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## FORGIVENESS: CONCEPT, ITS APPLICATION IN PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL LIFE

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**Shahnaz Noor**

Lecturer,  
Department of Education, University of Turbat, Gwadar,  
Balochistan, Pakistan  
Email: [Shahnaz.noor@uot.edu.pk](mailto:Shahnaz.noor@uot.edu.pk)

**Preeta Hinduja**

PhD Scholar,  
Department of Education, Iqra University,  
Sindh, Pakistan  
Email: [hindujapreeta@gmail.com](mailto:hindujapreeta@gmail.com)

**ABSTRACT**

*Recent focus on Positive Psychology directs attention to study the Forgiveness in dealing with personal and professional life situations. In educational set-up, teacher needs to face divergent problems; teamwork with the associates of dissimilar opinions, empathy to the students of eccentric character and forgo friends/family-related conflicts are challenging tasks. This study aims to explore (1) how teachers define forgiveness (2) different influencing factors that lead to forgiveness at work and family, and (3) analyze the effectiveness of forgiveness in coping with professional and personal lives situations. Based on snowball sampling technique, the data from twenty one primary school teachers was collected through open ended interviews. Using Content Analysis Approach was used the study determines the values and application of forgiveness in the unique educational and cultural context of Pakistan. The findings show that religion, sense of accomplishment, need for affiliation/preserving relations and family background are significant drivers of forgiveness. Simultaneously, it reveals that forgiveness play essential role to manage officials, colleagues and student related conflicts such as work load, scarce resources, favoritism, criticism, egocentrism. In addition the findings reveals the positive effects of forgiveness in repairing broken relationships, encouraging positive emotions and influencing physical and mental wellbeing. This original study highlights the worth of forgiveness strategy and its practical implications would energize teachers to tackle personal and professional lives issues.*

**KEYWORDS**

*Forgiveness, educational set-up, creativity, family ties, friends circle, stress/tension*

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**INTRODUCTION**

Among the certain challenges for the developing countries, teachers' attitude is one of the significant challenges which are given lesser attention (Khan & Ashbridge, 2020). Attitude of revenge in the educational institutions is exhibited through multiple ways such as discontinuing motivation and devotion to the job. Many teachers avoids to conduct classes in time, not paying attention to the weaker students or, maintaining grudges against the management or associates on not receiving the reward for work and co-operation in emergency situations (Ashraf et al., 2015). Also, high teachers' absentees ratio and less accountability is reported (Tauqeer, 2016; Ameer et al., 2018).

In order to improve students' output and teaching' quality in Pakistan, though much focus is given over recruitments of teachers (Ferozi, 2019) but less focus is paid on attitudinal disposition of teachers that hindrances working quality and thus students outcomes (Ali, 2016; Javed, Kausar & Khan, 2018). Research has shown that even newly appointment vigorous teachers lose the curiosity after spending few years in service (Bano et al., 2019). One of the reasons of poor performance of public sector education sectors is the rigid attitude towards forgiveness, still many believe in punishment (Khan & Ashbridge, 2020),

Researchers from worldwide have found that individuals' forgiving attitude decrease level of stress and emotional hurt and derive retention in work (Toussaint et al., 2018) however, the revenge attitude decreases the levels of hope, and increases the anger (Rahman et al., 2018), the levels of stress and roots the different health issues (Droll, 1984).

For the working individuals, there is a high integration in two roles/lives (personal and professional), this follows that stress and tension in one role can be carried to other role and simultaneously affecting the satisfaction of both lives (Abhyankar, 2012). This research study intended to study forgiveness and examine how adoption of forgiveness strategy help teachers to deal with school related and personal lives situations. Previous studies have found that forgiveness has positive impacts on job satisfaction of the teachers (Cox, 2011), strengthening self-regulatory mechanism among individuals (Ho, Tongeren & You, 2020) and added that positive attitude of teachers cater to psycho-emotional needs of young ones such as aggression and anxiety (Khan & Ashbridge, 2020).

