FORGIVENESS OF HISTORICAL AND CURRENT RACIAL OFFENSES: A STUDY

OF INTERGROUP FORGIVENESS AMONG AFRICAN AMERICANS

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Bengü Ergüner- Tekinalp

CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL:

_____   _____

Suhyun Suh   Renée A. Middleton, Chair
Associate Professor   Professor,
Counselor Education, Counseling   Counselor Education, Counseling
Psychology and School Psychology   Psychology and School Psychology

_____   _____

 John Dagley   George T. Flowers
Associate Professor   Interim Dean
Counselor Education, Counseling   Graduate School
Psychology and School Psychology

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Bengü Ergüner- Tekinalp

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Bengü Ergüner- Tekinalp

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Signature of Author

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Date of Graduation

VITA

Bengü Ergüner- Tekinalp, daughter of Erol and Kezban Ergüner, was born June 1977 in Ankara, Turkey. She graduated from Middle East Technical University in Ankara, Turkey with honors with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Guidance and Psychological Counseling in 1999. In 2001, she earned her Master of Science Degree from Middle East Technical University in Guidance and Psychological Counseling. She entered the doctoral program in Counselor Education at Auburn University in 2003. During her graduate study, she committed herself to actively engaging in research, teaching, and service. She has been involved in research studies in multicultural counseling, racial identity development, positive psychology and cross-cultural psychology. She is married to Serhat Tekinalp and has a daughter, Defne.

DISSERTATION ABSTRACT

FORGIVENESS OF HISTORICAL AND CURRENT RACIAL OFFENSES: A STUDY

OF INTERGROUP FORGIVENESS AMONG AFRICAN AMERICANS

Bengü Ergüner-Tekinalp

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The purpose of this dissertation is to explore the conditions needed for historically oppressed groups to forgive historical offenses and current experiences of racial/ethnic offenses. This study includes a sample of 147 African Americans. Results indicate that the condition needed for forgiving historical racial/ethnic offenses is different than that required for forgiveness of current racial/ethnic offenses. Remorse, reparations, seeking forgiveness and religion were found to be significant contributors to forgiving historical racial offenses. On the other hand forgiving current experiences of racism was only determined by personality characteristic of tendency to forgive. No age or gender

differences were observed; however males were significantly more willing to forgive

current experiences of racism even though they reported more incidences of racism and

more racism related stress. Implications for these findings are discussed along with

recommendations for the counseling profession; counselor education and counselor

educators.

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"içimin güler yüzü,
yaşanılası iklimim hoşgeldin….."

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I. INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the purpose of the study will be discussed, accompanied by a brief overview and background information related to forgiveness and the history of discrimination against African Americans. This chapter will also provide the research questions relative to this study expected benefits to the counseling profession and limitations of the study.

Statement of the Problem

Although there are many examples of peace and improvements in learning to live in peace, the world still faces challenges of learning to peacefully coexist with one another as human beings. Throughout centuries of the world's history, discrimination, maltreatment, and oppression has existed in every part of the world. The roots of many conflicts today are carried by past conflicts between nations and groups of people. Oppression and discrimination or dehumanization and invalidation of each other have existed universally throughout history and continue today. Oppression finds new forms of expression in many forms of –isms, such as racism, sexism, ageism and many others. Human rights have been violated in many different forms globally; and throughout history people hurt each other and still keep hurting one another, and human beings are

stuck into two roles, the oppressed and the oppressor. Oftentimes one may serve as both the oppressor and the oppressed. The psychological costs of oppression to both the victim and the offender have been documented (i.e. Arminio, 2001; Bankston & Caldas, 1996; Caughy, O'Campo & Muntaner, 2004; Williams, 1997; Williams & Williams-Morris, 2000). As we are all important pieces to the fabric of humanity, it is important that we explore ways to eliminate and bring to an end the cruel invalidation of any human being. One way to end this process is to find ways for healing. Acknowledging wrongdoing and the process of forgiving and forgiveness is essential to healing the wounds of discrimination and oppression. To this end, the oppressor must acknowledge acknowledging the wrongdoings and oppressed must empower themselves through the power of forgiveness.

The United States has a unique place in the world that it is home to many diverse populations. The populations of minority groups in U.S have been continually increasing. Today, people of color comprise over 30% of the U.S population (U.S Census, 2001). Although there are many efforts to improve the daily experiences of African Americans and other members of underrepresented groups their experiences are shaped by cultural forces that often demean, disadvantage and deny them equal access and opportunity (Atkinson & Hackett, 1998; Atkinson, Morten & Sue, 1993; Jones, 1997). Experiences of historical and current discrimination, prejudices, stereotypes and oppression are a daily reality for many diverse groups. Therefore, the worldview of African Americans and other historically oppressed groups in the United States is linked to historical and current experiences of oppression in the United States (Sue & Sue, 2003).

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It is important to explore the dynamic relationship between the oppressors and the oppressed. One way to understand this relationship is to examine, if the relationship between the oppressed and the oppressor has the capacity to spawn forgiveness for the offenses. Freire (1993) suggests that to move from being oppressed is not to become the oppressor of the oppressor or in other words to identify with the power of the oppressor and become the one who oppresses. However, the oppressed have a specific task; freeing themselves and the oppressor because only power which springs from the weakness of the oppressed will be strong enough to liberate them both. Oppression is dehumanizing one party and the process of liberation is painful and difficult, however; at the end, the oppressor-oppressed contradiction will supersede with the humanization of all. Forgiveness is one area that may ignite positive interrelations among the oppressed and the oppressor. In this study, in order to understand the experiences of the oppressed and their relationship with the oppressor, the attitudes of African Americans toward historical racial offenses and their experiences of current racial offenses and forgiveness will be explored. The intent of the study is to focus on the experiences of African Americans as one historically oppressed group in the United States, as a means of understanding the potential role, capacity, and power of forgiveness among other oppressed or racially and ethnically marginalized groups living the realities of oppression.

Experiences of African Americans

In spite of the efforts to improve the race relations in United States, segregation, lack of communication or miscommunication, distrust, and segregated lives still

characterizes contemporary Black and White American relationships in the United States (i.e Davis, Strube & Cheng, 1995; Dovidio, Kawakami & Gaertner, 2002; Jackman & Crane 1986; Massey & Denton, 1993). Hundreds of years of slavery and segregation made African and White American relationships a difficult issue for United States. Decades of racism and oppression have created wounds for both groups and resulted in unresolved relationship dynamics between these groups. Although the racial tension has been explained as a result of continued racist attitudes, unfinished business resulting from a failure to seek forgiveness and offering forgiveness may be one explanation for the ongoing racial tension between African Americans and White Americans. As Archbishop Desmond Tutu (1998, p. xiii) has suggested, "If we don't deal with our past adequately, it will return to haunt us".

Africans were enslaved and arrived on American shores in 1619. Upon their arrival they were subjected to dehumanization and relegation to second class citizenry (Morgan, 1985). For centuries, African American's status in this society historically kept as inferior. In 1865, the United States government ended all forms of slavery; in 1954, segregated schools were dismantled; and in 1964, the Civil Rights Act guaranteed broad citizen protections that the legal underpinnings for treating African Americans as equal and acceptable were secured (Franklin & Moss, 1994). However, legal ending of the slavery only terminated the economic aspect of slavery; the social aspect of slavery could not be erased in the society simply through courts. Social integration and equity could not be legislated. The focus of White society on maintaining rigid control over Blacks has continued (Franklin & Boyd-Franklin, 2000).

Despite the gains in civil rights, prejudice continues toward African Americans; racism continues to be an unavoidable and painful reality of daily life for racial minorities in the United States (Feagin, 1991; Feagin & Sikes, 1994; Landrine & Klonoff, 1996). Discrimination against African Americans can be found in many segments of society. The examples are higher education (Farrell & Jones, 1988), the restaurant industry (Schuman, Singer, Donovan, & Sellitz, 1983), housing rentals and sales (Feagin, 1991; Yinger, 1995), automotive sales (Ayres, 1991), hiring practices (Kirschenman & Neckerman, 1991), employment (Feagin 1991), poor education (Patton, 1995), discrimination within the judicial system and incarceration and (Staples, 1982), health and social services (Harrison, 1994; Lott & Maluso, 1995). Besides the discrimination in different areas in society, it is well documented in the literature that African Americans have reported some subjective experiences of racism and discrimination as well. For example, in two separate studies Landrine and Klonoff, (1996) found that almost all (98%) African American participants reported experiencing some type of racial discrimination in the past year. These experiences includes discrimination by waiters and store clerks, discrimination by health and helping professionals, being called a racist name (e.g., "nigger"), being hit, shoved, harmed, or threatened with physical harm because of their race. Moreover no gender, social class, or education differences were found in these reports.

All these studies evidenced that racial discrimination is still a common experience for African Americans. These discriminatory experiences are a significant source of stress for many African Americans. As such, experiences of racism plays a role in the

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physical and mental health of African Americans. A significant relationship was found between perceptions and experience of racism and stress related diseases such as resting blood pressure (Krieger & Sidney, 1996), gastrointestinal disorders, high blood pressure, cardiovascular disease, stroke and (Outlaw, 1993), higher incidence of hypertension (Krieger, 1990). Racism also effects African American's mental health. Studies show that there is a relationship between experience of racism and discrimination and subjective well-being (Thompson, 1996), depression (Burke, 1984), substance abuse (Harper, 1981), lowered self-esteem (Fernando, 1984), and lowered levels of happiness and life satisfaction (Jackson, et al., 1995). Alexander (2005) suggests that race still remains a prominent factor, attitudes from past are relevant, they operate on today's society and are reflective in current policy areas.

The long history of oppression has not only caused difficulties for African Americans but also, it has a tremendous negative effect on relationships between African Americans and White Americans. It has been suggested in the literature that African Americans and White Americans live in racially segregated areas with a minimal contact. Segregation occurs in such high levels that it is called as "hypersegregation". Along with segregation, interpersonal relationships are also affected by a prolonged history of oppression. The interpersonal relationships are characterized by miscommunication and distrust (Dovidio, Kawakami & Gaertner, 2002). Intimate relationships are also rare (Davidson, 1992; Dunleavy, 2004) even individuals engaged in intimate relations are at risk of being subjected to racial harassment. In a racially divided society such as United States, the concepts of reconciliation, public apology, and the offering and acceptance of

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forgiveness should well be considered for overcoming the harmful effects of prolonged racial discrimination and offenses. Public apology and accepting offering forgiveness may serve as a balm for healing the wounds of both the oppressed and the oppressor. Given the time constraints of this study, it is necessary to limit the scope and focus. To this end, only forgiveness on part of the historical oppressed (African Americans) is studied. Forgiveness empowers the oppressed by allowing the oppressed to move on and heal.

