

Predicting interpersonal forgiveness based on religious orientation dimensions among high school students in Tabriz

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Abstract

Background and Objective: Forgiveness is a concept taken into consideration in religion and positive psychology, and its constructive role in mental health and creating healthy relationships has been emphasized. Having said that, the aim of this study was predicting interpersonal forgiveness based on religious orientation dimensions among students at high school city of Tabriz.

Method: This descriptive-correlational study employed a sample of 250 students selected according to the Morgan table using multi-stage cluster sampling among high schools of district 2 in Tabriz. They filled Religious Orientation scale by Alport and Ross as well as Interpersonal Forgiveness scale by Ehteshamzadeh et al. The data were analyzed by the means of statistical methods of Pearson Correlation and Multivariate linear regression. It is worth noting that all ethical issues were observed in this research and the researcher declared no conflict of interests.

Results: The results indicated that there was a significant and positive relation between intrinsic religious orientation and interpersonal forgiveness ($P < .05$; $r = .275$) and there was no statistical relation between extrinsic religious orientation and interpersonal forgiveness ($p > .05$; $r = -.014$). In addition, the results of regression analysis demonstrated that intrinsic religious orientation can predict 9% of interpersonal forgiveness variance in a meaningful way.

Conclusion: Based on the results, it can be concluded that those who honestly believe in religious teachings and act upon them have greater forgiveness and seek compromises in the case of conflicts.

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Summary

Background and Objective: One of the few undisputed realities of human life is that one cannot find someone who has never experienced anxiety, frustration, being betrayed, despair, oppression or injustice from another human being. In such cases, negative emotions such as anger, resentment, disappointment and anxiety are common (1). The reflection of these deep resentments, the feeling of injustice and mistake in interpersonal relationships usually manifest itself through disgust and revenge that stimulate the most powerful emotional reactions ranging from anger to insult and aggression. Since

retaliation is the stimulus of many disgraceful acts of human beings such as murder and suicide, the need for forgiveness as an effective and practical human communication process in face of mistakes and injustice is obvious (2). Forgiveness is a concept that is taken into consideration in religion and positive psychology, and has been emphasized as a factor which has a constructive role in mental health and creating healthy relationships. As a result, identifying the contributory factors can facilitate forgiveness. Given that, the aim of this study was predicting interpersonal forgiveness based on religious orientation dimensions among students at high school in the city of Tabriz.

Method: The research method was descriptive-correlation. The statistical population of the study was

all 13220 male high school students in district 2 of Tabriz, who were studying in academic year of 94-95. Among them, a sample of 250 male students were selected based on cluster sampling and the Morgan formula ($z= 1/96$, $d= 0/05$). In this way, six state schools, and from each school two classes were selected to constitute the sample. The questionnaires were distributed in the classes with coordination in advance and collected after 15 minutes. The research data were collected after deleting defective questionnaires from 255 questionnaires (5 defective questionnaires) and analyzed using Pearson statistical method and multivariate linear regression. The criterion for entering research were being a student at the time of the research, lack of psychological problems, and collaboration with the researcher. The instruments included Religious Orientation scale by Alport and Ross as well as Interpersonal Forgiveness scale by Ehteshamzadeh et al, which have been validated.

Results: The correlation coefficient between variables was used to examine the relationship between interpersonal forgiveness and religious orientation components. The results indicated that there was a significant and positive relation between intrinsic religious orientation and interpersonal forgiveness ($P<.05$; $r= .275$) and there was no statistical relation between extrinsic religious orientation and interpersonal forgiveness ($p>.05$; $r= -.014$). In order to examine the effect of each component of religious orientation on interpersonal forgiveness, a multivariate linear regression was used which confirmed the assumptions of this method. Regression results demonstrated that intrinsic religious orientation can significantly predict 9% of variance of interpersonal forgiveness.

Conclusion: Based on the results, it can be safely concluded that those who honestly believe in religious teachings and act upon them have greater forgiveness and seek compromises in the case of conflicts. In other words, the true faith in God creates a system of cognition in a person according which the stressful events of life are regarded as experiential learning, the opportunity for growth and excellence, and in this sense, the power of forgiveness increases, thus diminishing vengeful behaviors diminishes. Taken together, ministry of education and health-related organizations can contribute to healthy interpersonal relationships between students via religious interventions.

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