

**EFFECTIVENESS OF GRATITUDE ON REDUCING COMPLAINING BEHAVIOR
AND INTERPERSONAL CONFLICT AMONG CHILDREN**

*Dissertation Submitted to the University of Kerala in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirement for
the Award of The Degree of*

Master of Science in Counselling Psychology

Submitted by

SHAHARBANA HUSSAIN

(Reg No: LC24PCP12)

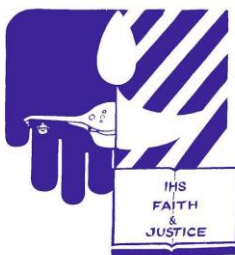
Under the Guidance of

Dr. Pramod S K

Assistant Professor

Department of Counselling Psychology

Loyola College of Social Sciences (Autonomous), Thiruvananthapuram



Department of Counselling Psychology

Loyola College of Social Sciences (Autonomous), Thiruvananthapuram

(2024 – 2026)

CERTIFICATE



This is to certify that **Shaharbana Hussain** (Reg No. **LC24PCP12**) has successfully carried out the project entitled **“Effectiveness of Gratitude Work on Reducing Complaining Behaviour and Interpersonal Conflict Among Children”** in the **Department of Counselling Psychology, Loyola College of Social Sciences(Autonomous), Thiruvananthapuram**, under the supervision and guidance of the **Dr. Pramod S.K, Assistant Professor, Department of Counselling Psychology**, during the Fourth Semester of the M.Sc Counselling Psychology programme in the academic year **2024 – 2026**.

Dr Ammu Lukose

Head of the Department (In Charge)

Loyola College of Social Sciences

Thiruvananthapuram

Dr. Pramod S K

Assistant professor

Department of Counselling Psychology

Loyola College of Social Sciences

Thiruvananthapuram

Submitted for the examination held on:

Examiner:

DECLARATION

I, Shaharbana Hussain, do hereby declare that the dissertation entitled “Effectiveness of Gratitude Work on Reducing Complaining Behaviour and Interpersonal Conflict Among Children” submitted to the Department of Counselling Psychology, Loyola College of Social Sciences (Autonomous), Sreekariyam, Thiruvananthapuram, under the supervision and guidance of Dr. Pramod S K, Assistant Professor, Department of Counselling Psychology, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the degree of Master of Science (M.Sc.) in Counselling Psychology of Kerala University, is a bona fide work carried out by me during the academic year 2024–2026.

I further declare that this dissertation has not been submitted, either in part or in full, to any other University or Institution for the award of any degree, diploma, or other academic qualification.

Place: Sreekariyam

Shaharbana Hussain

Date:

Reg. No: LC24PCP12

M. Sc Counselling Psychology

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I express my sincere gratitude to all those who have supported and guided me throughout the successful completion of this dissertation.

I extend my deepest gratitude to Dr. Pramod S. K., Assistant Professor, Department of Counselling Psychology, Loyola College of Social Sciences, my research guide, for his invaluable guidance, constructive suggestions, continuous encouragement, and unwavering support throughout this research. His expertise and insightful feedback were instrumental in the successful completion of this study.

I sincerely thank Dr. Jesline Maria Mammen, Head of the Department of Counselling Psychology, Dr. Ammu Lukose, Assistant Professor and Head of the Department (In-charge), and Ms. Athmaja Panickar, Assistant Professor, for their encouragement and academic support during my postgraduate programme.

I express my heartfelt gratitude to the Principal, the concerned class teacher, and all the children who participated in the study for their cooperation and support during the implementation of the gratitude work intervention. I also thank my classmates and friends for their encouragement and support throughout the research process.

Finally, I express my sincere gratitude to my parents and family members for their constant encouragement, patience, and unwavering support throughout my academic journey..

SHAHARBANA HUSSAIN

Table of Content

List of Tables

List of Appendices

Abstract

Sl No.	Chapters	Page No.
I	Introduction	9 - 38
II	Literature Review	39 - 60
III	Methodology	61 - 71
IV	Result and Discussion	72 - 80
V	Summary and Conclusion	81 - 95
	References	96 - 103

List of Tables

Table No	Table Name	Page No
1	Demographic Characteristics of the Participants (N=28)	73
2	Descriptive Statistics of the Study Variables (N=28)	74
3	Test of Normality of the Study Variables (N=28)	75
4	Paired Samples t-Test Results for Gratitude, Complaining Behaviour, and Conflict Behaviour (N = 28)	76

List of Appendices

Appendix No.	Appendix Name	Page No.
Appendix A	Informed Consent Form	104
Appendix B	Intervention Module	109
Appendix C	The Gratitude Questionnaire-Six Item Form (GQ-6)	118
Appendix D	Peer Conflict Scale (Youth Version)	120
Appendix E	Self-Report Complaining Behaviour Checklist	123

Abstract

The present study, titled "Effectiveness of Gratitude Work on Reducing Complaining Behavior and Interpersonal Conflict Among Children," aims to assess how effectively practicing gratitude can increase children's levels of appreciation while reducing their tendency to complain and engage in interpersonal conflicts. The research is grounded in positive psychology, which focuses on cultivating positive emotions and character strengths to enhance overall psychological well-being. The study employed a quantitative approach using a pre-experimental one-group pre-test and post-test design. Twenty-eight children aged 11 to 12 took part in the study. Data were collected using the Gratitude Questionnaire–Six Item Form (GQ–6), the Peer Conflict Scale (PCS), and a self-developed checklist to assess complaining behavior. Following the initial assessment, a structured gratitude intervention consisting of 25 days of gratitude-based activities was implemented. The data were analyzed using IBM SPSS Statistics (Version 26.0), with statistical methods including the Shapiro-Wilk test, paired samples t-test, and descriptive statistics. The findings indicate that gratitude practice effectively promotes positive emotional and behavioral changes in children, as evidenced by a significant increase in gratitude and a notable reduction in both interpersonal conflict and complaining behavior after the intervention. This study highlights the value of gratitude work as a simple, practical, and cost-effective intervention within positive psychology that can be incorporated into mental health and school counseling programs to foster children's emotional well-being and improve their interpersonal relationships.

Keywords: Gratitude Work, Interpersonal Conflict, Complaining Behavior, Children, Positive Psychology.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Childhood, which spans from the end of infancy to the beginning of puberty, is an important developmental stage. It is commonly described as the time between roughly two years of age and the start of puberty, which usually happens between the ages of ten and twelve. Early childhood (2–6 years), middle childhood (6–8/10 years), and late childhood or preadolescence (9–12 years) are the three stages of childhood that developmental psychologists often categorize (American Psychological Association [APA], n.d.). Rapid physical, cognitive, social, and emotional development is a hallmark of childhood. Children learn essential skills, beliefs, attitudes, and competences throughout this time that affect their future wellbeing and adjustment.

Late childhood, which typically spans the ages of 9 to 12, is one of the most important developmental phases of childhood and acts as a transitional time between childhood and adolescent. Increased independence, rising responsibility, and a heightened awareness of societal expectations are common characteristics of this period. Because peer groups become quite powerful and children have a strong need for social recognition and belonging, psychologists often refer to this time as the "gang age." It is also thought to as a creative time when kids show creativity, curiosity, and independent thought. Children are more conscious of themselves, their relationships, and their place in society as they get closer to puberty.

Steady growth and increased physical skill are hallmarks of late childhood physical development. Children continue to acquire weight and height at a steady pace while developing stronger, more resilient, and more coordinated muscles. Children's fine and gross motor abilities improve, enabling them to engage in sports, leisure activities, and academic assignments that call for control and accuracy. During this phase, especially in girls, the onset of puberty frequently occurs, signaling the beginning of adolescence. Increased self-awareness and independence are facilitated by these physical changes.

Late childhood is a time of significant cognitive development advancement. Youngsters develop the ability to think more logically, systematically, and logically. Through interactions with instructors, peers, family, books, and media, their vocabulary grows quickly. They exhibit enhanced reasoning, problem-solving, memory, and attention span. Youngsters start to grasp abstract ideas and grow in their sense of morality, integrity, justice, and accountability. They can assess things from several angles and make better decisions thanks to their increased cognitive maturity. These advancements have a major impact on intellectual development and academic success.

Peer interactions become more vital in late childhood, making social development more crucial. Youngsters cherish peer acceptance more and spend more time with friends and classmates. As friendships grow stronger and more significant, they offer chances to develop cooperation, communication, negotiation, teamwork, and conflict-resolution abilities. Engaging in group activities improves social skills and creates a feeling of community. Peer pressure intensifies at the same time, influencing attitudes, actions, and self-perceptions. Children's emotional health, social adjustment, and self-esteem are all greatly impacted by positive peer interactions.

Increased emotional awareness, self-control, and empathy are all aspects of late childhood emotional development. Children grow more adept at identifying and controlling their own emotions as well as those of others. They learn socially acceptable ways to express their emotions and have more control over emotions like anger, impatience, and disappointment. Children grow more self-conscious and conscious of their abilities and shortcomings throughout this phase. As a result, peer, teacher, and parental acceptance becomes especially crucial. Strong social and emotional skills are linked to increased psychological well-being, healthier relationships, and higher academic achievement, according to research (Alzahrani et al., 2019; Ferreira et al., 2021).

Because it fosters resilience, self-confidence, adaptability, and useful coping mechanisms, positive emotional development is crucial in late childhood. Strong emotional abilities help kids deal with difficulties, uphold healthy relationships, and exhibit prosocial traits like empathy, cooperation, and assisting others. Additionally, academic engagement and general psychological adjustment are supported by emotional competence.

In late childhood, interpersonal ties are crucial to growth. While teachers are crucial role models and facilitators of learning and social development, family interactions continue to offer stability, direction, and emotional support. Peer interactions have a growing impact on children's behavioral patterns, social skills, and self-concept at the same time. Children acquire the collaboration, perspective-taking, effective communication, and conflict-resolution skills necessary for successful social functioning through their interactions with parents, teachers, and classmates.

Late childhood is a time of ongoing brain development and plasticity from a developmental standpoint. This stage's experiences have a big impact on social, emotional, and cognitive development. Healthy development and well-being are promoted by supportive environments that are marked by positive interactions, emotional validation, effective communication, and learning opportunities (Ferreira et al., 2021). On the other hand, negative events might exacerbate emotional and behavioral issues. Therefore, creating interventions that support positive behavior, emotional wellbeing, and healthy social interactions requires an awareness of the developmental traits of late childhood.

Child's mental health and wellbeing are crucial to their growth. Mental health is more than just the absence of mental disease; it includes children's thoughts, feelings, behaviors, coping mechanisms, and social interactions. Emotional stability, positive relationships, scholastic success,

resilience, and general quality of life are all facilitated by good mental health during childhood (Ferreira et al., 2021). Because childhood experiences have a substantial impact on emotional, social, and psychological functioning throughout adolescence and adulthood, the early years of development are especially crucial (Ferreira et al., 2021). Positive mental health during childhood has been linked to long-term well-being by fostering social competence, emotional regulation, self-worth, and adaptive coping abilities (Alzahrani et al., 2019; Ferreira et al., 2021).

Because it fosters the growth of a positive self-concept, self-esteem, and confidence, psychological well-being during childhood is essential (Alzahrani et al., 2019). Children that are psychologically well are better equipped to handle stress, adjust to changing conditions, and bounce back from failures. Additionally, they are more likely to exhibit resilience, which is the capacity to deal with difficulties and adversity in an effective manner (Ferreira et al., 2021). Children who are emotionally healthy can grow to feel competent and purposeful, which helps them adapt effectively in social, familial, and academic contexts. According to Alzahrani et al. (2019), children who experience positive emotional well-being also typically show greater levels of motivation, engagement, and happiness in their day-to-day lives. Emotional control is one of the most crucial components of psychological health. The ability to identify, comprehend, express, and appropriately manage emotions is known as emotional regulation. Early in life, children start to develop emotional management skills, which they continue to hone throughout childhood and adolescence (United Kingdom Department for Education, 2021). Children who have good emotional control are able to handle emotions like anger, irritation, anxiety, disappointment, and sadness without feeling overpowered. Children who are able to control their emotions are more likely to exhibit patience, self-control, and constructive social behaviors (Ferreira et al., 2021). Children learn how to recognize emotions, express them correctly, and create healthy coping

mechanisms through supportive connections with parents, caregivers, and educators (United Kingdom Department for Education, 2021). Additionally, better peer connections, better classroom behavior, and higher levels of psychological adjustment are all linked to emotional control (Alzahrani et al., 2019).

For a youngster to develop healthily, positive emotions are just as crucial. In the past, studies have mostly concentrated on negative emotions and behavioral issues, but more recent study has shown how important good emotions are for fostering growth and well-being (Fredrickson, 2001). Children's social, cognitive, and emotional development is aided by positive feelings including joy, appreciation, hope, interest, and love (Fredrickson, 2001). The Broaden-and-Build Theory of Positive Emotions states that children's thought and behavior patterns are expanded by positive emotions, which promote social interaction, learning, creativity, and exploration (Fredrickson, 2001). Children gain important personal resources over time from these experiences, such as psychological strength, problem-solving skills, social competence, and resilience. Additionally, optimism, interpersonal interactions, coping skills, and general life satisfaction are all enhanced by positive emotions (Fredrickson, 2001; Ferreira et al., 2021). According to additional research, kids who regularly feel happy exhibit improved emotional wellbeing and better social adjustment (Alzahrani et al., 2019).

Another crucial measure of children's mental health and wellbeing is social adjustment. The ability of a youngster to connect with others, adhere to social rules, and form wholesome relationships is referred to as social adjustment. Children's social adjustment is influenced by a number of things. Children's ability to adjust to social situations is largely influenced by personal factors including intelligence, emotional development, and physical health. According to Ferreira et al. (2021), children who have strong emotional regulation and self-assurance are typically better

equipped to build healthy connections and successfully adapt to various social contexts. Children's social adjustment is also significantly impacted by environmental influences. Children's emotional and social development is greatly influenced by their families, which act as the main socializing force. According to Ferreira et al. (2021), a home setting that is responsive, caring, and supportive fosters social competence, stable attachment, and self-esteem. By offering chances for communication, collaboration, and education, schools also make a substantial contribution to social development. Children who grow up in positive school environments are more likely to develop social responsibility, communication skills, and respect for others (Alzahrani et al., 2019). Peer connections also offer important chances to develop cooperation, empathy, leadership, conflict resolution, and social problem-solving skills. Children's social conduct and adjustment are further shaped by community influences, cultural beliefs, religious organizations, and media exposure, which serve as role models for appropriate behavior and social norms. The ability of children to form and sustain meaningful relationships is directly related to the development of emotional well-being. Children are more likely to acquire empathy, trust, and good communication skills if they receive emotional support from peers, teachers, and caregivers (Ferreira et al., 2021). These skills support better academic achievement, psychological adjustment, and healthy social functioning (Alzahrani et al., 2019). In order to help children grow into self-assured, resilient, socially adept, and emotionally sound adults, it is crucial to promote emotional well-being and positive mental health during childhood.

Complaining Behaviour in Children

People frequently use complaining behavior as a way to communicate their displeasure, unease, annoyance, or unfulfilled expectations. Kowalski (2002) defines complaining as expressing discontent with oneself, other people, or circumstances in order to release feelings or

accomplish particular intrapsychic and interpersonal objectives. Excessive or persistent complaining can become maladaptive and have a detrimental impact on children's emotional, social, and academic functioning, even when occasional complaints may serve adaptive purposes.

According to Kowalski (2002), complaining behavior is defined as verbal or nonverbal expressions of discontent directed against a person, circumstance, event, or scenario that is thought to be unjust or unpleasant. Complaining in childhood might take the form of whining, moaning, expressing dissatisfaction frequently, placing blame on others, or dwelling on unpleasant elements of situations. Persistent complaining frequently indicates issues with emotional control and handling displeasure, even while some complaints are valid attempts to express needs or find solutions (Child Mind Institute, 2023). Not every complaint is detrimental. Researchers make a distinction between habitual complaining and productive complaints. Constructive complaints are targeted at someone who can resolve the problem and are solution-focused and detailed. Their main goal is to solve an issue, make a situation better, or find support for constructive change.

According to Kowalski (2002), constructive complaining promotes problem-solving, communication, and adaptive coping.

On the other hand, chronic complaining is repetitious, ambiguous, and mostly used as a way to express bad feelings without looking for answers. Regular whiners frequently reject helpful advice and concentrate more on issues than potential solutions. Over time, these tendencies may strengthen pessimistic attitudes, powerlessness, and negative thoughts (Fredrickson, 2001). In addition to strengthening cognitive inclinations to concentrate on unpleasant situations, persistent complaining may increase the frequency and automaticity of negative interpretations.

Numerous psychological, social, and environmental factors can contribute to children's complaining behavior. Frustration is one of the most frequent reasons people complain. Children frequently become frustrated when they run into problems, don't get the results they want, or deal with circumstances that are beyond of their control. Children may communicate their frustration by whining, complaining, or emotional outbursts rather than productive communication since emotional control abilities are still developing in late childhood (Ferreira et al., 2021). Thus, frequent complaints could be a sign of trouble controlling disappointment and negative feelings. When children's emotional, social, or physical needs are not sufficiently satisfied, complaining may also occur.

Persistent discontent may be caused by feelings of loneliness, isolation, exhaustion, hunger, boredom, or a lack of emotional support. When children lack the vocabulary or emotional awareness to communicate their concerns directly, they may utilize complaints as a means of expressing unfulfilled demands (Child Mind Institute, 2023). When a youngster complains, it's often an indication that they need help, attention, comfort, or understanding. Children may whine in order to get their parents, teachers, or peers' attention. Despite the negative perception of attention-seeking, it typically indicates a child's need for emotional support and connection. Children who feel neglected, alienated, or overlooked by important people may complain persistently.

According to research, children who receive little positive attention may resort to negative behaviors, such as whining, in an effort to regain adult attention and contact (Child Mind Institute, 2023). In late childhood, peer bonds become more significant. Children's peers and social groupings can have an impact on their attitudes and conduct. Children who are exposed to peers who regularly complain, criticize, or exhibit negative attitudes are more likely to engage in such

activities. Maladaptive communication habits, such as excessive complaining, might be adopted due to peer approval and the need to fit in (Rubin et al., 2015). Children's behavioral tendencies are greatly influenced by their parental environment. Through interaction with family members and observation, children pick up communication patterns and emotional reactions. Children may emulate parents or other caregivers who regularly grumble, criticize others, or voice unhappiness. On the other hand, excessive complaining can be less common in supportive family contexts that promote thankfulness, emotional expressiveness, and constructive problem-solving (Ferreira et al., 2021). Excessive complaining can have a number of detrimental effects on children's emotional, social, and academic functioning, even if occasional complaints are a normal part of growth.

