
Gratitude Interventions: Can They Improve Job Satisfaction

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KEYWORDS

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ABSTRACT

Job satisfaction tends to be low among civil servants at the Sanggau Regency Personnel and Human Resources Development Agency, indicating the need for effective psychological intervention. One form of intervention carried out is gratitude training. This research aims to determine the effectiveness of gratitude training in increasing job satisfaction for civil servants in the BKPSDM Sanggau Regency. The type of research is experimental with the design used is pretest and posttest control group design. The research was conducted on civil servants at the Sanggau Regency Personnel and Human Resources Development Agency with 35 subjects. Data was obtained by filling in the job satisfaction scale before and after gratitude training. The data analysis technique uses the N-Gain Score. The results of the hypothesis test show that there is a significant difference in the level of job satisfaction before and after gratitude training. The average job satisfaction score before training is 119.3, while after training, it increased to 162.5. By using the difference index (N Gain Score), an increase of 70.5064% is recorded. These findings indicate that gratitude training is effective in increasing civil servant job satisfaction in BKPSDM Sanggau Regency.

INTRODUCTION

Gratitude has been associated with a variety of positive socio-psychological adaptations in recent years, including a sense of belonging, quality of life, and life satisfaction (S.-C. Chen & Lin, 2019; Valikhani et al., 2019; Zhang et al., 2020). Some other researchers have also stated that a higher level of gratitude can encourage a tendency to use a positive perspective, which ultimately has a positive impact on the way a person interprets events in his life, as well as involving emotional and thought elements (H. Chen et al., 2023; Lambert et al., 2010; Wood et al., 2010).

The role of gratitude in influencing various aspects of life, including the work environment, cannot be ignored. This in particular increases feelings of happiness and satisfaction in the context of work. As one of the significant indicators in measuring the well-being of individuals, gratitude has an undeniable role (Di Fabio, 2017). According to (Kardas et al., 2019) a person who has gratitude tends to have a stronger sense of ownership of his or her life, experience a better quality of life, as well as feel a higher level of life satisfaction.

Recent research on gratitude in the workplace and its effects on work life identifies three types of gratitude. First is episodic gratitude at the event level, where gratitude is classified as a positive emotion, distinguishing it from other types of positive emotions based on the triggering event, the impact of the trigger on the self, and the propensity for prosocial actions. Persistent gratitude is the second type of gratitude intended to be shown as a consistent attitude

in a variety of situations. Collective gratitude is the third type, which is at the organizational level. It is characterized by the constant gratitude shown by the members of the organization. The researchers state that organizational gratitude can be fostered with focused interventions conducted by the Human Resources Division (Fehr et al., 2017).

Interventions in the field of positive psychology have been connected to a number of favorable outcomes from a psychological point of view, ranging from an improvement in the level of well-being to a reduction in depressive symptoms (Celano et al., 2017; Gander et al., 2016). (Killen & Macaskill, 2015), revealed that interventions focused on increasing gratitude have the potential to improve individual well-being. According to (Algoe & Zhaoyang, 2016), gratitude also has a beneficial effect on an individual's interpersonal interactions with their environment. Planning and implementing gratitude training can increase workplace happiness for employees (Laba & Kusumaputri, 2020). Previous studies by (Cortini et al., 2019) also identified a positive relationship between learning climate and job performance in the context of Public Administration. A good climate of gratitude can foster this kind of relationship. Gratitude, in this context, promotes a process of harmonization in work, spurring the construction of positive relationships with a part of oneself and others, both at the group level and at the community level.

Scientific evidence shows a positive correlation between gratitude and job satisfaction. Research by (Heintz & Ruch, 2020) explains gratitude is related to overall job satisfaction. Gratitude in the workplace has been shown to reduce fatigue and increase job satisfaction, fostering a culture of appreciation or gratitude lets employees know that they are being cared for and that their contributions and achievements are noted and supported (Stegen & Wankier, 2018). (Anggono & Silain, 2023) revealed that gratitude greatly affects civil servants at work and affects the level of job satisfaction. Gratitude can affect how a person reacts to a situation because gratitude is not just a feeling but also an attitude, moral quality, habit, trait, and personality. In addition, the results also show that the meanings of gratitude can help civil servants cope with stress and dissatisfaction at work, as well as strengthen social relationships in the work environment. Based on studies that have been done before to determine whether there is a relationship of work with poverty, this study aims to examine the extent to which the effectiveness of Gratitude Training in improving job satisfaction in civil servants.