The literature on forgiveness has focused on interpersonal relationships; however, recently the concept of forgiveness has gained attention in intergroup conflict situations. McLernon, Cairns, and Hewstone (2002) conducted a focus group on forgiveness between Protestants and Catholics in Northern Ireland. The results of the focus group showed that participants conceptualize forgiveness as related with compassion, mercy, humanity and empathy. Another important theme identified in the study was that the acknowledgement of the pain of hurtful acts and the public acknowledgement of the wrongdoing assisted in facilitating forgiveness. Participants also believed that forgiveness was easier when perpetrators showed remorse. Because remorse shows the acceptance of the grievance and the offender's need to be forgiven, participants stressed that forgiveness does not imply trust to the offender. Participants found easier to forgive a person than to forgive a group since it was easier to trust an individual. Participants agreed that forgiving a group who had wronged them might imply that the wrongs which were done to them were justified. One of the important themes emerging from the focus

group was that participants stressed was that preaching forgiveness or trying to force the acceptance of it might become counter productive.

Similarly, McLernon, Cairns, Hewstone and Smith (2004) conducted a study to explore intergroup forgiveness between Protestants and Catholics in Northern Ireland. Their results showed that the perceived degree of hurt from the other group in conflict (Protestants), rather than the type of injury was found to be a predictor of forgiveness on three levels: behavior, cognition, and affect. Specifically, this study shows that higher levels of hurt decrease the likelihood of forgiveness. It is important to note that the perception of hurt may not correspond with the actual severity of attack. This means that not the injury or the hurt itself, but rather the perception or the experience of the hurt by the individual was more important in determining the forgiveness. The study also shows that the time passed since the injury or hurtful event significantly correlates with the affect component of the forgiveness. Specifically participants who suffered more recently are less likely to forgive the perpetrator on the emotional level.

Hewstone, Cairns, Voci, McLernon and Noor (2004) reported different surveys conducted between 1999 and 2000. In 1999 Catholic and Protestant University students were surveyed in Northern Ireland. Intergroup forgiveness was assessed as it relates to collective guilt, religiosity, out-group contact, experience of victimhood for themselves, their family or a close friend and identification with the in-group. Results indicate a positive relationship between forgiveness and collective guilt assignment, more contact with out-group friends, and out-group attitudes. However, forgiveness was negatively associated with the identification with one's own religious community. Religious beliefs

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were not found to be highly correlated with intergroup forgiveness, this being significant only for Protestants. The study also showed that individuals with high experience of victimhood are less likely to have collective guilt and forgiveness.

In 2000, Hewstone, Cairns, Voci, McLernon and Noor surveyed 303 Catholic and Protestant students in Northern Ireland on forgiveness, importance of religions, out-group friendship, in-group identification, perspective taking and empathy. Importance of religion in individual's life was not correlated with forgiveness. Predicators of forgiveness revealed differently for Catholics Protestants. For Catholics, forgiveness positively correlated with more out-group friendships, out-group attitudes, perspective taking and empathy. For Protestants, on the other hand, any of the variables were found significant for forgiveness. Again in 2000, they surveyed a sample of Northern Irish population on forgiveness, contact with out-group friends, in-group identification, out-group perspective taking, victimization experience, out-group evaluation, out-group trust degree of experience of sectarian violence taken place in their residential area. They found that Catholics had a greater tendency to forgive than Protestants. Also Catholics were significantly higher on positive out-group attitudes, out-group perspective taking, and trust and in-group identification. However, for Protestants forgiveness was negatively related with in-group identification. For both groups there was a positive relationship between forgiveness and more contact with out-group friends, more positive out-group attitude, perspective taking and out-group trust. They also found higher experiences of violence to be significantly associated with less forgiveness and less trust.

In the Hewstone et al., report (2004), an experimental study is reported. In the study participants provided a scenario describing an act of paramilitary violence, its consequences, intention, and motivation. Participants were asked to make a number of judgments, including manipulation checks, attributions of blame, forgiveness, and a recommendation concerning whether the perpetrator should be granted early release (under the terms of Good Friday Agreement). Participants also completed surveys for importance of religion, intergroup contact, out-group perspective taking, out-group attitudes, intergroup forgiveness, and in-group identification. Results showed that each group was more willing to forgive the in-group perpetrator than the out-group perpetrator. It was also reported that forgiveness was related with in-group identification. Forgiveness was found to be a predictor of early release recommendations. For Catholics forgiveness was significantly associated with a recommendation to release a Catholic, but not a Protestant. For Protestant participants, forgiveness was marginally significantly correlated with a recommendation to release a Protestant, and significantly correlated with a recommendation to release a Catholic.

Wohl and Branscombe (2005) conducted a series of experiments to assess the collective guilt assignment and forgiveness of historical perpetrator. In the first experiment they found that when human level identity was salient, in other words when participants thought that the oppression of groups of individuals was a global human problem. Jewish participants were less likely to assign collective guilt and they were more willing to forgive Germans for the Holocaust. However, when the harmful action was perceived being relatively unique to Germans, there was less likelihood of

forgiveness and more likelihood of collective guilt assignment. Specifically, when individuals perceived the Holocaust as a nature of Germans rather than a human nature, they were less likely to forgive Germans and they were more likely to want Germans to experience collective guilt. Their second experiment showed that when harm is placed on a broader historical context, Jews were more willing to forgive and assign less collective guilt to contemporary Germans. Similar results were found from the experiments carried out with Native Canadians. When participants perceived White Canadians' oppression at the human level, they were more willing to forgive and less willing to assign collective guilt to White Canadians.

Azar, Mullet and Vinsonneau (1999) conducted a study in Lebanon to explore forgiveness of conflict experienced during the Lebanon civil war. They provided a story of a severe offense to Catholics, Maronites, and Orthodox Christians and explored intent to harm, cancellation of consequences, religious and social similarity to the offender, and apologies from the offender, as they relate to forgiveness. The results show that cancellation of consequences, intent to harm, and apologies were significant contributions of forgiveness. In 2001, Azar and Mullet carried out the same study to Sunni Muslims. They found similar results; specifically, Sunni Muslims were willing to forgive to the same extent as the Catholic, Maronite, and Orthodox Christians and cancellation of consequences, intent to harm, and apologies were found significantly related with forgiveness. On the other hand, religious and social similarity factors had significant relationship with forgiveness. For Sunni Muslims, gender and age were not found to be

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significant factors for forgiveness. However, education had a positive relationship with willingness to forgive. More educated participants were more willing to forgive.

Expected Benefits to Counseling Profession

The studies on forgiveness of historical and current racial offenses and intergroup forgiveness are limited in the literature. This study will contribute to the base of literature in this area by exploring the needed circumstances for forgiving historical and current racial offenses. Additionally, this study will provide early data on the forgiveness of historical and current racial offenses. It is intended that this study will serve as a framework for future researchers to use as comparative data.

Counseling and psychotherapy do not take place in a vacuum isolated from the largest sociopolitical influences in our society (Sue & Sue, 2003). Therefore, the racial relationship outside of the counseling relationship has an effect on the therapeutic relationships. Forgiveness is used as a therapeutic tool (i. e. Affinito, 2002; Aponte, 1998; DiBlasio, 2000, 1998; Holmgren, 2002) in counseling and conceptualized as an effective means of promoting personal and relational development.

Intergroup forgiveness of historical and current offenses is an important topic; however, there is no study in the literature exploring forgiveness and reconciliation of racial-ethnic minorities in United States. Trust can be re-built in a society which is likely to serve as a precursor to forgiveness. Forgiveness can bring healing to the individuals as well as the society. The results of this study can be potentially beneficial to counseling any oppressed racially or ethnically diverse population. Studying how forgiveness works

for African Americans in historical and current offenses may help us understand the necessary conditions in society for forgiveness to occur among members of other historically oppressed groups as well. We may also better understand how forgiveness takes part in the daily experiences of racism in the lives of African Americans. It is not the intent of this study to find the ways to encourage African Americans to forgive White Americans; rather the purpose is to study how oppressed groups deal with historical instances of oppression, their memories with the past and their experiences of oppression or racism today. Therefore, it is the aim of this study to test the presence or absence of forgiveness in terms of historical and current racial offenses and to examine the necessary conditions needed by the offended or oppressed group to forgive the historical perpetrator in order to bring healing to the trauma caused by historical and current offenses. The implications of this study extend beyond the counseling profession to the broader global society.

Research Questions

1. When forgiveness as a personality trait is controlled for, which specified variables will show a significant association to belief in African American's forgiveness of historical racial offenses when forgiveness?

2. When forgiveness as a personality trait is controlled for, which specified variables will show a significant association to one's forgiveness of historical racial offenses?

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3.   When forgiveness as a personality trait is controlled for, which specified variables will show a significant association to one's forgiveness of current racial offenses?

4.   Is there a relationship between experiences of racism and forgiveness of historical racial offenses and forgiveness of current racial offenses?

5.   Is there a relationship between forgiveness of historical racial offenses and current racial offenses?

6.   Is there difference between males and females forgiveness of historical and current racial offenses?

7.   Is there difference between males and females on Racism and Experiences of Life Events?

Purpose of the Study

The aim of this study is to understand how historical and current offenses are experienced by an oppressed group. For the purposes of this study, African Americans and their attitudes toward forgiving offenses of oppression is examined.

Specifically, this study seeks to understand the extent to which African Americans are able to forgive historical and current racial offenses (slavery, segregation, Tuskegee Experiment, etc.). The primary purpose of this study is to determine the factors contributing to forgiving historical racial offenses, and the secondary purpose is to determine the contributing factors for forgiving current racial offenses. Whether forgiving historical racial offenses contributes forgiveness of current racial offenses will

be explored. In order to better test these factors on forgiveness, forgiveness as a personality trait will be controlled.

Limitations of the Study

The results of the study should be interpreted with caution due to several methodological limitations. The sample of the study consists mainly of African Americans who have internet access. Although the study provides some valuable insight into minority experiences, the participants may not reflect the experiences of all racially and ethnically oppressed groups. The participants also may not reflect the larger African American population in general. Thus, the findings of the study will be limited in relation to generalization of the results. Since the experiences of oppressed groups vary across groups, the results are limited in explaining the experiences of other racial/ethnic groups. The results are also limited in terms of explanation of forgiveness; other related factors such as racial identity development, religious orientation, and racial contact should be investigated in future studies.

Glossary of Terms

African Americans: used to describe Americans with black African descent primarily from enslaved Africans brought to the United States. The term Black American and African American are used interchangeably.

Discrimination: refers to unfair treatment of a person or group on the basis of prejudice.

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Oppressed: Refers to individuals or groups of individuals who have been the target of oppression. To define the groups or individuals who have historically continuously been the target of oppression, the term Historically Oppressed is used.

Oppression: Oppression is used to describe the circumstances experienced as a result of unjust exercise of power in a society. Oppression refers to the process of keeping certain groups down by unjust use of force, authority or societal norms.

Oppressor: refers to individuals or groups of individuals who have subjected other individuals or groups to unjust exercise of power; in other words, who have oppressed individuals or groups of individuals. Historical Oppressor refers to the oppressor who has been known as an oppressor historically.

