



**A GENDER STUDY ON HAPPINESS AND FORGIVENESS
AMONG YOUNG ADULTS**

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DECLARATION

I declare that the Dissertation entitled: “A Gender Study on Happiness and Forgiveness among Young Adults” has been prepared by me under the guidance of Dr. Shruti Shourie, Associate Professor of Department of Psychology, D.A.V. College, Sector 10, Chandigarh, India. No part of this report has been formed the basis for the award of any degree or fellowship previously.

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Sincerely,

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ABSTRACT

Forgiveness might have a different definition for every individual. Yet, in general, it entails making a conscious choice to let go of bitterness and hatred. In some cases, forgiving someone might even elicit sentiments of comprehension, empathy and compassion for the person who is the perpetrator. Forgiveness can aid in relationship restoration. Moreover, it is a sign of strength, it demonstrates how tough one is and how individual overcomes adversity. Happiness is something that plays a vital role in everyone's life. In today's world, there are few factors that affect our happiness, and some essential things are money, trust, independence, health, and so on. Happiness is the pinnacle of human aspiration and contentment, and forgiveness is a result of human grit, engagement, and optimistic thinking. Forgiveness gives the forgiver peace of mind and releases them from destructive rage and makes a person happier than before. The aim of the current research was to study relationship between happiness and forgiveness and bring out the gender differences on happiness and forgiveness among young adults. A total sample of 100 young adults (50 Males and 50 Females) in the age group 18-25 years were collected. Standardized tools were used to measure happiness and forgiveness among young adults. The results found out that there was a positive significant correlation between forgiveness and happiness. No gender differences were reported on happiness and forgiveness. By cultivating positive emotions such as empathy and compassion, forgiveness can contribute to an increase in positive emotions, which are significantly associated with happiness.

Key words: Happiness, Forgiveness, Gender differences, Young Adults.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

“One invests one’s life in search of happiness.” ~Dalai Lama~

Happiness is an electrifying and elusive state. Happiness is founded on the inquiries into why some people are happier than others or why some have greater capacity for happiness after going through difficult circumstances. Happy people have better social and work relationships (Conkle, 2008). Happiness, is the “secret sauce” that can help us to be and perform our best. Being happy doesn't mean everything's perfect. People who are happy live intentionally. Long term relationships, achieving their objectives, and living according to their ideas provide them delight. For happiness, a person may not have to be obsessed with material possessions or extravagant trips. The individual finds contentment with the small joys in life, such as caressing a dog, relaxing under a tree, and enjoying a cup of tea. Happiness leads to better health. Typically, happiness is an emotional state characterized by feelings of joy, satisfaction, contentment, and fulfillment (Sonja Lyubomirsky, 2001). Happiness has long been recognized as a critical part of health and well-being. Our understanding of what will bring us happiness, however, has changed over time. Happy people are more likely to earn more money, can be more productive at work, can be higher on creativity and imagination. Happiness has several benefits such as happy people are smarter, cope better with stress and traumas, have greater friend circle, are more liberal. Furthermore, there are various factors of happiness, for instance, friendship, authority, health, religion, education, wealth, family, etc. Happiness is the ultimate goal and meaning of life. It is the whole purpose of human existence (Waitley, 1979).

“Happiness is when what you think, what you say, and what you do are in harmony.”

~ Mahatma Gandhi

Kanwal (2021) published a survey, according to global survey on the state of happiness conducted by Ipsos, it was seen that a majority of Indian respondents (49 percent), stated that they were rather happy. Only three percent of the respondents said they were not happy at all.

According to the UN's World Happiness Report (2021) which was published by Blazyte (2022), China's happiness index in 2021 was 5.59 points. Respondents from nationally representative samples are asked to rate the quality of their lives at the time of the survey on a scale of 0 to 10, with 0 denoting the worst possible life and 10 denoting the best possible life. Finland, Denmark and other European countries ranked the top spots, whereas China ranked 71 out of 141 countries.

In one of the published works by Kamer (2023), 'The Happiness Index' found Finland is reputed to be the happiest nation on earth. This report on the happiness of the world is a historic study that ranks nations based on how happy their residents believe they are. Evaluation of one's life, positive and negative emotions and life satisfaction are the three basic Markers used to quantify subjective well-being.

According to survey published by So (2022), over 54% of South Korean respondents reported being very happy or quite happy, as per an Ipsos survey on happiness levels, around the world which were performed in 2020. The global average happiness rate was roughly 63 percent, which was significantly higher than the responses from Korea.

According to the article by Sas (2021), the percentage of Polish respondents who reported feeling happy was highest in December 2011, when 75% said they felt extremely or somewhat happy. However, by June (2019) the percentage had decreased slightly to 71%. On the other hand, the survey conducted in Cuba in 2022, as reported by Statista Research Department (2023) found that the highest percentage of the population scored a 1 to 0 scale of 0 to 10, where 0 represents not at all happy and 10 represents very happy. The findings suggest many Cubans reported feeling very unhappy or not happy at all. Specifically, 13% of respondents reported

experiencing no happiness at all. It's important to note that these surveys were conducted in different countries and at different times.

Forgiveness is defined as the conscious, deliberate decision to let go of sentiments or vengeance towards a person or group who has harmed you, regardless of whether the offender or group actually deserves your forgiveness. Forgiveness is a choice one makes over and over again. It may take the form of a new viewpoint or a healthy amount of distance; it might resemble a calm room with a window looking out onto a complex and contentious world. Forgiveness can be a quality that depicts a connection in which one must be able to forgive oneself in order to forgive others. It can also be a gift you can offer to yourself or others. It is something that you also receive. Likewise, forgiveness is a powerful tool that can transform our lives and change our future. Moreover, it helps in lowering the risk of heart attack; improves sleep as well as cholesterol level blood pressure, levels of stress, anxiety and depression. Forgiveness is a journey or a path on the earth which has several stages. These stages characterize stepping-stones in a journey that is endless. With love and fear forgiveness is entangled in our lives. We remained sealed in our pain as far as we forgive.

In a survey by So (2022), over 12% of respondents from South Korea said that forgiving someone for wrongdoing did or might make them the happiest.

Happiness

According to Lyubomirsky (2001), happiness is defined as “the subjective assessment of whether a person is happy or unhappy and can be evaluated as a psychological state of well-being or contentment”. According to Tatarkiewicz (1976), happiness has been defined as a “a lasting, complete, and justified satisfaction with life as a whole.”

Veenhoven (1984) referred to happiness as the degree to which an individual judges the overall quality of his/her life favorably. Cohen (2002) stated that happiness is essential criteria for healthy life. Wessman and Ricks (1966, p. 240) stated “happiness appears as an overall evaluation of the quality of an individual's own

experience in the conduct of his vital affairs. As such, happiness represents conception abstracted from the flux of affective life, indicating a decided balance or positive affectivity over long periods of time.” Happiness has been defined as “the preponderance of positive affect over negative affect with a distinct focus on the affective evaluation of one’s life situation” (Diener, 1984).

According to Lyubomirsky, happiness is described as “the experience of joy, contentment, or positive well-being, combined with a sense that one’s life is good, meaningful, and worthwhile.

According to Kraut (1979) happiness includes “the belief that one is getting the important things one wants, as well as certain pleasant effects that normally go along with this belief”. According to Hills and Argyle (2001), happiness is a multidimensional construct comprising both emotional and cognitive elements. Seligman (2004) defined happiness as a state of mind in which a person acts positively. Happiness can be viewed in three ways; satisfaction, happiness in a limited period or happiness towards one another (Haybron, 2003). The mixture of both cognitive and non-cognitive elements is stated as happiness (Heylighen, 1992).

Theoretical Framework -

Hedonism Theory

According to the hedonism idea, people are happy primarily because they experience positive emotions and negative ones are negligible. This theory states that the key to happiness is to increase positive emotions and decrease negative ones. Ancient Greek philosophers like Aristippus and Epicurus, who thought that life's purpose was to seek pleasure and avoid misery, are the intellectual ancestors of this view (Ryan & Deci, 2001). However, modern interpretations of hedonism may differ from its historical roots, as the philosophy of happiness has developed over time. Ethical hedonism and psychological hedonism are the two most common varieties. According to ethical hedonists, we should evaluate our deeds based on how much pleasure they bring us. On the other side, psychological hedonism holds that all human action is driven by the

desire to maximize pleasure and minimize misery. The hedonism hypothesis of pleasure has been criticized for being overly simplistic and failing to account for other essential contributors to human satisfaction, such as fulfilling interpersonal connections, a meaningful life mission, and opportunities for self-improvement. The pursuit of pleasure without regard for the costs involved can also result in problems like addiction, impulsivity, and short-sightedness. The hedonistic hypothesis of happiness, while it may come close to capturing the intricacies of human satisfaction, has its limitations and may not do so entirely.