Anger, frustration, despair, and discontent are among the unpleasant feelings that are linked to frequent complaining. Pessimistic thought patterns can be strengthened and general psychological well-being can be lowered by repeatedly focusing on unpleasant situations. According to research on happy emotions, possibilities for pleasant emotional experiences and adaptive coping may be limited if negative occurrences receive constant attention (Fredrickson, 2001).

Children who complain a lot may have trouble interacting with their peers. Persistent negativity can reduce the enjoyment of social contacts, which may result in interpersonal conflict, social disengagement, or peer rejection. Children who constantly focus on issues and discontent may find that friends and classmates are less inclined to interact with them. As a result, persistent complaining may damage relationships and social acceptance (Rubin et al., 2015). Excessive complaining can interfere with classroom operations and foster a hostile learning environment in educational settings. Regular displays of discontent can divert peers, escalate disputes, and diminish cooperative relationships. According to Alzahrani et al. (2019), children who frequently

complain may also find it difficult to adjust to the norms, procedures, and expectations of the classroom, which can have an impact on their own and their peers' educational experiences.

A negative cognitive style that emphasizes problems rather than solutions may be developed as a result of persistent complaining. Children may eventually start to believe that they have no control over circumstances, which can result in feelings of helplessness and a decrease in their attempts to solve problems. Resilience, self-efficacy, and adaptive coping mechanisms may be hampered by such patterns (Seligman, 2011).

Conflict

A normal and unavoidable part of human contact and growth is conflict. According to the American Psychological Association [APA], n.d., conflict in psychology is a condition of tension or disagreement that develops when people have conflicting needs, goals, beliefs, values, or desires. Conflict can arise between individuals and groups (interpersonal and intergroup conflict) or within an individual (intrapersonal conflict). Interpersonal conflict is particularly significant in the context of childhood development since children often have arguments with parents, teachers, siblings, and peers as they develop social skills and negotiate relationships. A dispute, antagonism, or friction that arises when one person's behaviors, views, needs, or goals are opposed by another is known as conflict (APA, n.d.). When children see obstacles to their desires, personal space, belongings, relationships, or ideas, conflict frequently arises in childhood settings. Developmental psychologists acknowledge that age-appropriate conflict offers beneficial possibilities for learning communication, cooperation, empathy, bargaining, and problem-solving skills, despite the fact that conflict is typically seen negatively (Finch & Wirtanen, 2012). Conflict is typically divided into two categories by psychologists: internal (intrapersonal) and external (interpersonal). When two or more conflicting motives, wants, or objectives cause psychological strain, an individual

experiences intrapersonal conflict. Approach-approach conflict, avoidance-avoidance conflict, approach-avoidance conflict, and double approach-avoidance conflict are some of the intrapersonal conflict types that Kurt Lewin described (Lewin, 1935). These conflicts have an impact on children's decision-making, although they are not as obvious as interpersonal disputes. When two or more people disagree over goals, needs, beliefs, values, or behaviors, interpersonal conflict results (APA, n.d.). During late childhood, interpersonal conflicts typically arise between friends, siblings, parents, and teachers. These conflicts may entail fights about toys, resources, friendships, personal space, rules, justice, or social standing. As youngsters gain greater independence and social awareness, interpersonal disputes become a frequent aspect of their daily experiences (Finch & Wirtanen, 2012). During childhood, conflict is a typical developmental event. Children come across circumstances that test their beliefs, preferences, and behaviors as they engage with others in home, school, and community contexts. According to developmental experts, conflict is neither intrinsically good nor bad; rather, how it is handled and resolved determines its consequences (Finch & Wirtanen, 2012). Conflicts can be chances for kids to learn collaboration, communication, empathy, and emotional control when they are supported by loving adults.

Toys, relationships, ideas, personal space, power, and miscommunications are major sources of conflict for kids. Children are still acquiring the cognitive and emotional skills required to comprehend the perspectives of others and effectively control their own emotions, which frequently leads to such confrontations. Therefore, if disputes are not handled constructively, they may turn into arguments, hostility, disengagement, or emotional distress (Ferreira et al., 2021).

Children want more autonomy and control over their decisions and activities as they get older. Disagreements about rules, expectations, and obligations with parents, instructors, and peers

may result from this drive for independence. When youngsters feel that their freedom or ability to make decisions is restricted, conflicts can arise (Ferreira et al., 2021). In late childhood, children's capacity to control their emotions is still growing. Conflict may arise from an inability to control feelings like anger, irritation, disappointment, jealousy, or worry. Interpersonal conflict is more likely to occur when children who have trouble controlling their emotions respond impulsively during arguments (Alzahrani et al., 2019). When children's emotional, social, or physical needs are not sufficiently satisfied, conflicts may result. Feelings of alienation, neglect, loneliness, exhaustion, hunger, or perceived injustice can exacerbate dissatisfaction and raise the risk of conflict with others. Children may use disagreements, oppositional conduct, or conflictual relationships as a way to communicate these unfulfilled demands (Child Mind Institute, 2023).

Conflicts between siblings and peers are frequent in childhood. Conflicts are often the result of competition for resources, attention, friendships, social standing, or leadership positions. Children's growing communication abilities may also result in miscommunications that turn into confrontations. Effectively resolving these conflicts is a crucial component of social growth (Rubin et al., 2015). Children's conflict habits are greatly influenced by family interactions. Children may be more likely to engage in conflictual conduct if they are exposed to high levels of family conflict, inconsistent discipline, poor communication, or unfavorable role modeling. On the other hand, healthy conflict resolution techniques are promoted in supportive family settings that value respect, emotional expression, and problem-solving (Ferreira et al., 2021). There are many opportunities for social connection and, as a result, conflict in school environments. Interpersonal tensions may arise from disagreements about peer relationships, academic assignments, group activities, and classroom norms. Children can learn healthy conflict resolution techniques in classrooms with supportive teachers (Finch & Wirtanen, 2012). Excessive or badly handled conflict can have a

detrimental impact on children's development, even while moderate degrees of conflict can foster learning and development. Stress, anxiety, rage, impatience, and emotional suffering can all be exacerbated by frequent disagreement. Children who are exposed to ongoing interpersonal conflict may find it challenging to control their emotions and preserve their psychological health (Ferreira et al., 2021). Peer relationships and social adjustment can be negatively impacted by persistent conflict. Children that fight a lot may face social exclusion, rejection from their peers, or trouble making and keeping friends. Inadequate conflict resolution abilities may also diminish collaboration and empathy (Rubin et al., 2015). Academic performance, focus, and classroom participation can all be hampered by conflict in school settings. Unresolved disagreement can cause emotional distress, which can lower children's participation in educational activities and have a detrimental impact on academic results (Alzahrani et al., 2019). Aggressive behavior, oppositional tendencies, disengagement, and other behavioral issues may be exacerbated by ongoing conflict. When confronted with interpersonal difficulties, children who lack adequate conflict resolution skills may turn to maladaptive coping mechanisms (Child Mind Institute, 2023).

The process of resolving conflicts in a way that honors the needs and emotions of all parties involved is known as conflict resolution. Children can learn empathy, communication skills, emotional control, and problem-solving techniques through peaceful dispute resolution (Finch & Wirtanen, 2012). By demonstrating polite conversation, promoting perspective-taking, and assisting kids in coming up with workable solutions, adults play a critical role in helping kids resolve problems. Children's capacity to properly handle conflict can be greatly enhanced by teaching them skills like active listening, emotional awareness, cooperation, bargaining, and empathy. Gratitude, kindness, and compassion are examples of positive emotional traits that can further lessen animosity and foster peaceful interactions among kids.

A subfield of psychology called "positive psychology" is concerned with comprehending and advancing the elements that allow people, groups, and organizations to thrive and operate at their best. Positive psychology aims to comprehend human strengths, virtues, well-being, happiness, and optimal functioning, in contrast to traditional psychology, which focuses mostly on mental disease, weaknesses, and dysfunction (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). Positive psychology is "the study of the conditions and processes that contribute to the flourishing or optimal functioning of people, groups, and institutions," according to Gable and Haidt (2005). In a similar vein, positive psychology has been defined as the scientific study of virtues and qualities that support the well-being and fulfillment of individuals and communities (Peterson, 2006).

A major change in psychological research and practice was brought about by the rise of positive psychology. Positive psychology was initially launched as a significant trend within psychology in 1998 by psychologist Martin Seligman while he was president of the American Psychological Association. He maintained that psychology should research and foster positive traits like optimism, resilience, thankfulness, happiness, and well-being in addition to treating mental illnesses and fixing flaws (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). Therefore, the goal of positive psychology is to improve human functioning by assisting people in developing qualities that lead to fulfilling and meaningful lives.

Because it stresses the development of positive emotions, character characteristics, and supportive situations that foster healthy growth, positive psychology is especially pertinent to child development. Positive psychological qualities that are established from childhood have been shown to have a considerable impact on academic success, social competence, emotional adjustment, and long-term psychological well-being (Seligman et al., 2009). strong psychology

helps kids build resilience, self-assurance, optimism, and strong interpersonal interactions by emphasizing strengths rather than flaws.

Promoting happiness and pleasant emotions is one of positive psychology's main contributions to children's development. Joy, thankfulness, hope, and satisfaction are examples of positive emotions that expand children's thought processes and improve their capacity to develop social, intellectual, and emotional resources (Fredrickson, 2001). The Broaden-and-Build Theory states that children who experience pleasant emotions are more attentive and creative, which helps them build stronger social bonds and adaptive coping mechanisms. Children who experience good emotions on a regular basis typically exhibit higher levels of life satisfaction, better academic engagement, and stronger peer relationships. Optimism, or the propensity to anticipate favorable results in the future, is another key idea in positive psychology. According to Seligman's (1991) notion of acquired optimism, people can cultivate constructive explaining methods that enable them to deal with difficulties and disappointments. Children who are optimistic are more likely to show less anxiety and despair, have greater self-confidence, and persevere in the face of adversity. Additionally, optimism promotes adaptive behavior and constructive problem-solving, making it a crucial protective element in child development.

Another important concept that positive psychology emphasizes is resilience. The capacity to overcome hardship, adjust to difficulties, and preserve psychological health in the face of traumatic events is known as resilience. By enhancing coping mechanisms, emotional control, and constructive thought patterns, positive psychology interventions support children's resilience. Resilient children are better equipped to manage academic stress, peer conflicts, and everyday disappointments while maintaining healthy emotional functioning (Masten, 2014). As children

face more social, intellectual, and emotional difficulties in late childhood, resilience development is especially crucial.

Gratitude has drawn a lot of attention among the many strengths examined in positive psychology. According to Emmons and McCullough (2003), gratitude is a good emotional reaction that results from acknowledging and appreciating the advantages obtained from other people or from life's circumstances. Gratitude fosters positive feelings, empathy, prosocial behavior, and healthier interpersonal relationships. According to research, children who are thankful report happier lives, more social connections, and less behavioral issues (Froh et al., 2008). Gratitude is also very essential for lowering complaining behavior and interpersonal conflict since it encourages kids to concentrate on the good aspects of their experiences rather than lingering on negativity or discontent.

In positive psychology, the idea of well-being is crucial. The five key elements of Seligman's (2011) PERMA model of well-being are Positive Emotion, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning, and Accomplishment. This paradigm holds that people thrive when they feel well, actively participate in worthwhile activities, uphold helpful relationships, discover their life's purpose, and accomplish important objectives. These factors support children's overall life enjoyment, healthy social growth, academic performance, and emotional stability.

Through the creation of Positive Psychology Interventions (PPIs), positive psychology has also made a substantial contribution to educational settings. The goal of these therapies is to improve kids' emotional intelligence, resilience, well-being, and character traits. Gratitude journals, mindfulness exercises, strength identification, positive reflection, and social-emotional learning programs are all becoming more and more common in schools. Research has demonstrated that positive psychology interventions improve students' emotional well-being,

reduce symptoms of anxiety and depression, increase academic engagement, and foster positive peer connections (Seligman et al., 2009). Additionally, by promoting empathy, kindness, cooperation, and respect for one another among kids, these interventions create inclusive and encouraging educational settings.

Martin Seligman and Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi's work has had a significant impact on positive psychology. Seligman created the PERMA model of well-being, which provides a framework for comprehending human flourishing, and proposed the idea of acquired optimism (Seligman, 2011). He stressed the value of developing good feelings, virtues, and fulfilling experiences in life. The notion of flow, which defines a state of total engagement and absorption in an activity when people experience delight, attention, and intrinsic motivation, is what made Csikszentmihalyi most famous (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990). His studies showed that the best experiences had a major impact on psychological well-being, happiness, and personal development.

Gratitude

According to the American Psychological Association [APA], 2018, gratitude is the feeling of thankfulness, appreciation, and satisfaction that arises when one receives a favor, kindness, gift, or favorable result. Gratitude is seen in psychology as both a dispositional characteristic and an emotional experience. It entails appreciating life's pleasant elements and realizing that these advantages frequently originate from outside sources like other people, the natural world, or advantageous circumstances. Gratitude is seen by positive psychology as a positive psychological resource that improves well-being, fortifies interpersonal bonds, and increases life satisfaction rather than just being a straightforward way to express gratitude. Regularly feeling thankful is

associated with increased levels of enjoyment, optimism, psychological adjustment, and social connectivity (Emmons & McCullough, 2003; Wood et al., 2010).

The idea of thankfulness has developed over centuries and has its origins in modern psychology, philosophy, religious traditions, and evolutionary theory. The Latin terms *gratia* (grace or favor) and *gratus* (pleasing or thankful) are the roots of the English word *gratitude*. Gratitude is thought to have evolved as a mechanism that encouraged cooperation and reciprocal altruism among early human populations. Gratitude strengthened social ties and increased group survival by motivating people to return acts of generosity (Trivers, 1971). Additionally, gratitude is seen as a moral virtue that promotes humility, compassion, and spiritual development in many religious traditions, such as Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, and Buddhism (Emmons & Crumpler, 2000). Gratitude was considered one of the most significant virtues by classical thinkers like Cicero and Seneca, who referred to it as the "parent of all virtues." In modern psychology, gratitude received scientific recognition thanks to Martin Seligman's Positive Psychology Movement. Gratitude has been shown to have major advantages for social functioning, physical health, and psychological well-being by researchers like Robert Emmons (Emmons & McCullough, 2003).

As children's cognitive, emotional, and social skills develop, gratitude gradually grows throughout childhood. Gratitude is frequently exhibited in early life as taught social behaviors, like as "thank you," without a complete comprehension of its emotional importance. As kids get older, they start to understand that compassion and presents are the result of other people's efforts and intentions. By identifying the motivations underlying helpful gestures and comprehending how gratitude fosters social relationships, school-age children have a more nuanced knowledge of thankfulness. Gratitude during adolescence encompasses more than just material presents; it also includes appreciation for opportunities, friendships, emotional support, and life experiences.

According to research, children and teenagers who are thankful typically have higher levels of pleasure, empathy, prosocial conduct, social competence, and overall life satisfaction (Froh et al., 2011; Bono et al., 2019).

Gratitude, according to developmental psychologists, is a multifaceted process with four key elements. First, people need to take note of or acknowledge good things that happen, such as presents or deeds of generosity. Second, they think by comprehending the origin of the advantage and the motivations behind it. Third, they feel good emotions like gratitude, joy, or appreciation. Lastly, expressing gratitude entails using words, deeds, or mutually beneficial behaviors to show thanks. When combined, these elements support empathy, social understanding, and positive interpersonal interactions.

The nature and purposes of thankfulness are explained by a number of theoretical stances. According to McCullough and associates' Moral Affect Theory of Gratitude, gratitude is a moral feeling that fosters prosocial action and social cohesiveness. This theory holds that gratitude serves as a moral motivator by promoting reciprocal acts of kindness, a moral barometer by assisting people in identifying benefits received from others, and a moral reinforcer by raising the possibility that benefactors will continue to act in a prosocial manner (McCullough et al., 2001).

Barbara Fredrickson's Broaden-and-Build Theory is another well-known explanation. According to this hypothesis, a person's thought-action repertoire is expanded by good emotions like gratitude, allowing for more adaptable problem-solving, flexible thinking, and creativity. These expanded behavioral and cognitive inclinations eventually aid people in developing long-lasting personal resources like coping mechanisms, resilience, and encouraging social connections (Fredrickson, 2001).

Gratitude is a mechanism that controls reciprocity in interpersonal relationships, according to the Social Exchange Theory. This viewpoint holds that by encouraging people to recognize the advantages they have received and offer support in return, thankfulness contributes to the preservation of justice and equilibrium in social interactions. Gratitude fosters social cohesion, cooperation, and trust through this process. By boosting pleasant emotions and lowering negative ones like jealousy, anger, and regret, thankfulness enhances psychological well-being, according to pleasant Emotion Theory. Gratitude fosters optimism, life satisfaction, and emotional well-being by encouraging people to concentrate on what they have rather than what they lack.

Robert Emmons, one of the top scholars of gratitude, is credited with laying the groundwork for the field's scientific foundation. Emmons has shown through a number of empirical research that gratitude interventions enhance social relationships, physical health, psychological well-being, sleep quality, and overall life satisfaction (Emmons & McCullough, 2003). In a similar vein, Barbara Fredrickson's Broaden-and-Build Theory which explains how gratitude and other positive emotions help people develop long-term emotional, cognitive, and social resources necessary for flourishing made a substantial contribution to our understanding of gratitude (Fredrickson, 2001).

Gratitude interventions are deliberate actions intended to foster gratitude, boost happiness, and improve mental health. Gratitude journaling is a popular intervention in which people consistently list the things for which they are grateful. According to research, this approach lessens depression symptoms while increasing pleasure, life satisfaction, and positive affect (Emmons & McCullough, 2003). The gratitude letter is an additional intervention in which people write a letter to someone who has had a good impact on their lives to show gratitude. Stronger interpersonal connections and more positive feelings have been linked to this practice.

thankfulness sharing is another type of thankfulness intervention that strengthens social ties and empathy by having people verbally express gratitude to friends, family, or peers. People can become more conscious of the good things in their lives by participating in structured activities like gratitude jars, gratitude walks, and daily gratitude lists. Reflection-based therapies, such as counting blessings and gratitude meditation, help people focus on the good things in their lives and promote mental health. These techniques are especially helpful in educational and counseling contexts when the main objective is to foster resilience and positive feelings.