People of color: Refers to nonwhite minority groups living in USA.

White Americans: is used to describe Americans with European descent. This term is used interchangeably with the terms European American and White.

II.   REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In this chapter the literature related to the concept of forgiveness particularly with the historically conflicting groups will be provided. A brief overview of the challenges and factors associated with forgiveness is discussed. Additionally, a history of oppression towards African Americans is provided.

Forgiveness

The scientific study of forgiveness began in mid 1980s and since that time the interest has accelerated (Worthington, 2005). Although there are numerous studies exploring the concept of forgiveness, there is a lack of consensus among researchers in the definition of forgiveness (McCullough et al., 2000).

Rodden (2003) defines forgiveness as

Forgiveness is an act that joins moral-historical truth, forbearance from revenge, empathy for wrongdoers, and a commitment to repair a fractured human relationship. Such a combination requires a turn from the past that neither ignores past evil nor excuses it, that neither overlooks injustice nor reduces justice to revenge, that insists on the humanity of enemies even in their commission of inhumane deeds, and that values the justice that serves reconciliation above the justice that destroys it.

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It is generally accepted that Enright's (1999, 2000) definition is a more comprehensive and most frequently cited definition by forgiveness researchers. In this conceptualization, forgiveness is conceptualized as a multidimensional construct that forms interplay between cognition, emotion, and behavior. Therefore, forgiveness is not an act or behavior but rather forgiveness can occur on cognitive and affective levels as well. Therefore according to this definition it is possible to forgive somebody cognitively but still find it hard to let go on the emotional level. Forgiveness is seen as a process in which individuals overcome the resentment, negative judgment and indifferent behavior toward the offender and fostering compassion, generosity, even love toward the offender. The distinctive part of this definition is that this conceptualization includes compassion toward the offender; however they excluded the reconciliation from the definition. Therefore the forgiver develops positive feelings toward the offender but does not necessarily reconcile the relationship with the offender. Similar with this conceptualization, Hargrave and Sells (1997) define forgiveness as a process of restoring love and trustworthiness to end the destructive relationship for both to the offender and the offended. Therefore forgiveness is viewed within an ongoing relationship of the parties. However, apart from Enright's definition, this definition involves and necessitates reconciliation with the offender.

Some authors emphasize cognition in the process of forgiveness. According to Akthar (2002), forgiveness compromises two mental operations, the resolution of unpleasant angry emotions within oneself, and a changed attitude toward an offending party.

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On the other hand, other theorists conceptualize forgiveness in a stage-like model. Enright and the Human Development Study Group (1991) also argue that forgiveness takes place in four phases. In the "uncovering phase" the person experiences the pain and explores the injustice; in this phase the individual uncovers how the pain affects them. In the "decision phase", the individual explores the idea of forgiveness, and what is involved in forgiveness before committing any act. In the "work phase" the individual starts seeing the offender with a new perspective and reframes the offender and the offense in context. This new perspective contributes to feelings of empathy and compassion towards the offender. Lastly in the "outcome phase", the individual re-conceptualizes the forgiveness as a gift given to the offender, and experiences healing.

According to Gordon and Baucom (2003), forgiveness takes place in four stages. The process begins with the realization of the effect of the hurt. This stage is called the "impact" stage. This stage is characterized by a period of significant cognitive, emotional, and behavioral disruption. The second phase of the process of forgiveness is the "meaning" stage, where the victim discovers why the hurt occurred and tries to understand the offender. Increased understanding of the offense and the offender brings increased sense of control which is typically decreased in the first stage. The third stage or the recovery or "moving on" stage is wrestling with the question of why and making sense of the suffering. Here the victim moves beyond the event and stops allowing it to control his or her life. This often encompasses a dialogue between the offender and the victim. The fourth phase in this model is 'forgiving,' which is characterized by renewing

trust in the relationship. In this final phase the victim lets go of the pain, anger and resentment.

The developmental pattern of the practice of forgiveness throughout the life span has also been emphasized in the literature (Enright et al., 1989, 1991, 1994). Enright et al.'s developmental forgiveness model provides evidence that the tendency to forgive increases as the age increases. To this end, elderly people have been shown to be more likely to forgive than younger adults (Hewstone et al., 2004).

Different from the approaches defined above, McCullough, Rachal, Sandage, Worthington, Brown and Hight (1998) conceptualizes forgiveness as a motivational system. Basically feeling of hurt triggers a motivation to avoid personal contact and feeling "righteous indignation" triggers a motivation of seeking revenge. These motivations come together and create a psychological state of forgiveness. Therefore in this model forgiveness is described as a change in one's motivation from revenge-seeking and avoidance of contact with the offender to an increase in feelings of goodwill and movement toward reconciliation (McCullough., Worthington, & Rachal, 1997; McCullough, Fincham, & Tsang, 2003). In this motivational model of forgiveness McCullough et al. (1998) provided the determinants of interpersonal forgiveness: (a) social-cognitive (affective) variables such as the way the offended thinks/feels about the offender and the offense, (b) characteristics of the offense, (c) the quality of the relationship between the offender and the offended, and (d) personality traits or cognitive processes of the offended.

Similar to the above conceptualization of defining forgiveness as a change in motivations from negative to positive, Thompson and Snyder (2003) define forgiveness as a transformation of the perception of the transgression, transgressor and consequences of the transgression from negative to positive. Therefore, in this definition the object of the forgiveness can be oneself, another person or persons, or a situation. Once a person forgives, he/she frees him/herself from negative cognition, memories, affect or behaviors associated with the offense or the offender change. As a result, in the case of forgiving a person, this freedom may result in positive feelings towards the offender.

Another model of forgiveness emphasizes the relationship between offender and the offended or transgressed. Scobie and Scobie (1998) conceptualize forgiveness as a "pro-social facilitator" to restore damaged relationships, to reduce the negative influence between the offended and the offender, and to provide opportunity for the offended recipient to give up the role of victim and for the offender to make compensation.

Roberts (1995) argues that the main motivation of forgiveness is maintaining harmonious relationships; therefore, forgiveness is overcoming the justified anger and resentment to keep up the relationship. However, other factors such as offender's repentance, excuses, the offender's suffering, moral commonality with the offender, and closeness of relationship with the offender, ease the negative emotions for forgiveness take place. On the other hand factors like severity of the offense, lack of repentance, absence of suffering by the offender, moral distance, and lack of relationship limit the forgiveness.

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Forgiveness as a Personality Trait

Conceptualizing forgiveness as a personality trait is another common perspective in the forgiveness literature. McCullough and Hoyt (2002) argue that some people have a disposition to be more willing to forgive than others. Dispositional forgiveness is defined as readiness to grant forgiveness when victimized by interpersonal transgressions (Kamat Jones & Row, 2006; Lawler, Younger, Piferi, Billington, Jobe, Edmondson, & Jones, 2002). It is important to note that dispositional forgiveness does not discharge the importance of other facilitating tendencies such as empathy, perspective taking, prudence, emotional maturity, humility, and resistance to taking offense, and situational factors such as severity of the offense, the identity of the offender, apology, or some sort of acknowledgement (Kamat, Jones, & Row, 2006; Piferi et al., 2002). In sum, dispositional forgiveness approach supposes that although some factors play a role in forgiveness, individual differences also contribute to the probability and the extent to which a person will forgive an offender (Kamat, Jones, & Row, 2006).

To emphasize and differentiate forgiveness as a personality trait the term "forgivingness" is used. The term "forgivingness" was first introduced by Roberts (1995). According to Roberts (1995), forgivingness is the disposition to terminate one's anger toward the offender and seeing the offender in a compassionate generous way. However, forgivingness is not an indiscriminate state; the forgiving person properly holds the anger in certain situations. For forgivingness to be in benevolent and harmonious relationship with others is a basic dispositional motivation; in other words, keeping the harmonious relationship with the offender is the main motivation behind forgiveness. By

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using this philosophical statement of forgivingness, Neto and Mullet (2004) operationalized forgivingness in psychology literature and defined it as a disposition to forgive interpersonal offenses over time and across situations and a capacity to consistently act in a fully forgiving way. Mullet, Barros, Frongia, Usai, and Neto (2003) discusses three aspects of forgivingness: (a) enduring resentment which is the difficulty to escape the unforgivingness state by revenge taking or forgiving or choosing another path, (b) sensitivity to the circumstances which is characterized by reactivity to others' encouragement to forgive or offender's apology, and (c) overall tendency to forgive or avenge.

Hoyt, Fincham, McCullough, Maio and Davila (2005) differentiated the term "forgiveness" as the offended individual's response to a specific situation and forgivingness as a general disposition to forgive others. Therefore, forgiveness is a situation specific phenomena but forgivingness is a tendency to forgive across situations and individuals.

Forgiveness also studied as it relates to Big Five theory of personality. It is found that agreeableness (positive) and neuroticism (negative) were best predictors of forgiveness (Hoyt et al., 2005; McCullough & Hoyt, 2002; McCullough, 2001). Therefore people who are more agreeable and more emotionally stable have tendencies to forgive more. Other personality factors found related with forgiveness are empathy, friendliness, higher self-esteem, low anxiety (Berry, Worthington, Parrott, O'Connor, & Wade, 2001; Kaplan, 1992; McCullough, Bellah, Kilpatrick, & Johnson, 2001).

Forgiveness and Interpersonal Dynamics

Another perspective on forgiveness emphasizes the presence or absence of interpersonal dynamics. Andrews (2000) argues that there are two types of forgiveness: negotiated forgiveness and unilateral forgiveness. In the negotiated forgiveness, the actual dialogue between the offended and the offender creates an environment for forgiveness to take place. In this case, the offender identifies with the offense and seeks forgiveness. Seeking forgiveness takes place in three steps: confession, ownership and repentance. First, the offender must admit that he or she has committed the action. Second, the offender must take responsibility for the action, or "own" it, with all of its consequences, without providing excuses. Lastly, the offender must express remorse for the action. In the absence of such steps, the offended individual might refuse to forgive, believing that the essential preconditions for forgiveness have not been met. On the other hand, unilateral forgiveness takes place entirely within one individual; it is not dependent on the actions of offender after the offense. Nothing is expected from the offender for forgiveness take place. This type of forgiveness is offered freely and in one's own time (Enright, Freedman, & Rique, 1998; Enright & The Human Development Study Group, 1991; Fincham, 2000).

Worthington (2005) argues that forgiveness is an interpersonal process which involves a transgressor, a victim, sometimes either an involved or an impartial observer and sometimes wide elements in society. Accordingly, each participant is affected differently. A transgressor may experience, guilt, shame or self condemnation; the transgressor experiences different processes, from apology and offering restitution to

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accepting or not accepting forgiveness. The offended on the other hand, experiences the damage from the transgression and may overlook the transgressor's attempts to make amends or to discount the cost of apologizing. The offended may respond in anger, fear and resentment. Personality attributes of both the transgressor and transgressed affect how they deal with the transgression. Hoyt et al. (2005) argues that situational and relational factors as well as the characteristics of the offender and nature of offense play important role in people's willingness to forgive.

