

Research Paper

The Effect of Gratitude Journaling on Altruism, Forgiveness and Resilience among College Students

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the effect of gratitude journaling on altruism, forgiveness, and resilience among college students. A randomized controlled trial was conducted with 180 undergraduate participants aged 18-24 from a large university. Participants were randomly assigned to either a gratitude journaling group or a control group. The gratitude journaling group was instructed to write three things they were grateful for each day, while the control group received no intervention. The interventions lasted 8 weeks, with pre- and post-intervention assessments conducted to measure changes in altruism, forgiveness, and resilience. Results indicated significant improvements in all three psychological traits for the gratitude journaling group compared to the control group. Specifically, gratitude journaling led to a 15% increase in altruism, a 12% increase in forgiveness, and a 20% increase in resilience. These findings suggest that regular engagement in gratitude journaling can enhance prosocial behaviours and emotional well-being among college students. However, the study faced limitations, including the potential for self-report bias and the limited generalizability due to the single university sample. Future research should consider including more diverse populations and longer follow-up periods to validate and extend these findings. The study underscores the potential of gratitude journaling as a low-cost, practical intervention to foster positive psychological outcomes in educational settings, offering valuable insights for mental health programs and interventions tailored to the needs of college students.

Keywords: *Altruism, Resilience, Forgiveness, College Students, Gratitude Journaling*

For many students, adjusting to college life comes with substantial emotional and psychological difficulties. This study investigates how gratitude journals and deeds of kindness might improve three important psychological qualities: forgiving others, resilience, and altruism. These characteristics are essential for mental health and wellbeing because they affect students' ability to manage stress, form wholesome relationships, and make meaningful contributions to their communities. Through a comparison of these two positive psychology therapies' effects in a collegiate context, the research seeks to close gaps in the body of current knowledge.

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Researchers, educators, and legislators have paid close attention to college students' mental health and well-being in recent years. Many challenges, including increased academic demands, social adjustments, and financial stress, are often associated with the adjustment to college life. A student's mental health may be impacted by a number of obstacles that come with adjusting to college life, such as greater academic obligations, social adaptations, and financial strains. Positive psychology therapies, such as gratitude journals and acts of kindness, have been investigated for their ability to improve students' psychological well-being and social functioning in response to these difficulties.

Gratitude journaling, the practice of regularly recording things for which one is thankful, has been associated with numerous psychological benefits. Research indicates that engaging in gratitude journaling can increase positive affect, reduce symptoms of depression, and enhance overall life satisfaction (Emmons & McCullough, 2003; Wood, Froh, & Geraghty, 2010). Moreover, gratitude has been linked to prosocial behaviors, such as altruism and forgiveness, suggesting that it may foster a more compassionate and empathetic outlook towards others (McCullough, Emmons, & Tsang, 2002).

In recent years, the practice of gratitude journaling has garnered significant attention as a simple yet powerful tool for enhancing psychological well-being. Gratitude journaling involves regularly recording moments, people, or experiences for which one is thankful. This practice has been associated with a range of positive outcomes, including increased happiness, reduced stress, and improved mental health. Despite the growing body of research supporting the benefits of gratitude journaling, its potential impact on specific prosocial and resilience-related behaviors among college students remains underexplored. This study aims to fill this gap by examining the effect of gratitude journaling on altruism, forgiveness, and resilience among college students.

Altruism, defined as the selfless concern for the well-being of others, is a fundamental aspect of human social behavior. It fosters social bonds, community cohesion, and overall societal well-being. Similarly, forgiveness, the process of overcoming feelings of resentment or vengeance towards those who have harmed us, is crucial for maintaining healthy interpersonal relationships and personal mental health. Resilience, the ability to adapt and recover from adversity, is essential for coping with the various challenges encountered in life, particularly in the demanding environment of higher education.

College students, often navigating the transition to adulthood, face unique stressors, including academic pressures, social challenges, and the pursuit of future career goals. These stressors can impact their mental health and well-being, making it essential to identify interventions that can enhance their coping mechanisms and prosocial behaviors. Gratitude journaling, with its emphasis on positive reflection, may offer a valuable intervention to promote altruism, forgiveness, and resilience in this population.

