

Characteristics of forgiveness, aggression and their relationships in the case of female students in Russian State Social University.

Научный руководитель – No supervisor No supervisor

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For a very long time, forgiveness and aggression became the research topic of many psychologists all over the world. Thomson et al (2005) defined forgiveness as the ability to change responses to transgression, transgressors and the consequences of a transgression from negative to neutral or positive [1]. According to Thomson, the source of the transgression may come from oneself, from others or from situations that individual cannot control [3]. Meanwhile, according to the dictionary of Psychology by the American Psychological Association, aggression is behavior aimed at harming others physically or psychologically [2]. This study aims to show the characteristics of these two psychological traits as well as the relationship between them in female students of the Russian State Social University.

Participants and methods

There are 107 female students of Russian State Social University participating in this research (Mean age: 20,03, SD=1,74). A questionnaire was created from 2 scales. The first scale is 18-item HFS forgiveness scale by Thomas et al [3]. The scale was translated into Russian language with the assessment of Psychology faculty teacher - longtime researcher who is fluent in English. To guarantee reliability and validity of the new translated scale, exploratory factor analysis method was used. There were 6 items did not guarantee the necessary validity. After removing these 6 items, the new scale contains 12 questions which were divided into 6 groups of forgiveness which are forgiveness of self, others and situations in both positive and negative wording. The scoring method, therefore, was rearranged due to the reduction in number of the items. We categorized 3 levels of general forgiveness which are (1) low level (sum score between 12 and 36), (2) moderate level (sum score between 37 and 59) and high level (Sum score between 60 to 84). Factor loading of items ranges from 0,534 to 0,965, КМО=0,784, $p < 0,01$, total variance explained = 75,75% > 50%. The Cronbach's alpha index of the new 12-item scale is 0,75 which indicates a good level of reliability. The second scale used in this research is Buss-Perry Aggression Questionnaire (BPAQ-24) [1]. The scale was adapted into Russian language by Enikolopov and Tsiublsky. The Cronbach's alpha index of this scale is 0,89. The scale measures 3 aspects of aggression which are (1) Anger, (2) Physical aggression and (3) Hostility. The collected dataset was analyzed with the help of SPSS program version 22.

Results

The findings reveal the fact that the majority of participants are in the group of moderate level of forgiveness (M=53,05; SD=10,72). The low level of forgiveness group accounts for only 7,5%. Meanwhile, the percentage of moderate level group is 66,4% and the high level group accounts for 26,2% of the participants. This result corresponds with other findings when analyzing other factors of forgiveness. Specifically, in the factor "forgiveness of self" (M=17,93; SD=4,7), there are 16,8% of the participants in low level group, 43,9% in moderate level group and 39,3% in high level group. The percentage of participants who in the low level group

of “forgiveness of others” ($M=18,23$; $SD=4,44$) is 13,1% while the moderate level group and high level group account for 43% and 43,9%. In the factor “forgiveness of situations”(M=16,9; $SD=4,87$), the low level group accounts for 15,9%, the percentage of moderate and high level groups are 57,9% and 26,2%. From these findings, we can conclude that the majority of female students in Russian State Social University feel easy or quite easy to forgive to themselves, to others and to uncontrollable situations.

The result of analyzing aggression of female students in Russian State Social University shows that the majority (73,8%) are in low level group ($M=46,8$; $SD=12,42$), meanwhile the high level group only accounts for 1%. However, there are differences when analyzing the three factors of aggression. In factor “Anger” ($M=20,27$; $SD=6,41$), low level group only accounts for 29,2% when moderate and high level groups account for 41,5% and 29,2% of the participants. It can be implied that there are significant number of the participants who are easy to get angry. Two other factors are physical aggressive ($M=18,92$; $SD=6,62$) and hostility ($M=18,94$; $SD=5,81$) reveal quite similar results. Majority of the participants are in low level groups (67,3% in “physical aggression” and 50,0% in “Hostility”). Moderate level groups ranked the second place (27,1% in “physical aggression” and 39,6% in “Hostility”). The minority are high level groups (5,6% in “physical aggression” and 10,4% in “hostility”)

The correlation between forgiveness and aggression was found as well, corresponding with the research hypothesis. There is a significant negative correlation between forgiveness and aggression. ($r=-0,55$, $p<0,01$). Correlations between forgiveness and factors of aggression (Anger, physical aggression and hostility) range from -0.33 to -0,67 ($p<0,01$). Correlations between aggression and factors of forgiveness (Forgiveness of self, others and situations) range from -0,37 to -0,46 ($p<0,01$). Correlations among factors of the two psychological traits were also found. Most of them are on moderate - significant level of correlation. These findings suggest that the less aggressive individuals are, the more likely they forgive and vice versa.

Conclusions

According to the findings of this research, the majority of female students in Russian State Social University are in moderate level group of forgiveness and in low level group of aggression. However, a significant number of students are easy to get angry. This research also shows the opposite relationship between forgiveness and aggression through significant negative correlations between them and among their factors. Therefore, some psychocorrectional methods that reduce aggressiveness through developing the sense and ability of forgiveness can be suggested and applied.

References

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