Desire Theory

One way to be happy, according to the desire theory, is to have what one wants (Griffin, 1986). To rephrase, the theory asserts that all of us must rely on our own preferences and aspirations to find fulfilment. The ancient Greek philosopher Aristotle is credited with popularizing the idea that humans have an innate drive to pursue pleasure and avoid pain. However, the want theory of happiness has evolved and its present interpretations may differ from its historical foundations. Both an objective and a subjective theory of desire exist. According to the objective desire theory, love, health, and security are all examples of "objectively desirable" outcomes for human beings. On the other hand, the subjective want theory argues that satisfaction comes from acting in accordance with one's own preferences and desires, regardless of whether or not these actions are viewed as desirable by others. There are many who claim that the want theory of happiness is excessively narrow and selfish, failing to consider the feelings and needs of others or the ripple effect of our activities on the world at large. In addition, advertising and societal conventions can sway our preferences in ways that aren't necessarily beneficial to us.

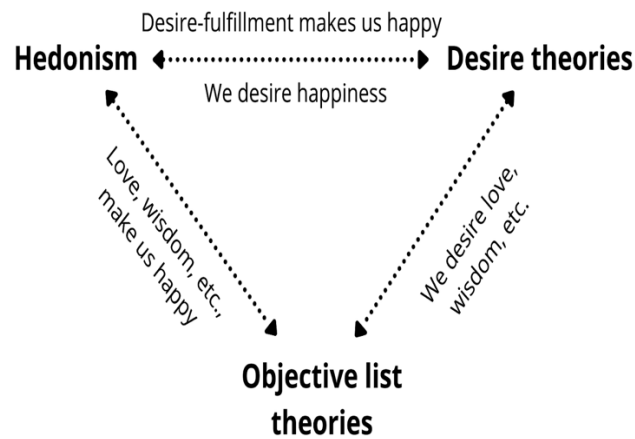
In conclusion, the desire theory of happiness has its limitations and may not fully reflect the intricacies of human satisfaction, despite its emphasis on the necessity of fulfilling our particular wishes and preferences.

Objective List Theory-

According to proponents of the Objective List theory of happiness, contentment can only be attained under specific, external conditions. To paraphrase the theory's proponents, happiness consists of more than simply a subjective feeling based on our wants and likes; it also comprises objective components crucial to human flourishing.

Aristotle, a Greek philosopher, popularized the idea that one might find fulfilment in life by working on one's character and becoming the best version of oneself. The modern interpretation of the Objective List theory of happiness builds on this concept by positing that health, safety, education, and relationships are objective goods that contribute to human happiness. However, the Objective List theory of happiness places greater emphasis on objective variables that contribute to human flourishing than does the want theory of happiness, which claims that happiness is attained through the fulfilment of individual desires or preferences. This approach also acknowledges that cultural and societal norms may cause these objective parameters to fluctuate. The Objective List theory of happiness has been criticized on the grounds that it does not take into consideration the importance of factors such as an individual's desires and preferences. Furthermore, cultural and societal conventions may influence the definition of objective goods, which in turn may result in varying perspectives on what constitutes happiness.

In conclusion, the Objective List theory of happiness has its limitations and may not fully represent the subjective experience of happiness, despite its emphasis on objective criteria like health, safety, education, and relationships.

**Figure 1***Theories of well-being***Authentic Happiness**

Seligman (2003) proposed the Authentic Happiness theory, a branch of positive psychology, to explain how people can increase their levels of happiness by focusing on the things that bring them the most satisfaction in life: their relationships, their work, and their sense of purpose. This theory posits that people are happiest when they are making full use of their individual abilities and skills in pursuit of a meaningful existence. According to this theory, contentment isn't merely a pleasant experience; it's a permanent state of being marked by a steady stream of happy feelings, strong social bonds, and meaningful work. According to this view, there are three primary factors that contribute to genuine happiness: good emotions, engagement, and significance. The term "positive emotions" describes how one feels when they are happy, satisfied, and pleased. Being "engaged" means you're totally committed to whatever it is you're doing, whether it's a job or a hobby. When one gives back to a group or a cause that is bigger than themselves, they gain a feeling of meaning in their lives. The pursuit of happiness is a personal endeavour, as emphasized by the Authentic Happiness philosophy. It proposes that people can increase their happiness, sense of purpose, and involvement with the world by focusing on and making the most of their specific qualities and talents. The idea also stresses the significance of having supportive relationships with others and feeling

like you belong in this world. Some have argued that the Authentic Happiness hypothesis ignores the importance of external elements like social and economic status in favour of focusing on the strengths and skills of the individual. Furthermore, sceptics claim that the theory does not adequately consider the range of human experience, including the range of negative feelings and events.

In conclusion, the Authentic Happiness hypothesis argues that one can improve their state of mind by focusing on the things that bring them joy, such as the relationships they maintain and the work they do. Although the theory has its flaws and may not capture all the complexity of human happiness, it does shed light on how vital personal strengths, social support, and a meaningful life mission are to flourishing.

Forgiveness

Enright et al. (1998) defined forgiveness as, “a willingness to abandon one's right to resentment, negative judgment and indifferent behavior toward one who unjustly hurt us, while fostering the undeserved qualities of compassion, generosity and even love toward him or her.” Thompson et al. (2005) defined forgiveness as freeing from a negative attachment to the source that has transgressed against a person. Steven (1999) defined forgiveness as “letting go of my right to hurt another person for hurting me.” According to North (1987), “forgiveness is the overcoming of negative affect and judgment towards the offender, not by denying ourselves the right to such affect and judgment, but by endeavoring to view the offender with compassion, benevolence and love while recognizing he/she has abandoned the right to them.”

McCullough et al. (1997) described forgiving as a ‘complex’ of motivational changes that occurs in the aftermath of a significant interpersonal offense. When offended people forgive, his or her basic motivation to (a) seek revenge and (b) avoid contact with the offender are lessened and other relationships and constructive motivation (such as the motivation to resume a positive relationship) are restored. According to Rye and Pargament (2002) forgiveness is defined as “letting go of negative emotions (hostility), negative thoughts (thoughts of revenge) and negative behaviors (verbal

aggression) in response to the considerable injustice suffered and may involve responding positively towards the offender (compassion).” Thompson and Snyder (2003) defined forgiveness as the “framing of a perceived transgression such that one’s attachment to the transgressor, transgression and sequel of the transgression is transformed from negative to neutral or positive.”

Fincham and Kashdan (2004) defined forgiveness in terms of its potential ability to offset the debilitating effects of anger and hostility associated with a desire to avenge the hurtful act of another.

According to Wade et al. (2005), forgiveness has been conceptualized as a person’s progression, moving from a position of hatred, resentment and bitterness to one of diminishment of anger and desire for revenge towards the perceived wrongdoer. Cosgrove and Konstam (2008) conceptualized forgiveness which includes benevolence and that it goes beyond the cessation of negative affect, judgment and behavior toward and the presence of positive affect, judgment and behavior toward the wrongdoer such as compassion, mercy, empathy and perhaps love. Recine et al. (2009) opined a consensus definition of forgiveness which comprises the following three elements; forgiveness is a process that takes time, it involves letting go of a negative response following an offense and through forgiveness, a positive response towards the offender emerges.

Theoretical Framework -

Enright’s Process Model

The Enright process model is mostly psychological and intellectual rather than religious and spiritual, despite the fact that Enright is a devoted Christian. According to the Enright model (2001) people must ask for and receive forgiveness when necessary if they want to grow spiritually.

The four phases of forgiveness include;

Uncovering Phase: A person “gains insight into whether and how the injustice and subsequent injury have compromised his or her life.” This entails facing the nature of the offense and learning what the repercussions of having been offended are. Clarifying the nature of the offense and how it has affected one’s life is a crucial step in coming to forgive an offender, identifying who did what to whom in the most impartial manner feasible. One cannot forgive an offense that did not occur, although one may be able to resolve the anger aroused by a perceived offender when the actual nature of the event is understood. Psychologically, people are not able to forgive an offense against another person, but they are able to forgive the secondary or indirect impacts that they do feel after someone else has offended them.

For instance, it is impossible to forgive someone who abuses another person or a drunk driver who injures or kills a close family member or friend. However, one can overlook the loss, pain, suffering, and suffering they themselves faced because of their loved one’s abuse.

Moreover, confronting the nature of the offense, uncovering the consequences of the offense adds understanding how both “the original unfairness” and one’s responses to this injustice have influenced one’s life. In this stage, a person must face both the objective and subjective harm or injuries that the offense has produced. Occasionally, a person may need help realizing the link between not having forgiven and the occurrence of various physical or psychological difficulties that are the result of suppressed or repressed anger. In counseling, this may involve discovering and “working through” various “layers of pain” in addition to justifiable anger. Shame, guilt, obsessive thoughts about the offender or one’s offense, and temporary or permanent life changes are some examples of these layers of agony.