The comprehensive review of literature suggests that most of the work on forgiveness has been conducted in the western context, still there is much need to understand concept of forgiveness for individuals (Fehr et al., 2010; Justyna & Kaleta, 2019). There are not many studies addressing the values of forgiveness for teachers in the education sector, few studies conducted that suggest how forgiveness works in the education sectors (Cox, 2011).

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In Pakistan very few studies address the problems caused by un-forgiveness (Rahman et al., 2018), there is scarcity of qualitative analysis to identifying the factors leading to forgiveness with respect to its socio-cultural context (Butt et al., 2013), and however no research has been conducted on teachers that compares the application of forgiveness in personal and professional lives. This research fills the gap in the literature by understanding the concept of forgiveness for teachers (Cox, 2011), why individuals adopt the forgiveness, and how forgiveness help to cope with life different situations in the cultural set-up of Pakistan (Rahman et al., 2018).

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

According to the Enright and the group of Human Development Studies(1991)and North (1987) defined forgiveness as ‘the willingness to abandon one’s right to resentment, indifferent behaviors and negative judgment towards those who unreasonably injured us, at the same time fostering the qualities for example compassion, generosity and love for him/her”. Enright and friends conceptualized forgiveness into three components (1) self, (2) others and situations. Forgiveness of *self* and *situation* stop injured holding grudges for oneself or past event, while forgiveness for *others* inhibit them to exhibit attitude or behavior of revenge for offenders.

It is choice rather than the act of submission; however the submission or the expression of weakness would disallow the injured to be benefitted by the process of forgiveness. In addition, forgiveness is not forgetting, forgiving is the conscious state that requires insight and personal efforts, while one can forget the injury in unconscious state of mind (McGary, 1989). Besides, forgiveness is not the reconciliation, forgiver can sever the relation and unsafe environment, but the injured who reconcile often strives and participate and hoping to cease abusive conducts of offender (Freedman, 1998).

### **Empirical Studies**

Researchers have highlighted teachers’ attitude affect the development of children, the punishment from the teachers increase youth vulnerability to violence and have negative impacts on educational outcome (Khan & Ashbridge). While comparing the public sector students with private sector students, the empirical study of Javed et al. (2018) found that public sector students lacking in moral etiquettes, less forgiver and lesser inclined to peace.

Though Public sector teachers need to face complex situations with varied problems such as dishonest behaviours of colleagues, students’ absenteeism and poor knowledge background, officials mistakes such as time pressure, unclear instructions and certain other uncontrollable factors such as deficiency of teachers, workload, dearth facilities and learning material (Cox, 2011; Hameed & Dahar, 2017). These situations require

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additional knowledge to cope the problem in the alternative but potential way.

Forgiveness is conceptualized as a motivational term in positive psychology entails the victim giving up negative motivations, such as revenge and avoidance, and adopting positive motivations (e.g., benevolence) toward the offender (McCullough, 2008). It is an individual's capacity to forgive across time, situations and relationships (Roberts, 1995). It is one of the personal resource helps individuals deal with changing circumstances (Justyna & Kaleta, 2019).

As the cognitive conception, the influences of forgiveness pertaining to the solution to victims' negative thoughts and attitude towards offender, it harmonizes the degree of severity of harms and rumination the victim is engaged in (Fehr, Gelfand & Nag, 2010). The emotional influences of forgiveness manifest the modification of negative feelings to neutral and even positive with empathy for transgressor (Thompson et al., 2005).

Forgiveness positively influences learning behaviours. If the employees are ridiculed, embraced or blamed for their errors, they would intend to break-up such relationship. However, if they are dealt with the discussions, this would help not only the transgressor but each group member to learn from mistaken behaviours of each other, and even the transgressor would become more committed to their job and would more likely to be connected with the organization (Guchait et al., 2016).

Shoab and Rafique (2015) found that rational thinking is positively associated with forgiveness. Forgiveness increases the strength of self-regulation, while researching on the Chinese university students Ho et al., (2020) found that forgiveness was more acquired by those who have awareness of situations and others' emotions. The forgiveness suggests individual a way how to resolve conflicts in the surroundings that benefits the organization (Thompson & Shahen, 2003). Even, the forgiveness-based climate strengthens positive interdependence, cohesiveness and support for each other (Cox, 2011).

