

## Gratitude as a Determinant of Psychological Well-Being in Adolescents: an Islamic Psychology Perspective

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### ABSTRACT

*The psychological well-being* of teenagers is still relatively low because teenagers are entering a period of searching for their identity, so teenagers are very vulnerable to their psychological well-being. This research aimed to find out the influence of gratitude on psychological well-being in adolescents. This research used a quantitative type of research with a survey approach. The total research respondents were 358 taken by using the Convenience Sampling Technique with the characteristics: 1) Adolescents aged 16-20 years; 2) Domicile in Palembang; 3) Willing to be a research respondent. The measuring instruments were Ryff's Psychological Well-Being Scale (RPWB) (1989), and The Gratitude Questionnaire Six Item Form (GQ-6) (2002). The research data collection method used an online survey with Google Form platform. The data analysis method used Pearson's Correlations Technique with JASP (Jeffrey's Amazing Statistics Program) version 0.18. The study concluded that there was a significant influence of gratitude on psychological well-being in adolescents ( $p = <0.001$ ). The higher the level of gratitude in teenagers, the higher the psychological well-being of teenagers. The contribution of gratitude to psychological well-being was 21.1%.

## INTRODUCTION

Adolescence is a developmental transition period between childhood and adulthood between 12-13 years and ends at 19-20 years (Amanah et al., 2023; Isra et al., 2021; Luthfiyyah et al., 2023). Jean Piaget said that psychologically, adolescence is a period when individuals integrate into adult society, a moment when children do not feel below the level of their elderly, but are on the same level, at least in terms of rights (Fadhullah et al., 2023; Firdaus & Marsudi, 2021; Hafid, 2022). Psychological well-being fosters positive emotions in teenagers so that they will feel satisfaction and happiness in their lives. Additionally, it can reduce depression and negative behavior in teenagers (Wulandari & Megawati, 2020).

However, some cases occur in teenagers in the city of Palembang: A group of teenagers brawled in Lorong Ramayana, Kalidoni Subdistrict, Palembang, in the morning at 00.30 WIB and the perpetrators were MB (17), Ra (18), RP (21) and MR (21) (Julheri, 2023); A teenage girl with the initials SM (20) was named by the South Sumatra Regional Police as a suspect in a suspected human trafficking crime, the victim trafficked by the suspect SM was still 16 years old, and each date was valued at IDR 1.8 million by the philanderer (Elko, 2023).

The explanation above shows that the psychological well-being of teenagers is still relatively low because teenagers are entering a period of searching for their identity, so teenagers are very vulnerable to their psychological well-being. This research was interesting to carry out because, in

the city of Palembang, it is still rare to research about this topic. It was the reason why this research was necessary. According to Ryff (1989), Psychological well-being is the achievement of full psychological potential and a state where individuals can accept themselves, have a purpose in life, develop positive social relationships, be independent, control the environment, continue to strive, and grow personally (Charry et al., 2020). Ryff (1989) conceptualizes psychological well-being through 6 dimensions, namely: 1) Self-acceptance, 2) Positive relations with others, 3) Autonomy, 4) Environmental mastery, 5) Purpose in life, and 6) Personal growth (Morales-Rodríguez et al., 2020).

The word of Allah SWT guides his servants. Therefore, if you obey all his commands, you will get happiness and psychological well-being. This word is stated in Surah Al-Baqarah verse 38 : *"We said, "Come down all of you from heaven! Then if My guidance truly comes to you, then whoever follows My guidance, there is no fear for them, and they will not grieve."* These words relate to one of the dimensions of *psychological well-being* as a life purpose. It proves that if a servant follows the instructions given by Allah SWT, then the purpose of life will be focused, and he will not feel afraid or sad.

According to Ryff (1989), factors that influence psychological well-being are demographic factors and social classification, social support, family life cycle, and personal adjustment (Hasanuddin & Khairuddin, 2021). Meanwhile, the results of research conducted by Nguyen and Le (2021) stated that increasing compassion and gratitude can help improve psychological well-being and reduce the influence of stress and fear of COVID-19 on individual mental health. Gratitude is a feeling that arises when someone receives something valuable from another person. From a positive psychology approach, gratitude is a positive emotion, which is very important in today's society (Arnout & Almoied, 2021). It is in line with the definition of psychological well-being itself, namely that positive emotions can foster psychological well-being in a person. According to Sarnoto (2021), gratitude is part of the values of Islamic teachings that are practiced in everyday life. Saying thank God is a symbol of gratitude. However, gratitude is much more than just saying thank you, it must be proven in the practice of life. The meaning of gratitude in Islam certainly comes from the Qur'an and Hadith.