Decision Phase: A person “gains an accurate understanding of the nature of forgiveness and decides to commit to forgiving on the basis of this understanding” during the decision phase. Forgiveness is and must be “free choice,” even though

there are numerous religious, spiritual and cultural laws or requirements to do so. A person must at the very least be willing to learn to forgive. A person who is imprisoned in the “prison of unforgiveness” may decide to forgive after realizing that their current method of dealing with the pain and suffering brought on by an offense is ineffective. In the words of the twelve steps, “sick and tired of being sick and tired” is a good place to start when deciding to forgive. At this moment, one is “pulled by the hope” that learning to forgive one’s offender will spare that one who was offended from additional, avoidable suffering in addition to being “pushed by the pain,” of unforgiveness. Decision to start forgiving, however hesitant or weak, is made by the individual who is stuck in and suffering from unforgiveness at the end of this phase.

Work Phase: In the work phase, forgiveness is actively practiced. In this stage, the offender “gains a cognitive understanding of the offender and begins to be viewed in a new light, resulting in positive change in affect about the offender, about the self, and about the relationship.” Working towards a precise grasp of the offender is frequently where concrete actions in this phase start. The consideration could mean approaching the objectionable scenario differently or viewing the perpetrator as “a person who is, in fact, a human being and not an evil incarnate.”



Figure 2

Shows Forgiveness Process by Enright (2001)

Clinical experience has demonstrated that a person usually comes to think differently about an offender before feeling more positively towards him. Other steps in this phase include developing realistic empathy and compassion for the offender, courageously and assertively suffering the hurt caused by the offender, and finally giving the offender the “moral gift” of forgiveness. Psychologically, such beneficence cannot be hurried and demanded and may take a long time to achieve. Some clients who struggle to forgive severe abuse discover that the closest they can come to the ideal objective of beneficence is a decrease of animosity towards their abuser.

Deepening Phase: - In this phase finally, a person “finds increasing meaning in the suffering, feels more connected to others, experiences decreased negative affect and at times, renewed purpose in life.” In this phase, it’s possible to find relief from the “emotional prison” of “unforgiveness, bitterness, resentment and anger” through the act of forgiveness. As one’s capacity for forgiveness grows, one could discover new significance in their pain and a new reason to live. Additionally, one could come to realize that they themselves need to beg for pardon from others, possibly even from the offender.

Affective, Cognitive and Behavioral Perspective

According to Zechmeister and Romero (2002), forgiveness involves three levels of functioning namely, affective, cognitive and behavioral levels. On an affective level, negative effects like hatred, resentment, anger and sorrow are given up. Eventually, the neutral feelings are replaced by positive effects like compassion. The offender party stops considering condemning judgements and plans for retaliation on a cognitive level. Positive attitudes towards the perpetrator take their place. These could take the shape of wishing the offender well (Smedes, 1984) and treating the offender with respect as a moral being. One doesn’t behave out of retaliation on a behavioral level. According to Ansburger (1981) this is replaced by willingness to join in a “loving community” with the offender and perhaps even to make overtures in that direction.

For instance, when accepting, a person recognizes the situational factor that led to an offender's action (cognitive), empathize with or feel sympathy for the offender (affective) and talk about potential solutions or assist the offender (behavior).

Interpersonal Perspective

Forgiveness is important for evolution and maintenance of social relationships that are necessary for human existence. Three factors trigger the instinct to forgive, according to McCullough et al. (2003) which may include, Safety (people have a natural tendency to forgive those they believe won't harm them again); Expected Value (an individual is more likely to forgive when relationships appear to have long-term value and we can see the advantages of mending fences); Compassion or care worthiness (one can easily forgive those with whom we have close relationships or understanding).

The Pyramid Model of Forgiveness

According to Worthington (1998) forgiveness is seen as 'the natural response to empathy and humility. Most forgiveness interventions use process-based models, which allow for a choice to forgive to be made in small steps overtime. A pyramidal model of forgiveness, developed by Worthington (1998, 2003), places a strong emphasis on empathy, humility and willingness to forgive. While humility reminds the victim of his/her own faults and times they have required forgiveness, empathy for the transgressor's situation places the hurt in the larger framework of all the factors influencing the transgressor's behavior but since forgiving is not simple, one must make a commitment to doing so. The acronym 'REACH', where each letter stands for one of the succeeding layers of a pyramid, describes the pyramid model, which appears to derive its name from an intervention to which it gives rise.

Empathy is a key feature of the forgiveness process. Recalling the pain is at the pyramid's base (R). In a friendly setting, the offender thinks back on the offense. The next layer is empathy through different exercises (E) or understanding things from the viewpoint of the other, followed by the selfless gift of forgiving the offender and

admitting that one has previously harmed others (A). Next, there is a public commitment to forgive (C) and lastly at the very top, there is a commitment to hang on to forgiveness (H).

Malleability Model of Forgiveness

According to McCullough et al. (2003) the level of forgiveness shown by a person can fluctuate over time. Karremans and Van Lange (2008b) argue that “the process underlying forgiveness cannot be fully understood without taking into account the unconscious and implicit process that may be at play in influencing forgiveness.” Thus, the researcher questions the widespread belief that forgiving always results from a conscious choice and place more emphasis on situational factors that affect forgiveness but are not always conscious. However, Karremans and Van Lange (2008) recognize that forgiveness is associated with automatic, nonconscious, and deliberate conscious processes and consider how these two processes interact to produce forgiveness. One is that the two processes operate concurrently and in tandem. Second, for pardon to occur, automatic and deliberate processes might take place in that order.

Gordon and Baucom’s Model

Gordon and Baucom’s (1998) model is based on the idea that psychological trauma can be used to explain how forgiveness works. According to the paradigm, parts of healing from more widespread traumatic experiences are almost identical to features of forgiving enormous treachery. The main incidents that call for a process of forgiveness can be viewed as interpersonal trauma that upends the person’s prior presumptions and expectations of relationships. When someone wants to successfully recover from a traumatic experience, they may want to recreate their prior views about the relationship in order to regain a sense of predictability, restraint, and security in it. In such circumstances, there are three stages to the forgiveness process;

Impact Stage: It is the first step; the victims begin to understand how the transgression has affected them personally and in their relationships.

Meaning Stage: It is the second step which focuses on finding the main cause of the incident in the main goal that the transgressors' behavior may be comprehended.

Recovery Stage: It is the third step, in the stage victim moves into the past traumatic event and relieves self from the control of its outcome.

Pereira et al. (2022) did a study to examine the direct and indirect effects of communication patterns and forgiveness on physical and psychological morbidity, among young adults involved in a romantic relationship. The tendency to Forgive Scale, the Communication Patterns Questionnaire, and the Rotterdam Symptom Checklist were completed by 298 students from a large university in the United States who are engaged in a heterosexual romantic relationship. Mutuality communication was found to be a direct predictor of physical morbidity. Destructive communication had an indirect effect on physical and psychological morbidity, via forgiveness. However, the indirect connection between destructive communication and psychological morbidity was not significant for female partners. Teaching constructive communication skills may be a key factor for interventions addressed to young adults in romantic relationships, in order to promote forgiveness, due to its potential positive influence in physical and psychological well-being.

This ongoing chapter tried to look at study variables in light of their theoretical framework, this helps the investigator to focus on relevant research conducted in this area.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The present chapter will attempt to look at relevant research carried out on happiness and forgiveness, in order to highlight the research gaps and frame objective of the present study.

Happiness

According to Lee and Im (2007) individuals who have a high level of subjective happiness have more positive thoughts about themselves. Cohen (2002) suggested that being happy may also boost the immune system and help one to achieve or maintain health. According to Garcia and Siddiqui (2009) studies on subjective happiness have shown a positive relationship with life satisfaction.

Chaplin (2006) stated happiness was negatively associated with the presence of depressive symptoms. According to Argyle and Crossland (1987) three main components of happiness have been identified which includes, frequent positive affect or joy, a high average level of satisfaction over a period, and the absence of negative feelings such as depression and anxiety and as asserted by Diener et al. (2006) happiness is a composite of life satisfaction.

Demir et al. (2015), conducted a study on friendship and happiness related to significant contributions to our understanding. The empirical data showed friendship to be a reliable and consistent predictor of happiness in young adults. In addition to reviewing well-known indicators of friendship (such as quality, quantity and satisfaction) that are frequently discussed in the literature. For instance, studies have shown that in some situations, factors like the presence of romantic relationships or family support, influence the benefits of friendship.

The research was conducted by Demir (2010) on close relationships and happiness among emerging adults. The current study investigated the impact of several close relationships (mother, father, best friend, romantic partner, if any) on happiness

among emerging adults with and without a romantic partner. Only relationships between one's mother and best friend were found to be predicting happiness in the group of those without a spouse ($n=152$). The results, on the other hand, indicated that only three factors; the quality of the mother - child relationships, the quality of the romantic relationship, and conflict- were predictive of happiness in those who had a partner ($n=159$). The findings for this group also revealed that the quality of romantic relationships was protective of best friend conflict. Furthermore, best friend quality did not mitigate the detrimental effects of romantic partner conflict on happiness, indicating a lesser significance for best friends in happiness. The results imply, in other words, that the relevance of friends to happiness may be diminished or absent altogether for emerging adults who are in a romantic relationship. In light of the literature, the findings were analyzed, and recommendations for further study were suggested.