Toussaint et al. (2018) finds the associations among forgiveness, health (physical, mental and emotional) promotion and organizational productivity with mediation effects of workplace interpersonal stress. The findings of their research highlights that workers equipped with forgiveness have reduced stress and emotional hurt that promote good health and organizational productivity. Research has found that un-forgiveness has been associated with higher levels of stress (Droll, 1984). Enduring offenses and not dealing with these offenses in a positive manner may lead to greater tension and increased stress.

Individuals' positive behaviors rely on how efficiently they balance personal and professional lives. Imbalance in personal or professional life determine employees attitude. Stress of one life can affect the working quality of other life (Abhyankar, 2012). Literature review highlights the positive effects of forgiveness in preserving close relationships (McCullough et al., 1998) and improving the damaged relationships (Sheldon, Gilchrist-Petty, & Lessley, 2014).

The above cited literature shows most of the studies have been conducted in western perspective. Very few studies have directed the attention towards forgiveness in Pakistan, and all of these have catered adolescents or young adults (Butt et al., 2013; Rahman et al., 2018). The literature relevant to forgiveness in educational set-up of Pakistan is rather not prevalent. Neither has it suggested the application of forgiveness to cope with different situations. Still, no research has been found comparing the personal and professional lives practices of forgiveness. Hence, the above reviewed literature provides valuable understanding address the research questions. The current study fills the gap in the literature by focusing on teachers, and the examination of the forgiveness in dealing with personal-professional problems.

#### **RESEARCH OBJECTIVE**

1. This study aims to explore teachers' perceptions towards forgiveness and factors lead to forgiveness at work and family, and analyze the effectiveness of forgiveness in coping with professional and personal lives situations.

#### **RESEARCH QUESTION**

1. How teachers define forgiveness?
2. What are motivational factors of forgiveness?
3. How forgiveness help them to cope with students, colleagues and officials and family related issues?

#### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

Qualitative research methodology is used in this study, which helps researchers to gain insight of the individuals and situations. No research addresses the scope of forgiveness in the context of educational sectors with the integration of personal life of the teachers. This method of inquiry is appropriate where little is known about the topic of study or, where the "things need to be explored" (Creswell, 1998).

By employing snowball sampling technique, 21 public sector school teachers were selected having experience of at least five years. There is a huge gap in the literature comparing the attitude of teachers towards school related and personal life problems in the Pakistani culture.

The open-ended face-to-face interviews were conducted in the Urdu language that is widely spoken in the context. Participants were sent request before participation of the study and they had right to withdraw anytime from the study. Interviews were tap recorded with the permission of the participants; data driven from the interviews were later translated and then transcribed. Respondents named were coded to ensure confidentiality of participants' identity. The Content Analytical Approach was used for data analysis. This approach is suitable for detailed analysis of each participant responses address the questions being asked about why and how forgiveness is practiced in life situations.

The study sample was limited to metropolis city 'Karachi' of Pakistan; future researchers can study forgiveness in the rural context of Pakistan. They are also recommended similar study with different population such as management cadre, administrators and students to gain much insight. Also, the sample was limited to Public Sector School teachers, future researches can be planned in the private school sectors. Future researchers can develop instrument in the light of our findings to approach broader population.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

**Table 1: Demographic Profile of the sample**

Respondents	Gender	Teaching experience in years	Marital status	B.ed Qualified
R1	F	6	D	Yes
R2	M	15	M	Yes
R3	M	15	M	Yes
R4	M	15	M	Yes
R5	M	5 ½	M	Yes
R6	F	10	M	Yes
R7	F	15	M	Yes
R8	F	15	M	Yes
R9	F	>15	UM	Yes
R10	F	>15	M	Yes
R11	F	13 years	M	Yes
R12	F	14 years	D	Yes
R13	F	>15	M	Yes
R14	F	>15	M	Yes
R15	F	>15	M	Yes
R16	F	5 1/2 years	M	Yes
R17	F	10 years	M	Yes
R18	F	>15	M	Yes
R19	F	>15	M	Yes

