

Emotional Intelligence and Forgiveness in adults: A study Across Gender

Vaishnavi Prakash^{1*}, Dr. Manini Srivastava²

ABSTRACT

Emotional intelligence by and large is the ability to understand and manage the feelings and emotions in positive way. Individuals having high degree of emotional intelligence have knowledge of their own emotions and tends to handle difficult circumstances, relieve stress, building positive relationships, and create a proper understanding of how their emotions can affect them or others. Their emotional intelligence promotes and guides them in dealing effectively with the life. There are essentially five elements of emotional intelligence- self-awareness, self-regulation, empathy, motivation and social skills (Daniel Goleman, 1998). Forgiveness, on the other hand, is a conscious and voluntary decision to let go of feeling of resentment and vengeance towards a person or a group who has harmed you. Enright stated that forgiveness is primarily the “foregoing of resentment or revenge” when the wrongdoers actions deserve it and instead giving the offender gifts of mercy, generosity and love or beneficence when the wrongdoer does not deserve them (Robert Enright). Emotional Intelligence and Forgiveness both involves content related to emotions and feelings. Both concepts show commonalities in their elements. Therefore, the main purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between Emotional intelligence and Forgiveness. The sample of 60 young adults (age 20-40) was taken. The collection of data was done using two questionnaires- Schutte Self Report Emotional Intelligence Test (SSEIT) and Heartland Forgiveness Scale (HFS). The result showed a moderately positive correlation coefficient ($r = 0.54$), which indicated that there is possibility of connection in the relationship between EI and Forgiveness. No significant difference was observed between the scores of males and females in EI as well as in Forgiveness.

Keywords: *Intelligence, Emotional Intelligence, Forgiveness, Adults, Gender*

In general when question arise that “What is Intelligence?” the simple and most common answer that comes to the mind is that, Intelligence is being smart and well in academics. But what does it mean to be “smart”? Is intelligence merely a score on some test or is it practical knowledge of how to get along in the world? It only means making good grades or being financial and socially successful as well. Ask some people and you will get multiple answers, all differ from each other. But what exactly is intelligence? Many psychologists

¹Department of Psychology, University of Lucknow, Lucknow, India

²Department of Psychology, University of Lucknow, Lucknow, India

*Corresponding Author

Received: November 24, 2021; Revision Received: January 06, 2022; Accepted: February 23, 2022

have given several workable definitions of intelligence. The way that researchers and psychologists defined intelligence and its concept has been modified and amended several times. Lewis Terman believed that an individual is intelligence in proportion as he is able to carry on abstract thinking. Therefore, he defined intelligence as, “*the ability to carry on abstract thinking*” (Terman,1921). Edward Thorndike definition on intelligence emphasized on, “*learning and the capacity or ability to give good responses to questions*”. He also proposed three types of intelligence which are- Social Intelligence; Abstract Intelligence; Concrete Intelligence. (Thorndike,1920). But the most prominent and used definition was given by David Wechsler that

“Intelligence is the aggregate or global capacity of the individual to act purposefully, to think rationally and to deal effectively with his environment.” (Wechsler, 1944)

There are several different views of the knowledge and abilities that fabricate the concept of intelligence. There are theories given by different psychologists that offer explanation of the nature and number of abilities related of intelligence.

Intelligence and its Theories

British psychologist Charles Spearman believed that intelligence consisted of two different abilities- “The ability to reason out and solve problems was labelled as g factor or general intelligence.” On the contrary, “The ability to excel in certain areas was labelled as s factor or specific intelligence.” (Spearman,1904). Other psychologists were of the opinion that intelligence is a collection of distinct abilities. In the 1940s, Raymond Cattell proposed a theory in which general intelligence was divided into two- Crystallised Intelligence, which represent acquired knowledge or skills. In simple terms this refers when you learn some information, remember and later recall that particular information and Fluid Intelligence, which emphasises on problem solving and ability to adapt in unfamiliar situations. (Flanagan & Dixon,2013; Schneider & McGrew,2012).Fluid intelligence assist you to address complex an abstract challenges in your daily life whereas Crystallised Intelligence assist you to overcome concrete and straight forward problems (Cattell,1963).John Horn expanded Cattell’s work and after an extensive factor analysis developed a three tier hierarchical model of cognitive abilities that a new theory was proposed names as the Cattell-Horn-Carroll (CHC) Theory of Intelligence (McGrew,2009). This theory is considered as the most comprehensive theory of intelligence to date. (Schneider & McGrew, 2018).

Many theorists and psychologists thought that intelligence should be explained more in practical terms. Robert Sternberg theorised that there are three kinds of intelligence which he had explained in his proposed theory named as Triarchic theory of Intelligence. It states intelligence as comprised of three parts (Sternberg,1988). These parts are as following- Practical Intelligence, as proposed by Sternberg, is sometimes best described as ‘street smart’. This implement, “the ability to use information to get along in life”. Individuals with high degree of practical intelligence knows to be tactful, manipulate situation according to their needs and advantage, and are able to use inside information to increase their odds of success. Sternberg, 1996 & 1997 has observed that practical intelligence predicts success in life but has surprisingly low relationship with Analytical Intelligence. Nevertheless when practical intelligence is used to supplement standardised tests, studies have found that college, high school and elementary school programs benefit in a diversity of areas due to that various range of individuals being included. (Sternberg,2015). **Analytical Intelligence** is firmly aligned with academics solving problems and computations. According to Sternberg, Analytical Intelligence refers to the ability to break problems down into component parts for

Emotional Intelligence and Forgiveness in adults: A study Across Gender

problem solving. It is demonstrated by an ability to analyse, evaluate, judge, compare, and contrast. This is a kind of intelligence that is measured by intelligence tests or academics achievements tests. **Creative Intelligence** is the ability to deal with new and different concepts and to come up with new ways of solving problems. In other words, it is to use divergent thinking. It also refers to the ability to automatically process certain aspects of information which frees up cognitive resources to deal with novelty (Sternberg,2005).