Literature Review

Meaning of Gratitude

The English word gratitude denotes gratitude, and the Latin word for gratitude is gratia, which means Mercy, tenderness, and gratitude. The Latin term "gratia" meaning "Thank you" is associated with giving and charity. Although this word can also indicate receiving something without justification, it also alludes to the beauty of giving (Emmons & Stern, 2013). (McCullough et al., 2002) in his research states that there are four aspects of gratitude, namely:

- 1) Intensity, the sensation of gratitude gives rise to intense feelings. The level of appreciation can be increased by feeling the benefits gained and appreciating the compassion of others.
- 2) Frequency, A person who expresses gratitude every day has more pleasant emotions than negative ones (Bono et al., 2019; Wood et al., 2010)
- 3) Span, the more often a person expresses gratitude in the face of various events in their life, the more feelings of gratitude they have.
- 4) Density, the number of people who are given gratitude and the various things expressed as a form of gratitude by a person reflect the level of gratitude they have. Grateful people are expected to have a large number of people who are considered to be contributing to their feelings of gratitude, and the more things they are grateful for and share with others, the more their gratitude increases.

Understanding Gratitude Training & Benefits of Gratitude Training To Increase Job Satisfaction

The goal of Gratitude Training is to improve a person's ability to show verbal and nonverbal gratitude for everything that happens in life (Emmons & Stern, 2013). According to Emmons and Stern (2013), Gratitude Training is a procedure used to provide people with knowledge and skills so that they can remember the good they have received and know that the origin of the good often comes from outside of themselves. It is intended that participants can apply this knowledge to improve their ability to be grateful. Through the practice of gratitude, people are taught how to transform their negative emotions into more optimistic ones. Gratitude is a state of mind and a way of life that comes from one's own self. This personal ability to express gratitude can provide a greater experience of happiness and satisfaction in living life (Geraghty et al., 2010).

Gratitude Training has strong positive implications for increasing job satisfaction. Results of a study by (McCullough et al., 2002) showed that individuals who routinely count things to be grateful for in everyday life tend to have higher positive emotions and better levels of subjective well-being compared to those who focus on negative or neutral events. When positive emotions increase, this can directly contribute to increased job satisfaction. Happier and positive employees tend to be more satisfied with their work, which in turn creates a more productive and positive work environment.

RESEARCH METHOD

Research Design

This study uses experimental research methods with the design used is True experiment pretest posttest control group design, with three stages, namely measuring the outline of behavior (pre-test), providing treatment of independent variables, and measuring dependent variables that appear (post-test) and do not provide treatment again but continue to measure the dependent variable for a certain time (Seniati et al., 2015).

The experimental and control groups were selected based on the screening results and then both given a pretest. The goal is to know the initial state of the subject before being given the treatment. Next, the subjects were randomized to divide the experimental and control groups. Experimental group is a group that was given treatment in the form of gratitude training after pretest.

Table 1. Desain experiment pretest dan posttest control grup design

	Group	Pretest	Treatment	Posttest
R	Experiments	O ¹	X	O ²
	Control	O ³	-	O ⁴

Description:

- R : Randomization
- O1 : Job satisfaction scale score at the time of pre-test experimental group
- O2 : Job satisfaction scale score at the time of posttest experimental group
- O3 : Job satisfaction scale score at the time of pre-test control group
- O4 : Job satisfaction scale score at the time of posttest control group
- X : Treatment in the form of Gratitude Training in the experimental group

Stages of Gratitude Training

Gratitude training used modify from gratitude training module Mukhlis and Koentjoro (2015), which consists of several stages, namely:

