

Research Paper

Meaning in Life, Gratitude, and Mental Health among Adults

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ABSTRACT

Background: Enhancing psychological well-being and life purpose positively impacts mental health. Since young adults are a population especially prone to mental health issues, the purpose of our study was to investigate the relationship between meaning in life, gratitude, and mental health among the adult population. **Method:** A total of 214 young adults (55 males and 159 females) who voluntarily agreed to take part in the research survey were included in the study. The Gratitude Questionnaire (GQ-6), the Depression Anxiety Stress Scale (DASS-21), and the Meaning in Life Questionnaire (MLQ) were all completed by participants. The sample for the study consisted of students from different colleges and institutions in the Bathinda (Punjab) area. The sample ranged in age from 18 to 40, respectively. **Findings:** The study's findings indicated a favorable correlation between meaning in life and gratitude. Additionally, the remaining results demonstrated a negative correlation between adult mental health issues and gratitude as well as a negative correlation between meaning in life and mental health issues. Research has also demonstrated the beneficial effects of gratitude and purpose in life, which have contributed to a decrease in the negative mental health issues that affect this demographic. **Conclusion:** The study's findings show that having a purpose in life and being grateful goes a long way towards lowering mental health problems including stress, anxiety, and depression.

Keywords: *Meaning in Life, Gratitude, Mental Health, Adults*

Determining the personal significance of one's life is a challenging endeavor, as each person possesses a distinct interpretation of their life's meaning. The concept of "meaning in life" is essential for establishing one's sense of self and primary purpose in the world. Meaning in life bestows individuals with a profound sense of direction and purpose (Steger, 2012). Life has no purpose without meaning, and several studies in the literature have indicated that, among many other things, meaninglessness may result in psychopathology, drug and alcohol misuse, and suicidality if left unchecked (Dunn & O'Brien, 2009; Frankl, 1985; Harlow et al., 1986; Lifton, 1996; Steger et al., 2009; Yalom, 2020). There is no one meaning for the term, despite the efforts of several philosophers, scholars, and theorists. Similarly, (Steger, 2012) defines meaning in life as "the web of connections, understandings, and interpretations that help us comprehend our experience and formulate plans directing our energies to the achievement of our desired future." Our perception of meaning provides us with the feeling that our lives are significant, meaningful,

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Received: May 13, 2026; Revision Received: July 19, 2026; Accepted: July 23, 2026

and more than the sum of our seconds, days, and years. Findings have also linked a lack of meaning to suicidality, neuroticism, anxiety, depression, post-traumatic stress disorder, psychopathology, anomia (the inability to recall item names), and decreased well-being (Crumbaugh & Maholick, 1981; Owens et al., 2009; M. E. P. Seligman, 1990; Steger et al., 2006; Steger & Kashdan, 2009; Steger et al., 2008). Thus, finding purpose in life is essential for improving one's welfare, and this may be achieved in part by fostering virtues like thankfulness. Finding purpose in life requires gratitude. By cultivating appreciation, we learn to see the good things in life and value the people and things that make us happy. As we realize the importance of what we have and how it affects our lives, this aids in the development of a sense of fulfillment and purpose in our lives (Bono & Sender, 2018; Çebi & Demir, 2022).

Research indicates a robust relation between gratitude and psychological wellbeing. An analysis of frequent thankfulness practises in the *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* revealed that these people had stronger immune systems, felt more alive, slept better, and expressed more kindness and compassion. Writing letters of thanks to others resulted in substantial improvements in pleasure and reductions in depressive symptoms, according to another University of California research. Based on these results, it appears that developing an attitude of appreciation might benefit one's physical and mental wellbeing (Emmons & McCullough, 2004). A thankfulness intervention was found to alleviate symptoms of anxiety and sadness in individuals with mental health issues in another study done by the University of Manchester (A. M. Wood et al., 2010).

Therefore, Gratitude is viewed as an emotion and a way of life in which individuals acknowledge and value the positive aspects of their existence, (Sirois & Wood, 2017; A. M. Wood et al., 2010). Although thankfulness has been welcomed by philosophers, theologians, and well-known authors, psychology has generally neglected it until lately (Emmons & McCullough, 2004). There isn't much study on thankfulness among adults as much of it has been done with young populations only (Alegría, 2022; Armenta et al., 2022; Bono et al., 2022; Preston et al., 2023; Srivastava & Ghosh, 2023). Therefore, if the optimal mental and psychological development among adults is to be fully comprehended, a thorough investigation of this positive emotion is essential, as it is seen to play a very significant role in one's life (Emmons & Shelton, 2002). Therefore, this study will help in instilling the positive emotions of gratitude and thankfulness in adults, which will help contribute to their positive mental health in later life. To encourage thankfulness, two techniques known as "gratitude interventions" have been applied often (Dickens, 2017). One activity is creating a gratitude list, often known as a gratitude notebook, in which participants frequently write down several things for which they are thankful (A. M. Wood et al., 2010). Another tactic, called "behavioral expression of gratitude," urges individuals to show others how appreciative they are (A. M. Wood et al., 2010). The most often referenced behavioral expression study by Seligman involves having people write and recite thank-you notes to their donors (M. E. Seligman et al., 2005). With activities, these treatments seek to promote state thankfulness; nevertheless, trait gratitude is frequently examined as an outcome since state gratitude is a transient phenomenon that is challenging to quantify.

