

Forgiveness and Mental Well-Being among Married Men and Women in Faisalabad District

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ABSTRACT

The current research probed the connection between mental well-being and forgiveness in married couples in the Faisalabad area of Pakistan. The initial aim was to analyze how the ability to forgive shapes psychological health among women and men. There were 111 participants, 20 men and 91 women, who were chosen using snowball sampling. The research employed three core data collection instruments: the Heartland Forgiveness Scale, the Demographic Information Form, and the Mental Well-Being Scale. Forgiveness as a psychological phenomenon has been extensively linked to better mental health outcomes, such as lower stress levels, better emotional regulation, and higher life satisfaction. Individuals who scored higher on the forgiveness measure were more likely to endorse better psychological well-being, such as increased subjective and spiritual well-being, and an increased feeling of happiness. This was true for both men and women, indicating that forgiveness is an equally positive quality in the marital relationship. These findings also imply that forgiveness is something that, when developed, can be more emotionally resilient and produce better coping outcomes in relationships. The research highlighted forgiveness as a salient factor in determining married men's and women's mental health. More forgiving individuals have healthier, adaptive coping styles that could be linked to higher overall marital well-being. Future work might look at intervention methods to increase forgiveness to enhance marital and psychological functioning. Studies on forgiveness and mental well-being between married women and men in Faisalabad can guide gender-sensitive counseling and mental health interventions. It could foster more robust family systems and shape policy decisions on marital well-being. In the longer term, it underlies a cultural transformation toward emotional literacy and mental health consciousness.



Introduction

The process by which a person attempts to get over his or her unfavorable emotions towards a transgressor or offender because of his or her wrongdoing is known as forgiveness. Since forgiveness affects how one perceives other people and events, it is possible to effectively alter one's perspective of the transgressor's characteristics by forgiving them. Forgiving people find it easy to think positively, begin seeing the best in others, and mend their connections. Positive emotions are fostered by mental health, allowing people to feel content and happy in their lives. Additionally, it may lessen depressive symptoms and bad conduct in married women and men (Akhtar, 2009).

According to Basson (2008), mental health is crucial as a protective factor to lessen detrimental impacts like loneliness, anxiety, and depression on married men and women. Furthermore, married individuals who are mentally well may have happier lives in both intrapersonal and interpersonal relationships (Gilman & Huebner, 2006; Proctor, Linley, & Maltby, 2010). If someone is joyful, they will feel liberated from the burdens in their lives. It has been demonstrated that a number of variables, such as age, gender, social support, and self-control, affect the mental health of married men and women. The findings indicated that among married men and women, mental well-being may be predicted by self-forgiveness, forgiveness of others, and forgiving of situations. Forgiveness is another element influencing mental health. Forgiveness may enhance mental health, according to a 1991 research by Enright and The Human Development research Group. According to Burnette et al. (2013), forgiveness may be explored as a whole or as a collection of elements, including kindness, avoidance and retaliation (McCullough, Root, & Cohen, 2006), and forgiving of oneself, others, and circumstances (Thompson et al., 2005).

Reframing offenders' negative ideas, sentiments, and emotions is facilitated by forgiveness. It is therefore quite distinct from forgetting, rejecting, approving, pardoning, and excusing (Enright & Coyle, 1998). According to Wade and Worthington (2005), forgiving can be a useful strategy for managing the negative effects of an offence, such as wrath, resentment, and impulses for vengeance. As a result, individuals are able to re-establish their intimacy (McCullough et al., 1998). The majority of studies has shown that forgiveness produces positive psychological, social, and family effects. According to literature, mental health is influenced by forgiveness.

Forgiveness is inversely correlated with suffering and favourably correlated with mental health. According to Asghari and Roshani (2013) and Saeed (2014), it also has a strong and substantial correlation with personality characteristics, relationship commitment and satisfaction (McCullough et al., 1998), and mental health. According to Enright and Zell (1989), people typically blame Allah (God) or their fate rather than forgiving circumstances like disease or misfortune. Maybe it's because they don't believe in religion.