Children's psychological, emotional, and social development is greatly influenced by gratitude. Children who often feel and express thankfulness are more likely to be happy, optimistic, empathetic, resilient, and prosocial. Stronger peer relationships, greater social competency, and greater life happiness are all facilitated by gratitude. Additionally, it helps youngsters focus on positive experiences, deal with difficulties more skillfully, and cultivate a more positive outlook on life, all of which contribute to emotional well-being (Froh et al., 2011; Bono et al., 2019). Gratitude is therefore becoming more widely acknowledged as a critical protective factor that promotes healthy growth, improves mental health, and helps children and adolescents flourish overall.

By reorienting a person's attention from discontent and bad experiences to appreciation and pleasant parts of life, gratitude plays a significant influence in lowering complaining behavior. Gratitude enables people to acknowledge and value the wonderful experiences, connections, and resources they currently have, while complaining frequently results from dissatisfaction, unfulfilled expectations, and recurrent negative thinking. Gratitude therefore serves as a cognitive buffer that disrupts negative thought patterns and encourages a more optimistic perspective. Children who consistently express thankfulness are less likely to focus on issues and more likely

to concentrate on opportunities and solutions, which lowers the frequency of complaining behavior (Emmons & McCullough, 2003; Wood et al., 2010).

Redirecting focus from shortcomings to blessings is one of the main ways that thankfulness lessens complaining. Gratitude helps kids see the good things that happen, the relationships that support them, and the everyday advantages instead of focusing on what is lacking or what has gone wrong. This change in focus promotes contentment and lessens discontent. Children who are grateful are less likely to voice persistent discontent and disparaging comments because they are more likely to recognize the efforts of their parents, teachers, and peers.

Additionally, gratitude lessens emotional ruminating and pessimistic thinking. Persistent focus on issues and perceived injustice are frequently linked to excessive complaints. According to research, being grateful lowers stress and negative affect while boosting good emotions and psychological well-being (Emmons & McCullough, 2003). The loop of negative thinking that frequently drives continuous complaining is weakened by thankfulness, which cultivates feelings of appreciation and contentment. Gratitude also has a major role in controlling emotions. Gratitude teaches kids how to better handle stress, frustration, and disappointment. They learn healthy coping strategies and improve their ability to control their emotions rather than reacting impulsively by whining or complaining. Children with better emotional regulation are able to react to obstacles and failures in a more positive way, which reduces whining and fosters resilience.

Additionally, gratitude has a big impact on fostering peaceful interpersonal connections and lowering conflict. Gratitude is a positive social feeling that promotes mutual regard, cooperation, empathy, and prosocial behavior all of which help to reduce interpersonal conflict. Gratitude increases a person's ability to identify and value the good intentions and deeds of others, which reduces the likelihood of animosity, violence, or interpersonal conflicts.

Enhancing empathy is one of the main ways that appreciation lessens conflict. Gratitude increases people's capacity to comprehend and value diverse viewpoints by encouraging them to recognize the efforts, sacrifices, and generosity of others. This increased empathy encourages perspective-taking and emotional comprehension, both of which are critical for resolving conflicts amicably. Grateful kids are less likely to behave angrily or resentfully during arguments and are more likely to react empathetically to others.

Additionally, gratitude encourages reciprocity and teamwork. Gratitude encourages people to reciprocate generosity and preserve strong connections, according to social exchange ideas. Children are more inclined to collaborate, share resources, make concessions, and participate in group problem-solving when they value the help and support they receive from others. These activities ease interpersonal conflict and promote more positive peer relationships.

Gratitude also promotes prosocial behavior, such as giving, kindness, sharing, and assistance. These actions improve classroom and household environments and build social ties. According to research, being grateful raises the possibility of "paying forward" deeds of kindness, which fosters social harmony and lowers the frequency of conflicts (Froh et al., 2011). Children who are thankful are more likely to form helpful peer relationships that are marked by mutual regard, trust, and understanding.

The capacity of appreciation to improve self-control and lessen anger is another significant benefit. Gratitude reduces unpleasant feelings like jealousy, resentment, and hostility and encourages emotional regulation. Children who are grateful are less likely to act aggressively or disruptively and are better able to restrain their spontaneous impulses during arguments. As a result, thankfulness promotes constructive conflict-resolution techniques and helps to defuse tense situations.

Gratitude interventions in schools have proven to be successful tactics for enhancing peer connections, lowering complaining behavior, and fostering emotional well-being. These programs help children cultivate positive thinking and appreciation habits by including gratitude practices into regular school activities. These initiatives, which are frequently based on the ideas of positive psychology, seek to promote social connectedness, emotional control, resilience, and empathy.

One noteworthy example is the Greater Good Science Center's Youth Gratitude Project, which encourages kids to be thankful and acknowledge the good things in their lives. According to research, students who participate in gratitude-based programs have higher levels of pleasant emotions, appreciative thinking, and social skills.

Gratitude is fostered through a variety of classroom exercises. Peer connections and classroom cohesion are strengthened when students are encouraged to recognize the positive traits and contributions of their peers through appreciation exercises. Students can show gratitude for persons and events in their lives and reflect on everyday positive experiences by keeping gratitude notebooks. Children are further encouraged to concentrate on positive events and cultivate an attitude of thankfulness through gratitude sharing activities, gratitude walls, and gratitude scavenger hunts.

The "Flip Complaints" activity, which teaches pupils to turn complaints into expressions of thankfulness, is another useful tactic. For instance, children are encouraged to find a good aspect of the circumstance rather than concentrating on an annoyance. This exercise fosters cognitive reframing, a technique that enhances emotional resilience and constructive problem-solving, and lessens negative thinking. In general, school-based thankfulness treatments strengthen peer relationships, social connections, emotional regulation, empathy, and lessen children's grumbling

and conflict. Gratitude is a vital protective element that supports psychological well-being and healthy social development by cultivating appreciation and happy feelings.

Need for the Study

Children's social and emotional behavior in school environments has drawn more attention in recent years, especially when it comes to maladaptive patterns like persistent complaining and interpersonal conflict. Peer connections, classroom atmosphere, and general learning engagement can all be adversely impacted by these behaviors. Gratitude has been recognized as a crucial protective element that promotes prosocial behavior, adaptive coping, and pleasant emotions within the positive psychology paradigm. Nevertheless, there is still little empirical research on the direct effects of thankfulness on particular behavioral outcomes, such as complaining behavior and conflict among school-age children, despite mounting evidence of its advantages.

Children in India are increasingly subjected to peer comparison, academic pressure, and regimented classroom demands, especially in metropolitan school settings like Thiruvananthapuram. These factors may lead to higher levels of discontent and interpersonal conflict. Fewer studies have examined organized gratitude-based interventions targeted at changing daily behavioral patterns in school environments, despite the fact that previous research has examined thankfulness in relation to well-being, happiness, and resilience. When it comes to early adolescents, where behavioral tendencies are still emerging and extremely receptive to environmental and psychological interventions, this disparity is most noticeable.

In order to close this gap, the current study looks at the efficacy of a 25-day activity intervention centered around gratitude for eleven and twelve-year-old students ($N = 28$) in an urban school in Thiruvananthapuram. Standardized measures of conflict and complaining behavior were

used in a pre-test and post-test design to evaluate changes after the intervention. The study aims to offer a more thorough knowledge of how thankfulness practices affect kids' interpersonal functioning in actual classroom settings by equally emphasizing both behavioral elements. The results of this study have practical implications for counseling psychology and education. Gratitude-based activities can be incorporated into student well-being programs, classroom management techniques, and school-based interventions if they prove to be successful. This could help educators and school counselors create more favorable learning environments, lessen behavioral issues, and encourage better peer relationships. Therefore, by addressing an understudied but developmentally significant aspect of child behavior in the Indian school context, the study advances the applied field of counseling psychology.

Statement of the Problem

School-age children frequently exhibit complaining behavior and interpersonal disagreements, which can negatively impact peer relationships, classroom dynamics, emotional health, and social adjustment. While unresolved arguments can impede communication, cooperation, and the development of healthy interpersonal skills, persistent complaining may perpetuate negative cognitive patterns and undermine effective functioning within the school environment.

While schools and families frequently use corrective or disciplinary tactics to address such behavioral issues, preventive and strength-based approaches receive relatively less attention. In order to improve wellbeing and encourage adaptive behavior, positive psychology emphasizes the importance of positive emotions and character traits. According to this theory, prosocial behavior, empathy, emotional control, and better interpersonal connections are all linked to the important notion of thankfulness.

Although there is growing evidence of the positive effects of thankfulness, little study has particularly looked at how well it works to reduce children's complaining behavior and interpersonal conflict. In order to improve children's social and emotional functioning, it is also necessary to investigate organized gratitude-based activities as workable school-based interventions.

Thus, the current study intends to investigate how well thankfulness exercises can lessen children's complaining behavior and conflict. The goal of the study is to ascertain whether developing thankfulness might lead to better peer relationships, better emotional control, and a happier learning environment.

Objectives of the Study

General Objective

1. To examine the effectiveness of gratitude-based activities in reducing complaining behaviour and interpersonal conflict among children.

Specific Objectives

2. To examine the effect of gratitude-based activities on reducing complaining behaviour among children.
3. To analyze the impact of gratitude-based activities on minimizing interpersonal conflicts among children.
4. To assess the change in gratitude levels among children following the implementation of gratitude-based activities.

Hypotheses of the Study

- H₀₁: There will be no significant difference in complaining behaviour among children before and after the implementation of gratitude-based activities.
- H₀₂: There will be no significant difference in conflict behaviour among children before and after the implementation of gratitude-based activities.
- H₀₃: There will be no significant difference in gratitude among children before and after the implementation of gratitude-based activities.

Delimitations of the Study

The present study is delimited to children in late childhood, specifically those aged 11–12 years, studying in a selected school in the urban area of Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala. The sample comprised 28 children selected based on accessibility and institutional permission.

The study is confined to examining the effectiveness of gratitude-based activities in reducing complaining behaviour and interpersonal conflict among children. In addition, gratitude levels were also assessed as part of the study. Other psychological and behavioural variables such as happiness, resilience, self-esteem, optimism, and general well-being were not included as outcome variables.

The intervention was limited to a 25-day structured programme involving gratitude activities conducted within the school setting. Pre-test and post-test assessments were administered for gratitude, complaining behaviour, and conflict using selected standardized measures.

Children with severe cognitive, developmental, or psychiatric conditions that could interfere with participation in the intervention were excluded from the study. The findings of the

study are based on a single-group or selected-sample design and are therefore limited in generalizability to other populations, settings, and contexts.

CHAPTER II
LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature pertinent to the study on how appreciation can lessen children's complaining behavior and conflict is reviewed in this chapter. The review is divided into three sections: literature review, empirical review, and theoretical review. The theoretical review looks at the theoretical and conceptual underpinnings of conflict, complaining behavior, and thankfulness. The empirical review summarizes the results of earlier studies on children's thankfulness development, conflict reduction, complaining behavior, and gratitude therapies. The literature review summarizes the key conclusions of the examined studies and identifies the research gap that serves as the foundation for the current study.

Theoretical Review

In his book "Conflict and Conflict Management," Joseph S. Himes (2008) investigated the nature, causes, and management of social conflict. The author examined basic issues about the traits, manifestations, origins, and effects of social conflict by drawing on social science ideas and research. The impact of interpersonal dynamics, power disparities, and social institutions on the formation and continuation of conflict was covered in the book. It also looked at the positive and negative effects of conflict and emphasized conflict management, prevention, and prediction techniques. Effective conflict management, according to Himes, should be based on a thorough comprehension of the reasons behind conflict and the distinction between legitimate and illegitimate forms of conflict. The book came to the conclusion that more effective conflict resolution and management techniques in social contexts can be facilitated by a methodical understanding of conflict.

In their chapter "Gratitude and the Science of Positive Psychology," Robert A. Emmons and Charles M. Shelton (2002) examined the function of thankfulness in the developing discipline of positive psychology. The authors looked at gratitude as a basic human strength that supports

social functioning, personal development, and psychological well-being. They emphasized that thankfulness has long been seen as a valued virtue across countries and traditions, drawing on philosophical, theological, and psychological viewpoints. The chapter focused on the potential advantages of gratitude, such as increased life satisfaction, deeper interpersonal ties, better physical and mental health, and increased pleasure. The writers contended that although gratitude was widely acknowledged in popular and religious literature, there was still little scientific research on the subject at the time and further empirical study was needed. The chapter came to the conclusion that gratitude is a key concept in positive psychology and offers a crucial basis for comprehending human flourishing and wellbeing.

In their chapter "Gratitude in Practice and the Practice of Gratitude," Giacomo Bono, Robert A. Emmons, and Michael E. McCullough (2004) covered the idea and practice of thankfulness. The authors defined gratitude as a larger life perspective marked by appreciation and thankfulness as well as an emotional reaction to obtaining advantages. They clarified that thankfulness may be understood on several levels, from transient emotional experiences to long-lasting personality dispositions, drawing on historical research and modern positive psychology. The chapter emphasized the importance of appreciation for healthy personal growth, interpersonal connections, and psychological well-being. The authors also highlighted the usefulness of gratitude in clinical and applied contexts, contending that it can promote constructive transformations in people, families, and organizations. The chapter came to the conclusion that gratitude is a key concept in positive psychology and a valuable tool for improving human happiness and well-being.

In a review titled "Gratitude and Well-Being: A Review and Theoretical Integration," Alex M. Wood, Jeffrey J. Froh, and Adam W. A. Geraghty (2010) looked into the connection between

thankfulness and well-being and created a thorough theoretical framework to explain it. The writers defined thankfulness as a habitual tendency to identify and value life's pleasant features as well as a reaction to getting advantages from others. Based on studies in psychopathology, personality, relationships, health, subjective well-being, and psychological functioning, the review demonstrated a robust and persistent relationship between well-being and thankfulness. Additionally, the authors examined gratitude-based therapies critically and proposed that they could improve psychological well-being. The review also included a number of ways that gratitude may enhance wellbeing, such as positive affect, adaptive coping, cognitive schemas, and the Broaden-and-Build Theory's tenets. The authors came to the conclusion that thankfulness has major implications for clinical psychology and positive psychology interventions and is a crucial concept for comprehending and fostering psychological well-being.

In their paper "From Struggle to Strength: The Therapeutic Potential of Gratitude Journaling for Student Mental Health," Simranjeet Kaur, Mamta Sharma, and Barjinder Singh (2025) examined the therapeutic potential of gratitude journaling in fostering students' mental health and wellbeing. The study, which was based on the ideas of positive psychology and expressive writing, described gratitude journaling as an organized activity that helps people identify and value the good things in their life. The authors explored how gratitude journaling may improve psychological resilience, cultivate a positive outlook, and lessen the negative impacts of academic stress through a review of the research. The study also emphasized how incorporating gratitude journals into classrooms might help students' mental health and long-term wellbeing. The authors came to the conclusion that keeping a thankfulness notebook is a viable and approachable strategy for enhancing students' psychological wellbeing.

P Veerasithi Vinayagan investigated how gratitude and yoga may be used in conjunction to turn conflict into compassion in learning environments. The author suggested that yoga and gratitude combined promote emotional control, self-awareness, empathy, and connectivity, drawing on ideas from both traditional yogic philosophy and modern psychology. The study emphasized that while gratitude fosters psychological well-being, life satisfaction, and healthy social interactions, yoga practices which include physical postures, breath control, and meditation improve stress resilience and emotional balance. It was proposed that incorporating these techniques would create a positive cycle that promotes compassion, lessens animosity, and enhances interactions between parents, teachers, and kids. The study came to the conclusion that integrating yoga with gratitude could be a useful strategy for fostering calm and encouraging learning environments.

Empirical Review

Studies Related to Complaining Behavior

In a study titled "Complaining Behavior in Social Interaction," Mark D. Alicke, James C. Braun, Jeffrey E. Glor, and associates (1992) looked at the purposes and traits of complaining in regular social contacts. On two times during the academic semester, college students were required to keep journals detailing the grievances they voiced to others over the course of three days. The type of complaints, the reasons behind them, and the answers they got were all noted by the participants. The results showed that over 75% of complaints were non-instrumental in character, which means that they were largely made to share experiences, express dissatisfaction, or ask for compassion rather than to make a change. The majority of complaints focused on other people's actions, and listeners most frequently expressed agreement with the complaint. According to the

study's findings, complaining is crucial for social communication and has a big impact on interpersonal relationships.

In a study titled "The Influence of Empathy in Complaint Handling: Evidence of Gritudinal and Transactional Routes to Loyalty," Françoise Simon (2013) investigated the function of appreciation and empathy in consumer complaint handling scenarios. Based on relationship marketing theory, the study suggested that the relationship between empathy and customers' trust and commitment is mediated by transactional satisfaction and appreciation. A cross-industry survey of consumers who had voiced complaints over the phone and online was used to gather data. The results validated the suggested model, showing that resolving complaints with empathy increased customer satisfaction and thankfulness, which in turn increased loyalty, commitment, and trust. The study came to the conclusion that, after service recovery efforts, firms can establish and sustain strong customer connections by using thankfulness as a key strategy.

In a study titled "Gratitude, Delight, or Guilt: The Role of Consumers' Emotions in Predicting Post consumption Behaviors," Isabella Soscia (2007) examined the connections between consumer evaluations, feelings, and post-consumption actions. The study looked at how emotions including appreciation, happiness, guilt, anger, pride, and sadness affect behaviors like repurchase intentions, complaint behavior, and positive and negative word-of-mouth. The results showed that different customer reactions were predicted by different emotions. Specifically, repurchase intentions and positive word-of-mouth were found to be predicted by gratitude, while happiness did not have the same effect. Guilt was also linked to less complaining behavior and unfavorable word-of-mouth. According to the study's findings, thankfulness has a special influence on encouraging consumer behavior and upholding positive connections between customers and businesses.