There are several advantages to gratitude therapies. It has proven to be beneficial in improving the mental health of adults and the emerging adult population. Mental health is a condition in which mental function is successfully carried out, leading to fruitful activities, satisfying relationships with other people, and the capacity to adjust to change and deal with adversity. Personal welfare, family ties, interpersonal relationships, and contribution to the

community and society all depend on good mental health (Gamm et al., 2010). Therefore, the good mental health of an individual must be maintained as it helps one to lead a purposeful life and effectively deal with all the challenges and obstacles of daily life.

Conversely, poor mental health can result in mental health issues such stress, anxiety, and depression. The person's physical and mental health may also be impacted by this. In particular, low levels of positive affect are a hallmark of depression, physiological hyperarousal is a sign of anxiety, and irritability, nervous tension, trouble relaxing, and agitation are traits of stress (Lovibond, 1995a). People encounter a plethora of difficult circumstances and pressures in their lifetime, which frequently have an adverse impact on their health (Weinstein et al., 2009). Nonetheless, reactions to such life events vary remarkably between and among individuals (Larsen, 2000). A psychological quality like gratitude may serve as a buffer against such difficult life occurrences. Accordingly, studies have demonstrated a negative correlation between perceived stress and appreciation (Lee et al., 2018; A. Wood et al., 2007). Furthermore, structural equation modeling validated a direct model that linked thankfulness to improved well-being and decreased stress levels in two investigations that used a complete cross-lagged panel design. Furthermore, studies have demonstrated that feeling grateful lowers stress levels (A. M. Wood, Joseph, et al., 2008; A. M. Wood, Maltby, et al., 2008).

Meaning in life and Gratitude

The meaning of life is a person's vision of himself or herself, understanding of human nature, existence, and the more significant things they believe. It consists of two elements: the existence of meaning and the pursuit of meaning (Steger et al., 2006). The absence of meaning in one's life can result in a lack of one's life goals, and one's sense of existence as well as feelings of emptiness, loneliness, helplessness, hopelessness, and various other negative aspects of boredom and frustration. This may also further lead to an impact on one's sense of self and increase the indulgence of one in various addictive behaviors such as alcohol and drug abuse, depression, anxiety, and even suicide (Fredrickson, 2004; X. X. Zhang et al., 2019).

The link between gratitude and the meaning in life has recently attracted the attention of many academics, and research has revealed that gratitude reliably predicts the meaning of life (Kleiman et al., 2013; Lin, 2021). According to (McCullough et al., 2001), gratitude is the thoughtful appreciation of advantages and gifts that may be traced to the goodness of other people. Studies have shown that grateful people have stronger social ties and a more positive view of society, which helps them feel more connected and at home. This, in turn, gives them more opportunities to recognize the significance of their lives and strengthens their propensity to live meaningful lives (Lambert et al., 2010; Lin, 2021; A. M. Wood et al., 2009). This is most likely because a thankful life orientation might increase appreciation for one's existence (Ryff & Singer, 1998). By expressing thankfulness, people may pay attention to and value the good things in their lives, which can help them feel more fulfilled, and enable people to see and appreciate the positive aspects, opportunities, and supporting connections in their lives, have a heightened awareness of the significant interactions and relationships around them, which can enhance their feeling of significance and purpose in life (Wood et al., 2010; Emmons & McCullough, 2004).

Having a sense of meaning in life can also amplify individuals' capacity for gratitude. People are more likely to recognize and enjoy the blessings, deeds of kindness, and pleasant experiences in their lives when they have a strong sense of purpose and values (Lambert et

al., 2012). A fruitful environment for growing thankfulness and a greater awareness of life's positive aspects is created through meaningful involvement in activities consistent with one's values and beliefs (Steger et al., 2006). Gratitude and finding meaning in life are interwoven concepts that may mutually impact and support one another, promoting better health and a greater feeling of fulfillment. These studies provide light on the beneficial effects that meaning in life and thankfulness have on people's well-being and sense of fulfillment in life, demonstrating the reciprocal link between them. According to the literature, developing appreciation and a sense of purpose will improve one's overall mental and emotional well-being (Komase et al., 2021; Valikhani et al., 2019; M. X. Zhang et al., 2018).

