



## SELF-FORGIVENESS AND WELL-BEING: A CORRELATIONAL STUDY IN A SAMPLE OF GREEK POPULATION

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**ABSTRACT:** A great deal of research has been done on the idea of interpersonal forgiveness. The concept of self-forgiveness, however, has not received much attention. Self-forgiveness is defined as the transition from self-alienation to a sense of being at ease with oneself. People's positive experiences and evaluations of their life are included in the notion of well-being. Self-forgiveness is widely acknowledged to enhance psychological well-being but research suggests that self-forgiveness might not always be advantageous. The purpose of this research is to investigate the correlation of self-forgiveness and psychological well-being and the relationship of these variables with individual characteristics. The quantitative method was used. In total, 114 participants were gathered both online via Google forms on social media and face-to-face. The results revealed that there is a positive correlation between self-forgiveness and psychological well-being. Self-forgiveness helps lessen negative emotions associated with psychological or physical issues, such as guilt, shame, wrath, regret or disappointment.

**KEYWORDS:** Forgiveness, self-forgiveness, well-being.



## INTRODUCTION

The study of interpersonal forgiveness has gained popularity these days. Still, despite this growing body of literature, little has been documented about intrapersonal forgiveness or self-forgiveness (Hall & Fincham, 2005). It seems that there has been no literature on self-forgiveness in psychology prior to the last few decades in the United States. The reports on forgiveness in the 1990s gave rise to self-forgiveness (Flanigan, 1997).

While a substantial body of research has been conducted on the effects of interpersonal forgiveness (Riek & Mania, 2012), relatively little is known about the repercussions of forgiveness toward the self. Furthermore, there is a deficiency in the literature of self-forgiveness in Greece. Knowing how self-forgiveness and well-being are related can aid in the development of self-forgiveness-promoting interventions. The aim of the present study is primarily to examine the relationship between self-forgiveness and well-being and secondly explore the relationship of these two variables with individual characteristics. It is hypothesized that there will be a correlation between self-forgiveness and well-being.

## LITERATURE/THEORETICAL UNDERPINNING

Studies on forgiveness in psychology began to appear in the latter half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century as a result of the development of positive psychology. According to the object of forgiveness, Mauger and colleagues (1992) divided forgiveness into two categories: self-forgiveness, which is forgiveness toward oneself, and interpersonal forgiveness, which is forgiveness to others.

Researchers have not agreed upon a single definition for self-forgiveness (Ingersoll-Dayton & Krause, 2005). According to the discipline of psychology, self-forgiveness is *"a willingness to foster compassion, generosity and love toward oneself, while abandoning self-resentment in the face of one's own acknowledged objective wrong"* (Enright, 1996, p. 115). According to Bauer and colleagues (1992), self-forgiveness can be defined more broadly as the transition from self-estrangement to a sense of being at ease with oneself. Another way to think about self-forgiveness is as a phases model, where one goes through a revealing phase (like denial, guilt or shame), a decision phase (like a change of heart), a work phase (like awareness of oneself), and ultimately an outcome phase (like identifying new goals) (Enright, 1996).

According to Hall and Fincham (2005), cognitive, emotional and behavioral mechanisms are thought to be responsible for the motivational shifts that characterize self-forgiveness. Guilt and shame are two emotional covariates that primarily influence self-forgiveness. Even though these terms are sometimes used interchangeably, they are different in that shame is linked to a negative focus on the self, while guilt entails tension, regret and an emphasis on one's bad behavior (Tangney, 1995). When it comes to social-cognitive determinants, attributions seem to be important. According to studies on interpersonal forgiveness, greater forgiveness is linked to benign explanations for an offender's actions, whereas little forgiveness is linked to maladaptive explanations (Fincham et al., 2002). Self-forgiving people are more likely to adaptively assign some of the responsibility to the victim (Zechmeister & Romero, 2002). One of the strongest relationships in the literature on forgiveness is the connection between the seriousness of a transgression and interpersonal forgiveness. Less forgiveness is linked to more serious offenses (Boon & Sulsky, 1997). According to Zachmeister and Romero (2002),



offenders who have forgiven themselves experience more beneficial effects and fewer long-lasting negative outcomes from the transgression.

Even though interpersonal and self-forgiveness are now recognized, the same cannot be stated for a third type of forgiveness, which is forgiveness by God or divine forgiveness. According to a recent research, self-forgiveness was promoted when one felt that they were being forgiven by God (McConnell & Dixon, 2012). For Christians, forgiveness by God serves as a potent cure that supports both the belief in self-forgiveness and the readiness to forgive others while facilitating the process of regaining enough self-worth to confront the wrongs committed to others and forgive themselves (Szablowinski, 2012). For unbelievers, the confirmation of a third source that the offense is forgiven seems to facilitate the process of self-forgiveness (Szablowinski, 2012). According to McCullough and colleagues (2001), a number of research indicated that forgiveness was more important to those who had religious or spiritual views than to those who did not.

Since ancient times, people have placed a high priority on well-being, as evidenced by numerous Greek philosophical works. People's pleasant experiences and assessments of their life are all included in the concept of well-being (Tov, 2018).