Studies Related to Gratitude Intervention

In order to investigate the efficacy of gratitude interventions across a variety of psychological outcomes, Leah R. Dickens (2017) carried out a meta-analysis titled "Using Gratitude to Promote Positive Change: A Series of Meta-Analyses Investigating the Effectiveness of Gratitude Interventions." The study contrasted gratitude therapies with neutral, negative, and positive comparison conditions at both post-intervention and follow-up evaluations, synthesizing results from 38 trials totaling 282 effect sizes. The results showed that thankfulness interventions improved a number of favorable outcomes, such as wellbeing and happiness. Nevertheless, not all outcomes showed the same impacts, and some advantages were shown to be similar to those generated by other beneficial activities. The study came to the conclusion that although gratitude therapies might encourage positive psychological change, the literature may occasionally exaggerate their special benefits. The significance of rigorously assessing the efficacy of gratitude-based therapies across many contexts and outcome measures was underlined by the author.

In order to assess the impact of gratitude treatments on psychological well-being, anxiety, and thankfulness, Don E. Davis, Elise Choe, Joel Meyers, and associates (2016) carried out a meta-analysis titled "Thankful for the Little Things: A Meta-Analysis of Gratitude Interventions." The researchers contrasted gratitude interventions with measurement-only control groups and alternative activity conditions, analyzing results from several experiments with participants in different contexts. When compared to measurement-only controls, the results showed that thankfulness interventions significantly improved psychological well-being. Additionally, thankfulness therapies were shown to be more successful than other activities in improving wellbeing and gratitude. However, the therapies were typically equivalent to other psychologically active interventions and did not have substantial effects in reducing anxiety. The study came to the

conclusion that, although their advantages may differ based on the comparative condition and result examined, gratitude interventions can successfully foster psychological well-being and gratitude. The authors stressed that more study is necessary to determine the best kind of gratitude-based therapies.

In order to evaluate the impact of various gratitude-based treatments on student well-being, Katherine Tolcher, Madalyn Cauble, and Andrew Downs (2024) conducted a study titled "Evaluating the Effects of Gratitude Interventions on College Student Well-Being." 132 college students participated in the study and were randomized to either an activity-matched control group or one of three gratitude intervention groups: gratitude blogging, gratitude contemplation, or app-prompted gratitude reflection. Over the course of eight weeks, participants performed baseline and post-intervention tests that measured life satisfaction, happiness, resilience, depression, anxiety, stress, and general well-being. The results showed that whereas the control group did not exhibit comparable improvements in well-being, students in all three thankfulness intervention groups did. Gratitude journaling showed the greatest improvements in emotional functioning and well-being among the therapies. According to the study's findings, thankfulness interventions are easy, affordable, and useful methods for improving college students' wellbeing and lowering stress, anxiety, and negative emotions.

This study looked at how first-year college students' adjustment, life satisfaction, and positive affect were affected by keeping a gratitude notebook. Students with high perceived stress levels and poor adaptability to college life were chosen by the researchers. Twenty-one of the twenty-four eligible students offered to take part. While students in the control group did not participate in any activities linked to appreciation, individuals in the experimental group kept a gratitude notebook for three weeks. The results showed that, in comparison to the control group,

students who kept gratitude journals demonstrated noticeably higher levels of thankfulness, improved transition to university life, greater life satisfaction, and more positive affect. According to the study's findings, college students who are under stress might improve their psychological well-being and adjust more easily by keeping a thankfulness notebook.

In a study titled "Positive Psychological Interventions for Children: A Comparison of Gratitude and Best Possible Selves Approaches," Rhea L. Owens and Meagan M. Patterson (2013) investigated the efficacy of gratitude and best possible selves interventions among children in elementary school. 62 kids between the ages of 5 and 11 took part in weekly intervention sessions as part of the study. Children in the control group drew something they had done that day, children in the best possible selves condition drew a positive future version of themselves, and children in the thankfulness condition were instructed to draw something for which they were thankful. Children were able to express gratitude and imagine happy future selves, according to an analysis of the drawings. The results showed that there was no discernible difference between the thankfulness intervention and the control condition. However, compared to the gratitude and control groups, children who took part in the greatest possible selves intervention showed more improvements in their self-esteem. The study found that while different therapies may result in varied psychological outcomes, positive psychological interventions can be used with young children.

Studies Related to Gratitude and Conflict Reduction

In order to investigate the impact of gratitude on competitive behavior in threatening social contexts, Eri Sasaki, Lile Jia, Heng Yin Lwa, and Mei Ting Goh (2020) did a study titled "Gratitude Inhibits Competitive Behavior in Threatening Interactions." In Study 1, which involved 171 individuals, participants used the Trucking Game paradigm to engage in a competitive engagement

while feeling grateful. The results showed that those who were feeling thankful behaved less competitively than people who were feeling neutral or happy. In Study 2, which involved 422 participants, options for sabotaging an opponent were evaluated and appreciation was induced following a competitive loss. The findings demonstrated that those who experienced gratitude were less inclined to act in ways that would undermine fiercely competitive opponents. According to the study's findings, thankfulness encourages more cooperative and prosocial reactions and lessens competitive and self-centered inclinations, especially in confrontational situations.

In a study titled "Dyadic Effects of Gratitude on Burden, Conflict, and Contribution in the Family Caregiver and Sibling Relationship," Lauren M. Amaro (2017) investigated how gratitude affected the relationships between family caregivers and their siblings while taking care of elderly parents. Actor-partner interdependence models were used to examine the dyadic data that was gathered via an online survey. Caregiver burden, spousal conflict, caring contribution, and thankfulness exchange were all examined in this study. The results showed that increased contributions to caring duties, decreased care-related conflict, and lower levels of caregiver burden were all linked to appreciation. According to the findings, family members' collaboration and support during caregiving situations are improved by appreciation, which acts as a protective relationship element. The study came to the conclusion that showing gratitude can improve caregiving results and fortify family ties.

In a study titled "Students in Higher Education Explore the Practice of Gratitude as Spirituality and Its Impact on Well-Being," Al Fuertes (2024) investigated the relationship between students' well-being and thankfulness as a kind of spirituality. Twenty-three college students from various religious backgrounds participated in the study and wrote in their journals every week on gratitude. The researcher found recurring themes about thankfulness and wellbeing through

qualitative analysis of students' remarks. The results showed that practicing thankfulness improved students' mental, physical, social, and spiritual well-being, helped them see disputes as chances for learning and positive change, and gave them a sense of interconnectedness and spiritual progress. Gratitude also promoted self-awareness, empathy, improved communication, and stronger interpersonal bonds. The study came to the conclusion that university students' overall well-being is positively impacted by the practice of thankfulness and that spirituality and gratitude are strongly related. In order to enhance students' academic and personal growth, the author suggested introducing conversations on wellbeing, spirituality, and thankfulness into higher education settings.

Studies Related to Behavioral Outcomes of Gratitude

In a study titled "How Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Saves a Company: The Role of Gratitude in Buffering Vindictive Consumer Behavior from Product Failures," Junghyun Kim and Taehoon Park (2020) investigated how CSR affects consumers' responses after product failures. The study investigated whether consumers' appreciation of socially conscious businesses could lessen retaliatory actions and enhance trustworthiness judgments. The results showed that consumers' thankfulness for CSR engagement increased the company's trust and decreased negative reactions after product failures. Furthermore, the impact differed according on whether customers blamed internal or external factors for the failure. The study came to the conclusion that CSR programs help shield businesses from unfavorable customer reactions and improve customer relationships following service failures by using thankfulness as a crucial psychological mechanism. In their 2019 study, "Observer Reactions to Other Customer Incivility: Emotional Labor, Gratitude, Loyalty to Employee and Tipping Intention," Youngsun Sean Kim and Melissa A. Baker looked at how customers reacted emotionally and behaviorally when they witnessed

other customers' poor service. The researchers used a 2×2 experimental design to compare employees' levels of service consumption criticality (high versus low) and emotional labor techniques (deep acting versus surface acting). The results showed that, in contrast to surface acting, clients were more appreciative when they witnessed personnel performing deep acting emotional labor. Stronger tipping intentions and increased staff loyalty were also linked to increased thankfulness. However, the association between emotional labor strategy and customer thankfulness was not substantially affected by service consumption criticality. According to the study's findings, genuine emotional expressions by staff members can promote client appreciation and favorable behavioral consequences including loyalty and tipping.

In a 2019 study titled "Gratitude and Problem Behaviors in Adolescents: The Mediating Roles of Positive and Negative Coping Styles," Peizhen Sun, Yudi Sun, Hongyan Jiang, and associates investigated the connection between adolescents' internalizing and externalizing problem behaviors and gratitude. 589 Chinese teenagers participated in the study and answered questions about aggressive behavior, coping mechanisms, emotional issues, and gratitude. The researchers examined the mediating functions of both positive and negative coping methods using structural equation modeling. Gratitude was found to be strongly linked to decreased levels of both internalizing and externalizing problem behaviors. Additionally, it was discovered that the association between problem behaviors and appreciation was mediated by both positive and negative coping methods. The study found that by encouraging adaptive coping mechanisms and decreasing maladaptive coping patterns in teenagers, gratitude may operate as a protective factor against psychological and behavioral issues.

Studies Related to Gratitude in Children

In a study titled "Beyond Politeness: The Expression of Gratitude in Children and Adolescents," Lia Beatriz de Lucca Freitas, Maria Adélia Minghelli Pieta, and Jonathan Richard Henry Tudge (2011) investigated how thankfulness is communicated at various phases of childhood and adolescence. 430 kids and teenagers between the ages of 7 and 14 participated in the study. Participants were asked about their biggest want and how they would react if that wish came true. Four categories of gratitude verbal, concrete, connective, and finalistic were identified through content analysis of the responses. The results showed developmental variations in the expression of thankfulness, with connective gratitude rising and concrete gratitude declining with age. These findings imply that as children grow, their comprehension and expression of thankfulness become more socially and relationally focused. According to the study's findings, young people's perceptions and expressions of gratitude toward others undergo significant developmental shifts as they grow through infancy and adolescence.

The study "Parents' Understanding of Gratitude in Children: A Thematic Analysis" by Amy G. Halberstadt, Hillary A. Langley, Andrea M. Hussong, and colleagues (2016) examined how parents view thankfulness in young children. Twenty parents of children between the ages of six and nine took part in six focus groups held in schools as part of the study. The researchers looked at how parents described gratitude and how children developed it using inductive theme analysis. The results showed that children demonstrate thanks for both material and intangible gifts, and that gratitude has behavioral, emotional, and cognitive components. Gratitude was seen by parents as a transient experience, a persistent emotion, and a more expansive way of being. Additionally, they noted that gratitude grows gradually over time and listed a number of emotional and cognitive obstacles to it. The study found that parents have a multifaceted understanding of children's

thankfulness and emphasized the significance of taking developmental aspects into account while researching childhood gratitude.

The study "Preschool-Aged Children's Understanding of Gratitude: Relations with Emotion and Mental State Knowledge" by Jackie A. Nelson, Lia Beatriz de Lucca Freitas, Marion O'Brien, and colleagues (2013) looked at the developmental factors related to children's understanding of gratitude. The study tracked 263 kids and tested their comprehension of thankfulness at age five, as well as their awareness of emotions and mental states at ages three and four. The researchers examined the long-term correlations between these factors using a path analysis method. The results showed that children who had a better early comprehension of emotions and mental processes also had a better knowledge of appreciation as they grew older. Additionally, the association between emotion knowledge at age three and thankfulness understanding at age five was mediated by mental state knowledge at age four. The study added crucial insights to the scant literature on children's thankfulness development and came to the conclusion that emotional and cognitive developmental skills play a significant influence in the formation of appreciation during early life.

In a study titled "Grateful Parents Raising Grateful Children: Niche Selection and the Socialization of Child Gratitude," William A. Rothenberg, Andrea M. Hussong, and colleagues (2017) investigated how parents foster gratitude in their kids through activities related to thankfulness. 101 parent-child pairs with kids between the ages of 6 and 9 participated in the study. Parents filled out a seven-day online journal to evaluate their children's displays of thankfulness, and participants attended a lab session. The researchers examined whether parents' niche selection the propensity to choose activities thought to promote thankfulness—mediated the association between parental and child gratitude using a structural equation modeling approach. The results

showed that parents who expressed greater levels of thankfulness were more likely to set goals for gratitude socialization and purposefully engage their kids in activities that foster gratitude. Children who participated in these activities expressed thankfulness more frequently. The study found that parents intentionally choose their surroundings and activities to cultivate appreciation, emphasizing niche selection as a crucial factor in the socialization of gratitude during childhood.

In order to investigate how parental socialization practices affect children's development of gratitude, Parvathy Viswanath, Aneesh Kumar, and Amrisha Vaish (2026) carried out a systematic review titled "Parental Socialization and Gratitude Development in Children: A Systematic Review and Call for Future Research." The researchers examined 11 empirical studies in accordance with PRISMA principles to investigate how parents perceive gratitude, the methods they employ to foster it, and the traits of parents linked to their children's development of thankfulness. The review found a number of ways parents cultivate thankfulness, such as setting an example of thankful conduct, participating in family activities and discussions about thankfulness, encouraging perspective-taking, and fostering emotional awareness and introspection. The results indicated that intentional education and regular family contacts both contribute to the development of thankfulness. The authors did point out that there is still little study on the development of appreciation and emphasized the need for more empirical studies employing a variety of approaches. In addition to offering helpful guidance for upcoming therapies and educational initiatives targeted at fostering gratitude in children, the review highlighted the critical role that parents play as crucial socializing agents in fostering gratitude.

In order to investigate the connections between children's thankfulness, parent-child interactions, and well-being, Carli A. Obeldobel and Kathryn A. Kerns (2021) carried out a systematic review titled "A Literature Review of Gratitude, Parent–Child Relationships, and Well-

Being in Children." The researchers looked at 38 studies that looked at children's wellbeing and gratitude, as well as 10 studies that focused on parent-child connections and gratitude. The results showed that when parents practiced loving, supporting, and autonomy-granting parenting, maintained stable attachment bonds, and modeled appreciative conduct, children showed higher levels of appreciation. Additionally, life satisfaction, good affect, and general mental health were all positively correlated with appreciation. A number of theoretical stances, including attachment theory, social learning theory, emotion socialization theory, the find-remind-and-bind theory, and the broaden-and-build theory, were supported by the review. The authors developed a model based on the reviewed data that suggests the association between parent-child relationship characteristics and well-being outcomes may be mediated by children's thankfulness. The study found that children's psychological growth and wellbeing are significantly impacted by thankfulness, and it offers a useful framework for further studies on the development of gratitude.

In order to investigate the relationship between thankfulness and happiness in young children, Simone P. Nguyen and Cameron L. Gordon (2020) did a study named "The Relationship Between Gratitude and Happiness in Young Children." The study evaluated trait happiness, domain-specific gratitude, and generic gratitude in 80 kids with an average age of about five years. Even after taking into consideration children's overall inclination toward appreciation, the results showed that domain-specific gratitude strongly predicted children's happiness. The findings highlighted domain-specific appreciation as a significant factor in children's wellbeing and showed that gratitude and happiness are positively correlated as early as age five. According to the study's findings, thankfulness is important for fostering happiness in young children and adds to the expanding corpus of research on children's positive psychological development.

Anat Shoshani and associates investigated the impact of thankfulness on prosocial behavior in preschoolers in a 2020 study titled "Grateful and Kind: The Prosocial Function of Gratitude in Young Children's Relationships." Children between the ages of three and six participated in three studies conducted by the researchers. Giving kids a tiny present and then asking for assistance or resource sharing was a way to foster gratitude. The first experiment's results demonstrated that showing gratitude enhanced helpful behaviors toward the benefactor, especially when the benefactor's intentions were highlighted. Gratitude increased children's inclination to assist strangers as well as the giver, according to the second experiment. The third experiment showed that sharing behavior with the benefactor was encouraged by thankfulness. Additionally, the association between age, appreciation, and prosocial conduct was found to be mediated by children's theory of mind and comprehension of the benefactor's intentions. According to the study's findings, early childhood prosocial actions and positive social relationships are greatly influenced by appreciation.

In order to investigate whether gratitude functions as a resilience element connecting secure attachment and depressive symptoms, Veronica Scott and colleagues carried out a longitudinal study named "Gratitude: A Resilience Factor for More Securely Attached Children" in 2021. Attachment appraisals, attachment representations, and depressed symptoms were tested at baseline in the study, which involved 157 youngsters between the ages of 9 and 12. Two years later, gratitude and depressive symptoms were measured once more. Higher levels of trait appreciation throughout adolescence were found to be positively correlated with secure connection during middle childhood. Additionally, changes in depressed symptoms over time were indirectly correlated with appreciation and attachment avoidance, trust, and secure foundation script knowledge. According to the study, among youngsters who are securely bonded, thankfulness may

work as a protective factor that increases resilience and lowers the chance of developing depressive symptoms.

In a study titled "Students in Higher Education Explore the Practice of Gratitude as Spirituality and Its Impact on Well-Being," Al Fuertes (2024) investigated the relationship between students' well-being and thankfulness as a kind of spirituality. Twenty-three college students from various religious backgrounds participated in the study and wrote in their journals every week on gratitude. The researcher found recurring themes about thankfulness and wellbeing through qualitative analysis of students' remarks. The results showed that practicing thankfulness improved students' mental, physical, social, and spiritual well-being, helped them see disputes as chances for learning and positive change, and gave them a sense of interconnectedness and spiritual progress. Gratitude also promoted self-awareness, empathy, improved communication, and stronger interpersonal bonds. The study came to the conclusion that university students' overall well-being is positively impacted by the practice of thankfulness and that spirituality and gratitude are strongly related. In order to enhance students' academic and personal growth, the author suggested introducing conversations on wellbeing, spirituality, and thankfulness into higher education settings.

Literature Review

Gratitude is a multifaceted concept that serves as an emotion, disposition, virtue, and life orientation, according to the studied literature. Gratitude is linked to pleasant emotions, adaptive coping, psychological well-being, and positive interpersonal interactions, according to theoretical studies. According to positive psychology, gratitude is a strength that fosters social functioning, resilience, life satisfaction, and personal development (Emmons & Shelton, 2002; Bono et al., 2004; Wood et al., 2010).

Additionally, research indicates that gratitude-based behaviors especially journaling and reflection exercises are useful in promoting favorable psychological outcomes. Research has repeatedly demonstrated that gratitude interventions enhance resilience, happiness, life satisfaction, well-being, and positive affect in a variety of populations (Davis et al., 2016; Dickens, 2017; Tolcher et al., 2024). Additionally, gratitude journaling has been found to be an easy-to-use method for improving psychological adjustment and lowering stress (Kaur et al., 2025).

