study variables indicates that there is significant difference between male and female for Resilience among college students (t=3.198, p=.002)

Table 5 shows difference among college students who volunteer at NGOs and students who don't volunteer for Resilience, Gratitude and Life satisfaction

Variables	Volunteering	Mean	Standard deviation	t value	*P*
Resilience	Students who volunteer	42.16	5.543	-.996	.324
	Students who don't volunteer	40.75	5.112		
Gratitude	Students who volunteer	33.24	5.027	-2.997	.004**
	Students who don't volunteer	28.97	5.568		
Life Satisfaction	Students who volunteer	21.56	6.232	,126	.900
	Students who don't volunteer	21.75	5.187		

*Note: **correlation is significant at 0.01 level*

Table 5 depicts the t value for study variables as for Resilience, gratitude and life satisfaction. t test values of the study variables indicates that there is significant difference

between college students who volunteer and college students who don't volunteer for gratitude (t=2.997, p=.004).

Table 6a shows regression of Gratitude and Resilience for Life Satisfaction

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.142[a]	.020	-.016	5.662

Predictors: Resilience, Gratitude
Dependent variable: Life Satisfaction

Based on Model summary table, it is suggestive that a total of 14.2% of variance of the dependent variable, Life Satisfaciton was explained by the independent variable, Resilience and Gratitude.

Table 6b shows regression of Gratitude and Resilience for Life satisfaction

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	15.193	6.244		2.433	.018
	Resilience	.107	.155	.101	.685	.496
	Gratitude	.067	.145	.068	.464	.645

Predictors: Resilience, Gratitude
Dependent Variable: Life Satisfaction

Based on the coefficient table, the independent variable, Life satisfaction could significantly predict the gratitude and resilience of college students.

Table 7a show regression of Life satisfaction and Gratitude for Resilience

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.407[a]	.166	.135	4.934

Predictors: Life Satisfaction and gratitude
Dependent Variable: Resilience

Based on Model summary table, it is suggestive that a total of 40.2% of variance of the dependent variable, Resilience was explained by the independent variable, Life satisfaction and gratitude.

Table 7b show regression of Life satisfaction and Gratitude for Resilience

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	28.476	4.223		6.742	.000
	Gratitude	.361	.116	.389	3.108	.003
	Life Satisfaction	.081	.118	.086	.685	.496

Predictors: Life Satisfaction and gratitude
Dependent Variable: Resilience

Based on the coefficient table, the independent variables, Life Satisfaction and gratitude could significantly predict the resilience of college students.

Table 8a shows regression of life satisfaction and Resilience for Gratitude

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.402ᵃ	.162	.131	5.321

Predictors: Life satisfaction and Resilience
Dependent variable: Gratitude

Based on Model summary table, it is suggestive that a total of 40.2% of variance of the dependent variable, Gratitude was explained by the independent variables, Resilience and Life satisfaction.

Table 8b shows regression of life satisfaction and Resilience for Gratitude

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	12.183	5.955		2.046	.046
	Life Satisfaction	.059	.128	.058	.464	.645
	Resilience	.420	.135	.390	3.108	.003

Predictors: Life satisfaction and Resilience
Dependent variable: Gratitude

Based on the coefficient table, the independent variables, Life satisfaction and Resilience could significantly predict Gratitude of college students.

DISCUSSION

The aim of the current research was to examine the relationship between Resilience, gratitude and life satisfaction among college students and the difference between those who volunteer at NGOs and college students who don't volunteer.

The results of the study indicated that among college students, there was significant positive correlation between resilience and gratitude. It means higher the level of gratitude, higher the level of resilience among college students. The findings are in line with the study on Vitality among university students: Exploring the role of gratitude and resilience conducted by Garg and Sarkar (2020). It is also consistent with the study conducted by Lee N (2022) on the relationship of personality, gratitude, empathy and resilience in nursing students.

The research findings depicted that there was no significant relationship between life satisfaction and gratitude as well as life satisfaction and resilience among college students. This finding is inconsistent with the study conducted by Kardas et al., (2018) on Gratitude, Hope, Optimism and Life Satisfaction as Predictors of Psychological Well-Being in university students, which indicated a positive significant relationship between life satisfaction and gratitude. The study on Associations between academic burnout, resilience and life satisfaction among medical students by Wang et al., (2022), which indicated a

positive significant relationship between life satisfaction and resilience among medical students, which is not consistent with the current study findings.