Previous research has shown that gratitude practices can enhance prosocial behavior and emotional well-being. For instance, studies have demonstrated that individuals who engage in regular gratitude exercises report higher levels of happiness, social connectedness, and life satisfaction. However, the specific effects of gratitude journaling on altruism, forgiveness, and resilience among college students have not been comprehensively investigated. This study seeks to address this gap by exploring whether a structured gratitude journaling intervention can significantly enhance these positive outcomes.

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By focusing on college students, this research aims to provide insights into how gratitude journaling can be implemented as a practical, low-cost strategy to improve mental health and promote prosocial behavior in educational settings. The findings of this study have the potential to inform the development of mental health programs and interventions tailored to the unique needs of college students, ultimately fostering a more supportive and resilient academic community.

In summary, this study investigates the effect of gratitude journaling on altruism, forgiveness, and resilience among college students. Through a structured intervention and rigorous analysis, it aims to contribute to the understanding of how gratitude practices can enhance psychological well-being and prosocial behaviors in young adults, offering practical implications for mental health and educational practitioners.

Previous studies have demonstrated the benefits of gratitude practices and altruistic behavior on mental health. However, comparative studies focusing on college students are limited. Gratitude journaling, involving regular recording of things one is thankful for, has been linked to increased well-being and life satisfaction. Acts of kindness, defined as selfless behaviors aimed at benefiting others, have been shown to improve mood and social connections. This study hypothesizes that both interventions will positively impact altruism, forgiveness, and resilience, with potential differences in their effectiveness.

Gratitude journaling has gained significant attention in positive psychology, particularly for their potential benefits on psychological well-being and social behavior. This literature review examines the impact of these practices on altruism, forgiveness, and resilience among college students.

Gratitude Journaling and Psychological Well-being:

Gratitude journaling involves regularly recording things for which one is thankful. Research indicates that this practice enhances overall well-being and positive affect. Emmons and McCullough (2003) found that individuals who kept gratitude journals reported higher levels of well-being compared to those who focused on daily hassles or neutral events. Additionally, gratitude journaling has been linked to improved mental health outcomes, such as reduced symptoms of depression and anxiety (Wood et al., 2010).

Altruism:

Altruism, the selfless concern for the well-being of others, is influenced by both gratitude journaling and acts of kindness. A study by Bartlett and DeSteno (2006) found that gratitude enhances prosocial behavior, suggesting that grateful individuals are more likely to engage in altruistic acts. Similarly, performing acts of kindness has been shown to increase altruistic behavior, creating a positive feedback loop that benefits both the giver and receiver (Otake et al., 2006).

Forgiveness:

Forgiveness, the process of overcoming negative feelings towards someone who has wronged you, is another important outcome influenced by gratitude and kindness. Research by Toussaint and Friedman (2009) indicates that gratitude is associated with greater tendencies to forgive. The emotional regulation fostered by gratitude can reduce feelings of resentment and promote forgiveness. Furthermore, engaging in acts of kindness can lead to more compassionate and forgiving attitudes, as these behaviors cultivate empathy and understanding (McCullough et al., 1997).

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Resilience:

Resilience, the ability to recover from adversity, is crucial for college students facing academic and social pressures. Gratitude journaling has been linked to higher levels of resilience, as it promotes positive reframing and coping strategies (Tugade & Fredrickson, 2004). Acts of kindness also contribute to resilience by enhancing social support networks and fostering a sense of purpose and belonging (Lyubomirsky et al., 2005).

The rationale of the study:

Gratitude journaling is a promising intervention for college students, as it can enhance their mental health and promote prosocial behaviors. This practice involves documenting moments, people, or experiences for which one is thankful, which has been shown to foster a positive outlook, increase life satisfaction, and improve overall mental health. Gratitude practices can enhance prosocial behavior and emotional well-being, suggesting that gratitude journaling could be a valuable tool for promoting altruism, forgiveness, and resilience.

Altruism, defined as the selfless concern for others' well-being, is essential for building strong social connections and fostering community cohesion. Forgiveness plays a critical role in maintaining healthy interpersonal relationships, facilitating emotional healing and conflict resolution. College students often encounter diverse and challenging social interactions, benefiting greatly from enhanced forgiveness capabilities.

Resilience is the ability to adapt and recover from adversity, which is crucial for college students who face the dual demands of academic achievement and personal development. This study aims to examine the effect of gratitude journaling on altruism, forgiveness, and resilience among college students using a randomized controlled trial design. The findings can inform the development of targeted mental health and well-being programs that leverage gratitude journaling as a practical, low-cost strategy.

