

## A Study on Happiness and Forgiveness among Orphans

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### ABSTRACT

The present study is aimed at understanding the gender difference in happiness and forgiveness among orphans; To identify the relationship between happiness and forgiveness among orphans. The sample is consisted of 60 participants comprising of 30 boys and 30 girls belonging the age of 12-18 years. The study adopted sample survey design. The tools are used in the present study, Oxford Happiness questionnaire (Hills, P., and Argyle, M. 2002), and Heartland Forgiveness scale (Mauger, 1992). The results are analyzed using independent sample t test and Pearson coefficient of correlation. The result indicates that there is a significant difference in the level of happiness among orphan boys and girls. There is no significant difference in the level of forgiveness among orphan boys and girls. There is no relationship between happiness and forgiveness among orphans.

**Keywords:** *Happiness, Forgiveness, Gender, Orphans*

**O***rphans* The term orphan is defined by the deprivation of parents, and is commonly understood to be a child who has lost both parents to death. The orphan thus reveals his or her culture's understanding of both the importance of the child's essential needs and society's responsibility for meeting them. Because debates about the importance of the child often crystallize around the orphan, the orphan proves to be a figure of concern across culture, throughout history, and in the contemporary world.

### *Happiness*

Happiness is a mental or emotional state of well-being characterized by positive or pleasant emotions ranging from contentment to intense joy. A variety of biological psychological, religious, and philosophical approaches have striven to define happiness and identify its sources.

Undoubtedly, happiness does not mean total absence of anger, pain, sorrow, loss or disappointment; there will be moments of pain and anxiety. But scars will heal with time. Our endeavour should be to heal the wounds at the earliest possible. We ourselves are the most important sources of happiness and unhappiness. It is our attitude and our actions that largely contribute to our state of life. Where the causes of happiness cannot be cured, we must

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## A Study on Happiness and Forgiveness among Orphans

endure. The need is to change the attitude and act positively and remain undisturbed by unfavourable events and situations.

### *Forgiveness*

In a psychological perspective, forgiveness is an intentional process by which an individual may initially feel victimized, undergoes a change in his/ her feelings and attitudes regarding a given offense, and overcomes negative emotions.

### *Types of forgiveness*

- **Cognitive forgiveness:** Cognitive forgiveness is defined based on the perspective that sees transgressions as violations of cognitive structures, like beliefs and thoughts for example A cognitive approach to forgiveness involves standard cognitive and psychodynamic therapeutic interventions to help people change their cognitions.
- **Emotional forgiveness:** Emotional forgiveness is a transformation of negative, unforgiving emotions (anger, resentment and bitterness) into positive emotions (sympathy, empathy and compassion). It is just concerned with emotions, not with thoughts, motivations and behaviors.
- **Decision-based forgiveness:** Forgiveness is viewed as an act of will or a choice to let go or to hold. People can separate their thoughts of resentment and bitterness from their feelings of hurt.

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Ali Mostafaei, et. al (2012) The comparison of happiness in Orphanage and non-orphanage children. The results showed that there is a significant difference between orphanage and non-orphanage children in positive and negative emotions. Orphanage children show more negative emotions (NA and NE) and less positive emotions (PA and PE) in comparison with non-orphanage children. There is no significant correlation between age, education and happiness.

M. Nasar Sayeed Khan et. al (2014) A comparative study of personality difference between orphans and non-orphans of Lahore. The study findings revealed that there is a significant difference in hostility and world view of institutionalized orphans, non-institutionalized orphans and non-orphan adolescents. Whereas, there is no significant difference in dependency, self-esteem, self-adequacy, emotional responsiveness and emotional stability among the three groups.

Danilo Garcia, (2011) conducted a study on Adolescents' Happiness. The results provide a reason and a more positive approach in the pursuit of happiness, suggesting that self-acceptance may foster life satisfaction regardless of individuals' temperamental dispositions. Thus, such factors may be more essential for well-being than life events per se. Indeed, Cloninger (2004) suggests that genetic and environmental influences do not influence behavior in the same way. Hence, in order to increase well-being, we need to look at the part of personality that mediates or modifies the significance or meaning of what is experienced as well as change emotional reactions and habits.

Thomas W. Baskin, et. al (2004) Intervention Studies on Forgiveness: A Meta-Analysis. Result shows that when compared with control groups, for measures of forgiveness and other emotional health measures, the decision-based interventions showed no effect, the process-based group interventions showed significant effects, and the process-based individual

## A Study on Happiness and Forgiveness among Orphans

interventions showed large effects. Consequently, effectiveness has been shown for use of forgiveness in clinical and other settings.