R20	M	>15	M	Yes
R21	M	>15	UM	Yes

Note: M=Married, UM= Unmarried & D=Divorced

## RESULTS

### Presentation of Demographic results

Demographic representation (Table 1) shows more than half of participants have 15 years or more teaching experience (67%), majority are females (71%), most of them are married, two unmarried and two are divorced. In addition all the participants have qualified teachers' training program (B.ed). Moreover the responses from the interviewed data on the above mentioned research questions are assembled under different themes.

### Conceptualizing forgiveness

Most of the interviewees interpreted forgiveness as "to avoid punishing or thinking negatively for someone committed mistakes". It further addresses that the term forgiveness has varied meaning for participants depending upon the demographic factor for instance family background. The participants who have nurtured in forgiving culture feel more comfortable with forgiveness, based on their childhood and subject learning experiences, they are more used to and efficient in coping with the different issues by practicing forgiveness. As one of the participants suggested, Forgiveness by teachers is the empathy for students and a way to teach them self-awareness, it is not something to let go students' mistake but to deal students' in such a way they get chance to observe their own behavior and self-realize their mistakes.

*"If you give students some time to calm down then certainly they will. If you show aggression in the response, they will even more violent. Self respect matters for everyone. I give them situations to analyze the behaviors this enable them to criticize their own behavior. If you tell truth in unethical way, others wouldn't think as seriously to change themselves as they can by self-realization"* (R6).

Some participants expressed forgiveness towards students is a strategy that keeps them going on learning route with high morale. As one of the participants reported that:

*"Forgiving students is necessary because if you punish them they would less like to study"* (R4).

Many reported forgiveness as the state to avoid revenge which one is able to take otherwise. As reported:

*"Among colleagues it helps to work as a one unit."*

Participants maintained that forgiveness is a technique to continue the work without harming oneself and others as said:

*“Conflicts in the family or school keep individuals and work disturb.”*

In the essence, majority of the participants highlighted that forgiveness is a positive psychological state helping in the keep going work smoothly.

### **Motivational drivers of Forgiveness**

The sample of interviewed participants has reported a number of reasons as the driving force behind their adoption of forgiveness, the most prominent among them are discussed below:

#### **(a) Religion**

Participants believed that forgiveness is loved by God and if people forgive others, they will be forgiven for their mistakes in the life thereafter. Moreover, feelings of revenge are strongly abhorred in the Islam religion which is interpreted as the religion of peace as told:

*“God says: “forgive the people of land, you will be forgiven by Almighty God. We believe that if we will forgive others, God will forgive us for our sins.”*

Moreover it was informed that most of the people take revenge when feelings are hurt due to egocentrism. Prescription of religion emphasis on egocentric behaviour is strongly abhorred by God instead the forgiveness is practiced and loved by the prophets of Allah. As follows:

*“Once a person spit on the face of Hazrat Umer (prophet), He despite the sword in his hand forgave him.”*

Another elaborated how prophet showed sympathy with the woman disregarded prophet Mohammad (P.B.U.H).

*“A woman used to through home garbage over the Prophet when he was walking through the street. Once she fell ill, He (the prophet) went to her home to treat with compassion” (R19).*

#### **(b) Sense of accomplishment**

Sense of accomplishment is one of the significant drivers. The desire of accomplishing one's role motivates individuals to decide how she/he wants to become role model. As a teacher, such individuals often reflect on childhood, work and home related experiences and try to incorporate behaviours in the classrooms that become positive memory for students. As follows:

*“When I was in eights class, one of my teachers beaten on my face*

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*when she found me not answering and lack of knowledge in the English subject she taught. This had induced negativity in my behavior, I was trying to get what I wanted, in case I was unable to get such things, I was not eating anything with intention to realize my mother that she has not fulfilled my wish. My mother and all were very nervous for my behavior” (R1).*

It was perceived that forgiveness is transferrable. Since teachers are role models for students. Students copy their behaviours and expose in their family and friends. The positive behaviour makes others happy while the negative cause others worried.