There are mainly two perspectives to conceptualize well-being in the current literature (Ryan & Deci, 2001). The first approach focuses on an individual's emotional and cognitive assessment of their own life. Known as Hedonic well-being (HWP), it comprises (i) frequent positive emotions, (ii) infrequent negative emotions, and (iii) a general assessment that life is fulfilling. This tripartite approach is also known as subjective well-being (Diener, 1984) as it places emphasis on an individual's evaluation of their life's progress. The second approach consists of a number of ideas that collectively have been called eudaimonic well-being (EWB). This approach views well-being as a broader notion that draws from a greater eudaimonic quality than happiness itself (Seligman, 2004). The emphasis on meaning and purpose lies at the core of this type of well-being research. These aspects of well-being are referred to as psychological well-being (PWB) (Ryff, 1989). In particular, Ryff's approach identifies six PWB dimensions: self-acceptance, positive relationships, environmental mastery, independence and self-growth. One component of people's health that is still poorly understood is social well-being, which is mainly a public phenomenon that focuses on the social responsibilities adults face in their communities and social networks (Keyes, 2006). Concisely, eudaimonia encompasses both the public and private aspects of positive functioning.

In defining the causes and effects of forgiveness, psychological research has advanced significantly over the past 20 years. However, relatively little has been done to understand the meaning, causes and effects of self-forgiveness. It is generally accepted that self-forgiveness improves post-transgression behaviors and both physical and psychological well-being (Hall & Fincham, 2005). According to a recent meta-analysis, psychological well-being, life satisfaction, purpose and overall mental health quality were all positively correlated with self-forgiveness. Additionally, anxiety, trauma, depression, suicidal thoughts and feelings, and alcoholism were all negatively correlated with self-forgiveness (Davis et al., 2015). According to research by Fincham and May (2019), self-forgiveness was directly correlated with life satisfaction and negatively correlated with depressed symptoms. Furthermore, these connections persisted even after taking into account religious belief and divine forgiveness. Additionally, self-forgiveness enhances one's quality of life. Empirical research findings have suggested a potential link between subjective well-being and self-forgiveness (Chan, 2009). It



has also been shown that self-forgiveness enhances psychological well-being. According to Ross and colleagues (2004), those who score highly on trait self-forgiveness have higher self-esteem and generally better psychological health. Research conducted by Scherer and colleagues (2011) revealed that when self-forgiveness training was included in outpatients' alcoholism intervention, it improved clients' self-worth and trust in their capacity to abstain from alcohol.

However, studies also indicate that self-forgiveness may not always have these beneficial outcomes. According to Wohl and McLaughlin (2014), self-forgiveness for persistently bad actions also contributes to the preservation of the behavioral status quo. For instance, a smoker who accepts the negative effects of smoking but forgives themselves for purchasing and smoking a packet of cigarettes. In this scenario, the smoker deliberately and intentionally continues in a harmful activity while persistently working to overcome the unpleasant emotions that are linked to the behavior. In a related example of the "bad" aspect of self-forgiveness, Squires and colleagues (2012) investigated the factors that influence gamblers to alter their gambling habits. They recently offered an explanation for this link that centers on self-forgiveness. In particular, they discovered that the more unforgiving they were regarding their gambling habit, the more willing disordered gamblers were to alter their behavior. Therefore, it seems that forgiving oneself for engaging in long-term, unhealthy behaviors discourages one's willingness to change. It should be mentioned that self-forgiveness has detrimental repercussions that are not limited to persistent addictive behaviors (Wohl & McLaughlin, 2014).

The key takeaway from this is that self-forgiveness is not a panacea and does not always result in favorable consequences. Actually, its offering may encourage a number of adverse consequences. This is due to the fact that forgiveness for self-directed, persistently damaging behavior results in an emotional release that reduces a person's desire to modify their behavior, hence impeding any advancement toward a stage of action (Wohl & McLaughlin, 2014).

The aim of the present study is to examine the relationship between self-forgiveness and well-being and explore the relationship of these two variables with individual characteristics. It is hypothesized that there will be a correlation between self-forgiveness and well-being.

## METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted with a total of 114 participants. The questionnaires were administered both online via social media and face-to-face. Every participant was older than 18 years old and their participation was voluntary. The convenience sampling method was applied. Information sheets and consent forms were used as appropriate. All analyses were conducted through the SPSS Software. The questionnaire was divided into 3 parts: 1) demographic questionnaire, 2) self-forgiveness scale, and 3) well-being scale. A demographic questionnaire was used to collect information regarding gender, age, educational status, marital status, faith in God, and frequency of religious thoughts or actions. Regarding the assessment of self-forgiveness, the State Self-Forgiveness Scale (SSFS) was used, which was developed by Wohl, DeShea and Wahkinney (2008). The SFSS has 18 items and is measured on the Likert scale. It assesses the following: 1) the emotional aspect of self-forgiveness, 2) cognitive changes, and 3) behavioral factors (Wohl et al., 2008). Research has shown that the SFSS is both reliable and valid (Wohl et al., 2008). A person's subjective perception of happiness and well-being



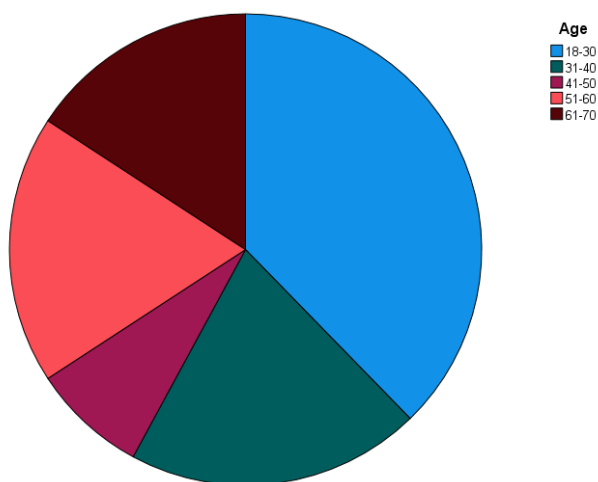
was evaluated by the Oxford Happiness Questionnaire (OHQ) (Hills & Argyle, 2002). The OHQ has 29 items and is measured on the Likert scale. It is intended to evaluate overall happiness, with a focus on life satisfaction and psychological well-being. The OHQ offers a comprehensive, all-encompassing method of measuring happiness, emphasizing the cognitive and emotional aspects of life satisfaction and well-being. Research has demonstrated that the OHQ is both reliable and valid.