Emotional Aspects of Forgiveness

Another distinctive perspective evident in literature is the process of, or the resulting emotions of, the forgiving party. Based on the experiences of the offended after forgiveness, it is classified as either "true" forgiveness or "false" forgiveness — pseudo-forgiveness (Baumeister, Exline, & Sommer, 1999; Enright & The Human Development Study Group, 1991; McCullough & Worthington, 1994; Vitz & Mango, 1997). For example, Baumeister et al. (1999) describes two dimensions of forgiveness: intrapsychic and interpersonal. The former involves the emotional and cognitive aspects of forgiveness, and the latter involves social or behavioral aspects. Whereas "total forgiveness" requires the presence of both dimensions, "hollow forgiveness" (or pseudo-forgiveness) is characterized as the interpersonal act in the absence of the intrapsychic state. For example, the transgressed may verbally express forgiveness to the offender, but may continue to resent and feel hurt. However, Zechmeister and Romero (2002) argue that rather than conceptualizing forgiveness as either total or hollow, a process approach characterizes individuals' progress in stages of forgiveness. Because sometimes the

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transgressed may have anger after stating that they forgive, but it may mean that they are in the beginning stages of forgiving. Similarly, lay people perceive that it is possible to be simultaneously angry and forgiving and it is not necessary to forget the hurt when an offense is forgiven (Kanz, 2000). It is suggested that continued anger at the offense, rather than the offender, may protect individuals from additional harm (Zechmeister & Romero, 2002).

Forgiveness and Reconciliation

There is disagreement about the relationship between forgiveness and reconciliation. Some scholars define forgiveness as an unconditional act which occurs independently from the remorseful or repentant actions of the offender, controlled exclusively by the offended (Baumeister, Exline, & Sommer, 1999; Enright & Fitzgibbons, 2000; Enright & The Human Development Study Group, 1991; Enright et. al, 1992). Herman (1992), on the other hand, states that even divine forgiveness in most religious systems is not unconditional; forgiveness cannot happen unless the offender seeks and earns it through some actions like confession, repentance and restitution. Although there are different perspectives on what forgiveness is, most scholars agree on the assumption that forgiveness is a pro-social change; when people forgive their feelings, behaviors, and thoughts about the offender become more positive or less negative (McCullough, 2005).

With numerous perspectives of forgiveness in the literature it is important to find out how lay people conceptualize forgiveness. In a study by Mullet, Gerard and Bakhshi (2004), only a minority of subjects conceptualized forgiveness as presupposing regaining

affection or sympathy toward the offender. This conceptualization does not support

prevailing scholars' (Enright & Fitzgibbons, 2000; Subkoviac, Enright, et. al 1995)

definition in literature. Overallm Mullet et al.'s (2004) study shows that forgiveness is

conceptualized as an intrapersonal process which involves the forgiver and not

necessarily the offender. This is consistent with the definition offered by McCullough,

Pargament, and Thorensen (1999). Similar to Mullet et al.'s (2004) study, Hewstone et al,

(2004) conducted a focus group and the results show that participants conceptualize

forgiveness as related with compassion, mercy, humanity and empathy, which is very

similar with the definition accepted by the majority of scholars (Enright et al., 1991) of

forgiveness in the literature.

Although there are different opinions on what forgiveness is and what it is not,

researchers are in agreement on the core elements of forgiveness. Specifically, it is

agreed that forgiveness does not imply forgetting or excusing offenses, and forgiveness

does not necessarily imply trust (Hewstone et al., 2004). Some researchers have argued

that forgetting past offenses may actually place individuals at risk (e.g., Fow, 1996;

Freedman, 1998). Forgiveness is giving up the rights of resentment, or even seeking

justice. There are also limits to what people can forgive. Whether forgiveness is limited

by the offender's acts or everything can be forgiven is still debatable in the literature

(Worthington, 2005). Despite the fact that there are differences in opinions or definitions

of forgiveness, almost all agree with this conceptualization; when people forgive, their

responses become more positive and/or less negative

Forgiveness and Related Health Factors

Forgiveness and Mental Health

Forgiveness is generally seen as something an offended party does for themselves. Many benefits of forgiveness have been documented and discussed in the literature. Forgiveness brings back a sense of self-worth and self-respect (Mclernon et al., 2004) and sense of control (Baucom & Epstein, 1990). Other benefits of forgiveness includes psychological and spiritual growth; reduction of negative emotions such as sadness, anger, or anxiety; ability to let go of the past and get on with life; cessation of hurtful behaviors; increase in ability to reestablish or build new relationships; and transcendence (Hope, 1987; McCullough & Worthington, 1994; Rosenak & Harnden, 1992). According to a number of scholars and researchers (Conrad, 1985; Doka, 1993; Kemp, 1994; Messenger & Roberts, 1994), forgiveness may also lead to a more accepting and peaceful death, help solidify a sense of meaning in life, help restore healthy relationships, and promote serenity in the dying process. In several studies that focused on forgiveness as a psychotherapeutic goal in healthy adults, a variety of positive responses were obtained, such as lower anxiety and depression and higher hope and self-esteem (Al-Mabuk, Enright, & Cardis, 1995; Freedman & Enright, 1996; Hebl & Enright, 1993). Therefore, forgiveness benefits the forgiver, both in terms of mental health and physical health and also it is beneficial for the relationship between the offender and the offended (Exline & Baumeister, 2000). Forgiveness is also found to be linked to a greater sense of self acceptance and purpose in life and less anxiety and depressive symptoms (Aschleman, 1996). Similarly it is reported that forgiving individuals have greater satisfaction with life

(Poloma & Callup, 1991) and higher well being (Karremans, Van Lange, Ouwerkerk, & Kluwer, 2003) than their unforgiving counterparts. As one can expect, forgiveness is also reported to be highly correlated with relationship satisfaction (McCullough et al., 1998; Nelson, 1993; Rackley, 1993; Woodman, 1991),

Forgiveness and Physical Health

Witvliet, Ludwig, and Vander Laan (2001) studied direct impact of forgiveness on health. In their study they asked participants to imagine forgiving a real life event and assessed their heart rate and blood pressure for cardiovascular functioning and skin conductance levels, and corrugator electromyogram for sympathetic nervous system functioning. The results show that forgiveness improves cardiovascular sympathetic nervous system functioning. Their results show that during the experience of unforgiveness, body responses are so negative; if unforgiveness is chronic it can seriously impact physical health negatively. Lawler, Younger, Piferi, and Jones (2000) monitored physiological reactions of participants who have forgiven and who have not forgiven their partners in close relationships. Participants who have forgiven had shown lower physiological reactivity. Lawler and colleagues (2000) argue that when people remember and discuss forgiven offenses, there is less cardiovascular reactivity than when they remember and talk about unforgiven offenses. Huang and Enright (2000) studied the emotional reactivity of people who had forgiven interpersonally. They divided the participants in two groups: participants who report forgiveness out of religious obligation and participants who report forgiveness out of love. The ones who forgave out of love showed lower elevations in systolic and diastolic blood pressure. Supporting the above

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findings, it is found that a chronic state of forgiveness is associated with negative health outcomes (Berry & Worthington, 2001). Berry and Worthington (2001) compared dispositionally forgiving and unforgiving participants in happy and unhappy relationships. Participants were asked to imagine scenes that were typical of their relationship. Researchers assessed the stress reactions by sampling salivary cortisol levels. This study shows that forgiving and unforgiving dispositions are related to quality of relationship, stress of remembering typical events of a stressful relationship and physical and mental health. Specifically, the researchers in this study found that participants who were not happy in their relationships showed an elevated stress response and worse physical and mental health compared with participants in happy relationships and dispositional forgivingness predicted relationship satisfaction. Seybold, Hill, Neumann and Chi (2001) studied psycho-physiological variables with forgiveness. Their results show that forgiveness is negatively relates alcohol and cigarette use. On the other hand people reported more forgiveness tendencies reported lower anxiety, anger and depression, lower hematocrit and white blood cell counts, and higher TxPA levels. Krause Ellison (2003) studied forgiveness in elder population and found that there is a relationship between forgiveness, psychological well-being, depressive symptoms, life satisfaction and death anxiety. Thoresen, Harris and Luskin (2000) also suggests an indirect link between forgiveness and physical well-being, suggesting that forgiveness may increase optimism, hope, self-efficacy, perceived social and emotional support and increase in connection with spirituality and God that all these factors will improve physical health. Although there are limited studies showing direct link of forgiveness to

physical health; these studies provide evidence that forgiveness lead to less stress and anger related shows that cardiovascular and neuroendocrine reactivity (Bono and McCullough, 2006). The relationship between health, well-being and forgiveness can be explained by negative emotional states deter immunological and cardiovascular functioning (McCraty, Atkinson, Tiller, Rein, & Watkins, 1995).

<center>Interpersonal and Intergroup Forgiveness</center>

Most of the research on forgiveness focuses on interpersonal dynamics of forgiveness. However, only recently forgiveness has been considered in the context of sociopolitical intergroup relationships. Intergroup forgiveness is generally more complicated, since it includes a group of offenders and a group of offended party. In some ethnic conflict situations it is hard to distinguish victim from the offender because they both are the victims of societal violence. Therefore, the nature of intergroup conflict makes intergroup forgiveness very complicated. Cairns, Tam, Hewstone, and Niens (2005) stated that it should not be unexpected to find "*we* are reluctant to forgive *them*".

There are different ideas in literature regarding the relational nature of forgiveness, whether forgiveness is a dyadic process which only involves a known offender and victim, or a process that can happen between a single person and group. McCullough, Pargament, and Thoresen (2000) suggest the idea that forgiveness can be applied to offenses carried out by a group of people. Others believe that forgiveness can be made on behalf of somebody else, which is called as secondary forgiveness (Enright & Fitzgibbons, 2000). It is believed in the literature that the forgiver can be the offended

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person or somebody in close relationship with him/her like a family member (Bakhshi , 2004; Katz, Street, & Arias, 1997; Mullet & Girard, 1999). Similarly Andrews (2000) argues that states can offer amnesty to perpetrators of criminal deeds, but they cannot offer forgiveness.

The forgiven party in the dyad can be a known or an unknown offender or an abstract institution like a Church or government (Denton & Martin, 1998; Mullet, Girard & Arias, 1997; Mullet, Gerard & Bakhshi, 2004). It is important to note that in order to forgive the whole organization one needs to put a name and a face on the organization, and in trying to forgive him/her, like putting the president's face to forgive the government (Smedes, 1996). Otherwise it is not possible to forgive the whole organization.