One of the later theorists to believe in the existence of several types or kinds of intelligence was **Howard Gardner**, a Harvard psychologist and student of Erik Erikson. He believed that there were different kinds or aspects of intelligence along with several other abilities. Proposed by Gardner in 1983, the **theory of Multiple Intelligences** has amended the view to understand intelligence. Among these intelligences, a person typically excels in some and falters in others (Gardner, 1983). In Gardner's intelligences type, each type represents different ways of processing information. They are in brief as following (Gardner, 1998).

Gardner's Nine Intelligences –

S.No	Types of Intelligences	Description (Individual's ability)
1.	Verbal/Linguistic	Ability to use language
2.	Musical	Ability to compose or perform music
3.	Logical/Mathematical	Ability to think logically and to solve mathematical problems
4.	Visual/Spatial	Ability to understand how objects are oriented in space
5.	Movement	Ability to control one's body motions
6.	Naturalist	Ability to recognize the patterns found in nature
7.	Intrapersonal	Ability to understand one's emotions and how they guide actions
8.	Interpersonal	Ability to understand others emotions and be sensitive towards them
9.	Existentialist (candidate intelligence)	Ability to see the big picture of the world by asking questions about life, death, and the ultimate reality of human existence

(Source: Gardner, 1998 & 1999b)

Gardner's Interpersonal and Intrapersonal intelligence are often merged into a single type known as Emotional Intelligence.

Emotional Intelligence (EI)

Emotional Intelligence encompasses the ability to understand the emotions of yourself and others, to show empathy, to understand social relationship and cues, to regulate your own emotions and to respond in culturally appropriate ways (Parker, Saklofske & Stough, 2009). This as a psychological concept was first developed by Peter Salovey & John Mayer. According to them emotional intelligence is the “*ability to perceive emotions, to access and generate emotions so as to assist thoughts, to understand emotions and emotional knowledge and to reflectively regulate emotions so to promote emotional and intellectual growth*” (Mayer & Salovey, 1997). This concept was later popularised by an author and science journalist, Daniel Goleman. In his book, “Emotional Intelligence: Why it can matter more than IQ’ argue that emotional intelligence is a better predictor of success than traditional intelligence (Goleman, 1995) including in academics, professional, social, and interpersonal aspects of an individual's life. According to him emotional intelligence is-

Emotional Intelligence and Forgiveness in adults: A study Across Gender

“The capacity for recognizing our own feelings and those of the others for motivating ourselves and for managing emotions well in ourselves and in our relationship” (Goleman, 1995)

Initially when John Mayer and Peter Salovey in 1990 coined the term Emotional Intelligence, they broke it down into four branches which were-

- Identifying emotions on a non-verbal level.
- Using emotions to guide cognitive thinking.
- Understanding the information emotions convey and the action emotions generate.
- Regulating one’s own emotions for personal benefit and for common good.

But later on, Goleman broadened Mayer and Salovey’s this four branch system and goes on to propose a framework of personal competencies that stem from the emotional intelligence concept. He defines emotional competence as, “a learned capability based on emotional intelligence that results in outstanding performance at work.” (Goleman, 1998). He engulfed five essential elements of emotional competence framework which are shown in the following figure-

Emotional Competence Framework –

PERSONAL SKILLS		
S.NO	ELEMENTS	DESCRIPTION
1.	SELF AWARENESS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Emotional Awareness ➤ Accurate self-assessment ➤ Self Confidence 	Knowing one’s internal states, preferences, resources, and intuitions.
2.	SELF REGULATION <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Self-Control ➤ Trustworthiness ➤ Conscientiousness ➤ Adaptability ➤ Innovation 	Managing one’s internal impulses and resources
3.	MOTIVATION <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Achievement Drive ➤ Commitment ➤ Initiative ➤ Optimism 	Emotional tendencies that guide or facilitate reaching goals
SOCIAL SKILLS		
4.	EMPATHY <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Understanding others ➤ Developing others ➤ Service Orientation ➤ Leveraging Diversity ➤ Political Awareness 	Awareness of other’s feelings, needs and concerns
5.	SOCIAL SKILLS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Influence ➤ Communication ➤ Conflict Management ➤ Leadership ➤ Change Catalyst ➤ Building Bonds ➤ Collaboration and Cooperation ➤ Team Capabilities 	Adeptness and inducing desirable responses in others

(Adopted from Goleman,1998- Working with Emotional Intelligence)

Emotional Intelligence and Forgiveness in adults: A study Across Gender

Despite being a very significant and popular concept, however emotional intelligence has been widely debated with different psychologists and researchers pointing out inconsistencies in how it is defined and described as well as questioning results of studies on a subject that is difficult to measure and study empirically (Locke,2005; Mayer, Salovey & Caruso,2004).

The actions we create in our life are mostly based on our emotions and emotional intelligence. It is a proactive technique that will help to become more effective in life. If your emotions are controlling you, rather than controlling your emotions you need to improve your emotional intelligence. The debate over emotional intelligence has been loud. There are some reasons for optimism about the future of emotional intelligence, but there is still a long way to go before this concept will come close to living up to the hype.

Forgiveness

Forgiveness is a hefty word. It has been tossed around self help circles for years but little has been made of what the science behind forgiveness can teach us about our own lives. Forgiveness is not saying what happened was okay. It is not saying you accept the person who wronged you. Instead forgiveness is choosing to accept what happened as it happened rather than what could or should have happened. In simple word forgiveness mean that you let go and step into present rather than anchoring in the past.

In psychology forgiveness is often defined as a voluntary internal process of letting go of feelings and thoughts of resentment, bitterness, anger, need for vengeance and retribution towards someone who we believe has wronged us including ourselves. Dr. Robert Enright is the unquestioned pioneer in the scientific study of forgiveness. He also pioneered forgiveness therapy and developed an early intervention to promote forgiveness. Many theorists and researchers coincide with Robert D. Enright and T. Coyle, 1998 that forgiveness is different from the followings-

- Pardoning : which is a legal concept.
- Condoning : which involves justifying the offence.
- Excusing : which implies that transgression was committed because of some circumstances.
- Forgetting : which implies that the memory of the transgression has decayed or slipped out of consciousness.
- Denial : which implies unwillingness to perceive the harmful injuries or events.
- Reconciliation : which implies the restoration of a fractured relationship (Freedman, 1998) .