According to the BPS Code of Human Research Ethics (2021), informed consent was used. Anonymity was established as no identifying information was collected. Confidentiality was reassured as only the researchers had access to the data. The participants were informed that they could withdraw at any point in the research.

A correlational design was applied and the two variables were self-forgiveness and well-being. A Pearson's  $r$  correlation coefficient was used to examine correlation between self-forgiveness and well-being. An alpha value of .05 was used for all analyses.

## RESULTS/FINDINGS

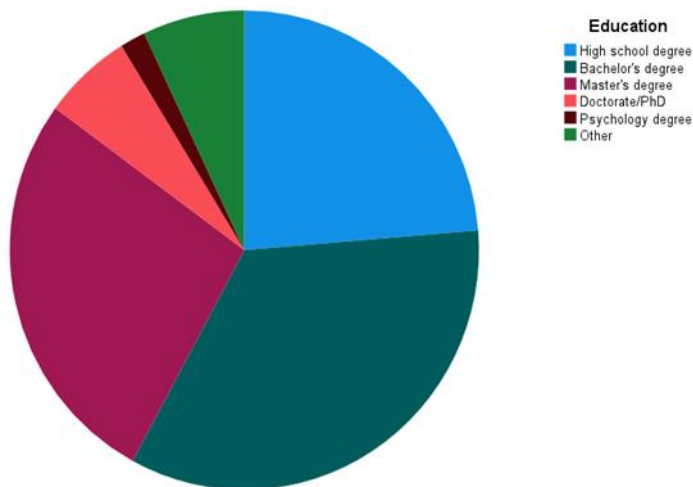
A total of 114 participants were recruited. In terms of gender, 47 (41.2%) were males and 67 (58.8%) females. The ages ranged from 18-70. Specifically, 43 participants (37.7%) were between 18-30, 23 (20.2%) between 31-40, 9 (7.9%) between 41-50, 21 (18.4%) between 51-60, and 18 (15.8%) between 61-70 (Figure 1).



**Figure 1: Age**

Regarding the educational background, 27 (23.7%) own a high school degree, 39 (34.2%) a bachelor's degree, 31 (27.2%) a master's degree, 7 (6.1%) a PhD, 2 (1.8%) a Psychology degree, and 8 (7%) replied Other (Figure 2).

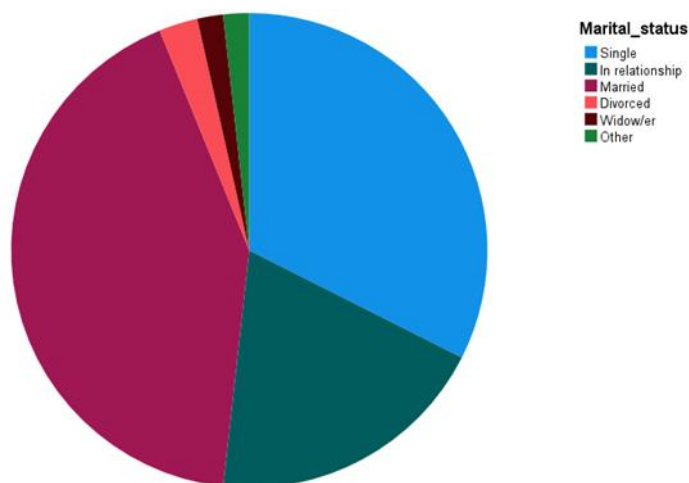




**Figure 2: Education**

Only 7 participants (6.1%) appeared to have attended a seminar regarding self-forgiveness and well-being.

Out of the 114 participants, 37 (32.5%) declared to be single, 22 (19.3%) in a relationship, 48 (42.1%) married, 3 (2.6%) divorced, 2 (1.8%) widows/-ers and 2 (1.8%) replied Other (Figure 3).