Similarly, research conducted by Czyżowska and Gurba (2022) states that there is a positive relationship between expressing gratitude and the meaning of life and psychological well-being. The proposed gratitude intervention has the potential to improve psychological well-being among young adults, but may not be effective in increasing meaning in life. According to McCullough, et al (2002), gratitude is an emotion, moral value, attitude, personality trait, and coping style. Gratitude comes from Latin which means grace or generosity. The word *gratia* is associated with kindness, generosity, and the beauty of giving and receiving. The word of Allah SWT regarding gratitude in Surah Az-Zumar verse 66: *"Therefore, you should worship Allah alone and you should be among those who are grateful."*

This research aimed to find out whether there is an influence of gratitude on the psychological well-being of teenagers in Palembang. Even though the gratitude variable has been widely studied in several studies, research on the gratitude variable and psychological well-being still needs to be carried out on teenagers in Palembang. Theoretically, the results of this research were expected to be useful as material to enrich the literature regarding the influence of gratitude on psychological well-being in adolescents. Meanwhile, it was hoped that the practical benefits could become information for the community and became the basis for planning to improve psychological well-being towards gratitude.

## RESEARCH METHODS

This research used a quantitative type of research with a survey approach. According to Creswell (2015), Survey research is a procedure in quantitative research in which the researcher provides a survey to a sample or entire population of people to describe attitudes, opinions, behavior, or special characteristics of the population. It is used in research regarding a decider *psychological*

*well-being* in adolescents: Islamic psychology perspective. Respondents in this study were determined using *a convenience sampling technique*. According to Kerlinger and Lee (2000), *convenience sampling* is a sampling technique in which respondents or research subjects are selected based on their convenience or accessibility to the researcher. Respondents have characteristics: 1) Teenagers aged 16-20 years; 2) Domicile in Palembang; 3) Willing to be a research respondent.

The measuring tool used in this research was *Ryff's Psychological Well-Being Scale (1989)* to measure *psychological well-being*. There were 42 valid items, and the alpha coefficient was 0.854. The measuring instrument used for *gratitude is the Gratitude Questionnaire Six Item Form (GQ-6)* developed by McCullough et al (2002). There were six valid items, and the alpha coefficient was 0.879. The research data collection method used an online survey with Google Form platform. The data analysis method used Pearson's Correlations Technique with the help of the JASP (Jeffrey's Amazing Statistics Program) version 0.18. *Pearson's Correlations Technique* is a statistical method for measuring the linear relationship between two continuous variables (usually interval or ratio data) (Kerlinger & Lee, 2000).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The total respondents collected in this study were  $N = 358$  with male respondents  $N = 84$  and female respondents  $N = 274$ . Based on the Pearson's Correlations test using the JASP (Jeffrey's Amazing Statistics Program) version 0.18, the results obtained were  $p \text{ value} = <0.001$ , which indicated a relationship between the gratitude variable and psychological well-being as explained in the statistical test results in Table 1.

Table 1. **Pearson's Correlations**

	n	Pearson's r	p
Gratitude-Psychological Well Being	358	0.462	< .001

The results of the scatter plot analysis also showed a positive relationship between gratitude and psychological well-being. The results of the statistical test are in figure 1.

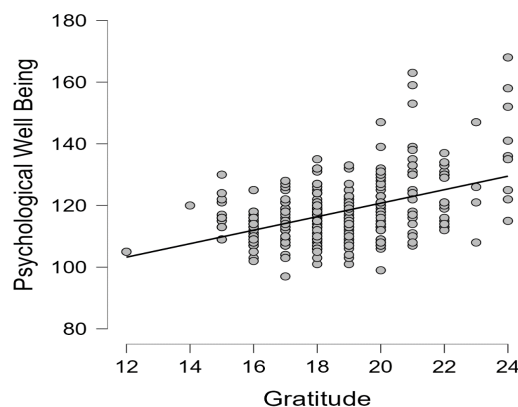


Figure 1. Gratitude vs. Gratitude Psychological Well-Being

The diagram above showed that the direction of the line had increased. So, the higher the level of gratitude of respondents in this study, the more it will follow *the psychological wellbeing* of research respondents. In the next analysis, the researcher carried out an analysis to find out how much contribution *gratitude* had in influencing the *psychological well-being* of the respondents of this study, teenagers. From the analysis results, the value of R Square Change  $R^2 = 0.211$  (21.1%). So, gratitude influenced the increasing psychological well-being in teenagers by 21.1% as shown in Table 2.