Intergroup forgiveness differs from interpersonal forgiveness in many aspects. For example, one of the conditions that increase the likelihood of forgiveness is the cancellation of consequences; specifically, people find it easier to forgive if the consequences of the harmful act disappear with time (Enright, Santos & Al-Mabuk, 1989). However, in intergroup-interethnic conflict situations, generally consequences continue to happen. Private-public dimension is another difference between the two. Forgiveness is considered as a private personal transaction; however, intergroup forgiveness is public, political and social (Hewstone et al., 2004). Severity of the offense is another factor that determines the likelihood of forgiveness (Azar & Mullet, 2001). Offenses against groups of people are more likely to be perceived as more severe (Tyler et al., 1997), which may make intergroup forgiveness more difficult. In addition, the

offended group may disagree on whether or not to forgive (Hewstone et al., 2004). In intergroup forgiveness situations, the relationship between forgiveness and reconciliation is usually conceptualized as one following the other, with forgiveness constituting a necessary step to achieving reconciliation (Borris & Diehl, 1998). However, there is still disagreement in the literature regarding reconciliation as an element of forgiveness in interpersonal offenses.

There are limited studies in the literature focusing on intergroup forgiveness. Hewstone et al. (2004) has conducted a comprehensive focus group study on the intergroup forgiveness between Protestants and Catholics in Northern Ireland. One important theme that is found is that acknowledgement of the pain of a hurtful act and a public acknowledgement of the wrongdoing facilitates intergroup forgiveness. Participants also believed that forgiveness was easier when remorse was shown by perpetrators, remorse can lead to acceptance of the grievance and the offender's need to be forgiven, the important part is that participants stressed that this does not mean that the offender can be trusted again. Most importantly, participants agreed that it was easier to forgive a person than to forgive a group because it was easier to trust an individual. Trusting a group means extending that trust to each individual member of the group, and not all members may be represented by the spokesperson. Participants stressed that forgiving a group who had wronged them might imply that the wrongs which were done to them were justified. Lastly, it was stressed by the participants that preaching forgiveness or trying to force the acceptance of it would be counter productive.

Another study again focuses on the intergroup forgiveness in Northern Ireland (McLernon et al., 2004). The results of this study shows that perceived degree of hurt from the other group in conflict (Protestants), not necessarily the type of injury predicts forgiveness. Participants who reported high levels of hurt were reportedly less likely to forgive the offender than those who felt that they have suffered less severely. It is important to note that the perception of hurt may not correspond with the actual severity of attack. Another interesting finding is that length of time the injury had occurred significantly correlated only with the emotional aspect of the forgiveness; participants who suffered more recently are less likely to experience emotional forgiveness of the perpetrator.

Wohl and Branscombe, (2005) conducted four experiments to assess the collective guilt assignment and forgiveness of the historical perpetrator. In the first experiment, when human level identity was salient, Jewish participants were less likely to assign collective guilt and more willing to forgive Germans for the Holocaust than they were when social identity was salient. Besides, when the harmful action were perceived as relatively unique to Germans, the actions were not forgiven, but when genocide was seen as pervasive across human societies, Jewish participants were more willing to forgive contemporary Germans. In another experiment, they showed that placing the harm committed in the past in a broader historical context can lead the victimized group to be more willing to forgive contemporary Germans. Similar with these results, when Native Canadians categorized White Canadians at the human level of identity, forgiveness was increased and collective guilt assignment decreased.

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A quasi-experimental study was conducted by Azar et al. (1999) among religious groups in the Lebanon. Their results suggest that the groups were able to accept some form of forgiveness. While the offender's group membership impacted the least on the propensity to forgiveness, a strong effect on forgiveness was observed for severity of consequences and apology offered by the offender.

Staub (2005) has studied the genocide and reconciliation after the mass violence in Rwanda. He argues that reconciliation after mass violence is difficult; however, it is essential to prevent future violence. Forgiveness is an important component for reconciliation in a society (Staub, 2005).

Forgiveness does not solely rely on the forgiver, it is transactional in nature. Therefore, in order for forgiveness to occur the offender has responsibilities; for example, literature suggests that apology, public acknowledgement of the hurtful act and remorse shown by the offender facilitates forgiveness (Hewstone, et al., 2004; Subkoviak, Enright, Wu, Gassin, Freedman, Olson, et al., 1995; Weiner, Graham, Peter & Zmuidinas, 1991). Cancellation of consequences is another condition for forgiveness to occur (Mclernon et al., 2004). Some authors believe that remorse is not enough for forgiveness because it is easy to fake, particularly if it offers the possibility of early release from prison or other punishment. Forgiveness is enhanced by the ability to understand the behavior of the offender and this understanding both creates and is dependent upon some level of trust between victim and the offender (Andrews, 2000). Therefore, in order to forgive, trust is necessary; in the absence of trust, forgiveness is more difficult.

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In order for forgiveness to be made, offenders must confess the acts they have committed, take responsibility for the suffering they have caused, and repent acknowledging one's responsibility in hurting others; this opens up the possibility of being forgiven (Andrews, 2000; Arminio, 2001). In general, the more responsible an individual is perceived for the offense, the greater the negative feelings directed toward that person and when an individual confesses, accepting full responsibility and blame, the negative feelings directed toward that person are reduced (Anderson, Krull, & Weiner, 1996; Weiner, 1995). Confession (Andrews, 2000) and apology has also been reported as a facilitator for forgiveness (Cody & McLaughlin, 1990; Darby & Schlenker, 1989; Ohbuchi, Kameda, & Agarie, 1989); however, confession has been found to be the more effective method for altering the impressions of others (Felson & Ribner, 1981; Hale, 1987), therefore more effective for forgiveness.

The perception of the intentionality of the offense is a factor that affects forgiveness; intentional offenses are less likely to be forgiven (Boon & Sulsky, 1997). Offense severity is another factor in forgiveness; more severe offenses are perceived as more unjust and make it more difficult to forgive (Hill, Exline & Cohen, 2005). However, it is important to note that it is the perception of the severity of offense which determines forgiveness (Hewstone et al., 2004)

Political Forgiveness

Lately, the term political forgiveness has emerged in psychology and political science (Shriver, 1995) suggesting that forgiveness not just an interpersonal personal

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matter, but also can be a way of facing social and political conflicts. Political forgiveness is described as a process in which the offended party relieves a debt; however, this release does not depend on the emotional or internal states of the forgiver but it simply is that the forgiver does not get what is owed (Digeser, 2001). This is the main difference between the definitions of interpersonal and political forgiveness since interpersonal forgiveness studies mainly look at the internal dynamics of the forgiver. Some other differences between interpersonal and political forgiveness were well described by Digeser (2001). In interpersonal forgiveness, the forgiver lets go of the negative emotions (Enright et al 2001); it is an internal motivation or a process. On the other hand, political forgiveness must be public; in other words, the forgiven party receives and understands that the debt is forgiven and accepts the invitation to restore a relationship. Rodden (2003) argues that forgiveness is a way to help individuals to break from their past and continues that forgiveness is most effective when it is initiated by the perpetrators, rather than demanded by the offended parties. This characteristic distinguishes political forgiveness in that the offender has an important role in the dynamic. Although forgiveness and reconciliation has been discussed in literature, the general acceptance is forgiveness does not have to go with reconciliation (Enright 1996, 2001); in political forgiveness, reconciliation between the parties is necessary (Digeser, 2001)

Daye (2004) suggests that when forgiveness is moved to the sociopolitical area, forgiveness becomes more complicated. Although political forgiveness shows the same core characteristics of interpersonal forgiveness, there are more elements of status in political forgiveness. Daye's (2004) political forgiveness model includes five elements.

These elements are not conceptualized as stages or steps because to a limited extent the order is pretty flexible. Political forgiveness starts with truth telling and ends with forgiveness; however, the middle acts are flexible. The elements of political forgiveness are: (a) truth telling where harm done is articulated, this is a very important step; any rush would diminish the process of forgiveness. The most important element of this step is to give victims voice; (b) apology and the claiming of responsibility is a process where trust is earned. However, this is an unstable process especially in large scale offenses because it is impossible to expect all transgressors or collaborators would step forward and apologize. Therefore, if a leader steps forward and apologizes, it makes the process easier; (c) building a transitional justice framework this process involves the implementation of processes of both retributive and restorative justice. In specific, it involves the punishment of those who have committed crimes and involves attempts to compensate victims; (d) finding ways to heal, especially in large scale human rights violations the whole society is wounded and therapy is necessary to heal the trauma and empower individuals and society through various means such as repairing socioeconomic systems; (e) embracing forgiveness is the last step and involves reformation of whole communities. It is a process when individuals reestablish their identities and revise their narratives of who they are and who their friends and enemies are. This is possible by influential leaders who change these symbol systems from enmity to affinity.

Digeser (2001) conceptualizes different forms of political forgiveness; in many-to-one form of forgiveness, a group forgives an individual; this form of forgiveness happens when governments pardons individuals. One-to-many forgiveness takes place

when an individual forgives a group; for example, individual citizens forgiving a government. A third type of political forgiveness is one-to-one forgiveness; where an individual citizen forgives another citizen publicly. The final type of forgiveness is many-to-many, when a group forgives another group. From this conceptualization, this study seeks to understand *many-to-many, one-to-many* and *one-to-one* types of forgiveness.

The tensions among different national, cultural or geographic groups have been carried by generations. It is believed that memories play a more profound role in community and international relations than is generally recognized (Lampman & Shattuck, 1999). Shriver (1995) asserts that memories of the past keep haunting current politics and social and political forms of forgiveness can help to stop harm or aid in healing the harm. Similarly, Rodden (2003) states that forgiveness is a rarely taken step in politics to break the cycle of conflict. Conflict among groups of people has existed historically and will keep existing for many years. Conflicts, oppression, and discrimination among groups of people trigger a variety of negative attitudes and reactions toward out-group-members (Reed & Aquino, 2003).

Universally, conflict among nations or groups of people in those nations creates hostility, prejudice or even wars. In the international arena, conflict can be resolved at the macro level between the governments and politicians; however, byproducts of conflict such as prejudices, hostile attitudes, and stereotypes may still exist and affect the group's behavior (Ben-Ari, 2004). Ben-Ari and Amir (1988) provides example of Israel and Egypt, although they have signed a peace treaty, mutual prejudice between these nations still continues. This information provides the insight that solving conflict on a macro

level between the politicians does not provide a holistic solution for the conflict, the programs or interventions needed for interpersonal and intergroup attitudes (Ben-Ari, 2004). Ben-Ari, (2004) provides examples of how historical memories affect people's interethnic or international behaviors. The Muslim world's response to Bush's use of word "crusade" is one example of it. Similarly, Hindu-Muslim conflict in India or uneasy relations between Turkey and Greece takes its roots from thousands of years ago. Today, political science has efforts to collaborate with psychology and there are efforts to bring resolution to such conflicts with forgiveness in political arena. One successful resolution brought by forgiveness is the establishment of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission to heal the nation's wounds from apartheid in South Africa (Daye, 2004). Conflicts and tension among ethnic, racial, and religious groups have been a foundation of deep concern for many nations worldwide (Weiner, 1998). However, it is important to note that political forgiveness does not bring sweetness and softness to politics; there are unforgivable acts and political forgiveness is most helpful when the limits of justice is achieved or providing justice is impossible (Digester, 2001).

