



Faculty of Cognitive Sciences and Human Development

**GRATITUDE AND PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING AMONG
UNIVERSITY STUDENTS IN MALAYSIA: THE MEDIATING ROLE
OF SELF-COMPASSION**

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ABSTRACT

The mental health and well-being of university students are critical, especially amidst the academic challenges encountered. This study explores the relationships between gratitude, self-compassion, and psychological well-being among Malaysian university students, with a specific focus on the mediating role of self-compassion. Using a cross-sectional correlational design, data were collected from 213 students via validated survey instruments. The results of Pearson correlation indicated significant positive correlations between gratitude and psychological well-being, gratitude and self-compassion, and self-compassion and psychological well-being. Furthermore, self-compassion was found to partially mediate the relationship between gratitude and psychological well-being. These findings underscore the importance of fostering gratitude and self-compassion within university programs to enhance student emotional well-being. Limitations include sampling bias, reliance on self-report measures, and the cross-sectional nature of the study. Despite these limitations, the research contributes valuable insights into the applicability of Western psychological constructs in a non-Western context, suggesting that gratitude and self-compassion are universal constructs that can enhance psychological well-being across diverse cultural settings. The study recommends incorporating gratitude and self-compassion practices into educational frameworks and conducting longitudinal and cross-cultural studies to further understand these dynamics. This research highlights the potential for educational institutions to integrate positive psychology practices, providing a holistic approach to student development and mental health.

Keywords: Gratitude, Self-compassion, Psychological well-being, University students

ABSTRAK

Kesihatan mental dan kesejahteraan pelajar universiti adalah kritikal, terutamanya di kala menghadapi cabaran akademik. Kajian ini meneroka hubungan antara kesyukuran, belas kasihan diri, dan kesejahteraan psikologi dalam kalangan pelajar universiti di Malaysia, dengan tumpuan khusus pada peranan pengantaraan belas kasihan diri. Menggunakan reka bentuk korelasi keratan rentas, data dikumpul daripada 213 pelajar melalui instrumen tinjauan yang telah disahkan. Dapatan kajian menggunakan korelasi Pearson menunjukkan korelasi positif yang signifikan antara kesyukuran dan kesejahteraan psikologi, kesyukuran dan belas kasihan diri, dan belas kasihan diri dan kesejahteraan psikologi. Selain itu, didapati bahawa belas kasihan diri sebahagiannya mengantara hubungan antara kesyukuran dan kesejahteraan psikologi. Penemuan ini menekankan kepentingan memupuk kesyukuran dan belas kasihan diri dalam program universiti untuk meningkatkan kesejahteraan emosi pelajar. Keterbatasan kajian termasuk berat sebelah pensamplean, pergantungan pada instrumen laporan sendiri, dan sifat keratan rentas kajian. Walaupun terdapat batasan ini, penyelidikan ini menyumbangkan pandangan yang berharga tentang kebolehgunaan konstruk psikologi Barat dalam konteks bukan Barat, menunjukkan bahawa kesyukuran dan belas kasihan diri adalah binaan sejagat yang boleh meningkatkan kesejahteraan psikologi merentas tetapan budaya yang pelbagai. Kajian ini mengesyorkan memasukkan amalan kesyukuran dan belas kasihan diri ke dalam rangka kerja pendidikan dan menjalankan kajian membujur dan silang budaya untuk memahami lebih lanjut dinamik ini. Penyelidikan ini menyerlahkan potensi institusi pendidikan untuk mengintegrasikan amalan psikologi positif, menyediakan pendekatan holistik kepada pembangunan pelajar dan kesihatan mental.

Kata kunci: Kesyukuran, Belas kasihan diri, Kesejahteraan psikologi, Pelajar universiti

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

The introduction section is a critical component of a research report as it serves multiple essential purposes. By outlining the issue or gap that the study aimed to address, it provides the background information and context that is required. It described how the research relates to the topic under investigation and any pertinent theoretical or practical ramifications to substantiate its significance. It also outlined the research's objectives and problems, which gives the study a defined structure. Determining the importance and value of the research study within the academic plays a crucial role in the introductory section, in general.

1.1 Background of Study

In recent years, the field of positive psychology has drawn greater attention with the emphasis on human qualities, well-being, and the elements that lead to a happy and meaningful life. Positive psychology looks at the positive elements of the human experience which acts as the foundation of human satisfaction and works to improve an individual's emotion (Reveley, 2013). Positive psychology is built on the PERMA paradigm, which was developed by Martin Seligman. It listed five essential components that are necessary for human flourishing and a meaningful existence in which the acronym of PERMA represents positive emotions, engagement, relationships, meaning, and accomplishment (Seligman, 2011). This research was particularly interested in the PERMA model's component of positive emotions, gratitude, and its potential impact on psychological well-being. Gratitude is a pleasant emotion associated with the idea of having benefited from another individual's deeds (Voci et al., 2018) and is

frequently associated with other elements including trust, appreciation, hope, and reciprocity (Macfarlane, 2020).

Encouraging students to feel thankful for positive aspects of their university experience can be a powerful way in assisting students to navigate the difficulties of academic life. When students practice gratitude, it creates a positive impact on their mental well-being (Sansone & Sansone, 2010), making their time at university more fulfilling. By making gratitude a part of university life, it becomes a helpful tool for students to navigate the complexities of academic and personal growth, promoting positive feelings (Komase et al., 2021; Wood et al., 2010), greater life satisfaction (Datu et al., 2021; Kerry et al., 2023) and improved well-being (Geier & Morris, 2022; Macfarlane, 2020; Sari & Santi, 2023; Sharifi & Moltafet, 2021). Practicing gratitude behaviours, including expressing gratitude through actions or behaviours, directing attention to the positive aspects in the current moment, appreciating the transient nature of life, and making positive social comparisons (Wood & Tarrier, 2010) regularly can protect students from the stress of university life, fostering emotional well-being and a more positive outlook on their studies and personal lives.

The psychological well-being of university students is a critical aspect for the students' overall development and success. Recognising the unique challenges faced by university students, integrating self-compassion as a crucial element in fostering their psychological well-being becomes imperative. The idea of self-compassion entails adopting positive approaches to self-relations during moments of distress, irrespective of whether such distress arises from failure, feelings of inadequacy, or overall life challenges (Braehler & Neff, 2020). As stated by Neff (2009), self-compassion has been linked to increased life satisfaction and overall well-being, along with lower levels of anxiety and depression. The concept behind including self-compassion as a mediating variable was that individuals who possess greater self-compassion

might be better able to process and derive benefits from feelings of gratitude, which could ultimately improve their psychological well-being.

The mental well-being of university students is facing significant challenges, with recent studies indicated that university students represent a demographic highly susceptible to conditions and disorders affecting mental health (Alharbi & Smith, 2018; Baik et al., 2019). University students encounter various challenges related to their psychological well-being, leading to academic stress due to various factors such as academic workload, studying, time management, rivalry, financial concerns, and adjusting to new surroundings (Barbayannis et al., 2022). According to Tran et al. (2022), university undergraduate students who exhibited an elevated degree of self-compassion could potentially be able to alleviate psychological issues and enhance psychological well-being. Neff (2003a) has also indicated that self-compassion is a psychological resource that can act as a buffer against the detrimental impacts of suffering and stress. This could have a positive effect on university students who deal with stress and academic tensions on a daily basis. It is an important factor to look into in the context of gratitude and psychological well-being given its function of developing emotional resilience and mechanisms for adaptive coping.

The precise dynamics of how gratitude, self-compassion, and psychological well-being interact in university student's demographic remain largely unexamined, despite previous research looking at these concepts independently. By examining the mediation role of self-compassion in the relationship between gratitude and psychological well-being among Malaysian university students, this study sought to bridge this gap in the existing literature. The purpose of this research is to illuminate on these constructs in relation to university students, potentially having ramifications for educational settings and initiatives meant to enhance the well-being of this demographic.

1.2 Problem Statement

Amidst the evolving landscape of higher education, cultivating the psychological well-being of university students is increasingly recognised as a vital component of their holistic development. Positive mental health and human flourishing are fundamentally reliant on gratitude (Allen, 2018), self-compassion (Neff, 2004), and psychological well-being (Burns et al., 2022). In the realm of positive psychology and well-being research, understanding of their interactions and processes is crucial. While prior studies have extensively explored the individual relationships between gratitude, self-compassion, and psychological well-being, there remains a significant gap concerning the intricate interplay among these factors in the specific context of university students. A research by Sotiropoulou et al. (2023) examined the connections and reciprocal effects of self-compassion on individuals' psychological well-being and subjective happiness during the COVID-19 pandemic. The results of the study showed that while there were negative correlations between self-criticism and psychological health, self-compassion had favourable relationships with both psychological health and subjective happiness. Nevertheless, the study did not particularly address university students and lacked insight into the connection between students' well-being and their capacity for self-compassion and gratitude. In relation to self-compassion and gratitude, Yang et al. (2021) studied the social development of adolescents can benefit from the adaptive functions of self-compassion in fostering gratitude. According to the study's findings, prosocial behaviour and gratitude were both significantly correlated with self-compassion. The longitudinal study carried out by Yang et al. (2021) in China makes a substantial contribution to comprehending the link between self-compassion, gratitude, and prosocial behaviour in adolescents. It is crucial to recognise, however, that the research predominantly concentrated on Chinese adolescents.

Within the Malaysian context, Voon et al. (2021) explored the correlations among resilience, self-compassion, and psychological well-being in Malaysian counsellors. The findings indicated that resilience played a significant mediating role in the relationships between self-compassion and psychological well-being. In another study, Kotera and Ting (2019) aimed to understand the relationships between mental health and positive psychological factors such as engagement, motivation, self-compassion, and well-being among Malaysian university students. The findings revealed that self-compassion had the most significant impact on mental health among all the positive psychological factors, highlighting how crucial it is to promote positive psychological traits like self-compassion, motivation, academic engagement, and well-being in order to improve Malaysian university students' mental health. The study emphasised how important it is to include positive psychology techniques in initiatives aimed at promoting and preventing mental health problems in this particular population. Though these studies have provided insightful information about the effects of gratitude and self-compassion on well-being in diverse populations, the research has not specifically addressed the intricate interactions between these variables within the specific challenges and experiences faced by university students in Malaysia.

Although most researches highlighted the positive impact of gratitude, Armenta et al. (2017) shed light on situations where expressing gratitude may not lead to anticipated positive outcomes. For instance, they highlighted that insincere expressions of gratitude, driven by obligation or social pressure, may result in heightened negative emotions, such as annoyance or resentment. Moreover, the expression of gratitude might have adverse effects on dysphoric individuals, potentially diminishing well-being. Cultural variations played a crucial role, as observed in a study where South Koreans experienced fewer benefits from expressing gratitude compared to U.S. participants. These nuanced findings underscored the importance of

investigating the complex dynamics of gratitude, self-compassion, and psychological well-being among university students, particularly in the specific context of Malaysia.

There is a need to research the intricate connections between gratitude, self-compassion, and psychological well-being, especially in the context of university students in Malaysia. It is crucial to have a greater knowledge of the elements that affected university students' psychological well-being given the growing emphasis on their holistic growth and wellbeing. This study sets out to fill in the gaps in the existing literature by revealing a more complex understanding of the dynamics of these constructs in the particular setting of university students. Understanding how self-compassion and gratitude influence university students' well-being is essential for determining academic assistance programmes and well-being initiatives.

1.3 Research Objectives

1.3.1 General Objective

To investigate the relationship between gratitude, self-compassion and psychological well-being among university students in Malaysia.

1.3.2 Specific Objectives

1. To measure the levels of gratitude among university students.
2. To measure the levels of self-compassion among university students.
3. To measure the levels of psychological well-being among university students.
4. To examine the relationship between gratitude and psychological well-being among university students.
5. To examine the relationship between gratitude and self-compassion among university students.

6. To examine the relationship between self-compassion and psychological well-being among university students.
7. To examine the mediating effect of self-compassion in the relationship between gratitude and psychological well-being among university students.

1.4 Research Questions

1. What are the levels of gratitude among university students?
2. What are the levels of self-compassion among university students?
3. What are the levels of psychological well-being among university students?
4. Is there a significant relationship between gratitude and psychological well-being among university students?
5. Is there a significant relationship between gratitude and self-compassion among university students?
6. Is there a significant relationship between self-compassion and psychological well-being among university students?
7. Does self-compassion mediate the relationship between gratitude and psychological well-being among university students?

1.5 Research Hypotheses

H₁: There is a significant relationship between gratitude and psychological well-being among university students.

H₂: There is a significant relationship between gratitude and self-compassion among university students.

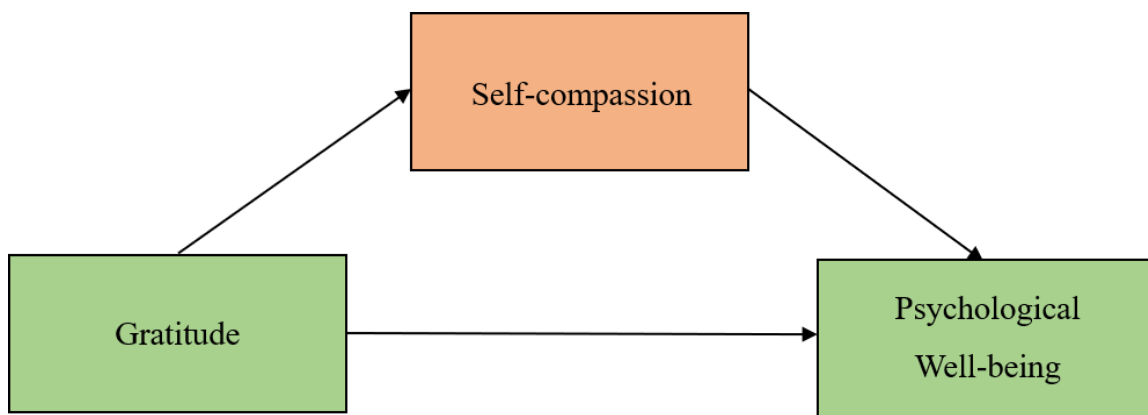
H₃: There is a significant relationship between self-compassion and psychological well-being among university students.

H₄: Self-compassion mediates the relationship between gratitude and psychological well-being among university students.

1.6 Conceptual Framework

Figure 1

Conceptual Framework of the Study



In this study, the degree of gratitude experienced by university students was represented by the independent variable, gratitude. The dependent variable that represented the general well-being of the students is psychological well-being, which included the six key dimensions, as outlined by Ryff (1989) which are “autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, positive relations with others, purpose in life, and self-acceptance.” The construct of self-compassion encompassed six components, involving “self-kindness versus self-judgment, common humanity versus isolation, and mindfulness versus over-identification,” (Neff, 2003b) which acted as a mediating variable in this study. In comprehending the influence of gratitude

on students' psychological well-being, it was proposed that self-compassion played a pivotal mediating role in the connection between gratitude and psychological well-being.

1.7 Definition of Terms

1.7.1 Positive Psychology

Conceptual Definition

In psychology, the study of positive feelings, traits, virtues, and elements that lead to a happy and fulfilled life is the main emphasis of the area known as positive psychology (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). By focusing on individuals' good experiences and potential, positive psychology investigated how people might flourish and lead meaningful lives. Within the context of this research, positive psychology provided a framework for investigating the complex connections among university students' gratitude, self-compassion and psychological well-being. A basis for examining elements that support a positive and thriving psychological state in the target population is provided by the conceptual framework, even when no specialised positive psychology assessments were used.

1.7.2 Self-compassion

Conceptual Definition

According to Braehler and Neff (2020), self-compassion involved adopting positive approaches toward oneself during moments of distress, irrespective of whether the distress stems from failure, feelings of unworthiness, or general life challenges. It includes cultivating an attitude of love and understanding towards oneself, embracing flaws, failures, and limitations without judgment. Self-compassion, which has its roots in the Buddhist psychology described by Neff (2003b), aimed to alleviate one's own suffering as well as acknowledge the

pain and failure that all people feel on a daily basis. This acknowledgment highlighted how all people are interrelated, which fosters a feeling of shared humanity.

Operational Definition

Based on Neff (2003b), self-compassion can be operationalised by three interconnected components: “self-kindness versus self-judgment, a sense of common humanity versus isolation, and mindfulness versus over-identification.” The measurement of self-compassion utilised the Self-Compassion Scale-Short Form (SCS-SF), developed by Raes et al. (2011), comprising twelve items on a five-point scale ranging from 1 (almost never) to 5 (almost always). The SCS-SF assessed various facets of self-compassion, including the capacity to show kindness towards oneself during challenges, recognising shared human experiences, and maintaining mindfulness without excessive identification with negative thoughts or feelings. The SCS-SF is a valid instrument for evaluating the multifaceted dimensions of self-compassion, offering an extensive understanding of how people react to themselves in different contexts.

1.7.3 Gratitude

Conceptual Definition

Various concepts have been proposed to describe gratitude, including emotion, attitude, moral virtue, habit, personality characteristic, or coping mechanism (Emmons & McCullough, 2003). Though sentiments of gratitude can arise from a wide range of life experiences, Emmons & McCullough (2003) described the traditional definition of gratitude as the sense that one has achieved a favourable personal outcome that was made possible by the deeds of another and is not always something that one deserves or earned.

Operational Definition

In this study, gratitude is operationally defined as the self-reported emotional reaction and appreciation of advantages received from others, in accordance with the operational definition provided by Emmons and McCullough (2003). Gratitude was assessed through the Gratitude Questionnaire – Six Item Form (GQ-6) developed by McCullough et al. (2002), comprising six items. Participants gauged the frequency of their experience of gratitude through answering statements such as "I have so much in life to be thankful for," utilising a 7-point Likert scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree).

1.7.4 Psychological Well-being

Conceptual Definition

Based on Ryff (1989) conception, psychological well-being is a complex and multi-dimensional concept that includes a person's positive functioning in a variety of life aspects. It emphasised self-awareness, self-acceptance, and self-growth in six fundamental dimensions: “autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, purpose in life, positive relations with others and self-acceptance” (Ryff, 1989). It signifies the general psychological well-being and contentment of an individual.

Operational Definition

According to Ryff (1989), psychological well-being can be operationalised as the evaluation of a person's experiences and functioning on six different levels, which are “autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, purpose in life, positive relations with others and self-acceptance” that is measured using the short version of the Scale of Psychological Well-being developed by Ryff & Keyes (1995), Ryff's Psychological Well-Being Scale, Short Form (PWBS-SF) containing 18 items, and the response scale consisted of

a continuum with six points, where a score of 1 indicated complete disagreement, and a score of 6 indicated total agreement.

