

## FORGIVENESS AMONG SCHOOL TEACHERS AND COLLEGE TEACHERS

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### Abstract:

Forgiveness refers to an intentional decision to let go of resentment and anger. It is difficult to forget the hurt one felt but forgiveness lessens the intensity of one's response emotionally towards that person. Forgiveness helps peace to prevail and supports and individual to move forward in life. In the present study dispositional forgiveness is studied which refers to the general tendency of a person to be forgiving rather than forgiveness of a particular event or person. This empirical research paper focuses on the difference in the dispositional forgiveness between school and college teachers. The between groups research design was chosen and purposive sampling technique was used to select the sample (N=60). 30 school teachers and 30 college teachers between the age group of 30-45 years were chosen as the sample. The Heartland Forgiveness Scale was used to assess the dispositional forgiveness of the sample. Independent samples 't' test was used for statistical analysis. The mean values for dispositional forgiveness indicate that school teachers are usually forgiving and college teachers are likely to forgive. The statistical findings revealed that there is no significant difference in dispositional forgiveness between school and college teachers thereby accepting the null hypothesis.

**Key Words:** *Dispositional forgiveness, School teachers, College teachers.*

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## INTRODUCTION:

Forgiveness is one among the essential and noble human values. Forgiveness means different things to different people. But in general, forgiveness refers to an intentional decision to let go of resentment and anger. It is difficult to forget the hurt one felt but forgiveness lessens the intensity of one's response emotionally towards that person. Forgiveness helps peace to prevail and supports an individual to move forward in life. Resentment is quick to happen whereas forgiveness takes time. The action that hurt or offended a person might always be with oneself. But working on forgiveness lessens the action's hold on a person. Sometimes, forgiveness may lead to understanding, compassion and empathy for the one who has hurt the concerned individual.

Being hurt by someone whom we love and trust can cause anger, mistrust, sadness and confusion. This leads to develop grudge on that particular person which in turn builds hostility and resentment. Holding on to grudge brings anger, bitterness into relationships and experiences, spoils the present life of the person, depression, irritability and anxiousness creeps in and weakens the ability to trust others. Getting angry is a natural response for humans. But forgiveness is learnt. The more one learns to forgive and move on in life, the better his/her quality of life would be.

Sometimes the hurt one feels would be very deep especially when a spouse, parent or children betrays our trust, or when we are victims of crime and abuse, or when we are harshly bullied. When we are hurt we are emotionally charged and cognitively we become weak to think of anything else except for the hurt that we have felt. During such times, our personal and professional life suffers. Forgiveness is the best medicine in such situations. When life hits us hard, there is nothing as effective as forgiveness for healing deep wounds.

Forgiveness can be a gift to oneself or to others; it may be something you receive, but it can also be a quality that describes a relationship where one must be capable of self-forgiveness in order to forgive others. If hope gives you wings, forgiveness will often be what you will need to get off the ground. As an aspect of resilience and a measure of psychological flexibility, forgiveness should be best cultivated as an ongoing practice. Hence, one has to learn to forgive oneself, others and the situations that have caused the harm or hurt.

Forgiveness makes one's life happier, leads to healthier relationships, improved mental health, less anxiety, hostility and stress, keeps one physically healthy and immune and enhances the person's self-esteem.

## **REVIEW OF LITERATURE:**

A study done by Ibadat Khan and Nayanika Singh (2013) on gender differences on gratitude, spirituality and forgiveness among school teachers revealed significant gender differences among male and female teachers with respect to gratitude, spirituality and forgiveness.

The study conducted by Sermet Toktas (2019) showed positive and low correlation between psychological resilience and forgiveness of teachers.

A study conducted by Shirley Karseboom (2016) on the relationship between meaning in life and dispositional forgiveness found a significant relationship between meaning in life and dispositional forgiveness, dispositional forgiveness of situations, and overall dispositional forgiveness. There was no relationship found between meaning in life and dispositional forgiveness of others.

A study conducted by Sezgin & Erdogan (2018) on humility and forgiveness as predictors of teacher self-efficacy revealed positive and significant relationship among teacher self efficacy and positive psychological state improvement.

## **METHODOLOGY:**

### **Problem:**

To study the difference in dispositional forgiveness between school and college teachers.

### **Objective:**

To verify the significance of difference in dispositional forgiveness between school and college teachers.

### **Hypothesis:**

There will be no significant difference in dispositional forgiveness between school and college teachers.

### **Variables:**

- Independent Variable: Teaching- School level and College level.
- Dependent Variable: Dispositional forgiveness.

### **Research Design:**

Between groups design was used for the study.

**Sample:** Purposive sampling technique was used and a total of 60 teachers were selected as the sample. Among them, 30 were school teachers (teaching high school students) and 30 were college teachers (teaching exclusively for degree course) between the age group of 30-45 years.

**Inclusion criteria:**

- Teachers aged between 30-45 years were included.
- Teachers teaching high school students and degree students were included.
- Only full-time teachers were included.

**Exclusion criteria:**

- Teachers teaching Primary school students and PUC students were excluded.
- Part-time teachers were excluded.

**Research Tools:**

- Demographic data sheet.
- Heartland Forgiveness Scale [HFS] (Thompson, Synder & Hoffman,1999).