Instead forgiveness brings the forgiver peace of mind and frees them from corrosive anger. While there is some debate over whether true forgiveness requires positive feelings towards the offender, experts agree that it is at least involves letting go of deeply held negative feelings. In that way it empowers you to recognize the pain you endured without letting that pain and suffering define you, enabling you to heal and move on with your life. Forgiveness is a complex psychological construct and researchers who study forgiveness stress different aspects of it when they formulate their theories. It may be defined according to its properties such as following-

- i. As a Response – It may be understood as a prosocial change in a victim’s thoughts, emotions, and behaviour towards a blameworthy transgression. When people forgive their responses towards people who offended or injured them become less negative and more positive overtime. (McCullough, Pargament & Thoresen, 2000).

Emotional Intelligence and Forgiveness in adults: A study Across Gender

- ii. As a Personality disposition – It may be understood as a propensity to forgive others across a wide variety of interpersonal circumstances. In this sense people can be scaled along a forgiving-unforgiving continuum, with most people falling somewhere towards mean of the population. The disposition to forgive might itself have several aspects (Mullet, Houdbine, Laumonier & Girard, 1998).
- iii. As a characteristic of Social units – It may be understood as an attribute that is similar to intimacy, trust or commitment. Some social structures are characterised by a high degree of forgiveness in which people are forgiven readily for their wrong doing, for e.g. marriages, families. Whereas other social structures are characterised by less degree of forgiveness, for e.g. social institutions that hasten to ostracize or retaliate against members who commit transgressions. Development of a benevolent stance is crucial for forgiveness (Enright, 1989).

Models of Forgiveness

- a) **Thompson et al. (2005)** developed a model of cultivating forgiveness in which the target of forgiveness can be a Person, Oneself or Situation.
- b) **Gordon et.al. (2004)** suggested a three stage process of forgiveness towards another person. The stages are briefly described below-
 - I. Appraisal Stage, in this stage a realistic and non distorted appraisal of the relationship is promoted.
 - II. Meaning Stage, in this stage a release from the bond of negative affects held towards the transgressor is facilitated.
 - III. Lessing the desire to punish, in this stage despite having all rights to punish the transgressor the victimised person chooses to reduce the desire to punish the transgressor.
- c) **Robert Enright** proposed a four phases model of forgiving which includes-
 - I. The Uncovering Phase, in this phase the forgiver evaluates the defence mechanism that he has been consciously or unconsciously acting in dealing with the pain and unpleasant feelings like anger, guilt and shame.
 - II. The Decision Phase, in this phase the forgiver realise that what he has been doing in response to the pain did not lead to a resolution and consider forgiveness as an option.
 - III. The Work Phase, in this phase Enright encourages the forgiver to view the person they are upset with compassion, challenging then to view their offence through a frame other than that of victim and offender.
 - IV. The Deepening Phase, in this phase there can be healing from emotional pain. Enright encourages others to find meaning in their experiences through giving mercy, generosity, and love to the transgressor.
- d) **Everett Worthington (2002)** developed another model known by the acronym of 'REACH' wherein the letters stands for-
 - R= Recalling the hurt.
 - E= Empathize
 - A= Altruistically giving the gift of forgiveness to other partner
 - C= Commit verbally to forgive
 - H= Hold onto the forgiveness

Eastern View of Forgiveness

In Indian ideology, Forgiveness is considered as a 'divine quality'. In this way forgiveness means to self-purification. In Sanskrit forgiveness or '*shama*' is synonymous with suffering, endurance, patience, and forbearance. Forgiveness encompasses all these and is a virtue because by forgiving others you willingly accept the suffering caused by others by their thoughtless actions. In Vedic literature and Epics of Hinduism '*ksama or kshyama*' describes the concept of forgiveness. Forgiveness is regarded as one of the six cardinal virtue in Hindu dharma. In this not only one should forgive others but one must also seek forgiveness if one has wronged someone else. It is to be sought from the individual wronged as well a society at large by acts of charity, purification, fasting, ritual, and meditative introspection. In the *Bhagavad-Gita*, sacred scripture of Hinduism, Lord Krishna declares forgiveness to be a godly quality foundational for liberation and is contrasted with the anger and harshness that characterise the ungodly who stay in bondage. According to the *Gita* forgiveness arises from God only. It is associated with other divine qualities such as intelligence, knowledge, freedom from delusion, truthfulness, control of sense, control of mind, fearlessness, nonviolence, austerity etc. *Gita* teaches one that forgiveness is essential for to free oneself from negative thoughts and being able to focus on blissfully living moral and ethical life (dharmic life).

“Intelligence, knowledge, freedom from doubt and delusion, forgiveness, truthfulness, self-control and calmness, pleasure and pain, birth, death, fear, fearlessness, nonviolence, equanimity, satisfaction, austerity, charity, fame and infamy are created by Me alone.” (Bhagavad-Gita- Ch 10, Verse 4-5).

In Buddhism, forgiveness is seen as a practice to prevent harmful thoughts from causing havoc on one's mental well-being. Buddhism recognises that feelings of hatred and ill will leave a lasting effect on our mind. When resentments have already arisen, the Buddhist view is to calmly proceed to release them by going back to their roots. Buddhism centres on release from delusion and suffering through meditation and receiving insight into the nature of reality. It questions the reality of the passion that make forgiveness necessary as well as the reality of the objects of those passions. Buddhism view, “if we haven't forgiven, we keep creating an identity around our pain and that is what is reborn. That is what suffers.” Buddhism places much emphasis on the concepts of *Metta* (loving kindness), *Karuna* (compassion), *Mudita* (sympathetic joy), and *Upekkha* (equanimity) as a means to avoid resentment in the first place. These reflections are used to understand the context of suffering in the world, both our own and the suffering of others.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

There are several studies done on emotional intelligence. Although there is lack of empirical studies that shows the positive relationship between emotional intelligence and forgiveness but there are some researches that emotional intelligence does have an impact on interpersonal relationship with society and family. It seems to be one of the building blocks for maintain and managing emotions.