1.8 Significance of Study

The research exploring the mediating role of self-compassion in the relationship between gratitude and psychological well-being among university students in Malaysia contributed to the expanding corpus of research in the context of positive psychology, which is devoted to the study of human well-being, positive emotions, and personal strengths. Although previous studies have shown that gratitude and psychological well-being were positively correlated, this research explored an intriguing possibility that self-compassion mediated this relationship. By concentrating on the distinct setting of university students' life, particularly in Malaysia, it expanded the scope of these concepts and provided new perspectives on the mechanisms that develop psychological well-being. This population has particular difficulties and pressures faced throughout the studies, therefore comprehending their mental health required a customised strategy. Given that the current research took into consideration this unique setting, it offered a more useful comprehension of these components in the context of university students' life. This research is crucial given that it has practical implications for university officials, counsellors, and educators who wished to enhance the psychological well-being of their students. The findings from this research may lead to the development of gratitude and self-compassion interventions and support systems in improving university students' psychological well-being, which will have a substantial effect on both the students' personal and academic lives.

1.9 Scope of Study

The scope of this study was focused on understanding the relationships between gratitude, self-compassion, and psychological well-being among university students in

Malaysia. The study was restricted to students pursuing studies in universities in Malaysia because they constituted a distinct and well-defined population that can offer important insights into how gratitude, self-compassion, and psychological well-being interact in an academic environment. This includes university students from both public universities and private higher education institution of various level of studies in Malaysia, consisting of 1,202,202 students, according to Kementerian Pendidikan Tinggi (2023) statistics for the year of 2022. In order to protect participants' privacy and identity, self-report measures was employed. It included the Gratitude Questionnaire - Six Item Form (GQ-6) (McCullough et al., 2002), Self-Compassion Scale - Short Form (SCS-SF) (Raes et al., 2011), and Ryff's Psychological Well-Being Scale, Short Form (PWBS-SF) (Ryff & Keyes, 1995).

1.10 Summary

This chapter served as the foundational pillar of the study, outlining the background of study, problem statement, research objectives, research questions, hypotheses, conceptual framework, definitions of terms, significance, scope and limitations of study. The relevance of this study to the fields of positive psychology and student well-being is highlighted, along with its practical and pertinent implications. It also draws emphasis on the concept of self-compassion and how it could operate as a mediator between gratitude and psychological well-being. With a focus on university students in Malaysia, this research addressed the unique difficulties faced by undergraduate students and aims to provide a more comprehensive knowledge of the ways in which gratitude and self-compassion influence their psychological well-being.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

In this chapter, the focus is on an in-depth exploration of the existing literature that underpinned the study on gratitude, self-compassion, and psychological well-being among university students. Through a comprehensive review of relevant studies, theoretical frameworks, and conceptual models, a nuanced understanding of the relationships between gratitude, self-compassion, and psychological well-being is sought. This literature review not only provides insights into the current state of knowledge in positive psychology but also highlighted gaps that the research aimed to address, contributing to the broader discourse on student well-being and positive psychological factors.

2.1 Gratitude

2.1.1 Background of Gratitude

Gratitude can be defined as an optimistic and thankful feeling or attitude characterised by appreciation and acknowledgment for the compassion, altruism, or wonderful experiences received from people or from daily routines in everyday life. Emmons and McCullough (2003) referred gratitude as a feeling, a way of thinking, a moral quality, a way of life, a personality characteristic, or a coping mechanism. In everyday life, individuals may encounter a deep emotional reaction in a variety of situations that goes beyond simple appreciation or satisfaction. While gratitude may be triggered by a wide range of life events, it is generally associated with the sense of having received a favourable personal outcome—which may not have been earned or deserved—as a result of the deeds of another individual (Emmons & McCullough, 2003). Gratitude plays a vital part in developing interpersonal ties and encouraging an optimistic

perspective on life. It is frequently prompted by a variety of life events, strengthening its association with the pleasant sense of getting undeserved advantages as a result of the acts of others. Furthermore, according to Wood and Tarrier (2010), gratitude stands apart from other positive emotions like optimism and hope, of which were clarified by constructive expectations for the future and the capacity to think of creative approaches to make those expectations come true (Tong et al., 2010). Likewise, research indicated that fostering gratitude affects mental and general well-being in addition to personal satisfaction. In Emmons and McCullough's (2003) experimental investigation on gratitude and subjective well-being, it provided compelling evidence of the benefits of cultivating appreciation, whereby, a random assignment of participants to the gratitude condition resulted with higher positive affect levels, greater amount of sleep, more pleasant sleep, increased optimism, and a stronger sense of interpersonal connectivity. The increased positive affect levels seen in those receiving gratitude therapies suggested that gratitude may play a factor in building emotional resilience and elevating satisfaction levels in general. The evidenced enhancements in the quality of sleep highlighted the comprehensive impact of gratitude, implying possible advantages for psychological and physiological health.

2.1.2 The Broaden-and-Build Theory (1998)

The Broaden-and-Build theory formulated by Barbara L. Fredrickson (1998) is a theoretical framework in psychology that investigated how positive emotions affect an individual's range of thought and action. Fredrickson justified the development of the Broaden-and-Build theory as an alternate approach to positive emotions that better reflects their distinct benefits since “positive emotions appear to broaden peoples’ momentary thought–action repertoires and build their enduring personal resources” (Fredrickson 1998, 2001). Fredrickson's research implied that positive emotions, such as happiness, love, gratitude, and

serenity, extend an individual's cognitive and behavioural repertoires, building on the fundamental ideas of the broaden-and-build hypothesis. The development of long-lasting personal resources including coping strategies, social networks, and resilience is facilitated by this expanding impact. Through exploring the subtleties of positive emotions, the theory offered important new perspectives on the adaptive roles of these feelings and how they affected many facets of human existence. The Broaden-and-Build concept has significant ramifications for how individuals perceived well-being and adaptive functioning. Individuals who cultivated positive emotions not only improve their immediate well-being but also strengthen their resilience to difficulties in life. Through the growing impact of positive emotions, coping mechanisms were developed and become essential parts of an individual's psychological forces, providing resilience in the face of difficulty.

In the context of gratitude, Fredrickson (2004) mentioned her full endorsement towards the three moral functions of gratitude, serving as the moral barometer, moral motivator and moral reinforcer as indicated by McCullough and Tsang's (2002) findings. McCullough and Tsang (2002) contended that gratitude might be regarded as a moral barometer by using the expanding thought-action repertoires as a perspective. An increased sense of gratitude and appreciation of one's gifts might act as a cognitive-broadening process, assisting individuals in choosing ethical choices. Gratitude serves as a moral motivator in line with the theory's focus on developing long-lasting personal resources. Positive emotions like gratitude encourage prosocial actions and facilitate in the growth of social resources like connections and relationships. These long-lasting resources, developed by the drive to show appreciation, aligned with the theory that affirmative feelings, according to the Broaden-and-Build Theory, create long-lasting personal reserves that support general well-being. In the framework of the Broaden-and-Build theory, seeing gratitude primarily as a moral reinforcer implies a reciprocal

connection. Not only does expressing gratitude support virtue, but it also supports the gradual internalisation of moral principles. According to McCullough et al. (2001), when benefactors get gratitude for their previous efforts of providing advantages to a recipient, they are more inclined to give more and exert greater effort on behalf of others. This is consistent with Fredrickson's theory that positive emotions empowered individuals to build lasting personal resources, such as moral and ethical foundations.

2.2 Self-Compassion

2.2.1 Background of Self-Compassion

Being kind, understanding, and empathic to oneself is at the core of the self-compassion concept and practise, specifically during times of difficulty or while confronting one's own inadequacies. Neff (2022) described self-compassion as the way we react to ourselves when we feel like we have failed, are inadequate, or are going through personal pain. It involves developing a loving and accepting attitude towards oneself, recognising one's challenges without passing harsh judgement, and encouraging a kind and supportive internal conversation. Accordingly, Neff (2003a) emphasised the three central and interrelated elements of self-compassion which are, the contrast between self-kindness and self-judgment, common humanity versus isolation, and mindfulness versus over-identification, of all which are vital especially in the context of confronting challenging experiences (Voon et al., 2021). Self-compassion traced its roots to the spiritual teachings of Buddhism, emphasising the values of self-respect and respect for others which involved cultivating qualities such as kindness, composure, empathy, and patience when facing challenges and adversity, as well as fostering self-support and resilience during times of distress and calamity (Neff, 2004). Notably, this characteristic, as highlighted by Neff, serves as a protective factor against heightened

psychopathological symptoms, activating resilience mechanisms in response to stress (Sotiropoulou et al., 2023).

Even though facing pain might be unpleasant, doing so is necessary for an individual to attain compassion which requires the practise of mindfulness to be there with the discomfort instead of opposing it (Neff, 2022). In accordance with Neff and Costigan (2014), self-compassion cultivates a sense of well-being based on acknowledging our common human experience rather than running away from sorrow. As stated by Sotiropoulou et al. (2023), those with self-compassion exhibit greater adaptability, flexibility, and effective regulation of negative emotions and daily challenges, thereby enhancing mental health and preventing dysfunctional thoughts associated with psychopathology. Employing mindfulness to embrace discomfort may be a life-changing experience that helps individuals face life's obstacles in a kind and non-judgmental way, leading to personal development and resilience. In a set of sophisticated experimental investigations, Leary et al. (2007) gave undergraduate subjects tasks that included thinking back on unpleasant experiences, imagining failure, loss, and shame, performing a humiliating task, and disclosing private information to a peer who offered conflicting feedback. The experiment's conclusions showed that those who had high levels of self-compassion reacted more subtly, felt less gloomy, thought more positively, and were better able to contextualise their issues. Conversely, those exhibiting poor self-compassion had more intense reactions, elevated negative affect, and a diminished ability to view their difficulties from a wider angle, all while accepting personal accountability (Neff & Costigan, 2014). This showed that although self-compassion diminished the influence of negativity, it does not completely eliminate or repel negative emotions (Neff, 2003b), rather, those who are compassionate towards themselves are more likely than those who are not, to recognise and accept unpleasant thoughts and emotions within themselves.

2.2.2 Self-Compassion Model (2003)

The theory of self-compassion, which was first presented by psychologist Kristin Neff in 2003, has sparked an immense amount of interest in psychology. Neff (2003b) defined self-compassion as a complex construct with interconnected yet conceptually distinct elements, categorisable into three overarching domains: “self-kindness versus self-judgement, common humanity versus isolation, and mindfulness versus over-identification” (Neff, 2003a, 2003b, 2004, 2022). For a more in-depth comprehension of how the three interconnected elements operate, Neff (2016) described it as individuals' emotional reactions to suffering (whether marked by kindness or judgment), their cognitive perception of their situation (seen as part of the human experience or as isolating), and their attentional approach to suffering (mindful or excessively identified). Neff (2022) highlighted the significance of practising self-kindness as opposed to self-judgment, in which people proactively express empathy for their suffering, own their flaws, and take care of themselves in spite of them. This caring approach lessened emotions of unworthiness and promotes a sense of self-acceptance, similar to providing warmth and compassion to friends (Neff, 2022). Acknowledging the commonality of human experience, the fact that everyone makes errors and fails sometimes, and the fact that everyone has flawed lives are all parts of common humanity (Neff & Costigan, 2014). Instead of feeling alone (isolation) in one's imperfection, this helps one to build a wider and more linked perspective about personal faults and individual issues. Mindfulness, which constituted the third component of self-compassion, involved cultivating a clear and balanced awareness of one's present moment experience of suffering (Neff & Costigan, 2014), rather than getting entangled or overwhelmed by negative thoughts and emotions, which is characterised as over-identification. In order for an individual to be compassionate towards oneself, acknowledging the pain one is experiencing is especially crucial. However, if the individual choose to oppose

and reject the sufferings, they may get overly fixated on it, which makes it difficult to take a step back and accept the perspective that is required for self-care. This resistance, as mentioned by Neff (2022), could lead the individual in becoming too identified with the unpleasant feelings and beliefs, which would then cause adverse reactions that overwhelm them.

2.3 Psychological Well-Being

2.3.1 Background of Psychological Well-Being

Various conceptualisations of well-being have been explored in psychological research, with the most prominent ones being subjective well-being and psychological well-being. The initial exploration of the dichotomy between subjective and psychological well-being dates back to Aristotle, as elaborated by Ryan and Deci (2001). According to Aristotle, well-being can be divided into hedonistic well-being, characterised by momentary pleasure, and eudemonic well-being, which entails constructive actions that are socially beneficial and conducive to personal growth (Wood et al., 2009). While subjective well-being is often centered around momentary feelings of happiness and life satisfaction, psychological well-being delved deeper into a person's general state of mental health, encompassing factors such as personal growth, purpose in life, and positive relationships (Ryff, 2014). Ryff (1989) envisioned psychological well-being as a dynamic framework, covering subjective, social, and psychological aspects, as well as behaviours related to health. Zessin et al. (2015) referred to psychological well-being as connected to the pursuit of realising one's genuine potential, emphasising optimal individual functioning (Huppert, 2009), which Ryan and Deci (2001) quoted that it represented a perspective aligned with eudemonic well-being. Ryff (1989) utilised a thorough approach to evaluate psychological well-being by considering six specific dimensions: autonomy, personal growth, self-acceptance, purpose in life, environmental mastery, and positive relations with others. Each dimension captured the essence of achieving

optimal psychological well-being. Elevated degrees of psychological well-being in individuals may aid in cultivating an optimistic outlook, learning how to effectively handle obstacles in life, and pursuing worthwhile objectives. Psychological well-being is more than just not having mental medical condition; it also includes having good psychological features and a thorough feeling of contentment with one's life.

2.3.2 Ryff's Model of Psychological Well-Being (1989)

To have a deeper comprehension of psychological well-being, Ryff's Model (1989) became an essential framework, illuminating several aspects that take into consideration as they add to an individual's overall well-being. Developed by Carol Ryff, this influential model outlined six key dimensions, each capturing a unique facet of psychological well-being. Ryff and Keyes (1995) state that collectively, the six dimensions encompassed various facets of well-being, including holding positive views about oneself and past life experiences (self-acceptance), experiencing ongoing personal growth and development (personal growth), perceiving a sense of purpose and significance in life (purpose in life), maintaining positive relationships with diverse individuals (positive relations with others), effectively handling life circumstances (environmental mastery), and feeling self-reliant (autonomy).

The dimension of self-acceptance encompassed fostering a positive self-regard and accepting past experiences, laying the foundation for a robust psychological foundation. Personal growth delved into the ongoing journey of personal development, fostering a dynamic sense of advancement and maturation. Purpose in life introduced a profound existential dimension, emphasising the significance of believing in one's purpose and contributing to the broader tapestry of life. Positive relations with others underscored the importance of cultivating and sustaining meaningful connections, contributing significantly to one's emotional well-being. Environmental mastery delved into the adeptness in managing life's circumstances,

enhancing one's capacity to navigate challenges effectively. Lastly, autonomy encapsulated the empowering sense of independence and self-determination, crucial for fostering a resilient and flourishing life. In amalgamating these dimensions, Ryff's model provided a comprehensive roadmap for understanding and cultivating psychological well-being, transcending the boundaries of mere contentment to foster a life of fulfilment and flourishing.

2.4 Previous Findings

Exploring the impact of gratitude and self-compassion on psychological well-being involved delving into existing research on these subjects. This section reviewed key findings from prior studies to offer insights into the complex interconnections among gratitude, self-compassion, and psychological well-being.

2.4.1 Gratitude and Self-Compassion

University students often navigate a challenging terrain marked by academic demands, heightened expectations, and the pressure to succeed. The academic burden increases, and the pursuit of career goals becomes more challenging as students advance through higher education. The psychological well-being of university students can be profoundly affected by these difficulties. However, embracing positive attitudes such as gratitude and self-compassion has shown promise in providing students with valuable tools to cope with stress, enhance mental well-being, and navigate the complexities of academic life. Currently, only a small number of research studies have explicitly examined the direct relationship between gratitude and self-compassion. Nonetheless, a large body of research has examined self-compassion and gratitude in the larger framework of psychological well-being, stress management, and coping mechanisms among various populations. While not directly addressing the relationship, these studies indirectly advance knowledge of the intricate interactions between self-compassion and gratitude in the complex field of student well-being by highlighting the significant influence of

these factors even when considered in conjunction with other factors. The development of gratitude was shown to be significantly predicted by self-compassion in a research by Yang et al. (2021), examining the longitudinal connections involving self-compassion, gratitude, and prosocial behaviour amongst Chinese adolescents. The study found a noteworthy association, indicating that adolescents perceiving higher-than-usual levels of self-compassion subsequently reported an increase in gratitude. Yang et al. (2021) acknowledged that the study's findings on the positive association of gratitude and self-compassion obtained in the study aligned with earlier cross-sectional research on adult populations that were carried out by Neff et al. (2018) and Booker and Dunsmore (2019). In a parallel research by Hernandez et al. (2021), the focus shifted to the relationship between gratitude and self-compassion, particularly in the context of teachers' well-being, providing a distinct perspective in contrast to Yang et al.'s (2021) study of the relationships over time involving Chinese adolescents' prosocial behaviour, gratitude, and self-compassion. Gratitude and self-compassion have been found to positively correlate, according to a research by Hernandez et al. (2021). The study found that enhanced self-compassion is linked to higher feelings of gratefulness and vice versa. This implies that cultivating self-compassion and gratitude could bring about positive outcomes, better coping styles, and a healthy lifestyle. The research employed a quantitative correlational design, utilising statistical tests such as t-tests and chi-square tests for data analysis. Findings revealed that self-compassion remains unaffected by variables such as sex, age, school, and the number of teaching units, thereby reinforcing the established positive correlation between gratitude and self-compassion. A different investigation explored how self-compassion and gratitude impacted the life satisfaction of university students, utilising social support as a mediating factor (Aruni et al., 2023). The findings of the study revealed that university students' life satisfaction was significantly and positively influenced by both self-compassion and gratitude.

Additionally, the research recognised social support as an intermediary factor in the connection between self-compassion, gratitude, and life satisfaction. This suggests that social support played a crucial role in linking self-compassion, gratitude, and life satisfaction within the university student population. These results proposed that fostering self-compassion and gratitude, along with enhancing social support, may contribute to promoting life satisfaction among university students. In a separate investigation conducted by Zhang and Li (2021), which delved into the enduring welfare of rural Chinese children left behind and scrutinising the impact of child neglect, the researchers examined how self-compassion and gratitude act as mediators in the relationship between child neglect and life satisfaction. The study revealed a direct correlation between child neglect and life satisfaction, both as standalone factors and indirectly through the reduction of self-compassion and gratitude. The study suggested that the negative life event of neglect can lead to reduced self-compassion in children, depriving them of warmth and benevolence and hindering the development of gratitude. Consequently, children with neglect experiences are less likely to be kind to themselves and grateful to others, contributing to overall dissatisfaction with their lives. This highlights that strengthening both self-compassion and gratitude may be beneficial for the overall well-being and satisfaction of these children.

