

An Associational Study of Personality Factors and Forgiveness

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Abstract

85 boys and 47 girls, studying at undergraduate level in Jalgaon, were administered Big Five Personality inventory by Costa & McCrae and Hastland forgiveness scale. It was hypothesized that neuroticism and forgiveness are negatively and strongly related. Relationships between extraversion, openness, agreeableness, conscientiousness and forgiveness are positive and strong. Results of the study supported both the hypotheses. All the three measures of forgiveness: forgiveness of self, forgiveness of others and forgiveness of situations were negatively and very strongly related to neuroticism.

Introduction

In psychology probably personality is such a field, fertile for research, in which several experiments were done and even today they are being carried out. First type approach and then trait approach provided ample scope for research in psychology [1] believed that every personality is made up of a set of traits and that these traits shape behavior and cause it to be consistent over-time and across situations. has long held that personality consists of a set of traits and each trait is represented as a bipolar dimension with high and low ends. Cattell used powerful multivariate statistical techniques, most often factor analysis, and searched clusters of variables that represent personality dimensions.

He originally derived 16 of these important trait dimensions and later expanded the list to 23 [2] for three to four decades personality traits were measured by cattell's 16 PF test. Hans Eysenck also used factor analysis to search for a set of personality dimensions, but he found just three.

The major current alternative to Cattell and Eysenck has been the Big 5 [3] Paul Costa and Robert [4, 5] has done extensive work to isolate 5 central and universal factors in personality: extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism, and openness to experience.

Now a days in most research studies instead of 16 personality factors, the Big 5 factors are used. A number of researchers made attempts to examine relationships between the Big 5 factors and forgiveness. In fact forgiveness was not a popular term in psychology, but because of studies in positive psychology forgiveness attracted the attention of many researchers.

Forgiveness refers to the act of forgiving, or the willingness to forgive; to excuse for a fault or offence. Also, it indicate renouncement of anger or resentment against someone, situation etc. Positive psychologists have popularized this term as an important personality characteristic and examined its relationship with varied factors of personality.

In a study by [6] examined relationship between personality and forgiveness. Eighty one women and 137 men of a Nepali University completed NEO five factor inventories, and modified version of forgiveness inventory by Mullet, Handbine, and Lemonier & Girard. Agreeableness and emotional stability were positively related to forgiveness.

Using a sample of 275 college students [7] examined the relationship between forgiveness and the five factor model of personality. Forgiveness measured

negatively correlated with neuroticism and positively correlated with agreeableness and extraversion.

Openness and conscientiousness were unrelated to forgiveness [8].

Administered Big five inventory and State-Trait Forgiveness Scale by Rye & others on 155 Taiwanese college students. It was found that agreeableness and neuroticism were significantly related to forgiveness [9].

Studied relationship between five factor model of personality, spirituality and forgiveness. Agreeableness, extraversion, conscientiousness, and emotional stability were positively related to forgiveness [10].

In a study of 450 Jordanian University students found significant positive correlation between forgiveness trait, personality traits and mental health [11].

Administered Malaysia Personality Inventory and Hartland Forgiveness scale on 200 males and 300 females of age 15 to 22. Results showed negative relationship between neuroticism and forgiveness; positive relationships between conscientiousness, extraversion, openness, agreeableness and forgiveness.

Present study is designed to measure five big factors of personality and forgiveness and examine the relationship between them.

Aim of Study

Aim of present study is to measure neuroticism, extroversion, openness, agreeableness, conscientiousness and forgiveness among college going students and study the strength and direction between five factors of personality and forgiveness.

Hypotheses

Neuroticism and forgiveness are negatively and strongly related.

There is strong positive relationship between forgiveness and four factors of personality namely extraversion, openness, agreeableness and conscientiousness.

Sample

Randomly selected 132 undergraduate students of Jalgaon city took part in the study. There were 85 boys and 47 girls. Their age range was 19 to 21 years.

Tools

Big Five personality inventory:

This inventory was constructed and standardized by Costa and McCrae. It consists of 60 items, and each item is provided with five alternatives.

Hartland Forgiveness Scale

The scale was constructed by Hartland. It consists of 18 statements. Each statement is provided with seven alternatives. It measures three types of forgiveness.

Procedure

Personality inventory and forgiveness scale were administered on small groups of Ss, following the instructions laid down by the authors of the scales. Before administering the scales rapport was formed.

Results and Discussion

For five major factors of personality and three types of forgiveness first means and standard deviations were computed. These values indicate that distribution of scores in each factor is more or less normal.

Neuroticism has a mean of 34.24 ± 8.40 ; Extraversion obtained mean of 35.79 ± 5.92 ; Openness had a mean of 34.73 ± 5.49 ; agreeableness is having mean of 33.00 ± 4.99 , and conscientiousness has a mean of 32.27 ± 4.29 .

The three measures of forgiveness obtained more or less similar mean values. For example, forgiveness of self obtained a mean of 17.12 ± 4.97 ; forgiveness of other had a mean of 17.91 and forgiveness of situations got mean value 17.24 ± 4.67 .

To examine the relationships between five factors of personality and three factors of forgiveness product moment correlations were computed.

Table 1: Coefficients of correlation between personality and forgiveness

| | N | E | O | A | C |
|---------------------------|---------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Forgiveness of self | -0.91** | 0.62** | 0.63** | 0.64** | 0.60** |
| Forgiveness of others | -0.92** | 0.67** | 0.68** | 0.68** | 0.63** |
| Forgiveness of situations | -0.90 | 0.60** | 0.61** | 0.64** | 0.59** |

**significant at .01 level

All the correlation coefficients are significant at .01 level. These results are in line with the assumption of study. Correlation coefficients between neuroticism and measures of forgiveness are negative and very high. These relationships suggest that emotional stability is necessary for developing forgiveness. Extraversion, openness, agreeableness and conscientiousness were positively related to forgiveness. However, none of these correlations was high. All the correlation coefficients were moderate and significant at .01 level.

In the studies conducted earlier, similar results were seen. For example, [11]

observed negative relationship between neuroticism and forgiveness; other four factors of Big Five were positively related with forgiveness [6]. Also got similar results.

On the basis of results of present it is concluded that,

- Relationship between neuroticism and forgiveness was negative, very high and significant.
- Extraversion, openness, agreeableness and conscientiousness were positively related to forgiveness, but though the correlations were significant, the relationships were moderate.

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