Gratitude and Mental Health

According to Peterson & Seligman, (2012), "gratitude has been conceptualized as a sense of thankfulness and joy in response to receiving a gift, whether the gift is a tangible benefit from a particular other or a fleeting bliss evoked by natural beauty." According to studies, gratitude makes a major contribution to the accomplishment of positive psychological outcomes like subjective well-being and other measures of psychological health (Datu, 2014; Kashdan et al., 2006; A. M. Wood et al., 2010). A favorable impact of appreciation on one's mental health has been discovered in several research such as Krause, (2006), discovered that elderly persons who feel more grateful to God had less negative impacts on their mental health, whereas, McCullough et al., (2004) found that among undergraduate psychology students, there were substantial negative connections between an attitude of gratitude and negative affect, anxiety, and depressive symptoms. Moreover, the same researchers discovered that thankfulness was inversely connected with envy in a different sample of 156 college students.

A systematic review also examined the impact of gratitude treatments on several mental health variables which showed that being grateful promotes lowering bad feelings (stress and sadness), raises positive emotions (life satisfaction, social relationships, creating a happy atmosphere), and has a beneficial impact on mental health, along with impact in enhancing psychological well-being, (reducing negative experiences of stress and depression) in adults (Putri, 2019; O'Connell et al., 2020; Sansone & Sansone, 2010). Findings also report that gratitude may serve as a buffer between effective parenting and depression symptoms which may contribute to improving the mental health of the adult population and prove that females score higher than males on the dimensions of mental health. Gratitude and aspects of health, such as social dysfunction and depression/anxiety, correlate negatively. Thus, the importance of gratitude in preserving people's quality of life is highlighted (Duprey et al., 2020; Singh et al., 2014). A longitudinal study also found the role of gratitude in predicting the reduced levels of depression in individuals with chronic illnesses, specifically inflammatory bowel disease and arthritis. The results demonstrated gratitude's potential as a psychological tool for those managing chronic health issues, acting as a protective factor against depressive symptoms in these groups (Sirois & Wood, 2017).

Therefore, it is clear from the research listed above that there is a link between an individual's mental health and their level of thankfulness. These works jointly advance knowledge of thankfulness and its effects on adult mental health. They offer empirical support for the beneficial relationships between thankfulness and several elements of well-being, including life satisfaction, self-esteem, social support, prosocial behavior, and decreased symptoms of sadness and anxiety. The findings also point out how thankfulness therapies may improve mental health outcomes and advance general well-being.

Meaning in life and Mental Health

Perceiving one's own life as significant and useful is one of the key components of well-being (Greenberg & Arndt, 2012). In addition to being linked to improved stress management (Hooker et al., 2018), decreased anxiety and depressive symptoms (Disabato et al., 2017; Korkmaz & Güloğlu, 2021), and reduced suicidal tendencies (Lew et al., 2020), having a sense of purpose in life is also thought to be protective of mental health.

Meaning in life is the aspect that deals with how much a person values his or her life. The capacity to grasp one's life circumstances, the possession of motivating and life-organizing plans, and the perception that one's life matters may all be summed up as having meaning in life (Martela & Steger, 2016). Various psychologists and researchers have tried to study the relation between the two variables. Additionally, studies have linked psychological distress and physical sickness to a loss of purpose in life (Goldberg et al., 1979; Wong, 2000).

A study examined how adults' sense of meaning in life affected the relationship between stress and mental health (depression symptoms). Lowered symptoms of depression were predicted by more meaning in one's life. Also, meaning in life, attenuated the association between stress exposure and depressed symptoms. Stress exposure was linked to increased depression when meaning in life was found to be low (Dulaney et al., 2018). Another study looked into the potential role of meaning in life and mental health status as predictors of suicidal thoughts. According to the study's findings, people with lower mental health reported having a reduced sense of purpose in life, which in turn encouraged more suicidal thoughts (Tan et al., 2018).

Meaning in Life and Gratitude on Mental Health

Having a purpose in life undoubtedly has a positive impact on how well someone functions (AshaRani et al., 2022; Geier & Morris, 2022; Upenieks & Ford-Robertson, 2022). However, as researchers have noted, it is challenging to change it directly, which is why the concept of doing so indirectly, for example, by enhancing appreciation (Kleiman et al., 2013), has gained popularity. Gratitude and finding significance in life are recognized to have a favorable impact on psychological well-being (Kardas et al., 2019; Krok, 2015). Having gratitude may help one have a meaningful life since it is linked to things like having a purpose in life and seeing one's own life to be more important (A. M. Wood et al., 2009). According to Ryff & Singer, (1998), gratitude might heighten awareness of one's existence when seen in terms of life orientation.

Datu & Mateo, (2015) in their research found that meaning in life influences the link between gratitude and wellbeing. In addition, gratitude is inversely correlated with sadness and suicidal thoughts (Liang et al., 2020; Lin, 2021), and those who are more appreciative report higher levels of life satisfaction (Xiang & Yuan, 2021; Lambert et al., 2010).