Additionally, studies showed a correlation between psychological suffering (Maselko, 1998, as referenced in Sadiq, 2013), anxiety, and sadness (Hebl & Enright, 1993) and forgiving of oneself and others. Tolerance reduces sadness (Berry et al., 2005), rage, depression, and anxiety (Seybold et al., 2001). By forgiving, interpersonal relationships can be restored and social connection can be regulated (McCullough & Witvliet, 2002). If people value forgiveness more, they will be less aggressive and more empathetic. Another aspect of self-control is dispositional forgiveness (DeWall, Pond, & Bushman, 2010). Forgiveness is essential to healthy marriage and family dynamics (Fincham & Beach, 2002). It plays a crucial role in social and intimate relationships, wellness, and conflict resolution (McCullough, Root, Tabak, & Witvliet, 2009; Van der Wal, Karremans, & Cillessen, 2014).

According to research on the demographics of forgiveness, women report forgiving others more often than males does (Miller et al., 2008). According to Rijavec et al. (2010), males are more likely than women to harbour thoughts and sentiments of retaliation. Married women without jobs were more considerate to their in-laws than married women with jobs.

Rationale of study

The main purpose of this study is to determine the relationship between forgiveness and mental well-being among married men and women. The following Hypothesis had been presented:

There would be relationship between forgiveness and mental well-being among married men and women in Faisalabad district

Methodology

Sample

The correlational research approach was used in this study to evaluate the association between forgiveness and mental health. With ages ranging from 21 to 50, the current sample size in this regard is 111. Participating in the study were married men and women from the Faisalabad district.

Measure

To gather basic information from the participants, such as age, gender, marital status, socioeconomic position, educational attainment, number of family members, etc., a Demographic Information Form was used.

The Heartland Forgiveness Scale (Thompson et al., 2005) was utilised to assess participants' forgiveness. This 18-item measure is divided into three subscales: six items for self-forgiveness, six items for others, and six items for situational forgiveness. The seven-point continuum used to rate each item on this scale ranges from "Almost always false than true" (a score of -1) to "Almost always true of me" (a score of 7).

The current study also employed the Mental Well-Being Scale to assess married men's and women's general health. 14 items total, with 5 points on a scoring continuum (1 being never, 2 being rare, 3 being occasionally, 4 being often, and 5 being always).

Procedure

Institutional approval was obtained to conduct the current investigation. The authors of the research instruments utilised in the study were then asked for their approval. Selected metrics were used to start the data gathering process. Snowball sampling was used to contact married men and women in the Faisalabad district in order to collect data. Prior to holding one-on-one sessions with individuals at the research location, their written consent was obtained. All chosen measures were given instructions on how to gather data, and they were instructed to respond accordingly. Finally, we would like to thank all of the participants for their cooperation and kind reaction during the data gathering process.

Statistical Analysis

Statistical test of Pearson Correlation Coefficient was computed to analyze the relationship between forgiveness and mental well-being. Obtained raw data of the present study 6 was statistically analyzed via SPSS by entering variables and data.

Table 1: *Demographic characteristics of participants (n=111)*

Characteristics	Frequencies (F)	Percentage (%)
Age		
21-25	14	12.61
25-29	15	13.51
29-33	18	16.21
33-37	15	13.51
37-41	22	19.81
42-46	17	15.31
46-50	10	9
Gender		
Male	20	18.018
Female	91	81.98
Family system		
Joint	111	100
Socio-economic Status		
Middle	111	100

The results showed that in this research, 12.61% of participants were between age of 21-25, 13.51% of participants were between age of 25-29, 16.21% of participants were between age of 29-33, 13.51% of participants were between age of 33-37, 19.81% of participants were between age of 37-41, 15.31% of participants were between age of 41-46, 9% of participants between age of 46-50. In this research, 81.98% of the participants were married women and 18% were married men. Among them, all of the participants belong to middle class family. All of the participants were living in joint families.

