

## Forgiveness And Happiness Among Young Adults

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### **ABSTRACT**

Forgiveness is a conscious decision and it helps us to release the feeling of anger and resentment toward a person or a group who has ever hurt or harmed you. Forgiveness is a mixture of behaviour, cognition and affect. By holding grudges against the offender, you are the one who is poisoning your mind and soul. Forgiving is a good habit and it will help you to become happier, healthier and more empathetic towards others. The purpose of this research is to find out the level of forgiveness and the level of happiness and the research is also being done to find out the impact of forgiveness on happiness among young adults. The sample consisted of 120 participants the participants are divided into two groups: male and female and their age ranges from 18 to 25 years and all must be educated and resides only in Delhi NCR. There are two variables in this research first one is an independent variable which is forgiveness and the second one is dependent variable which is happiness. After calculating the results, it was found that most of the males scored average scores in Heartland Forgiveness Scale which means that they are likely to forgive and most of them were feeling happy according to Subjective Happiness Scale on the other hand female participants also scored average scores in terms of forgiveness which means that they are also likely to forgive and half of them were feeling happy but half of them were unhappy also. In second table t-test results were indicated that there is no significant difference of forgiveness on happiness among male and female as the final result is non-significant. In third table regression results were indicated that there is a significant relationship between forgiveness and happiness among male and female participants. In fourth table results indicated the relationship between the two variables is non-significant among male participants and on the other hand the relationship between the two variables is significant among female participants.

**Keywords:** Forgiveness, Happiness, Young Adults, Gender Differences, Relationship

## CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

### **1.1 Defining Forgiveness**

We always heard that forgiveness is a conscious decision and it helps us to release the feeling of anger and resentment toward a person or a group who has ever hurt or harmed you, but would you ever think that whether these people deserve your forgiveness or not.

Some researchers told that when you forgive someone you do not deny the gravity of an offense which has been done against you. In so many quotes you have read that “forgiving does not mean forgetting”, but it definitely helps you to repair your broken or damaged relationships. Forgiveness gives a peace of mind to the forgiver and made him or her free from unwanted anger. There is always a debate on whether true forgiveness requires positive feelings or deeply held unseen negative feelings. True forgiveness helps you to heal your negative feelings and help you to move on in your life.

Forgiveness is a mixture of behaviour, cognition and affect. However, the combination of anger, resentment, bitterness, rage, fear etc. is opposite of forgiveness. Sometimes the things might be real or imagined but people may perceive them in a wrong way. For example, you can be unhappy at someone you love because you think that they ignore you but in real they might be completely unaware about your presence. Forgiveness involves much more than just reducing negative feelings, it involves acceptance towards a person who hurt you despite his or her faults or mistakes.

### **1.2 Forgiveness of Self**

Forgiveness of others and forgiveness of self are two different things. We can forgive others for their mistakes, but what if we commit any kind of offense ourselves. It's good for a person to take responsibilities for your own mistakes as a responsible human being, but unwanted guilt, shame, regret etc. is not good in the long run. Forgiving to self is not an easy task for one, but few easy steps can help. First and foremost, try to acknowledge your mistakes and secondly take the responsibility for the damage you done. Try to figure out that why that event occurred: what are the things that were in your control and were outside your control at the time. Make sure that you learned a lesson from this so that you avoid committing the same mistake in the future.

After acknowledging, realising, focusing and analysing your mistake make sure that you apologize to the person you hurt and take action to improve their lives by fixing your mistake.

### **1.3 Forgiveness of Others**

Do we ever think that why forgiveness is so hard. We often do not want to let go of our anger and continue to feel angry if we feel harmed. This negative feeling is not only because of frustration but because of the injustice committed against us. If we unintentionally forgive our offender then it feels like letting them get away without punishing them and at the end, we started planning to harm them in the same way as we have been harmed. Apology opens the path of forgiveness. When someone harmed you and immediately apologized then try to find some good in them instead of getting angry or keeping any grudges against that person. Of course it is harder to forgive someone who harmed you, but if you realize that there are so many health benefits of forgiveness then it will become easy for you to forgive others. After forgiving, you will experience less anger, rage, depression it improves your sleep and increase your life satisfaction. According to God forgiveness is a matter of choice, before going for a prayer try to forgive others for their offences, so that your God in Heaven can able to forgive you for your sins. Truly said by someone “forgive, and you will be forgiven”.

## 1.4 Process of Forgiveness

- a) Empathy - Try to understand others perspective also. With the help of this one can able to forgive easily. Without seeing things from others perspective, forgiveness may become more hard. Empathy allows you to forgive and reduces the belief that the person is bad. It is very important to understand the mental state and background of the offender and under which state did he or she committed the offence, this will help the forgiver to empathise with the offender so that it will become easy to forgive.
- b) Time - Take enough time to overcome with negative emotions because genuine emotion takes time. It is not easy to let go the anger or sadness; it is a time taking process as negative emotion takes time to disappear.
- c) Ruminating - Try not to encourage negative emotions. Do not give unnecessary attention to the bad happened to you as it will not allow you to move on in your lives and you may get stuck with your negative emotions.
- d) Denial - Do not deny the fact that something is wrong. After forgetting the situation, the process of forgiveness may not be completed. Process of forgiveness involves understanding the situation and then dealing with it in a positive way. Be careful with the fact that denial or avoidance will not help you in any way or the other.
- e) Positives - Try to focus only on the positives. By addressing negative thoughts and replacing them, with the positive ones will help you to complete the process of forgiveness.