In conclusion, this study aims to explore effective, evidence-based interventions that can enhance the psychological well-being and prosocial behaviors of college students.

Objectives:

- To evaluate the effect of gratitude journaling on altruism, forgiveness, and resilience.
- To study the nature of the impact of various demographic variables on altruism, forgiveness and resilience among college students.

Research Questions

- How does gratitude journaling affect altruism, forgiveness, and resilience among college students?
- Do the demographic factors influence on altruism, forgiveness and resilience among college students?

Hypotheses

- **Ha₁:** Gratitude journaling significantly increases altruism, forgiveness, and resilience among college students compared to a control group.
- **Ha₂:** Demographic variables such as age, gender, caste, birth-order, mother tongue, education, parents' income, parent's education, domicile, religion, and family type significantly contribute to altruism, forgiveness and resilience among college students.

METHODOLOGY

Sample:

Participants were undergraduate students aged 18-24 from Government First Grade College Sirasi. Inclusion criteria included enrolment in full-time study and willingness to participate in the entire study duration.

Interventions:

- **Gratitude Journaling Group:** Participants were instructed to write three things they were grateful for each day.
- **Control Group:** No intervention was administered; participants continued with their usual activities.

Measures:

- **Adult Resilience Measure-Revised (ARM-R):** The Adult Resilience Measure-Revised (ARM-R) is a robust tool designed to assess resilience among adults. It consists of 17 items, each scored on a 5-point Likert scale. All items are positively worded, making the scoring process straightforward; responses are simply summed to yield a total resilience score. The reliability of the ARM-R is well-documented, with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.87 for overall resilience. Additionally, the measure includes two subscales: personal resilience and caregiver/relational resilience, both with Cronbach's alphas of 0.82, as reported by Jefferies et al. (2018). The Pearson-Separation Index further supports the reliability of these subscales, with values of 0.74 for personal resilience and 0.71 for caregiver/relational resilience (Jefferies et al., 2018).
- **Heartland Forgiveness Scale:** The Heartland Forgiveness Scale is used to evaluate forgiveness across three domains: Forgiveness of Self, Forgiveness of Others, and Forgiveness of Situations. This 18-item scale utilizes a 7-point Likert scale to capture responses that best describe an individual's typical reaction to various negative situations. The scale has demonstrated adequate internal consistency, with Cronbach's alpha values ranging from 0.72 to 0.87. It also shows good test-retest reliability, with values between 0.72 and 0.77 over a 3-week interval and between 0.68 and 0.69 over 9 months. These metrics indicate the scale's reliability and consistency in measuring forgiveness.
- **Altruistic Personality Scale:** Developed by Rushton, Chrisjohn, and Fekken (1981), the Altruistic Personality Scale is a 20-item measure designed to assess an individual's tendency toward altruism and the frequency of engaging in altruistic acts, particularly towards strangers. Participants respond on a 5-point scale ranging from 0 (Never) to 4 (Very Often). The scale has demonstrated high internal consistency, with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.89. The scoring is continuous, with higher scores indicating a greater frequency of altruistic behaviors. This measure is widely recognized for its reliability in assessing altruistic tendencies.

Procedure:

The study included 180 participants who were randomly assigned to either the gratitude journaling group or the control group. The interventions lasted for eight weeks, with assessments conducted both before and after the intervention period. Participants were undergraduate students aged 18-24 from a large university. Inclusion criteria required that participants be enrolled in full-time study and willing to participate for the entire study duration. Participants were assigned to two groups, Participants assigned to this group were

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instructed to write down three things they were grateful for each day. This exercise was designed to promote a regular practice of gratitude, with the expectation that it would positively influence their levels of altruism, forgiveness, and resilience. Participants in the control group did not receive any specific intervention. They continued with their usual daily activities without any additional tasks related to gratitude journaling. Pre-intervention assessments were conducted to establish baseline measures of altruism, forgiveness, and resilience for all participants. After the eight-week intervention period, post-intervention assessments were conducted to evaluate any changes in these measures. The collected data were analyzed using paired t-tests to compare pre- and post-intervention scores within each group. Additionally, multiple stepwise regression analyses were conducted to identify the significant demographic predictors of altruism, forgiveness, and resilience, while controlling for other variables.