The Relationship between White and Black Americans

Historically, the relationship between African Americans and White Americans has been highly negative because of the long history of wrongdoings such as enslavement, segregation, oppression and racism. The long history of segregation between Black and White Americans has resulted in weak relationships and mistrust.

Racial segregation, which still remains high and relatively constant (Massey & Denton, 1993), is one factor that shows the current tension between these groups. Jackman and Crane (1986) asserts that physical separation of Blacks and Whites is a characteristic of racial relations in the United States that only a very limited number of minority White Americans could rightly claim that "some of their best friends" are Black.

Today, the tension can be observed in the relationships of Black and White Americans. For example, there are negative attitudes toward interracial friendships (Sherman, 1990), interracial dating (Johnson & Ogasawara. 1988), and interracial marriage (Davidson, 1992; Davidson & Schneider, 1992; Dunleavy, 2004). Trust is necessary to develop long term positive relations and forgiveness. However, distrust is one of the major characteristics of racial relations in the United States (Dovidio, Kawakami & Gaertner, 2002). For example, Anderson (1996) states that the majority of Black Americans have a profound distrust for the police and legal system, and some are overtly distrustful of White Americans in general.

It has been documented in the social psychology literature that intergroup contact can improve intergroup relations that can lead to less prejudice (Allport, 1954; Brewer & Brown, 1998; Pettigrew & Tropp, 2000; Plant & Devine, 2003). However, interracial contact between African and White Americans is very limited. In fact, Black and White Americans are the two groups with the greatest social distance and spatial separation. Despite the efforts to increase diversity, an example of racial separation is observed in college campuses (Buttny, 1999). On campuses, African Americans show greater social distance and express more negative affect to those outside of their racial group than do

Caucasians (Brigham, 1993). Racial tension and conflict have also been reported on many college campuses (Fisher & Hartmann, 1995). Similarly, Littleford, O'Dougherty Wright, and Maria Sayoc-Parial (2005) examined same-sex dyadic interactions between White, White and Black, and White and Asian American college students. Their study showed that Whites experienced greater discomfort with ethnic minority partners than with White partners. Moreover, they reported significantly less comfort associated with interacting with Asian or Black students as friends, roommates, dating partners, classmates, and the like than with White students.

Interracial intimate relationships are another indicator of racial segregation, social distance (Qian, 1999), and persistent social stigmatization attached to these relationships (Lewandowski & Jackson, 2001; Rockquemore & Brunsma, 2002). However, in the U.S., interracial marriages are still not common (Davidson, 1992; Moran, 2001; Porterfield, 1982) and they occur less frequently than interethnic or interfaith marriages (Qian, 1999, Tucker & Mitchell-Kernan, 1990). It has been found that interracial couples that included an African American were perceived as less compatible than were those that included an Asian American. Additionally, it has been reported that White Americans found it more difficult to imagine themselves married to an African American than to an Asian American (Lewandowski & Jackson, 2001).

Even if Black-White interracial marriages occur, they engender problems associated with racist attitudes and perceived relational inappropriateness (Hibbler & Shinew, 2002; Lewandowski & Jackson, 2001). Hibbler and Shinew (2002) found that Black-White couples reported experiencing racist treatment in the form of stares,

comments, refusal of service, or overt hostility while attempting to participate in family leisure activities. Their familial relationships are also affected or severed as a result of prejudicial attitudes (Hegar, 1994; Solsberry, 1994).

Interestingly, some theories suggest that individuals who choose to marry interracially have ulterior motives that may be hidden or even unconscious in nature. Rather than explaining the relationship by love, choice, or compatibility like same race marriages, these theories argue that pathological deviance or abnormal level of rebellion causes interracial marriages (Porterfield, 1982), which becomes the prime example of negative attitudes toward interracial marriages.

Another indicator of quality of interracial relationships is racial segregation Massey and Hajnal (1995) found that today the level of segregation has changed. In the beginning of the century, Black Americans were segregated from White Americans at the state and county levels; however, today, this original system of macro level segregation is replaced with the micro level segregation. More specifically, first segregation happened at the state and county levels, then at the neighborhood level, and most recently at the municipal level (Massey & Hajnal, 1995). They argue that since the early twentieth century, segregation patterns in the US have consistently evolved to satisfy one overriding principle, the minimization of Black-White contact. Today, in some places, the residential segregation is so high, it is characterized as a pattern of hypersegregation where Blacks and Whites have no contact with one another in their own neighboring communities (Denton, 1994). Massey and Denton (1993) calls this residential pattern in the U.S. a system of "American Apartheid" and they explain the main difference between

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the U.S. and South Africa. In South Africa, segregation was reached by laws which forced Blacks into rural areas and urban satellite communities; in the U.S., however, it was reached by institutionalized discrimination in real estate and banking industries, racially biased public policies, and persistent prejudice among Whites.

There are different explanations of racial segregation. One perspective explains it with discriminatory practices in the marketing of real estate (Massey & Denton, 1993; Yinger, 1995, 1998). Another view suggests that it is the preferences of both African and White Americans (Patterson, 1997). However, Farley, Fielding and Krysan (1997) found out that African Americans prefer 50-50 areas, a density far too high for most Whites. This study shows that the preference to live separately is driven by fears of White hostility. Racial segregation is also very much related with racism because the more that Blacks and Whites tend to live in different places, the fewer interests they share and the easier and more efficient racial subordination becomes (Massey & Hajnal, 1995).

Whatever the reason is, the point is Whites and Blacks are still segregated; whether it is preference or not, these groups do not live together. It is obvious that there are some psychological factors that hinder the relationship between White and African Americans. It is possible that forgiveness or lack of it is part of the problem.

Racial prejudice is another longstanding problem in U.S. There are some stereotypes of prejudices towards African Americans. Black Americans are not seen as intelligent or friendly as Whites (von Hippel, Silver, & Lynch, 2000); and are seen as less industrious and moral (Devine, 1989). The contemporary theories of racism aversive racism (Dovidio & Gaertner, 1998; Frey & Gaertner, 1986), ambivalent racism (Katz,

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1981; Katz, Cohen, & Glass, 1975), symbolic racism (Sears, 1988, 1998), and modern

racism (McConahay, 1986) suggest that today racism is expressed in more subtle or

indirect ways because there are social norms which are against direct expressions of

prejudice. For example, Nail, Harton and Decker (2003) argue that symbolic-modern

racists would not publicly support segregation, but would express racism in more subtle

ways like opposing busing for elementary school pupils or opposing affirmative action.

In modern racism, they reconfigure their negative feelings toward African Americans into

attitudes about social policies and justifiable discrimination (Dovidio & Gearner,

Kawakami, & Hodson, 2002; Frey & Gaerttner, 1986). This form of racism

systematically damages race relations by fostering miscommunication and distrust.

Whether it is subtle or unconscious, it is clear that African Americans still suffer

from continuing racism (Axelson, 1985, Ezekiel, 1995; Hacker, 1992; Johnson,

Whitestone, Jackson, & Gatto, 1995; Schulman., Berlin., Harless, Kerner, Sistrunk.,

Gersh, et al., 1999; Vanman, Paul, Ito, & Miller, 1997), and oppression (Brancombe,

Schmitt & Harvey, 1995; Hughes & Hertel 1990; Keith and Herring, 1991). The

inequality between White and African Americans is observed in income (Beggs, 1995;

Beggs, Villemez, & Arnold, 1997; Cassirer, 1996; Fossett & Seibert 1997; McCall, 2001;

Rankin & Falk, 1991), occupational attainment (Burr, Omer & Mark, 1991; Perna 2001),

levels of employment (Tigges & Tootle 1993), and poverty rates (Tomaskovic-Devey &

Roscigno 1996).

The subtle forms of racism is resulted in development of different views on the

conditions of racial disparities and perceptions of their causes. Whites greatly

underestimate the existence of racial disparities (Blank, 2001; Morin, 2001). They also differ significantly in their perceptions of the prevalence and impact of discrimination on the well-being of Blacks. Generally, Blacks perceive racial discrimination to be more pervasive and damaging to Blacks than do Whites (Hochschild, 1995).

Dovidio et al. (2002) examined how interpersonal biases can contribute to the different perspectives of discrimination and ultimately to interracial distrust. They proposed that there are four aspects of contemporary prejudices held by Whites toward Blacks that contribute to the divergence of perceptions and interracial distrust: (a) Contemporary racism among Whites is subtle, (b) these racial biases are often unintentional and unconscious, (c) these biases influence the perceptions that Whites and Blacks have these same behaviors or events, and (d) these racial biases have different consequences on the outcomes for Blacks and Whites.

Clearly, the problem of race relations in the U.S. involves many dimensions such as intergroup contact, close and intimate relations, and prolonged history of oppression, discrimination and inequity in many arenas of life, continuum of segregation. Nevertheless, increasing an understanding of possible cause of these problems, lack of remorse and forgiveness may have the potential for creating more open, harmonious, and peaceful race relations in U.S.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This section describes the procedures that were used to investigate how intergroup forgiveness functions in the case of African Americans. In other words, it describes what variables contribute to forgiveness of historical and racial offenses. Research on intergroup forgiveness is scarce. This study intends to increase the knowledge on forgiveness in a diverse society with a history of oppression of a particular group. In particular, this study investigates the factors related to intergroup and interpersonal forgiveness. To this end a mixed method research methodology is used. Since there is less research around this topic, it is important to explore the processes of forgiveness by employing surveys and employing qualitative open ended responses. Mixed methods research is a procedure for collecting and analyzing both quantitative and qualitative data in a single study or in a series of studies (Creswell, 2003; Creswell, Plano Clark, Guttman, & Hanson, 2003; Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003). The aim of using mixed method is to take the strengths and minimize the weaknesses of both quantitative and qualitative methods in research studies (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). Specifically, in this study the data was collected quantitatively by surveys and questionnaires and qualitatively by asking a free response question to support and further explore the findings of the quantitative methods. For this reason, the specific mixed method procedure used in this study is characterized as a concurrent nested design

in which the qualitative phase is embedded within predominantly quantitative methods to confirm findings within a single study (Creswell et al., 2003).

Review of the Problem

Despite the efforts to improve the experiences of racial/ethnic minorities, race related difficulties continue to occur between minorities and White Americans. In the case of African Americans, studies shows that even during brief cross-racial interaction, African Americans and Whites commonly exhibit indications of racial discomfort and tension (Davis, Strube & Cheng 1995). The racial tension is evident between African and White Americans such that they live in racially separated areas with limited contact with each other (Massey & Denton, 1993) and intimate relationships are not common (Davidson, 1992; Dunleavy, 2004), racism continues to be an inescapable and painful reality of daily life for African Americans in the United States (Feagin, 1991; Feagin & Sikes, 1994; Landrine & Klonoff, 1996). Traditionally, it has been believed that such discomfort is merely a result of racist beliefs and attitudes held by members of such groups (Adorno, Frenkel- Brunswick, Levinson & Sanford, 1950). However, this racial discomfort may be the result of unforgiveness and unfinished business.