2.4.2 Gratitude and Psychological Well-Being

To comprehend the intricate connection between gratitude and psychological well-being, it is imperative to review prior research that has specifically delved into the interplay between these two variables. Notably, the study conducted by Sharifi and Moltafet (2021) explored how psychological well-being could be predicted by examining the influences of gratitude, social support, and self-esteem among bachelor student populations. As per the study's findings, psychological well-being was most strongly predicted by gratitude among the

other variables such as social support and self-esteem, suggesting that nurturing a sense of gratitude could serve as a potent strategy for boosting psychological well-being. Expanding on this, Hemarajareswari and Kumar Gupta (2021) carried out a correlational investigation to explore the link between gratitude, psychological well-being, and happiness among college students, encompassing both undergraduates and postgraduates in the Coimbatore and Tirupur districts in India. The study utilised McCullough's GQ-6, psychological well-being scale by Ryff, 1995, and The Oxford Happiness Questionnaire (OHQ) in a sample of 200 students. It was discovered that among college students, gratitude has a strong connection with increased psychological well-being and happiness. Significant associations were found when the relationship between gratitude and the six aspects of psychological well-being was examined, ranging from 0.655 to 0.703. Given the strong correlation found between psychological well-being and gratitude, people who practise or experience gratitude are likely to be happier in a variety of ways, including self-acceptance, autonomy, mastery of their surroundings, personal development, and fulfilling relationships with others. In another study, Geier and Morris (2022) looked into how a gratitude intervention affected college students' mental health during the COVID-19 epidemic. The results showed that even in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic crisis, university students' mental health was substantially improved by the gratitude intervention. In contrast to the control group, the treatment group—which took part in the gratitude intervention—exhibited noticeably greater levels of well-being. These findings imply that, even in trying situations like a pandemic, treatments centred around gratitude may be very successful in enhancing college students' mental health. Findings obtained from the study provide credence to the potential advantages of gratitude initiatives in improving mental health, particularly in critical circumstances. Another research investigated whether there was a correlation between gratitude and psychological well-being among undergraduates enrolled at

a public university in Malaysia (Ping Bilong et al., 2021). The research, which involved 149 randomly selected participants, evaluated the psychological well-being and happiness of the students using the Subjective Happiness Scale and Ryff's Scale of Psychological Well-Being. The results supported the idea that cultivating gratitude is a useful strategy for improving general well-being because they showed a positive association between the participants' psychological well-being and happiness and their respective levels of gratitude. These findings supported previous research by Hemarajareswari and Kumar Gupta (2021) that suggests practicing gratitude can enhance psychological well-being and happiness. These findings provided valuable perspectives on the potential advantages of nurturing gratitude among university students in Malaysia. The researchers highlighted the significance of encouraging activities that substantially enhance the psychological well-being and happiness of students.

2.4.3 Self-Compassion and Psychological Well-Being

Investigating self-compassion's possible role in fostering wellbeing is essential to understanding the connection between psychological well-being and self-compassion. A growing body of research has been conducted in recent years on the relationship between psychological well-being and self-compassion in a variety of contexts and populations. Many of these studies have found positive relationships. In one study conducted during the COVID-19 lockdowns, Sotiropoulou et al. (2023) looked at the relationships between self-compassion and psychological well-being, resilience, subjective happiness, and purpose in life in Greek individuals. The study's contemporaneous correlational methodology demonstrated a high positive correlation between psychological well-being and self-compassion, as well as a significant relationship between self-compassion and purpose in life. According to the study, people's growth of psychological well-being and subjective happiness may be influenced by their attitude of self-compassion. The study's findings suggested that psychological well-being

and subjective happiness are influenced by self-compassion, resilience, and life's purpose. The study's conclusions highlighted the possible advantages of encouraging self-compassion and associated qualities in the context of mental health and wellbeing, particularly when dealing with major stressors like those encountered during the COVID-19 lockdowns. In contrast, Voon et al. (2021) investigated resilience's mediation function in the connection between 408 Malaysian counsellors' psychological well-being and self-compassion. An elevated degree of self-compassion were connected with stronger resilience among the participants, according to the study's results, which showed a favourable relationship between self-compassion and counsellors' resilience. The findings showed that self-compassion and psychological well-being were considerably mediated by resilience. The proposed model clarified the significant impacts of resilience and self-compassion on the psychological health of counsellors, highlighting the significance of these two elements. The implications of these findings suggested that interventions and training programs for counsellors should prioritise the practice of developing self-compassion and resilience, emphasising their significance in fostering a positive psychological state among professionals in the field. In a similar vein, Mohamed et al. (2020) looked into the connection between psychological well-being and self-compassion within Malaysian guidance and counselling practitioners in schools. The study's conclusions showed that self-compassion greatly enhanced these instructors' psychological health, who were an essential source of eudemonic happiness in their field. The research highlighted the importance of self-compassion for the psychological well-being of Malaysian educators in the counselling and guidance field, emphasising the potential benefits of self-compassion in enhancing well-being and resilience among professionals in this sector. Expanding on the limited existing research in the Malaysian context, the study titled 'Positive Psychology of Malaysian University Students,' conducted by Kotera and Ting (2019), delved into the intricate

connections between mental health and various positive psychological factors, which included academic engagement, motivation, self-compassion, and overall well-being (Kotera & Ting, 2019). The research unearthed a positive association between self-compassion and mental health, indicating that higher levels of self-compassion were linked to improved mental health among the participants. Furthermore, the research underscored favourable associations between mental health and academic engagement, motivation, and overall well-being (Kotera & Ting, 2019). This discovery aligned with broader literature on self-compassion and psychological well-being, providing valuable insights into the relevance of these constructs within the distinct cultural and educational landscape of Malaysia.

2.4.4 Gratitude, Self-Compassion and Psychological Well-Being

Despite the acknowledged importance of gratitude, self-compassion, and their contributions to psychological well-being, the existing literature reveals a notable scarcity of research specifically delving into these interconnected variables. A notable exception is the study conducted by Voci et al. (2018), which comprehensively explored the relationships between mindfulness, heartfulness, self-compassion, gratitude, and psychological well-being. The study revealed that self-compassion and gratitude acted as mediators between mindfulness and psychological well-being, emphasising their importance in fostering overall well-being. Furthermore, the study underscored the importance of heartfulness, incorporating gratitude and self-compassion, in fostering a more compassionate and empathetic stance toward oneself and others. This underscored the crucial role of nurturing self-compassion and gratitude for the enhancement of overall well-being. However, it is noteworthy that such dedicated investigations on the roles of gratitude and self-compassion in psychological well-being within the Malaysian context are notably limited. This underscored the significance of further research

in this area to deepen the understanding and enhance the applicability of positive psychological interventions, particularly in the Malaysian setting.

2.5 Improvement in Present Study

The literature review revealed a noticeable gap in dedicated investigations exploring the direct associations between gratitude, self-compassion, and psychological well-being, particularly within the Malaysian context. Although studies by Yang et al. (2021), Hernandez et al. (2021), Zhang and Li (2021), Hemarajareswari and Kumar Gupta (2021), and Ping Bilong et al. (2021) contributed valuable insights, a focused examination of these variables in the Malaysian academic setting is limited. There is a notable absence of dedicated investigations into the direct and comprehensive associations between gratitude, self-compassion, and psychological well-being. Most existing studies have explored gratitude or self-compassion on well-being within broader contexts, often alongside other factors. The current research aimed to address this gap by specifically exploring the relationships between gratitude, self-compassion, and psychological well-being among university students in Malaysia, offering nuanced insights into these interrelated factors. While previous research, such as that by Kotera and Ting (2019), touched upon the positive associations between self-compassion and mental health in the Malaysian university setting, the current study sought to offer a more thorough examination within the context of gratitude and its mediating role of self-compassion in affecting the psychological well-being of university students in the academic settings in Malaysia, comprising of students from various backgrounds across different level of studies.

2.6 Summary

This chapter undertook a thorough examination of existing literature concerning gratitude, self-compassion, and psychological well-being. It delved into the definitions and

historical context of gratitude and self-compassion, exploring pertinent theories like the Broaden-and-Build theory for gratitude and the Self-Compassion Model for self-compassion. Additionally, the chapter explored psychological well-being, incorporating Ryff's model. The review highlighted prior research findings, indicating positive associations between gratitude, self-compassion, and psychological well-being across diverse populations, including university students. However, it emphasised a lack of dedicated research within the Malaysian context, particularly in investigating the direct links between gratitude, self-compassion, and psychological well-being. The current research aimed to address this gap by focusing on these relationships among Malaysian university students, contributing valuable insights to the literature on positive psychology and student well-being.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter provided a thorough description of the methodological framework that was implemented in this study. It provided a detailed explanation of the research design, commencing with an analysis of the demographic and sample characteristics and clarifying the conditions determining participant selection. The frameworks and individual parts of the instruments used, such as the Self-Compassion Scale - Short Form (SCS-SF), Ryff's Psychological Well-Being Scale, Short Form (PWBS-SF), and Gratitude Questionnaire - Six Item Form (GQ-6), were explained in detail. The chapter emphasised ethical issues while going into great depth about procedures for regulating data collecting. It also goes into detail on the goals, participants, methods, and validity and reliability evaluation of the instruments. The process of methodological inquiry also includes the methodological examination of data using both descriptive and inferential analysis. This exacting methodology provided the precision, validity, and reliability of findings in addressing the research questions and accomplishing the research's objectives, laying the groundwork for the research as a whole.

3.1 Research Design

This research adopted a cross-sectional correlational quantitative research design, aligning with a positivist philosophy that emphasises empirical science and the scientific method (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Positivism challenges the absolute truth of knowledge and underscores the importance of systematically observing and measuring objective reality (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Drawing on previous research, which suggests a deductive approach to hypothesis testing, this research aimed to explore the intricate relationships

between gratitude, psychological well-being, and the mediating role of self-compassion among university students in Malaysia.

The cross-sectional approach provided means to examine the strength and direction of associations between gratitude, self-compassion, and psychological well-being without manipulating any factors, collecting data only at a specific point in time (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). This design proved advantageous for investigating real-world relationships, exploring how changes in one variable may be linked to changes in another. By collecting survey data from a diverse sample of university students using validated measurement instruments, this study sought to provide nuanced insights into the complex dynamics shaping the well-being of university students.

The intricate interactions between the three factors were examined using statistical techniques including correlation and regression analysis, aligning with the deterministic philosophy of positivist research, which seeks to identify causal relationships (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). This thorough method takes into consideration the mediating role of self-compassion within the context of university students in Malaysia, aiming to provide insightful information concerning the dynamics of gratitude and its impact on psychological well-being.

3.2 Population and Sample

The statistical analysis established the sample size, taking into consideration practical limitations and strived for an adequate number to establish statistical power. Based on the estimated total enrolment of 1,202,202 students in Malaysia's public and private higher education institutions in 2022 (Statistik Pendidikan Tinggi, 2023), the minimum sample size target for the present study is 384 respondents, as per the sample size formula proposed by Krejcie and Morgan (1970). Adhering to the principles set forth by Krejcie and Morgan (1970),

the aim was to achieve equilibrium between practical feasibility and the precision required for meaningful outcomes. This approach considered the expansive population of university students in Malaysia while recognising the importance of a manageable sample. It enables in-depth exploration and comprehensive insights into the relationships between gratitude, self-compassion, and psychological well-being among this specific demographic.

The research's population encompassed university students enrolled in public universities and private higher education institutions across Malaysia, regardless of their current level of studies, ranging from pre-university, foundation, diploma, undergraduate degree to postgraduate studies. This study sought to include a representative sample of students from various institutions and level of studies to provide a thorough and inclusive analysis of the university students population within Malaysia. By including students from both public and private higher institutions, the study endeavoured to capture a diverse range of perspectives. To enable a comprehensive investigation of the relationships between gratitude, psychological well-being, and the mediation role of self-compassion, a convenience sampling method was utilised. Convenience sampling is a non-probability sampling technique (Simkus, 2023) that involves selecting individuals based on their ease of accessibility and willingness to participate. This approach is practical and efficient, particularly when aiming to collect data at one point in time from a specific population, such as university students. The use of convenience sampling allowed for a quick and accessible means of gathering responses from a diverse range of participants without the complexities associated with more elaborate sampling methods. By utilising various social media platforms like WhatsApp, Telegram, and Instagram, the study aimed to widely distribute the survey link, involving participants who were easily accessible and willing to take part in the study.

3.3 Instruments

3.3.1 Section A: Demographic

This section served as the foundational component of the survey, collecting essential demographic information from participants. Questions include gender, age, race, type of institution, current level of studies, and enrolment status. These details were instrumental in segmenting and analysing the data based on relevant demographic factors.

3.3.2 Section B: The Gratitude Questionnaire - Six Item Form (GQ-6, McCullough et al., 2002)

This segment encompassed the inventory designed by McCullough et al., 2002, to assess individual differences in the tendency to feel gratitude in everyday life. The self-report questionnaire comprised of six items, employing a response scale ranging from one to seven, where 1 corresponded to "strongly disagree," 2 to "disagree," 3 to "slightly disagree," 4 to "neutral," 5 to "slightly agree," 6 to "agree," and 7 to "strongly agree." Questions 3 "*When I look at the world, I don't see much to be grateful for*" and 6 "*Long amounts of time can go by before I feel grateful to something or someone*" were indicated as negative statements which were reverse scored when computing the means to prevent response bias. The GQ-6 offered a distinctive and user-friendly assessment of gratitude. Bartholomew et al. (2022) pointed out that shorter tests like this one present advantages, including a greater willingness to respond and the potential for more thoughtful answers.

The GQ-6 was widely used and exhibited robust reliability across various studies. McCullough et al. (2002) emphasised the GQ-6's internal reliability, noting alphas within the range of 0.82 to 0.87. In another study conducted by Zhang and Li (2021), the internal consistency coefficient for gratitude, assessed using the GQ-6, was deemed good with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.67. Using the GQ-6 in its Japanese translated version, Sumi (2017) found

that there were notable correlations between individual items and the whole scale, with adjusted item-total correlations ranging from $r = 0.68$ to 0.88 . Cronbach's alphas were notably high at 0.92 for both Time 1 and Time 2 (over the course of four weeks, individuals performed the GQ-6-J twice), demonstrating internal consistency. This reliability persisted even when excluding Item 6, yielding consistent alphas of 0.92 at both time points. A strong correlation ($r = 0.86$) was also found in the study between the GQ-6-J scores at Time 1 and Time 2, demonstrating the instrument's consistency across time.

3.3.3 Section C: Self-Compassion Scale – Short Form (SCS-SF, Raes et al., 2011)

Within this section, the degree of self-compassion was evaluated through the utilization of the Self-Compassion Scale - Short Form (SCS-SF), formulated by Raes et al., 2011. This self-report questionnaire served to gauge and quantified individuals' levels of self-compassion, encompassing essential dimensions such as “self-kindness, common humanity, and mindfulness,” as delineated by Raes et al. (2011). Comprising 12 items, this scale assessed three positive components and their corresponding negative counterparts (Yang et al., 2021). A 5-point Likert scale was employed to assess each statement, with responses ranging from 1 (almost never) to 5 (almost always). The scale was divided into two subscales: self-disparagement (comprising Items 1, 4, 8, 9, 11, 12) and self-care (comprising Items 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 10). The total score is calculated by adding the self-care scores to the reversed self-disparagement scores. Greater total self-compassion score is indicative of elevated self-care and reduced self-disparagement. The questionnaire strategically assigned items to assess various dimensions of self-compassion: Items 2 and 6 measured self-kindness, 11 and 12 focused on self-judgment, 5 and 10 captured common humanity, 4 and 8 explored isolation, 3 and 7 gauged mindfulness, and 1 and 9 assessed over-identification.

The SCS-SF demonstrated reliable internal consistency, with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.86, and showed a high correlation with the full version of the SCS ($r = 0.97$; Raes et al., 2011). Raes et al. (2011) used confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) to validate the presence of a consistent six-factor structure in the short form, mirroring the dimensions found in the long form (“self-kindness, self-judgment, common humanity, isolation, mindfulness, over-identification”). Furthermore, a superior-level factor of self-compassion was recognised. It is noteworthy that the SCS-SF's individual subscales displayed somewhat modest internal consistencies, ranging from 0.54 to 0.75, discouraging the interpretation of subscale scores. Nevertheless, when considering the overall score analysis, the internal consistency of the SCS-SF was remarkable, showing a near perfect correlation with the full version of the SCS. In terms of test–retest reliability, the SCS–SF yielded a coefficient of 0.71 over a five-month interval (Raes et al., 2011).

3.3.4 Section D: Ryff's Psychological Well-Being Scale, Short Form (PWBS-SF, Ryff & Keyes, 1995)

Within this segment, participants' psychological well-being were evaluated through Ryff's Psychological Well-Being Scale, Short Form (PWBS-SF). Developed by Ryff in 1989, the Psychological Well-Being Scale has numerous versions, among which are the 120-item, 84-item, 54-item, 42-item, and the abbreviated version consisting of 18-item, which was utilised in this study. This validated instrument is specifically designed to assess diverse dimensions of psychological well-being, providing valuable insights into participants' overall mental health and life satisfaction. The scale included fundamental domains, covering ‘autonomy’ (Items 15, 17, 18), ‘environmental mastery’ (Items 4, 8, 9), ‘personal growth’ (Items 11, 12, 14), ‘positive relations with others’ (Items 6, 13, 16), ‘purpose in life’ (Items 3, 7, 10), and ‘self-acceptance’ (Items 1, 2, 5). This self-report questionnaire comprised of 18

items, with the response scale ranging from “1 (*strongly agree*), 2 (*somewhat agree*), 3 (*a little agree*), 4 (*neither agree or disagree*), 5 (*a little disagree*), 6 (*somewhat disagree*), and 7 (*strongly disagree*).”

The Ryff's Psychological Well-Being Scale, Short Form (PWBS-SF), which consisted of eighteen items, has not been utilised much in research. However, when it was employed in a study by Klainin-Yobas et al. (2020), it shown strong psychometric qualities in a variety of samples. The scale, comprising six subscales, showed strong factorial validity and excellent internal consistency ($\alpha \geq 0.86$). While Garcia et al. (2023) reported slightly lower internal consistency coefficients for specific subscales, such as 0.68 for “environmental mastery”, 0.76 for “self-acceptance”, 0.55 for “personal growth”, 0.52 for “positive relations with others”, and 0.48 for both “autonomy” and “purpose in life” (with a 95% confidence interval), these variations are contextualised within the broader strengths of the PWBS-SF. Additionally, Akhtar et al. (2023) noted, through both exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses, that shorter scales, like the PWBS-SF, often exhibit greater factorial validity. These collective findings emphasised the PWBS-SF's overall strength as a valid and dependable indicator of psychological well-being, positioning it as a valuable tool for diverse research applications.