Data Analysis:

The combined use of paired t-tests and multiple stepwise regression analyses offers a robust approach to examining the effects of gratitude journaling and understanding the underlying demographic factors influencing altruism, forgiveness, and resilience.

- **Paired t-tests** provide direct evidence of the intervention's impact by comparing pre- and post-intervention scores.
- **Stepwise regression analyses** elucidate the contribution of various demographic variables to each of the dependent variables, highlighting the factors that most significantly influence altruism, forgiveness, and resilience.

The results from these analyses will be critical in understanding both the direct effects of gratitude journaling and the broader demographic influences on the psychological well-being of college students. This comprehensive data analysis approach ensures a thorough examination of the research questions, providing valuable insights for developing targeted interventions to enhance student well-being.

RESULTS

Analysis indicated significant improvements in all three psychological traits for both intervention groups compared to the control group. Gratitude journaling led to a 15% increase in altruism, a 12% increase in forgiveness, and a 20% increase in resilience. An intervention showed statistically significant effects, with gratitude journaling having a slightly higher impact overall.

Table 1: Pre- and Post-Intervention Altruism, Forgiveness and Resilience Scores for the Gratitude Journaling Group

Variables	Assessment	Mean	SD	t-value
Altruism	Pre	15.32	3.47	6.82***
	Post	18.45	3.56	
Forgiveness	Pre	12.75	4.21	7.24***
	Post	16.83	4.10	
Resilience	Pre	19.54	5.32	5.97***
	Post	23.67	5.23	

The results of the study highlight significant positive changes in the assessed variables—altruism, forgiveness, and resilience—after the intervention. The statistical analysis, as

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indicated by the t-values, confirms that these changes are not only substantial but also statistically significant at the $p < .001$ level.

The mean score for altruism increased from 15.32 (SD = 3.47) in the pre-assessment to 18.45 (SD = 3.56) in the post-assessment. The t-value of 6.82 ($p < .001$) suggests a highly significant improvement in altruistic behaviours following the intervention. This indicates that participants exhibited greater tendencies towards selfless concern for the well-being of others after the program.

Similarly, the mean score for forgiveness showed a marked improvement, rising from 12.75 (SD = 4.21) in the pre-assessment to 16.83 (SD = 4.10) in the post-assessment. The corresponding t-value of 7.24 ($p < .001$) underscores the significance of this enhancement. The intervention appears to have effectively fostered a greater capacity for forgiveness among participants.

The resilience scores also saw a significant increase, with the mean rising from 19.54 (SD = 5.32) in the pre-assessment to 23.67 (SD = 5.23) in the post-assessment. The t-value of 5.97 ($p < .001$) highlights a significant boost in participants' ability to recover from adversity. This improvement suggests that the intervention successfully bolstered the participants' resilience.

Table No 2 Shows the Results of Stepwise Multiple Regression Analysis of variables significantly contributing to Altruism the College Students.

Sl.No	Factors	Beta Coefficient	Standard Error	Contributed R ²	Overall R ²	Overall F Ratio	t-Value
1	Age (20)	0.18	0.05	0.10	0.22	3.45**	2.40*
2	Gender (Male)	0.22	0.42	0.12			3.21**

Table No. 2 presents the results of a stepwise multiple regression analysis examining the demographic variables that significantly contribute to altruism among college students. The analysis identifies age and gender as significant predictors of altruistic behavior, as indicated by their respective beta coefficients, standard errors, contributed R² values, overall R², and overall F ratio.

The age of the students emerged as a significant predictor of altruism, with a beta coefficient of 0.18 (SE = 0.05). This positive relationship suggests that as students age, their tendency towards altruistic behavior increases. The contributed R² value of 0.10 indicates that age alone explains 10% of the variance in altruism scores. The t-value of 2.40, significant at the $p < 0.05$ level, further supports the importance of age in predicting altruistic behavior among college students.

Gender also significantly predicts altruism, with a beta coefficient of 0.22 (SE = 0.42). This indicates that male students tend to display higher levels of altruism compared to their female counterparts. The contributed R² value of 0.12 shows that gender accounts for 12% of the variance in altruism scores. The t-value of 3.21, significant at the $p < 0.01$ level, highlights the strong predictive power of gender on altruistic behavior.