- a. First meeting:
 1. Session I. Opening
 - Facilitator introduction

- Participant introduction
- 2. Session II. Gratitude and the meaning of work
 - a. Grateful
 - Understanding grateful
 - Factors affecting gratitude.
 - Grateful function
 - Training the ability to be grateful
 - b. Meaning of work
 - Understanding the meaning and job satisfaction
 - Aspects of meaning and job satisfaction
 - Factors affecting the sense of job satisfaction.
- 3. Session III. Counting gratitude
 - Recording happy and less happy experiences on a life chart sheet
 - Write down one favor that you feel is most important to the group.
 - Write down the favors felt during the last two days, the last week, and the previous month.
 - Quiz.
- 4. Session IV. Reflecting Gratitude
 - Watch gratitude videos.
 - Discuss the opinions of participants about the situation, the problems that exist in the gratitude video.
 - Reflect on the wisdom that can be taken from the gratitude video show by jointly evaluating yourself related to the pleasures of life that have been obtained and associated with the video show.
 - Ensuring that gratitude is not only remembering the favors that have been received but also by reflecting on the favors that have been received by involving the feelings of the participants.
 - Fill out a discussion sheet of gratitude video shows.
 - Create a gratitude task by writing a specific thank you letter to God or an individual who has done a very meaningful good and describes the positive impact of that good on the lives of participants to date.
- b. Second meeting:
 - 5. Session V. Expressing Gratitude
 - Review previous meeting materials.
 - Ask the task of gratitude that has been given at the first meeting.
 - Read aloud Thanksgiving tasks thank you letters in turns.
 - Ask other participants to provide feedback.
 - Express what you have felt after reading the gratitude task and get responses from other participants.
 - Compare how they feel when they don't express appreciation and when they manage to express gratitude.
 - Together conclude the lessons learned after successfully expressing gratitude.
 - Optimistic game
 - 6. Session VI. Reassess
 - Telling the happy and unhappy experiences that have been written on the worksheet graph of life.
 - Revisit less pleasant experiences and identify lessons to be learned from them.
 - Together conclude that although unpleasant experiences are an inevitable part of life, there are always valuable lessons to be learned from each of them and worthy of gratitude.

7. Session VII. Closure and evaluation

- Motivational video playback for the creation of gratitude, relaxation and mindfulness exercises

Sample and Data Collection

This research was conducted at Bkpsdm Sanggau Regency, which is located on Jalan Ki Hajar Dewantara Ilir Village, Kapuas City, Sanggau Regency, West Kalimantan. The study took place from September 2023 to February 2024. In this study, subjects were selected using purposive sampling method, the subjects were civil servants in BKPSDM Sanggau Regency, amounting to 35 people.

The following stages will be carried out researchers in data collection:

- a. Preparation of training module gratitude and job satisfaction scale;
- b. Perform validation to validation experts;
- c. Spreading about pretest in the form of job satisfaction scale to measure job satisfaction of civil servants. Distributed to experimental class and control class;
- d. Conducting Gratitude Training in the experimental class, while the control class was not given treatment; and
- e. Conducting posttest in experimental class and control class.

The data collection instrument used in this study is the Likert scale, especially the job Satisfaction Scale (Job Satisfaction Scale) which uses the job satisfaction scale from Syani et al. (2021). This scale is used to measure the level of job satisfaction in various aspects. The complete job satisfaction scale consists of 36 questions that are divided into nine aspects of job satisfaction, including salary, promotion, supervision, additional benefits, rewards, work rules and procedures, relationships with colleagues, the nature of the work itself, and communication. The assessment uses a Likert scale, which allows respondents to express their attitudes, mentalities, assumptions and views with statements that range from strongly agree to strongly disagree, in accordance with the research methodology (Sugiyono, 2019).

Table 2. Grain Distribution Of Job Satisfaction Scale (JSS)

Aspect	Indicator	Favorable	Unfavorable	Total
Salary	Satisfied with current compensation, satisfied with salary increase	1, 2	10, 19	4
Promotion	Satisfied with promotional opportunities, are satisfied with the promotion system in the company	11, 20, 33	2	4
Supervision	Satisfied with the relationship between superiors, feel satisfied with the attitude of superiors.	3, 30	12, 21	4
Additional benefits	Satisfied with the benefits provided	13, 22	4, 29	4
Awards	Satisfied with the recognition of outstanding work	5, 23, 32	14	4
Work rules and procedures	Satisfaction with the procedures and regulations in force in the company	15	6, 24, 31	4
Relationship with colleagues	Satisfied with the way colleagues work together and the quality of colleagues	7, 25	16, 34	4
The nature of the work itself	Satisfied with the quality of the work done	17, 27, 35	8	4

Communication	Satisfied for communication with superiors and colleagues is well received.	9	18, 26, 36	4
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Analyzing of Data

Descriptive statistical analysis, Pretest and Posttest Data on job satisfaction among civil servants. Standard deviation, variance, and mean are the statistical methods used. The purpose of descriptive analysis is to provide information to be studied by describing the data that has been obtained.