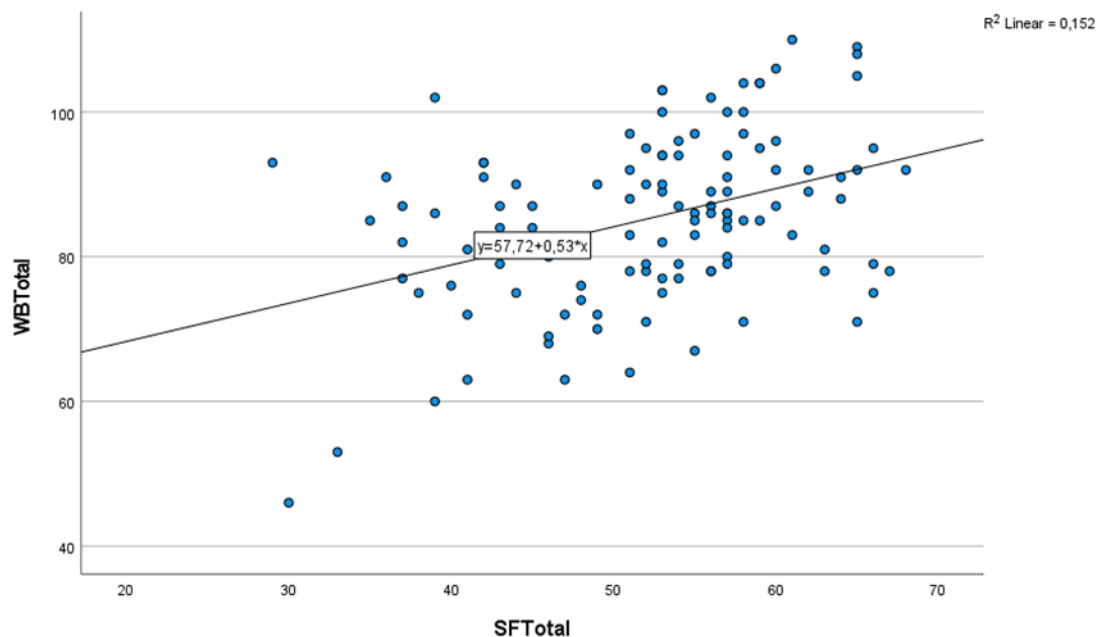
**Figure 3: Marital status**

Considering faith in God, 99 (86.8%) stated that they believe in God while 15 (13.2%) stated that they do not. Out of the 99 participants that believe in God, 12 (10.5%) stated that they always engage in religious thoughts or actions, 30 (26.3%) often, 28 (24.6%) sometimes, 15 (13.2%) infrequently, and 15 (13.2%) rarely.

A Pearson's  $r$  correlation coefficient was used to examine the association between self-forgiveness and well-being. There was a statistically significant positive correlation between the two variables as  $r(114) = .39$  and  $p < .001$ . The scatter plot shows a positive correlation between the two variables. The trendline reveals that the more someone forgives the self, the

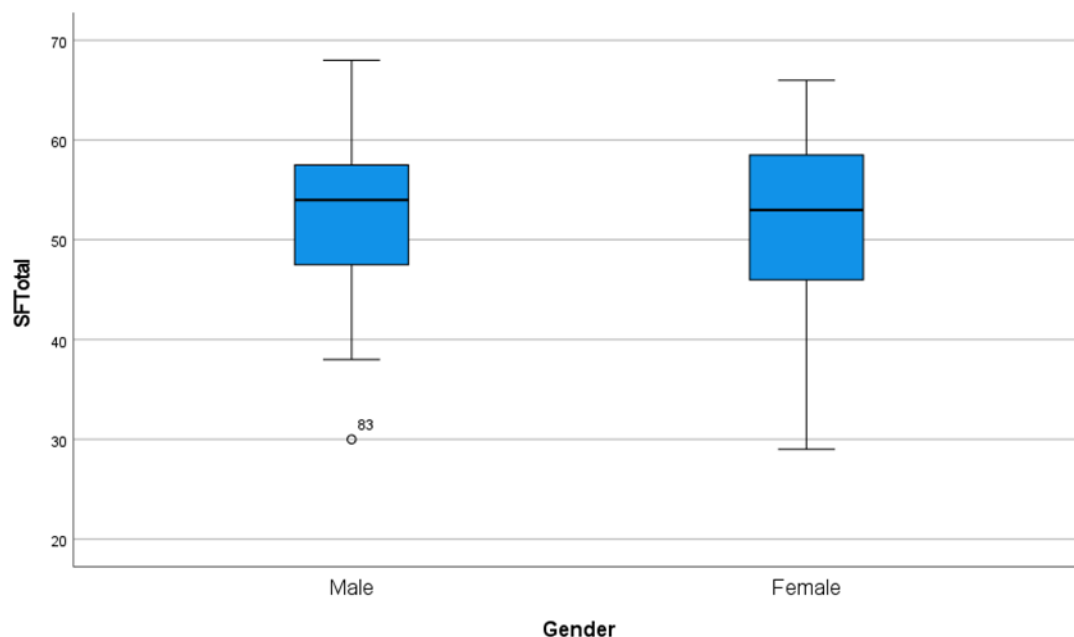


higher the reported well-being. The results of the analysis are shown in the graph below (Figure 4).

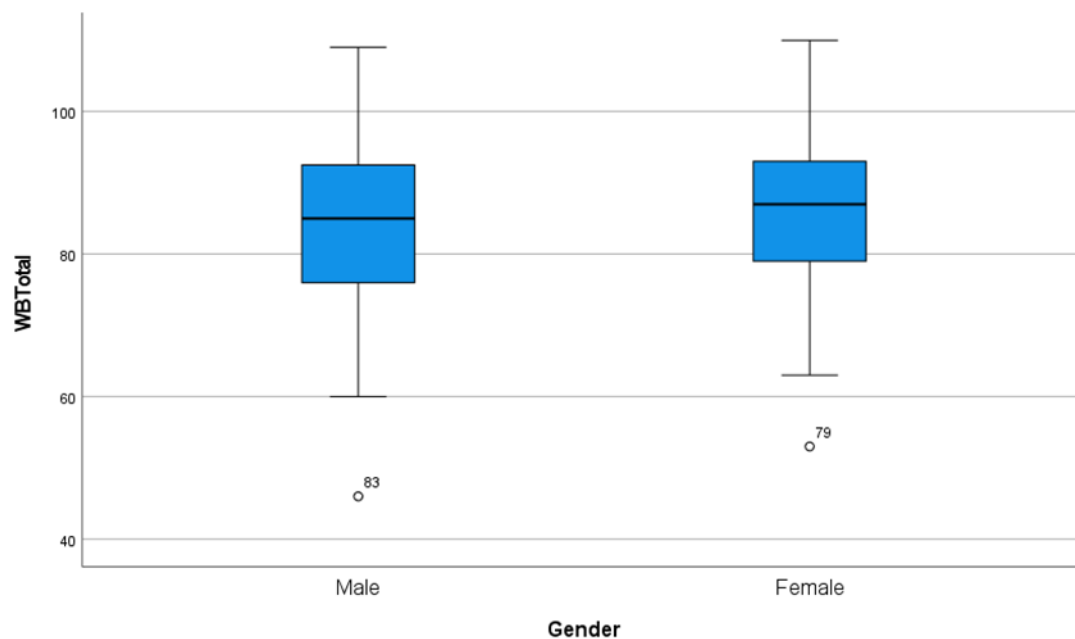


**Figure 4: Correlation between self-forgiveness and well-being**

A t-test analysis was conducted to examine self-forgiveness and well-being scores between males and females. As Levene's test was not significant, equal variances were assumed. Regarding self-forgiveness, no significant effects were found as  $t(112) = .483$  and  $p > .05$  (Figure 5). Also, in well-being, no significant differences were shown as  $t(112) = .778$  and  $p > .05$  (Figure 6).