The present research focuses on the relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Forgiveness in youth. Thus, the current study aims to explore these two variables only. However, an effort is being made to discuss some of the empirical studies done on emotional intelligence and forgiveness both with various other variables.

Emotional Intelligence and Forgiveness in adults: A study Across Gender

Studies on Emotional Intelligence –

Studies have supported that medical school students with higher emotional intelligence perform better in courses related to patient relationships or ‘bedside manners’ (Libbrecht et al, 2014).

There has been reported evidence for emotional intelligence being related to physicians competence and areas of improved physicians-patient interacts including enhanced communication and more empathic & compassionate patient care (Arora et al, 2010).

Another review found people with higher emotional intelligence tended to have better social relationships for children and adults, better family and intimate relationship, were perceived more positively by others, were more successful at work and lastly experienced greater psychological well being. (Mayer, Roberts et al, 2008).

Another study was done to explore the relationship between emotional intelligence and effective leadership. For these 43 participants were included employed in management roles. The result showed that Emotional intelligence correlated with several components of transformational leadership suggesting that it may be an important component of effective leadership (Benjamin Palmer, Melissa Walls, Zena Burgess, Con Stough, 2001).

Many aspects of emotional intelligence are dependent on what is learned in one’s early development (Mayer, Salovey & Caruso, 2000). People with high emotional intelligence are not likely to repress or project anger and they have a greater ability to express the feelings (Goleman, 1995).

Studies on Forgiveness –

A study correlated forgiveness scale scores of 68 community adults with a variety of immunological, psycho-physiological and other physiological factors. Blood samples and physiological measurements were taken after a 30-minute rest period. In addition, participants completed a series of standardized assessments of anger, anxiety, depression, social desirability and coping styles. Higher levels of forgiveness correlated with better health habits, lower anxiety, lower anger, lower depression, and more task coping. In general, results supported that forgiveness is positively associated with indices of good health (Kevin S Seybold, Peter C Hill et al, 2001).

An intervention designed to foster forgiveness was implemented with post abortion men. Participants were randomly assigned to either the treatment or the control (wait list) condition, which received treatment after a 12-week waiting period. Following treatment, the participants demonstrated a significant gain in forgiveness and significant reductions in anxiety, anger, and grief as compared with controls. Similar significant findings were evident among control participants after they participated in the treatment (Enright & Coyle, 1997).

A study was done using a sample of 275 college students to examined the relationship between forgiveness of others (i.e., situational and dispositional) and the five-factor model of personality. All forgiveness measures were negatively correlated with Neuroticism and positively correlated with Agreeableness. Extraversion was positively related to one forgiveness measure. None of the forgiveness measures were related to Openness or Conscientiousness. However, Conscientiousness showed suppression effects and was negatively correlated with one situational and one dispositional forgiveness measure when included in multiple regression equations. Several features of the five-factor domains were

Emotional Intelligence and Forgiveness in adults: A study Across Gender

significantly correlated with forgiveness in the expected direction (Lesley Brose, Mark Rye, Catherine Lutz & Scott Ross, 2005).

Another study reviewed that was conducted to identify the difference in Happiness and Forgiveness among college students and to find a correlation between these two the data comprised of 100 students out of which 50 were Male students & 50 were Female students. Results found that there was a significant difference in Happiness and Forgiveness across gender and a weak correlation was found between Happiness and forgiveness. Mean of male students were greater than females students in both variables (Chandra Shekhar, Aditya Jamwal & Shubra Sharma).

Studies on Emotional Intelligence & Forgiveness

Theories and researches have underlined the role that specific positive psychological characteristics play in the process of forgiving others. Lourdes Rey and Natalio Extremera examined the joint contribution of the four specific psychological characteristics of emotional intelligence, Big Five, gratitude and optimism in interpersonal forgiveness. They studied 535 undergraduate students and found

- a. Partial support for the role of personality traits and emotional intelligence abilities as predictors
- b. Regression analysis indicated that the motivation to revenge, but not the motivation to avoid, was predicted by neuroticism, agreeableness, openness and managing emotions.

These findings demonstrated that psychological characteristics, Big Five traits and managing emotions may contribute to individual variation in some transgression related interpersonal motivations (Lourdes Rey & Natalio Extremera, 2014). Following a transgression victim having high emotional intelligence abilities may channel their anger away from revenge and use it for more socially adapted reaction (Crossley, 2009).

In 2011, research was done to see the accuracy of emotional intelligence and forgiveness in prediction the degree of satisfaction in marital communications. 200 Iranian couples were randomly selected for this study. Results showed a significance relationship between emotional intelligence and satisfaction in marital communications. However no relation was found between emotional intelligence and forgiveness (Afsaneh Ghanbari-Panah, Haji Shariff & Roya Koochak-Entezar, 2011).

Some researchers reported that forgiveness has been related to emotional control and empathic ability (Enright & Fitzgibbons, 2000; Fincham, 2007; Baucom, 1998; Wayne, 2001).

Another study explored the association of trait emotional intelligence with a disposition for forgiveness. The relationship between emotional intelligence and affect was also examined. A sample of 268 Portuguese students completed measures of trait emotional intelligence, disposition to forgive, and affect. Results demonstrated that trait emotional intelligence scores were negatively associated with lasting resentment and negative affect and positively associated with positive affect (Daniela Carvalho, Felix Neto & Stella Mavroveli).

METHODOLOGY

Purpose: To study the relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Forgiveness among adults of Indian population.