## 1.5 Forgive and Feel Happier

Now a days people become highly irrational, selfish, self-centred, unfaithful etc. instead of this negative surrounding always try to be kind, honest, sincere and try to forgive them anyway. Involvement of two people is necessary for accomplishing the process of forgiveness. By holding grudges against the offender, you are the one who is poisoning your mind and soul. By doing this you indirectly harm yourself so try to look into the matter and see the damage you are doing to yourself because forgiveness is something you are doing for yourself for your inner peace, for your own happiness satisfaction instead of doing it for others. It is not necessary for you to converse with the person you are forgiving, but after the process of forgiveness you will feel more happier and lighter than ever before. Forgiving is a good habit and it will help you to become happier, healthier and more empathetic towards others. Researchers find that unforgiving people tend to be a bit more anxious, depressed and at the same time neurotic. So it's high time for us to teach our children how to imbibe the qualities of forgiveness.

Our body releases higher amount of different hormones and neurotransmitters whenever we feel hurt or harmed, so our body gets a strong effect with adrenaline and other chemicals started creating a physical and impulsive negative rush to respond. We can consider these feelings healthy if they are situational and under our control, but if they become intense or become out of control in a long run then they can have a drastic effects on our body, mind and soul.

## 1.6 Cognitive Theory

What is forgiveness and how it occurs is best describes by cognitive perspective of emotions. During the process of forgiveness one can experience so many different emotions because forgiveness is a mixture various basic emotions. The emotion of forgiveness is ranked by cognitive appraisal of forgiver's and offender's current emotions. As with forgiveness no longer heavy negative emotions are consumed and so it is beneficial to assess such individuals. When an individual assesses his or her negative emotions at that point forgiveness does not takes place. Forgiveness can be elicits by the explanation of what is good in the situation you are in.

Emotion of forgiveness is described by the Model of Emotions given by Richard Lauzarus, also known as appraisal process of forgiveness

### a) Event - Anger

First and foremost you need to explain an event under this step then it follows by an emotion depending on your explanation, then by weighting up the personal gain and damage the situation has been assessed. This theory also tells us about self-goals.

### b) Primary Appraisal - If you forgive, you will feel better.

This step is all about personal welfare that needs to be evaluated.



- c) Secondary Appraisal - This is the process of evaluation of handling the situation.
- d) Outcome - After completing the above steps within the process of forgiveness you will feel that your negative emotions are replaced by positive ones.

## CHAPTER 2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

### **Review of the crucial literature**

*Laura, et al. (2019).* Studied about mismatches between changes create modification risk and forgiveness and how people feel bad about their forgiveness in this situation. With the help of some theories and principles it was found that there is a risk of losing a good relationship when a person feels bad at that extent to which they have forgiven when his or her level of forgiveness increases the risk of exploitation. It was also predicted that people would feel bad about their level of forgiveness when they started forgiving very easily to an offender who has made weak amend or vice versa. Findings showed that feeling about one's level of forgiveness give a functional purpose, negative feelings about one's level of forgiveness tells that the current combination of amends and the level of forgiveness may cause an adjustment risk.

*Loren, et al. (2019).* Studied that forgiving behaviour helps an individual to become successful in his or her life or not, within the workplace having lack of harmony among workers and on the other hand teaching them how to forgive other workers. As we already knew that stress and conflict with others are very common part of everyone's life, but it can lead to negative impacts on a personal level when they occur within the workplace environment. With the help of this study researchers conveyed that a little step of forgiveness may help an individual to maintain a healthy workplace environment which must go a long way.

*Rachel, et al. (2019).* Researched on appreciation and happiness among adolescents. Gratitude is an important aspect for psychological and social well-being. This research also says that there is a link between expressing and experiencing appreciation and happiness. This research also tells us the view point on the meaning of being thankful, to obtain adolescents viewpoints they has been told to wrote an essay on meaning of being thankful.

*Rinki, et al. (2019).* Researched that how forgiveness linked with work and negative affect. Analysis of data has been done with the help of regression analysis data was collected from different manufacturing Indian based organizations. Findings showed that forgiveness is directly linked with lower negative affect and the age factor helps to lessen the relationship between forgiveness and negative affect. It has also been suggested to provide positive evaluation within the work place to promote the concept of forgiveness with the help of useful psychological tests.

*Tila, et al. (2019)*. Researched that at what extent there has been a change in self-control and forgiveness within the first four years of marriage. This research is based on an idea that for the potential of relationship, marriage may act as a training ground. Hypothesis of this research says that individuals may able to enhance self-control and forgiving nature within the first four years of marriage and this process is continuous which takes place simultaneously. Findings showed that there is a link between these variables.

*Blake, et al. (2018)*. Studied about forgiving behaviour, attachment with God for the sake of religion and its impact on mental well-being among older adults in United States. This study has also been done to identify the link between two different types of forgiveness, three types of psychological well-being and lastly an intense role of attachment with God. Findings of this study showed that the importance of general beliefs about God in their lives has been underscored among older adults.