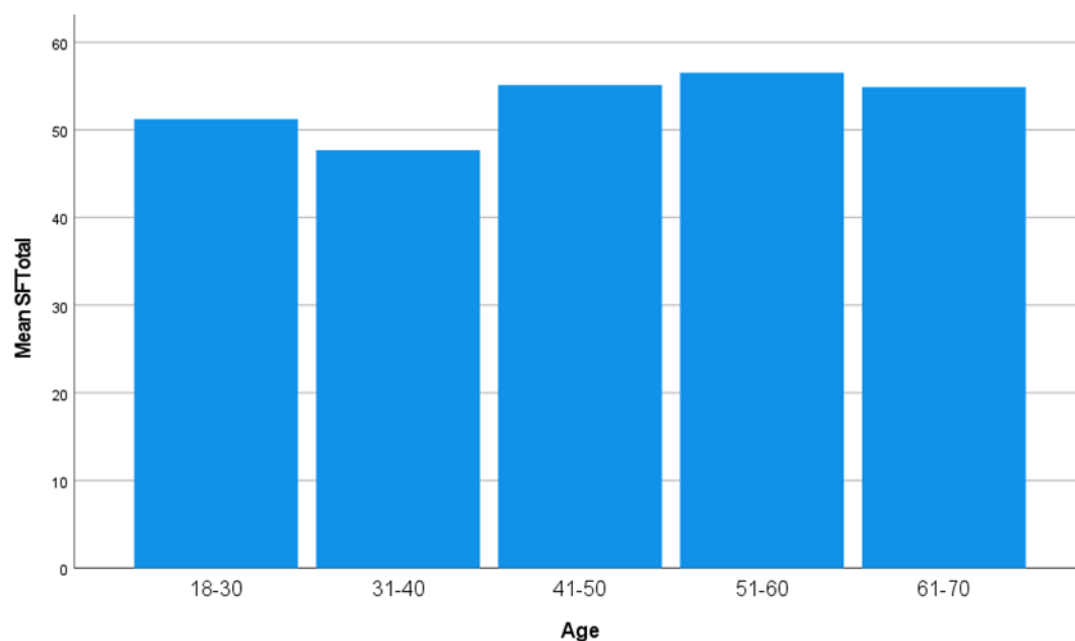


**Figure 5: Gender differences in self-forgiveness**



**Figure 6: Gender differences in well-being**

A one-way ANOVA was conducted to compare self-forgiveness scores across age groups. Results showed a significant difference between groups,  $F(4,109) = 3.986$  and  $p < 0.05$ . Post-hoc analysis revealed that individuals aged between 51-60 ( $M = 56.52$ ,  $SD = 7.737$ ) reported significantly higher self-forgiveness scores compared to those aged 31-40 ( $M = 47.70$ ,  $SD = 9.197$ ), as shown in the graph below (Figure 7).



**Figure 7: Differences between age groups in self-forgiveness**





A one-way ANOVA was conducted to examine whether marital status had an effect on self-forgiveness. The results indicated that there were no statistical differences in self-forgiveness between the five marital status groups as  $F(5,108) = 1.889$  and  $p > .05$ , as shown in the table below. Post hoc comparisons using the Tukey test revealed no significant differences between any of the marital status groups.

**Table 1: Self-forgiveness and marital status**

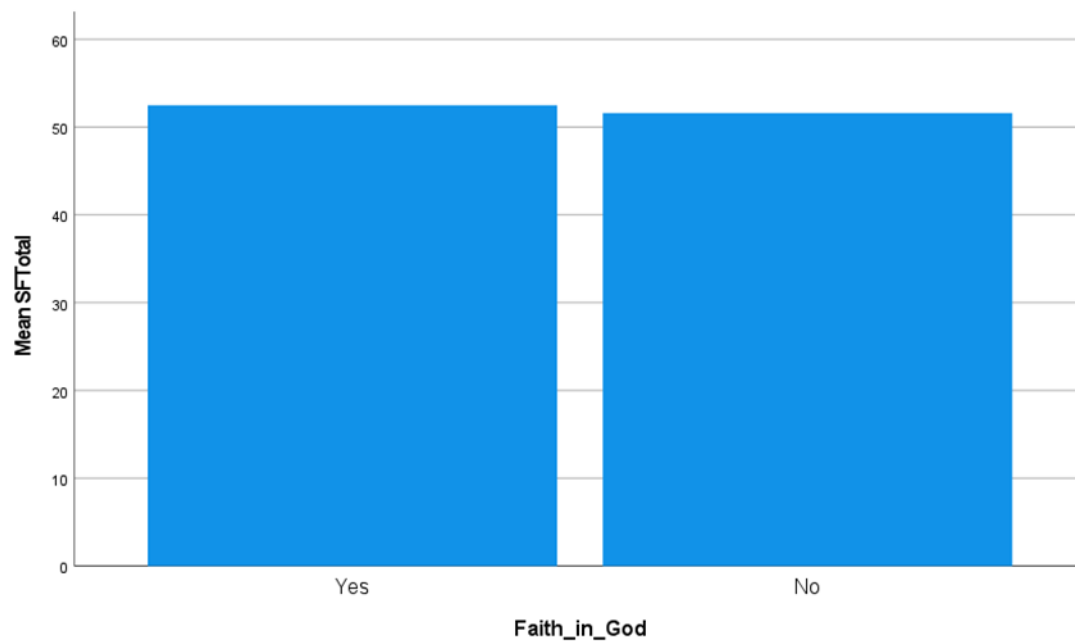
ANOVA					
SFTotal	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	694,727	5	138,945	1,889	,102
Within Groups	7944,054	108	73,556		
Total	8638,781	113			