Emotional Intelligence and Forgiveness in adults: A study Across Gender

Hypothesis 1: The individuals scoring high on Emotional Intelligence will also score high on Forgiveness.

Hypothesis 2: There will be a significant difference between the scores of Males and Females on both Emotional Intelligence and Forgiveness.

Sample: The selected sample consists of total 60 participants in which 30 were Males and 30 Females. The age range picked out was between 20 years to 40 years which is considered approximately the age range of adulthood. The sampling method is Purposive Sampling.

Inclusive Criteria: For adults, the participants selected were of age range between 20 years to 40 years. Therefore, mostly college students or working individuals are included in this research. All of the participants belonged to the urban area.

Exclusive Criteria: The individuals below age 20 years and above age 40 years were excluded from this research as they do not fall in the category of the research purpose. Individuals from rural population were not included.

Variables:

Emotional intelligence, forgiveness and gender.

Tools Description:

Schutte Self-Report Emotional Intelligence Test (SSEIT) – This is a tool which is used to measure Emotional Intelligence. Schutte and colleagues developed this test in 1998. This scale was made by using items based on the original model of emotional intelligence which was developed by Salovey and Mayer in 1990. Schutte et al. (1998) indicate that they used the original model of emotional intelligence of Salovey and Mayer as a basis for the development of a self-report measure of emotional intelligence. Sixty-two items were found to be reflective of the dimensions of Salovey and Mayer's model (Schutte, Malouff, Hall, Haggerty, Cooper, Golden, & Dornheim, 1998). Then, a factor analysis was done from a study which leads to the development of this 33-item scale. This scale is also known by other names which are- Assessing Emotions Scale (AES), Emotional Intelligence Scale (EIS), Self-Report Emotional Intelligence Scale (SREIS), or Schutte Emotional Intelligence Scale (SEIS).

Administration- SSEIT is a five point Likert type scale with scores ranging from 33 to 165. The high score indicate higher emotional intelligence while the low score indicate lower emotional intelligence. The assessed individual is asked to indicate the degree to which the items describe him. Scores are as following-

- 1=strongly disagree
- 2=disagree
- 3=neither agree nor disagree
- 4=agree
- 5=strongly agree

Items 5, 28 and 33 are negative therefore the scoring will be done in reverse order. The reliability of SSEIT is found to be high. A Cronbach's Alpha of 0.90 was reported for the sample of 346 university students and individuals from different communities. Schutte et al. reported a two week test-retest reliability of 0.78 for total score (Schutte et al, 1998). Researchers have established that all the 33 items in the SSEIT load on a single factor (Ciarrochi, Chan Amy, & Bajgar, 2001; Schutte et al., 1998). In other words it is said to

Emotional Intelligence and Forgiveness in adults: A study Across Gender

measure overall emotional intelligence. However, this overall emotional intelligence is broken down into four components, referred to as components of emotional intelligence (Schutte et al., 1998).

Heartland Forgiveness Scale (HFS) -Heartland Forgiveness Scale is a tool used for measuring the general tendency to be forgiving. It was developed by Laura Thompson and her collaborators in 2005. It is one of the most widely used tools and has been translated into over twenty languages. The HFS consists of the Total HFS and three six-item subscales: Forgiveness of Self, Forgiveness of others, and Forgiveness of Situations.

Administration- HFS is a self-report inventory. It consists of 18 items divided into three sub scale having six items in each of the sub scales.

Items	Dimensions
1-6	Self
7-12	Others
13-18	Situation

It is a 7-point Likert scale with scores ranging from 18 to 126. High score indicates individual's more willingness in forgiving self, others or situations whereas low scores indicate less willingness in forgiving self, others, or situations. The individual is asked to indicate the degree to which they identify with each item. Items 2, 4, 6, 7, 9, 11, 13, 15, 17 are all negative therefore scoring will be done in reverse order. Several researches report an internal consistency, Cronbach's alpha, with values between 0.72 and 0.87. The test-retest reliability for a 3-week interval of 0.72–0.77 and 9 months of 0.68–0.69. In some previous studies, internal consistency values between 0.48 and 0.86 were found for the different sub scales. There is evidence to support HFS and HFS subscales construct validity with university student and non student samples. (Shepherd & Belicki, 2008; Thompson et al., 2005).

Data collection

All participants were debriefed about the topic and were asked for their consent. Proper instructions were given to the participants. The questionnaires were administered and the data was collected individually. After data collection all participants were thanked for their time and efforts.

Statistical analysis

The calculations were done using the statistical method of Pearson r correlation and to test the significance difference, t-testing was done.

RESULTS

Table 1: Showing the value of Pearson correlation coefficient (r) for observing relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Forgiveness

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE & FORGIVINESS	$r = 0.543$ or 0.54
--------------------------------------	-----------------------

To describe the relationship between emotional intelligence and forgiveness, Pearson r correlation was calculated. Table 1 shows the calculated value correlation r between emotional intelligence and forgiveness which came as 0.54 indicating a positive moderate correlation. The correlation was found to be positive which implies that as the level of emotional intelligence in a person increases the tendency to forgive also increases.

Emotional Intelligence and Forgiveness in adults: A study Across Gender

Table 2.1: Showing the values of t-test between the scores of males and females in Emotional Intelligence

GENDER	N	MEAN	SD	SED	df	t
MALES	30	130.17	134.32	34.92	58	0.015
FEMALES	30	130.7	-	-	58	-

($p < 0.05$, $p < 0.01$)

To test the difference, t-testing was done. Table 2.1 shows the calculated values for t-test between the scores of males and females for emotional intelligence. The obtained value of SD was 134.32 and SED was 34.92. The calculated t value found out to be 0.015 which was insignificant at 0.05 and 0.01 indicating no difference between the scores of males and females.