Hypothesis testing, data analysis techniques used to assess and determine the increase in job satisfaction is done through gain-normalized analysis <g>. Normalized gain or N-Gain score aims to evaluate how effective the use of a particular method or treatment in a study. The N gain score test is carried out by calculating the difference between the pretest value and the posttest value. By calculating the difference between the value of the pretest and posttest or gain score, it can be seen whether the use or application of a particular method can be said to be effective or not. The steps taken to analyze the normalized gain are:

- a. Calculating normalized score gain by Formula:

$$N\text{ Gain} = \frac{\text{Skor Posttest} - \text{Skor Pretest}}{\text{Skor Ideal} - \text{Skor Pretest}}$$

- b. Determining the average value of the normalized gain score
- c. Determining the criteria for increasing the gain in the following table:

Tabel 3. Interpretation of normalized score Gain

N-Gain Value	Categories
$g > 0.7$	Height
$0.3 \leq g \leq 0.7$	Medium
$g < 0.3$	Low

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Pretest data collection

Pretest data collection used in this study using google form, data collection was carried out on February 6, 2024. Pretest and posttest score Data from the experimental group and the control group need to be categorized to get an idea of the level of job satisfaction of research subjects

Tabel 4. Normalizing formulas for categorization

Category	formulas	Value
Low	$X < 108 - 24$	$X < 84$
Medium	$108 - 24 < X < 108 + 24$	$X < 132$
Height	$108 + 24 < X$	> 132

Referring to the normalization of the categorization, a category can be made of the level of job satisfaction of the subjects of each group. The description of the pretest score data on job satisfaction and categorization of subjects in the experimental and control groups is shown in the following table.

Tabel 5. The formula for categorization

No	Subject	Experimental Group		Subject	Control Group	
		Pretest	Category		Pretest	Category
1	TO	122	Medium	PA	116	Medium
2	HR	127	Medium	HP	131	Medium
3	MED	114	Medium	PS	121	Medium
4	RH	79	Low	AY	125	Medium

5	Y	123	Medium	RW	131	Medium
6	M	131	Medium	S	126	Medium
7	R	130	Medium	W	112	Medium
8	JWB	122	Medium	YDD	130	Medium
9	YL	114	Medium	AJR	114	Medium
10	SO	131	Medium	DMK	129	Medium

Based on Table 5, it can be explained that in the experimental group there was 1 person who had low job satisfaction and 9 others had moderate job satisfaction. While the entire control group has a job satisfaction score is.

Implementation of The Experiment

Implementation of the experiment in this study involves the implementation of training on gratitude. The training consisted of two sessions held on February 21 and 22, 2024, each lasting approximately 180 minutes. The methods used in the training include the delivery of materials, games, assignments, discussions, video screenings, sharing experiences, exercises, as well as respiratory relaxation techniques.

1. Session 1 (Introduction to gratitude and the meaning of work)
The introductory session on gratitude and the meaning of work aims to educate participants about the importance of gratitude, motivate them to be grateful, and make them aware of the meaning of work in the context of training.
2. Session 2 (Counting Gratitude)
The second session, "counting gratitude", has several main goals. First, the goal is to help participants identify the good and bad experiences in their lives. Second, this session aims to increase participants' awareness of the favors they have received in life. And finally, the goal is to make participants understand that every favor, whether big or small, has a meaningful value.
3. Session 3 (Reflecting on Gratitude)
The third session, "reflecting on gratitude", has two main objectives. First, participants are meant to understand the benefits of the favors they have received in life and be able to transform them into feelings of gratitude. Second, participants were directed to be able to express their gratitude in the form of a letter of thanks.
4. Session 4 (Expressing Gratitude)
The fourth session aims to help participants turn feelings of gratitude into concrete actions, improve mental and emotional well-being, and develop an optimistic attitude. The activity begins by reviewing previous material to ensure consistent understanding before moving on to new material, including reminding participants of the gratitude task given at the first meeting.
5. Session 5 (Reassess)
The purpose of this session is to help participants understand that in life there are always pleasant and unpleasant experiences and invite them to learn from unpleasant experiences by turning them into valuable and grateful experiences.
6. Session 6 (evaluation and relaxation)
In this last session, participants are invited to achieve peace of mind and feelings while reinforcing previous learning. The session begins with a screening of motivational videos specially selected to inspire and foster gratitude among participants. The goal is to create a positive and uplifting atmosphere to reflect on the precious things in life.