3.4 Pilot Study

Before commencing the comprehensive investigation, a pilot study with 30 participants was conducted. Google Forms was utilised and distributed through online platforms to collect data. This initial phase was designed to evaluate the practicability of research procedures, identify potential challenges, and fine-tune the research design by examining the reliability of the instruments utilised in this study. The knowledge acquired from the pilot study guided modifications to the methodology, ensuring the subsequent main study's efficiency and effectiveness. Cronbach's alpha, which ranges from 0 to 1, is essential for measuring a test or

scale's internal consistency, reflecting the degree to which all items assessed the same concept or construct, thus indicating their inter-relatedness (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011). Hinton et al. (2004) proposed that there are four levels of reliability. An excellent reliability ($\alpha \geq 0.90$), high ($\alpha = 0.70$ to 0.90), moderate ($\alpha = 0.50$ to 0.70), and low ($\alpha < 0.50$). While a Cronbach's alpha of 0.70 is commonly considered acceptable for internal consistency, this standard lacked strong justification. Said (2018), referencing Wim et al. (2008), indicated that a Cronbach's alpha in the range of 0.6 to 0.8 is acceptable (Nawi et al., 2020).

3.4.1 Reliability of GQ-6

Table 1

Reliability Statistics of GQ-6

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.554	.645	6

The Cronbach's alpha value of 0.554 for the 6-item GQ-6 indicated moderate reliability, suggesting that the items within the scale had a moderate level of internal consistency. The small sample size ($n=30$) utilised in the pilot study may have limited the stability and precision of the reliability estimate, which accounted for the relatively low alpha value. Variability is frequently less well recorded in small samples, which resulted in lower reliability coefficients.

3.4.2 Reliability of SCS-SF

Table 2

Reliability Statistics of SCS-SF

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.859	.860	12

The Cronbach's alpha value of 0.859 for the 12-item SCS-SF indicated high reliability, indicating that the items within the scale consistently assessed the same underlying construct, reflecting high internal consistency.

3.4.3 Reliability of PWBS-SF

Table 3

Reliability Statistics of PWBS-SF

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.929	.936	18

The Cronbach's alpha value of 0.929 for the 18-item PWBS-SF indicated excellent reliability, suggesting that the items within the scale were highly consistent in measuring the same underlying construct. This high reliability demonstrated that the items were well-correlated and effectively captured the intended concept.

3.5 Data Collection Procedures

The data collection procedures implemented in this study had been carefully structured to acquire a thorough understanding of the intricate relationships among gratitude, psychological well-being, and the mediating role of self-compassion within the demographic of university students.

The collection of data involved administering the questionnaire to respondents through electronic means, utilising Google Forms in providing a convenient and accessible platform for participants. The Google Forms was disseminated across various online platforms such as WhatsApp, Telegram and Instagram. Upon opening the link, participants were directed to the initial page of the Google Forms questionnaire, where they received an introduction to the research's title, purpose, benefits and potential risks of participation, confidentiality and informed consent before advancing further. Informed consent was acquired, emphasising the voluntary nature of participation and ensuring anonymity, and participants were given the option to voluntarily participate in the research. Participants acknowledging their willingness to participate by clicking "Yes" proceeded to the subsequent pages for answering the questionnaire, indicating their understanding and consent to engage in the study. The researcher's contact information were presented on the initial page for participants to contact for further inquiries and additional information on the study. Participants were guided through the questionnaire by clear instructions, which ensured consistency in responses. The questionnaire was accessible for a predetermined duration, providing participants with sufficient time to finish it.

To measure gratitude, self-compassion, and psychological well-being, the research utilised rigorously validated instruments. The survey instruments were strategically divided into four sections. Section A collected demographic information including gender, age, race,

type of institution, current level of studies, and enrolment status. No personal information such as name, email address, contact number, and name of institution were collected in ensuring anonymity of participants. Section B included the Gratitude Questionnaire - Six Item Form (GQ-6), Section C featured the Self-Compassion Scale - Short Form (SCS-SF), and Section D incorporated Ryff's Psychological Well-Being Scale, Short Form (PWBS-SF). Each section was designed with precision to gather specific data relevant to the study's objectives. Participants spent approximately five to ten minutes to complete the Google Forms questionnaire. Participants failing to provide comprehensive responses in the questionnaire form were excluded from the research to prevent the inclusion of incomplete or inaccurate data, ensuring the research 's validity and minimising errors.

Responses obtained from the Google Forms were collected, handled with confidentiality and analysed accordingly using descriptive data analysis and inferential data analysis.

3.6 Ethics of the Study

The ethical considerations guiding this research were of utmost importance, underscoring the necessity of conducting research with the highest standards of integrity, respect, and a deep regard for the well-being of participants. At the core of these ethical principles is the voluntary and informed engagement of every individual participating in the research.

3.6.1 Informed consent

Before participating in the study, participants encountered an informed consent statement displayed prominently on the initial page of the Google Forms. This statement articulated the study's purpose, procedures, and emphasised the voluntary nature of

participation. Participants were informed that their involvement was completely voluntary, and they had the right to withdraw from the research at any juncture without facing any consequences.

3.6.2 Confidentiality

Ensuring the privacy and confidentiality of participants were of utmost importance in this research. All gathered data, encompassing questionnaire responses and any personally identifiable information, were handled with the highest degree of confidentiality. Stringent measures were in place to secure the anonymity of participants, preventing the tracing of individual responses to specific individuals. The research was dedicated to maintaining confidentiality to establish a secure and trustworthy environment, promoting openness and honesty among participants.

3.6.3 Beneficence and Non-Maleficence

The ethical framework of this research was rooted in the principles of beneficence and non-maleficence. Acting in accordance with beneficence, the study aimed to bring positive effects to both participants and the broader community. Concurrently, a dedication to non-maleficence ensured vigilant efforts to reduce risks and safeguard participants from harm. Stringent measures were implemented to assure the ethical execution of the study, placing paramount importance on the well-being and rights of every participant.

3.7 Data Cleansing

The raw data obtained during the data collection came from various sources which often contain missing values, inconsistencies and errors that may affect the dependability and accuracy of further analyses. Data cleansing aimed to meticulously identify and correct errors within datasets (Van den Broeck et al., 2005), ensuring that the integrity and reliability of study

results were upheld by minimising the potential impact of these errors. After identifying that there were no missing values in the data, a normality test was conducted.

Figure 2

Q-Q Plot of Gratitude

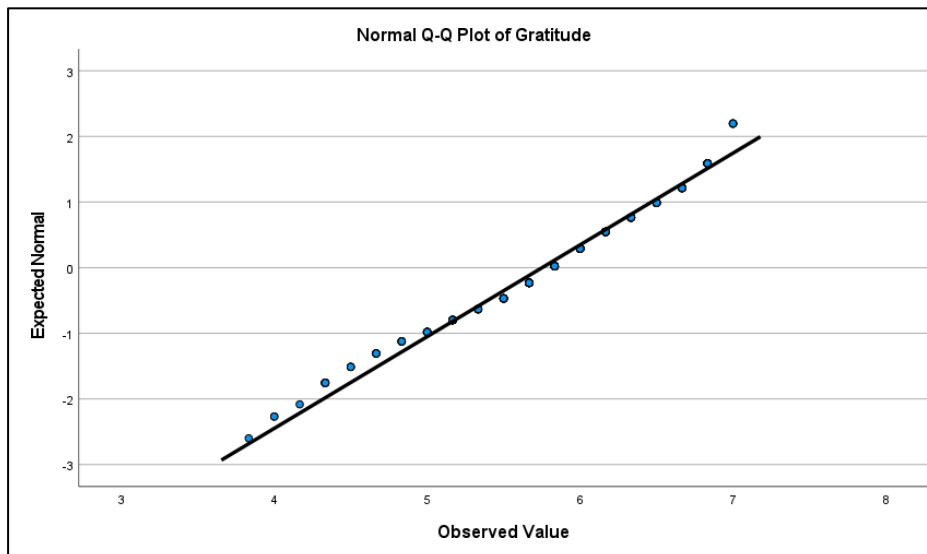


Figure 3

Q-Q Plot of Self-Compassion

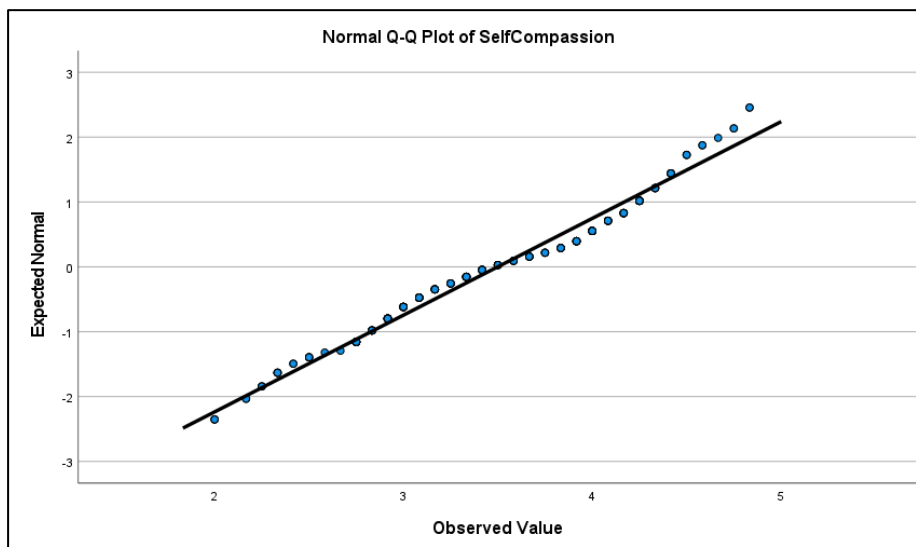
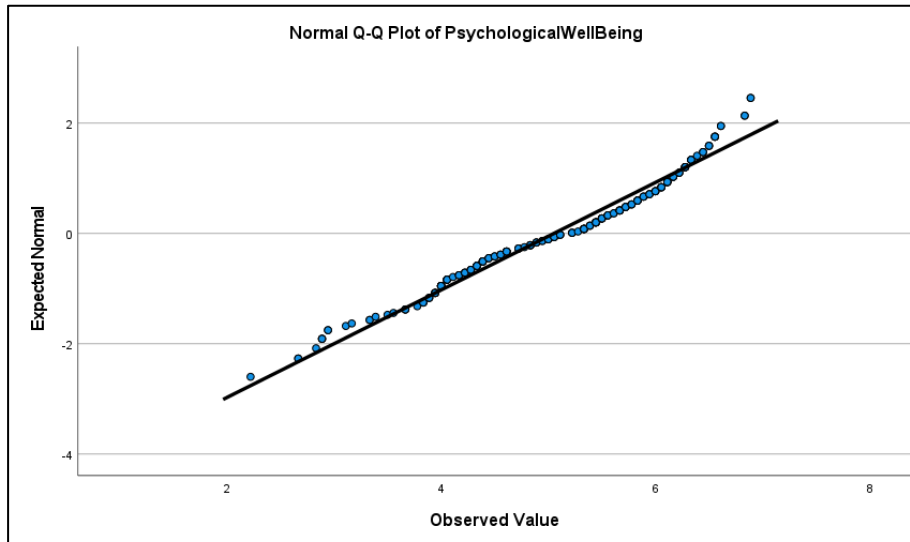


Figure 4

Q-Q Plot of Psychological Well-Being



A normality test was conducted for all three variables as depicted in Figure 2, 3 and 4 to assess whether the dataset obtained followed a normal distribution. The Q-Q plot (quantile-quantile plot), used for assessing normality, depicted the distribution of data points relative to expected quantiles of a normal distribution. After identifying and removing four outliers, the plot showed improved alignment of data points along the theoretical diagonal line. This observation led to the assumption that the dataset approximated a normal distribution. This assumption is crucial for ensuring the validity of subsequent statistical analyses that rely on normality assumptions.

3.8 Data Analysis Procedures

3.8.1 Descriptive Data Analysis

In this study, the utilisation of descriptive data analysis held a crucial significance as it aimed to offer a thorough overview encompassing both demographic information and the primary variables of interest—namely, gratitude, self-compassion and psychological well-

being—within the context of Malaysia's university student population. The application of descriptive statistics through the IBM Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 28.0 was instrumental in summarising and presenting the essential characteristics inherent in the gathered data.

For the demographic information, measures such as frequencies, percentages, central tendencies (mean), and standard deviation were computed for gender, age, race, type of institution, current level of studies, and enrolment status. This analysis offered valuable insights into the composition and characteristics of the study participants, contributing to a thorough understanding of the sample. Simultaneously, descriptive statistics were computed for the key variables of gratitude, self-compassion, and psychological well-being. Measures such as mean, standard deviation, and frequency distributions were calculated to provide a clear and concise representation of the central tendencies and variability within these constructs. The analysis offered insights into the typical levels and distribution patterns of gratitude, self-compassion, and psychological well-being scores among the sampled university students.

3.8.2 Inferential Data Analysis

3.8.2.1 Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)

Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was conducted using IBM SPSS Amos version 29.0 to validate the factor structure of the constructs measured in this study. CFA builds on prior EFA findings by confirming or disconfirming factor structures and used a theory-driven approach to evaluate how well the data fit a proposed model, employing maximum likelihood estimation (MLE) and specific standards to assess construct suitability (Tavakol & Wetzel, 2020). This method is essential for determining if the connections between observable variables and their underlying latent constructs are congruent with theoretical assumptions. By employing CFA, the current study aimed to confirm the factorial validity of the scales used to

measure gratitude, self-compassion, and psychological well-being. This analysis helped to ensure that the constructs were accurately represented by their respective items, thereby providing a robust foundation for subsequent statistical analyses. The fit indices and factor loadings obtained from the CFA were used to assess the adequacy of the measurement model, ensuring that the constructs were measured reliably and validly.

3.8.2.2 Pearson Correlation

Pearson correlation analysis is a fundamental statistical tool utilised to assess the linear relationships between variables (Schober et al., 2018). In this research, the utilisation of Pearson correlation assisted in measuring the strength and direction of connections among gratitude, self-compassion, and psychological well-being. The aim is to discern the nature and significance of these relationships, thereby contributing to a more nuanced comprehension of the interplay between the key variables. The use of Pearson correlation analysis in this study was to test **H₁** (There is a significant relationship between gratitude and psychological well-being among university students), **H₂** (There is a significant relationship between gratitude and self-compassion among university students), and **H₃** (There is a significant relationship between self-compassion and psychological well-being among university students).

3.8.2.3 Multiple Regression Analysis

Multiple regression analysis goes beyond simple linear regression and is applied when predicting a variable's value using two or more other variables. In this research, multiple regression was used to assess the direct and simultaneous impacts of gratitude and self-compassion on psychological well-being. Incorporating both variables as predictors aimed to unveil the distinct contributions and comprehend how self-compassion mediated gratitude and psychological well-being. This analysis was used to test the **H₄** (Self-compassion mediates the relationship between gratitude and psychological well-being among university students).

Table 4*Summary of Technique Analyses*

Objectives	Hypotheses	Analyses
1. To measure the levels of gratitude among university students.		Descriptive Data Analysis
2. To measure the levels of self-compassion among university students.		Descriptive Data Analysis
3. To measure the levels of psychological well-being among university students.		Descriptive Data Analysis
4. To examine the relationship between gratitude and psychological well-being among university students.	H₁: There is a significant relationship between gratitude and psychological well-being among university students.	Pearson Correlation
5. To examine the relationship between gratitude and self-compassion among university students.	H₂: There is a significant relationship between gratitude and self-compassion among university students.	Pearson Correlation
6. To examine the relationship between	H₃: There is a significant relationship between self-	Pearson Correlation

Objectives	Hypotheses	Analyses
self-compassion and psychological well-being among university students.	compassion and psychological well-being among university students.	
7. To examine the mediating effect of self-compassion in the relationship between gratitude and psychological well-being among university students.	H4: Self-compassion mediates the relationship between gratitude and psychological well-being among university students.	Multiple Regression Analysis

3.9 Summary

In conclusion, this chapter outlined the research design, population and sample, instruments, data collection procedures, ethical considerations, and data analysis procedures. The correlational quantitative design explored relationships between gratitude, psychological well-being, and self-compassion in Malaysian university students. A convenience sampling method ensured a representative sample. Instruments include GQ-6, SCS-SF, and PWBS-SF. Ethical considerations involve informed consent, confidentiality, and beneficence. Analysis includes descriptive and inferential methods like Pearson correlation and multiple regression. The chapter underscored the robust methodology ensuring accurate and valid findings.

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presented the findings of the study, which aimed to investigate the levels of gratitude, self-compassion, and psychological well-being among university students in Malaysia. The data collected from the survey responses were analysed to address the research objectives and questions outlined in the earlier chapters. Descriptive statistics were utilised to summarise the levels of gratitude, self-compassion, and psychological well-being, providing a comprehensive overview of the sample's characteristics. This chapter explored the relationships between these variables, examining the mediating role of self-compassion in the relationship between gratitude and psychological well-being. The results were presented in a structured manner, accompanied by relevant tables, charts, and graphs to facilitate a clear understanding of the findings.

4.1 Demographic Data

This section discussed on the descriptive analysis of the demographic data of the participants obtained from the survey, consisting of gender, age, race, type of institution, current level of studies and enrolment status.

4.1.1 Gender

Table 5

Frequency and Percentage of Participants' Gender

		Frequency (n)	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	56	26.3	26.3	26.3
	Female	157	73.7	73.7	100.0

	Frequency (n)	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Total	213	100.0	100.0	

Figure 5

Pie Chart of Participants' Gender

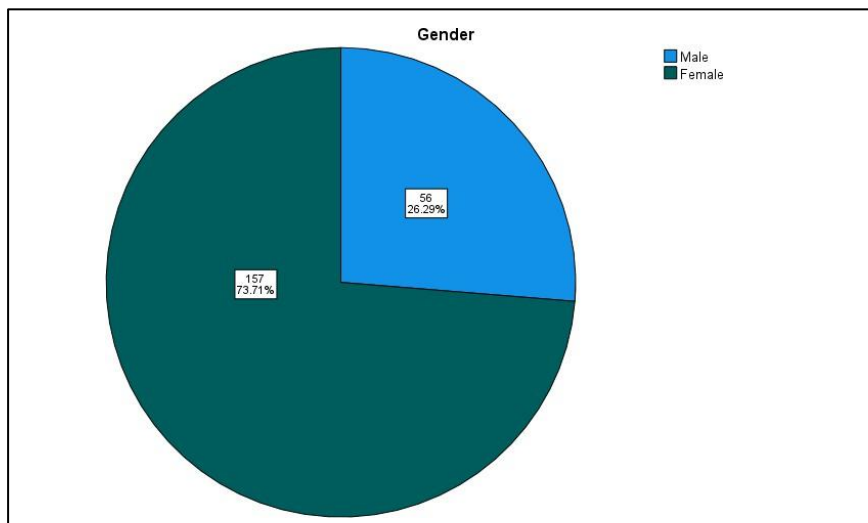


Table 5 and Figure 5 showed the frequency and percentage of the participants' gender. The total number of participants obtained were 217 with the vast majority of 73.3% ($n=159$) consisted of females and 26.7% ($n=58$) were males.