Positive impacts on mental health include an increase in psychological well-being and a sense of purpose in life. Numerous studies examined the effects of an intervention promoting gratitude on adolescents' perceptions of stress, psychological well-being, and general health because young people are a demographic that is particularly vulnerable to mental health issues (Armenta et al., 2022; Fekete & Deichert, 2022; Jiang, 2022). The study's conclusions show notable improvements in environmental mastery, interpersonal relationships, and a feeling of purpose. Psychological well-being was positively correlated with expressing gratitude and finding purpose in life, while symptoms of depression, anxiety/insomnia, and perceived stress all showed a significant drop. A study's results also

showed that depression decreases over three and six months were predicted by higher levels of appreciation, thankfulness, and purpose in life. Consequently, the study showed that therapies for depression remission may include mindfulness and purpose in life (Czyżowska & Gurba, 2022; Disabato et al., 2017).

Reviewing literature has also shown that fewer studies have looked at the effects of gratitude and finding meaning in life on mental health, even though many earlier studies have focused on studying the effects of stress, anxiety, depression, subjective well-being, etc. on the mental health of an individual. Although studies have been conducted to examine the effects of these factors separately, such as studying the relationship between gratitude and mental health (Froh et al., 2014; Ma et al., 2013), relatively few studies have examined the effects of these two factors, which are meaning in life and gratitude, when combined with a person's mental health. The purpose of the current research is to better understand how having a purpose in life and being grateful affect one's mental health. The current study predicts that those with a feeling of purpose or meaning in their lives as well as those who value thankfulness would have better mental health than those without such a sense of meaning. It is anticipated that a person's mental health would improve and be more favorable if they have a sense of purpose in their lives and an appreciative attitude towards what they have. On the other hand, research findings are anticipated to support the growth of the few studies carried out in Punjab and address the topic of positive youth development, which has emerged as a significant area of study in the field of mental health.

Consequently, research indicates that the generation of college and university students is currently going through a variety of changes, obstacles, and hardships in their lives. This is a result of several major life transitions that may have increased stress and anxiety, such as starting college, growing older, and needing to take on more responsibility in all facets of one's life. Optimal psychological development is crucial for young people to transition easily into adulthood. However, because there aren't enough studies on the precise relationship between mental health and gratitude and purpose in life, further study is needed to properly understand this link in a range of cultural contexts. Therefore, the following conceptual model was proposed for studying the relationship between the variables selected for the study (Figure1).

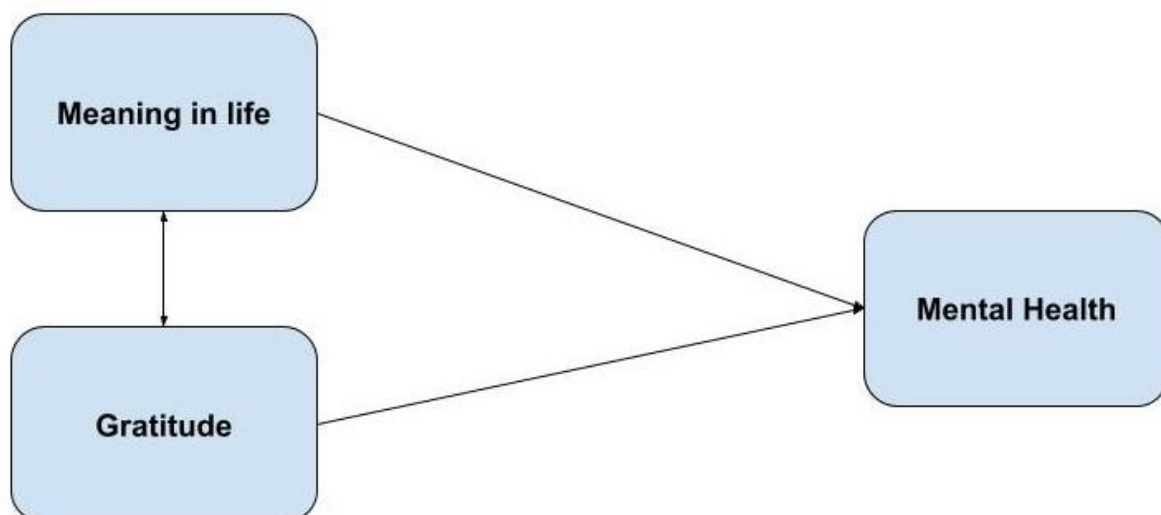


Figure 1. Conceptual model of the relationships between meaning in life and gratitude and their impact on the mental health problems of the adults.

Objectives of the Study

In order to conduct the study and find out the relationship between the variables the following objectives were formulated:

1. To study the relationship between gratitude and meaning in life among adults.
2. To study the relationship between gratitude and meaning in life among male and female adults.
3. To study the relationship between gratitude and mental health problems among adults.
4. To study the relationship between gratitude and mental health problems among male and female adults.
5. To study the relationship between meaning in life and mental health problems among adults.
6. To study the relationship between meaning in life and mental health problems among male and female adults.
7. To study the impact of gratitude on mental health problems among adults.
8. To study the impact of meaning in life on mental health problems among adults.