The research was conducted by Kennison (2022) on humor and resilience relationships with happiness in young adults. The previous studies have demonstrated that happier people tend to be more resilient. As per additional studies, those who use positive humor more frequently, (such as self - enhancing and affiliative humor) and who use negative humor less frequently, (such as aggressive and self - defeating humor), report feeling happier overall. Further, resilience entails a variety of protective variables that help people to do better than predicted despite past and present challenges. The study explored the possibility that using one or more humor types could work as unique resilience protective factors in predicting happiness. The research of 204 young adults (105 men and 99 women) who participated in an online survey revealed that, after resilience was taken into account, the negative humor types (aggressive humor) were used less frequently. After resilience was controlled, there was no longer any additional variation in happiness that could be attributed to the employment of the positive humor techniques. The outcomes are in line with the body of knowledge that suggests alterations in behavior are connected to increase in well-being.

A study was conducted by Singh et al. (2017) on understanding happiness among young adults. The study aimed to predict the role of personality, psychological well-being, and gratitude on happiness among young adults. The study is based on a youth sample (N=109) with ages ranging from 18 to 23 years. There was a positive significant correlation observed among personality, psychological well-being, gratitude and happiness. Regression analysis was carried out step-wise to predict the best predictors of happiness. Results based on stepwise regression demonstrated that happiness among young adults is significantly predicted by psychological well-being, gratitude, and extroversion. The researchers further emphasized the importance of these variables in the happiness of young adults.

Correlates of happiness among young adults, was studied by Mukherjee and Basu (2008). The research looked at the factors associated with happiness in adults (n=100). Happiness was positively correlated with secure attachment pattern, reality testing, judgment, sense of one's own reality as well as that of the world, regulation and control of one's drives, impulses, and objects, adaptive regression in service of the ego, defensive functioning, stimulus barrier, autonomous functioning, synthetic integrative functioning, mastery-competence, emotional intelligence, inner-other directedness, and meaning in life (presence). The findings of stepwise multiple regression demonstrated that the growth of happiness was highly influenced by emotional intelligence, existence of meaning in life, and secure attachment patterns.

A study was aimed for an unrealistic standard that can impair happiness. A cross sectional sample of 259 young adults aged between 18 to 35 were taken. Technical assistance of SPSS and AMOS was used. The research concluded that increased dominance of intense intelligence was related to decreased perfectionism and more happiness. It further showed that increased dominance of emotional intelligence decreased maladaptive perfectionism because the cynical results of maladaptive perfectionism were present thus reducing happiness extent among young adult. The study ended up giving practical implementations of improving emotional intelligence

(EI) and lowering perfectionism among individuals which will enhance their overall happiness (Badri et al. 2021)

Forgiveness

Safaria (2014) predicted a relationship between gratitude and forgiveness with happiness, explaining 28.9% of the variance. The researchers found out a significant positive correlation between forgiveness personality traits and mental health (Sabeelah et al. 2014)

According to Rey et al. (2016) the research was conducted on psychological correlates and personality foundations of forgiveness. According to research findings, agreeableness may be the most reliable predictor of forgiveness and retaliation in a sample of young adults. The research further explored gender differences in the association between this dispositional quality and intergroup forgiveness. In addition, gender was investigated in this study as a potential moderator between dispositional factors and forgiveness dimensions. In the sample there were no gender differences in agreeableness, however women scored lower on avoidance motivations while men scored higher on revenge motive. Additionally, findings showed that agreeableness was substantially linked to avoidance and vengeance impulses in men exclusively (for both genders). Finally, the relationship between agreeableness and drive for retaliation was modified by gender. The need of taking these disparities into account in additional positive psychology intervention program in future study is highlighted by the researchers.

Psychological maltreatment, forgiveness, mindfulness and internet addiction study was conducted among young adults by Arslan (2017). Many people's lives are improved by using the Internet, but excessive use of it can have negative effects on both mental and physical health. The goal of the study was to understand how forgiveness and mindfulness can reduce the relationship between young adults' psychological abuse and Internet addiction. A total sample of 392 young people with an average age of 22.01 were taken. Preliminary analysis revealed that the

at-risk group for online addiction had lower levels of forgiveness and mindfulness but higher levels of psychological abuse than the normal group for Internet addiction. A structural equation model was also used to examine the impacts of mediator variables on internet addiction, and the results showed that forgiveness and mindfulness played the complete mediating function regarding the impact of psychological maltreatment on Internet addiction. The study's findings have important ramifications for mental health programs that can help young adults with their Internet addictions by reducing the impact of psychological abuse on them.

The study investigated the relationship between the forgiveness cultures of young adults and their parents. The forgiveness scale was distributed to 166 adults, ages 18 to 33, together with their 166 biological moms, ages 34 to 66 and their 166 biological fathers ages 34 to 72. Young people's propensities for resentment and retribution were correlated with their mothers' and fathers' levels of forgiveness, respectively. The validity of emotions is explored in relation to gender stereotypes using these findings (Mullet et al. 2006)

A study was carried out on forgiveness in younger, middle-aged, and older adults by Ghaemmaghami et al. (2011). The purpose of the study was to examine how age and gender affect forgiveness for infractions that occurred in real life. Emerging adults as well as young, middle aged and older adults filled out the Transgression - Related Interpersonal Motivations Inventory (TRIM-18), which studied their avoidance, revenge and benevolence motivation towards an offender and revealed how much they are generally concerned with the subject of forgiveness. According to the findings, middle-aged adults tend to display avoidance more than younger adults. In addition, young men were more driven to exact retribution than middle-aged or older males. Women did not exhibit any such age difference. Furthermore, women and middle - aged adults found that the topic of forgiveness was more prevalent in their daily lives.

The aim of the study was to analyze the relationships between the propensity to forgive and life satisfaction in different age groups. Polish versions of the Heartland

Forgiveness Scale (adapted by Kaleta et al. 2016) and of The Satisfaction with Life Scale by Diener et al. (SWLS, 1985) adapted by Juczynski (2012), were used. The sample included 436 individuals aged 19 to 67. For all the age groups separately, the analyses were performed. Negative and positive dimensions of forgiveness of self, of others, and of situations beyond anyone's control were considered. The findings showed connections between several aspects of the capacity to forgive and overall sample life happiness. Furthermore, individuals aged 19-30 and 41-50 showed statistically significant positive relationships between the positive and negative features of forgiveness and life satisfaction. However, a significant positive association between reduced unforgiveness and life satisfaction was found in the group of respondents aged 31 to 40, whereas in the group of respondents aged 50 and older a substantial positive relationship between positive forgiveness and life satisfaction was found (Kaleta & Mroz, 2018).

Lin et al. (2013) did a study to evaluate the efficacy of an intervention that promotes forgiveness for young adults who have a shaky attachment to their moms. Twenty-seven students were chosen from four Taiwanese colleges and placed in one or two controlled groups: those receiving alternative treatments or the forgiveness intervention. Dependent tests were given before, after, and eight-week followed-up. Within-group analysis revealed that participants in the forgiveness intervention improved more than those in attachment security, forgiveness, trait anxiety, hope, and self-esteem.

Hermaen and Bhutto (2020), conducted a study which explored the impact of gratitude and forgiveness in predicting well-being in young adults. The sample for study included 300 participants between the ages of 18 and 24 who were conveniently selected from a university in Karachi city. Gratitude Questionnaire (McCullough et al. 2002), Heartland Forgiveness Scale (Thompson et al. 2005) and Flourishing Scale (Diener et al. 2010) were used as the measures to collect data. Multiple linear regression analysis revealed gratitude to be a non-significant predictor of subjective well-being, whereas forgiveness was found to be a significant predictor of subjective

well-being. In addition, a weak positive correlation between forgiveness and subjective well-being and appreciation and subjective well-being has been discovered. According to this study, general counseling for clients who are young adults may effectively use forgiveness and gratitude as well as other therapeutic strategies.

A study was conducted by Zagrean et al. (2020), on forgiveness and family functioning among young adults from divorced and married families. Forgiveness is a response strategy capable of countering the escalation of conflicts and it therefore represents a valuable resource for managing critical individual and family transitions. In addition, parental divorce is a stressful event that requires the reorganization of the whole family. This study, which involved 95 Italian young adults with divorced or married parents, analyzed the relationship between family functioning and forgiveness. In divorced families, the results revealed substantial relationships between factors, but not in the intact families. Specifically in the setting of divorce, forgiveness was negatively correlated with family disengagement and disorder and positively correlated with family cohesion and flexibility.