4.1.2 Age

Table 6

Frequency and Percentage of Participants' Age

		Frequency (n)	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	18	8	3.8	3.8	3.8
	19	26	12.2	12.2	16.0
	20	24	11.3	11.3	27.2
	21	22	10.3	10.3	37.6

	Frequency (n)	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
22	52	24.4	24.4	62.0
23	44	20.7	20.7	82.6
24	16	7.5	7.5	90.1
25	9	4.2	4.2	94.4
26	4	1.9	1.9	96.2
27	2	.9	.9	97.2
28	1	.5	.5	97.7
29	1	.5	.5	98.1
30	1	.5	.5	98.6
31	1	.5	.5	99.1
33	1	.5	.5	99.5
35	1	.5	.5	100.0
Total	213	100.0	100.0	

Figure 6

Bar Chart on Participants' Age

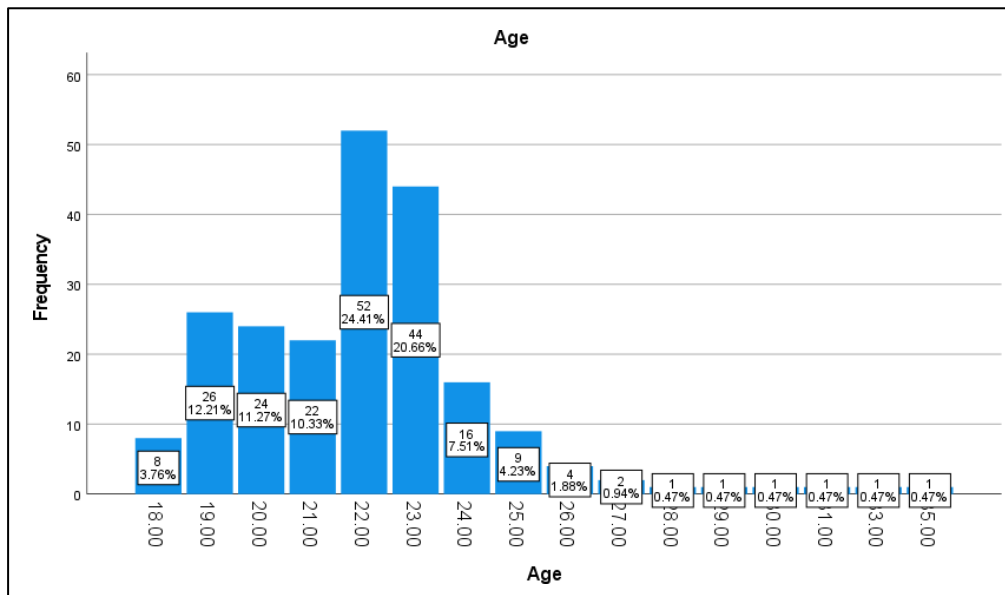


Table 6 and Figure 6 illustrated the frequency and percentage of the participants' age with 24% ($n=52$) of the participants were 22 year olds, followed by 23 year olds with 20.3% ($n=44$), 19 year olds at 12.9% ($n=28$), 20 year olds at 11.5% ($n=25$), and 21 year olds at 10.1%

($n=22$). The rest of the ages are below ten percent with 24 year olds at 7.4% ($n=16$), 18 and 25 year olds at 4.1% ($n=9$) respectively, 26 year olds at 1.8% ($n=4$), and 27 year olds at 0.9% ($n=2$). Ages 28, 29, 30, 31, 33, and 35 stands at 0.5% ($n=1$) respectively.

4.1.3 Race

Table 7

Frequency and Percentage of Participants' Race

		Frequency (n)		Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Malay	63	29.6	29.6	29.6
	Chinese	42	19.7	19.7	49.3
	Indian	6	2.8	2.8	52.1
	Sarawak Bumiputera	85	39.9	39.9	92.0
	Sabah Bumiputera	11	5.2	5.2	97.2
	Others	6	2.8	2.8	100.0
	Total	213	100.0	100.0	

Figure 7

Pie Chart on Participants' Race

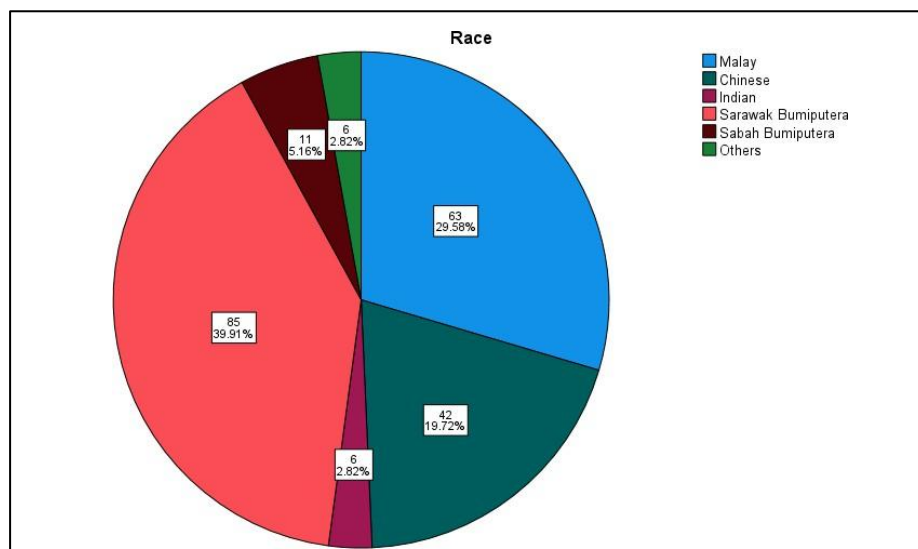


Table 7 and Figure 7 showed the frequency and percentage of participants' race with the majority at 39.6% ($n=86$) were Sarawak Bumiputera, followed by Malay at 30.0% ($n=65$). Participants of Chinese race consisted of 19.8% ($n=43$), Sabah Bumiputera at 5.1% ($n=11$) and both Indian and other races stands at 2.8% ($n=6$) respectively.

4.1.4 Type of Institution

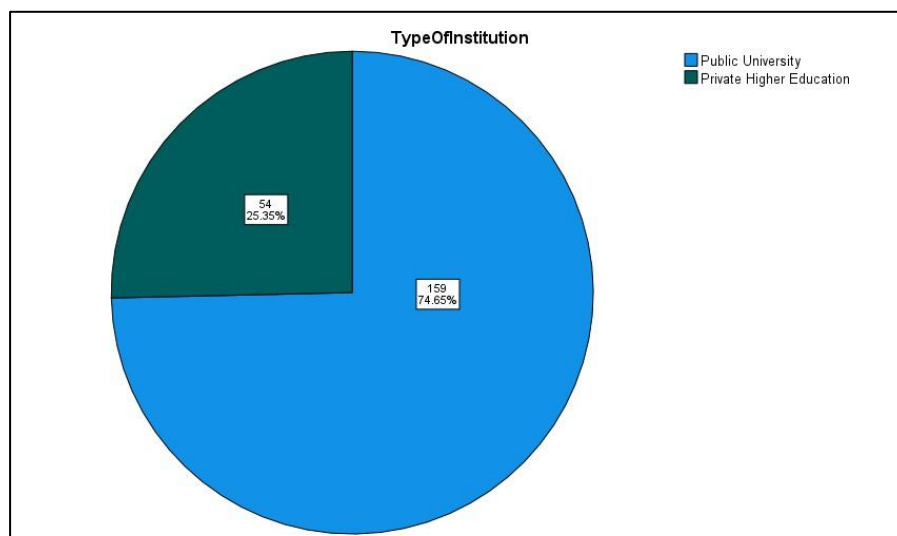
Table 8

Frequency and Percentage of Participants' Type of Institution

		Frequency (n)	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Public University	159	74.6	74.6	74.6
	Private Higher Education	54	25.4	25.4	100.0
	Total	213	100.0	100.0	

Figure 8

Pie Chart on Participants' Type of Institution



For the participants' type of institution, Table 8 and Figure 8 demonstrated the majority of participants came from public university at 74.7% ($n=162$) while 25.3% ($n=55$) of the participants were from private higher education institution.

4.1.5 Current Level of Studies

Table 9

Frequency and Percentage of Participants' Current Level of Studies

		Frequency (<i>n</i>)	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Diploma/Foundation/Pre- University	58	27.2	27.2	27.2
	Bachelor's Degree	141	66.2	66.2	93.4
	Postgraduate	14	6.6	6.6	100.0
	Total	213	100.0	100.0	

Figure 9

Pie Chart on Participants' Current Level of Studies

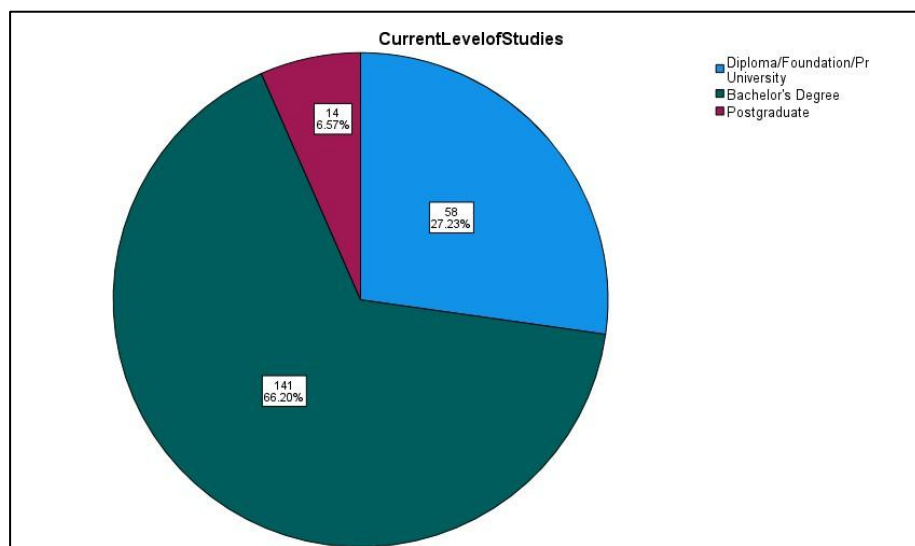


Table 9 and Figure 9 illustrated the participants' current level of studies. Most of the participants involved, 65.4% ($n=142$) consisted of bachelor's degree students. This was followed by participants coming from either diploma, foundation or pre-university at 28.1% ($n=61$) and 6.5% ($n=14$) were postgraduate students.

4.1.6 Enrolment Status

Table 10

Frequency and Percentage of Participants' Enrolment Status

		Frequency (n)	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Full-time	198	93.0	93.0	93.0
	Part-time	15	7.0	7.0	100.0
Total		213	100.0	100.0	

Figure 10

Pie Chart on Participants' Enrolment Status

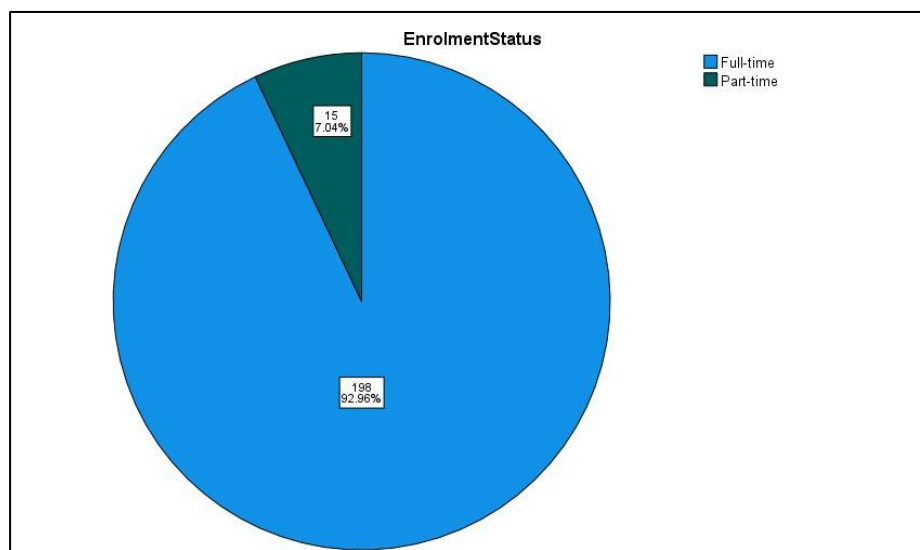


Table 10 and Figure 10 showed the frequency and percentage of the participants' enrolment status. The vast majority of participants consisted of full-time students, constituting 93.1% ($n=202$) and only 6.9% ($n=15$) were part-time students.

4.1.7 Summary of Demographic Data

Table 11

Summary of Demographic Data

		Frequency (n)	Percent (%)
Gender	Male	56	26.3
	Female	157	73.7
Age	18	8	3.8
	19	26	12.2
	20	24	11.3
	21	22	10.3
	22	52	24.4
	23	44	20.7
	24	16	7.5
	25	9	4.2
	26	4	1.9
	27	2	0.9
	28	1	0.5
	29	1	0.5
	30	1	0.5
	31	1	0.5
	33	1	0.5
	35	1	0.5
Race	Malay	63	29.6
	Chinese	42	19.7
	Indian	6	2.8
	Sarawak Bumiputera	85	39.9
	Sabah Bumiputera	11	5.2
	Others	6	2.8
Type of Institution	Public University	159	74.6
	Private Higher Education Institution	54	25.4
Current Level of Studies	Diploma/Foundation/Pre-University	58	27.2

		Frequency (<i>n</i>)	Percent (%)
Enrolment Status	Bachelor's Degree	141	66.2
	Postgraduate	14	6.6
	Full-time	198	93.0
	Part-time	15	7.0

4.2 Reliability and Validity of Current Study

In this section, the reliability and validity of the measurement scales used in this study were assessed to ensure the robustness and accuracy of the gathered data. This evaluation includes examining the internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha) and confirming the factorial structure (Confirmatory Factor Analysis, CFA) of the instruments utilised in the present research.

4.2.1 Reliability

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

Table 12

Reliability Statistics of GQ-6

Cronbach's Alpha Based on		
Cronbach's Alpha	Standardized Items	N of Items
.624	.691	6

Table 13*Item-Total Statistics of GQ-6*

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Squared Multiple Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
1. I have so much in life to be thankful for.	28.1502	15.015	.463	.363	.564
2. If I had to list everything that I felt grateful for, it would be a very long list.	28.4883	13.817	.448	.326	.550
3. When I look at the world, I don't see much to be grateful for.	28.6526	12.020	.454	.229	.535
4. I am grateful to a wide variety of people.	28.4695	14.363	.413	.295	.565
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.	28.2629	14.949	.383	.303	.578
6. Long amounts of time can go by before I feel grateful to something or someone.	30.5117	12.364	.207	.092	.698

To determine the internal consistency of GQ-6, a reliability test was conducted, with the Cronbach's alpha value obtained was 0.624 (Table 12), indicating moderate to acceptable reliability. According to Said (2018), referencing Wim et al. (2008), a Cronbach's alpha ranging from 0.6 to 0.8 is considered acceptable (Nawi et al., 2020). Based on Table 13, even if any of

the items listed were removed from the scale, the Cronbach's alpha value would still fall within the range of 0.6 to 0.7. This suggests that each item, despite its unique contribution, maintains a level of internal consistency that is considered acceptable for the scale as a whole.

4.2.1.2 Self-Compassion Scale - Short Form (SCS-SF)

Table 14

Reliability Statistics of SCS-SF

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on	
	Standardized Items	N of Items
.840	.839	12

Table 15

Item-Total Statistics of SCS-SF

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Squared Multiple Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
1. When I fail at something important to me I become consumed by feelings of inadequacy.	39.1221	51.872	.649	.499	.815
2. I try to be understanding and patient towards those aspects of my personality I don't like.	37.8732	59.007	.381	.262	.836
3. When something painful happens I try to take a balanced view of the situation.	37.8732	56.573	.530	.440	.827

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Squared Multiple Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
4. When I'm feeling down, I tend to feel like most other people are probably happier than I am.	39.5822	59.348	.214	.170	.850
5. I try to see my failings as part of the human condition.	37.7042	58.549	.421	.407	.834
6. When I'm going through a very hard time, I give myself the caring and tenderness I need.	38.0610	56.652	.468	.351	.830
7. When something upsets me I try to keep my emotions in balance.	38.0751	58.117	.373	.331	.837
8. When I fail at something that's important to me, I tend to feel alone in my failure.	39.0939	50.585	.626	.506	.817
9. When I'm feeling down I tend to obsess and fixate on everything that's wrong.	38.9437	50.563	.646	.586	.815
10. When I feel inadequate in some way, I try to remind myself that feelings of inadequacy are shared by most people.	37.9531	56.809	.516	.400	.828
11. I'm disapproving and judgmental about my own flaws and inadequacies.	38.9108	50.940	.641	.550	.816

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Squared Multiple Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
12. I'm intolerant and impatient towards those aspects of my personality I don't like.	38.6526	53.388	.578	.447	.822

The internal consistency of SCS-SF as shown in Table 14 indicates a Cronbach's alpha of 0.840, with a total of 12 items. This suggests a high level of internal consistency among the items as it is above 0.7, indicating that all items in the scale measure the same fundamental concept consistently. Such a high Cronbach's alpha value ensures that the scale is reliable and that the items within it are well-correlated, contributing to the overall robustness of the measurement. Moreover, this level of internal consistency is crucial for the validity of the research findings, as it confirms that the scale can be trusted to provide accurate and stable measurements of self-compassion. Consequently, the high reliability of the SCS-SF supports its use in further analyses and reinforces confidence in the derived results.