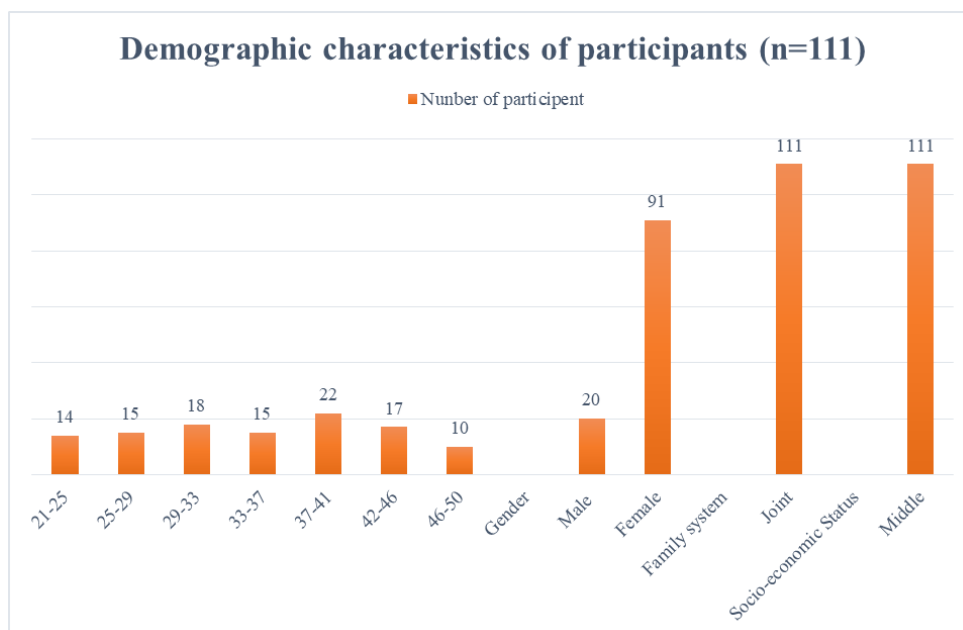


Table 2: Pearson Correlation Coefficient reveals the relationship between forgiveness and mental well-being

Variables	Mental Well-being		
	N	r	P
Self-forgiveness	111	0.106	0.268
Other forgiveness	111	0.148	0.122
Situation forgiveness	111	0.273	0.004
Total forgiveness	111	0.246	0.009

Results proved the significant and positive relationship of mental well-being with situation forgiveness($n=111, r=0.273, p=0.004$) and total forgiveness ($n=111, r=0.246, p=0.009$). A non-significant relationship between was appeared between mental well-being with self-forgiveness ($n=111, r=0.106, p=0.268$) and between mental well-being and other forgiveness($n=111, r=0.148, p=0.122$)

Discussion

The study has demonstrated the importance of responding to perceived injury with forgiveness and its beneficial effects on mental health. This study demonstrated that forgiveness had a good impact on mental health by reducing levels of despair, anger, and anxiety. The present study's findings also showed a substantial correlation between married men and women living in joint families and forgiveness and their mental health. Pakistan favors the joint family arrangement, and it appears that family members who live together have more influence over one another. Despite the fact that this living system has many advantages, it also has certain challenges.

They must adapt to their family's needs and deal with criticism for the tasks they complete. According to this study, married women have higher stress and mental health issues when it comes to performing their jobs well. However, married women are more forgiving than married men since males are more prone to retaliation and have short fused personalities. The findings indicate that married males are less able to forgive, which leads in lower mental health than married women. Married men are mediocre at forgiving themselves, but they are not very good at forgiving others or situations.

However, married women have a strong capacity for forgiving others and situations, but a limited capacity for forgiving themselves. Therapeutic interventions like cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) and mindfulness-based approaches provide avenues for people to examine and address the underlying causes of their inability to forgive others, promoting healthier self-perceptions and interpersonal relationships for those who struggle with this issue and its impact on their mental health (Horney, 1950). Mental health practitioners may help people on their journey to self-awareness, acceptance, and better mental health outcomes by comprehending and negotiating this intricate relationship between forgiveness and mental health in married men and women.

Conclusion

The current study's findings showed that forgiveness has an impact on mental health. Forgiveness and mental health are significantly correlated among married men and women who have lived in joint families. Married men and women who are forgiving are better able to manage situations and deal with them more readily.

Implications

Addressing forgiveness and its effects on married men's and women's mental health is important for the application of therapeutic interventions like cognitive behavioral therapy, in which the therapist is aware of the patient's capacity for forgiveness as well as their mental health. Early detection and prevention help people deal with their families, handle challenging circumstances, and forgive those who have wronged them. Professional and organizational contexts. Married men's and women's mental health can be improved by these initiatives.

Limitations

Married men and women who lived in joint families were the subjects of the current study. People who live in nuclear families can also be researched for their mental health and the role forgiveness plays in it. The study's scope is restricted to married women with typical children. Forgiveness and its effects on mental health are also examined in married couples with children that are exceptional or atypical. Additionally, it was done on married women without children. It has a more positive impact on mental health and forgiveness.

Conflict of interest

The authors declared no conflict of interest

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