The current study also depicted the there was significant difference in gratitude among college students who volunteer in NGOs and College students who don't volunteer. The findings indicated that gratitude was higher among college students who volunteer than college students who don't volunteer. The findings is in consistent with the study by Llenares et al., (2020), on Volunteerism influences on student resilience and gratitude, which indicated that higher gratitude was found among volunteers than non-volunteers.

The results also indicated that there was also significant gender difference in resilience among college students. This indicates that the level of resilience was higher among females than males among college students. The result of the current study is inconsistent with the findings of the study conducted by Peyer et al., (2022) on Gender differences in stress, resilience, and physical activity among university students, which indicated that females had lower resilience when compared to male students.

CONCLUSION

Based on the present study finding,

- There is a significant positive correlation between Resilience and Gratitude among college students
- There is a significant gender difference in resilience among college students
- There is a significant difference in gratitude among college students who volunteer at NGOs and students who don't volunteer.

Limitations

The geographical location of the study is limited in and around Tamil Nadu only. Only a small sample could be taken and hence the generalization of the results might not be accurate. The study did not focus on other associative variables like socio-economic status, birth order etc. As the data for the study was collected through online mode, there might be a chance of random response bias, Acquiescence and central tendency bias.

Implications

Based on present study findings, it suggests hat educational institutions, such as colleges and universities, can benefit from promoting and supporting volunteer opportunities for students. Incorporating service-learning programs or community service initiatives into the curriculum may be a valuable approach to fostering the positive outcomes among students.

REFERENCES

Algoe, S. B., Haidt, J., & Gable, S. L. (2008). Beyond reciprocity: Gratitude and relationships in everyday life. *Emotion*, *8*(3), 425–429. https://doi.org/10.1037/1528-3542.8.3.425

Connor, K. M., & Davidson, J. R. (2003). Development of a new resilience scale: The Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale (CD-RISC). Depression and Anxiety, 18(2), 76-82.

Diener, E., Emmons, R. A., Larsen, R. W., & Griffin, S. (1985). The satisfaction with life scale. Journal of Personality Assessment, 49(1), 71–75. https://doi.org/10.1207/s15327752jpa4901_13

Garg, N., & Sarkar, A. (2020). Vitality among university students: exploring the role of gratitude and resilience. *Journal of Organizational Effectiveness*, *7*(3), 321–337. https://doi.org/10.1108/joepp-03-2020-0041

Kausar, R. (2018). Relationship between gratitude and happiness in college students. *Indian Journal of Positive Psychology*. https://doi.org/10.15614/ijpp.v9i01.11752

Kardaş, F., Çam, Z., Eşkisu, M., & Gelibolu, S. (2019). Gratitude, hope, optimism and life satisfaction as predictors of psychological Well-Being. *Eurasian Journal of Educational Research*, *19*(82), 1–20. https://doi.org/10.14689/ejer.2019.82.5

Lee, M. (2022). The relationship of personality, gratitude, empathy and resilience in nursing students. *Journal of the Korean Data & Information Science Society*, *33*(4), 645–655. https://doi.org/10.7465/jkdi.2022.33.4.645

Llenares, I. I., Sario, J. A., Bialba, D., & Cruz, J. M. D. (2020). Volunteerism influences on student resilience and gratitude. Journal of Psychology in Africa, 30(3), 211–216

Masten, A. S. (2001). Ordinary magic: Resilience processes in development. American Psychologist, 56(3), 227-238.

McCullough, M. E., Emmons, R. A., & Tsang, J. (2002). The grateful disposition: A conceptual and empirical topography. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 82, 112-127.

Pavot, W., & Diener, E. (2008). The Satisfaction with Life Scale and the emerging construct of life satisfaction. Journal of Positive Psychology, 3(2), 137–152.

Peyer, K. L., Hathaway, E. D., & Doyle, K. (2022). Gender differences in stress, resilience, and physical activity during the COVID-19 pandemic. Journal of American College Health, 1–8. https://doi.org/10.1080/07448481.2022.2052075

Smith, B. W., Dalen, J., Wiggins, K., Tooley, E., Christopher, P., & Bernard, J. (2008). The brief resilience scale: assessing the ability to bounce back. International journal of behavioral medicine, 15(3), 194-200.

Tusaie, K., & Dyer, J. (2004). Resilience: A historical review of the construct. Holistic Nursing Practice, 18(1), 3-10

Wang, Q., Sun, W. & Wu, H. Associations between academic burnout, resilience and life satisfaction among medical students: a three-wave longitudinal study. BMC Med Educ 22, 248 (2022). https://doi.org/10.1186/s12909-022-03326-6