The purpose of this study is to investigate the absence or presence of forgiveness and the contributing factors for forgiveness of historical and current racial offenses.

Selection of the Sample

This study focuses on the predictor variables of forgiving historical or current racial offenses. One hundred forty seven (147) African American individuals have completed the surveys. The participants were recruited by sending an e-mail invitation describing the study and asking them to participate. The e-mail was sent to personal contacts at various universities such as Troy University–Montgomery, Alabama State University, University of South Alabama, and Clark Atlanta University, and they were also asked to pass the e-mail to students and colleagues who might be interested. The e-mail invitation was also sent to e-mail discussion groups and list-serves such as the Diverse-Grad list-serve, the list-serve of positive psychology, and the Holmes Scholars list-serve. After reading the consent, participants were asked to fill out an online survey. Only individuals who self-identified as African American were asked to participate. This racial self- identification was asked on the information sheet, and that those who identified as African Americans were then asked to proceed to the surveys.

The age of the participants ranged from 21 to 64 with the mean age of 34. Of the participants, 105 were females and 42 were males.

Measures

The Racism and Life Experiences Scales-Brief Version (RaLES-B: Harell, 1997) was used to assess racism-related experiences of the participants. The Trait Forgivingness Scale (TFS; Berry, Worthington, O'Connor, Parrott III, & Wade, 2004) was used to assess forgiveness as a personality trait. Surveys of Forgiveness of Historical Offenses

and Forgiveness of Current Offenses (developed by the researcher) were used to assess the individual's forgiveness-related responses regarding historical and current racial offenses. Besides demographic data, the survey was used to assess the participants' age and gender. The surveys of forgiveness include both Likert-type questions and an open-ended question. Participants were also asked to provide a free response to six forgiveness related terms (reparations, remorse, guilt, public apology, revenge, and trust).

Racism and Life Experiences Scales-Brief Version (RaLES-B)

One factor to determine the level of forgiveness of African Americans is their negative experiences as minorities. To assess their perceived experiences of racism the Racism and Life Experiences Scale–Brief version was used. The Racism and Life Experiences Scales–Brief Version (RaLES–B) was developed by Harell (1997). The Racism and Life Experiences Scale Scales (RaLES) are comprehensive set of scales designed to measure multiple dimensions of racism experiences (direct, vicarious, and collective) and associated constructs (reactions to racism, racism related coping styles). The scales were developed by Harell (1996) based on a model of racism and well-being. The current version of The RaLES consists of five primary racism-related stress scales; Racism Experiences, Daily Life Experiences, Perceived Influence of Race, Group Impact, and Life Experiences and Stress. Internal consistency, split half and test-retest reliability coefficients of full scale ranged from .69 to .96 suggesting moderate to excellent reliability. RaLES appears to be a promising instrument for assessing multiple dimensions of racism experiences. The brief version includes 9 questions; the questions cover the content of several of the subscales in a very general way. The brief scale is

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designed to be used as an overall indication of racism experience. Previous reliability and validity were not provided in the literature for the brief version. This is the first study to analyze the reliability of the RaLES–B. The Cronbach Alpha reliability is yielded as .80 in the study.

Trait Forgivingness Scale (TFS)

The Trait Forgivingness Scale (TFS) was developed by Berry, Worthington, O'Connor, Parrott III, and Wade (2004). Trait forgivingness is the disposition to forgive interpersonal transgressions over time and across situations. The TFS consists of 10 items which assess a person's self-appraisal of her or his tendency to forgive interpersonal transgressions. The 10-item TFS is a subset of a 15-items scale used by Berry and Worthington (2001). Four different studies yielded strong psychometric qualities. Cronbach's alpha coefficients were .80, .78, .79, and .74 for four pilot studies. Corrected item-total correlations for all items, across all studies, ranged from .30 to .63. In this current study the reliability coefficient was found as .33. Using a 10-item subset of the original 15-item scale might explain the relatively lower reliability yielded in this study.

Forgiveness for Historical Offenses–Intergroup Context

A Forgiveness for Historical Offenses Survey was developed by the researcher specifically for this study. The survey consists of questions which are designed to assess the required conditions for forgiveness (e.g., apology, remorse, and acknowledgement) as well as collective guilt assignment and trust towards contemporary White Americans. The questions were adapted from Hewstone and Cairns' (2004) study on intergroup forgiveness in Northern Ireland. The survey consists of sixteen items and respondents

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rate their attitude on a 5-point Likert scale (from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5)). Before administering the questionnaire, it was sent to five African American doctoral students to get an expert opinion and to avoid possible offensive language. In the questionnaire, two items assessed the same variable with a negative statement and were used to control deception. First the negative item was reverse-coded and averages of the two items were analyzed. The reliability coefficient of the survey yielded as.45.

Forgiveness for Current Offenses–Interpersonal Context

A Forgiveness for Historical Offenses Survey was also developed by the researcher specifically for this study. This is an eight item survey to assess participants' forgiveness for current racial offenses. The questions include the time of the offense, perceived degree of hurt, and the conditions for forgiveness such as whether the offense was intentional, the closeness of the relationship with the offender, apology, and remorse. Participants rated their responses on a 5-point Likert scale (from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5)). The Cronbach alpha for this survey was found as.52.

Free Response Items

In order to collect qualitative data to explore participants conceptualization of forgiveness related terms, participants were asked to respond freely to the terms of reparations, remorse, guilt, public apology, revenge, and trust.

Variable Selection

The purpose of this study is to find the contributing factors of forgiveness for historical and current racial offenses. In order to examine the contributing factors for

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forgiveness, forgiveness as a personality trait was controlled. For forgiving historical racial offenses participants were asked sixteen questions in order to determine the required conditions for forgiveness. Forgiving historical racial offenses was measured in two levels, group and individual. The group level is when an individual thinks about forgiveness as a group, whether or not African Americans have forgiven, and at the individual level, the extent to which an individual forgives historical racial offenses as an individual. These two levels of forgiveness were analyzed as dependent variables. Beliefs about apology, seeking forgiveness, trust, acknowledgement of the wrongdoing, and collective guilt assignment were analyzed as independent variables to influence forgiveness at the individual and group levels.

For forgiveness of current racial offenses, the perception of degree of hurt, the time passed from the offense, the perception of the intentionality of the offense, the closeness to the offender, apology, remorse, and taking responsibility for the offense were analyzed as contributing factors for forgiving current racial offenses. Additionally, the relationship between forgiving historical and current racial offenses was explored. Also forgiveness as a personality trait and participants' experiences of racism-related events were explored.

Data Analysis

The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) data analysis system was used to analyze the data. In order to address the research questions (investigating the effects of selected variables on forgiveness), a stepwise multiple regression method was

performed, with controlling forgiveness as a personality trait. Stepwise multiple regression is a method used to determine the utility of a set of predictor variables (contributors of forgiveness, perceptions of offender behaviors, perceived degree of discrimination) for predicting another important event (forgiveness). The greater potential predictive power of multiple regression is seen through the absolute level of multiple predictors which is most likely better than any one of the predictors taken by itself (Licht, 1995). In order to determine the gender differences, a t-test statistical method was employed. To assess the relationship between racism-related experiences and forgiveness and the relationship between forgiveness of historical and current racial offenses a correlation analysis was used. In order to explore participants' conceptualizations of forgiveness-related terms the thematic analysis was employed by looking for recurring themes within the responses. Thematic analysis is a method for identifying, analyzing and reporting patterns or themes within data. It is a method used to organize and describe the data set in a rich detail (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

IV. RESULTS

Analysis Procedure

In order to answer the research questions, the data analyses was carried on in five steps. In the first analysis, the predictors of forgiving historical racial offenses were analyzed by using a step-wise regression method. In this analysis, forgiveness as a personality trait was controlled. In the second analysis, the predictors of forgiving current racial offenses were analyzed by using a stepwise regression method. Again in this method forgiveness as a personality trait was controlled. The third aim of this research was to determine whether experiences of racism and forgiving historical and current racial offenses were correlated. This portion of study was explored via correlation. Then in the fourth step, the gender differences were explored on the variables of experiences of racism and forgiveness. The last portion of the study is qualitative in nature; in this section the participants were asked to respond to some forgiveness-related terms. Their responses were coded to provide a better light to the questions under investigation. This qualitative portion of the data was analyzed by employing thematic analysis. The quantitative data was analyzed using SPSS (version 11.0), the analysis included Pearson correlation coefficients for independent and dependent variables, stepwise regression analysis to see the effect of independent variables on the dependent variable by controlling for a personality trait, and a t-test to see the gender differences.

Results

Research Question 1: When forgiveness as a personality trait is controlled for, which specified variables will show a significant association to belief in African American's forgiveness of historical racial offenses when forgiveness?

Stepwise regression analysis was performed to see the contribution of twelve independent variables (age, remorse, collective guilt assignment, trust-personal level, reparations, acknowledgement, trust- group level, seeking forgiveness, apology, revenge, religion and perceiving racial/ethnic offenses as a global human act) on beliefs in African American's forgiveness of historical racial offenses by controlling the personality trait of forgiveness (forgivingness). The questions for independent variables can be seen in Appendix B. The dependent variable was assessed through responding to the following statement "African Americans have forgiven whites for the past mistreatments". The participants rated their responses on a Likert scale from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). Since the personality factor of forgiveness is controlled for in this study, the forgivingness variable was entered first into the regression and then other independent variables were introduced.

Results indicate that forgivingness (β=.091, p=.252) does not have significant contribution to the dependent variable. The R^2 was .356 indicating that this set of independent variables explained 35% of the variance in dependent variable. The analysis of variance table for this regression (Table 1) shows that this set of independent variables had very high significant effects on the dependent variable (p = 0.0000). Results indicate that the remorse (β =.262, p=.001), reparations (β =.218, p=.019), seeking forgiveness (β

=.271, p=.001), and religion (β = .291, p=.001) variables contributed significantly to the variance explained the belief in African American's forgiving historical offenses. Religion made the highest contribution in explaining 29% of the belief on whether or not African Americans have forgiven historical racial offenses. Trust on group level (β =.-151, p=.066) and apology (β = -.176, p=.071) have approached significance in explanation of the dependent variable.

Table 1

Analysis of Variance Table for the Regression of Belief on African Americans'

Forgiveness of Historical Racial Offenses

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	63.615	12	5.301	6.174	.000
Residual	115.052	134	.859		
Total	178.667	146			

Table 2

Summary of the Results of the Stepwise Regression Dependent Variable on Independent Variables

	Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	Beta		
Age	.026	.330	.742
Remorse	.262	3.261	.001
Collective Guilt Assignment	-.114	-1.394	.165
Trust- Personal Level	-.038	-.434	.665
Reparations	.218	2.370	.019
Acknowledgement	.045	.484	.629
Trust-Group Level	-.151	-1.851	.066
Seeking Forgiveness	.271	3.433	.001
Apology	-.176	-1.818	.071
Revenge	-.117	-1.470	.144
Religion	.291	3.283	.001
Offenses as global human act	.029	.327	.744

Research Question 2: When forgiveness as a personality trait is controlled for, which specified variables will show a significant association to one's forgiveness of historical racial offenses?