*“The aggression I had learnt from teachers, because none in my personal life including my family and friends were behaving in a way I used to behave. Everyone is cheerful at my home. I have observed if you are not punishing your students, they start forgiving their young siblings” (R1).*

Another said:

*“When I was in secondary classes, my copy was incomplete; my teacher did not let me enjoy recess time and said until you complete your copy you cannot leave the school. She did not allow me to leave before completion. I learnt that if you want others to do some work you need to be cruel with them. I was getting indifferent with my loving mamma when she was not listening to me and I was only feeling happy when I was able to get my work done from others. My elders always used to say me to change your behavior. But I was adamant and said “those who do not like me can leave my house” (R7).*

In consent with this, other participant said:

*“Due to insulting behaviours of teacher, my mood was always off in my young age. I was unable to enjoy picnic and gatherings of my relatives. Even when I was looking at my cousins gossiping in pairs, I hated because I have always remembered my teachers taunting. For these reasons, I was embedded with negative feelings and used to displease others” (R16).*

She also noted that when pupils are inspired by any teacher’s personality, they considered them a best teacher. With these teachers, students wish to study and keep motivated; in the contrast those teachers who punish, students are feeling fatigue of their presence and cheers at their absence.

*“I am also class teacher of class 6<sup>th</sup>, one of the subject teachers of*

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*my class students is always rude and punish the students by taking them from their shirt collar to outside the class. My students are feeling fear from her, they do not even want her to enter in their class."*

Another added that finest teachers are conscious of the effects of negative emotions on physical and mental health of the students on the academic performance, so they strive to forgive and react positively in certain issues.

*"Once an inkpot was drained by one student on my table, she started shivering in fear of punishment. When, I said no matter, she felt relaxed and continue her study in peace" (R17).*

Participants highlighted that the teachers' role is to guide the students for right path. If students are not paying attention in studies or deteriorating the classroom discipline, teachers must not take it personal and achieving revenge by insulting them, rather such students should be given private attention to self-realize their behavior. This way they can be brought again on the learning trail.

*"We avoid punishing students to improve their progress by bettering the relations with them. I think when we punish students they will feel fear from us and avoid questioning in the class. This will retard their progress. If our behaviour is harsh then all our efforts are useless because students will get out of learning process" (R5).*

Moreover forgiveness is preferred as it was noted that due to limited spent time with students, teachers are not aware with personal matter of students that may become potential cause for their mistaken behaviour.

*"We don't know students home environment and reasons behind students behaviours, thus we need to forgive those students do not attempt homework. If we will not forgive we won't be able to help them learn concepts" (R16).*

### **(c) Affiliation need/ Preserve the relations**

Desire to be connected with the institutions or maintain the relationships with relative members motivate participants to forgive others' mistakes. Majority of the participants reported that they wish to work in the similar institution and opined that they can work better with the support of colleagues/ friends. As follows:

*"My school is near to my home, it saves cost and time of travel, I want to continue here, and thus I need to forgive professional life issues" (R18).*

Another said:

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*“Most of the times we try to resolve issues by saying sorry to each other because I know that I cannot work alone to attain schools’ goal, I believe we are interdependent. We need each-others’ support to learn from each-others’ expertise”.*

Another said:

*“Miss ABC is well-qualified in Math subject. Because I am not so but I am assigned to teach this subject, so I go to her for help. Even though she speaks unethical words on some occasions such as “you are teacher do not you know these tiny things”. Because I wish to learn from her also she liked to teach me, so I try to forgive such things” (R1).*

Likewise, in personal life participants wish to live together with their family. As reported:

*“If I will revenge, the relationship might break that I would not be able to bear” (R17).*

#### **(d) Family background**

Among all drivers, family background is one of the most significant factors that motivate the use of forgiveness. As reported that their parents are used to forgive others’ mistakes, so they have forgiving culture at home. They got inspired by their parents from the early age and developed the similar behavior. According to one of the respondents:

*“In my childhood I told lie several times to avoid punishment or let not feeling ashamed for the mistakes I done, but my mother forgave me, I try to incorporate the similar behaviors” (R6).*

Another added:

*“My mother and father do not think negative for wrong doers. They spend life peaceful. This makes me to remind myself when I am depressed with someone misbehaviors” (R1).*

#### **Forgiveness in professional Life**

In order to answer the research question three; this section is divided into three subthemes that are outlined below.