4.2.1.3 Ryff's Psychological Well-Being Scale, Short Form (PWBS-SF)

Table 16

Reliability Statistics of PWBS-SF

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on	
	Standardized Items	N of Items
.904	.906	18

Table 17*Item-Total Statistics of PWBS-SF*

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Squared Multiple Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
1. I like most parts of my personality.	85.8779	302.391	.720	.606	.894
2. When I look at the story of my life, I am pleased with how things have turned out so far.	85.7981	301.369	.671	.610	.895
3. Some people wander aimlessly through life, but I am not one of them.	86.0939	301.444	.618	.493	.896
4. The demands of everyday life often get me down.	86.3286	306.807	.528	.555	.899
5. In many ways I feel disappointed about my achievements in life.	85.6995	296.702	.697	.642	.894
6. Maintaining close relationships has been difficult and frustrating for me.	85.9765	302.240	.563	.463	.898
7. I live life one day at a time and don't really think about the future.	86.0329	315.739	.365	.286	.904
8. In general, I feel I am in charge of the situation in which I live.	85.8920	304.493	.604	.514	.897
9. I am good at managing the responsibilities of daily life.	85.6197	300.388	.719	.614	.894

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Squared Multiple Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
10. I sometimes feel as if I've done all there is to do in life.	85.9765	313.919	.380	.295	.904
11. For me, life has been a continuous process of learning, changing, and growth.	84.9437	306.770	.597	.750	.897
12. I think it is important to have new experiences that challenge how I think about myself and the world.	85.1784	307.383	.586	.762	.898
13. People would describe me as a giving person, willing to share my time with others.	86.0516	315.285	.424	.358	.902
14. I gave up trying to make big improvements or changes in my life a long time ago.	85.8310	296.028	.670	.569	.895
15. I tend to be influenced by people with strong opinions.	86.9390	322.350	.231	.409	.909
16. I have not experienced many warm and trusting relationships with others.	85.8028	300.782	.570	.423	.898
17. I have confidence in my own opinions, even if they are different from the way most other people think.	86.1033	303.980	.601	.552	.897
18. I judge myself by what I think is important, not by the	85.8967	307.442	.557	.531	.898

	Scale				Cronbach's
	Mean	Variance	Corrected	Squared	Alpha if
	if Item	if Item	Item-Total	Multiple	Item
	Deleted	Deleted	Correlation	Correlation	Deleted
values of what others think is important.					

The reliability statistics for the PWBS-SF scale, as shown in Table 16, indicate a Cronbach's alpha of 0.904, with a total of 18 items. These high alpha values suggest strong internal consistency (α = above 0.8) among the items, indicating that the scale reliably measures the construct it intends to assess across its entirety. The item-total statistics in Table 17 further illustrate how each item correlates with the total score and contributes to maintaining the scale's robustness and reliability. Additionally, the high internal consistency reflects the coherence and uniformity of the items, which ensures that the responses are dependable and consistent over repeated measurements. The scale's reliability is further supported by the fact that removing any single item would not significantly enhance the overall alpha value, indicating that each item plays a critical role in the measurement. These findings underscored the scale's suitability for assessing psychological well-being with confidence in its precision and accuracy.

4.2.2 Validity

4.2.2.1 Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)

Figure 11

Factor Loadings and Measurement Model of Gratitude, Self-Compassion and Psychological Well-Being

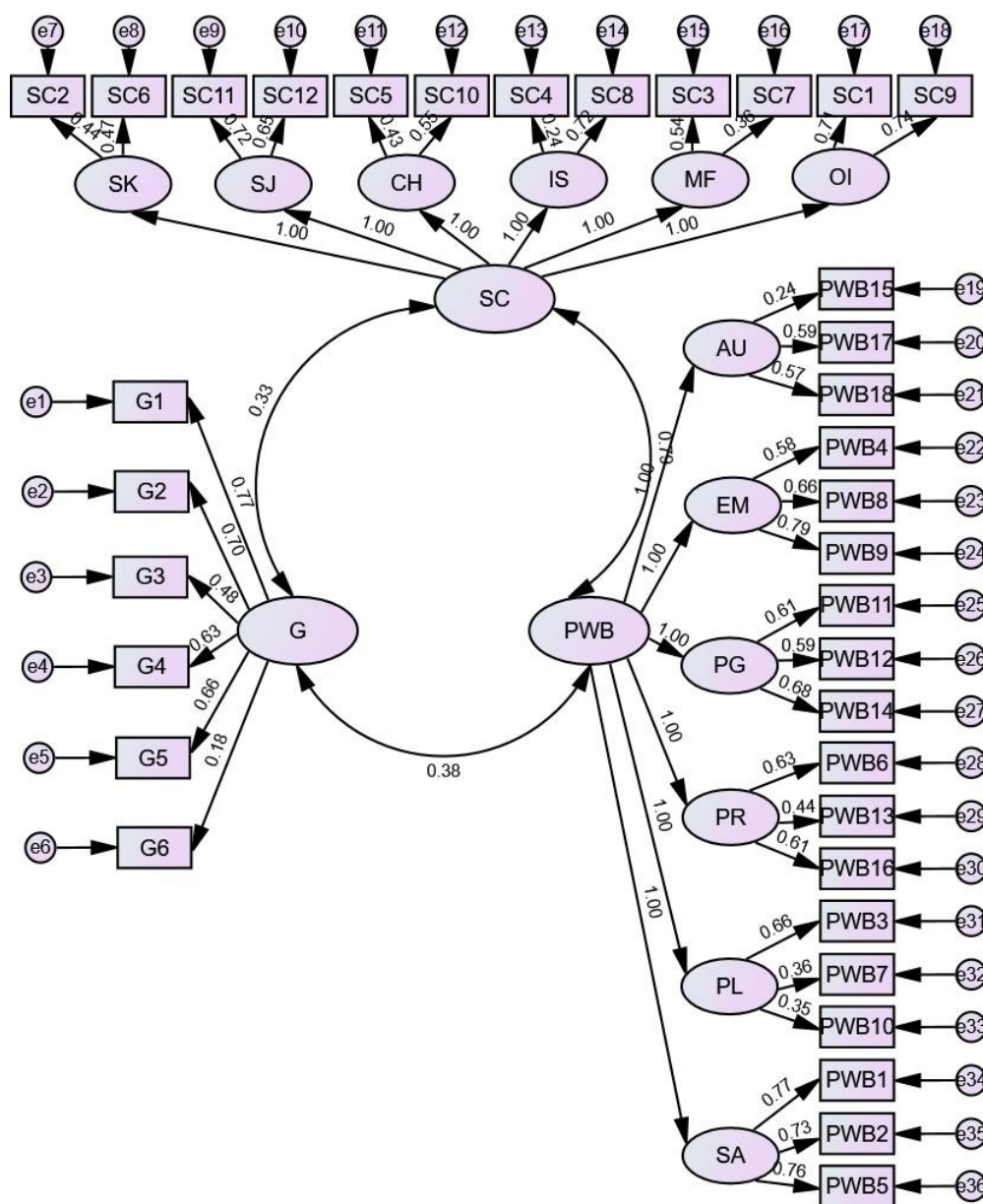


Table 18

Model Fit Summary for the Confirmatory Factor Analysis Model of Gratitude, Self-Compassion and Psychological Well-Being

Fit Index	Value	Interpretation
CMIN/DF	3.014	Acceptable (ideal < 3)
RMSEA	0.097	Marginally acceptable, [< 0.08 (acceptable)]
SRMR	0.1071	Above acceptable threshold, [< 0.10 (acceptable)]
CFI	0.672	Below acceptable threshold, [> 0.90 (acceptable)]
TLI	0.650	Below acceptable threshold, [> 0.90 (acceptable)]
NFI	0.582	Below acceptable threshold, [> 0.90 (acceptable)]

Note. CMIN/DF = minimum discrepancy of confirmatory factor analysis/degrees of freedom; RMSEA = root mean square error of approximation; SRMR = standardized root mean square residual; CFI = comparative fit index; TLI = Tucker-Lewis index; NFI = normed fit index

Table 19

Covariances for the Confirmatory Factor Analysis Model

Path			Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P
SC	<-->	G	.089	.027	3.344	***
PWB	<-->	G	.119	.043	2.771	.006
PWB	<-->	SC	.133	.045	2.965	.003

Table 20

Standardized Factor Loadings for the Confirmatory Factor Analysis Model of Gratitude, Self-Compassion and Psychological Well-Being

Construct		Items	Loadings
Gratitude		G1	0.769
		G2	0.705
		G3	0.476
		G4	0.634
		G5	0.656
		G6	0.176
Self-compassion	Self-kindness	SC2	0.435
		SC6	0.471
	Self-judgement	SC11	0.723
		SC12	0.648
	Common humanity	SC5	0.428
		SC10	0.550
	Isolation	SC4	0.241
		SC8	0.723
	Mindfulness	SC3	0.536
		SC7	0.359
	Over-identification	SC1	0.710
		SC9	0.741

Construct		Items	Loadings
Psychological well-being	Autonomy	PWB15	0.243
		PWB17	0.593
		PWB18	0.567
	Environmental mastery	PWB4	0.583
		PWB8	0.662
		PWB9	0.789
	Personal growth	PWB11	0.615
		PWB12	0.589
		PWB14	0.677
	Positive relations with others	PWB6	0.632
		PWB13	0.438
		PWB16	0.613
	Purpose in life	PWB3	0.663
		PWB7	0.362
		PWB10	0.354
	Self-acceptance	PWB1	0.771
		PWB2	0.734
		PWB5	0.757

The confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) results for the model of gratitude, self-compassion, and psychological well-being are illustrated in Figure 11 and detailed in Tables 18 to 20. The Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) model for gratitude, self-compassion, and psychological well-being is depicted in Figure 11, which illustrated the factor loadings and the

measurement model. This figure visually represents the relationships between the constructs and their associated factor loadings.

Table 18 summarised the model fit indices for the CFA. The CMIN/DF value of 3.014 is within the acceptable range, indicating a reasonable model fit. However, the RMSEA value of 0.097 is marginally acceptable, as values below 0.08 are preferable. The SRMR of 0.1071 is slightly above the acceptable threshold of 0.10. According to Kline (1998), the SRMR is an absolute fit index that measures the mean absolute covariance residual in a standardized metric, with values greater than 0.10 potentially indicating poor fit. The CFI (0.672), TLI (0.650), and NFI (0.582) are all below the ideal threshold of 0.90, suggesting that the model could be improved to better fit the data. As per Shi et al. (2018), the CFI ranges between 0 and 1, with higher values signifying a better fit. They noted that Hu and Bentler (1999) and West et al. (2012) commonly use a CFI of 0.95 as a criterion for a good fit. Additionally, a TLI of 0.95 or higher is generally considered indicative of a good fit (Hu & Bentler, 1999; West et al., 2012, as cited in Shi et al., 2018).

Table 19 provided the covariances among the constructs. The covariance between self-compassion and gratitude is 0.089 ($p < 0.001$), indicating a small but significant relationship. The covariance between psychological well-being and gratitude is 0.119 ($p = 0.006$), suggesting a moderate positive association. The covariance between psychological well-being and self-compassion is 0.133 ($p = 0.003$), reflecting a similar moderate relationship.

Table 20 detailed the standardized factor loadings for each construct. For gratitude, item loadings range from 0.176 to 0.769, with items G1 (0.769) and G2 (0.705) showing strong associations with the gratitude construct. For self-compassion, the loadings vary from 0.241 to 0.741, with items SC1 (0.710) and SC9 (0.741) demonstrating high loadings. Psychological

well-being items exhibited loadings from 0.243 to 0.789, with items PWB9 (0.789) and PWB1 (0.771) having the highest loadings, indicating strong alignment with the psychological well-being construct.

Overall, while the CFA model showed significant relationships among the constructs, the fit indices suggested room for improvement in model specification. The covariances and factor loadings provided insight into the strength and direction of relationships among gratitude, self-compassion, and psychological well-being.

4.3 Inferential Data (Main Findings)

4.3.1 Descriptive Statistics

Table 21

Levels of Gratitude, Self-Compassion and Psychological Well-Being

	<i>N</i>	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Gratitude	213	3.83	7.00	5.7512	.71533
Self-Compassion	213	2.00	4.83	3.4988	.67056
Psychological Well-Being	213	2.22	6.89	5.0524	1.02585
Valid N (listwise)	213				

Table 21 showed the mean (*M*) and standard deviation (*SD*) of gratitude, self-compassion and psychological well-being with the total number of participants (*N* = 213). Gratitude, (*M* = 5.75, *SD* = .72), indicated a generally high level of gratitude among the students, aligning with Research Objective 1, which aims to measure the levels of gratitude. The mean self-compassion score was 3.49 (*SD* = 0.67), suggesting a moderate level of self-compassion, addressing Research Objective 2, which seeks to measure the levels of self-compassion. The values for psychological well-being (*M* = 5.05, *SD* = 1.03) showed that university students had

a reasonably high degree of psychological well-being, fulfilling Research Objective 3, which is to measure the levels of psychological well-being. These findings demonstrate that the levels of gratitude, self-compassion, and psychological well-being among the participants align with the research objectives, providing a comprehensive understanding of these constructs in the context of university students.

4.3.2 Pearson Correlation

To examine the relationship between gratitude, self-compassion and psychological well-being, Pearson correlation test was utilised. The linear correlation between two variables' strength and direction were measured using this statistical technique. The test was specifically used to assess if levels of gratitude and psychological well-being, gratitude and self-compassion, and self-compassion and psychological well-being are significantly correlated.

4.3.2.1 Gratitude and Psychological Well-Being

H₁: There is a significant relationship between gratitude and psychological well-being among university students.

Table 22

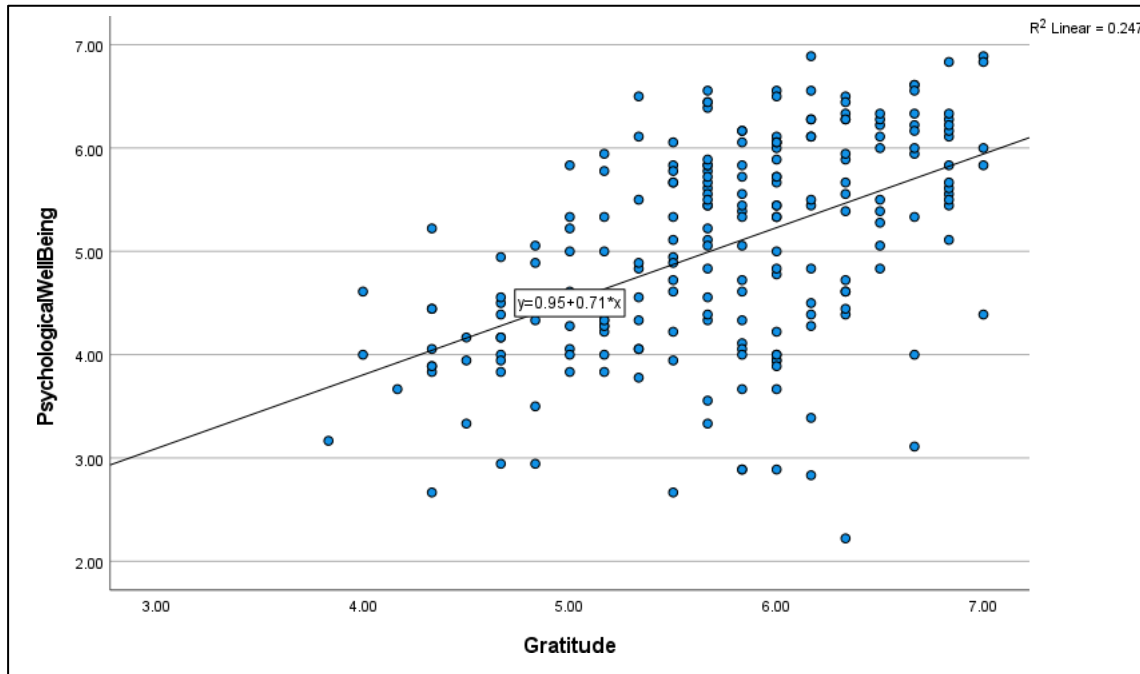
Pearson Correlation between Gratitude and Psychological Well-Being

		Gratitude	Psychological well-being
Gratitude	Pearson Correlation	1	.497**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		<.001
	N	213	213
Psychological well-being	Pearson Correlation	.497**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	
	N	213	213

**.Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Figure 12

Scatter Plot of the Correlation Between Gratitude and Psychological Well-Being



The Pearson correlation analysis between gratitude and psychological well-being as depicted in Table 22 reveals a statistically significant positive relationship $r = .497, p < .001$. This implies that a positive correlation exists between the sample's levels of gratitude and psychological well-being. The correlation coefficient of .497 suggests a moderate strength of association between these variables. As shown in Figure 12, the scatter plot illustrates a moderate positive correlation between gratitude and psychological well-being ($r = .497, p < .001$). The linear regression line, with an R^2 value of .247, indicates that gratitude explains about 24.7% of the variance in psychological well-being. Therefore, based on the findings from the Pearson correlation analysis and scatter plot depicted in Table 22 and Figure 12 respectively, it substantiated the hypothesis that there is a strong association between gratitude and psychological well-being among university students.

4.3.2.2 Gratitude and Self-Compassion

H₂: There is a significant relationship between gratitude and self-compassion among university students.

Table 23

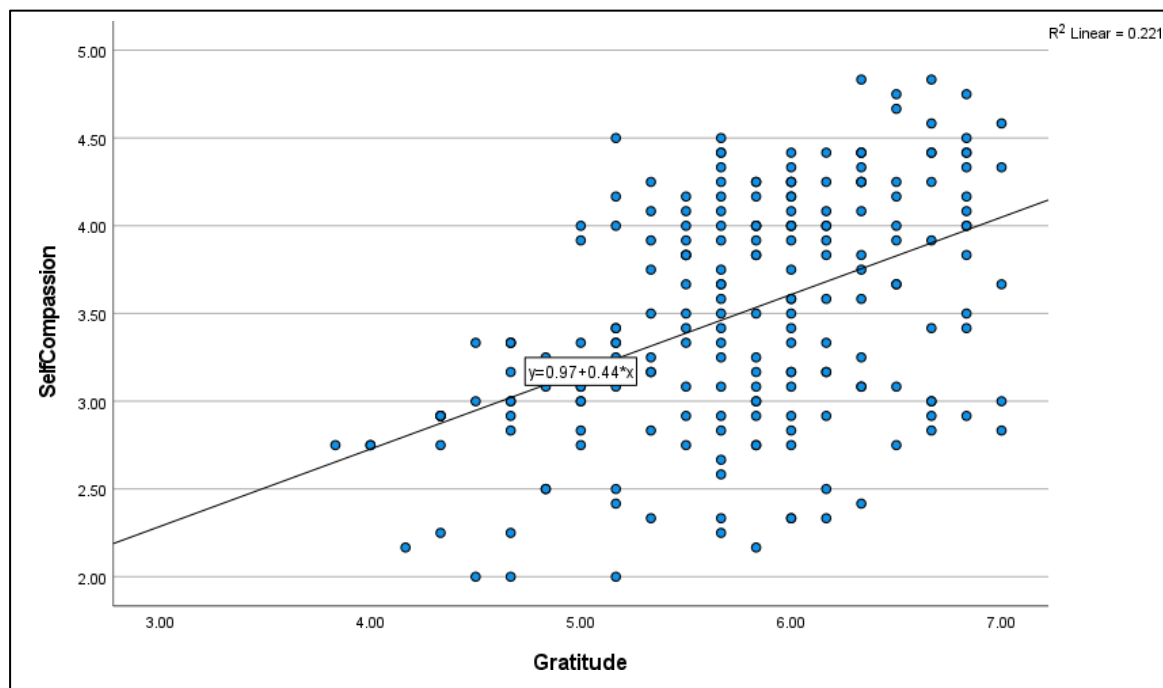
Pearson Correlation between Gratitude and Self-Compassion

		Gratitude	Self-Compassion
Gratitude	Pearson Correlation	1	.470**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		<.001
	N	213	213
Self-Compassion	Pearson Correlation	.470**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	
	N	213	213

**.Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Figure 13

Scatter Plot of the Correlation Between Gratitude and Self-Compassion



The Pearson correlation analysis between gratitude and self-compassion, presented in Table 23, indicates a statistically significant positive relationship, $r = .470$, $p < .001$. This suggests that there is a positive association between the sample's levels of gratitude and self-compassion. The correlation coefficient of .470 indicates a moderate strength of association between these variables. As illustrated in Figure 13, the scatter plot demonstrates a moderate positive correlation between gratitude and self-compassion ($r = .470$, $p < .001$). The linear regression line, with an R^2 value of .221, shows that gratitude accounts for about 22.1% of the variance in self-compassion. Therefore, based on the findings from the Pearson correlation analysis and scatter plot in Table 23 and Figure 13 respectively, H_2 , which posits a significant relationship between gratitude and self-compassion among university students, was accepted.