A one-way ANOVA was also conducted to assess whether marital status had an effect on well-being. The results indicated that there were no statistical differences as  $F(5,108) = 1.032$  and  $p > .05$ . Please refer to Table 2.

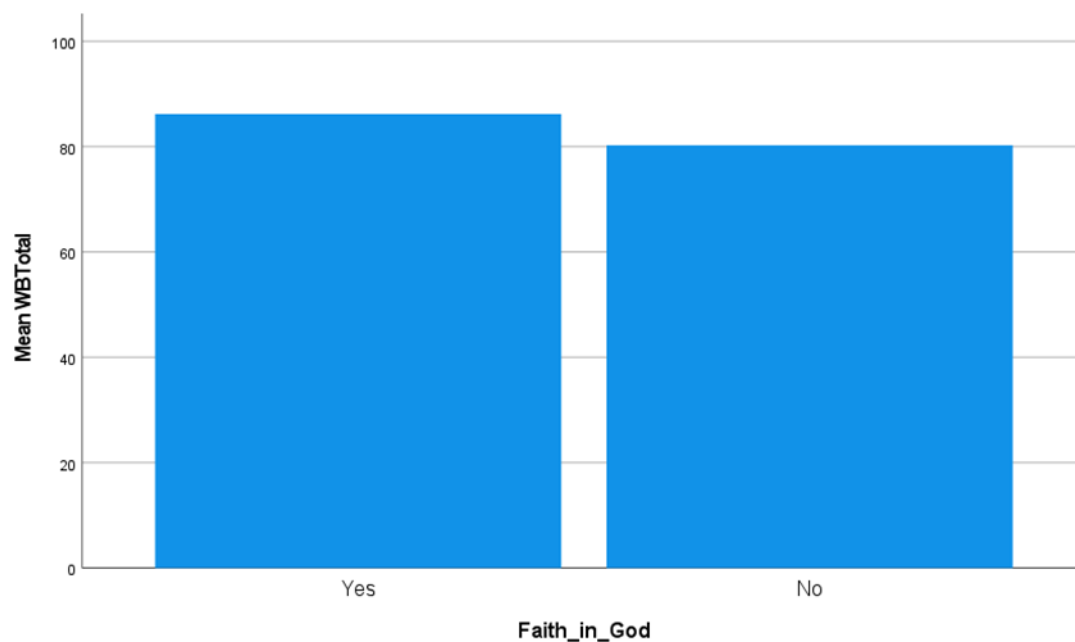
**Table 2: Well-being and marital status**

ANOVA					
WBTotat	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	723,108	5	144,622	1,032	,403
Within Groups	15136,129	108	140,149		
Total	15859,237	113			

A t-test analysis was conducted to examine the effect of faith in God on self-forgiveness and well-being. As Levene's test was not significant, equal variances were assumed. No significant effects were found regarding self-forgiveness as  $t(112) = .368$  and  $p > .05$  (Figure 8). No significant effects were found between those who believe in God and those who do not regarding well-being, as  $t(112) = 1.817$  and  $p > .05$  (Figure 9).



**Figure 8: Self-forgiveness and faith in God**

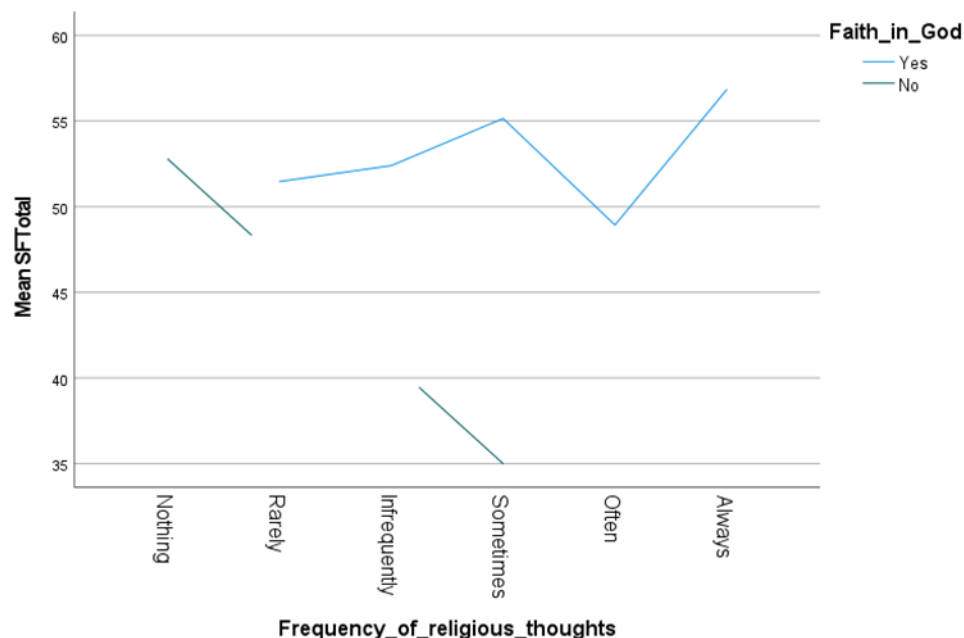


**Figure 9: Well-being and faith in God**

To examine the combined effect of faith in God and frequency of religious thoughts on self-forgiveness, an interaction variable was created by multiplying the two abovementioned variables. A linear regression analysis was conducted to examine the interaction between faith in God and frequency of religious thoughts as predictors on self-forgiveness. This analysis revealed a significant interaction between faith in God and frequency of religious thoughts on self-forgiveness ( $\beta = -6.123$ ,  $t(110) = -1.985$  and  $p = 0.05$ ). The interaction plot in Figure 10