##### **(a) Official related issues**

Most of the Participants perceived high work pressures, shortage and absenteeism of teachers, students’ promoted policy (without passing examination), lack at the moment forgiveness to management help them to meet the institutional needs.

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*“I have to take more than four periods a day and school demands quality work. And it is really challenging to teach students of weaker background knowledge in the limited scheduled time” (R12).*

It was also highlighted that participants hold grudges for those things that are out of control, but also realise that over emphasis on negative thoughts add more sufferings.

*“I remain disturb for Government policy that does not allow my transfer to the school near to my home, this stress has caused my accident.”*

Moreover it was observed that the participants who are biased against the opinion of management take revenge in different ways for instance; such teachers do not pay serious attention to the discussions made during school meetings. One of the participants reported:

*“In his meetings, many teachers remain absent minded” (R8).*

Some participants commented paucity of resources (in public sector schools), raise frustration against the management, at the same time forgiveness help them to deal the problem in effective way. As one of the experienced teachers said:

*“There are lesser teaching aids allocated for our section, I try to incorporate low cost material in the class, our complete staff collect charity to be used in educational expenses such as worksheet printing and photocopies for each student. This way we could implement active learning” (R16).*

It was also observed that the due to un-forgiveness attitude at workplace, teachers are unable to balance their personal lives. As reported:

*“Many however cannot confront but, exhibit aggression on pupils and children” (R19).*

#### **(b) Colleagues related issues**

Participants highlighted that in public sector very few teachers are open-minded to accept criticism by their colleagues. On suggesting the faults in their teaching methodology, they exhibit resentment, taunt and backbiting. Forgiveness from the observer colleagues help to carry out planned activities of organization.

*‘Most of the time I am assigned duty of observer of my colleagues in the demos of lesson planning by teachers. My intention is to provide suggestions so that purpose of activity could be achieved. Few teachers dislike they confronts me by saying “you talk too much” and some back bites and convey the similar messages through others. Obviously it is better to forgive them” (R6).*

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Similarly other said:

*“Those who backbites, I hate them” (R14).*

It is observed that many teachers do not forgive the past unfavorable experiences related to staff members. This comes out as revenge in different situations on varied time or by achieving the dominant position.

*“Once there was teachers’ meeting with section in-charge. It was recess time and discussion topic was almost ended. In-charge had started informal talking. Meanwhile one of the teachers left the room. As a reaction section in-charge over reacted, in anger she spoke unethical words such as people of such community will never learn behaviours. Other teachers of such community confronted. As a result there was a great quarrel” (R7).*

Moreover it is reported that Colleagues behavioral issues such as telling lies, disrespecting seniors and avoiding taking responsibilities increases hostility among participants.

*“In my school (secondary) new appointed teachers (grade 15) are well qualified; some have passed M.BA and others M.phil. But, they argue with the head that they cannot teach mathematics. However they can better teach but they avoid taking responsibility. They also speak arrogantly with senior teachers” (R12).*

### **(c) Students’ related issues:**

Participants added that the students who are punished and demoralized by teachers, their levels of motivation towards learning lower down, lose confidence over mastery the subject knowledge and would show poor performance. As reported by one of the participants:

*“My son in grade six was punished by hitting on shoulder with pen and by saying he would never read better English. By that time he is determined that learning English is impossible for him; however he is very good in all other subjects. When he was in primary classes, the similar behavior of science teacher made him weaker in science subject, now that is recovered when learned with empathetic teacher” (R17).*

### **Forgiveness in Personal Life**

Participants shared their experiences by saying forgiveness from parents inhibits children to repeat the mistakes and prevents trigger of telling lie or jealousy among siblings.