4.3.2.3 Self-Compassion and Psychological Well-Being

H_3 : There is a significant relationship between self-compassion and psychological well-being among university students.

Table 24

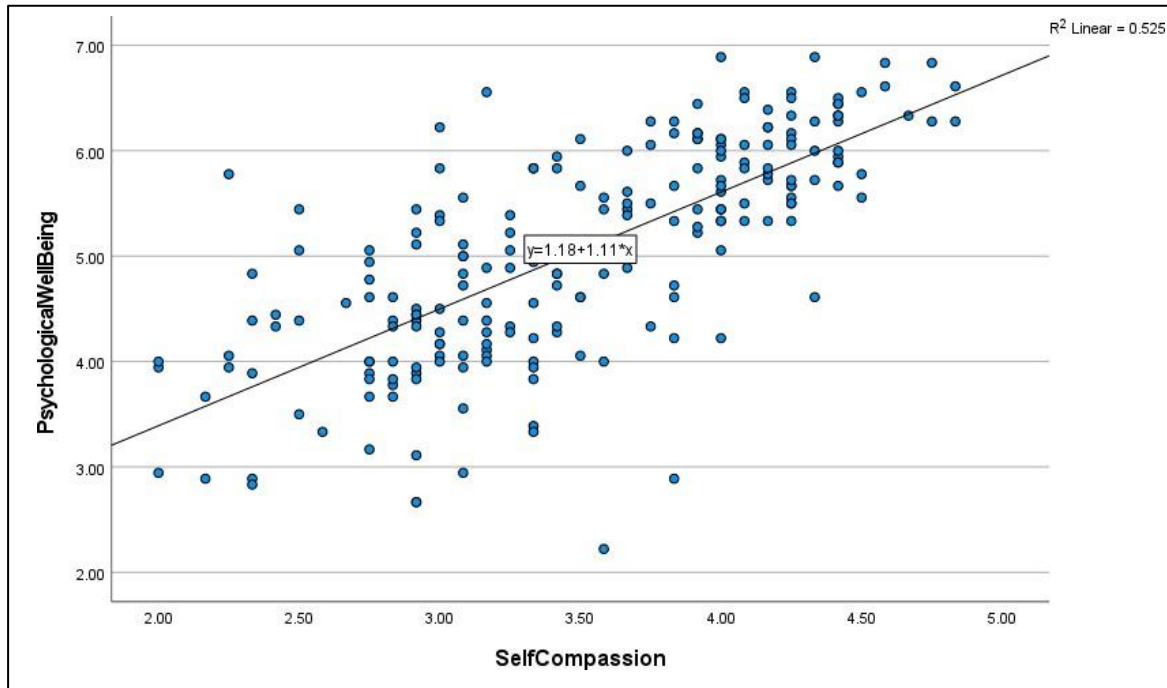
Pearson Correlation between Self-Compassion and Psychological Well-Being

		Self-Compassion	Psychological Well-Being
Self-Compassion	Pearson Correlation	1	.724**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		<.001
	N	213	213
Psychological Well-Being	Pearson Correlation	.724**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	
	N	213	213

**.Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Figure 14

Scatter Plot of the Correlation Between Self-Compassion and Psychological Well-Being



The Pearson correlation analysis between self-compassion and psychological well-being, presented in Table 24, indicates a statistically significant positive relationship, $r = .724$, $p < .001$. This suggests that there is a strong positive association between the sample's levels of self-compassion and psychological well-being. The correlation coefficient of .724 indicates a strong strength of association between these variables. As illustrated in Figure 14, the scatter plot demonstrates a substantial positive relationship between self-compassion and psychological well-being ($r = .724$, $p < .001$). The linear regression line, with an R^2 value of .525, shows that self-compassion accounts for about 52.5% of the variance in psychological well-being. Therefore, based on the findings from the Pearson correlation analysis and scatter plot in Table 24 and Figure 14 respectively, H_3 , which suggests self-compassion has a substantial association with psychological well-being among university students, was accepted.

4.3.3 Multiple Regression

H4: Self-compassion mediates the relationship between gratitude and psychological well-being among university students.

Total Effect

Table 25

Model Summary of Gratitude on Psychological Well-Being

Rows	Columns						
	R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
row1	.497	.247	.796	69.210	1.000	211.000	.000

Table 26

Model Coefficients of Gratitude on Psychological Well-Being

Rows	Columns					
	coeff	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
constant	.953	.496	1.920	.056	-.025	1.932
Gratitude	.713	.086	8.319	.000	.544	.882

An analysis of multiple regression was performed to investigate the effect of gratitude on psychological well-being. The results of the regression in Table 25 and Table 26 indicated that the gratitude explained 24.7% of the variance ($R^2 = 0.247$, $F(1, 211) = 69.21$, $p < .001$) in psychological well-being. Gratitude significantly predicted psychological well-being ($\beta = 0.497$, $p < .001$), indicating that greater levels of gratitude are linked to enhanced psychological well-being. This finding underscored the importance of fostering gratitude to improve overall psychological health.

Direct Effect

Table 27

Model Summary of Gratitude on Self-Compassion

Rows	Columns						
	R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
row1	.470	.221	.352	59.795	1.000	211.000	.000

Table 28

Model Coefficients of Gratitude on Self-Compassion

Rows	Columns					
	coeff	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
constant	.965	.330	2.924	.004	.315	1.616
Gratitude	.441	.057	7.733	.000	.328	.553

A multiple regression analysis was performed to investigate the impact of gratitude on self-compassion. The findings (Table 27 and Table 28) revealed that the model accounted for 22.1% of the variance ($R^2 = 0.221$, $F(1, 211) = 59.795$, $p < .001$). Gratitude emerged as a significant predictor of self-compassion ($\beta = 0.470$, $p < .001$), indicating that increased gratitude is associated with higher self-compassion.

Table 29

Model Summary of Gratitude and Self-Compassion on Psychological Well-Being

Rows	Columns						
	R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
row1	.746	.556	.472	131.586	2.000	211.000	.000

Table 30*Model Coefficients of Gratitude and Self-Compassion on Psychological Well-Being*

Rows	Columns					
	coeff	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
constant	.023	.390	.059	.953	-.745	.791
Gratitude	.288	.075	3.859	.000	.141	.435
Self-compassion	.964	.080	12.096	.000	.807	1.121

Table 31*Standardized Coefficients of Gratitude and Self-Compassion*

Rows	Columns
	coeff
Gratitude	.201
Self-compassion	.630

A multiple regression analysis was conducted to examine the effects of gratitude and self-compassion on psychological well-being. The results as shown in Table 29 and Table 30 indicated that the model explained 55.6% of the variance ($R^2 = 0.556$, $F(2, 211) = 131.586$, $p < .001$). Table 31 showed that both gratitude ($\beta = 0.201$, $p < .001$) and self-compassion ($\beta = 0.630$, $p < .001$) significantly predicted psychological well-being, with self-compassion having a greater impact.

Figure 15

Path Analysis Model of the Associations Between Gratitude, Self-Compassion and Psychological Well-Being

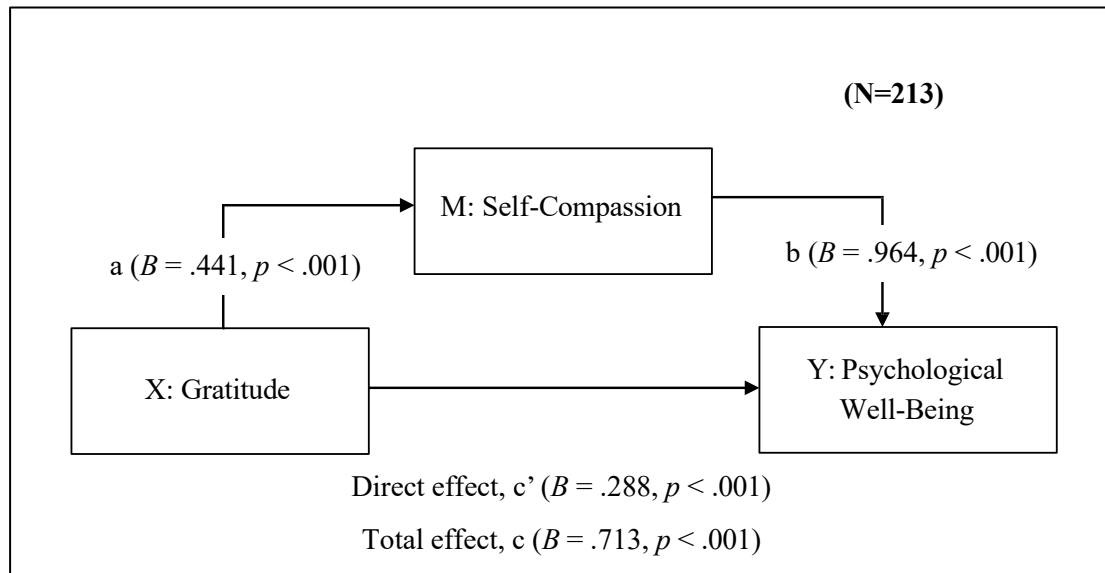


Table 32

Mediation Analysis Summary

Relationship	Total Effect	Direct Effect	Indirect Effect	Confidence Intervals		R^2	t-statistics	Conclusion
				LL	UL			
Gratitude→Self-compassion→Psychological well-being	.713 (.000)	.288 (.000)	.425	.315	.544	.556	7.456	Complementary Partial Mediation

Note. LL = lower level; UL = upper level
*95% confidence intervals

The PROCESS Macro's model 4 for SPSS was utilised to conduct the mediation analysis. The purpose was to investigate the relationship between gratitude (X), self-compassion (M), and psychological well-being (Y), and to assess whether self-compassion mediated the effect of gratitude on psychological well-being. The results, as shown in Figure

15 showed that gratitude positively predicted self-compassion ($B = .441, p < .001$). Self-compassion, in turn, strongly predicted psychological well-being ($B = .964, p < .001$). Further analysis, as shown in Table 32 revealed the indirect effect of gratitude on psychological well-being through self-compassion was significant, as the confidence intervals derived from 5000 bootstrap samples did not encompass zero. ($B = .425, 95\% \text{ CI } .315, .544$). Moreover, gratitude ($B = .288, p < .001$) also exhibited a significant direct effect on psychological well-being when the mediator was included in the model, indicating that gratitude independently contributes to psychological well-being beyond its influence through self-compassion, which means that complementary partial mediation was observed. The model explained 55.6% of the variance in the dependent variable ($R^2 = 0.556, F(2, 211) = 131.586, p < .001$), as shown in Table 29. This suggests that gratitude might lead to greater self-compassion, which in turn leads to better psychological well-being. Thus, the hypothesis is valid and H₄ was accepted.

4.4 Discussion

4.4.1 Relationship between Gratitude and Psychological Well-Being

Based on the findings of the current study, it was found that among university students, gratitude and psychological well-being had a statistically significant positive relationship. In particular, a moderate correlation was found in the study, indicating that increased gratitude and psychological well-being levels are correlated. These findings are in line with previous research showing that cultivating gratitude could boost mental health outcomes.

The findings of this study regarding the positive relationship between gratitude and psychological well-being were supported by several notable studies discussed in the literature. For example, Sharifi and Moltafet (2021) highlighted that gratitude significantly predicts psychological well-being among bachelor student populations, emphasising its pivotal role in enhancing mental health outcomes. Their findings suggest that cultivating gratitude may

contribute to greater emotional resilience and life satisfaction among young adults. Similarly, Hemarajajeswari and Kumar Gupta (2021) conducted a correlational investigation that revealed robust associations between gratitude and psychological well-being in college students from India. Using comprehensive measures of happiness and psychological well-being, their study underscored the broad-ranging benefits of gratitude practices in promoting positive mental health outcomes. Furthermore, Geier and Morris (2022) demonstrated the effectiveness of gratitude interventions in improving mental health during challenging circumstances such as the COVID-19 pandemic. Their research highlighted that interventions focusing on gratitude not only mitigate psychological distress but also foster resilience and well-being among university students.

Collectively, these studies reinforced the notion that gratitude plays a crucial role in improving psychological well-being across diverse student populations, emphasising the practical implications of integrating gratitude-promoting activities into educational and therapeutic settings.

4.4.2 Relationship between Gratitude and Self-Compassion

The current study examined the relationship between gratitude and self-compassion among university students. The results indicated a notable positive correlation, suggesting that increased levels of gratitude coincide with higher levels of self-compassion. This aligns with previous research suggesting that cultivating gratitude and self-compassion can enhance coping mechanisms in challenging academic environments.

The findings of the current study are supported by Yang et al. (2021)'s research whereby it demonstrated a longitudinal association where higher self-compassion predicted increased gratitude among adolescents, echoing findings by Neff et al. (2018) and Booker and

Dunsmore (2019) in adult populations. Furthermore, Hernandez et al. (2021) explored the reciprocal relationship between gratitude and self-compassion, underscoring their positive correlation and reinforcing our findings. Additional evidence supports the current study's findings as such by Aruni et al. (2023), which explored how self-compassion and gratitude impact university students' life satisfaction, with social support as a mediating factor. Their findings revealed that both self-compassion and gratitude significantly and positively influenced university students' life satisfaction. These insights collectively emphasise the importance of fostering both gratitude and self-compassion as integral components of promoting well-being and among university students.

4.4.3 Relationship between Self-Compassion and Psychological Well-Being

The current study found a strong positive relationship between self-compassion and psychological well-being among university students, consistent with previous research. This relationship suggests that higher levels of self-compassion are associated with enhanced psychological well-being. For instance, Sotiropoulou et al. (2023) identified a significant positive relationship between self-compassion and psychological well-being in Greek individuals, indicating that fostering self-compassion can improve resilience, subjective happiness, and purpose in life. Similarly, Voon et al. (2021) demonstrated that self-compassion significantly influenced psychological well-being through the mediation of resilience among Malaysian counsellors, emphasising how crucial self-compassion is for fostering mental well-being. Mohamed et al. (2020) further discovered that self-compassion greatly enhances the psychological well-being of Malaysian guidance and counselling practitioners, emphasising its role in fostering resilience and eudaimonic happiness in educational settings. Additionally, Kotera and Ting (2019) identified a positive association between self-compassion and mental health among university students in Malaysia, establishing a connection where increased self-

compassion correlates with improved mental health outcomes. These findings align with the results of the current study, underscoring the critical role of self-compassion in promoting psychological well-being.

It can be deduced that self-compassion has a crucial role in improving the students' psychological well-being by encouraging improved emotional stability and flexible coping mechanisms. This suggests that interventions aimed at enhancing self-compassion could be particularly beneficial for improving mental health among university students, providing them with valuable tools to navigate academic and personal challenges.

4.4.4 Self-Compassion Mediates the relationship between Gratitude and Psychological Well-Being

Examining self-compassion as a mediating factor in the relationship between gratitude and psychological well-being in university students offers important new perspectives on the underlying processes that connect these concepts. The findings from the current study found that there was a substantial correlation between gratitude and psychological well-being, with self-compassion as the mediator. Gratitude indirectly influences psychological well-being through self-compassion, as indicated by statistically significant findings. Given that both direct and indirect effects aligned positively, self-compassion serves as a complementary partial mediator, indicating that gratitude positively impacts university students' psychological well-being both directly and indirectly through self-compassion.

These findings were supported by the works of Fong and Loi (2016), which had found that self-compassion significantly mediates the relationships between various distress factors (stress, negative affect, and burnout) and depression, as well as between overall distress and well-being. These effects were observed consistently across multiple regression analyses,

regardless of covariates, demonstrating significant indirect effects through self-compassion. This highlighted self-compassion's crucial role in psychological outcomes. Thus, their findings supported the idea that self-compassion could be a valuable mediator in the relationship between distress and psychological well-being in the current research. Results from Bui et al. (2021) further validated the role of self-compassion as a mediator as they found that self-compassion strongly influenced the association between proactive coping and perceived stress, explaining a sizable amount of the variation in stress levels. The results highlighted the crucial role that self-compassion played as a mediator in this connection by showing that it is correlated with lower levels of perceived stress.

Thus, it can be inferred that gratitude positively influenced students' psychological well-being, both directly and indirectly through the mechanism of self-compassion. This relationship is not entirely mediated by self-compassion, though, as shown by the ongoing direct effect of gratitude on psychological well-being. Therefore, the relationship between gratitude and psychological well-being may potentially be influenced by other mechanisms or factors that were not taken into consideration in this study.

Table 33

Summary of Results

Research Hypotheses	Statistical Analyses	Results
H ₁ : There is a significant relationship between gratitude and psychological well-being among university students.	Pearson correlation	Accepted. $r = .497, p < .001$

Research Hypotheses	Statistical Analyses	Results
H ₂ : There is a significant relationship between gratitude and self-compassion among university students.	Pearson correlation	Accepted. $r = .470, p < .001$
H ₃ : There is a significant relationship between self-compassion and psychological well-being among university students.	Pearson correlation	Accepted. $r = .724, p < .001$
H ₄ : Self-compassion mediates the relationship between gratitude and psychological well-being among university students.	Multiple regression	Accepted. Indirect effect ($a*b$) = .425 CI does not contain zero = LL .315, UL .544

4.5 Summary

This chapter presented a detailed analysis of the study's findings, focusing on the levels of gratitude, self-compassion, and psychological well-being among university students in Malaysia. Descriptive statistics provided an overview of the demographic characteristics of the participants and the distribution of the key variables. Reliability analyses confirmed the internal consistency of the measurement scales used. Pearson correlation analyses revealed significant positive relationships between gratitude and psychological well-being, gratitude and self-compassion, and self-compassion and psychological well-being. Further, multiple regression analyses demonstrated that self-compassion significantly mediates the relationship between gratitude and psychological well-being.