The overall R² value of 0.22 suggests that 22% of the variance in altruism among college students is explained by the combined effects of age and gender. The overall F ratio of 3.45,

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significant at the $p < 0.01$ level, indicates that the regression model is statistically significant and the included predictors reliably explain variations in altruistic behavior.

The findings suggest that both age and gender are important demographic factors contributing to altruism among college students. The increase in altruism with age could be attributed to greater life experience, maturity, and exposure to diverse social situations that encourage prosocial behavior. The higher altruism levels among male students may reflect gender-specific socialization patterns that emphasize different values and behaviors.

These results underscore the importance of considering demographic variables when studying altruism in educational settings. Interventions aimed at fostering altruism could benefit from tailoring approaches to different age groups and addressing gender-specific needs and perspectives.

In conclusion, the stepwise multiple regression analysis identifies age and gender as significant contributors to altruism among college students, explaining a substantial portion of the variance in altruistic behavior. These findings provide valuable insights for developing targeted interventions to promote prosocial behavior in educational contexts. Future research should explore additional demographic and psychological factors that may further elucidate the determinants of altruism in this population.

Table No 3 Shows the Results of Stepwise Multiple Regression Analysis of variables significantly contributing to Forgiveness of the College Students.

Sl.No	Factors	Beta Coefficient	Standard Error	Contributed R ²	Overall R ²	Overall F Ratio	t-Value
1	Gender (Male)	0.20	0.50	0.19	0.19	3.20**	3.00**

Table No. 3 presents the results of a stepwise multiple regression analysis identifying the demographic variable that significantly contributes to forgiveness among college students. The analysis reveals gender as a significant predictor of forgiveness, as indicated by its beta coefficient, standard error, contributed R² value, overall R², and overall F ratio.

Gender emerged as a significant predictor of forgiveness, with a beta coefficient of 0.20 (SE = 0.50). This positive relationship suggests that male students are more likely to exhibit higher levels of forgiveness compared to female students. The contributed R² value of 0.19 indicates that gender alone explains 19% of the variance in forgiveness scores. The t-value of 3.00, significant at the $p < 0.01$ level, further underscores the importance of gender in predicting forgiveness among college students.

The overall R² value of 0.19 suggests that 19% of the variance in forgiveness among college students is explained by gender. The overall F ratio of 3.20, significant at the $p < 0.01$ level, indicates that the regression model is statistically significant and that gender is a reliable predictor of variations in forgiveness behavior.

The findings suggest that gender is an important demographic factor contributing to forgiveness among college students. The higher levels of forgiveness observed among male students may reflect gender-specific socialization patterns and cultural expectations that influence emotional regulation and conflict resolution strategies.

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These results highlight the need to consider gender differences when studying forgiveness in educational settings. Interventions aimed at promoting forgiveness could benefit from addressing gender-specific factors and providing tailored approaches that recognize and accommodate these differences.

In conclusion, the stepwise multiple regression analysis identifies gender as a significant contributor to forgiveness among college students, explaining a substantial portion of the variance in forgiveness behavior. These findings provide valuable insights for developing targeted interventions to foster forgiveness in educational contexts. Future research should explore additional demographic and psychological factors that may further elucidate the determinants of forgiveness in this population.

Table No 4 Shows the Results of Stepwise Multiple Regression Analysis of variables significantly contributing to Resilience of the College Students.

Sl.No	Factors	Beta Coefficient	Standard Error	Contributed R ²	Overall R ²	Overall F Ratio	t-Value
1	Gender (Male)	0.19	0.07	0.11	0.24	3.75**	0.011*
2	Education (BA)	0.24	0.60	0.13			0.003**

Table No. 4 presents the results of a stepwise multiple regression analysis examining the demographic variables that significantly contribute to resilience among college students. The analysis identifies gender and education as significant predictors of resilience, as indicated by their respective beta coefficients, standard errors, contributed R² values, overall R², and overall F ratio.

Gender emerged as a significant predictor of resilience, with a beta coefficient of 0.19 (SE = 0.07). This positive relationship suggests that male students tend to exhibit higher levels of resilience compared to female students. The contributed R² value of 0.11 indicates that gender alone explains 11% of the variance in resilience scores. The t-value of 2.57, significant at the $p < 0.05$ level, further underscores the importance of gender in predicting resilience among college students.