Hypotheses of the Study

- **H1.** There will be significant positive relationship between gratitude and meaning in life among adults.
- **H2.** There will be significant positive relationship between gratitude and meaning in life among male and female adults.
- **H3.** There will be significant negative relationship between gratitude and mental health problems among adults.
- **H4.** There will be significant negative relationship between gratitude and mental health problems among male and female adults.
- **H5.** There will be significant negative relationship between meaning in life and mental health problems among adults.
- **H6.** There will be significant negative relationship between meaning in life and mental health problems among male and female adults.
- **H7.** There will be significant impact of gratitude on mental health among problems adults.
- **H8.** There will be significant impact of meaning in life on mental health problems among adults.

METHODOLOGY

Participants

This study describes research that was carried out in August 2023 using data from Punjab students using an anonymous cross-sectional survey. Students from various colleges and universities from the region of Bathinda (Punjab) formed the sample of the study. The sample consisted of students between the age range of 18-40 years respectively. In the study, it was observed that more women than men participated. The informed consent of all the participants was taken prior being a part of the study. The students completed the self-administered questionnaire and the responses were recorded. In addition to informing participants regarding the anonymity and confidentiality of their responses, the participants were asked to be true in their responses.

Tools for data collection

- **Meaning in life questionnaire (MLQ):** The MLQ is a ten-item instrument that includes two distinct constructs. They are the Presence of Meaning (MLQ-P; for instance, "my life has a clear sense of purpose") and the Search for Meaning (MLQ-S; for example, "I am seeking a purpose or mission for my life"). The subscale of presence of meaning gauges respondents' perceptions of the level of significance and meaning in their lives. The subscale, search for meaning gauges respondents' interest in and willingness to put up effort to find meaning in their life. This test measures each dimension with five items scored on a 7-point Likert scale from "Absolutely True" to "Absolutely Untrue". The scores range from 5 to 35, with higher scores representing higher degrees of presence of meaning and search for meaning. One item on the subscale for the presence of meaning (item 9) is reverse coded. Cronbach's alpha values for both subscales in the normative sample ranged from 0.82 to 0.88, with one-month test-retest stability of 0.70 (MLQ-P) and 0.73 (MLQ-S) (Steger et al., 2006).
- **The Gratitude Questionnaire – Six Item Form (GQ-6):** McCullough, M. E., Emmons, R. A., & Tsang, J. (2002). The Gratitude Questionnaire-Six-Item Form (GQ-6) is a six-item self-report questionnaire designed to assess individual differences in the proneness to experience gratitude in daily life. The GQ-6 is a brief, self-report assessment of the propensity to feel grateful. Participants respond to six questions using a 1 to 7 scale, where 1 indicates "strongly disagree" and 7 indicates "strongly agree." To prevent response bias, two items are scored in reverse. There is evidence that the GQ-6 is positively related to optimism, life satisfaction, hope, spirituality and religiousness, forgiveness, empathy, and prosocial behaviour and negatively related to depression, anxiety, materialism, and envy. The GQ-6 has good internal reliability, with alphas between .82 and .87. Although there is no time constraint, the GQ-6 takes less than 5 minutes to complete (McCullough et al., 2002).
- **Depression anxiety stress scale (DASS-21):** The DASS-21 is a commonly used screening instrument that may assess depression, anxiety, and stress symptoms individually. The DASS-21 was evolved from the original 42-item DASS produced by Lovibond et al. (1995), which comprises three subscales: depression (DASS-D), anxiety (DASS-A), and stress (DASS-S) (Moussa et al., 2017). The DASS-D assesses a person's hopelessness, positive affect, and self-esteem. The DASS-A assesses autonomic arousal, situational anxiety, musculoskeletal symptoms, anxiety arousal, and scenario anxiety. Finally, the DASS-S assesses agitation, tension, and negativity (Tran et al., 2013). To represent severity, each subscale consists of seven questions that are rated from 0 (did not apply to me at all) to 3 (applied to me very lot, or most of the time) in the week preceding the interview. Each DASS-21 subscale has a total score ranging from 0 to 21. The scores of the items are summed and multiplied by two to get a total score that may be compared to the original DASS-42 (Lovibond, 1995b).

RESULTS

The main objective of this study was to examine the relationship between meaning in life, gratitude, and mental health problems among male and female adults. To test the various hypotheses, SPSS Version 20 was used to analyze the results. The results of the Spearman's Correlation were presented in table format according to the various hypotheses.