CHAPTER FIVE

LIMITATION, IMPLICATION, RECOMMENDATION AND CONCLUSION

5.0 Introduction

This chapter explored the limitations, implications, recommendations, and conclusions drawn from this study on gratitude, self-compassion, and psychological well-being among university students in Malaysia. This chapter critically evaluated the constraints encountered during the research process, discussed the practical implications of the findings for educational settings, proposes recommendations for future studies, and concludes with a synthesis of key insights and their broader implications. By addressing these facets, this chapter aimed to provide a comprehensive overview that enhances understanding and guides future research and application in promoting student well-being.

5.1 Limitations of Study

Several limitations existed in this research that need to be acknowledged. Sampling bias may arise as the sample was exclusively drawn from university students in Malaysia, which raised concerns about the generalisability of the findings to student populations in other regions or countries. This limitation suggested that the results may not be reflective of broader student demographics, potentially affecting the study's external validity. Moreover, the sample size of 213 may not have adequately captured the diverse population of university students in Malaysia. A larger sample size would provide a more robust foundation for generalising the findings to the entire student body.

The findings were specific to university students in Malaysia and may not be applicable to students in different cultural or national contexts. Cultural differences in expressing and experiencing gratitude and self-compassion could influence the results. For instance, students

from cultures that emphasise collectivism may report different levels of gratitude compared to those from more individualistic cultures. As such, it is important to proceed with caution when extrapolating these results to other national or cultural groups.

The reliance on self-report measures introduced the risk of subjectivity and response bias. Participants may not always provide accurate or honest responses, and their self-assessments might be influenced by various factors such as social desirability or misunderstanding of the questions. This limitation could affect the reliability and validity of the data collected, leading to potential inaccuracies in the study's conclusions.

The current study's cross-sectional design imposed limitations on drawing causal conclusions. Collecting data at a single point makes it difficult to ascertain the directionality of relationships between variables. Longitudinal studies would be essential to establish causality and to track the evolution of these relationships over time.

5.2 Implications of Study

The implications of this current study are multifaceted, offering significant contributions to both theoretical understanding and practical applications. The current research provides valuable insights into the applicability and relevance of Western-developed theories of gratitude and self-compassion in non-Western contexts, thus contributing to the cross-cultural validation and adaptation of these theories. By demonstrating that these constructs are pertinent and beneficial in a Malaysian university setting, the study supports the notion that gratitude and self-compassion are universal constructs that can enhance psychological well-being across diverse cultural contexts.

Furthermore, the positive relationship identified between gratitude, self-compassion, and psychological well-being has practical implications for educational institutions.

Universities could leverage these findings to develop targeted programs aimed at fostering gratitude and self-compassion among students. Initiatives such as workshops, seminars, and counselling sessions could be designed to cultivate these attributes, thereby enhancing overall student well-being. Implementing such programs could help students manage stress, improve mental health, and foster a more supportive and positive university environment.

The current study's findings have important implications for educational policymakers. Integrating components of positive psychology into the curriculum could be a strategic approach to promoting student well-being. Activities such as gratitude journaling and self-compassion exercises could be incorporated into existing courses or developed as standalone modules. By embedding these practices into the educational framework, institutions can create a more holistic and supportive learning environment that prioritises not only academic success but also the psychological and emotional health of students.

All things considered, this study emphasises how crucial it is for psychological researchers to take cultural settings into account when conducting research and provides useful strategies that policymakers and educational institutions may use to improve the well-being of their students. The results support a more inclusive and all-encompassing approach to education, where encouraging good psychological traits is considered essential to students' development as a whole.

5.3 Recommendations

To address the limitations of the current study and to further enhance the understanding of gratitude, self-compassion, and psychological well-being, several recommendations are proposed. Future studies should employ more diverse and representative sampling techniques, such as stratified random sampling, to enhance the generalisability of findings. This approach

would ensure that various subgroups within the population are adequately represented, thereby providing a more comprehensive understanding of the phenomena under study and increasing the external validity of the results. By including a wider range of participants, researchers can draw more accurate and generalisable conclusions about the relationships between gratitude, self-compassion, and psychological well-being that fully represents the whole population of university students in Malaysia, regardless of the type of institutions and students' background.

Comparative studies across different cultural contexts are also recommended to examine the universality and cultural specificity of gratitude and self-compassion. By comparing findings from various cultural backgrounds, researchers can identify cultural factors that may influence how these constructs are experienced and expressed. Such studies would contribute to the development of culturally sensitive interventions and programs, ensuring that strategies to enhance psychological well-being are effective and relevant across diverse populations.

Integrating a mixed-methods approach, which includes qualitative methods like interviews or focus groups, can enhance and provide depth to quantitative findings. Qualitative data would provide rich, thorough explanations of the experiences and viewpoints of the students on gratitude and self-compassion, revealing nuances that quantitative measures might miss. This methodological triangulation would enhance the depth and breadth of the research, allowing for a more holistic understanding of the studied constructs.

Conducting longitudinal studies is essential to look into the causal relationships between gratitude, self-compassion, and psychological well-being over time. Longitudinal research would allow for the examination of how these constructs interact and influence each other across different stages of students' lives. This approach would provide insights into the

directionality and stability of these relationships, providing a deeper insight into how gratitude and self-compassion contribute to long-term psychological well-being.

5.4 Conclusion

The current study sheds light on the significant relationships among gratitude, self-compassion, and psychological well-being within the context of Malaysian university students. The findings underscored robust positive correlations between gratitude and both self-compassion and psychological well-being, while also highlighting self-compassion's crucial mediating role in enhancing psychological well-being through gratitude. Gratitude and self-compassion are shown to positively impact psychological well-being, emphasising the importance of fostering these traits within university programs to enhance student well-being. Integrating gratitude journaling and self-compassion exercises into student support services can help students better navigate academic challenges and improve their mental health. Despite limitations such as sampling bias and reliance on self-report measures, the study contributes valuable insights into the applicability of Western-developed psychological constructs in non-Western contexts. The implications for educational practice are profound, advocating for the integration of gratitude and self-compassion promotion initiatives into university settings to foster a supportive environment that prioritises holistic student development. Moving forward, future research should consider longitudinal and cross-cultural studies to further elucidate the dynamics of these constructs and enhance their effectiveness in promoting student well-being globally.

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APPENDIX A
RAW SPSS OUTPUTS

Demographic Data

Gender

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	56	26.3	26.3	26.3
	Female	157	73.7	73.7	100.0
	Total	213	100.0	100.0	

Age

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	18.00	8	3.8	3.8	3.8
	19.00	26	12.2	12.2	16.0
	20.00	24	11.3	11.3	27.2
	21.00	22	10.3	10.3	37.6
	22.00	52	24.4	24.4	62.0
	23.00	44	20.7	20.7	82.6
	24.00	16	7.5	7.5	90.1
	25.00	9	4.2	4.2	94.4
	26.00	4	1.9	1.9	96.2
	27.00	2	.9	.9	97.2
	28.00	1	.5	.5	97.7
	29.00	1	.5	.5	98.1
	30.00	1	.5	.5	98.6
	31.00	1	.5	.5	99.1
	33.00	1	.5	.5	99.5
	35.00	1	.5	.5	100.0
	Total	213	100.0	100.0	

Race

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Malay	63	29.6	29.6	29.6
	Chinese	42	19.7	19.7	49.3
	Indian	6	2.8	2.8	52.1
	Sarawak	85	39.9	39.9	92.0
	Bumiputera				
	Sabah	11	5.2	5.2	97.2
	Bumiputera				
	Others	6	2.8	2.8	100.0
	Total	213	100.0	100.0	

TypeOfInstitution

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Public University	159	74.6	74.6	74.6
	Private Higher Education	54	25.4	25.4	100.0
	Total	213	100.0	100.0	

CurrentLevelofStudies

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Diploma/Foundation/Pre- University	58	27.2	27.2	27.2
	Bachelor's Degree	141	66.2	66.2	93.4
	Postgraduate	14	6.6	6.6	100.0
	Total	213	100.0	100.0	

Statistical Data

Level of Gratitude

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
GQ_Mean	213	3.83	7.00	5.7512	.71533
Valid N (listwise)	213				

Level of Self-compassion

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
SC_Mean	213	2.00	4.83	3.4988	.67056
Valid N (listwise)	213				

Level of Psychological well-being

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
PWB_Mean	213	2.22	6.89	5.0524	1.02585
Valid N (listwise)	213				

PROCESS Macro Mediation Analysis

Run MATRIX procedure:

***** PROCESS Procedure for SPSS Version 4.2 *****

Written by Andrew F. Hayes, Ph.D. www.afhayes.com
Documentation available in Hayes (2022). www.guilford.com/p/hayes3

Model : 4
Y : PWB
X : G
M : SC

Sample
Size: 213

OUTCOME VARIABLE:
SC

Model Summary

R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
.470	.221	.352	59.795	1.000	211.000	.000

Model

	coeff	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
constant	.965	.330	2.924	.004	.315	1.616
G	.441	.057	7.733	.000	.328	.553

Standardized coefficients

	coeff
G	.470

OUTCOME VARIABLE:
PWB

Model Summary

R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
.746	.556	.472	131.586	2.000	210.000	.000

Model

	coeff	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
constant	.023	.390	.059	.953	-.745	.791
G	.288	.075	3.859	.000	.141	.435
SC	.964	.080	12.096	.000	.807	1.121

Standardized coefficients

	coeff
G	.201
SC	.630

***** TOTAL EFFECT MODEL *****

OUTCOME VARIABLE:
PWB

Model Summary

R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
.497	.247	.796	69.210	1.000	211.000	.000

Model	coeff	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
constant	.953	.496	1.920	.056	-.025	1.932
G	.713	.086	8.319	.000	.544	.882

Standardized coefficients

	coeff
G	.497

***** TOTAL, DIRECT, AND INDIRECT EFFECTS OF X ON Y *****

Total effect of X on Y

Effect	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI	c_cs
.713	.086	8.319	.000	.544	.882	.497

Direct effect of X on Y

Effect	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI	c'_cs
.288	.075	3.859	.000	.141	.435	.201

Indirect effect(s) of X on Y:

	Effect	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI
SC	.425	.057	.315	.544

Completely standardized indirect effect(s) of X on Y:

	Effect	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI
SC	.296	.038	.220	.372

***** ANALYSIS NOTES AND ERRORS *****

Level of confidence for all confidence intervals in output:

95.0000

Number of bootstrap samples for percentile bootstrap confidence intervals:

5000

----- END MATRIX -----

APPENDIX B

MATERIALS/INSTRUMENT

Gratitude and Psychological Well-Being Among University Students in Malaysia: The Mediating Role of Self-Compassion

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

Please read the information carefully before participating in this study.

Investigator

Sharon Liaw Hui Ching (81142), third year Psychology undergraduate student

Institution

Faculty of Cognitive Sciences and Human Development (FCSHD)
Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS)

Supervisor

Dr Voon Siok Ping

Introduction

Understanding the purpose and nature of the research is crucial. Please take your time to read through and consider this information thoughtfully before making a decision regarding your willingness to participate.

Purpose of the study

To explore the relationship between gratitude, self-compassion and psychological well-being among university students in Malaysia. The findings from this study can offer vital insights in shaping future mental health development and interventions tailored to university students in Malaysia, focusing on the relationship between gratitude, self-compassion, and psychological well-being.

Inclusion Criteria

To participate in this study, you must meet the following criteria:

- i. Be at least 18 years old at the time of participation.
- ii. Currently enrolled as a student in a recognised university in Malaysia.
- iii. Currently pursuing either pre-university, diploma, undergraduate or postgraduate studies at the university.
- iv. Willing to provide informed consent to participate in the research.
- v. Able to understand English, as the questionnaire and study materials are in English.

This questionnaire consists of **FOUR (4)** sections. Please answer **ALL** the questions.

Section A: Demographic Information

Section B: The Gratitude Questionnaire - Six Item Form (GQ-6, McCullough et al., 2002)

Section C: Self-Compassion Scale - Short Form (SCS-SF, Raes et al., 2011)

Section D: Ryff's Psychological Well-Being Scale, Short Form (PWBS-SF, Ryff & Keyes, 1995)

Potential Risks

Participation in this study poses minimal risk. It's essential to note that all questions must be answered as part of the survey requirements. However, if you feel any uncomfortable or emotional disturbances while answering the questionnaire, you may withdraw at any time.

Benefits

Participation in this study offers the opportunity to contribute to the advancement of knowledge regarding gratitude, self-compassion, and psychological well-being, potentially informing targeted interventions for the benefit of both current and future university students.

Confidentiality

All information gathered in this study will be kept and handled in a confidential manner, adhering to relevant laws and regulations, and will only be used for academic purposes. When publishing or presenting the study findings, only aggregated data will be utilized, ensuring your identity remains undisclosed.

Voluntary Participation

Your decision to participate in this study is complete voluntary. You may choose not to participate or withdraw from this study at any time without receiving any punishment or penalty.

Questions

If you have any questions or want more information about this study, please, do not hesitate to contact the researcher, Sharon Liaw Hui Ching at +60198160342 / 81142@siswa.unimas.my.

* Indicates required question

1. **Informed Consent**

*

By participating in this study, I hereby acknowledge that:

1. I have read and understood the information provided about the study in the participant information sheet.
2. I am participating voluntarily and understand that I have the right to withdraw at any time without penalty or loss of benefits.
3. I understand that my responses will be kept confidential, and my identity will be anonymised in any reporting or publication of study results.

Mark only one oval.

☐ Yes, I agree.

Section A: Demographic Information

This section aims to gather your essential details, providing valuable context for the study.

2. 1. Gender *

Mark only one oval.

☐ Male

☐ Female

3. 2. Age (e.g. 18) *

4. 3. Race *

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Malay
- ☐ Chinese
- ☐ Indian
- ☐ Sarawak Bumiputera
- ☐ Sabah Bumiputera
- ☐ Other: _____

5. 4. Type of Institution *

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Public University
- ☐ Private Higher Education Institution

6. 5. Current Level of Studies *

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Postgraduate (PhD, Master's, Postgraduate Diploma)
- ☐ Bachelor's Degree
- ☐ Diploma/Foundation/Pre-University

7. 6. Enrollment Status *

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Part-Time
- ☐ Full-Time

Section B: The Gratitude Questionnaire - Six Item Form (GQ-6, McCullough et al., 2002)

The Gratitude Questionnaire-Six-Item Form (GQ-6) is a six-item self-report questionnaire designed to assess individual differences in the proneness to experience gratitude in daily life.

Please read each statement carefully before answering. Indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree in each of the statement in the stated manner.

1 = Strongly Disagree

2 = Disagree

3 = Slightly Disagree

4 = Neutral

5 = Slightly Agree

6 = Agree

7 = Strongly Agree

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

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐ Strongly Agree

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

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐ Strongly Agree

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

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Strongly	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly Agree

11. 4. I am grateful to a wide variety of people. *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Strongly	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly Agree

12. 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. *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Strongly	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly Agree

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

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Strongly	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly Agree

Section C: Self-Compassion Scale - Short Form (SCS-SF, Raes et al., 2011)

The Self-Compassion Scale - Short Form (SCS-SF) is a psychological tool utilised to assess your ability to extend kindness to yourself during challenging situations, aiming to understand your unique perspectives on self-compassion.

Please read each statement carefully before answering. Indicate how often you behave in the stated manner.

1 = Almost Never

5 = Almost Always

14. 1. When I fail at something important to me I become consumed by feelings of inadequacy. *

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5

Alm ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Almost Always

15. 2. I try to be understanding and patient towards those aspects of my personality I don't like. *

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5

Alm ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Almost Always

16. 3. When something painful happens I try to take a balanced view of the situation. *

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5

Alm ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Almost Always

17. 4. When I'm feeling down, I tend to feel like most other people are probably happier than I am. *

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5

Alm ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Almost Always

18. 5. I try to see my failings as part of the human condition. *

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5

Alm ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Almost Always

19. 6. When I'm going through a very hard time, I give myself the caring and tenderness I need. *

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5

Alm ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Almost Always

20. 7. When something upsets me I try to keep my emotions in balance. *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Alm	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Almost Always

21. 8. When I fail at something that's important to me, I tend to feel alone in my failure. *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Alm	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Almost Always

22. 9. When I'm feeling down I tend to obsess and fixate on everything that's wrong. *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Alm	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Almost Always

23. 10. When I feel inadequate in some way, I try to remind myself that feelings of inadequacy are shared by most people. *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Alm	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Almost Always

24. 11. I'm disapproving and judgmental about my own flaws and inadequacies. *

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5

Alm ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Almost Always

25. 12. I'm intolerant and impatient towards those aspects of my personality I don't like. *

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5

Alm ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Almost Always

Section D: Ryff's Psychological Well-Being Scale, Short Form (PWBS-SF, Ryff & Keyes, 1995)

The Ryff's Psychological Well-Being Scale, Short Form (PWBS-SF) is employed to delve into different facets of your psychological well-being. Developed by Ryff & Keyes (1995), this scale investigates dimensions including autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, purpose in life, positive relations with others and self-acceptance.

Please read each statement carefully before answering. Indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree in each of the statement in the stated manner.

- 1 = Strongly Agree**
2 = Somewhat Agree
3 = A Little Agree
4 = Neither Agree or Disagree
5 = A Little Disagree
6 = Somewhat Disagree
7 = Strongly Disagree

26. 1. I like most parts of my personality. *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Strongly Agree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly Disagree

27. 2. When I look at the story of my life, I am pleased with how things have turned out so far. *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Strongly Agree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly Disagree

28. 3. Some people wander aimlessly through life, but I am not one of them. *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Strongly Agree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly Disagree

29. 4. The demands of everyday life often get me down. *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Strongly Agree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly Disagree

30. 5. In many ways I feel disappointed about my achievements in life. *

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Strongly Disagree

31. 6. Maintaining close relationships has been difficult and frustrating for me. *

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Strongly Disagree

32. 7. I live life one day at a time and don't really think about the future. *

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Strongly Disagree

33. 8. In general, I feel I am in charge of the situation in which I live. *

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Strongly Disagree

34. 9. I am good at managing the responsibilities of daily life. *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Strongly	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Disagree

35. 10. I sometimes feel as if I've done all there is to do in life. *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Strongly	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Disagree

36. 11. For me, life has been a continuous process of learning, changing, and growth. *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Strongly	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Disagree

37. 12. I think it is important to have new experiences that challenge how I think about myself and the world. *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Strongly	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Disagree

38. 13. People would describe me as a giving person, willing to share my time with others. *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Strongly Agree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly Disagree

39. 14. I gave up trying to make big improvements or changes in my life a long time ago. *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Strongly Agree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly Disagree

40. 15. I tend to be influenced by people with strong opinions. *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Strongly Agree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly Disagree

41. 16. I have not experienced many warm and trusting relationships with others. *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Strongly Agree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly Disagree

42. 17. I have confidence in my own opinions, even if they are different from the way most ^{*} other people think.

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Strongly	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Disagree

43. 18. I judge myself by what I think is important, not by the values of what others think is ^{*} important.

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Strongly	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Disagree

Thank you for your participation!