Gratitude promotes positive social relationships, according to research on conflict and interpersonal behavior. According to studies (Sasaki et al., 2020; Amaro, 2017; Fuertes, 2024), thankfulness fosters cooperation, empathy, and constructive communication while reducing competitive tendencies, interpersonal conflict, and aggressive behaviors. Similarly, research on complaining behavior indicates that while gratitude is linked to more positive behavioral outcomes and fewer negative responses (Simon, 2013; Soscia, 2007), complaints frequently serve as expressions of frustration and dissatisfaction in social interactions (Alicke et al., 1992).

Numerous studies have also demonstrated how thankfulness can encourage prosocial conduct and lessen problematic behaviors. Positive social interactions, helpful behavior, sharing behavior, adaptive coping methods, and reduced levels of internalizing and externalizing difficulties have all been linked to gratitude (Sun et al., 2019; Shoshani et al., 2020; Scott et al., 2021). These results imply that thankfulness improves emotional and behavioral adjustment by acting as a protective factor.

The literature on children's development of gratitude highlights the significance of social, cognitive, and developmental factors. According to studies, children's comprehension and expression of gratitude develop with age and are impacted by social experiences, perspective-taking skills, and emotion awareness (Freitas et al., 2011; Nelson et al., 2013). Through modeling,

conversations about appreciation, supportive parenting techniques, and the provision of experiences that enhance thankfulness, parents play a critical role in cultivating gratitude (Halberstadt et al., 2016; Rothenberg et al., 2017; Viswanath et al., 2026). Additionally, appreciation has been linked to children's pleasure, wellbeing, stable attachment, and positive parent-child connections (Nguyen & Gordon, 2020; Obeldobel & Kerns, 2021).

Overall, there is strong evidence from the reviewed literature that gratitude enhances wellbeing, prosocial conduct, healthy psychological functioning, and interpersonal connections. Previous research has looked at the relationship between thankfulness and prosocial conduct, wellbeing, resilience, conflict reduction, and child development. The usefulness of thankfulness treatments in lowering children's complaining behavior and conflict, however, has not been thoroughly studied. Therefore, by investigating whether thankfulness can function as an effective remedy for lowering children's complaining behavior and conflict, the current study aims to close this gap.

Research Gap

Gratitude is positively correlated with psychological well-being, resilience, prosocial behavior, and positive interpersonal connections, according to the literature currently in publication. The efficacy of thankfulness therapies in improving positive emotional outcomes and lowering a variety of negative behavioral and psychological issues has been demonstrated by earlier research. Additionally, studies have shown how thankfulness fosters empathy, collaboration, and a decrease in conflict.

The usefulness of appreciation in lowering children's complaining behavior has received little attention, despite the expanding corpus of studies on the subject. Additionally, there are very

few studies looking at how thankfulness affects both complaining behavior and conflict in child populations. Relatively few studies have examined these factors in children; the majority of previous research has concentrated on teenagers, college students, adults, caregivers, or consumer populations.

As a result, there is a void in the literature about the use of gratitude-based interventions to lessen children's complaining behavior and conflict. By investigating the efficacy of appreciation in lowering children's complaining behavior and conflict, the current study aims to close this gap.

Relevance of the Study

From a theoretical and practical standpoint, the current study is important. Theoretically, by expanding its application to the areas of children's conflict and complaining behavior, it adds to the body of knowledge already available on appreciation. The current study investigates thankfulness's possible involvement in lowering negative behavioral consequences, whereas prior research has mostly concentrated on the association between gratitude and well-being, resilience, prosocial conduct, and interpersonal relationships. As a result, the study contributes to the expanding body of research on positive psychology and advances knowledge of how appreciation affects kids' social and emotional growth.

Practically speaking, the results of this study may offer insightful information to parents, educators, school counselors, and mental health specialists looking for practical ways to encourage positive conduct in kids. Gratitude-based activities and interventions can be integrated into educational and counseling settings to promote healthier interpersonal relationships, enhance classroom environments, and support children's overall socio-emotional well-being if it is found to be effective in lowering complaining behavior and conflict. The study may also be used as a

basis for the creation of intervention and prevention initiatives that support children's positive behavioral outcomes.

CHAPTER III

METHOD

This chapter presents the methodology adopted for the present study on the effectiveness of gratitude work in reducing complaining behaviour and conflict among children. It outlines the aim and objectives of the study, research questions, and hypotheses. Further, it describes the research design, variables of the study, participants, sampling technique, tools used for data collection, and the gratitude-based intervention implemented. The chapter also explains the procedure for data collection, ethical considerations, and the statistical techniques employed for data analysis to achieve the objectives of the study.

Aim of the study

The present study aims to examine the effectiveness of gratitude-based activities in reducing complaining behaviour and interpersonal conflict among children aged 11–12 years studying in a school of Thiruvananthapuram District, Kerala, and to assess the relationship between gratitude and these behavioural outcomes using a pre-test and post-test design.

Objectives of the Study

General Objective

5. To examine the effectiveness of gratitude-based activities in reducing complaining behaviour and interpersonal conflict among children.

Specific Objectives

6. To examine the effect of gratitude-based activities on reducing complaining behaviour among children.
7. To analyze the impact of gratitude-based activities on minimizing interpersonal conflicts among children.

8. To assess the change in gratitude levels among children following the implementation of gratitude-based activities.

Variables of the Study

The variables of the present study include gratitude, complaining behaviour, and interpersonal conflict among children aged 11–12 years. These variables were assessed using two standardized questionnaires and one behavioural checklist, administered at both pre-test and post-test phases.

Gratitude is defined as the tendency of children to recognize, appreciate, and respond positively to beneficial experiences and social support. In the present study, gratitude was measured using a structured questionnaire administered before and after a 25-day gratitude-based intervention programme.

Complaining behaviour refers to the frequency and tendency of children to express dissatisfaction, negativity, or grievances in everyday interactions. This variable was assessed using a standardized questionnaire and a behavioural checklist to capture both self-reported and observed indicators. Measurements were taken at pre-test and post-test to evaluate changes following the intervention.

Interpersonal conflict refers to disagreements, misunderstandings, and behavioural tensions occurring between children during peer interactions. It was assessed using a standardized questionnaire and a behavioural checklist at both pre-test and post-test levels.

The study employed a pre-test and post-test design, in which the same set of tools (two questionnaires and one checklist) was administered before and after the implementation of 25 days of gratitude-based activities. The intervention was designed to enhance gratitude and examine its

effect on reducing complaining behaviour and interpersonal conflict among children. The study further examines within-group changes in gratitude, complaining behaviour, and interpersonal conflict across the pre-intervention and post-intervention phases.

Operational Definitions of Variables

Gratitude Work

The term "gratitude work" describes a collection of exercises and methods intended to assist kids in identifying, expressing, and appreciating the positive parts of their everyday lives as well as the role that others play in them. It entails cultivating gratitude and supporting prosocial actions that lead to a more optimistic perspective and cooperative relationships.

Complaining Behavior

Complaining behavior is defined as children's tendency to express dissatisfaction or annoyance about situations, often repetitively and without attempting to find constructive solutions. It represents a negative communication pattern that can affect peer relationships and classroom harmony.

Interpersonal Conflicts

Interpersonal conflicts are understood as disagreements, arguments, or clashes that arise between children when they perceive differences in goals, needs, or actions. Within the school setting, such conflicts often disrupt cooperation and peer bonding, and if unresolved, can lead to long-term difficulties in relationships.

Children

Children refer to school-going individuals in the age group of 7 to 11 years who are in their middle childhood stage. This period is characterized by rapid social, emotional, and behavioral development, where peer relationships and classroom interactions play a vital role in shaping their adjustment and communication patterns.

Hypotheses of the Study

H₀₁: There will be no significant difference in complaining behaviour among children before and after the implementation of gratitude-based activities.

H₀₂: There will be no significant difference in conflict behaviour among children before and after the implementation of gratitude-based activities.

H₀₃: There will be no significant difference in gratitude among children before and after the implementation of gratitude-based activities.

Research Design

The impact of gratitude-based activities in lowering children's complaining behavior and interpersonal conflict was investigated in this study using a quantitative, quasi-experimental research design with a pre-test and post-test method. Because it enables for the evaluation of changes in the chosen behavioral outcomes after an intervention is implemented without randomly assigning individuals to experimental and control conditions, this design was deemed appropriate.

The current study used standardized instruments to measure thankfulness, complaining behavior, and interpersonal conflict before and after the introduction of gratitude-based activities

as an intervention. To assess how well the intervention changed the study variables, the pre-test and post-test results were compared.

This methodology is appropriate for school-based research because it makes it easier to apply interventions in real-world classroom environments while yet allowing for a methodical assessment of their effects.

Participants

Population

The target population of the present study comprised children in late childhood, specifically students aged 11–12 years studying in schools in the urban area of Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala.

Sample and Sampling Technique

The sample consisted of 28 children from a single classroom in a school of Thiruvananthapuram District. A non-probability convenience sampling technique was used, wherein one intact classroom that met the age criteria and was accessible for intervention was selected for the study. Permission for conducting the study was obtained from the school principal and the class teacher.

Inclusion Criteria

The study included children who met the following criteria:

- (a) students aged 11–12 years;
- (b) studying in the selected classroom of a school in Thiruvananthapuram district;
- (c) present during the intervention period;
- (d) able to understand and respond to the study tools (questionnaire and checklist);

(e) willing to participate in the activities conducted in the classroom.

Exclusion Criteria

The following children were excluded from the study:

- (a) children outside the age range of 11–12 years;
- (b) children who were absent for a substantial part of the intervention period;
- (c) children with identified severe cognitive, developmental, or neurological conditions that could interfere with participation and response accuracy.

Instruments

Gratitude Questionnaire–Six Item Form (GQ–6)

The Gratitude Questionnaire–Six Item Form (GQ–6) was developed by Robert A. Emmons, Michael E. McCullough, and Jo-Ann Tsang (2002) to assess dispositional gratitude. The instrument measures an individual's tendency to recognize, appreciate, and respond with gratitude to the positive aspects of life and the contributions of others. The GQ–6 consists of six items rated on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 7 (Strongly Agree). The instrument can be administered individually or in groups and generally requires approximately 5–10 minutes to complete. Scoring is carried out by summing responses across all items, with Items 1, 2, 4, and 5 scored directly and Items 3 and 6 reverse scored. Total scores range from 6 to 42, with higher scores indicating higher levels of gratitude. Emmons and McCullough (2002) reported satisfactory internal consistency reliability, with Cronbach's alpha coefficients ranging from .76 to .84 across samples. The instrument has demonstrated good construct validity through significant associations with positive affect, optimism, life satisfaction, and prosocial behaviour. Evidence also supports

its convergent and discriminant validity, indicating that the GQ-6 is a reliable and valid measure of dispositional gratitude.

Peer Conflict Scale (PCS)

The Peer Conflict Scale (PCS) was developed by Marsee and Frick (2007) to assess aggressive and conflict-related behaviours among children and adolescents. The scale measures different forms of aggression and interpersonal conflict that occur within peer relationships. The PCS consists of 40 items rated on a 4-point scale ranging from 0 (Not at all true) to 3 (Definitely true). The instrument may be administered individually or in groups and generally requires approximately 10–15 minutes to complete. Scores are obtained by summing responses across items, with higher scores indicating greater levels of peer conflict and aggressive interpersonal behaviour. The developers reported satisfactory psychometric properties for the scale, with internal consistency coefficients for the total scale and its subscales falling within acceptable to excellent ranges. The Peer Conflict Scale has demonstrated good construct validity and criterion-related validity through significant associations with aggression, externalizing behaviours, and peer relationship difficulties, supporting its usefulness in assessing conflict-related behaviours among children and adolescents.

Self-Report Complaining Behavior Checklist

The Self-Report Complaining Behavior Checklist was developed by the researcher under the guidance of the research supervisor to assess the frequency of complaining behaviour among school children. The checklist was constructed based on a review of relevant literature, existing behavioural measures, and common complaining behaviours observed in school settings. It was designed to measure children's tendency to express dissatisfaction, blame, negative reactions, and

frequent complaints related to academic, social, and school-related situations. The instrument consists of 20 statements representing common forms of complaining behaviour among children. Responses are recorded using a three-point scale: 0 (Never), 1 (Sometimes), and 2 (Often).

The checklist was administered in a group setting to students aged 11–12 years. Participants were instructed to read each statement carefully and indicate the response that best described their behaviour. The administration required approximately 5–10 minutes to complete. Scoring was carried out by summing the responses across all 20 items, resulting in a total score ranging from 0 to 40, with higher scores indicating a greater tendency toward complaining behaviour. Scores ranging from 0–8 indicate a low complaining tendency, 9–16 indicate a mild complaining tendency, 17–28 indicate a moderate complaining tendency, and 29–40 indicate a high complaining tendency.

Content validation of the checklist was established through expert review by the research supervisor, who assessed the relevance, clarity, and appropriateness of the items for children in late childhood. Necessary modifications were incorporated based on the suggestions provided during the review process. Formal reliability and validity analyses were not conducted for the present study. Therefore, the checklist was used as a researcher-developed measure for assessing complaining behaviour among the participants.

Demographic Data Sheet

A demographic data sheet was prepared by the researcher to collect basic background information about the participants. The sheet included variables such as age and gender. The participants comprised children aged 11–12 years studying in a selected educational institution. Gender was recorded as male or female to describe the composition of the study sample.

The study sample consisted of 28 students, including 18 males and 10 females. The demographic information was collected solely for descriptive purposes and to provide a profile of the participants involved in the study. No personally identifiable information, such as names or other identifying details, was collected. All information was kept confidential and used exclusively for research purposes.

Data Collection Procedure

The principal of the chosen educational institution granted formal permission to carry out the study prior to data collection. The concerned class teacher was then asked for permission to perform the study with the chosen participants. Based on the study's inclusion criteria, 28 children between the ages of 11 and 12 made up the participants. Paper-and-pencil methods were used to collect the data in March 2026. First, the participants were gathered in their classroom and given detailed instructions on how to complete the assessment tools and the goal of the study. They received guarantees that their answers would be kept private and used only for research. The Gratitude Questionnaire–Six Item Form (GQ–6), the Peer Conflict Scale, and the Self-Report Complaining Behavior Checklist were used in a pre-test evaluation. The completed surveys were gathered and their completeness examined.

After the pre-test evaluation, a 25-day structured gratitude-based intervention was carried out. Through classroom-based exercises, reflective activities, and guided conversations, the intervention included planned appreciation activities intended to promote thankfulness, pleasant emotional experiences, and positive interpersonal relationships among the participants. The same evaluation tools used in the pre-test phase were used to give a post-test after the intervention period was over. To verify correctness and completeness, the completed surveys were gathered and examined.

The participants were acknowledged for their cooperation and participation at the end of the study. Anonymity and confidentiality were upheld during the whole research process. The gathered information was coded, safely kept, and utilized only for research. To ensure that no specific participant or educational institution may be identified, the results are presented in aggregate form.

Data Analysis Techniques

The collected data were coded, entered, and analysed using IBM SPSS Statistics (Version 26.0). The statistical techniques employed were selected based on the objectives and hypotheses of the study.

(a) Descriptive Statistics: Frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation were computed to describe the demographic characteristics of the participants and to summarise the pre-test and post-test scores of gratitude, complaining behaviour, and conflict behaviour.

(b) Test of Normality: The Shapiro–Wilk test was employed to assess the normality of the distribution of the study variables. Since the sample size was less than 50 ($N = 28$), the Shapiro–Wilk test was considered appropriate for evaluating the assumption of normality.

(c) Paired Samples t-Test: As the majority of the study variables met the assumption of normality, a paired samples t-test was used to compare the pre-test and post-test scores of gratitude, complaining behaviour, and conflict behaviour. This analysis was conducted to examine the effectiveness of the gratitude-based activities and to test the study hypotheses related to changes in the outcome variables following the intervention.

The level of statistical significance was set at 0.05 ($p < .05$) for all analyses.

CHAPTER IV

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents the results of the study and discusses the findings in relation to the research objectives. The results are analysed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) and are presented systematically through tables and statistical analyses. The chapter includes the demographic profile of the participants, descriptive statistics, test of normality, comparison of pre-test and post-test scores, and paired sample t-test results for the study variables. The findings are interpreted to determine the effectiveness of the gratitude intervention in reducing complaining behaviour and conflict behaviour and in enhancing gratitude among the participants. The discussion section provides an interpretation of the statistical findings in light of relevant literature, incorporates the researcher's observations made during the intervention sessions, and includes participants' feedback to provide a comprehensive understanding of the outcomes of the study.

Table 1

Demographic Characteristics of the Participants (N=28)

Variable	Category	Frequency (<i>n</i>)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	18	64.3
	Female	10	35.7
Age	11-12 years	28	100.0

The demographic details of the study participants are displayed in the table. All 28 of the students who took part were between the ages of 11 and 12. Ten participants (35.7%) were female and eighteen participants (64.3%) were male. According to the demographic profile, early adolescent students of both genders made up the study sample.

Table 2***Descriptive Statistics of the Study Variables (N=28)***

Variable	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Standard Error
Pre-test Complaining Behaviour	28	13.64	5.064	0.957
Post-test Complaining Behaviour	28	7.25	4.291	0.811
Pre-test Conflict Behaviour	28	35.50	19.192	3.627
Post-test Conflict Behaviour	28	13.11	10.895	2.059
Pre-test Gratitude	28	27.18	5.683	1.074
Post-test Gratitude	28	30.82	4.287	0.810

The descriptive statistics of the study variables measured prior to and following the thankfulness intervention are shown in the table. The results show that the mean scores for conflict and complaining behavior decreased from the pre-test to the post-test. On the other hand, after the intervention, the mean score for gratitude increased. Inferential statistical analyses were used to further investigate the favorable improvements in the research variables that these descriptive statistics first suggested.

Table 3***Test of Normality of the Study Variables (N= 28)***

Variable	Kolmogorov-			Sharpiro-		
	Smirnov Statistic	df	Sig.	Wilk Statistic	df	Sig.
Pre-test Complaining Behaviour	.083	28	.200*	.964	28	.430
Pre-test Conflict Behaviour	.109	28	.200*	.972	28	.627
Pre-test Gratitude	.157	28	.076	.949	28	.186
Post-test Complaining Behaviour	.087	28	.200*	.977	28	.786
Post-test Conflict Behaviour	.114	28	.200*	.968	28	.523
Post-test Gratitude	.195	28	.008	.876	28	.003

Note: N = 28. The assumption of normality was assessed using the Kolmogorov–Smirnov and Shapiro–Wilk tests. As the sample size was less than 50, the Shapiro–Wilk test was considered the primary criterion for assessing normality. Variables with $p > .05$ were considered normally distributed. This is a lower bound of the true significance (Lilliefors Significance Correction).