Chen et al. (2019) examined a study to perform an outcome wide analysis to prospectively examine the associations of forgiveness (including forgiveness of others, forgiveness of oneself and forgiveness of God) with a variety of psychosocial, mental, behavioral and physical health outcomes. Using generalized estimating equations, data from the Nurses' Health Study II and the Growing Up Today Study (Ns ranged from 5,246 - 6994, depending on forgiveness type and outcome with 3 or 6 years of follow-up were analyzed. All of the models took into account socio demographic traits, previous religious attendance, previous maternal attachment, and previous values of the outcome variables. All forgiving measures were inversely related to depressed and anxious symptoms and favorably related to every psychosocial well-being outcome. Forgiveness and behavioral or physical health outcomes were not significantly correlated. It is possible to view forgiveness as a virtue in and of itself, as well as a factor in improved psychosocial functioning and mental health.

According to Turnage et al. (2012), a research study was done on the self-esteem, empathy, and forgiveness perspectives of 86 social work students at a university in Florida. A cross-sectional, self-administered survey was used in the study. According to the findings, female students expressed a higher level of emotional empathy than did male students. Significant relationships were also noted between forgiveness of others and the age of the respondent and ethnicity. Self-esteem was a significant predictor of forgiveness of self and forgiveness of others; empathy is a significant predictor of forgiveness of others. According to the study it was suggested that social work educators must assist students in building a solid sense of self and a good knowledge of others. Further, the researchers suggested that future research should be focused on the timing of a transgression affects forgiveness of self and others.

Jeter and Brannon (2017) did a study on research that suggests that college-aged students, especially first-year college students, are particularly prone to experience relational conflict. Interpersonal forgiveness has been well-documented as a variable that can reduce relational conflict among young adults. However, limited empirical research to date has explored the motivation and ability of college-aged students to engage in forgiveness granting behavior when they are the victim of an interpersonal conflict; this lack of empirical research is especially noteworthy when considering the perpetrator's perspective and why (motivation) and how (ability) perpetrators engage in forgiveness seeking behaviors following conflict. The purpose of the current study was to examine how victims and offenders of interpersonal offenses sort and grant forgiveness. Results from a sample of 144 young adults show that those who were exposed to the justification for forgiving others all as well as a mindfulness or implementation planning approach were more likely to participate in forgiveness/seeking behaviors than those who were not. Participants' mood and attitudes toward forgiveness granting/seeking were enhanced by receiving both a message and a technique. These results were especially pronounced for victims of an interpersonal transgression who practiced mindfulness. Overall, mindfulness appeared to be the most promising technique in promoting forgiveness.

Happiness and Forgiveness

According to Shekhar et al. (2016) the study was conducted to assess the happiness and forgiveness among college going students and to discover a correlation between these two variables using Oxford Happiness Questionnaire by (Argyle & Hills, 2000) to assess happiness and Heartland Forgiveness Scale (Thompson & Snyder, 2003) to assess forgiveness. 100 students were included in the data, 50 of them were males and 50 of them were females. T-test and partial correlation were the statistical techniques employed. In this study, it was discovered that happiness and forgiveness varied significantly by gender, with happiness and forgiveness showing only a weak relationship. Male students' means in both variables were higher than those of female students. A research study was conducted by Rijavec et al. (2010) to study the role of gender in the relationship between revenge motivation and avoidance motivation and well-being. The students responded to two self-report questionnaires. Well-being was measured with Short Depression-Happiness Scale whereas the Forging was measured with the Transgression-Related Interpersonal Motivations (TRIM) Inventory. A sample of 600 college students was taken from which 300 were males and 300 were females. The age group was 19 to 28 years. Regression analyses showed that both revenge and avoidance motivation were significant predictors of depression for males, while for females only revenge motivation proved to be significant. Neither revenge nor avoidance motivation predicted happiness. It concluded that being prone to revenge and avoidance can be related to depression, but that doesn't mean that less avoidance and revenge will necessarily be related to more happiness.

CHAPTER 3

OVERVIEW, AIMS, OBJECTIVES AND HYPOTHESES

- Happiness is an electrifying and elusive state. Being happy doesn't mean everything's perfect. The person who is not obsessed with material possessions or extravagant trips. This individual is content with the small joys in life, such as caressing a dog, relaxing under a tree, and enjoying a cup of tea.
- Forgiveness is defined as the conscious, deliberate decision to let go of sentiments or vengeance towards a person or group who has harmed you, regardless of whether the offender or group actually deserves your forgiveness.

Forgiveness is a choice one makes over and over again. It can also be a gift you can offer to yourself or others. Forgiveness is a powerful tool that can transform our lives and change our future. Forgiveness helps in lowering the risk of heart attack; improves sleep as well as cholesterol level blood pressure, levels of stress, anxiety and depression.

- Cohen (2002) stated that happiness is essential criteria for healthy life. Wessman and Ricks (1966) wrote “happiness appears as an overall evaluation of the quality of an individual's own experience in the conduct of his vital affairs. As such, happiness represents conception abstracted from the flux of affective life, indicating a decided balance or positive affectivity over long periods of time.” Happiness has been defined as “a lasting, complete, and justified satisfaction with life as a whole.” According to Heylighen (1992) the mixture of both cognitive and non-cognitive elements is stated as happiness.
- According to the hedonism idea, people are happy primarily because they experience positive emotions and negative ones are negligible. On the other side, psychological hedonism holds that all human action is driven by the desire to maximize pleasure and minimize misery. There are many who claim that the want theory of happiness is excessively narrow and selfish, failing to consider the

feelings and needs of others or the ripple effect of our activities on the world at large. In conclusion, the desire theory of happiness has its limitations and may not fully reflect the intricacies of human satisfaction, despite its emphasis on the necessity of fulfilling our particular wishes and preferences. However, the Objective List theory of happiness places greater emphasis on objective variables that contribute to human flourishing than does the want theory of happiness, which claims that happiness is attained through the fulfilment of individual desires or preferences.

- Seligman (2003) proposed the Authentic Happiness theory, a branch of positive psychology, to explain how people can increase their levels of happiness by focusing on the things that bring them the most satisfaction in life: their relationships, their work, and their sense of purpose. The term "positive emotions" describes how one feels when they are happy, satisfied, and pleased. Being "engaged" means you're totally committed to whatever it is you're doing, whether it's a job or a hobby. When one gives back to a group or a cause that is bigger than themselves, they gain a feeling of meaning in their lives. Some have argued that the Authentic Happiness hypothesis ignores the importance of external elements like social and economic status in favour of focusing on the strengths and skills of the individual.
- Enright et al. (1998) defined forgiveness as, “a willingness to abandon one's right to resentment, negative judgment and indifferent behavior toward one who unjustly hurt us, while fostering the undeserved qualities of compassion, generosity and even love toward him or her.” Thompson et al., (2005) defined forgiveness as freeing from a negative attachment to the source that has transgressed against a person. Steven (1999) defined forgiveness as “letting go of my right to hurt another person for hurting me.” McCullough et al. (1997) described forgiving as a ‘complex’ of motivational changes that occurs in the aftermath of a significant interpersonal offense.

- According to Rye and Pargament (2002) forgiveness is defined as “letting go of negative emotions (hostility), negative thoughts (thoughts of revenge) and negative behaviors (verbal aggression) in response to the considerable injustice suffered, and may involve responding positively towards the offender (compassion).” Reid (2014) defined forgiveness as a deliberate and conscious decision to release feelings of resentment or anger towards a person or group of people who have caused harm.
- The Enright process model is mostly psychological and intellectual rather than religious and spiritual, even though Enright is a devoted Christian. Psychologically, people are not able to forgive an offense against another person, but they are able to forgive the secondary or indirect impacts that they do feel after someone else has offended them. Shame, guilt, obsessive thoughts about the offender or one’s offense, and temporary or permanent life changes are some examples of these layers of agony. A person who is imprisoned in the “prison of unforgiveness” may decide to forgive after realizing that their current method of dealing with the pain and suffering brought on by an offense is ineffective. Work Phase: In the work phase, forgiveness is actively practiced. Other steps in this phase include developing realistic empathy and compassion for the offender, courageously and assertively suffering the hurt caused by the offender, and finally giving the offender the “moral gift” of forgiveness.
- According to Worthington (1998) forgiveness is seen as ‘the natural response to empathy and humility’. Empathy is a key feature of the forgiveness process. Next, there is a public commitment to forgive (C) and lastly at the very top, there is a commitment to hang on to forgiveness (H). One is that the two processes operate concurrently and in tandem. Second, for pardon to occur, automatic and deliberate processes might take place in that order. According to Demir et al. (2015), conducted a study on friendship and happiness related to significant contributions to our understanding. In addition to reviewing well-known indicators of friendship (such as quality, quantity and satisfaction) that are frequently discussed in the

literature, we will also touch on topics like how crucial friendship is to happiness. Although there was significant overlap in scores and many participants with schizophrenia endorsed a high level of well-being, people with schizophrenia endorsed considerably lower levels of subjective well-being than healthy controls.