Table 2.2 Showing the values of t-test between the scores of males and females in Forgiveness

GENDER	N	MEAN	SD	SED	df	t
MALES	30	89.03	158.41	41.19	58	0.071
FEMALES	30	86.1	-	-	58	-

($p < 0.05$, $p < 0.01$)

Table 2.2 shows the calculated values for t-test between the scores of males and females for forgiveness. The obtained value of SD was 158.41 and SED was 41.19. The calculated t value came out to be 0.071. The value of t was found to be insignificant at both the levels which is 0.05 and 0.01 indicating no difference between the scores of males and females.

DISCUSSION

The main purpose of this research study was to study the relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Forgiveness among adults of Indian population. Two hypotheses were made which were- “The individuals scoring high on Emotional Intelligence will also score high on Forgiveness.” and “There will be a significant difference between the scores of Males and Females on both Emotional Intelligence and Forgiveness”. For doing so the sample comprised of 60 young adult individuals (30 males and 30 females) residing in urban areas were selected. The age range varied from 20 to 40 years. The tool which was used to assess Emotional Intelligence was Schutte Self Report Emotional Intelligence Test (SSEIT) developed by Schutte et al. in 1998. This tool or scale was made based on the original model of emotional intelligence proposed by Salovey and Mayer in 1990. This model proposed that emotional intelligence consists of appraisal of emotion in the self and others, expression of emotion, regulation of emotion in the self and others, and utilization of emotion in solving problems. It is an 33 items, 5 point likert type scale. For assessing forgiveness, Heartland Forgiveness Scale (HFS) was used developed by Laura Thompson and her collaborators in 2005. It is 18 items, 7 point likert type scale. This scale does not measure forgiveness but it measures the willingness or general tendency to be forgiving towards self, others, and situations. All these three are the subscales of HFS.

Once the data was collected it was analysed and scorings was done. The correlation between emotional intelligence and forgiveness was calculated using Pearson r . The t-test was administered between the scores of males and females for both the variables. Then tables were made for further observation and calculations.

Emotional Intelligence and Forgiveness in adults: A study Across Gender

Table 1 was made for showing the calculated value of Pearson's correlation coefficient (r). The obtained value was 0.543 or 0.54 ($r = 0.54$) which signifies a positive moderate correlation. This indicated that the two variables (EI & Forgiveness) can be considered moderately correlated. Since the coefficient correlation value is positive, it means that as emotional intelligence increases the willingness to be forgiving will also increase. In other words, it can be said that a moderate level of relationship is found between the scores of Emotional intelligence and forgiveness. It means that individual's emotional intelligence plays an average or medium part in forgiving others, situations, or self. Therefore, it can be taken that the first hypothesis which was, "The individuals scoring high on Emotional Intelligence will also score high on Forgiveness." is partially accepted. It is neither fully accepted nor rejected because although the correlation was not found to be high yet it was present moderately which means that there is a chance that if any individual's emotional intelligence is high or moderate then it will impact or effect that individual's general forgiving tendency. An empirical study showed that emotional empathy, which is one of the components of emotional intelligence, is positively correlated with forgiveness of others, but not with forgiveness of self (Ann Macaskill, John Maltby, Liza Day, 2002).

Table 2.1 was made for showing the values of t-test between the scores of males and females in emotional intelligence. Here the N was 30 (for both males and females). The calculated mean of males (M1) was 130.17 and mean of females (M2) was 130.7. The other calculated values of Standard deviation (SD), Standard error of deviation (SED), t, and degree of freedom (df) were 134.32, 34.92, 0.015 and 58 respectively. Since the df value 58 is not given in the table of t therefore the significance level was checked from the df value 60. The given t value of df 60 at 0.05 level is 2 and at 0.01 level is 2.66. Since the calculated t test value of this research study is lower than the given t values at both levels therefore it was concluded that t is insignificant at both levels which indicated that there was no difference between the means of males and females. There is no hard evidence which shows that any specific gender holds high degree of emotional intelligence. Several empirical studies and researches have shown that both males and females can hold specific degree of emotional intelligence. In some researches males have shown to contain high emotional intelligence while in others females have shown to be high. But in reality individuals other attributes like personality, environment, social conditions or attribution, cognition and behaviour impact his or her emotional intelligence. A study was done to assess the gender differences in emotional intelligence and learning behaviour among children. Results showed that boys tend to be significantly higher score in learning behaviour than that of girls. However, it failed to show any significant gender differences with respect to emotional intelligence (Mr. Vargha Mokhlesi and Dr. Chidanand B. Patil, 2018).

Table 2.2 was made for showing the t-test values between the scores of males and females in forgiveness. Similarly, as shown in table 2, here the value of N was 30 (both males and females). The mean of males (M1) was 89.03 and the mean of females (M2) was 86.1. The calculated values of Standard deviation (SD), Standard error of deviation (SED), t, and degree of freedom (df) were 158.41, 41.19, 0.071 and 58 respectively. Here also the df value 60 was taken to check the significant level at 0.05 and 0.01. This also resulted in t being insignificant at both levels because the value of t is lower than the values given at 0.05 and 0.01 indicating that there was no gender difference. Many researchers have shown that women are more empathic than men. Yet they are equally forgiving. A study in 2005 was done on 127 participants to examine gender differences in levels of empathy and forgiveness and the extent to which the association of empathy and forgiveness differed by gender. Results showed that females were more empathic than males, but no gender difference for