Table 4.3 presents the results of the tests of normality for the study variables. The Shapiro–Wilk test indicated that the pre-test and post-test scores for complaining behaviour, pre-test and post-test scores for conflict behaviour, and the pre-test gratitude scores were normally distributed ($p >$

.05). However, the post-test gratitude scores significantly deviated from normality ($p = .003$). Therefore, the assumption of normality was satisfied for all variables except post-test gratitude.

Table 4

Paired Samples t-Test Results for Gratitude, Complaining Behaviour, and Conflict Behaviour (N = 28)

Variable	Mean Difference	t	df	p
Gratitude	-3.64	-2.63	27	.014
Complaining Behaviour	6.39	6.85	27	<.001
Gratitude	22.39	5.97	27	<.001

Note: N = 28. df = Degrees of Freedom. Mean difference was calculated as pre-test score minus post-test score. A negative mean difference indicates an increase in the post-test score, whereas a positive mean difference indicates a decrease in the post-test score. Statistical significance was set at $p < .05$.

The paired samples t-test was conducted to examine the effectiveness of the gratitude intervention on gratitude, complaining behaviour, and conflict behaviour among the participants. The results revealed a statistically significant increase in gratitude scores following the intervention ($t(27) = -2.63$, $p = .014$). In contrast, the mean scores for complaining behaviour ($t(27) = 6.85$, $p < .001$) and conflict behaviour ($t(27) = 5.97$, $p < .001$) decreased significantly from pre-test to post-test. These findings indicate that the gratitude intervention was effective in increasing gratitude while reducing complaining behaviour and conflict behaviour among the participants.

The current study looked at how well gratitude-based activities can improve children's gratitude while lowering their complaining and conflict-related behaviors. All three research variables showed statistically significant changes after the intervention, according to the results of the paired samples t-test. Following the implementation of the thankfulness-based activities, feelings of gratitude dramatically increased while complaining and conflict behaviors significantly decreased. These results demonstrate the efficacy of gratitude-based practices in fostering positive behavioral and emotional outcomes in children and show that the intervention effectively accomplished its intended goal. As a result, the null hypotheses, which predicted that there would be no discernible changes in conflict behavior, complaining behavior, or thankfulness before and after the intervention, were rejected. Along with each of the specific goals of lowering complaining behavior, minimizing conflict behavior, and increasing thankfulness among the participants, the results also meet the overall goal of evaluating the efficacy of gratitude-based activities.

The observations gathered during the intervention sessions consistently mirrored the quantitative findings. In the early stages of the program, the classroom was relatively boisterous, and the kids often complained about their peers and the conditions in the classroom. During the sessions, statements like "Ma'am, he is disturbing me," "He took my pen," and "She is irritating me" were frequently heard. Many kids showed signs of impatience and were more likely to complain to the instructor right away about small annoyances. Because it was their first time acting in front of a group, several kids were reluctant to take part in activities that required them to perform in front of their peers, especially the role-playing sessions. However, not a single person declined to take part in the intervention activities. Rather, they showed interest and excitement at the start of each session and progressively grew more at ease with the curriculum. The classroom environment became more structured, collaborative, and participatory as the researcher and

participants became closer. Youngsters started to actively participate in conversations, wait patiently for instructions, and show a stronger desire to cooperate during group activities. By showing how the gratitude-based activities progressively affected the participants' attitudes and classroom interactions, these behavioral observations support the statistical findings.

The Thanksgiving activity, gratitude journals, appreciation letters to parents, gratitude meditation, and positive remark activities produced the highest levels of engagement and participation across the different intervention activities. The Thanksgiving program, which encouraged kids to recognize school personnel who had positively impacted them and show gratitude by presenting cards, was very well-received. The kids' understanding of kindness, gratitude, and respect for others seemed to grow as a result of this activity. In a similar vein, the thankfulness journals prompted the participants to record the persons and occasions for which they were grateful as well as to think back on happy experiences on a daily basis. While some kids periodically neglected to finish their journals, most of them enthusiastically participated in class discussions and offered their views. A more encouraging classroom atmosphere was created by the positive comment exercise, which also encouraged classmates to show gratitude for one another. One especially poignant event was when a participant said that their parents gave them a heartfelt hug and expressed gratitude after they presented them with a letter of appreciation. This demonstrated how the intervention went beyond the classroom and had a positive impact on family connections. These examples show how gratitude-based activities helped kids identify good experiences, value deep connections, and express thanks more freely in their daily lives.

Participant input gathered both during and after the intervention provided additional evidence for these findings. Many kids said that the thankfulness book and other exercises had made it easier for them to see the good things in their everyday lives and value the help they had

from others. Significant cognitive, emotional, and behavioral changes among the participants are reflected in comments like "I have learned to think properly," "I started saying thank you to everyone who helps me," "You helped me see the positive things that happen in my life," and "Now if any problem comes in class, I talk with the teacher rather than fighting." Additionally, a number of kids said they enjoyed keeping the gratitude diary and that they planned to go on with the practice even after the intervention. According to this feedback, the program reduced children's propensity to complain or get into needless arguments by encouraging them to adopt healthier thought patterns and more constructive methods of reacting to everyday situations.

The principal of the school and the class instructor acknowledged the improvements that the researcher had seen. The class teacher reported that the pupils looked forward to each intervention session and frequently talked about the activities afterward. The instructor also noted changes in the classroom's cohesiveness, communication, and general conduct, pointing out that a number of pupils showed greater collaboration and were more inclined to talk about issues rather than fight. Additionally, the principal expressed confidence that the program had had a significant influence on the children and reported receiving positive comments regarding the intervention. The quantitative results are further supported by these observations from school staff, which further show that the behavioral improvements seen during the intervention were discernible in the typical classroom setting.

The results of this study are also in line with other studies on thankfulness interventions for kids and teenagers. According to recent research by Franz Cois Simon, Li, R. Dickens, Catherine Tolcher, Madeline Cowgil, and Andrew Downs (2024) and Alex M., Jeffrey J. Frost, Adam W. A. Greg T., Ranjit Kaur, Mamta Sharma, and Barjinder Singh (2025), gratitude-based interventions improve prosocial behavior, positive affect, emotional well-being, and interpersonal

relationships while lowering negative emotional reactions and behavioral challenges. By showing that planned thankfulness-based classroom activities can successfully lower complaining and conflict behavior while also increasing gratitude among upper primary school students, the current study expands on previous findings. The conclusion that gratitude is not only a positive emotion but also a useful psychological tool for fostering better interpersonal relationships, emotional control, and adaptive behavior in educational settings is strengthened by the consistency between the current findings and earlier empirical data.

Overall, the study's results show that participants' behavioral and emotional functioning significantly improved as a result of gratitude-based activities. The study's general and specific objectives were successfully met by the intervention, as seen by the notable rise in thankfulness and decrease in complaining and conflict behaviors. Strong evidence that gratitude-based activities can function as an effective school-based psychological intervention for encouraging positive behavior, bolstering peer relationships, and promoting emotional well-being among children is provided by the statistical results, researcher's observations, participant experiences, teacher and principal feedback, and supporting liter

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The goal of the current study, "Effectiveness of Gratitude on Reducing Complaining Behavior and Interpersonal Conflict Among Children," was to determine whether a structured gratitude-based intervention could successfully lessen late-childhood complaining behavior and interpersonal conflict. Positive psychology, which stresses the development of positive emotions, character traits, and psychological resources that support human flourishing and well-being, served as the basis for the study. Gratitude has become one of the most studied categories among the many characteristics found in positive psychology due to its important role in resilience, prosocial behavior, emotional well-being, and positive interpersonal connections. While many positive psychological outcomes have been linked to gratitude, relatively few studies have examined its efficacy in lowering specific behavioral issues like complaining behavior and interpersonal conflict among schoolchildren, especially in the Indian educational context. Therefore, the current study was conducted to fill this research vacuum and investigate if teaching children to be grateful through structured activities could encourage good behavioral change.

The study's conceptual framework was established in Chapter I, which included late childhood developmental traits. Children undergo major physical, cognitive, emotional, and social changes during late childhood, which is acknowledged as a critical developmental time. Children progressively gain more independence, higher reasoning skills, increased emotional awareness, and stronger peer interactions during this time. They also grow more perceptive of interpersonal relationships, peer approval, and social interactions. Children frequently display behaviors like frequent grumbling, irritation, disagreement, and interpersonal problems because their emotional control and conflict-resolution skills are still developing. Children's mental health, peer relationships, classroom adjustment, and academic functioning may be negatively impacted by chronic patterns of complaining and unresolved interpersonal conflicts, even if occasional

complaints and conflicts are a natural part of growth. Additionally, these behaviors may impede the growth of social competence, cooperation, empathy, and emotional control. As a result, in counseling psychology and educational contexts, finding preventive interventions that enhance good emotional functioning has grown in significance.

Gratitude, positive psychology, interpersonal conflict, and complaining behavior were all further explored in the first chapter. The repeated voicing of discontent with oneself, other people, or circumstances was defined as complaining behavior. Constructive complaints can help people express their demands and find solutions, but persistent complaining frequently perpetuates negative thought patterns, emotional discontent, and ineffective coping mechanisms. In a similar vein, interpersonal conflict was explained as an inevitable result of divergent viewpoints, requirements, objectives, and expectations. Ineffective conflict management can lead to emotional pain, bad peer relationships, violence, and decreased psychological well-being, even though conflict itself is neither totally positive nor negative. In order to lessen these maladaptive behavioral tendencies, the chapter stressed the significance of encouraging good emotional resources.

Positive psychology served as the study's main theoretical foundation. The development of strengths, virtues, and optimal human functioning replaced the treatment of deficiencies and mental disease as the primary focus of psychological research with the advent of positive psychology. One of the most significant good emotions that supports emotional resilience, life satisfaction, psychological adjustment, and interpersonal harmony was described as gratitude. The significance of thankfulness in encouraging positive behavior was supported by a number of theoretical stances. Positive emotions expand cognitive and behavioral repertoires while progressively creating long-lasting psychological, cognitive, emotional, and social resources,

according to Fredrickson's Broaden-and-Build Theory. In a similar vein, McCullough's Moral Affect Theory highlighted gratitude as a moral feeling that enhances social connectivity, prosocial behavior, and reciprocity. Additionally, thankfulness fosters appreciation for others' efforts, which strengthens interpersonal relationships through good exchanges that are reciprocated, according to Social Exchange Theory. Together, these theoretical stances bolstered the notion that children's interpersonal interactions, emotional regulation, empathy, and persistent complaining might all be improved by appreciation.

The growing awareness of behavioral issues among school-age children created the need for the study. Children are subjected to a variety of academic, interpersonal, and social demands in modern school settings, which may lead to discontent, annoyance, peer disputes, and unfavorable communication styles. While corrective or punitive measures are commonly used by educational institutions to deal with such behaviors, preventive strength-based treatments have received relatively less attention. Gratitude improves emotional well-being, optimism, resilience, empathy, and prosocial behavior, according to earlier studies. However, there was little empirical data on how well appreciation treatments worked to lessen children's interpersonal conflict and complaining behavior, especially in Indian schools. Thus, the goal of the current study was to ascertain if a structured thankfulness intervention could be a useful school-based tactic for enhancing kids' social and emotional development.

The study's objectives were well-defined and centered on evaluating interpersonal conflict, complaining behavior, and thankfulness both before and after the gratitude intervention was put into practice. To determine whether the pre-test and post-test scores on the chosen variables differed significantly, corresponding hypotheses were developed. Through these goals, the study

aimed to ascertain if engaging in gratitude exercises may result in quantifiable enhancements in kids' emotional and behavioral development.

The existing literature that was pertinent to the investigation was evaluated in Chapter II. The review was divided into two sections: theoretical and empirical. Through the contributions of eminent academics and theoretical models, the theoretical review explored the conceptual underpinnings of conflict, positive psychology, complaining behavior, and gratitude. National and international studies on gratitude therapies, children's development of gratitude, behavioral outcomes related to gratitude, conflict reduction, and emotional well-being were included in the empirical review. Gratitude interventions have been linked to improved happiness, psychological well-being, optimism, resilience, empathy, prosocial behavior, and life satisfaction, according to numerous prior studies. Additionally, a number of studies showed that thankfulness improved interpersonal connections and emotional control while lowering stress, antagonism, violence, and unpleasant emotional experiences. Gratitude also promotes cooperation, perspective-taking, compassion, and constructive conflict resolution, according to studies on conflict. However, the evaluation of the literature also showed that very few research had specifically looked at how well thankfulness interventions worked to lessen school-age children's complaining behavior and interpersonal conflict. This discovered research gap offered a solid empirical basis for starting the current study.

The investigation's approach was explained in Chapter III. Using a pre-experimental one-group pre-test and post-test design, the study used a quantitative research methodology. The researcher was able to assess changes that took place following the application of the thankfulness intervention thanks to this design. Children in the late childhood age group participated in the study at the Jawahar Vidya Bhavan English Medium School in Kuthukal, Thiruvananthapuram.

Participating in the study were twenty-nine students, ages eleven to twelve. The investigation's goals and institutional approval were taken into consideration when choosing the participants.

Data was gathered using three assessment tools. The Gratitude Questionnaire–6 (GQ-6) was used to measure gratitude; the Peer Conflict Scale was used to measure interpersonal conflict; and the Self-report Complaining Behavior Checklist was used to measure complaining behavior. Before the intervention was put into practice, baseline evaluations were carried out using all three tools to ascertain the participants' starting levels of interpersonal conflict, complaining behavior, and appreciation.

The study's main focus was the gratitude intervention. Based on the ideas of positive psychology and cultivating gratitude, a systematic 25-day program was created. The carefully thought-out experiential, reflective, and interactive activities that made up the intervention were designed to help kids identify good experiences, value other people's contributions, grow in empathy, and build thankful thinking in their daily lives. Gratitude journaling, gratitude meditation, gratitude letters, gratitude drawing, gratitude collage preparation, appreciation exercises, gratitude sharing, role plays, reflection exercises, group discussions, positive games, and classroom-based experiential exercises were among the activities. Every activity was created to help kids focus on appreciation, kindness, cooperation, and pleasant interpersonal relationships instead of unhappiness and bad experiences. In order to support the internalization of thankful attitudes and behaviors, active involvement, self-reflection, peer interaction, and emotional expression were continuously encouraged during the intervention period.

The same instruments used in the pre-test phase were used for post-test evaluations once the intervention was finished. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to systematically arrange and statistically analyze the collected data. The study variables and

participant characteristics were summarized using descriptive statistics, such as frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation. The normality of the data distribution was evaluated using the Shapiro-Wilk test. Appropriate inferential statistical techniques were used to compare pre-test and post-test scores and assess the efficacy of the thankfulness intervention based on the findings of the normality analysis. The statistical analyses were performed in compliance with the study's goals and assumptions, guaranteeing methodological rigor and scientific accuracy.

The analysis and interpretation of the gathered data were reported in Chapter IV. The results showed that gains in all study variables were linked to participation in the thankfulness intervention. After the intervention, the children's gratitude scores rose, suggesting that they had become more conscious of, appreciative of, and aware of the positive events and helpful relationships in their life. Concurrently, the frequency of complaining behavior decreased following the intervention, indicating that gratitude exercises assisted kids in refocusing their attention from unhappiness and bad experiences to appreciation and positive thoughts. The results also showed that after the session, there was less interpersonal conflict. Enhancements in cooperation, empathy, communication, emotional control, and perspective-taking seemed to support better peer relationships and more positive conflict resolution among the participants.

The study's results were found to be in line with the theoretical presumptions covered in the previous chapters when understood within the positive psychology paradigm. Children's cognitive views were expanded, adaptive emotional regulation was promoted, and interpersonal relationships were reinforced by gratitude, which seemed to serve as a positive emotional resource. Children showed decreased inclinations toward chronic complaining and enhanced capacities to react constructively during interpersonal conflicts as they grew more conscious of the good aspects of their everyday experiences. The observed behavioral changes also corroborated earlier research

showing that gratitude reduces negative emotional experiences and maladaptive behavioral patterns while increasing empathy, optimism, resilience, prosocial behavior, and social connectivity.

The results have significant practical implications for counseling psychology as well. The intervention showed that children's positive emotional and behavioral development can be fostered in school settings through the use of straightforward, planned appreciation exercises. Children can develop emotional awareness, appreciation, empathy, cooperation, and positive interpersonal skills through gratitude-based programs, which need few resources and can be included into regular school activities. Therefore, by fostering emotional well-being, bolstering peer relationships, lowering behavioral problems, and fostering more supportive classroom environments, such treatments may be useful preventive mental health programs for schools. The results also emphasize how crucial it is for educators, psychologists, school counselors, and educational institutions to include positive psychology interventions into student development initiatives and school mental health services.

Additionally, by expanding gratitude's application beyond general psychological well-being to particular behavioral outcomes like children's complaining behavior and interpersonal conflict, the study adds to the body of knowledge already available on gratitude. The results offer empirical backing for the application of thankfulness as an evidence-based positive psychology intervention that can promote better interpersonal connections, healthier emotional regulation, and adaptive behavioral functioning in educational environments. As a result, the study has significant ramifications for counseling psychology, school counseling, educational practice, and future studies that support children's holistic development and good mental health.

Major Findings

The major findings of the present study are summarized as follows:

1. The findings revealed that the structured gratitude intervention was effective in significantly increasing gratitude levels among children. The post-test scores indicated an improvement in children's tendency to recognize, appreciate, and acknowledge the positive aspects of their lives and the support received from others. The intervention encouraged children to develop an attitude of thankfulness, appreciation, and positive reflection, thereby strengthening gratitude as a positive psychological resource.
2. A significant reduction in complaining behaviour was observed following the implementation of the gratitude-based activities. The findings suggest that regular engagement in gratitude practices enabled children to shift their attention from dissatisfaction, frustration, and negative experiences towards appreciation and positive thinking. As a result, children demonstrated fewer habitual complaints and greater acceptance of everyday situations.
3. The study found a significant reduction in interpersonal conflict among the participants after the intervention. Children exhibited improvements in peer relationships, cooperation, communication, empathy, and emotional understanding. The gratitude activities appeared to encourage perspective-taking, mutual respect, and constructive interaction, thereby reducing the occurrence of conflicts within the classroom setting.
4. The intervention contributed to positive behavioural and emotional changes among the participants. Children became more aware of their emotions, expressed appreciation more frequently, demonstrated improved emotional regulation, and responded more positively during

interpersonal interactions. These behavioural improvements indicate that gratitude can function as a protective factor in children's socio-emotional development.