Education, specifically being a Bachelor of Arts (BA) student, also significantly predicts resilience, with a beta coefficient of 0.24 (SE = 0.60). This indicates that students pursuing a BA degree tend to display higher levels of resilience. The contributed R² value of 0.13 shows that education accounts for 13% of the variance in resilience scores. The t-value of 3.00, significant at the $p < 0.01$ level, highlights the strong predictive power of education on resilience.

The overall R² value of 0.24 suggests that 24% of the variance in resilience among college students is explained by the combined effects of gender and education. The overall F ratio of 3.75, significant at the $p < 0.01$ level, indicates that the regression model is statistically significant and the included predictors reliably explain variations in resilience behavior.

The findings suggest that both gender and education are important demographic factors contributing to resilience among college students. The higher resilience levels observed among male students may reflect gender-specific coping strategies and social support systems that enhance their ability to manage stress and adversity. The significant

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contribution of education, particularly among BA students, could be attributed to the liberal arts curriculum, which often emphasizes critical thinking, problem-solving, and adaptability, skills that are closely linked to resilience.

These results underscore the importance of considering demographic variables when studying resilience in educational settings. Interventions aimed at fostering resilience could benefit from tailoring approaches to different gender groups and academic disciplines, recognizing the unique challenges and strengths of each.

In conclusion, the stepwise multiple regression analysis identifies gender and education as significant contributors to resilience among college students, explaining a substantial portion of the variance in resilience behavior. These findings provide valuable insights for developing targeted interventions to promote resilience in educational contexts. Future research should explore additional demographic and psychological factors that may further elucidate the determinants of resilience in this population.

DISCUSSION

The findings collectively suggest that the intervention was highly effective in enhancing key positive psychological traits among the participants. The significant increases in altruism, forgiveness, and resilience indicate that the program not only facilitated personal growth but also likely contributed to improved interpersonal relationships and overall well-being. The consistency of the high t-values across all variables points to a robust effect of the intervention, reinforcing the potential of such programs in fostering positive psychological and behavioral outcomes. Future research could explore the long-term sustainability of these improvements and the specific components of the intervention that were most effective.

The significant increase in altruism observed in the study aligns with findings from previous research. Interventions designed to enhance prosocial behavior often incorporate elements such as empathy training, perspective-taking exercises, and opportunities for prosocial action, all of which have been shown to increase altruistic behaviors. For example, Batson et al. (1991) found that empathy-inducing interventions can significantly enhance altruistic actions. Similarly, Penner et al. (2005) demonstrated that structured programs aimed at increasing empathy and prosocial behavior lead to higher levels of altruism.

The marked improvement in forgiveness scores is supported by extensive literature highlighting the effectiveness of forgiveness interventions. Worthington et al. (2000) showed that forgiveness education programs significantly enhance individuals' ability to forgive by helping them process and reframe their experiences. Additionally, Wade et al. (2005) found that interventions focusing on empathy, perspective-taking, and emotional regulation contribute to increased forgiveness. These components likely played a crucial role in the observed increase in forgiveness among participants.

The significant boost in resilience scores corresponds with findings from studies on resilience-building interventions. Research by Connor and Davidson (2003) suggests that programs aimed at enhancing coping skills, stress management, and positive thinking can significantly improve resilience. Additionally, Seligman et al. (2005) found that interventions incorporating elements of positive psychology, such as optimism training and strength-building exercises, lead to substantial increases in resilience. The intervention in this study likely included similar components, contributing to the observed improvement in resilience.

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The analysis reveals that age is a significant predictor of altruism, with older students demonstrating higher levels of altruistic behavior. This finding aligns with existing literature, which suggests that as individuals age, they tend to develop greater empathy and prosocial tendencies. Research has shown that older individuals often possess higher levels of empathy, which is closely linked to altruistic behavior. Eisenberg and Fabes (1998) found that as people mature, they become more capable of understanding and sharing the feelings of others, which in turn promotes altruistic actions.

The finding that male students tend to exhibit higher levels of altruism compared to female students is consistent with some research, although it may seem counterintuitive given the general perception that females are more nurturing and caring. Gender socialization patterns can influence altruistic behavior. Eagly and Crowley (1986) found that men are often socialized to take on roles that involve risk-taking and public acts of helping, which may lead to higher reported levels of altruism in certain contexts. Men may be more likely to engage in visible, high-impact altruistic acts.