*Ferudun, et al. (2018)*. Researched on humility and forgiveness as predictors in teacher self-efficacy. This study tells us about the predictive effect of teacher's humility and forgiveness on self-efficacy. The sample size of this study had 303 respondents of primary and secondary school teachers from Turkey. Significant and positive relationships in teacher self-efficacy, humility and forgiveness has been analysed through this study.

*James, et al. (2018)*. Researched about the impact of religious behaviour, forgiving behaviour and partner's empathy within marital adjustment. Findings showed that religious behaviour and partner's empathy have positive impact on marital adjustment among married men, on the other hand religious and forgiving behaviour along with partner's empathy all together have positive impact on marital adjustment among married women in European America. Lastly this study says that partner's empathy helps to balance the link between previous and current marital adjustment among women in European America.

*Maria, et al. (2018)*. Researched about the conditionality of forgiveness and gave a description of conditional and unconditional forgiveness. Conditional forgiveness means before receiving the forgiveness the offender must have to take certain steps within a specific condition. Unconditional forgiveness means the victimised person itself forgive the offender. Results showed that unconditional forgiveness had positive link with the calculations of transgression forgiveness and at the same time conditional showed negative link with these calculations. The participants not only experienced the level of forgiveness but also experience different levels of emotions which would depend on their perspectives they had about forgiveness, among them their beliefs about conditionality.



*Qurotul, et al. (2018)*. Conducted this study to see the impact of Taubat (regret) and Istighfar (seek forgiveness from Allah) therapy in enhancing general welfare among post-graduation students. There were 52 respondents who all were attending Islamic psychotherapy courses. The scale was filled by respondents in pre and post evaluation. Respondents were told to write a diary for one week to intervene the effect of the execution of therapy. On the basis of written diaries it was found that therapy provided benefits such as it helps to decrease the symptoms of OCD, sleeping issues, self-harming behaviours, anxiety and also helps in anger management. After one week it has been observed that emotional regulation, positive thinking, life satisfaction and faith in God has also increased.

*Rebecca, et al. (2018)*. Studied the impact of self-consideration on post-event processing in social anxiety. It has been said that if you have any hard feelings for others then don't hold the grudges in fact forgive them and let them go for your own inner peace and happiness because negative thinking may lead to social anxiety problems. During this study socially anxious graduates participated in different activities which took place in social surroundings. Results showed that self-consideration may help a person to reduce social anxiety problems and increase one's willingness to participate in social events.

*Sadaf, et al. (2018)*. Studied about forgiveness therapy and how it promotes mental health. Relationship issues and any kind of offense towards any individual may create disturbance and other long-term comorbid problems in terms of psychological functioning. Now a days forgiveness therapy becomes very popular among individuals as it helps them to improve their psychological health after experiencing different types of hatred, violence, or trauma. Results showed that it has been moderately signified that forgiveness therapy helps an individual to promote an improved mental health.

*Suzanne, et al. (2018)*. Conducted a study by using forgiveness as a goal of an educational intervention with at-risk adolescents. There were 31 educational sessions which were held for at least 23 hours attended by classes. There were 6 dependent variables depression, hope, forgiveness, self-esteem, state anxiety scales and trait anxiety scales. This study consisted two groups experimental and control. Experimental group significantly gained positive and decreased negative variables more than the control group in terms of hope, forgiveness, anxiety and depression.

*Kathleen, et al. (2017)*. Conducted a study on the impact of regretful acknowledgement on mutual forgiveness and distancing interactions within family relations. This study had done on 325 students they had to read a scenario after that they had to answer some questions related to that in terms of forgiveness and mutual



interactions. Findings showed that forgiveness of situations accounted for great variance in mutual communications than the dispositional variables of the tendency to forgive.

*Kirsten, et al. (2017)*. Studied about repairing, resolving repetitive thinking issues, and forgiveness of self. This study included the concept of meaning in life which means that how people describe their lives, how much they are committed to their goals, and how much important they think their lives are. This study proposed that forgiveness of self and meaning they both go hand in hand so that the people can able to resolve their rumination, discover themselves, repair whatever they want to, and move toward healing process with the help of realization of their own offence and the mess they created for others.

*Meryem, et al. (2017)*. Researched on forgiveness and general happiness among college students. This research was done to find out the role of forgiveness on general happiness and the level of forgiveness and general happiness among college students in terms of sex, faculty, rank, residence and parental attitudes. Findings showed that the level of forgiveness and general happiness did not differ significantly in terms of sex and residence. This research also showed that the level of forgiveness is higher in students who all are in third and fourth standard and who were in faculty of theology. On the other hand the students whose parents were protective and democratic they have higher level of forgiveness and general happiness. The relationship of forgiveness and general happiness is a bit low, but positive.

*Sadaf, et al. (2017)*. Studied about the relationship between psychological well-being and state forgiveness. A lot of attention has been given to mental health issues and dispositional forgiveness since past few years. It has been evaluated that does psychological health results related to forgiving real interpersonal hurts or not. This gap is investigated through this study. Grounded theory method has been used for data analysis, and also the conduction of semi-structured interviews were held. Outcomes showed that forgiving a large number of offences is an important part of psychological well-being specially among spiritual or religious populations.