*“I and younger sister were studying together in grade 1.*

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*Once, the teacher gave Harim (the pseudonym name of younger one) a beautiful puppet chick as a gift. I was very jealous thinking why not teacher gave to me. While returning home, she gave it to mummy, who put it in the small glass showcase in the drawing room. After a day, I through the showcase on the floor, and torn the chick into pieces. Although mom knew the truth, yet I did not admit, despite she did not beat me. Rather, she only said, chick was a toy to amuse all of you, if it would have not broken. Contrarily, If she had beaten me, I would have felt that my younger sister is loved by everyone but I am not. This situation would have lead have rooted jealousy for my sister. And, to avoid being punished I would have become habitual liar” (R6).*

Participants maintain that by forgiveness, they can be able to repair broken relationships. As one of the female participants said:

*“My marriage caused me to live with in-laws in joint family where the behavior of each person except my spouse was sardonic. We lived together only for two years. Though we have been living as a separated family for ten years, yet my husband is unable to forgive his family members and thus getting upset over reflection. But, I have forgiven them; I visit them periodically and send my young son to be amused with them.”*

In the contrast, it was observed that majority of male participants are more aggressive against ego-related issues and not ready to forgive even in the close relations as said:

*“I do not speak to my wife when she disregards me. Sometimes I become violent to let others not repeat the mistakes” (R5).*

Many respondents highlighted by holding grudges, their health suffer. Male has reported heart attack problems while females reported depression, loss of sleep and memory, continuous absent-mindedness, lack of appetite and miscarriages. One of the respondents said:

*“My brother holds middle class status, but his son is married with the girl of upper class. His daughter-in-law could not adjust in middle class family, so she without informing anyone left the in-laws with her assets such as gold. On the second day my brother was died of attack (R20).” His brother could not forgive her as the matter was against his respect.”*

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Another participant added:

*“I had three miscarriages only due to holding negative feelings for in-laws behaviors.”*

## CONCLUSIONS

The results revealed that the understanding of the concept of forgiveness depends upon the demographic nature of the participants. Those who are nurtured in the forgiving home culture had better understanding, were more inclined towards forgiveness and efficiently cope with different problems. According to them, forgiveness is not only the prevention of the negative attitude for the transgressor but also adoption of the positive attitude such as empathy for them (Thompson et al., 2005). Moreover, its application was considered effective at individual's level to deal with ego-related issues and help them to sustain the positive state of mind with improved health and emotions. Its application encourages teamwork among colleagues (Cox, 2011). Simultaneously, its need has been highlighted for the teachers due to many failed to forgive others.

The findings show that the significant factors drive forgiveness are religion, sense of accomplishment, preserving relationships and family background. The findings are consistent with research by Shoaib and Rafique (2015) rational attitude by family lead the adoption of the forgiveness in the generations, and adherence with religion and consciousness of emotions are positively associated with forgiveness (Ho et al., 2020). Moreover the findings also support the results of Glaz, (2019) forgiveness is an essential tool helps individual to accomplish desired values (teaching goals and aspirations) that makes life meaningful for them. Similarly, the need to preserve relations motivates individuals towards forgiveness (McCullough et al., 1998).

Thompson and Shahan (2003) suggested that forgiving individuals are more creative as their behaviours sometimes not directly related to the job, yet promote efficiency and effectiveness of Institutions. With respect to third world countries, our findings exemplify that teachers who tend to forgive paucity of resources and learning materials, they do incorporate low-cost material as teaching aids and strive to generate money from the donors or teachers altogether. Such teachers also share colleague's work burden in their absence. Cox (2011) discovered students' absenteeism, dropouts and lower scores on standardized tests cannot be forgiven because it becomes problematic for the organization and thus the lowering the performance based appraisals for the teachers. Contrast with that, in the public sector school context of Pakistan, teachers are neither given any bonus for their performance, nor the school is much rewarded for better performance, and target is on increasing the enrolment of children, so the use of forgiveness allow teachers to resolve the abovementioned issues through collaborative norm (Droll, 1984).