**Table 2.** Model Summary - Psychological Well Being

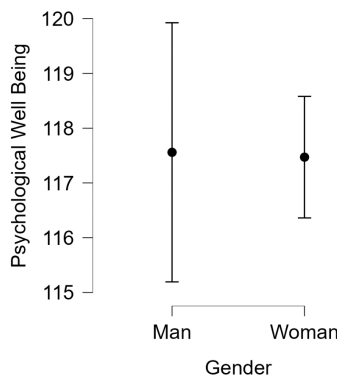
Model	R	R <sup>2</sup>	Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	RMSE	R <sup>2</sup> Change
H <sub>0</sub>	0,000	0,000	0,000	9,778	0,000
H <sub>1</sub>	0.462	0.214	0.211	8,683	0.214

Apart from that, the researcher carried out a gender comparison test analysis (men and women) on the two variables in this study as presented in table 3.

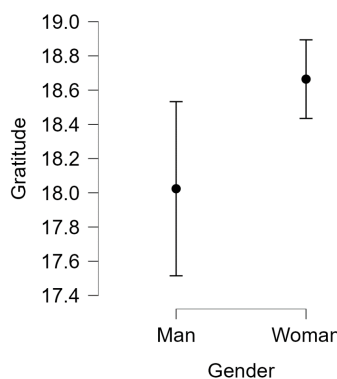
**Table 3.** Descriptive Statistics

	Psychological Well Being		Gratitude	
	Man	Woman	Man	Woman
Valid	84	274	84	274
Missing	0	0	0	0
Mean	117,560	117,471	18,024	18,664

From the results of Table 3 on the Psychological Well-Being variable, it could be seen that male teenage respondents tend to have a higher level of Psychological Well-Being than female teenage respondents seen from the comparison of mean values (Male = 117,560, Female = 117,471). Meanwhile, the gratitude variable showed that female adolescent respondents tend to have a higher level of gratitude than male adolescent respondents, as seen from the comparison of mean values (Male = 18,024, Female = 18,664) as shown in figure 2 and figure 3.



**Figure 2.** Gender vs. Gender Psychological Well-Being



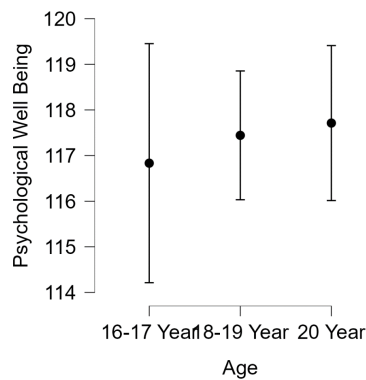
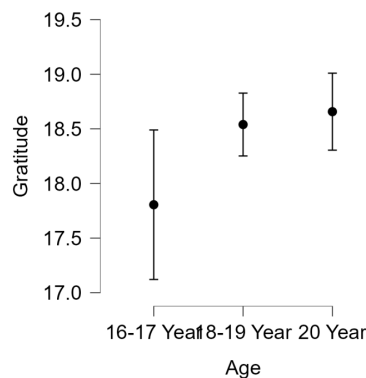
**Figure 3.** Gender vs. Gender Gratitude

Next, the researchers conducted a comparative test analysis of the age levels of teenage respondents which were divided into three categories: 16-17 years, 18-19 years, and 20 years old of the two variables in this study which can be seen in Table 4.