5. The findings support the principles of Positive Psychology, particularly the proposition that cultivating positive emotions contributes to improved psychological functioning and healthier interpersonal relationships. The results are also consistent with previous empirical studies demonstrating that gratitude promotes emotional well-being, empathy, prosocial behaviour, and resilience while reducing negative emotional and behavioural outcomes.

6. The study demonstrates that gratitude-based activities can be effectively implemented within school settings as simple, practical, and low-cost interventions for promoting children's emotional well-being and positive behaviour. The intervention required minimal resources while producing meaningful improvements in gratitude, complaining behaviour, and interpersonal relationships.

7. Overall, the study provides empirical evidence that structured gratitude activities are effective in increasing gratitude levels while reducing complaining behaviour and interpersonal conflict among children, thereby contributing to healthier emotional, social, and behavioural development.

Conclusion

The goal of the current study was to determine whether gratitude-based activities might lessen children's complaining behavior and interpersonal conflict. It is clear from the results of the pre-test and post-test evaluations that the participants experienced significant improvements as a result of the thankfulness intervention. appreciation is a significant psychological strength that can support adaptive emotional and behavioral functioning, as demonstrated by the intervention's successful enhancement of appreciation while decreasing interpersonal conflict and complaining behavior.

The results support the tenets of positive psychology, which highlight the development of good feelings and personal qualities as means of achieving psychological well-being. Emotional control, empathy, cooperation, and peer relationships all improved as a result of the intervention, which encouraged kids to identify pleasant experiences, value other people's assistance, and show gratitude. These beneficial adjustments encouraged improved interpersonal connections in the school setting and helped to lessen harmful behavioral tendencies.

Additionally, the study emphasizes the usefulness of gratitude-based interventions in learning environments. Gratitude exercises are easy, affordable, interesting, and readily adaptable to educational settings. Implementing them can help foster more positive school environments, better peer connections, and increased children's emotional wellbeing. In order to promote children's holistic development, school counseling services and educational programs might incorporate gratitude-based programs as a useful preventive mental health technique.

Implications of the study

The findings of the present study have important implications for counselling psychology, education, school counselling, and future research.

The study contributes to the growing body of knowledge in positive psychology by providing empirical evidence for the effectiveness of gratitude interventions in reducing children's complaining behavior and interpersonal conflict. By expanding the application of appreciation beyond psychological well-being to specific behavioral goals, it contributes to the body of information on positive psychology therapies for school-age children.

The findings show that by incorporating gratitude-based activities into individual counseling, group therapy, and life skills programs, school counselors can promote emotional

regulation, empathy, resilience, and healthy peer connections. In order to reduce behavioral problems before they get worse, these interventions could be utilized as preventative measures. Teachers may incorporate gratitude practices into normal classroom activities, such as gratitude journals, appreciation circles, gratitude reflections, class discussions, and thankfulness walls. These techniques can minimize student conflict, encourage teamwork, improve communication, and create a more positive learning environment.

Gratitude-based programs could be included into student well-being activities, value education, social-emotional learning programs, and school mental health efforts. These initiatives may enhance children's emotional intelligence and foster more positive classroom relationships. Parents and other caregivers can also encourage gratitude practices at home by modeling thankful behavior, assisting children in identifying positive experiences, and offering opportunities for family members to express gratitude. Such efforts can reinforce positive behavioral changes initiated in the educational environment.

The findings may also aid legislators, educators, psychologists, and counselors in developing evidence-based interventions that promote children's social development, emotional well-being, and positive behavior.

Limitations of the study

A comparatively small sample of children from a single Thiruvananthapuram school participated in the current investigation. The low sample size and geographic location may limit the results' applicability to children from various educational settings, socioeconomic backgrounds, and cultural contexts, despite the fact that the findings offer insightful information

about the efficacy of gratitude-based activities. As a result, the results must be evaluated in light of the chosen study population.

Without a control group, the study used a pre-experimental one-group pre-test and post-test research design. As a result, it was impossible to compare the youngsters in the intervention group with those who did not participate in the thankfulness exercises. Therefore, external environmental influences, developmental changes, or classroom experiences that took place during the intervention period may have had some influence on the reported behavioral changes.

The length of the intervention is another study drawback. The 25-day duration of the thankfulness program was adequate to assess short-term behavioral improvements, but it might not have been enough to assess the intervention's long-term sustainability. Furthermore, post-test evaluations were carried out just after the intervention was finished; no follow-up evaluation was done to see if the noted changes persisted over time.

Additionally, the study concentrated on interpersonal conflict, complaining behavior, and thankfulness. The investigation did not cover other significant psychological factors such emotional intelligence, resilience, self-esteem, optimism, coping mechanisms, psychological well-being, and academic adjustment. Additionally, the results were mostly dependent on self-report measures, which could be impacted by social desirability or response bias. When evaluating the results and organizing further study, these constraints should be taken into account.

Suggestions

Based on the findings of the present study, future research may be conducted using larger and more diverse samples involving children from different schools, districts, and socio-cultural backgrounds. Such studies would enhance the generalizability of the findings and provide a

broader understanding of the effectiveness of gratitude-based interventions among children. Researchers may also employ true experimental or quasi-experimental designs by including both experimental and control groups to establish stronger evidence regarding the causal effects of gratitude interventions.

Future studies may examine the long-term effectiveness of gratitude-based interventions by extending the duration of the programme and conducting follow-up assessments after several weeks or months. Longitudinal studies would provide valuable information regarding the sustainability of behavioural changes and the continued influence of gratitude on children's emotional and social development. Researchers may also compare different gratitude intervention techniques to identify the most effective strategies for various age groups.

Further research can expand the scope of the investigation by exploring the relationship between gratitude and other psychological variables, including emotional intelligence, resilience, self-esteem, optimism, subjective well-being, coping skills, life satisfaction, academic performance, social competence, and mental health. Comparative studies involving different developmental stages, such as adolescents or college students, may also provide valuable insights into the developmental significance of gratitude across the lifespan.

From a practical perspective, schools may consider integrating gratitude-based activities into regular classroom practices, life skills education, value education programmes, and school counselling services. Teachers can encourage gratitude through classroom discussions, gratitude journals, appreciation exercises, reflective writing, and group activities that promote empathy, cooperation, and mutual respect. Similarly, school counsellors may incorporate gratitude-based interventions into preventive mental health programmes aimed at strengthening children's emotional regulation and interpersonal relationships.

Parents and caregivers may also be encouraged to foster gratitude within the home environment by modelling appreciative behaviour, encouraging children to express thankfulness, and creating opportunities for positive family interactions. Collaboration among parents, teachers, school counsellors, and mental health professionals can contribute to the development of emotionally healthy, socially responsible, and psychologically resilient children. Such coordinated efforts may further enhance the effectiveness of gratitude-based interventions and promote children's overall well-being.

References

- Alicke, M. D., Braun, J. C., Glor, J. P., Klotz, M. L., Magee, J., Sederholm, H., & Siegel, R. (1992). Complaining behavior in social interaction. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 18(3), 286–295.
- Alzahrani, M., Alharbi, M., & Alodwani, A. (2019). The effect of social-emotional competence on children’s psychological well-being and academic achievement. *International Journal of Education and Practice*, 7(3), 216–225.
- Amaro, A. (2017). Gratitude and interpersonal relationships: The role of appreciation in conflict management. *Journal of Positive Psychology and Wellbeing*, 1(2), 58–71.
- American Psychological Association. (2018). *APA dictionary of psychology* (2nd ed.). American Psychological Association.
- American Psychological Association. (2020). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th ed.). American Psychological Association.
- American Psychological Association. (n.d.). Conflict. In *APA Dictionary of Psychology*. <https://dictionary.apa.org/conflict>
- Bono, G., Emmons, R. A., & McCullough, M. E. (2004). Gratitude in practice and the practice of gratitude. In P. A. Linley & S. Joseph (Eds.), *Positive psychology in practice* (pp. 464–481). John Wiley & Sons.
- Child Mind Institute. (2023). Why kids complain—and how to respond. <https://childmind.org>

Cicero, M. T. (1923). *De officiis* (W. Miller, Trans.). Harvard University Press.

(Original work published c. 44 BCE)

Csikszentmihalyi, M. (1990). *Flow: The psychology of optimal experience*. Harper & Row.

Davis, D. E., Choe, E., Meyers, J., Wade, N., Varjas, K., Gifford, A., Hook, J. N., Van Tongeren,

D. R., Griffin, B. J., & Worthington, E. L., Jr. (2016). Thankful for the little things: A meta-analysis of gratitude interventions. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 63(1), 20–31.

Dickens, L. R. (2017). Using gratitude to promote positive change: A meta-analysis of gratitude interventions. *Basic and Applied Social Psychology*, 39(4), 193–208.

Emmons, R. A., & Crumpler, C. A. (2000). Gratitude as a human strength: Appraising the evidence. *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology*, 19(1), 56–69.

Emmons, R. A., & McCullough, M. E. (Eds.). (2004). *The psychology of gratitude*. Oxford University Press.

Emmons, R. A., & McCullough, M. E. (2003). Counting blessings versus burdens: An experimental investigation of gratitude and subjective well-being in daily life. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 84(2), 377–389.

Emmons, R. A., & Shelton, C. M. (2002). Gratitude and the science of positive psychology. In C. R. Snyder & S. J. Lopez (Eds.), *Handbook of positive psychology* (pp. 459–471). Oxford University Press.

Ferreira, M., Simões, C., Matos, M. G., Ramiro, L., & Equipa Aventura Social. (2021).

- Children's social and emotional development and mental well-being in school settings. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 12, 669437.
- Finch, C., & Wirtanen, C. (2012). *The preschool and elementary school child: Development and education*. Pearson.
- Fredrickson, B. L. (2001). The role of positive emotions in positive psychology: The broaden-and-build theory of positive emotions. *American Psychologist*, 56(3), 218–226.
- Freitas, L. B. D. L., Pieta, M. A. M., & Tudge, J. R. H. (2011). Beyond politeness: The expression of gratitude in children and adolescents. *Psychological Reports*, 109(3), 757–774.
- Froh, J. J., Bono, G., & Emmons, R. A. (2010). Being grateful is beyond good manners: Gratitude and motivation to contribute to society among early adolescents. *Motivation and Emotion*, 34(2), 144–157.
- Froh, J. J., Bono, G., & Emmons, R. A. (2014). Nice thinking! A classroom-based gratitude gratitude intervention for school children. *Journal of Counseling and Development*, 92(1), 1–13. <https://doi.org/10.1002/j.1556-6676.2014.00128.x>
- Halberstadt, A. G., Langley, H. A., Hussong, A. M., Coffman, J. L., Rothenberg, W. A., Mokrova, I., & Ferrari, J. R. (2016). Parents' understanding of gratitude in children: A thematic analysis. *Cogent Psychology*, 3(1), 1234169. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311908.2016.1234169>
- Himes, J. S. (2008). *Conflict and conflict management*. University of Georgia Press.

Hocker, J. L., Wilmot, W. W., & Forsyth, D. R. (2018). *Interpersonal conflict* (10th ed.).

McGraw-Hill Education.

Kaur, R., Sharma, M., & Singh, B. (2025). Gratitude journaling and psychological well-being among college students. *International Journal of Indian Psychology*, 13(1), 150–162.

Kim, Y. S., & Baker, M. A. (2019). Observer reactions to other customer incivility: Emotional labor, gratitude, loyalty to employee, and tipping intention. *Journal of Services Marketing*, 33(6), 667–682.

Kowalski, R. M. (2002). Whining, griping, and complaining: Positive and negative effects of complaining. *Psychological Bulletin*, 128(2), 179–196.

Linley, P. A., & Joseph, S. (Eds.). (2004). *Positive psychology in practice*. John Wiley & Sons.

Machiel, K. A., Kashdan, T. B., & Nezlek, J. B. (2024). Gratitude as a buffer of the association between stressful life events and externalizing behaviors in early adolescence. *Journal of Child and Family Studies*, 33(2), 355–368. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10826-023-02618-5>

Marsee, M. A., & Frick, P. J. (2007). Exploring the cognitive and emotional correlates to proactive and reactive aggression in a sample of detained girls. *Journal of Abnormal Child Psychology*, 35(6), 969–981.

Masten, A. S. (2014). *Ordinary magic: Resilience in development*. Guilford Press.

McCullough, M. E., Emmons, R. A., & Tsang, J. A. (2002). The grateful disposition: A

- conceptual and empirical topography. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 82(1), 112–127.
- McCullough, M. E., Kilpatrick, S. D., Emmons, R. A., & Larson, D. B. (2001). Is gratitude a moral affect? *Psychological Bulletin*, 127(2), 249–266.
- Nelson, J. A., de Lucca Freitas, L. B., O'Brien, M., Calkins, S. D., Marcovitch, S., & Tudge, J. R. H. (2013). Preschool-aged children's understanding of gratitude: Relations with emotion and mental state knowledge. *British Journal of Developmental Psychology*, 31(1), 42–56. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.2044-835X.2012.02077.x>
- Nguyen, T. S., & Gordon, C. L. (2020). Gratitude and well-being among children and adolescents: A systematic review. *Journal of Happiness Studies*, 21(6), 2135–2159.
- Obeldobel, C. A., & Kerns, K. A. (2021). Gratitude, attachment, and well-being in middle childhood. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, 38(5), 1488–1508.
- Oguni, M. (2023). Gratitude and fairness in elementary school children's resource allocation. *Japanese Psychological Research*, 65(2), 135–145.
- O'Leary, K., & Dockray, S. (2015). The effects of two novel gratitude and mindfulness on well-being. *Journal of Alternative and Complementary Medicine*, 21(4), 243–245. <https://doi.org/10.1089/acm.2014.0390>
- Owens, R. L., & Patterson, M. M. (2013). Positive psychological interventions for children:

- A comparison of gratitude and best possible selves approaches. *School Psychology International*, 34(5), 559–571.
- Rothenberg, W. A., Hussong, A. M., Langley, H. A., Coffman, J. L., Halberstadt, A. G., & Mokrova, I. (2017). Grateful parents raising grateful children: Niche selection and the socialization of child gratitude. *Applied Developmental Science*, 21(2), 106–120.
- Rubin, K. H., Bukowski, W. M., & Bowker, J. C. (2015). Children in peer groups. In R. M. Lerner (Ed.), *Handbook of child psychology and developmental science* (7th ed., Vol. 4, pp. 175–222). John Wiley & Sons.
- Snyder, C. R., & Lopez, S. J. (Eds.). (2002). *Handbook of positive psychology*. Oxford University Press.
- Sasaki, J. Y., Kim, H. S., Mojaverian, T., Kelley, L. D., Park, I. Y., & Janusonis, S. (2020). Gratitude reduces competitive inequity and sabotage behaviors. *Emotion*, 20(6), 1045–1058.
- Scott, H., Stuart, J., Barber, B. L., & Kang, M. (2021). Gratitude and prosocial behaviour among adolescents: A systematic review. *Journal of Adolescence*, 88, 65–78.
- Seligman, M. E. P. (1991). *Learned optimism*. Alfred A. Knopf.
- Seligman, M. E. P. (2011). *Flourish: A visionary new understanding of happiness and well-being*. Free Press.
- Seligman, M. E. P., Ernst, R. M., Gillham, J., Reivich, K., & Linkins, M. (2009). *Positive*

- education: Positive psychology and classroom interventions. *Oxford Review of Education*, 35(3), 293–311.
- Shoshani, A., Slone, M., & Steinmetz, S. (2020). Positive psychology at school: A school-based intervention to promote adolescents' mental health and well-being. *Journal of Happiness Studies*, 21(4), 1433–1454.
- Simon, F. C. (2013). Gratitude and positive behaviour: The role of appreciation in emotional well-being. *Journal of Positive Psychology*, 8(5), 420–430.
- Soscia, I. (2007). Gratitude, delight, or guilt: The role of consumers' emotions in predicting post-consumption behaviours. *Psychology & Marketing*, 24(10), 871–894.
- Sun, P., Sun, Y., Jiang, H., Jia, R., & Li, Z. (2019). Gratitude and problem behaviors in adolescents: The mediating roles of positive and negative coping styles. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 10, 1547. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2019.01547>
- Tolcher, K., Cauble, M., & Downs, A. (2024). Evaluating the effects of gratitude interventions on college student well-being. *Journal of American College Health*. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07448481.2024.xxxxx> (Update DOI if available in the published version.)
- Trivers, R. L. (1971). The evolution of reciprocal altruism. *Quarterly Review of Biology*, 46(1), 35–57. <https://doi.org/10.1086/406755>
- United Kingdom Department for Education. (2021). Promoting children and young

people's mental health and wellbeing: A whole school or college approach. Department for Education. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications>

Viswanath, P., Kumar, A., & Vaish, A. (2026). Parental socialization and gratitude development in children: A systematic review and call for future research. *Current Psychology*. Advance online publication.

Wood, A. M., Froh, J. J., & Geraghty, A. W. A. (2010). Gratitude and well-being: A review and theoretical integration. *Clinical Psychology Review*, 30(7), 890–905. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cpr.2010.03.005>

Appendices

Appendix A- Informed Consent Form

Title of the Study

Effectiveness of Gratitude Work on Reducing Complaining Behavior and Interpersonal Conflict Among Children

Researcher's Details

Name of the Researcher: _____

Programme: _____

Institution: _____

Purpose of the Study

I am conducting a research study entitled “Effectiveness of Gratitude on Reducing Complaining Behavior and Interpersonal Conflict Among Children” as part of the academic requirements for the Master of Science in Counselling Psychology.

The purpose of the study is to examine whether a structured gratitude-based intervention can enhance gratitude while reducing complaining behavior and interpersonal conflict among children.

The findings of the study are expected to contribute to the understanding of gratitude as a positive psychological intervention for promoting children's emotional and interpersonal well-being within the school setting.