Posttest Data Collection

Posttest data collection was carried out after the 6th training session was carried out. Participants in both the experimental and control groups were given a job satisfaction scale using google form. Posttest results can be seen in the following table:

Tabel 5. Experimental and control group posttest score Data

No	Subject	Experimental Group		Subject	Control Group	
		Posttest	Categories		Posttest	Categories
1	TO	161	High	PA	117	Medium
2	HR	163	High	HP	131	Medium
3	MED	164	High	PS	122	Medium
4	RH	156	High	AY	125	Medium
5	Y	163	High	RW	130	Medium
6	M	164	High	S	127	Medium
7	R	164	High	W	114	Medium
8	JWB	166	High	YDD	131	Medium
9	YL	161	High	AJR	114	Medium
10	SO	163	High	DMK	130	Medium

Based on the data in the table above, it is known that the level of job satisfaction of participants in the experimental group almost entirely increased, on the results of posttest, or measurements made after the intervention in the form of gratitude training, it is known that 10 subjects were in the high category. While the entire control group has a job satisfaction score is.

Hypothesis Test

A description of the job satisfaction score data and the categorization of subjects in the experimental group is shown in Figure 1. Categorization comparison of job satisfaction levels of subjects before treatment (pretest) and after treatment (posttest) of each group.

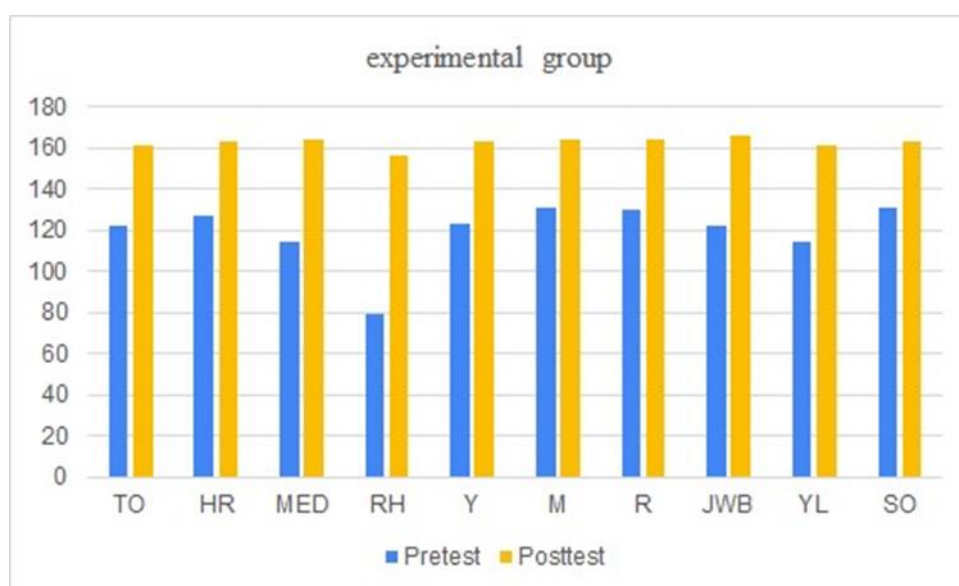


Figure 1. Comparison of Pretest and Post-test data of experimental groups

Based on the graphic image above, it can be seen that in the experimental group there is a fairly clear change from the pretest data to the posttest data of the subjects. Pretest and posttest measurements were not only carried out in the experimental group but also carried out to the control group using the same job satisfaction scale as used in the experimental group. The difference between these two groups only lies in the treatment given in the form of gratitude training, while the control group did not get treatment at the time of the study.

The description of job satisfaction and categorization of subjects in the control group is shown in Figure 2 below:

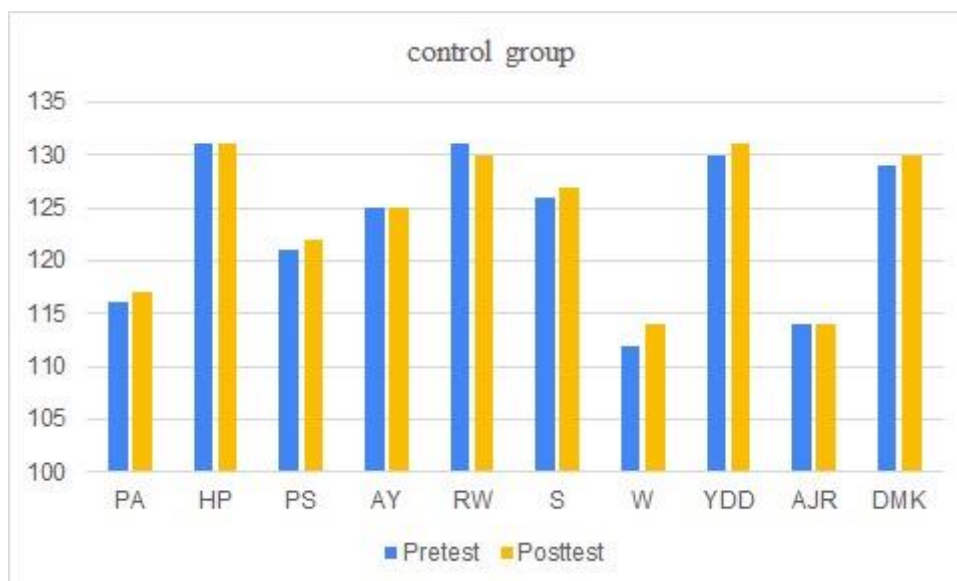


Figure 2. Comparison of Pretest and Posttest control groups

Based on the graph above, it can be seen that in the control group there is no clear change from the pretest data to the posttest data of the subjects. Description of job satisfaction scores and categorization of subjects in the control group showed that at the initial measurement (pretest) is known that there are 10 subjects in the medium category. While in the posttest measurement is known that there is little change compared to the initial measurement where there are six subjects who increased but remained in the medium category, three subjects with a fixed value, and 1 subject with a decrease in value.

Discussion

The results of the hypothesis test explain that there is a difference in the level of job satisfaction before and after undergoing Gratitude Training where the average score before and after training is 119.3 while after Gratitude Training increased to 162.5. By using N Score Gain is 70.5064%. This means that there is a significant difference in the level of job satisfaction between before and after the Gratitude Training. The results of statistical tests showed that there was an increase in job satisfaction scores before and after treatment in the experimental group, so the hypothesis can be accepted. Thus, it can be concluded that Gratitude Training is effective in increasing job satisfaction of civil servants. Gratitude training can increase job satisfaction through deepening the understanding of the concept of gratitude and the meaning of work, the introduction of positive and negative experiences in life, as well as the practice of gratitude reflection and expression of appreciation to others in the work environment.

This helps individuals experience changes in attitudes and perceptions towards their work, improve interpersonal relationships, create a more harmonious work atmosphere, and develop an optimistic attitude, which overall contributes to increased job satisfaction. The results of this study also confirm the relationship between gratitude and job satisfaction, where in several previous studies it was stated that gratitude has a positive effect on job satisfaction (Anggono & Silain, 2023; Buote, 2014; Cortini et al., 2019; Di Fabio, 2017; Forster et al., 2017; Nawa & Yamagishi, 2021).

The approach used in this study aims to focus attention on the positive aspects in life by identifying and exploring positive emotions through recognition of life's blessings, such as favors or kindness received from others. This is done by reflecting on the benefits of such favors and considering how life would have turned out without them. Furthermore, the appreciation of the favor is realized through concrete actions, for example, by creating and

sending a letter of thanks to someone who has an important role in life, with the aim of reducing negative emotions and strengthening positive ones.

This study refers to the theory of job satisfaction proposed by (Spector, 2022), which emphasizes the importance of an individual's subjective evaluation of his work as a whole. The concept of job satisfaction not only considers specific aspects of the job, but also includes a holistic view of the individual towards his role in the work environment. Thus, a positive assessment of employment reflects the level of job satisfaction, while a negative assessment reflects dissatisfaction. Gratitude has a significant role in predicting the level of job satisfaction. Job satisfaction has a strong correlation with individual performance in the work environment and can affect the turnover rate in the organization. Research by (Buote, 2014) shows that with increasing levels of gratitude, managers of organizations can improve employee performance and reduce the tendency of employees to seek new jobs.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of research conducted at Bkpsdm Sanggau Regency, it was found that Gratitude Training has a significant positive impact on increasing job satisfaction of civil servants. Analysis of the data showed a significant difference between the level of job satisfaction before and after training. The average job satisfaction score of civil servants before the training was 119.3, which increased significantly to 162.5 after the Gratitude Training. This result illustrates a substantial increase in job satisfaction of civil servants after attending the training, with a percentage increase of 70.5064% according to N Score Gain.

These findings suggest that gratitude training not only serves as an activity that introduces the concepts of gratitude, but is also effective as a strategy in improving the psychological well-being and job satisfaction of civil servants. Participants were given the opportunity to deepen an understanding of the importance of gratitude in the subject's personal and work life, as well as to recognize its positive impact in the work environment.

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