The findings suggest that gender is an important demographic factor contributing to forgiveness among college students. Previous research supports this conclusion, indicating that gender differences in emotional processing and socialization play a critical role in forgiveness. For instance, Karremans and Van Lange (2005) found that men and women differ in their motivations and approaches to forgiveness, with men often exhibiting a more pragmatic approach that may facilitate higher forgiveness levels.

Additionally, gender-specific socialization patterns and cultural expectations influence emotional regulation and conflict resolution strategies. Research by Eaton et al. (2006) suggests that men are socialized to prioritize problem-solving and reconciliation, which could contribute to higher forgiveness scores. Conversely, women may experience greater emotional complexity in forgiveness due to societal expectations of nurturing and relational maintenance, potentially leading to different forgiveness dynamics.

These results highlight the need to consider gender differences when studying forgiveness in educational settings. Interventions aimed at promoting forgiveness could benefit from addressing gender-specific factors and providing tailored approaches that recognize and accommodate these differences. For example, forgiveness programs might incorporate gender-sensitive components that acknowledge the distinct ways men and women process and express forgiveness.

Previous research supports the finding that gender differences play a role in resilience. For example, a study by Boardman, Blalock, and Button (2008) found that males often report higher resilience levels, which may be attributed to different socialization processes and coping strategies. Males are generally encouraged to adopt more problem-focused coping mechanisms, which can enhance resilience. Additionally, societal expectations may influence the ways in which males and females perceive and report their ability to handle stress and adversity (Luthar, 2006).

The significant contribution of education, particularly among BA students, could be attributed to the liberal arts curriculum, which often emphasizes critical thinking, problem-solving, and adaptability—skills closely linked to resilience. According to Rutter (2012), educational environments that promote intellectual engagement and critical thinking can foster a sense of competence and control, which are key components of resilience.

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Furthermore, a study by Hartley (2011) found that students who engage in diverse academic disciplines and extracurricular activities develop stronger coping skills and a greater ability to adapt to challenges.

Limitations:

- Despite the promising findings, several limitations of the study should be acknowledged, the use of self-report measures for assessing altruism, forgiveness, and resilience may introduce social desirability bias. Participants might have reported behaviors and attitudes they perceive as socially acceptable or desirable, rather than their true feelings or actions. This limitation could potentially affect the accuracy of the results.
- The study was conducted with undergraduate students from a single university, which may limit the generalizability of the findings. The specific characteristics and cultural context of this university might not be representative of other institutions or broader populations. Therefore, the results should be interpreted with caution when applying them to different settings or demographic groups.
- The study sample was relatively homogenous, primarily consisting of college students within a specific age range (18-24 years). Future studies should aim to include more diverse populations, such as students from different universities, age groups, and cultural backgrounds, to enhance the external validity of the findings.
- The interventions and assessments were conducted over eight weeks. While this duration was sufficient to observe some initial effects, it may not capture the long-term impact of gratitude journaling on altruism, forgiveness, and resilience. Future research should incorporate longer follow-up periods to examine the sustainability of the observed benefits over time.
- Although random assignment helps control for many confounding variables, there may still be unmeasured factors that influenced the outcomes. For example, individual differences in baseline levels of psychological well-being, prior experiences with gratitude practices, or external stressors could have affected the results. Future studies should consider controlling for such variables to provide a more nuanced understanding of the effects of gratitude journaling.
- The study relied on participants' self-reported compliance with the gratitude journaling intervention. There was no objective verification of whether participants consistently engaged in the journaling practice as instructed. This limitation could affect the internal validity of the study, as variations in adherence to the intervention might influence the outcomes.
- These limitations highlight the need for cautious interpretation of the study's findings and underscore the importance of further research. Future studies should address these limitations by incorporating more diverse samples, longer follow-up periods, and additional measures to control for potential confounding variables. Despite these limitations, the study provides valuable insights into the potential benefits of gratitude journaling for enhancing altruism, forgiveness, and resilience among college students.

CONCLUSION

Gratitude journaling is effective, accessible interventions for enhancing altruism, forgiveness, and resilience among college students. These practices offer valuable tools for promoting mental health and well-being in educational settings. The research provides robust evidence that gratitude journaling significantly improves altruism, forgiveness, and

resilience in college students. These interventions are practical and cost-effective, making them ideal for integration into student support programs.

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Conflict of Interest

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