Findings related to the relationship between Gratitude and Meaning in life

In order to achieve the first and second objectives of the proposed research, it was hypothesized that there will be significant positive relationship between gratitude and meaning in life among adults and the similar results will be observed in different genders separately. The results of the proposed hypotheses are shown in Table 1 and Table 2 respectively. The results showed that the two variables had a positive correlation. This indicates that the proposed hypothesis (H1) is supported, since the association coefficients between gratitude and meaning in life were determined to be .578 ($p < .01$) (Table 1). The similar findings as anticipated in the second hypotheses regarding the genders individually were also seen to be positively correlated to each other. The findings revealed that the relationship coefficients between gratitude and meaning in life among females was found to be .578 ($p < .01$), and among males was found to be .774 ($p < .01$) respectively. Therefore, according to the results, the hypothesis (H2) also gets accepted (Table 2). The findings reveal that people with higher meaning in life were found to be more grateful of things and lives than those who were found to be lower on such aspect.

Table 1 Relationship between Gratitude and Meaning in life among adults

<i>Variables</i>	<i>TOTALMIL</i>	<i>TOTALGRAT</i>
TOTALMIL	1	
TOTALGRAT	.578**	1

Note. $N = 214$. ** indicates Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 2 Relationship between Gratitude and Meaning in life among male and female adults.

<i>GENDER</i>	<i>Variables</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>GRAT</i>	<i>MIL</i>
Female	Gratitude		1	
	Meaning in Life	159	.578**	1
Male	Gratitude		1	
	Meaning in Life	55	.774**	1

Note. $N1 = 159(F)$, $N2 = 55(M)$. ** indicates Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Findings related to Gratitude and Mental Health problems

In order to test the third and fourth objectives of the proposed research, it was hypothesized that there will be a significant negative relationship between gratitude and mental health problems among adults and the similar results will be observed in different genders separately. The results of the proposed hypotheses are shown in Table 3 and Table 4 respectively. The results showed that the two variables had a negative correlation. This indicates that the proposed hypothesis (H3) is supported, since the association coefficients between gratitude and mental health were determined to be -.35 ($p < .01$) (for stress), -.34 ($p < .01$) (for anxiety), and -.45 ($p < .01$) (for depression) (Table 3). The similar findings as anticipated in the fourth hypotheses regarding the genders individually were also seen to be negatively correlated to each other. The findings revealed that the relationship coefficients between gratitude and mental health problems among females was found to be -.350 ($p < .01$) (for stress), -.351 ($p < .01$) (for anxiety), and -.495 ($p < .01$) (for depression), and among males was found to be -.242 (for stress), -.251 (for anxiety), and -.285 ($p < .05$) (for depression) respectively. Thus, in light of the findings, hypothesis (H4) is likewise acceptable (Table 4). The results also show that mental health issues including anxiety, stress, and depression

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were less common among those who expressed gratitude and greater thankfulness. Consequently, it is discovered that these individuals have good mental health and a decreased likelihood of acquiring depression.

Table 3 Relationship between Gratitude and Mental Health problems among adults

<i>Variables</i>	<i>Stress</i>	<i>Anxiety</i>	<i>Depression</i>	<i>Totalgrat</i>
Stress	1			
Anxiety	.79**	1		
Depression	.83**	.74**	1	
Totalgrat	-.35**	-.34**	-.45**	1

Note. $N = 214$. ** indicates Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 4 Correlation analysis for the Relationship between Gratitude and Mental Health problems among male and female adults.

<i>Gender</i>	<i>Variables</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Totalgrat</i>	<i>Stress</i>	<i>Anxiety</i>	<i>Depression</i>
Female	Totalgrat	1				
	Stress		-.350**	1		
		159				
	Anxiety		-.351**	.752**	1	
	Depression		-.495**	.812**	.690**	1
Male	Totalgrat	1				
	Stress		-.242	1		
		55				
	Anxiety		-.251	.885**	1	
	Depression		-.285*	.884**	.870**	1

Note. $N_1 = 159(F)$, $N_2 = 55(M)$. * Indicates Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed) and ** indicates Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Findings related to the relationship between Meaning in life and Mental health problems

In addition to this, to test the fifth and sixth objectives of the proposed research, it was hypothesized that there will be a significant negative relationship between meaning in life and mental health problems among adults and similar results will be observed in different genders separately. The results of the proposed hypotheses are shown in [Table 5](#) and [Table 6](#) respectively. The results showed that the two variables, i.e., meaning in life and mental health problems had a negative correlation. This indicates that the proposed hypothesis (H5) is supported, since the association coefficients between meaning in life and mental health problems were determined to be $-.17$ ($p < .05$) (for stress), $-.13$ (for anxiety), and $-.22$ ($p < .01$) (for depression) (Table 5). The similar findings as anticipated in the fourth hypotheses regarding the genders individually were also seen to be negatively correlated to each other. The findings revealed that the relationship coefficients between meaning in life and mental health problems among females was found to be $-.180$ ($p < .05$) (for stress), $-.119$ (for anxiety), and $-.215$ ($p < .01$) (for depression), and among males was found to be $-.145$ (for stress), $-.167$ (for anxiety), and $-.232$ (for depression) respectively. Thus, in light of the findings, hypothesis (H6) is likewise acceptable (Table 4). The results also show that mental health issues including anxiety, stress, and depression were less common among those who had higher meaning and purpose in their lives. Consequently, it can be inferred from the results that having a greater meaning in life contributes to better wellbeing of people and

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decreased likelihood of acquiring mental health problems such as anxiety stress and depression.