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Consistent with the study of Khan and Ashbridge (2020) it was found that students are not dealt with potential techniques to resolve problematic behaviours rather they are being punished for ego-related matters and such as disrespecting teachers, making noises on the class and not paying interest in their studies. At the same time, findings also show that teachers adaptive to forgiveness strategy generate the platform where students could realise their mistakes and learn from their own behaviours, the results are much similar with Guchait et al. (2016) observation over employees' behaviour patterns. Parallel with the previous research by McCullough et al. (1998) forgiveness is adopted in close relationships where the victim desires to preserve the relation as the cost against holding conflicts is assumed higher. This study's findings support the idea with additional point that parents forgive their children's mistakes because they want to keep up relations with them and are well aware they won't be able to lead a life in resentment, one might be reason is they are expecting old-age support from children (Ashraf, 2016).

Meanwhile, this study also emphasis over Gender that plays important role to study the forgiveness in the patriarchal societies of Pakistan, females are more inclined to forgive their spouse and children than do the men because spouse support is social demand for women (Rahman & Roomi, 2012). Dissimilar with the findings of quantitative research by Butt et al. (2013), forgiveness is less likely to adopt by male participants than females. Even son is unable to forgive parents' long ago transgressions, although his wife has forgiven her in-laws. It is due to the wife has desires to become role model for her children as researched by Fehr et al, (2010) social desirability enable victims to forgive across the time and situation. It is recommended to study yet deeper the influences of gender in the adoption of forgiveness in Pakistani societies. Again in the close relations the victim who failed to forgive the transgressor acquires different health problems (Toussaint et al., 2018) such as heart attack, depression, tension leads to miscarriages and absentmindedness. However, for friends, there is no forgiveness, this might be thought they will be replaced by others and the cost is negligible. This study recommends future researchers to examine influences of forgiveness among friends.

Un-forgiveness increases negative thoughts in individuals (Fehr et al., 2010). Our findings suggest that due to unforgiving behaviour of teachers they not only remain disturb for management related issues such as, shortage of teachers, shifting from classes, not easy transferring the jobs to the vicinity schools or assumed favouritism of officials (Hameed & Dahar, 2017; Ashraf et al., 2015) but also take revenge in different forms such as avoid performing job responsibility properly, being absent without emergency and lacking attention to the matters that could improve students' achievement.

It is noted that forgiving of the victim create the space to change the mindset of transgressor and transform the positivity and simultaneously stop the trigger of certain problems that would have caused by un-forgiveness (Guchait et al., 2016). The forgiveness of elders to the younger such as mother to their children and teacher to their students has a significant potential. It is concluded that the unforgiving behaviour of mother and teachers would give root to different negative attitude among the children, those who are punished start feeling as like demoralized by society, as a response they exhibit mood off and try to commit more mistakes, amongst them the most prominent feelings are jealousy and adopting arrogance attitude in the society. Javed et al. (2018) found that public sector school students are holding unforgiving attitude, our findings provide one of the significant reasons behind the such behaviour of students' that is teachers' lack of forgiving attitude to the students made students to exhibit similar behaviours in the society. Such things rather than advancing the personality development of children, reinforcing the damaging effects.

In addition to this, results highlight that forgiveness helps in restoring the broken relationships and helps nourishing the family ties (Sheldon et al., 2014), after being separated from joint family due to perceived unforgiveable offences, behaving more positive of daughter in law (victim) by foregoing the injustices of in-laws, both the parties are now enjoying the pleasure of family ties. Also it was found that teacher education (B.ed) and experiences have not association with the application of forgiveness. Thus, based on above results, we recommend forgiveness therapy for

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The study recommends forgiveness therapy for employees specifically primary sector teachers to improve attitude and well-being in both personal and professional lives. The forgiveness therapy needs to include scenarios that are contextually relevant that challenges gender stereotypes and cultural taboos. This would help uplift psychological growth of teachers so that they could be able to better deal with young children.

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