Emotional Intelligence and Forgiveness in adults: A study Across Gender

forgiveness was found. However, Empathy was associated with forgiveness in males but not in females (Loren Toussaint and Jon R. Webb). In 2013 another study was attempted to investigate gender differences on gratitude, spirituality and forgiveness among 80 school teachers which showed significant gender differences with respect to gratitude in which males were found to be higher, and spirituality & forgiveness in which females were found to be higher in both dimensions than males.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion this can be observed that the purpose of the current study was fulfilled due to the positive connection found between emotional intelligence and forgiveness. The first hypothesis of this study -“The individuals scoring high on Emotional Intelligence will also score high on Forgiveness.” was partially accepted because of the moderate correlation coefficient. Although correlation is not high yet it can be said that an individual’s emotional intelligence influences his forgiving tendency or nature to some degree. From table 2.1 and 2.2 it was observed that there was no gender difference in both variables i.e., emotional intelligence and forgiveness. Therefore, the second hypothesis- “There will be a significant difference between the scores of Males and Females on both Emotional Intelligence and Forgiveness” was fully rejected. This study supported that although no gender difference was seen in both variables i.e., emotional intelligence and forgiveness yet it can be said that a connection is present between these two variables. Emotional intelligences’ components can help increasing forgiveness. There are five components of emotional intelligence and on the basis of these components relation between emotional intelligence and forgiveness could be understood such as emotional intelligent person is considered to be empathic therefore can understand the perspective of others and thus be more forgiving. Similarly emotional intelligent person tends to be more self regulating therefore is able to adapt to new or difficult situations and control his internal impulses which help him to avoid any conflicts and creates understanding towards others leading to forgiveness. Emotional intelligent person have adequate social skills and thus be more forgiving because he/she value interpersonal relationship and can manage conflicts effectively. Enright says that the first step of forgiveness should be to find the source of the one’s pain and this could only be achieved through self awareness which is another component of emotional intelligence. Forgiveness is preceded by cognitive appraisal of a person's own current emotions and the offender. The interpretation of what is best in the situation helps elicit forgiveness (Orathinkal, 2008). Before forgiveness is felt, usually forms of negative emotions such as anger or sadness are felt which arise from appraisal of harm from a situation. Forgiveness appraisal recognises this harm but assesses that ruminating on this will be of more harm or achieve no good purpose and so letting go is beneficial. Thus person becomes motivated, another component of emotional intelligence, to achieve this benefit through forgiveness. This show that this component of emotional intelligence also contributes in forgiving others.

It is recommended that a more detailed and thorough research can be done using different techniques for analysis, and an attempt could be made to establish a pure connection or relationship between these two variables (emotional intelligence and forgiveness). It can be done in relation to gender also.

Limitations

There are several possible limitations in this study. Sample size was small (N=60). It could be one of the reasons that hypotheses were not completely accepted. Small sample size is good while doing qualitative research. But in quantitative researches, the larger sample size gives more reliable and accurate the results. There was lack of laboratory environment. Subject bias

Emotional Intelligence and Forgiveness in adults: A study Across Gender

might have been happened. Since the instructions of both tools were so clear that subjects may have got the idea behind the purpose of the study and have not responded with their natural response. Although many researches and empirical studies are there related to emotional intelligence and forgiveness separately yet they are still lacking in taking these two variables together.

FUTURE DIRECTION

For more enhanced study working with a large sample with some other variables like age, culture, environment background is required. Because the sample of the current study was selected from urban areas therefore it is also recommended that a replication of the study could be done with representative sample from rural area. There are various possible studies could take place in this area. Some of them can be Emotional intelligence & Forgiveness in adolescents, Effect of Emotional intelligence in academic or Effects of Forgiveness and Emotional intelligence in managing marital conflicts etc.

REFERENCES

- Arora, S., Ashrafian, H., Davis, R., Athanasiou, T., Darzi, A., & Sevdalis, N. (2010). Emotional intelligence in medicine: A systematic review through the context of the ACGME competencies. *Medical Education*, 44(8), 749-764.
- Brose, L., Rye., Lutz, C., Rossca, S. (2005). Forgiveness and personality traits. *Journal of Personality and Individual Differences*, 39(1), 35-46.
- Carvalho, D., & Neto, F. (2010). Trait emotional intelligence and disposition for forgiveness. *Psychological reports*, 107(2), 526-534.
- Caruso, D.R., Mayer, J.D., & Salovey, P. *Emotional Intelligence & Emotional Leadership*. In R. Riggio & S. Murphy (Eds.), *Multiple intelligence and leadership*. Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum
- Chandra, S., Jamwal, A., Sharma, S. Happiness and Forgiveness among College Students. *Indian Journal of Psychological Science*, V-7.
- Coyle, C. T., & Enright, R. D. (1997). Forgiveness intervention with postabortion men. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 65(6), 1042–1046.
- Enright, R. D., & Coyle, C. T. (1998). Researching the process model of forgiveness within psychological interventions. In E. L. Worthington Jr. (Ed.), *Dimensions of forgiveness: Psychological research and theological perspectives* (pp. 139–161). Philadelphia: Templeton Foundation Press.
- Flanagan, D.P., & Dixon, S.G. (2013). The Cattell-Horn-Carroll theory of cognitive abilities. In C.R. Reynolds, K.J. Vannest & E. Fletcher-Janzen (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of special education* (pp. 368-382). Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons.
- Freedman, S. (1998). Forgiveness and reconciliation: The importance of understanding how they differ. *Counseling and Values*, 42, 200–21.
- Freedman, S., & Zarifkar, T. (2015). The Psychology of Interpersonal Forgiveness and Guidances for Forgiveness Therapy: What Therapists Need to Know to Help their Clients Forgive. *Journal of Spirituality in Clinical Practice*, 3(1), 45-58.
- Gardner, H. (1993a). *Creating minds: An anatomy of creativity seen through the lives of Freud, Einstein, Picasso, Stravinsky, Eliot, Graham, and Ghandi*. New York: Basic Books.
- Gardner, H. (1993b). *Multiple intelligence: The theory in practice*. New York: Basic Books.
- Gardner, H. (1998). Are there additional intelligences? The case for naturalist, spiritual, and existential intelligences. In J. Kane (Ed.), *Education, information, and transformation* (pp. 111-131). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill-Prentice Hall.