Table 5 Correlation analysis for Relationship between Meaning in life and Mental Health problems among adults

<i>Variables</i>	<i>STRESS2</i>	<i>ANXIETY2</i>	<i>DEPRESSION2</i>	<i>TOTALMIL</i>
STRESS2	1			
ANXIETY2	0.79**	1		
DEPRESSION2	0.82**	0.73**	1	
TOTALMIL	-0.17*	-0.13	-0.22**	1

Note. N = 214. * Indicates Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed) and ** indicates Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 6 Correlations analysis for the Relationship between Meaning in Life and Mental Health Problems among Male and Female adults

Gender	Variables	N	Stress	Anxiety	Depression	Totalmil
Female	Stress2	159	1			
	Anxiety2		.752**	1		
	Depression		.812**	.690**	1	
	Totalmil		-.180*	-.119	-.215**	1
Male	Stress	55	1			
	Anxiety		.885**	1		
	Depression		.884**	.870**	1	
	Totalmil		-.145	-.167	-.232	1

Note. N1= 159(F), N2= 55(M). * Indicates Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed) and ** indicates Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Findings related to the impact of Gratitude on Mental Health problems among adults.

In order to further examine the impact of gratitude on mental health problems, the linear regression analysis was carried out. Therefore, it was hypothesized that there will be a significant impact of gratitude on mental health among problems adults to test the seventh objective of the proposed research. The results of the proposed hypotheses are shown in [Table 7](#) respectively. The analysis of the results demonstrated that gratitude has a standardised coefficient (Beta) of -.445 (for depression), -.340 (for anxiety) and -.344 (for stress) respectively, which indicates that it has a somewhat negative influence on mental health problems. All else being equal, this shows that a rise in gratitude is connected with a moderate decrease in worry, stress and depression. Results also prove that these mental health problems are supposed to decrease as gratitude grows (showing increased levels of thankfulness). This is supported by the negative unstandardized coefficients, the negative standardized coefficients (Beta), and the statistically significant associations. In conclusion, based on these regression results, there is evidence to suggest that higher levels of gratitude are associated with lower levels of mental health problems.

Table 7 (i) Regression analysis for Impact of Gratitude on Depression

Coefficients				
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T
	B	Std. Error	Beta	
(Constant)	37.079	3.263		11.362
TOTALGRAT	-.805	.111	-.445	-7.237

Note. N = 214. a. Dependent Variable: DEPRESSION

Table 7(ii) Regression Analysis for Impact of Gratitude on Anxiety

Coefficients				
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T
	B	Std. Error	Beta	
(Constant)	37.824	3.183		9.685
TOTALGRAT	-.572	.109	-.340	-5.272

Note. N = 214. a. Dependent Variable: ANXIETY

Table 7(iii) Regression Analysis for Impact of Gratitude on Stress

Coefficients				
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T
	B	Std. Error	Beta	
(Constant)	30.151	3.048		9.891
TOTALGRAT	-.555	.104	-.344	-5.342

Note. N = 214. a. Dependent Variable: STRESS

Findings related to impact of meaning in life on Mental Health problems among adults.

In order to fulfil the seventh objective of the proposed research, it was hypothesized that there will be a significant impact of meaning in life on mental health among problems adults. The results of the proposed hypotheses are shown in [Table 8](#) respectively. The analysis of the results demonstrated that meaning in life has a standardised coefficient (Beta) of -.220 (for depression), -.133 (for anxiety) and -.173 (for stress) respectively, which indicates that it has a somewhat negative influence on mental health problems. The results depict as meaning in life increases, mental health problems like stress, anxiety and depression are expected to decrease. This is supported by the negative unstandardized coefficient, the negative standardized coefficient (Beta), and the statistically significant relationship. The findings imply that mental health problems are certainly impacted by a person's sense of purpose in life. In summary, these regression results provide data that suggests a negative relationship and between depression and greater levels of life meaning. It's crucial to remember that although this research shows a correlation, it does not establish a cause-and-effect relationship. The findings indicate a connection between mental health issues and a sense of meaning or purpose in life, but more investigation and analysis of other variables are required to completely comprehend the nature of this link.