Makame, V., et al. (2002) involving 41 orphans in Dar El Salaam, Tanzania, whose fathers and/or mother had died from AIDS. “ It was found that the orphans not only had unmet basic needs, but also had markedly increased internalizing problems, thus putting their long-term mental health would be in jeopardy.

Day, I., et al., (2005) Forgiveness and Happiness. The differing contexts of forgiveness using the distinctions between hedonic and eudaimonic happiness. The results show that forgiveness accounts for statistically significant variance, albeit quiet low, in both hedonic and eudaimonic happiness and the relationships may vary depending on which aspects of happiness is being considered. In terms of shorter-term hedonic happiness, the present findings suggest it is important not to engage in negative cognition about the transgression. In term of maintaining eudaimonic happiness, engaging in positive behaviours and feelings may lead to, be the results of, or be very much part of longer-term happiness.

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### *Objectives*

- To study the difference in the level of forgiveness and happiness among orphans.
- To study the relationship between forgiveness and happiness among orphans.
- To study the gender difference in the level of forgiveness and happiness among orphans.

#### *Hypotheses*

- There is no significant gender difference in the level of forgiveness among orphans.
- There is no significant gender difference in the level of happiness among orphans.
- There is no significant relationship between forgiveness and happiness among orphans.

#### *Sample*

Purposive Sampling method is adopted for the study. The sample consisted of 60 participants, out of which 30 are girls and 30 are boys.

<b>GENDER</b>	<b>GIRLS</b>	<b>BOYS</b>
<b>ORPHANS</b>	30	30
<b>Total</b>	60	

#### *Materials*

Two measures were used in this study.

- **Oxford Happiness Questionnaire:** The oxford happiness questionnaire was developed by psychologists Michael argyle and peter hills in 2002 at Oxford university. Take a few moments to take the survey. This is a good way to get a snapshot of your current level of happiness. There are 29 questions is there in the questionnaire. The items are answered on a six-point scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. This is simple scale question with some reverse coded items. The OHQ reliability is 0.91 and validity is 0.04 to 0.65.
- **The Heartland Forgiveness Scale:** The heartland forgiveness scale (HFS) was first developed by Mauger in 1998, and the current version was finalized in 1999. The heartland forgiveness scale is an 18 item, self-report questionnaire that measures a

## A Study on Happiness and Forgiveness among Orphans

person's dispositional forgiveness, rather than forgiveness of a particular event or person. The HFS consists of the total HFS and three six-item subscales (Forgiveness of Self, Forgiveness of Others, Forgiveness of Situations). The reliability of Forgiveness scale is 0.80 and validity of this scale is adequate.

### **Procedure**

The Purpose of the study was explained to the participants. The participant's willingness to participate in the study was ascertained after the establishment of rapport. The socio-demographic details were collected. The participants were briefed about the two inventories separately and were provided with clear instructions. After the completion of the administration of forgiveness questionnaire, a five-minute break was given for the purpose of relaxation and then Oxford happiness Questionnaire was administered, later both the inventories were collected back.

### **Variables:**

#### **Independent variable**

Male & Female

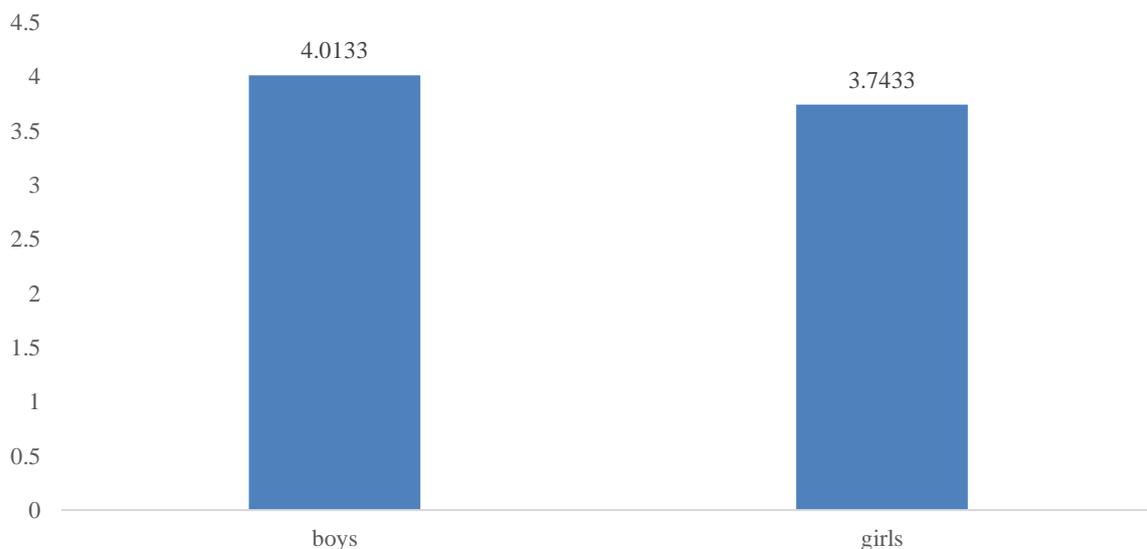
#### **Dependent variable**

Happiness and forgiveness

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

*Table 1 Mean, Standard deviation and t value of happiness among orphan boys and girls.*