- The research of 204 young adults (105 men and 99 women) who participated in an online survey revealed that, after resilience was taken into account, the negative humor types (aggressive humor) were used less frequently. The current study is an empirical investigation, to predict the role of personality, psychological well-being, and gratitude on happiness among young adults. Correlates of happiness among young adults' study was conducted by Mukherjee and Basu (2008).
- Rey et al. (2016) conducted a research and reported that recently, there has been a rise in interest in psychological correlates and personality foundations of forgiveness. Additionally, findings showed that agreeableness was substantially linked to avoidance and vengeance impulses in men exclusively (for both genders). Many people's lives are improved by using the Internet, but excessive use of it can have negative effects on both mental and physical health. Participants were 392 young people with an average age of 22.01. A study's findings have important ramifications for mental health programs that can help young adults with their Internet addictions by reducing the impact of psychological abuse on them.
- Mullet et al. (2006) did a study on relationships between young adults' forgiveness culture and their parents' forgiveness culture. The current study investigated the relationship between the forgiveness cultures of young adults and their parents. The forgiveness scale was distributed to 166 adults, ages 18 to 33, together with their 166 biological moms, ages 34 to 66 and their 166 biological fathers ages 34 to 72. Emerging adults as well as young, middle aged and older adults filled out the Transgression - Related Interpersonal Motivations Inventory (TRIM-18), Which majored their avoidance, revenge and benevolence motivation towards an offender and revealed how much they are generally concerned with the

subject of forgiveness. Women did not exhibit any such age difference. The aim of the study was to analyze the relationships between the propensity to forgive and life satisfaction in different age groups. Polish versions of the Heartland Forgiveness Scale (adapted by Kaleta et al. 2016) and of The Satisfaction with Life Scale by Diener et al. (2006).

- Chen et al. (2019) examine a study to perform an outcome wide analysis to prospectively examine the associations of forgiveness (including forgiveness of others, forgiveness of oneself and forgiveness of God) with a variety of psychosocial, mental, behavioral and physical health outcomes. To correct multiple testing Bonferroni correction was used. All forgiving measures were inversely related to depressed and anxious symptoms and favorably related to every psychosocial well-being outcome. A cross-sectional, self-administered survey was used in the study. However, limited empirical research to date has explored the motivation and ability of college-aged students to engage in forgiveness granting behavior when they are the victim of an interpersonal conflict; this lack of empirical research is especially noteworthy when considering the perpetrator's perspective and why (motivation) and how (ability) perpetrators engage in forgiveness seeking behaviors following conflict.
- According to Shekhar et al. (2016) the study was conducted to assess the happiness and forgiveness among college going students and to discover a correlation between these two variables using Oxford Happiness Questionnaire by (Argyle & Hills, 2000) to assess happiness and Heartland Forgiveness Scale (Thompson & Synder , 2003) to assess forgiveness. 100 students were included in the data, 50 of them were males and 50 of them were females. In this study, it was discovered that happiness and forgiveness varied significantly by gender, with happiness and forgiveness showing only a weak relationship. Male students' means in both variables were higher than those of female students. A research study was conducted by Rijavec et al. (2010). Neither revenge nor avoidance motivation predicted happiness.

Research Gaps

Research gaps in this area are highlighted by the review of literature. The investigator has been interested to study happiness and forgiveness among young adults in India, to understand this linkage that can help us to work towards increasing happiness by addressing the negative emotions caused due to hurt; and helping the youth to learn and practice forgiveness. Happiness and Forgiveness can change over the course of life time, and it is essential to comprehend how these traits develop and alter during adolescence. Keeping the above in mind, the primary goal of the investigation is to study Happiness and Forgiveness among young adults. Through this investigation, we will try to close this gap.

Aim

The present investigation aims to study Happiness and Forgiveness among male and female young adults.

Need of Study

Happiness plays a vital role in everyone's life. Happy people are more likely to be active and always try to eat healthy. Happiness helps in strengthening one's immune system. Happiness helps in reducing stress levels. Happiness is important as it boost our immune system, helps in better relationships with others, also extends our life longevity, increases our productivity at work. The one who is happy is seen that she or he is better at problem solving which is a vital skill at workplace. Happy people are more creative and imaginative. Happiness helps in lower up stress hormones; helps ease anxiety and depression and improve our mood. There is a powerful link between happiness and satisfaction in marriage. The ones who express happiness are more content with their partner. Happiness can be derived from various sources such as from individual salary, family, physical health, social relationship, positive emotions experienced, etc.

Forgiveness may aid in releasing ones from the grip of wrongdoer. Sometimes, forgiving someone can even elicit feelings of comprehension, empathy, and sympathy for the person who injured anyone. To forgive is not to ignore or to justify the wrongs done to ones. Forgiving is not only healthy but it also helps in making us happier, it takes off weight from our shoulder which we have never noticed that it was there. Forgiveness is a sign of strength, demonstrating one's capacity for resilience in the face of suffering. Holding grudges always make us feel bitterness and hatred. Positive psychology is crucial because understanding what makes people live more meaningful lives can help us develop more effective management techniques for dealing with mental disease, stopping bad behaviors, and boosting happiness and productivity. Happiness in young adults is important as it helps in understanding ones feeling, engaging in various activities, maintaining positive interpersonal and social ties, discovering a sense of purpose in life, and feeling like doing well is important.

Research indicates that forgiveness is associated with enhanced mental health outcomes, such as reduced anxiety and depression, increased life satisfaction, and decreased stress. Similarly, contentment has been associated with better mental health outcomes, including a lower risk of depression and anxiety. Forgiveness and happiness can also assist individuals in developing greater resilience in the face of adversity. People who are able to forgive and maintain positive emotions are typically better able to manage stress and recover from adversity. Overall, the study of forgiveness and happiness can assist people in leading healthier, more fulfilling lives and contribute to a more positive and compassionate society.

The World Report on Happiness Index has revealed that India ranks 136 out of 146 countries. The picture is grim. It can be explained not just by the socio-political and economic realities, but also due to psychological factors where hurt, anger, revenge can keep people in a state of constant stress and unhappiness. Forgiveness can be an important pathway to address this burning issue in India.

Research Question

1. Is there a relationship between Happiness and Forgiveness?
2. Are there any gender differences between Happiness and Forgiveness?

Research Objectives

1. This research aims to assess the relationship between happiness and forgiveness.
2. This research aims to assess gender differences in happiness and forgiveness.

Hypotheses

Based on the review of literature, following hypothesis were formulated,

1. Happiness is expected to be positively correlated to Forgiveness and its subscales. Viz. Coming to terms and letting go of subscales (CTLG), Developing positive feeling subscales (DPF), Giving benefit of doubt subscales (GBD), Total Bolton forgiveness scale (BFS).
2. No gender differences are expected on Happiness and Forgiveness.

CHAPTER 4

METHODOLOGY

This chapter clarifies the research methodology to answer the hypotheses to acquire systematic information. The aim of the present study was to identify the correlates of happiness and forgiveness. The study also explored gender differences in forgiveness and happiness. Forgiveness is the significant predictor of happiness. For this purpose, 100 subjects were taken (50 Males and 50 Females) in the age of 18 to 25 years were selected.

Research Design

For the present investigation, a quantitative approach was used. Researchers use the quantitative research method when the purpose of the research is to obtain primary data, that is, data gathered and assembled particularly for the study, in contrast to secondary data. The present study follows the quantitative research design intended to examine the correlation and group differences among the variables used in the study.

Sample

A total sample of 100 was taken 50 males and 50 females in the age of 18-25 years. The samples was collected from Tricity (Chandigarh, Mohali & Panchkula).

Inclusion Criteria

- The age of the respondents was 18 to 25 years of young adults.
- Only respondents who gave consent were considered.
- The respondents were drawn from the urban area.
- Both males and females were included.
- Only literate young adults were chosen.

Exclusion Criteria

- Those suffering from any Psychopathology or undergoing treatment for psychological problems were excluded from the sample.
- Those suffering from any other chronic illness were excluded.
- Those exhibiting any physical deformity were excluded.
- Those residing in rural areas were not selected.
- Illiterate or those having studied less than 10th standard was not included in the sample.

Ethical Considerations

The following ethical guidelines were put into place for the research period.

- Confidentiality of the responses and identity was assured.
- Participants were briefed about the purpose of the study.
- Informed consent was obtained.
- The dignity and well-being of the respondent was protected all the time.

Tests and Tools

The following standardized tests and tools were used:

- Oxford Happiness Questionnaire Scale (Argyle & Hills ,2002)
- Bolton Forgiveness Scale (BFS) (Amanze & Carson ,2019)

All the tests used were standardized and had established reliability and validity. The scales administered were available in English. A semi structured interview schedule was also administered to the participants to seek detailed information about their

critical social and demographic aspects such as age, gender, city and education qualification.