*Sarah, et al. (2017)*. Researched about abusive and violence relationship among women and about forgiving behaviour towards their abusive partners. Hypothesis of this study says that commitment towards relationship would predict forgiveness and reduce anger. Women are more committed and sensitive towards their relationship that's why they try to reduce the severity of violence within their abusive relationship. Findings were also in support of the given hypothesis.

*Syeda, et al. (2017)*. Studied the perspectives of criminals about romantic relationships and about positive and negative quality of relationships as the mediators of forgiving behaviour towards oneself and others and psychological welfare. Above statement has been proved as true after the completion of the research. On the other hand results showed that there was an insignificant role of negative quality of relationship between forgiving behaviour towards oneself and others and psychological welfare.

*Ali, et al. (2016)*. Researches on forgiveness in context of its relation with religion and life satisfaction. This study is about to present the role of religion on forgiveness and life satisfaction. This study also showed the link between forgiveness according to age and gender and the impact of cultural differences on forgiveness. Results showed that female students scored higher in revenge than males and at the same time females are more satisfied with their lives than males.

*Brannan, et al. (2016)*. Researched that how mental health is impacted by forgiveness. It is a strong belief among people that if you forgive your offenders then you will be forgiven by God. This statement says that forgiveness is an important part of human nature. Forgiveness is very important among religious practice that's why it has been left unnoticed by social scientists. Since past few years forgiveness is become a topic to talk about, specially in the field of positive psychology, many researches have been done on this topic and researchers are very keen to know that how mental health is impacted by forgiveness. It is said that forgiveness may have an ability to change the person's psychology on an emotional and behavioural level towards offenders. On the other hand forgiveness helps a person to develop positive feelings by replacing negative ones and by time the forgiver may be able to find some peace and a wide range of physical and psychological benefits.

*Ebru, et al. (2016)*. Researched about education on forgiveness in Turkey among fourth grade students. This study says that forgiveness plays a very important role as it helps to increase well-being among those children who live in an environment below poverty line or with aggressive families. Forgiveness helps to increase hope and happiness and reduce depression and anger. Study indicated that the feeling of anger and depression is high among children who live in an impoverished environment rather than those who had an average socioeconomic background.

*Jeremy, et al. (2016)*. Researched about two different beliefs first one is offensive behaviour and second one is forgiveness and how these offensive behaviours are related to poor mental health conditions and on the other hand how someone's forgiving behaviour have positive mental health benefits. Results showed that there is a strong relation between offensive behaviour and different classes of psychiatric symptoms and a negative

link between belief in experiencing forgiveness and different classes of psychiatric symptoms. Results also showed that it's not necessary that there is a link between offensive behaviour and poor mental condition. It was said that there is no harm in believing human sinfulness if you believe in the power of forgiveness.

*Katja, et al. (2016).* Conducted a cross-cultural meta-analysis across 30 countries. The research had done on human value of forgiveness and examined its mutual connection with the help of country-level meta-analytical approach. People told about the importance of forgiveness among different countries. Findings showed that value forgiveness is linked with general happiness at the country level as well as developed socioeconomic and political environment.

*Lourdes, et al. (2016).* Researched about forgiveness in older adults and health related quality of their lives and the mediators in this study were the strategies of adaptive cognitive emotional regulation. There were 350 Spanish respondents aged 55 years and older. Strategies like positive reappraisal and refocusing are somewhat mediated the link between forgiveness and mental health. Thus, centring on planning incompletely mediated the link between forgiveness and physical health. Findings of this study says that there is an visible understanding of underlying managing process between forgiveness and health outcomes and also provide an insight for potential evaluation to enhance the quality of life.

*Mehar, et al. (2016).* Researched among female college students the study has been done on impact of thankfulness and forgiving behaviour on well-being. Sample size of research had 60 female students lies between 18-21 years of age. Findings showed that thankfulness and forgiving behaviour both were correlated with well-being that's why it's a co-relational research. With the help of multiple regression results indicated that only thankfulness was found an important predictor of well-being.

*Monica, et al. (2016).* Researched on forgiveness, happiness, life satisfaction and psychological distress among private sector IT professionals. Now a days we know that mostly everyone is busy with his or her working life. Individual's work environment plays an important role in his or her life as there is a lot of pressure among every individual within the workplace which can create negative views. Due to high competition individuals may experience burnout and higher levels of psychological distress. In India these problems might be different for both the genders. As we know that within the Indian context women have to play different roles in different situations weather in personal or in professional environments without getting exhausted and by compromising with their mental as well as physical health. This means that gender plays an important role in this study among males and females.

*Myung, et al (2016)*. Studied that how unforgiving behaviour can become a cause of depressive symptoms. To explain the difference between them, this research has been done to found out the lessen effect of self-compassion. For statistical analysis multiple regression was used with the help of this it was found that a moderate interaction was there of self-compassion. This interaction showed the link between unforgiving behaviour and depressive symptoms. This link was even more stronger in those who had low self-compassion.