shows the relationship between frequency of religious thoughts and self-forgiveness for individuals with or without faith in God. The X-axis represents the frequency of religious thoughts, while the Y-axis represents self-forgiveness. Separate lines represent the two groups.



**Figure 10: Interaction between faith in God and frequency of religious thoughts on self-forgiveness**

## DISCUSSION

Similar to earlier research, the results of this study showed a significant positive correlation between self-forgiveness and psychological well-being. This result is consistent with previous research that highlights the benefits of self-forgiveness for improving mental health and life satisfaction. Fincham and May (2019), for example, discovered a direct link between fulfillment in life and self-forgiveness, highlighting its influence on subjective well-being. This relationship is further supported by empirical evidence. Chan (2009) highlighted the link between psychological well-being and self-forgiveness. Self-forgiveness improves mental health by addressing negative judgments and feelings that block adaptive coping, self-care and interpersonal connections. Liao and Wei (2015) discovered that among undergraduate students, greater levels of self-forgiveness were linked to improved psychological well-being and decreased perceived stress.

Given the contradictory findings of previous studies, the current study's discovery that there are no significant gender differences in self-forgiveness is both important and intriguing. For example, Pandey and colleagues (2020) reported no gender differences in self-forgiveness. Given its deep roots in the inner core of the self, self-forgiveness frequently ignores physical indicators, and people may not fully understand the behavioral, emotional and cognitive processes that underlie it (Pandey et al., 2020). This implies that self-forgiveness may function



on a level that is more general and that goes beyond conventional gender differences. In contrast, some research works, such as Hall and Fincham (2005), indicate that men may be better at forgiving themselves, whereas women may have greater difficulty doing so because of their increased propensity for guilt, self-criticism and perfectionism. Although the current study's findings indicate that there are no significant gender differences in self-forgiveness, it is important to recognize that these results could differ depending on the population, environment and cultural setting. The process of self-forgiveness is significantly shaped by gender roles, methods of socialization and emotional support from others.

The current study's findings showed no significant gender differences in well-being as well. According to Huppert (2009), there is conflicting evidence about the impact of gender on psychological well-being, with the majority of extensive surveys revealing minor evidence of gender-based inequalities (Helliwell, 2003). This lack of clarity was further reinforced by Tuzgöl-Dost (2006), who looked at the connection between gender and subjective well-being and found no discernible differences. According to Diener and Ryan (2009), research indicates that there is minimal difference between males and females when it comes to average subjective well-being. He pointed out that women are overrepresented in both the extremely happy and severely unhappy extremes of the well-being spectrum.

In line with research indicating that self-forgiveness varies throughout the lifetime due to developmental and life-stage influences, the finding of variances in self-forgiveness between age groups is noteworthy. For example, compared to teenagers and adults, older people indicated a higher propensity to forgive (Sadiq & Mehnaz, 2017). Adolescents, on the other hand, showed less forgiveness than the other age groups. Adolescents' propensity for taking risks is a reasonable explanation for these results. Due to their limited ability to withstand emotional and social pressures, they are also more unlikely to make wise choices (Karaman & Cok, 2007). On the other hand, elderly people tend to be more emotionally well-off than younger people (Momtaz et al., 2014).

The findings showed no significant differences in self-forgiveness according to marital status. This result is consistent with the increasing amount of evidence indicating that the primary determinants of self-forgiveness are internal psychological processes, rather than external demographic factors. Rather, one's capacity for self-forgiveness is more heavily influenced by characteristics like personality traits, coping strategies and personal values (Wenzel et al., 2012). It is likely that a marriage's relational context, such as the nature of the partnership, has a greater impact than just marital status. According to research, those who are in loving relationships are more likely to be emotionally resilient (Fincham et al., 2006).

While some studies conclude that there are no differences in well-being based on marital status, other research works indicate that marital status has a greater impact on well-being outcomes. For example, Dolan and colleagues (2008) found that marriage is generally linked to reduced rates of psychological illness and higher life satisfaction. This finding is not aligned with the results of the present study. This association is further nuanced by longitudinal studies. Recent studies also emphasize the intricate relationships between marital status and well-being. For instance, Lindfors and associates (2006) discovered that women who were divorced or separated had higher levels of autonomy compared to women who were married or had never been married. These results highlight how crucial it is to take into account the kind and circumstances of partnerships when analyzing their effects on well-being.



The data analysis revealed that there are no differences between those who believe in God and those who do not, regarding self-forgiveness. According to Krause (2017), people who believe that God has forgiven them are more inclined to forgive themselves. While faith can offer a helpful context for forgiveness, Exline and colleagues (2011) contend that self-forgiveness frequently functions irrespective of religious convictions. Faith and self-forgiveness have a complicated and multifaceted relationship. Through spiritual activities that highlight ideas like grace, compassion and redemption, faith can foster self-forgiveness (Maltby & Day, 2003). Strong religious beliefs, however, can also cause internal conflict due to strict moral standards, which can make it harder for people to forgive themselves and increase their feelings of guilt (Davis et al., 2013). This contradiction emphasizes how crucial it is to take into account people's interpretations of their beliefs and the religious practices they follow.