Brief description of the Tests and Tools Used:

The following standardized test and tools were used:

Oxford Happiness Questionnaire: The questionnaire was developed by Argyle and Hills (2002). The scale has 29 items. It measures global happiness and feelings about the self. The responses are given on 6-point Likert-type ranging from 6 (strongly agree) to 1 (strongly disagree). Some items were reverse scored. It includes questions such as (I don't feel particularly pleased with the way I am), (I am intensely interested in other people), (I feel that life is very rewarding). An item marked (R) should be scored in reverse. If one gave oneself a "1", cross it out and change it to a "6". Change "2" to a "5", change "3" to a "4", change "4" to a "3", change "5" to a "2", change "6" to a "1". Firstly, add scores of all 29 questions and then divide them by 29.

The reliability of the scale has been found to be 0.91. The scale also demonstrates construct validity by correlation with measures of self-esteem, life regard index and depression happiness scale (.90).

The internal consistency of the Oxford Happiness Questionnaire has been found to be high, with a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.89, indicating good reliability.

The Oxford Happiness Questionnaire has been found to have good construct validity, as it is strongly related to other measures of happiness and well-being, such as the Satisfaction with Life Scale and the Positive and Negative Affect Schedule. Additionally, the Oxford Happiness Questionnaire has been found to be sensitive to changes in happiness levels following interventions aimed at increasing well-being.

Following instructions were given for Oxford Happiness Questionnaire:

“Please read the statements given carefully. Some of the questions are phrased positively and others negatively. Don't take too long over individual questions; there are no “right” or “wrong” answers (and no trick questions). The first answer that comes into your head is probably the right one for you. If you find some of the questions difficult, please give the answer that is true for you in general or for most of the time.”

Bolton Forgiveness Scale (BFS): The questionnaire was developed by Amanze and Carson (2019). The scale has 15 items and has 4 sub scales;

- a. BFS-coming to terms and letting go of subscales BFS- CTLG, the score 42 is higher score, the score between 28-35 are high scores, the scores between 22-27 are good scores and the score less than 21 is low and poor.
- b. BFS - Developing positive feeling subscale BFS-DPF, the score 30 is the highest score, the score between 18-23 is a high score, the score between less than 13 are low and poor.
- c. BFS -Giving benefit of doubt subscale BFS- GBD, the score 18 is the highest score, the score more than 12 is very good and the scores less than 9 is low and poor.
- d. Total BFS the score 90 is the highest score, the scores less than 45 is poor, the score between 45-58 is good, the scores between 59-70 is very good and the scores from 70 and above is excellent (exceptionally forgiving).

It includes questions such as (with time I can be understanding of bad things in my life), (I have compassion for the person who wronged me), (with time I let go of negative thoughts about bad things that are beyond anyone's control).

The reliability of the final model of the BFS was assessed using Cronbach's alpha and test-retest reliability was assessed by administering the 15-item BFS questionnaire to 100 participants across a two weeks interval and the results were good and acceptable. It is important to note that while the BFS alpha is high (.82), one of the subscales; “Giving benefit of the doubts' ' reported a low alpha (.60). This is not unusual as it has

only three items and from psychometric formulae, alpha is known to be very sensitive to scale length such that long scales (scales with ten or more items) are expected to yield high alpha while short scales yield relatively low alphas. In this case, reporting the mean inter-item correlation for the items may be more appropriate (Pallant, 2016, p. 101).

An optimal range of (.2) (.4) inter-item correlation mean has been recommended by Briggs and Cheek (1986) and the subscales “Giving benefit of the doubts” despite its low alpha, reported a good inter-item correlation mean of (.33).

The validity of the outcome of part 2 appears to be a psychometrically good and valid measure of dispositional forgiveness, which can be used to better assess and understand the dynamic interplay amongst the different aspects of the construct.

Bolton Forgiveness Scale Alpha (.82) and test-retest (.86). Coming to the term and letting go (BFS-CTLG) alpha (.78), test-retest (.81) and Mean Inter-item correlation (.30). Developing positive feelings (BFS-DPF) alpha (.67), test-retest (.82) and Mean Inter-item correlation (.29). Giving benefit of doubts (BFS-GBD) Alpha (.60), test-retest (.70) and Mean Inter-item correlation (.33).

Furthermore, to test the convergent and discriminant validity of this construct, it was necessary to determine how BFS correlates particularly with other relevant and related constructs such as dispositional forgiveness, mental well-being, life-satisfaction, happiness, anxiety, worthwhile, social trust, positive affect, negative affect and empathy.

Following instructions were given for Bolton Forgiveness Scale (BFS):

“Please read the statements given carefully. There are no right or wrong answers, as we want to know your opinion. Please be as open as possible in your answers. Your results will be kept confidential. Below is a list of statements dealing with the general feelings about yourself. Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with each statement.”

Procedure

Keeping in view the objectives and the ethical considerations, following procedure was executed by the researcher:

To investigate the relationship between happiness and forgiveness among young adults, the research was initiated. Literature review was collected, and the various researchers were studied. The tools for data collection for all the variables were gathered. Next, the hypotheses were formulated, and the expected outcomes were identified. The sample of young adults i.e., age group from 18 to 25 years were identified and approached for data collection. The purpose of the present study was explained in brief to all the participants and their doubts related to the questionnaire were cleared. The participants were both males and females. Upon giving the instructions to the participants, data was collected. Prior to completing the questionnaires, participants were informed of their option to participate or not as participation is voluntary. Informed consent was obtained from the study participants of the data collection process. Participants who declined the informed consent were thanked for their interest. The data was collected by online google forms. The elements formed part of the data collection process:

- a) Informed consent
- b) Demographic Information
- c) scales were used;
 - Oxford Happiness Questionnaire
 - Bolton Forgiveness Scale (BFS)

Participants were required to read and give their consent before they move forward to answer the survey questionnaires. The informed consent described the study, including the purpose of the study, voluntary nature of participation, confidentiality and anonymity and the right of participants to opt-out of the study at any time without

penalty. The demographic information contains name, age, gender, educational qualification, city and contact details. The survey questionnaires make up the remaining elements of the data. Once the desired response was gathered, participants were thanked for their valuable response and time. The scores were compiled in excel sheets for each variable and each participant.

For the analysis of raw scores, the help of SPSS was taken. Prior to the scoring and calculation, data were checked for entry errors using frequency analysis and ensured any and all discrepancies were removed. The Mean, SD, Correlation and t-ratio were computed using SPSS. Further, the limitations of the study, implications of the study and recommendations for future research in the field were written.

Scoring and Statistical Analysis

Scoring for all the given tests were done as per the scoring instructions given in the manuals. The raw scores were tabulated and subjected to various statistical analyses by using Statistical Product and Service Solutions (SPSS) Package. Keeping in view the objectives of the study, statistical analysis was conducted. The aim of the study was to correlate Forgiveness and Happiness among male and female young adults.

Mean, Standard Deviations, Correlation Analysis, t-ratio was carried out. The t-ratio were taken out to see the significant differences between the groups. Correlations analysis was carried out to test the relationship between the two variables.

CHAPTER 5

RESULTS

Table 1

N, Mean and Standard Deviation scores of 100 young adults with variables happiness and forgiveness.

	Gender	BFS- CTLG	BFS- DPF	BFS- GBD	TOTAL- BFS	HAPPINESS	MEAN OF HAPPINESS
N	F	50	50	50	50	50	50
	M	50	50	50	50	50	50
Mean	F	30.7	19.5	12.1	62.3	124	4.26
	M	30.6	18.2	12.0	60.7	123	4.25
Standard deviation	F	4.24	4.29	2.67	9.14	19.0	0.654
	M	6.23	3.95	2.61	9.64	14.8	0.511

Note: Forgiveness Scale (BFS): Coming to terms and letting go of subscales (CTLG), Developing positive feeling subscale (DPF), Giving benefit of doubt subscale (GBD), Total BFS Bolton Forgiveness Scale and Means of happiness.

Table 2:*t-ratio's for females and males*

Variables	Females		Males		t-ratio
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
BFS-CTLG	30.72	4.238	30.58	6.227	0.1314
BFS-DPF	19.46	4.287	18.24	3.952	1.4797
BFS-GBD	12.14	2.665	12.02	2.615	0.2273
TOTAL-BFS	62.32	9.137	60.72	9.641	0.8518
HAPPINESS	123.50	18.979	123.18	14.815	0.0940
MEAN of HAPPINESS	4.26	0.654	4.25	0.511	0.0940

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Note: Forgiveness Scale (BFS): Coming to terms and letting go of subscales (CTLG), Developing positive feeling subscale (DPF), Giving benefit of doubt subscale (GBD), Total BFS Bolton Forgiveness Scale and Means of happiness.