Emotional Intelligence and Forgiveness in adults: A study Across Gender

- Gardner, H. (1999a). *Intelligence reframed: Multiple intelligence for the 21st century*. New York: Basic Books
- Gardner, H. (1999b, February). Who owns intelligence? *Atlantic Monthly*, 67-76.
- Ghanbari-Panah, A., Mohamed Shariff, H., Koochak-Entezar, R. (2011). The accuracy of emotional intelligence and forgiveness in predicting the degree of satisfaction in marital communications. *International Journal of Psychology and Counselling*, 3(6), 106-110.
- Goleman, D. (1995b). Why your emotional intelligence quotient can matter more than IQ. *USA Weekend*, pp. 4-8.
- Goleman, D. (1995). *Emotional Intelligence: Why it can matter more than IQ*. New York: Bantam Books.
- Goleman, D. (1998). *Working with emotional intelligence*. New York: Bantam Books.
- Libbercht, N., Lievens, F., Carette, B., & Cote, S. (2014). Emotional intelligence predicts success in medical school. *Emotions*, 14(1), 64-73.
- Macaskill, A., Maltby, J., & Day, L. (2002). Forgiveness of Self and Others and Emotional Empathy. *The Journal of Social Psychology*, 142(5), 663-665.
- Mayer, J. D., Roberts, R. D., & Barsade, S. G. (2008). Human abilities: Emotional intelligence. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 59(1), 507-536.
- Mayer, J. D., & Salovey, P. (1997). *What is emotional intelligence?* In P. Salovey & D. Sluyter (Eds.), *Emotional development and emotional intelligence: Educational implications* (pp. 3-31). New York: Basic books.
- Mayer, J. D., Salovey, P., & Caruso, D. R. (2000). Models of emotional intelligence. In R. J. Sternberg (ed.), *Handbook of human intelligence* (2nd ed., pp. 396-420). New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Mayer, J. D., Salovey, P., & Caruso, D. R. (2008). Emotional intelligence: New ability or eclectic traits? *American Psychologist*, 63(6), 503-571.
- McCullough, M. E., Pargament, K. I., & Thoresen, C. T. (Eds.). (2000). *Forgiveness: Theory, research, and practice*. New York: Guilford.
- McCullough, M. E., Pargament, K. I., & Thoresen, C. T. (2000). The psychology of forgiveness: History, conceptual issues, and overview. In M. E. McCullough, K. I. Pargament, & C. E. Thoresen (Eds.), *Forgiveness: Theory, research, and practice* (pp. 1-14). New York: Guilford.
- McGrew, K. S. (2009). CHC theory and the human cognitive abilities project: Standing on the shoulders of the giants of psychometric intelligence research. *Intelligence*, 37(1), 1-10.
- Mokhlesil, V., & Patil, C. B. (2018). A Study of Gender Differences in Emotional Intelligence and Learning Behaviour among Children. *The International Journal of Indian Psychology*, 6(4), 55-61.
- Mullet, E., Houdbine, A., Laumonier, S., & Girard, M. (1998). "Forgivingness": Factor structure in a sample of young, middle-aged, and elderly adults. *European Psychologist*, 3, 289-297.
- Orathinkal, J. (2008). Forgiveness: A perception and motivation study among married adults. *Scandinavian Journal of Psychology*, 49(2), 155-160.
- Rey, L., Extremera, N. (2014). Positive psychological characteristics and interpersonal forgiveness: Identifying the unique contribution of emotional intelligence abilities, Big Five traits, gratitude and optimism. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 68: 199-204.
- Salovey, P., & Mayer, J. D. (1990). Emotional intelligence. *Imagination, cognition, and personality*, 9, 185-211.

Emotional Intelligence and Forgiveness in adults: A study Across Gender

- Schneider, W.J., & McGrew, K.S. (2012). The Cattell-Horn-Carroll model of intelligence. In D.P. Flanagan & P.L. Harrison (Eds.), *Contemporary intellectual assessment: Theories, tests, and issues* (3rd ed., pp. 99-144). New York, NY: Guilford Press.
- Schneider, W.J., & McGrew, K.S. (2013). The cattell-horn-carroll (chc) model of intelligence v2.2.
- Schutte, N.S., Malouff, J.M., Hall, L.E., Haggerty, D.J., Cooper, J.T., Golden, C.J., et al. (1998). Development and validation of a measure of emotional intelligence. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 25, 167-177.
- Schutte, N.S., Malouff, J. M., Simunek, M., Hollander, S., & McKenley, J. (2002). Characteristic emotional intelligence and emotional well-being. *Cognition and Emotion*, 16, 769
- Seybold, K. S., Hill, P. C., Neumann, J. K., & Chi, D. S. (2001). Physiological and psychological correlates of forgiveness. *Journal of Psychology and Christianity*, 20(3), 250–259.
- Spearman, C. (1904). "General Intelligence" objectively determined and measured. *American Journal of Psychology*, 15, 201-293.
- Sternberg, R.J. (1988a). *The triarchic mind: A new theory of human intelligence*. New York: Viking-Penguin.
- Sternberg, R.J. (1996). *Successful intelligence: How practical and creative intelligence determine success in life*. New York: Simon & Schuster.
- Sternberg, R.J. (1997). The triarchic theory of intelligence. In P. Flannagan, J.L. Genshaft, & P.L. Harrison (Eds.), *Contemporary intellectual assessment: Theories, tests, and issues* (pp. 92-104). New York: Guilford Press.
- Sternberg, R.J. (2005). The triarchic theory of successful intelligence. In *Contemporary Intellectual Assessment: Theories, Tests, and Issues*. New York: Guilford Press.
- Sternberg, R.J. (2015). Successful intelligence: A model for testing intelligence beyond IQ tests. *European Journal of Education and Psychology*, 8(2), 76-84.
- Snyder, C.R., Lopez, J.S. (2002). *Handbook of Positive Psychology*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Toussaint, L., & Webb, J. R. (2005). Gender Differences in the Relationship Between Empathy and Forgiveness. *The Journal of Social Psychology*, 145(6), 673–685.

Acknowledgement

The author appreciates all those who participated in the study and helped to facilitate the process.

Conflict of Interest

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

How to cite this article: Prakash V. & Srivastava M. (2022). Emotional Intelligence and Forgiveness in adults: A study Across Gender. *International Journal of Indian Psychology*, 10(1), 126-142. DIP:18.01.013.20221001, DOI:10.25215/1001.013