**Table 4.** Descriptive Statistics

	Psychological Well Being			Gratitude		
	16-17 Years	18-19 Years	20 Years	16-17 Years	18-19 Years	20 Years
Valid	36	176	146	36	176	146
Missing	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mean	116,833	117,443	117,712	17,806	18,540	18,658

From the results of Table 4 on the Psychological Well Being variable, it can be seen that adolescent respondents aged 20 years (Mean = 117.71) have the highest level of Psychological Well Being, followed by those aged 18-19 years (Mean = 117.44) and those aged 16-17 years who have the lowest level of Psychological Well Being (Mean = 116.83). Meanwhile, in the gratitude variable, it can be seen that teenage respondents aged 20 years (Mean = 18,658) have the highest level of gratitude, followed by those aged 18-19 years (Mean = 18,540) and those aged 16-17 years who have the lowest level of gratitude (Mean = 17,806) as shown in figure 2 and figure 4 and 5.

**Figure 4.** Age vs. Age Psychological Well Being**Figure 5.** Age vs. Age Gratitude

## DISCUSSION

The results of this research showed that the higher the level of gratitude for the respondents in this study, the greater the increase in the *psychological well-being* of research respondents. These results were not much different from the results of research conducted by [Geier and Morris \(2022\)](#), which suggested that gratitude interventions may effectively improve college students' mental well-being even during crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic. Gratitude interventions appeared suitable for improving mental well-being for the temporary mental challenges of college students facing a pandemic or other form of crisis.

The results of research from [Bali et al \(2022\)](#) were in line with the results of this research but they had different research subjects, namely the research findings illustrate that gratitude and the

dimensions of spirituality had a positive and significant relationship with psychological well-being. Dimensions of spirituality emerge as possible mediators in the relationship between gratitude and psychological well-being. These results led to a deeper understanding of the relationship between gratitude and the psychological well-being of emerging adults, concluding that gratitude influenced psychological well-being both directly ( $b = 0.34, p < .001$ ) and indirectly ( $b = 0.20, p < .001$ ) through spirituality.

Another study conducted by [Deichert et al \(2021\)](#) also showed that there was a significant interaction between gratitude and receiving social support during the speech, so individuals in the gratitude for writing condition who received support felt less stressed than individuals who did not receive support. These results provided more support for the growing literature showing that gratitude enhances the beneficial effects of support on psychological well-being. [Hemarajarajeswari and Guptas research \(2021\)](#) also showed that there was a positive relationship between gratitude, psychological well-being, its dimensions, and happiness. The findings from this research could serve as a basis for conceptualizing a theoretical model of gratitude and its determining variables. Further research could focus on intervention studies to increase gratitude among adolescents by implementing gratitude-based therapy, and thereby improved their Psychological Well-Being.

According to [Harlianty et al \(2022\)](#), The results of the analysis showed that sincerity (narimo ing pandum) had a significant role in predicting psychological well-being ( $r = 0.604; p < 0.01$ ) with a predictor contribution of 36.5%. Gratitude could moderate the relationship between gratitude and psychological well-being ( $p < 0.01$ ). It can be concluded that sincerity can influence students' psychological well-being. Gratitude can act as a moderator in the relationship between gratitude and the psychological well-being of students.

Internal situations such as gratitude and external support from the family could be factors that can encourage increased psychological well-being ([Hezbollah & Mulyati, 2022](#)). This was reinforced by the results in the field that the research results showed a significance value of  $p < 0.05$  so gratitude and family support had a role or influence on the psychological well-being of mothers having children with autism spectrum disorders. Meanwhile, the effective contribution for gratitude was 17.39%, and family support was 21.53%. Grateful people had been reported to have better psychological, social, and physical well-being, and experimental evidence showed that encouraging people to express gratitude consistently improved psychological and social well-being ([Layous, 2020](#)). So, this research could then be used as a reference for developing psychological well-being strategies through a sense of gratitude.

## CONCLUSION

This research concluded that there was a significant influence ( $p = <0.001$ ) of gratitude on psychological well-being in adolescents. The higher the level of gratitude in teenagers, the higher the psychological well-being of teenagers will also be. Furthermore, other findings also stated that male teenagers were more likely to have a higher level of psychological well-being than female teenagers (Male = 117,560, Female = 117,471). However, on the contrary, female teenagers were more likely to have a high level of gratitude than male teenagers (Male = 18,024, Female = 18,664). Hopefully, the results of this research will be beneficial as material to enrich the literature on the influence of gratitude on psychological well-being in adolescents. Hopefully, it can become information material for the Youth and Sports Department, Middle Schools, and High Schools, to increase the gratitude of teenage students through training, seminars, and other relevant programs.

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