Area	Gender	N	Mean	SD	t value	P
Happiness	Boys	30	4.0133	.40830	2.668	.010
	Girls	30	3.7433	.37479		



*Figure 1 Mean score of happiness among orphan girls and boys.*

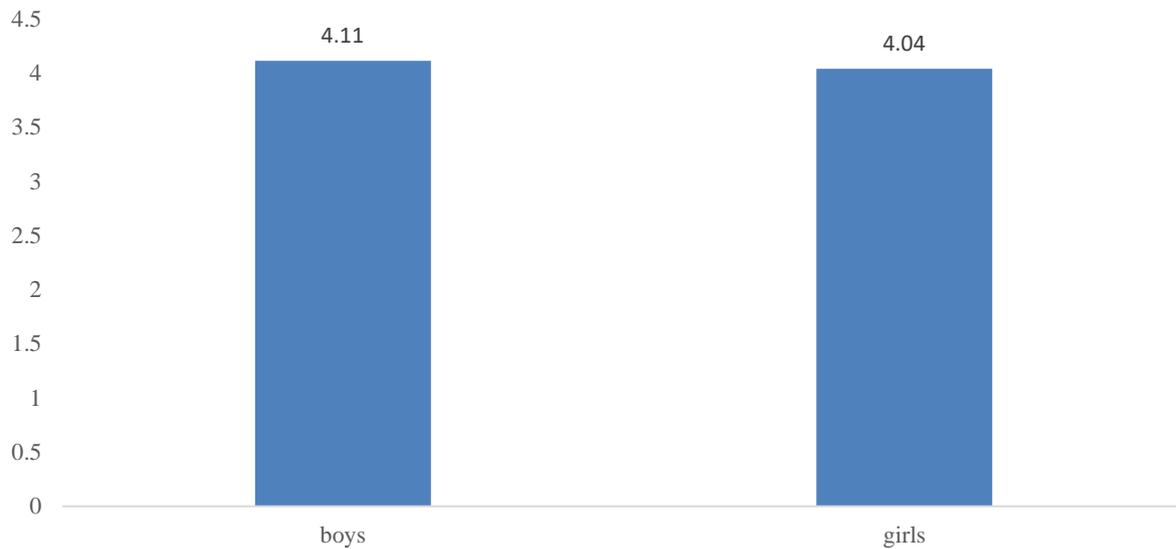
The hypothesis stating that there is no significant gender difference in the level of happiness among orphan boys and girls was tested using independent sample *t* test. The *t* value for happiness is 0.010 which is significant. Mean scores indicate that boys have higher level of

## A Study on Happiness and Forgiveness among Orphans

happiness compared to girls. Hence, the null hypothesis which states there is no significant gender difference in the level of happiness among orphan boys and girls is rejected.

**Table 2 Mean, Standard deviation and t value of forgiveness among orphan boys and girls.**

Area	Gender	N	Mean	SD	t value	P
Forgiveness	Boys	30	4.1167	.46169	.711	.480
	Girls	30	4.0400	.36822		



**Figure 2 Mean score of forgiveness among orphan boys and girls.**

The hypothesis stating that there is no significant gender difference in the level of forgiveness among orphan boys and girls was tested using independent sample *t* test. The *t* value for forgiveness is 0.480 which is not significant. Hence, the null hypothesis which states there is no significant gender difference in the level of forgiveness among orphan boys and girls is accepted.

**Table 3 Pearson coefficient of correlation on forgiveness and happiness among orphan boys and girls.**

	Forgiveness	Happiness
Forgiveness	1	.041
Happiness	.041	1

The hypothesis stating that there is no significant relationship between happiness and forgiveness among orphan boys and girls was tested using Pearson coefficient of correlation. The statistical analysis of the result reveals no significant relationship between happiness and forgiveness, hence the null hypothesis is accepted.

### CONCLUSIONS

- The result of the study found higher level of happiness among orphan boys when compared to orphan girls
- Significant gender difference in the level of forgiveness among orphan boys and girls is not found.

## A Study on Happiness and Forgiveness among Orphans

- Significant relationship is not found between happiness and forgiveness among orphans.

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### **Conflict of Interest**

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

## A Study on Happiness and Forgiveness among Orphans

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