**Procedure:**

The school and college teachers aged between 30-45 years were approached for consent to be participants for the present study. The demographic data sheet was administered to obtain the required demographic details of the sample. Based on the demographic details obtained by the sample, they were categorized into two groups: School teachers and College teachers. The subjects were also screened keeping in view the inclusion and exclusion criteria. Rapport was established with the subjects before the administration of the questionnaire. Subsequently, the Heartland Forgiveness Scale [HFS] which consists of 18 items was administered to them with appropriate instructions. After the completion of the task, the questionnaire was collected from the sample and the obtained data was statistically analyzed considering the objective of the study. To arrive at the key findings of the study, Independent sample 't' test was used.

**Results and Discussion:**

Forgiveness is generally defined as a conscious, deliberate decision to release feelings of resentment and vengeance toward a person or group who has harmed an individual, regardless of whether they actually deserve your forgiveness. It is important that individuals learn to forgive others, forgive themselves and forgive the situations which hurt them.

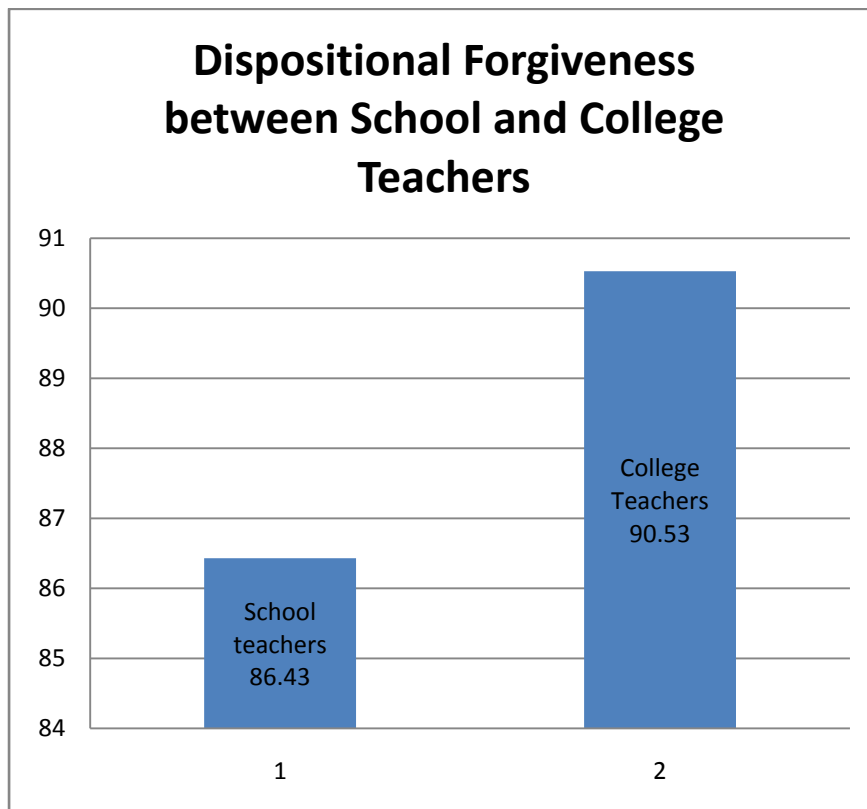
Teaching is one among the noblest professions. Depending on the age group they teach, their forgiveness levels may also vary. To have better insight into these aspects, the present study was undertaken. The present study highlights the importance of measuring the dispositional forgiveness between School and College teachers whose forgiveness would be influenced by multiple factors. But, here it was examined whether teaching school students or college students would make a difference in the dispositional forgiveness that the teachers possess. Statistical analysis of the study has been presented below.

Table showing scores for dispositional forgiveness of school and college teachers.

Variable	Sample	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	't' value
Dispositional Forgiveness	School teachers	30	86.43	12.96	1.16
	College teachers	30	90.53	14.16	

- Not significant.

The above table shows the difference in dispositional forgiveness between school and college teachers. As per the table, the mean is 86.43 and 90.53 with the standard deviation being 12.96 and 14.16 in dispositional forgiveness for school and college teachers respectively. The obtained 't' value is 1.16 indicating no significant difference in dispositional forgiveness between school and college teachers. Hence, the study accepts the null hypothesis stating "There will be no significant difference in dispositional forgiveness between school and college teachers."



The graphical representation of mean values for dispositional forgiveness indicate that, school teachers are usually forgiving and college teachers are likely to forgive. Most social science researchers include the renunciation of anger and resentment as a main tenet in their forgiveness conceptualizations (e.g., Enright, 2001; Enright, Eastin, Golden, Sarinopoulos, & Freedman, 1992; McCullough, 2000; Worthington, Sandage, & Berry, 2000). Several researchers have proposed that the forgiver also must develop feelings of benevolence, or even agape, for the transgressor (e.g., Enright et al., 1992; McCullough, 2000; Worthington et al., 2000). Others, including the current authors, propose that the development of positive feelings or love for the transgressor is not an essential component of forgiveness (e.g., Tangney et al., 1999). The study conducted by Sermet Toktas (2019) showed positive and low correlation between psychological resilience and forgiveness of teachers. A study conducted by Shirley Karseboom (2016) on the relationship between meaning in life and dispositional forgiveness found a significant relationship between meaning in life and dispositional forgiveness, dispositional forgiveness of situations, and overall dispositional forgiveness. There was no relationship found between meaning in life and dispositional forgiveness of others. These studies support the findings of the present study.

### **Conclusions:**

The result of the present study shows that there is no significant difference in dispositional forgiveness between school and college teachers. The study proposes to work on the several other factors that influence forgiveness of school and college teachers in future.

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