Table 3*Intercorrelation Matrix for female (N = 50)*

	BFS- CTLG	BFS- DPF	BFS- GBD	TOTAL- BFS	HAPPINESS	MEAN OF HAPPINESS
BFS-CTLG	—					
BFS-DPF	0.440**	—				
BFS-GBD	0.408**	0.650***	—			
TOTAL-BFS	0.789***	0.863***	0.786***	—		
HAPPINESS	0.413**	0.258	0.057	0.329*	—	
MEAN OF HAPPINESS	0.413**	0.258	0.057	0.329*	1.000***	—

Note. * p < .05, ** p < .01, *** p < .001
 ***Correlation is significant at the 0.001 level
 **Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level
 *Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level

Table 4*Intercorrelation Matrix for male (N = 50)*

	BFS- CTLG	BFS- DPF	BFS- GBD	TOTAL- BFS	HAPPINESS	MEAN OF HAPPINESS
BFS-CTLG	—					
BFS-DPF	0.392**	—				
BFS-GBD	0.348*	0.442**	—			
TOTAL-BFS	0.863***	0.744***	0.619***	—		
HAPPINESS	0.397**	0.171	0.306*	0.431**	—	
MEAN OF HAPPINESS	0.397**	0.171	0.306*	0.431**	1.000***	—

Note. * p < .05, ** p < .01, *** p < .001

***Correlation is significant at the 0.001 level

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level

Table 5*Correlation matrix of females and males (N=100).*

	BFS- CTLG	BFS- DPF	BFS- GBD	TOTAL- BFS	HAPPINESS	MEAN OF HAPPINESS
BFS-CTLG	—					
BFS-DPF	0.399***	—				
BFS-GBD	0.365***	0.548***	—			
TOTAL-BFS	0.822***	0.803***	0.700***	—		
HAPPINESS	0.385***	0.220*	0.164	0.371***	—	
MEAN OF HAPPINESS	0.385***	0.220*	0.164	0.371***	1.000***	—

Note. * p < .05, ** p < .01, *** p < .001

***Correlation is significant at the 0.001 level

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level

CHAPTER 6

DISCUSSION, SUMMARY & IMPLICATIONS

The aim of the present study is to compare female and male young adults on the basis of two variables viz. happiness and forgiveness. For this purpose, sample of 100 young adults were collected from tricity, in which 50 female and 50 male young adults within the age range of 18-25 years were included.

The result of this study Enlighten us about critical linkages between Happiness and Forgiveness. In table 1, Descriptive statistics are shown i.e., N, Mean and Standard Deviation of 100 young adults with variables Happiness and Forgiveness.

From table 2, Though our hypothesis is accepted that there will be no gender differences in forgiveness and happiness. The previous study was conducted on university students in order to study forgiveness and subjective happiness. The study consisted 828 university pupils. The study used standardized tools to access forgiveness and happiness that were Forgiveness Scale and Subjective Happiness Scale. The results indicated that university students did not differ significantly in terms of gender (Batik et al., 2017).

On the basis of correlation statistical analysis, the results found that there is a positive significant correlation between happiness and forgiveness ($r= 0.371$, $p<0.001$). The results of present study support the hypothesis that there is significant positive relationship between forgiveness and happiness. The results found that there is a positive significant correlation between CTLG and DPF ($r=0.399$, $p<0.001$), GBD ($r=0.365$, $p<0.001$), Total-BFS ($r=0.822$, $p<0.001$) and Happiness ($r=0.385$, $p<0.001$). Moreover, we found that there is significant positive correlation between DPF and GBD ($r=0.548$, $p<0.001$), Total-BFS ($r=0.803$, $p<0.001$) and Happiness ($r=0.220$, $p<0.05$). Also, there is significant positive correlation between GBD and Total-BFS ($r=0.700$, $p<0.001$) and no significant results were found between GBD and Mean of Happiness. However, no significant results were found between CTLG and DPF, GBD and TOTAL BFS and Mean of happiness.

In relation to previous literature where Shekhar et al. (2016) conducted a study to assess the happiness and forgiveness among college going students and to discover a correlation between these two variables using Oxford Happiness Questionnaire by (Argyle and Hills, 2000) to assess happiness and Heartland Forgiveness Scale (Thompson & Synder, 2003) to assess forgiveness. 100 students were included in the data, 50 of them were males and 50 of them were females. The present study found that there was a significant difference and forgiveness across gender. Another study was done to study the association between forgiveness at work and employee happiness. The study was conducted on 357 employees in the Indian Organization (North India). The results proved that there is a significant positive correlation between forgiveness and employee happiness (Dahiya, 2021).

SUMMARY

Forgiveness might have a different definition for every individual. Yet, in general, it entails making a conscious choice to let go of bitterness and hatred. In some cases, forgiving someone might even elicit sentiments of comprehension, empathy and compassion for the person who is the perpetrator. Forgiveness can aid in relationship restoration. Happiness is something that plays a vital role in everyone's life. In today's world, there are few factors that affect our happiness, and some essential things are money, trust, independence, health, and so on. Happiness is the pinnacle of human aspiration and contentment, and forgiveness is a result of human grit, engagement, and optimistic thinking. Forgiveness gives the forgiver peace of mind and releases them from destructive rage and makes a person happier than before. The aim of the current study relationship between happiness and forgiveness brings out the gender difference on happiness and forgiveness among young adults and to study correlation between these two variables. A total sample of 100 young adults (50 Males and 50 Females) in the age group 18-25 years was collected. Standardized tools were used to measure happiness and forgiveness among young adults. The results found out that there was a positive significant correlation between forgiveness and happiness.

The relationship between forgiveness and happiness is significant. Forgiveness is the decision to replace negative emotions such as wrath, resentment, and bitterness with more positive emotions such as compassion and empathy. When individuals are able to forgive others, it can result in an increase in contentment and well-being, among other positive outcomes. Happiness and forgiveness have a strong relationship. When individuals harbor grudges, enmity, and resentment, it can be challenging for them to experience contentment and well-being. In contrast, forgiveness increases the likelihood of experiencing positive emotions and increases life satisfaction. Negative emotions such as anger, resentment, and bitterness are diminished as a result of forgiveness. When people absolve others, they let go of the negative emotions such as anger, resentment, and bitterness. This can contribute to a decrease in negative emotions, which are known to negatively affect happiness and well-being. By cultivating positive emotions such as empathy and compassion, forgiveness can contribute to an increase in positive emotions, which are significantly associated with happiness. Relationships are enhanced by forgiveness, which can aid in mending broken bonds and foster greater trust and closeness between individuals. Positive relationships are essential to contentment and life fulfillment. Retaining grudges and negative emotions can be a significant source of tension, which can have detrimental effects on both physical and mental health. Forgiveness can reduce tension and enhance relaxation and well-being.

LIMITATIONS

No research can be all-inclusive. During this humble effort to investigate the relationship between happiness and forgiveness, the researcher did realize the following limitations. It is suggested that the sample size should be large so that generalization could be made in a better way. It would be better if the ratio of males and females is well represented, it would provide us with comparison between both the sexes along with representing both the perspectives equally. The sampling technique used was convenience sampling. Hence, the results might not be generalized to the population.

SUGGESTIONS

There are many ways to improve happiness, and what works for one person may not work for another. Here are some suggestions that one may find helpful :-

- Practice gratitude: Take time each day to reflect on what one is grateful for. This can help shift one's focus from what one don't have to, what one do have.
- Exercise: Regular exercise can improve one's mood and increase one's energy levels.
- Connect with others: Spending time with friends and family can provide a sense of belonging and increase feelings of happiness.
- Engage in activities one enjoys: Doing things one enjoys can bring a sense of accomplishment and fulfilment.
- Practice mindfulness: Mindfulness involves being present in the moment and focusing on one's thoughts and feelings without judgment. This can help reduce stress and increase happiness.
- Get enough sleep: Lack of sleep can negatively impact mood and energy levels.
- Set goals: Setting and achieving goals can provide a sense of purpose and increase self-esteem.
- Give back: Volunteering or helping others can increase feelings of happiness and fulfilment.
- Practice self-care: Taking care of oneself physically, emotionally, and mentally can improve overall well-being and increase happiness.

Forgiveness is a complex process and can be challenging, but there are steps one can take to increase forgiveness. Here are some of the suggestions:

- Acknowledge the hurt: Recognize and validate the pain one experiences. This can help one to move towards forgiveness.
- Take responsibility for one's own feelings: Understand that one's feelings are one's responsibility, and one have control over how one respond to the situation.
- Practice empathy: Try to understand the other person's perspective and the reasons behind their actions. This can help one feel more compassionate and less resentful.
- Communicate ones feelings: Express how one feels and what one needs from the other person. This can help repair the relationship and create a path towards forgiveness.
- Let go of resentment: Holding onto resentment can be toxic and prevent forgiveness from happening. Practice letting go of negative thoughts and emotions.
- Practice self-forgiveness: Forgiving oneself is just as important as forgiving others. Acknowledge one's mistakes and taking responsibility for one's actions, but also being kind and compassionate towards oneself.
- Seek support: Forgiveness can be a challenging process, so one should not be afraid to seek support from friends, family, or a therapist.

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