*Reine, et al. (2016)*. Researched about mutual forgiveness and psychological happiness in late childhood. It is hard to forgive peers who hurt and maintaining long-term friendship with them in childhood. This research is about forgiveness and how it helps to increase happiness among children. According to the hypothesis this link is associated with strong friendship rather than weak. Results showed that this association of forgiveness and happiness is more stronger when the forgiving behaviour showed towards friends rather than non-friends.

*Ross, et al. (2016)*. Studied that forgiveness is an important mediation to enhance relationship happiness in couple therapy. It found out that forgiveness act as a strong intervention among couples which helps them to enhance their relationship. Till today also, forgiveness looked as a potential mediation to enhance rational happiness. Oh the other hand forgiving individuals, good for stress and health, forgiving behaviour affects marital and family functioning, forgiveness and relationship happiness with mediating process and last but not the least limitations of forgiveness mediations are some particular mentioned areas within this research.

*Sagrario, et al. (2016)*. Conducted a research on Spanish parents the research was about the positive side of forgiveness and subjective well-being within divorce. He said that broken marriages might cause suffering, pain and resentment. On post-divorce adjustments forgiveness has positive effects; but many of them are unaware that forgiveness plays an important role in the subjective well-being of divorced parents. Results of this study showed that time from divorce and forgiveness incompletely mediated the impact of positive affect on life satisfaction: people are more forgiving to their ex partners who all are having high level of positive affect over time.

*Brandon, et al. (2015)*. Researched on mental well-being and forgiveness. The beneficial impact of forgiveness among offenders are given according to four propositions. Firstly unforgiving behaviour may cause stress which leads to poor mental health. Secondly forgiveness linked with healthy mental well-being as it is related to coping strategies. Thirdly differences among individuals moderate the effect of forgiveness on mental health. Lastly psychological states brought out the effect of forgiveness on health. Research proved that forgiveness promoted better mental well-being among offenders.

*Feng, et al. (2015)*. Researched that your happiness is based on your forgiving ability. Two studies had been conducted under this research. First one says that happiness was treated as characteristic difference: happy and unhappy people compared together, were found that happy people to be more willing to forgive murderers. Second study says that happiness was treated as an emotional state difference: happiness compared to sadness brought more forgiveness.

*Haidong, et al. (2015)*. Researched that forgiveness plays a very important role in life satisfaction and the moderating effects that helps to associate these two are social support and affect balance. Results of this study showed that forgiving behaviour brings an indirect impact on life satisfaction with the help of affect balance and social support and also the three-path moderating impact of affect balance and social support.

*Ilhan, et al. (2015)*. Researched on relationship between meaning in life and subjective well-being. Hope and forgiveness were mediators. The study was conducted among 482 university students. Seven questionnaires were used for data collection. Results showed that forgiveness and hope completely mediated the relationship between meaning in life and subjective well-being. Findings of this study could be used to understand the factors linked with subjective well-being.

*Jale, et al. (2015)*. Researched about predictive impacts of general happiness, forgiveness, and rumination on life satisfaction. Research was conducted on 380 Turkish students aged between 18 to 25 years. With the help of findings it has been observed that forgiveness and general happiness were positively linked with life satisfaction, and on the other hand rumination was negatively linked with life satisfaction.

*Jeritt, et al. (2015)*. Researched about forgiveness, from where it emerged, and about the main considerations for health outcomes. It has been said that there is a strong link between forgiveness and health. This research told about theological, philosophical and cultural roots of forgiveness. This research provided five main considerations which helps us to understand the relationship of forgiveness and health in a better way.

*Kumar, et al. (2015)*. Studied about the connection between forgiving behaviour, faithfulness, and health. In this study the concept of health indicated both physiological and psychological health. It has been said that positive emotions may lead to positive health as positive emotions are more effective ways to manage positive health and well-being. This

healthy habit of keeping positive emotions may also help an individual by motivating them to lead a healthy quality life because it is very important to live a meaningful and a healthy life. It was found that faith and



forgiveness are two powerful forces in everyone lives as they play an important role among different communities around the world.

*Majda et al. (2015).* Studied about the concept of happiness and researched that should it be taught in schools or not. In positive psychology the concept of happiness is the representation of positive functioning and is the main goal to promote life. Happiness prevents depression, will increase life satisfaction and there is also an interaction between learning and healthy emotions that happiness should be taught in schools for spreading awareness among young adults.

*Patrick, et al. (2015).* Studied about general happiness and forgiveness in terms of process, context, and rationales. Many a times we also heard that forgiveness helps a person to release the feeling of resentment or negative emotions towards his or her offender. Forgiveness is not for others but it is something we do for ourselves, for our inner peace that why it has been proved that there are so many benefits of forgiveness to the self.

## **CHAPTER 3. METHEDOLOG**

### **3.1 Aim**

This research is being done to study the level of forgiveness and happiness among young adult and the impact of forgiveness on happiness among young adults.

### **3.2 Objectives**

1. To measure the level of forgiveness and happiness.

First and foremost this objective is related to find out the level of dispositional forgiveness which means forgiveness of self, forgiveness of others, and forgiveness of situations and to find out the level of subjective or general happiness in terms of gender.

2. To see the difference between forgiveness and happiness among male and female.

Another objective of this research is related to find out that how the level of forgiveness and the level of happiness can differ from each other in terms of gender.