Your permission is kindly requested to conduct this study among the selected students of your institution.

Procedure of the Study

Upon receiving permission from the school authorities, the study will be conducted among the selected students aged 11–12 years. Initially, the researcher will administer the Gratitude Questionnaire–6 (GQ–6), the Peer Conflict Scale, and the Self-Report Complaining Behavior Checklist as pre-test measures.

Following the pre-test assessment, a structured gratitude-based intervention programme will be implemented over a period of 25 consecutive working days. Each session will be conducted for approximately 30 minutes during the school hours in consultation with the Principal and the concerned class teacher, ensuring that the regular academic activities of the students are disrupted as little as possible.

The intervention will include structured gratitude activities such as gratitude journaling, gratitude sharing, gratitude letters, storytelling, role plays, appreciation exercises, drawing activities, group discussions, reflection exercises, and other classroom-based activities designed to cultivate gratitude, improve peer relationships, and reduce complaining behavior and interpersonal conflict.

Before the commencement of the programme, the students will be informed that they will be participating in a series of gratitude-based classroom sessions conducted as part of an academic research study. The purpose and nature of the sessions will be explained in language appropriate to their age.

Following the completion of the intervention programme, the same assessment tools will be administered as post-tests to evaluate the effectiveness of the intervention.

Voluntary Participation

Permission to conduct the study is sought from the Principal and the concerned class teacher. Participation in the classroom-based gratitude activities will be carried out only after obtaining institutional approval.

Students will be informed about the nature and purpose of the gratitude sessions before the commencement of the intervention. Any student who is unwilling to participate in a particular activity or assessment will be allowed to refrain from doing so without any academic penalty or adverse consequence.

Confidentiality

The confidentiality and privacy of both the institution and the participants will be strictly maintained throughout the research process.

The name of the school, class teacher, and individual students will not be disclosed in the dissertation, presentations, publications, or any other academic reports arising from this study. All responses collected during the assessment will be coded and analysed anonymously. No personally identifiable information will be included in the research report.

The collected data will be used solely for academic and research purposes and will be stored securely by the researcher.

Risks and Benefits

The present study does not involve any physical, medical, or psychological procedures that are expected to cause harm to the participants.

The gratitude-based activities are educational and experiential in nature and are designed to promote positive thinking, appreciation, empathy, cooperation, and healthy interpersonal relationships. Some students may reflect upon their personal experiences during certain activities; however, they will not be required to disclose any information that makes them uncomfortable.

The intervention is expected to help students develop gratitude, improve emotional regulation, strengthen peer relationships, reduce unnecessary complaining, and promote constructive conflict management. The findings of the study may also contribute to the development of positive mental health programmes within school settings.

Collection of Feedback

During the intervention period, informal feedback may be obtained from the students regarding their experiences with the gratitude activities. Observations from the concerned class teacher may also be considered to understand behavioural changes observed during the intervention.

Following the completion of the programme, feedback regarding the usefulness and effectiveness of the intervention may be collected for academic and research purposes. All feedback will remain confidential and will not reveal the identity of any participant or the institution.

Consent Declaration

I have read and understood the information provided above regarding the purpose, procedure, duration, confidentiality, risks, and expected benefits of the proposed research study.

I understand that the study is being conducted solely for academic purposes and that the confidentiality of the institution and the participating students will be maintained throughout the research process.

I voluntarily grant permission to the researcher to conduct the study in the institution under the conditions described above.

Signature of the Principal: _____

Seal of the Institution

Date: _____

Permission of the Concerned Class Teacher

I have been informed about the nature, purpose, and procedure of the proposed gratitude-based intervention programme. I agree to facilitate the conduct of the study among the selected students during the approved period.

Signature of the Class Teacher: _____

Date: _____

Appendix B – Gratitude Work Intervention Module

The Gratitude Work Intervention Module was developed by the researcher based on the principles of Positive Psychology to enhance gratitude and reduce complaining behavior and interpersonal conflict among children. The module comprised a series of structured, age-appropriate, and experiential gratitude-based activities implemented over a period of 25 working days. The sessions were conducted for approximately 40 minutes each in a group setting during the available working days of the school, with the permission of the Principal and the concerned class teacher. The activities were designed to encourage appreciation, positive emotional expression, empathy, cooperation, and healthy interpersonal relationships through active participation, reflection, creative expression, and group interaction. The following section presents the activities included in the Gratitude Work Intervention Module.

Activity 1: Gratitude Journal

Objective

To introduce the concept of gratitude and encourage children to develop the habit of recognising and appreciating the positive aspects of their daily lives.

Materials Required

Magic Box, gratitude journals, pens.

Procedure

The session began with an interactive activity using a “Magic Box.” The researcher provided clues describing gratitude as a feeling that makes the heart happy, helps people focus on positive things instead of complaints, begins with the letter “G,” consists of nine letters, and is the reason people

say “thank you.” The students were encouraged to guess the word, and the child who correctly identified “Gratitude” was appreciated with a pen. The concept and purpose of maintaining a gratitude journal were then explained. Each student was provided with a gratitude journal and a pen and was encouraged to record things they were grateful for regularly.

Outcome

The activity introduced children to the concept of gratitude and motivated them to begin practising gratitude through daily journaling.

Activity 2: Guided Gratitude Meditation and Five Blessings Drawing

Objective

To help children recognise and reflect upon the valuable blessings in their lives.

Materials Required

Drawing sheets and colouring materials.

Procedure

Students were guided through a short meditation and asked to close their eyes and visualise the five most valuable blessings in their lives. After the guided visualisation, they were asked to open their eyes and draw the five blessings they had imagined on the sheets provided.

Outcome

The activity promoted self-reflection, gratitude, and appreciation of the positive people and experiences in the children’s lives.

Activity 3: Positive Throw Ball***Objective***

To promote positive peer appreciation and strengthen interpersonal relationships.

Materials Required

Soft throw ball.

Procedure

Students stood in a circle. One student threw the ball to another, and the student who caught it expressed one positive quality or appreciation about the student who had thrown the ball. The activity continued until every student had participated.

Outcome

The activity encouraged appreciation among peers, strengthened positive communication, and enhanced classroom bonding.

Activity 4: Gratitude Collage***Objective***

To encourage children to identify and express gratitude through creative expression.

Materials Required

Chart paper, newspapers, magazines, scissors, glue, and colouring materials.

Procedure

Students were asked to collect pictures from newspapers and magazines that represented gratitude, happiness, kindness, family, friendship, or other positive experiences. They pasted the selected pictures onto chart paper to create a gratitude collage and shared their work with the class.

Outcome

The activity enhanced children's awareness of gratitude and encouraged creative expression of positive experiences.

Activity 5: Gratitude Storytelling***Objective***

To develop gratitude through reflective listening and emotional understanding.

Materials Required

Story script.

Procedure

A story highlighting the importance of gratitude towards God and parents was narrated. Students listened to the story with their eyes closed to encourage reflection. After the narration, they were invited to share their thoughts and feelings about the story.

Outcome

The activity helped children understand the value of gratitude and encouraged emotional reflection and expression.

Activity 6: Gratitude Letter Writing***Objective***

To encourage children to express gratitude towards their parents.

Materials Required

Writing cards and pens.

Procedure

Each student was provided with two small cards and was asked to write one gratitude letter to their father and another to their mother, expressing appreciation for their love, care, and support. Students were encouraged to give the letters to their parents at home.

Outcome

The activity strengthened emotional expression and encouraged children to communicate appreciation towards their parents.

Activity 7: Gratitude-Based Role Play***Objective***

To reinforce gratitude through experiential learning and cooperative group participation.

Materials Required

Simple props and chart papers (if required).

Procedure

Students were divided into six groups, and each group was assigned a gratitude-related theme, such as gratitude towards parents, teachers, friends, good health, or nature. The groups prepared short role plays and presented them before the class on the following day.

Outcome

The activity enhanced children's understanding of gratitude in everyday life, strengthened teamwork, improved communication skills, and encouraged the practical expression of gratitude.

Activity 8: Thanksgiving Activity***Objective***

To encourage children to recognize, appreciate, and express gratitude towards individuals who positively influence their daily lives.

Materials Required

Lots containing gratitude prompts, gratitude cards, and pens.

Procedure

The students were divided into groups, and each group was asked to select a lot containing a gratitude-based prompt, such as identifying the kindest person in the school, the teacher who always appreciates them, or the person who always maintains a pleasant smile. Group members discussed the prompt collectively and identified the individual who best matched it. The researcher then provided each group with a gratitude card containing an appreciation message corresponding to the selected prompt. The students personally presented the gratitude card to the identified individual and expressed their appreciation.

Outcome

The activity promoted appreciation, empathy, and positive social interactions by encouraging children to acknowledge and express gratitude towards significant individuals in their school environment.

Activity 9: Complaining Versus Expressing Needs***Objective***

To help children understand the difference between complaining behaviour and healthy expression of needs.

Materials Required

No specific materials required.

Procedure

The researcher invited a few students to share common complaints or situations that they frequently expressed at home or in school. Based on their responses, a discussion was facilitated to differentiate between habitual complaining and appropriately expressing one's needs or concerns. The researcher explained the characteristics of both behaviours using simple examples and encouraged students to communicate their needs in a positive and respectful manner.

Outcome

The activity enhanced children's understanding of constructive communication and enabled them to distinguish between unnecessary complaining and the healthy expression of their needs and feelings.

Activity 10: Gratitude Circle***Objective***

To encourage children to express gratitude verbally and appreciate the positive qualities of their peers.

Materials Required

No specific materials required.

Procedure

The students were asked to sit in a circle. One by one, each student expressed gratitude towards a classmate, teacher, family member, or any individual who had positively influenced their life. They were encouraged to explain the reason for their gratitude. The researcher facilitated the discussion and ensured that every child had an opportunity to participate.

Outcome

The activity promoted positive communication, appreciation, empathy, and strengthened interpersonal relationships among the participants.

Activity 11: Gratitude Reflection***Objective***

To encourage children to reflect on their learning and the positive changes experienced during the gratitude work programme.

Materials Required

Reflection sheets and pens.

Procedure

At the end of the intervention, students were asked to reflect on their experiences throughout the gratitude work programme. They were encouraged to write or share what they had learned, the activities they enjoyed the most, and whether they noticed any positive changes in their thoughts, feelings, or relationships with others. A brief group discussion followed, allowing students to share their reflections voluntarily.

Outcome

The activity reinforced the practice of gratitude, encouraged self-reflection, and helped children recognize the positive impact of gratitude on their emotions, behaviour, and interpersonal relationships.

Appendix C - The Gratitude Questionnaire-Six Item Form (GQ-6)

ACTIVITIES

From a TOPSS unit lesson plan on Positive Psychology, published by APA in 2022. This activity is intended for teachers for use in their classes. Any further use requires additional APA permission.

[Back to Content Outline](#)

ACTIVITY 3.1

The Gratitude Questionnaire-Six Item Form (GQ-6)

Concept

In this lesson, students will complete a short inventory designed to assess their current levels of gratitude among three dimensions.

Units it could embed into

Stress and Health, or this could be a stand-alone assignment

Learning Target

1. Students measure their own levels of gratitude using a gratitude assessment.

Materials

[Handout 3.1: The Gratitude Questionnaire-Six Item Form \(GQ-6\)](#)

Time

10 Minutes

Instructions

1. The GQ-6 is one of the most frequently used assessments in gratitude. It measures three dimensions of gratitude, including the tendency to recognize, respond to, and experience gratitude.
2. Students complete [Handout 3.1 The Gratitude Questionnaire-Six Item Form \(GQ-6\)](#).
3. Provide the students with the following scoring instructions:
 - » Add up your scores for items 1, 2, 4, and 5.
 - » Reverse your scores for items 3 and 6. That is, if you scored a "7," give yourself a "1," if you scored a "6," give yourself a "2," etc.
 - » Add the reversed scores for items 3 and 6 to the total from Step 1.
 - » This is your total GQ-6 score. This number should be between 6 and 42.
4. Scoring Analysis: Although higher scores on the GQ-6 are positively correlated with a range of positive outcomes, when having students fill out this measure the emphasis should be on self-awareness (i.e., learning about where there may be room to grow) and not on overall score. Teachers can make the point that gratitude is like a muscle. The more you practice it, the stronger it becomes. However, teachers should also have resources available for any student who finds completion of the measure distressing (e.g., if a student is going through a particularly challenging time, and it feels impossible to find any positive aspects to their lives).

ACTIVITIES

[Back to Content Outline](#)

HANDOUT 3.1

The Gratitude Questionnaire-Six Item Form (GQ-6)

Learning Target

1. Utilize the GQ-6 to measure your current level of gratitude.

Using the scale below as a guide, write a number beside each statement to indicate how much you agree with it. 1 = strongly disagree 2 = disagree 3 = slightly disagree 4 = neutral 5 = slightly agree 6 = agree 7 = strongly agree

_____ 1. I have so much in life to be thankful for.

_____ 2. If I had to list everything that I felt grateful for, it would be a very long list.

_____ 3. When I look at the world, I don't see much to be grateful for.

_____ 4. I am grateful to a wide variety of people.

_____ 5. As I get older I find myself more able to appreciate the people, events, and situations that have been part of my life history.

_____ 6. Long amounts of time can go by before I feel grateful to something or someone.

Reference

McCullough, M. E., Emmons, R. A., & Tsang, J.A. (2002). The grateful disposition: A conceptual and empirical topography. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 82(1), 112-127. Copyright © 2002 by the American Psychological Association. Reproduced with permission.

Appendix D - Peer Conflict Scale (Youth Version)

Peer Conflict Scale (Youth Version)

Name: _____

Age: _____

Date Completed: _____

***Instructions:** Please read each statement and decide how well it describes you. Mark your answer by circling the appropriate number (0-3) for each statement. Do not leave any statement unrated.*

	Not at all true	Somewhat true	Very true	Definitely true
1. I have hurt others to win a game or contest	0	1	2	3
2. I enjoy making fun of others	0	1	2	3
3. When I am teased, I will hurt someone or break something	0	1	2	3
4. Sometimes I gossip about others when I'm angry at them	0	1	2	3
5. I start fights to get what I want	0	1	2	3
6. I deliberately exclude others from my group, even if they haven't done anything to me	0	1	2	3
7. I spread rumors and lies about others when they do something wrong to me	0	1	2	3
8. When someone hurts me, I end up getting into a fight	0	1	2	3
9. I try to make others look bad to get what I want	0	1	2	3
10. When someone upsets me, I tell my friends to stop liking that person	0	1	2	3
11. I threaten others when they do something wrong to me	0	1	2	3
12. When I hurt others, it makes me feel powerful and respected	0	1	2	3
13. I tell others' secrets for things they did to me a while back	0	1	2	3
14. When someone threatens me, I end up getting into a fight	0	1	2	3

	Not at all true	Somewhat true	Very true	Definitely true
15. I make new friends to get back at someone who has made me angry	0	1	2	3
16. I hurt others when I am angry at them	0	1	2	3
17. When others make me mad, I write mean notes about them and pass the notes around	0	1	2	3
18. I threaten others to get what I want	0	1	2	3
19. I gossip about others to become popular	0	1	2	3
20. If others make me mad, I hurt them	0	1	2	3
21. I am deliberately cruel to others, even if they haven't done anything to me	0	1	2	3
22. When I am angry at others, I try to make them look bad	0	1	2	3
23. To get what I want, I try to steal others' friends from them	0	1	2	3
24. I carefully plan out how to hurt others	0	1	2	3
25. When someone makes me mad, I throw things at them	0	1	2	3
26. When I gossip about others, I feel like it makes me popular	0	1	2	3
27. I hurt others for things they did to me a while back	0	1	2	3
28. I enjoy hurting others	0	1	2	3
29. I spread rumors and lies about others to get what I want	0	1	2	3
30. When I have gotten into arguments or physical fights, it is usually because I acted without thinking	0	1	2	3
31. If others make me mad, I tell their secrets	0	1	2	3
32. I ignore or stop talking to others in order to get them to do what I want	0	1	2	3
33. I like to hurt kids smaller than me	0	1	2	3
34. When others make me angry, I try to steal their friends from them	0	1	2	3

	Not at all true	Somewhat true	Very true	Definitely true
35. I threaten others, even if they haven't done anything to me	0	1	2	3
36. When I get angry, I will hurt someone	0	1	2	3
37. I have gotten into fights, even over small insults from others	0	1	2	3
38. When I have started rumors about someone, it is usually because I acted without thinking	0	1	2	3
39. I say mean things about others, even if they haven't done anything to me	0	1	2	3
40. When someone makes me angry, I try to exclude them from my group	0	1	2	3

Unpublished rating scale, Department of Psychology, University of New Orleans
 Contact: Paul J. Frick, (pflick@uno.edu)

Appendix E – Self – Report Complaining Behavior Checklist

Self-Report Complaining Behavior Checklist

(For Students – Standard VI)

Name (Optional): _____
Age: _____ Class/Division: _____ Date: _____

Instructions:

Read each statement carefully. Tick (✓) the option that best describes you in the last 1 month. 0 – Never 1 – Sometimes 2 – Often There are no right or wrong answers. Please answer honestly.

No.	Statement	0	1	2
1	I say homework is too much.			
2	I feel teachers give too many assignments.			
3	I complain about class tests or exams.			
4	I say 'This is too difficult' before trying properly.			
5	When I get low marks, I blame the teacher or question paper.			
6	I complain that my friends are troubling me.			
7	I feel classmates leave me out of games or groups.			
8	I report small issues to the teacher quickly.			
9	I feel others are not fair to me.			
10	I get upset easily over small teasing.			
11	I complain about school rules (uniform, assembly, discipline).			
12	I ask 'Why only me?' when corrected.			
13	I argue when teachers scold me.			
14	I feel school timings are too long.			
15	I feel bored in class and complain about it.			
16	I say school is very stressful.			
17	I complain even when things are normal.			
18	I say I have headache or stomachache to avoid class.			
19	I feel tired when I don't want to do work.			
20	I complain to get attention from teachers or friends.			

Scoring:

Total Score = _____ / 40

Interpretation (For Teacher/Counselor Use Only):

- 0–8 → Low complaining tendency
- 9–16 → Mild level
- 17–28 → Moderate level (needs guidance)
- 29–40 → High level (consider counseling support)

Student Reflection (Optional):

1. When do I complain the most? _____
2. One thing I can improve: _____
3. One good quality I have: _____