Table 8 (i) Regression analysis for Impact of Meaning in life on Depression

Coefficients				
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T
	B	Std. Error	Beta	
(Constant)	25.718	3.666		7.014
TOTAL MIL	-.236	.072	-.220	-3.286

Note. N = 214. a. Dependent Variable: DEPRESSION

Table 8 (ii) Regression analysis for Impact of Meaning in life on Anxiety

Coefficients				
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T
	B	Std. Error	Beta	
(Constant)	20.978	3.460		6.063
TOTAL MIL	-.133	.068	-.133	-1.953

Note. N = 214. a. Dependent Variable: ANXIETY

Table 8 (iii) Regression analysis for Impact of Meaning in life on Stress

Coefficients				
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T
	B	Std. Error	Beta	
(Constant)	22.428	3.299		6.799
TOTAL MIL	-.165	.065	-.173	-2.553

Note. N = 214. a. Dependent Variable: STRESS

DISCUSSION AND LIMITATIONS

The current study was conducted in order to examine the relationship between gratitude, meaning in life and mental health problems along with examining the impact gratitude and meaning in life has on mental health problems of adults. Consistent with our hypotheses, our results reported that there exists a relation between the variables. The present study's findings shed light on the complicated links between thankfulness, purpose in life, and mental health concerns in adulthood. It validates and emphasises their interconnected nature, making a substantial addition to existing study on these areas. Our findings are consistent with previous studies which found a significant relationship between gratitude and mental health (Frinking et al., 2020; Lin, 2015; Lyubomirsky, 2008; Singh et al., 2014; Valikhani et al., 2019), relationship between gratitude and meaning in life (Çebi & Demir, 2022; Czyżowska & Gurba, 2022; Loi & Ng, 2021; P. Zhang et al., 2021), and relationship between meaning in life and mental health among adults (Glaw et al., 2016; Halama & Dedova, 2007; Moomal, 1999). While prior studies looked at these elements separately, this study looks at them together, emphasising their importance in the context of well-being. Furthermore, this study contributes to our knowledge of well-being by approaching mental health from a more holistic perspective. Apart from examining the lack of mental health issues, it emphasises the need of considering the existence of good psychological elements like thankfulness and meaning and purpose in life. Therefore, the present study focuses on how positive impact gratitude and meaning in life has on reducing mental health problems among adults (Atad & Russo-Netzer, 2022; Disabato et al., 2017; Jun, 2023; Salces-Cubero et al., 2019; Czyżowska & Gurba, 2022; Disabato et al., 2017; Frinking et al., 2020).

This study has significant limitations, although providing valuable information regarding the relationships between mental health, meaning in life, and thanksgiving. The correlational nature of the study first and foremost limits our capacity to establish causality. No directionality has been found in the relationships between thanksgiving, life purpose, and mental health. Future research should employ longitudinal designs to look at the temporal dynamics of these elements and establish causal connections. Second, a significant amount of the study's measures is based on self-report, which increases the risk of social desirability effects and response bias. Combining self-report data with objective measurements—such as physiological markers of stress or expert assessments of mental health—would increase the reliability of the results. Thirdly, the study's main focus is on the adult population, which restricts its application to other age groups and localities. Further research should cover a wider range of age groups and cultural backgrounds to gain a deeper understanding of the relationships between mental health, meaning in life, and thankfulness. Furthermore, even while this study deepens our knowledge of the connections between these factors, it is impossible to account for the impact of unmeasured variables that could have an impact on the results. Researchers could consider accounting for more aspects in future study. In summary, this study contains limitations that should be acknowledged even if it makes significant contributions to the field. By doing so, we may better understand the relationships between mental health, life purpose, and thanksgiving and thereby direct future research.

The other recommendations for future research work can include research exploring the cultural variations in the experience and cultivation of gratitude and meaning can help in developing culturally sensitive interventions and understanding the nuances of these constructs across various populations. It may be possible to increase the effectiveness of therapies by pinpointing the precise cognitive, emotional, and social mechanisms that mediate their effects. As a final point, researching the efficacy of technology-based interventions, such as mobile applications or online platforms, to cultivate appreciation and meaning might provide approachable and scalable to reach a wider community.

By addressing these research recommendations, we can gain further insights into the interplay between gratitude, meaning in life, and mental health, and develop more effective interventions to promote well-being and enhance individuals' overall satisfaction with life.

CONCLUSION

Adults' relationships with purpose in life and thankfulness are dynamic and reciprocal, and they have a significant impact on mental health and general wellbeing. A greater feeling of purpose, fulfilment, and general contentment with life can be attained by cultivating meaning and thankfulness. The body of research corroborates the idea that thankfulness and life purpose mutually reinforce one another, creating a positive feedback loop that improves psychological health. This interaction has been shown in therapy modalities, treatments, and activities that support the development of appreciation and meaning-making in day-to-day living. To fully comprehend this link and maximise the efficacy of therapies, more study is necessary.

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Acknowledgment

We would like to thank all the participants for their contributions to this study.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

How to cite this article: Kaur, S. & Khatoon, Z. (2026). Meaning in Life, Gratitude, and Mental Health among Adults. *International Journal of Indian Psychology*, 14(3), 352-371. DIP:18.01.032.20261403, DOI:10.25215/1403.032