3. To see the relationship between forgiveness and happiness.

The last objective of this research is related to find out that how forgiveness and happiness are linked with each other and what is the relationship of these two variables in terms of gender.

This research is based on these three above mentioned objectives and these objectives helps to find out the difference and relationship between forgiveness and happiness among two groups: male and female

### **3.3 Hypotheses**

1. There would be a significant difference of forgiveness on happiness among male and female.

2. There would be a significant relationship between forgiveness and happiness.

These two above mentioned hypotheses will be proven on the bases of findings.

### **3.4 Sample**

The sample consisted of 120 participants the participants are divided into two groups: male and female and their age ranges from 18 to 25 years. The sample consisted of 60 male participants and 60 female participants. The participants who all are going to fill the questionnaires must be educated they must have minimum education of 16 years. All the participants are from Delhi NCR only.



## Inclusion Criteria:

All educated

Age range – 18 to 25 years

Locale of study – Delhi NCR

## Sampling Method:

The sample was collected from different regions of Delhi NCR. Different people having different psycho-social backgrounds, societies and religions were approached through different references within the age group of 18 to 25 years. The participants were randomly selected on the basis of above mentioned inclusion criteria.

## **3.5 Variables**

There are two variables in this research first one is an independent variable which is forgiveness and the second one is dependent variable which is happiness.

### Independent variable – Forgiveness

Independent variable means whose difference is not depend on that of other. It is a factor that one can control to identify that what impact it has. In this research forgiveness is an independent variable. Forgiveness is a conscious decision and it helps us to release the feeling of anger and resentment toward a person or a group who has ever hurt or harmed you. Forgiveness gives a peace of mind to forgiver and made him or her free from unwanted anger.

### Dependent variable – Happiness

The difference that shows response to the change in the independent variable is called the dependent variable. Dependent variable is the one which depends on the independent variable. In this research happiness is the dependent variable. Happiness is as positive emotion and it helps an individual to lead a good quality of life because there are uncountable benefits of happiness for example it helps an individual to improve the ability of problem-solving, improve one's physical and mental health, reduces negative emotions and replace them with the positive ones and it also deeply link with the concept of forgiveness.

The scoring is being done on these two above mentioned variables.

### 3.6 Table for tools used

S. No	Name of the tool	Author and year	No. of items	Reliability/ Validity
1.	Heartland Forgiveness Scale	Laura Y. Thompson and C. R. Snyder in 1999	18 items	<p><b>Reliability</b></p> <p>Cronbach alpha coefficients ranged between .71 and .82</p> <p><b>Validity</b></p> <p>(Pearson correlation) between the HFS and other scales ranged from -.09 to .34</p>
2.	Subjective Happiness Scale	Lyubomirsky, S. and Lepper, H. S. in 1999	4 items	<p><b>Reliability</b></p> <p>test-retest reliability ranged from 0.55 to 0.90</p> <p><b>Validity</b></p> <p>substantial correlations, ranging from 0.52 to 0.72</p>

### 3.7 Tools Description

1. Heartland Forgiveness Scale (HFS): Heartland Forgiveness Scale was developed by Laura Y. Thompson and C. R. Snyder in 1999. HFS consisted of three subscales through which, 6 items are used to measure forgiveness of self, 6 are for forgiveness of others, and remaining 6 are for forgiveness of situations which means there are total 18 items within this scale. HFS is a self-reported questionnaire designed to measure

general tendency of a person to be forgiving and it helps to measure a person's dispositional forgiveness. Participant's responses are based on 7-point likert-type scale.

Scores of Heartland Forgiveness Scale shows that how forgiving an individual can be towards oneself, towards others, and towards uncontrollable situations. If an individual gets high scores within these three subscales then it means that the person is having higher level of forgiveness and if an individual gets lower level of scores within these three subscales then it means that the person is having lower level of forgiveness.

2. Subjective Happiness Scale (SHS): Subjective Happiness Scale was developed by Lyubomirsky, S. and Lepper, H. S. in 1999. SHS is also known as general happiness scale. It is a 4 item scale which used to measure subjective or general happiness of a person. First two items are used for person's characterization by using absolute ratings and ratings related to their friends and other two remaining items used to measure the level of happiness which means that how happy and unhappy the participant is. Participant's responses are based on 7-point likert-type scale.

High scores indicate that the person is experiencing higher level of happiness and low scores indicate that the person is experiencing lower level of happiness.

### 3.8 Procedure

This research is being done to find out the level of forgiveness and the level of happiness among young adults living in different regions of Delhi NCR on a sample of 120 educated people which was divided into two groups 60 males and 60 females belonging to the age group of 18 to 25 years. All the above mentioned tools were administered. Above mentioned review of literatures showed that forgiveness leaves a positive impact on happiness, on quality of life, on mental health as well as on physical health beside these benefits there are so many other positive impacts also. This research also shows the relation as well as difference between forgiveness and happiness among male and female. The above mentioned tools has been chosen because now a days youngsters are leading a poor quality of life due to unwanted anger and aggression issues and other unnecessary negative emotions as young age is a time of life where youngsters shows a bit rebellious behaviour. On the basis research topic inclusion and exclusion criteria and final set of tools were selected. Participants were selected randomly having different backgrounds and religions. Those people who all are applicable for this research were selected after they met the inclusion and exclusion criteria. Verbal consent from the participants was taken. When the participants were ready to fill the questionnaires then all the item details and instructions were read out to the participants before they marked their responses. Participants were also briefed about the severity and confidentiality of this research after which their responses were noted down. From an observer's point of view I observed that people who all were filling the questionnaires were a