Although some research indicates that spirituality or faith can improve well-being, the current study's findings contradict this. Beyond religious beliefs, a variety of factors influence well-being, such as personality qualities and social support. For example, Ryff and Keyes (1995) stress that well-being encompasses a variety of elements, many of which may not be explicitly related to faith, including autonomy, personal development and healthy relationships. According to Pargament (2001), religion frequently promotes inner serenity and hope by acting as a coping mechanism. Exline and Rose (2005) warn, however, that faith can sometimes lead to emotional problems especially when people believe they have fallen short of their spiritual standards. According to Lyubomirsky and colleagues (2005), a mix of life circumstances, deliberate activity and genetic predisposition determines sustainable happiness. This demonstrates how cultural contexts influence the relationship between faith and well-being.

The relationship between the frequency of religious thoughts or behaviors and faith in God suggests that religious participation may increase the impact of faith on self-forgiveness. The frequency of religious thoughts on self-forgiveness and faith in God were found to interact significantly, highlighting the complex link between these variables. In particular, it implies that the degree to which people think and act religiously, for example, by praying, meditating or reflecting on their beliefs, can affect their ability to forgive themselves. Davis and colleagues (2015) point out that religious teachings frequently promote self-forgiveness because they offer a framework for embracing one's flaws and making peace with oneself. According to Pargament (2001), those who often consider their faith are prone to turn to religion as a coping mechanism, which may involve self-forgiveness as a component of spiritual healing. These results highlight the significance of active religious involvement, compared to merely having faith, in fostering self-forgiveness. According to Worthington and Langberg (2012), involvement in religious practices or ongoing involvement with faith-based thoughts is frequently required to convert beliefs into action. According to Krause (2017), informal interactions within religious communities could be a vital tool for achieving self-forgiveness. This viewpoint is consistent with a number of studies showing that religion is fundamentally a social phenomenon (Krause, 2008). Therefore, the relationship between faith and self-forgiveness may be moderated by the frequency and intensity of religious activity.

## IMPLICATION TO RESEARCH AND PRACTICE

The results of the study have a number of implications for psychological research and therapeutic approaches. Firstly, the importance of including self-forgiveness in models of



emotional and mental health is shown by the considerable positive association found between self-forgiveness and psychological well-being. A strong framework for comprehending this connection is provided by stress and coping theory. Offenses cause behavioral, emotional, cognitive and physiological responses because they are viewed as stressors. By changing assessments and rewriting the meaning of stressors, self-forgiveness reduces these stress reactions (Costa et al., 2021). While assisting people in reintegrating a good self-image without endorsing their behavior, this technique lessens rumination and pervasive negative emotions (Thompson et al., 2005; Wohl et al., 2010).

Given the observed age-related changes, it is possible that self-forgiveness may evolve throughout life as a result of growing life experience, improved emotional control or personal growth. This emphasizes how crucial a developmental viewpoint is for upcoming research on moral sentiments and wellbeing.

Additionally, self-forgiveness was correlated with the frequency of religious thoughts and activities but not with general religious belief. This distinction suggests that self-forgiveness may be facilitated by active religious involvement rather than belief alone. Such understandings could be helpful for culturally sensitive therapeutic approaches or for counseling in faith-based settings.

When working with clients who are feeling guilty, ashamed or critical of themselves, mental health practitioners may think about incorporating self-forgiveness exercises or interventions—like compassion-based practices, cognitive restructuring or story techniques—into their therapy work.

## CONCLUSION

The aim of the current study was to investigate the correlation between psychological well-being and self-forgiveness as well as the impact of different personality traits. The results show that self-forgiveness and well-being are positively correlated, indicating that people who are more self-forgiving also typically have higher psychological well-being. Furthermore, the research investigated the influence of diverse demographic attributes on self-forgiveness and overall well-being. Interestingly, neither self-forgiveness nor well-being showed significant gender differences. Additionally, there were no differences in self-forgiveness or well-being, according to marital status or religious belief, which implies that these characteristics may not be as important in these particular outcomes.

The study revealed, however, that self-forgiveness varied by age group, indicating that self-forgiveness may evolve or shift throughout the course of a person's life. Crucially, the research also found a strong correlation between the frequency of religious thoughts or behaviors and self-forgiveness, indicating that active religious participation strengthens the bond between faith and self-forgiveness.

In summary, the results of this study add to the increasing amount of data suggesting that self-forgiveness is a critical factor in determining subjective well-being. Self-forgiveness improves psychological health and constitutes a useful tool for therapeutic interventions by lowering unpleasant emotional states and encouraging adaptive coping strategies.





## FUTURE RESEARCH

Although this study has provided insightful information about the connection between psychological well-being and self-forgiveness, there are a number of significant directions for further investigation.

Future studies should examine how culture and gender differences influence self-forgiveness statement and experience. Knowing how gender norms and cultural expectations affect self-forgiveness could help us understand how these elements either support or undermine self-forgiveness behaviors in various communities.

Further understanding of the long-term impacts of self-forgiveness on well-being may be possible through longitudinal research. It would be possible to determine whether self-forgiveness results in long-lasting advantages in psychological well-being and whether these gains are transient or permanent by following people over time.

Last but not least, future studies should investigate the function of certain religious customs and convictions in the procedure of self-forgiveness, as faith and frequent religious thinking were found to be major moderating factors in this study. Future studies can offer more focused suggestions for incorporating spiritual activities into therapeutic interventions by looking at the different facets of religious engagement.

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