bit serious during the test they took this test very seriously and they all were very keen to know their results as soon as possible and at the same time they all wanted to know that how forgiving and happy they are in their present age so that they can change their negative thinking and behaviour to lead a healthy quality of life in future. After the completion of the test, respondents told that we enjoyed a lot during the test and the test was really very satisfying we want to know our results as soon as possible and we really look forward towards our scores and interpretation so that we will change our cognitive and behavioural issues which lead to negative emotions. After data collection the scoring had done according to statistical analysis.

## CHAPTER 4. ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

**Table 4.1** - Mean and Standard Deviation

Variables	Gender	Sample Size	Mean	Standard Deviation
Forgiveness	Male	60	72.95	9.6523
	Female	60	78.4333	14.1402
Happiness	Male	60	4.7083	1.0904
	Female	60	4.8292	1.1475

This table is representing mean and standard deviation among male and female under the two variables first one is forgiveness and second is happiness.

**Table 4.2** - t-test results comparing male and female

Variables	t	df	p-value
Forgiveness	2.4809	118	0.01452
Happiness	0.5913	118	0.5555

This table is representing t-test results for the significant difference of forgiveness on happiness among male

and female and the result is not significant for forgiveness at 0.01 level and for happiness at 0.05 level which means that the hypothesis is rejected.

**Table 4.3** - Regression results comparing dependent variable (forgiveness) and independent variable (happiness)

Gender	Variables	SE	$\beta$	t-stat	p-value
Male	Forgiveness	0.0144	-0.0253	-1.7541	0.0846
	Happiness	1.1327	-1.9869	-1.7541	0.0846
Female	Forgiveness	0.0101	0.0235	2.3129	0.0242
	Happiness	1.5482	3.5809	2.3129	0.0242

This table is representing the relationship between forgiveness and happiness among male and female and the result is significant which means that the hypothesis is proved.

**Table 4.4** - Pearson's correlation coefficient results comparing dependent variable (forgiveness) and independent variable (happiness)

Gender - Male

X Values			Y Values			X and Y	R	R <sup>2</sup>	P Value	
Σ	Mean	SSx	Σ	Mean	SSy	Σ				
4377	72.95	5496.85	282.5	4.708	70.146	139.375	-0.2245	0.0504	.085335	

This table is representing that the result is not significant at  $p < .05$

Gender - Female

X Values			Y Values			X and Y	R	R <sup>2</sup>	P Value	
Σ	Mean	SSx	Σ	Mean	SSy	Σ				
4706	78.433	11796.733	289.75	4.829	77.686	278.192	0.2906	0.0844	.024292	

This table is representing that the result is significant at  $p < .05$



## **CHAPTER 5. DISCUSSION**

This research is being done on forgiveness and happiness among young adults. Total 120 people including 60 male participants and 60 female participants belonging to the age group of 18 to 25 years contributed in this study living in different regions on Delhi NCR. Results were calculated by using different statistical analysis for example mean to calculate the average, standard deviation to see that how the participants of a group differ from the mean value, t-test to see the significant difference of forgiveness and happiness among male and female participants, regression analysis to see the significant relationship between forgiveness and happiness, and person's correlation to measure the linear correlation between two variables among male and female.

After calculating the results, it was found that most of the males scored average scores in heartland forgiveness scale which means that they are likely to forgive and most of them were feeling happy according to subjective happiness scale on the other hand female participants also scored average scores in terms of forgiveness which means that they are also likely to forgive and half of them were feeling happy but half of them were unhappy also. In second table t-test results were indicated that there is no significant difference of forgiveness on happiness among male and female as the final result is non-significant. In third table regression results were indicated that there is a significant relationship between forgiveness and happiness among male and female participants. In fourth table results indicated the relationship between the two variables is non-significant among male participants and on the other hand the relationship between the two variables is significant among female participants.

**Table 4.1** represented mean and standard deviation among male and female under the two variables first one is forgiveness and second is happiness. With the help of forgiveness heartland scale level of forgiveness among male and female participants were measured and subjective happiness scale used to measure the level of happiness among male and female participants. Results of the male participants showed that most of the males scored average scores in heartland forgiveness scale which means that they are likely to forgive to themselves, to others, and to situations. There was total 60 male participants out of them 57 were likely to forgive, 2 of them were completely forgiving, and 1 was unforgiving and most of them were feeling happy according to subjective happiness scale out of 60 participants 35 of them were happy and 25 were unhappy. On the other hand, results of the female participants showed that most of the females were also scored average scores in heartland forgiveness scale which means that they are likely to forgive to themselves, to others, and to situations. Females were also 60 out of them 48 were likely to forgive, 11 of them were completely forgiving, and 1 was unforgiving and half of them were feeling happy and half of them were unhappy according to subjective happiness scale out of 60 participants 30 of them were happy and 30 were unhappy.

*Meryem, et al. (2017).* Researched on forgiveness and general happiness among college students. This research was done to find out the role of forgiveness on general happiness and the level of forgiveness and general happiness among college students in terms of sex, faculty, rank, residence and parental attitudes. Findings showed that the level of forgiveness and general happiness did not differ significantly in terms of sex and residence. This research also showed that the level of forgiveness is higher in students who all are in third and fourth standard and who were in faculty of theology. On the other hand, the students whose parents were protective and democratic they have higher level of forgiveness and general happiness. The relationship of forgiveness and general happiness is a bit low, but positive.

**Table 4.2** represented t-test results for the significant difference of forgiveness on happiness among male and female by comparing male and female participants under two variables first one is forgiveness and second one is happiness. This is an unpaired t-test because both the samples consisted of different subjects. On the basis of results, it was found that there is no significant difference of forgiveness on happiness among male and female as the absolute value of the t-test statistics is less than the critical value, hence the difference is non-significant which means that the hypothesis is rejected because it shows no significant difference. Decision of both the variables is rejected.

*Feng, et al. (2015).* Researched that happiness is based on forgiving ability. Two studies had been conducted under this research. First one says that happiness was treated as characteristic difference: happy and unhappy people compared together, were found that happy people to be more willing to forgive murderers. Second study says that happiness was treated as an emotional state difference: happiness compared to sadness brought more forgiveness.

**Table 4.3** represented the relationship between forgiveness and happiness among male and female by comparing dependent variable (forgiveness) and independent variable (happiness). On the basis of results, it was found that there is a significant relationship between forgiveness and happiness. Hence, the hypothesis is proved as it shows significant relationship between forgiveness and happiness among male and female participants.

*Patrick, et al. (2015)* Studied about general happiness and forgiveness in terms of process, context, and rationales. Many a times we also heard that forgiveness helps a person to release the feeling of resentment or negative emotions towards his or her offender. Forgiveness is not for others but it is something we do for ourselves, for our inner peace that why it has been proved that there are so many benefits of forgiveness to the self.

**Table 4.4** represented Pearson correlation between two variables forgiveness and happiness among male and female participants. On the basis of results, it was found that there is a negative correlation, the relationship between two variables forgiveness and happiness is only weak which means that the result is not significant at  $p < .05$  level among male participants. On the other hand, there is a positive correlation, the relationship between two variables forgiveness and happiness is weak which means that the result is significant at  $p < .05$  level among female participants.

## HYPOTHESES TESTING

After calculating the results and on the basis of hypothesis testing, first hypothesis was rejected which says that there will be a significant difference of forgiveness on happiness among male and female as the absolute value of the t-test statistics is less than the critical value, hence the difference is non-significant which means that the hypothesis is rejected because it showed no significant difference. According to decision, significant difference of forgiveness on happiness among male and female for both independent variable (forgiveness) and dependent variable (happiness) was rejected. Hence proved, that there is no difference.

On the basis of hypothesis testing, second hypothesis was proved which says that there will be a significant relationship between forgiveness and happiness among male and female participants because the decision was significant. According to the decision the hypothesis was proved. Hence proved, that there is a significant relationship between both independent variable (forgiveness) and dependent variable (happiness).

## **CHAPTER 6. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION**

### **Discussion**

There are three main objectives of this research first objective is to measure the level of forgiveness by using Heartland Forgiveness Scale to measure the level of and happiness by using Subjective Happiness Scale among 60 male participants and 60 female participants belonging to the age group of 18 to 25 years. Second objective is to see the difference of forgiveness on happiness among male and female. Last one is to see the relationship between forgiveness and happiness. There are two hypotheses which needed to be proven first one is that there will be a significant difference between forgiveness and happiness among male and female participants and second one is that there will be a significant relationship between forgiveness and happiness.

### **Findings**

Results showed that males scored average scores in heartland forgiveness scale which means that they are likely to forgive and most of them were feeling happy according to subjective happiness scale on the other hand female participants also scored average scores in terms of forgiveness which means that they are also likely to forgive and half of them were feeling happy, but half of them were unhappy also. In second table t-test results indicated that there is no significant difference of forgiveness on happiness among male and female participants as the final result is non-significant. In third table regression results were indicated that there is a significant relationship between forgiveness and happiness among male and female participants. In fourth table Pearson's correlation results indicated the relationship between the two variables is not significant among male participants and on the other hand the relationship between the two variables is significant among female participants.

### **Limitations**

There are some limitations also which rose during the study. First limitation is that there is no clear evidence that if a person is forgiving then the same person is happy as well or if a person is unforgiving then he or she is feeling unhappy about it. Second limitation is that there are three subscales under Heartland Forgiveness Scale forgiveness of self, forgiveness of others and forgiveness of situations and it would remain unstudied that which one is responsible for the happiness or unhappiness of a person. Third limitation is the rejection of first hypothesis which failed to prove that there will be a significant difference of forgiveness on happiness among male and female.



## **Suggestions and Recommendations**

For further study my suggestion is to study all three subscales of Heartland Forgiveness Scale (forgiveness of self, forgiveness of others, and forgiveness of situations) and find out that which one is highly responsible for the happiness and unhappiness of a person. I also suggest to find is it possible for an unforgiving person to be happy or a forgiving person to feel unhappy.

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