To answer this question, a stepwise regression analysis was performed. In this question the contribution of the same twelve independent variables (age, remorse, collective guilt

assignment, trust-personal level, reparations, acknowledgement, trust- group level, seeking forgiveness, apology, revenge, religion, and perceiving racial/ethnic offenses as a global human act) on the dependent variable (one's forgiveness of historical racial offenses) were explored. The dependent variable was assessed by a separate question: "As an individual to what extent have you forgiven White Americans for past mistreatments?" The participants rated their responses either as not at all, trying to forgive or complete forgiveness. Again in this analysis personality factor (forgivingness) is controlled for; it was entered first into the regression, and then all the independent variables were introduced.

The results show that forgivingness does not have a significant contribution to the dependent variable (β =-.055, p=.493) indicating that the contribution of independent variables on dependent variable is free from the effects of personality differences. The R^2 was .354 indicating that this set of independent variables explained 35% of the variance in the dependent variable. The analysis of variance table for this regression (Table 3) shows that this set of independent variables had a very high significant effect on the dependent variable (p = 0.0000).

Table 3

Analysis of Variance Table for the Regression Forgiving Historical Racial Offenses

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	20.527	12	1.711	6.110	.000
Residual	37.514	134	.280		
Total	58.041	146			

Results indicate that five variables have a significant impact on participants' forgiving historical racial offenses. The variables which contributed significantly to the variance in the dependent variable are acknowledgement (β =.241, p=.010), trust- group level (β =-.185, p=.026), apology (β =.-.255, p=.010), revenge (β = .171, p=.033), and religion (β =.294, p=.001). Again in this analysis, religion made the highest contribution in explaining 29% of the forgiveness of historical racial offenses.

Table 4

Summary of the Results of the Stepwise Regression of Forgiving Historical Offenses on Independent Variables

	Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	Beta		
Age	.113	1.409	.161
Remorse	-.134	-1.668	.098
Collective Guilt Assignment	-.078	-.953	.343
Trust-Personal Level	-.088	-.998	.320
Reparations	-.085	-.926	.356
Acknowledgement	.241	2.618	.010
Trust-Group Level	-.185	-2.255	.026
Seeking Forgiveness	.070	.892	.374
Apology	-.255	-2.627	.010
Revenge	.171	2.154	.033
Religion	.294	3.311	.001
Offenses as global human act	.078	.868	.387

Research Question 3: When forgiveness as a personality trait is controlled for, which specified variables will show a significant association to one's forgiveness of current racial offenses?

In this analysis the contribution of nine independent variables (age, time passed since the offense, apology, degree of hurt, intentionality, closeness to the offender, remorse, responsibility and trust) on forgiving current racial offenses was explored by using a stepwise regression analysis. Again, the personality factor of forgiveness of forgiveness (forgivingness) is controlled. It was entered first in the regression, and then all the independent variables were introduced.

The R^2 was .102 indicating that this set of independent variables explained 10% of the variance in the dependent variable. The analysis of variance table for this regression (Table 5) shows that this set of independent variables do not have a significant effect on the dependent variable ($p = .186$). On the other hand forgivingness has a significant contribution to the forgiveness of current racial offenses ($p = .049$).

Table 5

Analysis of Variance Table for the Regression of Forgiving Current Racial Offenses

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	2.317	1	2.317	3.960	.049
	Residual	77.242	132	.585		
	Total	79.560	133			
2	Regression	8.149	10	.815	1.404	.186
	Residual	71.410	123	.581		
	Total	79.560	133			

Model 1 Predictors: (Constant), Forgiveness as a Personality Trait

Model 2 (Constant), Forgiveness as a Personality Trait, Age, Time Passed Since the Offense, Apology,

Degree of Hurt, Intentionality, Closeness to Offender, Remorse, Responsibility, Trust

Stepwise regression analysis results indicate that only forgiveness as a personality trait (β =.171, p=.049) contributes significantly to the forgiveness of current racial offenses by explaining 17% of variance in the dependent variable. However, closeness to the offender (β =.220, p=.082) and trust (β =-.262, p=.052) has approached significance. Table 6 summarizes the results of the stepwise regression of the dependent variable on the independent variables.

Table 6

Summary of the Results of the Stepwise Regression of Forgiving Historical Offenses on

Independent Variables

Model		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		Beta		
1	(Constant)		2.293	.023
	Forgivingness	.171	1.990	.049
2	(Constant)		1.526	.129
	Age	-.003	-.033	.974
	Time Passed Since the Offense	.139	1.450	.150
	Apology	-.034	-.280	.780
	Degree of Hurt	.048	.480	.632
	Intentionality	-.003	-.027	.979
	Closeness to Offender	.220	1.755	.082
	Remorse	.057	.408	.684
	Responsibility	-.014	-.097	.923
	Trust	-.262	-1.959	.052

Research Question 4: Is there a relationship between experiences of racism and

forgiveness of historical racial offenses and forgiveness of current racial offenses?

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A Correlation coefficient was performed to see the relationship among the variables of experiences of racism, forgiveness of historical racial offenses, and forgiveness of current racial offenses. The results indicate that in general the racism-related life experiences variables are correlated with the individuals' belief in whether African Americans have forgiven historical offenses. These variables show a negative relationship with the belief in African Americans' forgiveness of historical racial offenses, meaning that as racist experiences increase, belief in African American's forgiveness decreases. Specifically, there is a positive relationship between individual's forgiveness of historical ($r = .258$, $p < .001$) and current racial offenses ($r = .248$, $p < .001$). Indicating that as the belief that African Americans have forgiven whites for past offenses increases; the individual's forgiveness of past and current offenses increases. There is a negative relationship between belief in African Americans' forgiveness of historical offenses and racism- related experiences such as racism experiences over the course of one's life time ($r = -.210$, $p < .005$) the belief that overall racism effects African Americans ($r = -.263$, $p < .001$), racism experiences of people who are close to the individual ($r = -.239$, $p < .001$), how African Americans are regarded in USA ($r = .512$, $p < .001$) and thinking about racism ($r = -.330$, $p < .001$).

For the individual's own forgiveness of historical offenses, it is found that there is a significant negative relationship between racism-related experiences and forgiving historical offenses. Specifically a negative relationship was found between one's forgiveness of historical racial offenses and racism-related experience during one's life time ($r = -.370$, $p < 0.001$), racism-related experiences during the past year ($r = -.193$, $p <$

0.005), racism experiences of people who are close to the individual (r = -.261, p<0.001), how African Americans are regarded in the United States (r = -.182, p < 0.005), hear event about racism (r = -.283, p < 0.001), thinking about racism (r= -.370, p < 0.001), stress racism caused individual's life time (r = -.376, p < 0.001), stress racism has caused over the past year (r= -.323, p < 0.001). The negative relationship indicates that as racism- related experiences increases individuals' forgiveness of historical offenses decreases.

Forgiveness of current racial offenses only correlates with racism experiences of people who are close to the individual (r = -.166, p < 0.005), how African Americans regarded in the United States (r = -.381, p < 0.001) and thinking about racism (r = -.297, p < 0.001). Results indicate that the less people think about racism, and the less racism is experienced by people who are close to them, and the more they think that African Americans are regarded negatively in the United States the less they tend to forgive current racial offenses. An overall summary of results of the correlation can be seen in Table 7.

Table 7

Correlations Among Racism and Life Experiences Variables and Forgiveness Variables

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1. Belief AA have forgiven											
2. forgiveness historical offenses	.258**										
3. forgiving current offenses	.248**	.382**									
4. racism during life time	-.210*	-. 370**	-.047								
5. racism during past year	-.041	-.193*	.095	.662**							
6. overall racism affects AA	-.263**	-.071	.038	.212**	.199*						
7. racism to close people	-.239**	-.261**	.166*	.539**	.514**	.317**					
8. how AA regarded in USA	-.512**	-.182*	-.381**	.262**	.064	.353**	.089				
9. hear about racism	.005	-.283**	.027	.528**	.400**	.170*	.283**	-.244**			
10. think about racism	-.330**	-.370**	-.297**	.553**	.387**	.166*	.238**	-.414**	.551**		
11. stress racism caused during lifetime	-.158	-.376**	-.138	.594**	.501**	.177*	.395**	-.217**	.450**	.676**	
12. stress racism caused past year	-.097	-.323**	-.022	.596**	.622**	.086	.424**	-.031	.324**	.417**	.653**

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Research Question 5: Is there a relationship between forgiveness of historical racial offenses and current racial offenses?

A correlation analysis was employed to answer this question. The results are shown in Table 7. The results indicate that there is a positive moderate relationship ($r = .382$, $p < 0.01$) between forgiveness of historical racial offenses and forgiveness of current racial offenses, suggesting that the more people have forgiven the historical offenses, the more they tend to forgive their experiences of current offenses.

Research Question 6: Is there difference between males and females forgiveness of historical and current racial offenses?

In order to explore the gender differences on forgiveness t-test analysis was employed. The descriptive statistics and t- test results are shown in Table 8. The results indicate that only gender difference was found on forgiving current experiences of racial offenses ($t = -4.88$, $p = .000$) indicating that males tend to forgive current offenses more than females. No difference was found for forgiveness of historical racial offenses.

Table 8

Means, Standard Deviation, and T-Test of Males and Females on Forgiveness Variables

Variables	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t-test	Sig.
Belief AA have forgiven	Female	105	2.5429	1.05638	.10309	-1.324	.188
	Male	42	2.8095	1.21451	.18740		
Forgiving historical offenses	Female	105	2.2000	.62634	.06112	.495	.621
	Male	42	2.1429	.64662	.09978		
Forgiving current offenses	Female	105	2.0000	.73380	.07161	-4.88	.000
	Male	42	2.6190	.58236	.08986		

Research Question 7: Is there difference between males and females on Racism and Experiences of Life Events?

In order to explore the gender differences on racist life experiences and perceptions a t-test analysis was performed. The descriptive statistics and t-test results for the variables are shown in Table 9. The results show that there is a gender difference on the experience of racism one's life time (t = -2.56, p = .011), experience of racism in the past year (t = -2.52, p = .013), racism experienced by people close to the participant (t = -.293, p=.004), and the stress racism has caused overall in their life time (t = -3.36, p = .001). The summary of the results is shown in Table 10. Results indicate that males experience more racism overall in their life time and the past year than females also they hear more about

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racism happening to people who are close to them and racism caused significantly more

stress within the last year for males than females.

Table 9

Means, Standard Deviation, and T-Test of Males and Females on Racism and Life

Experiences Variables

Variables	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t-test	Sig
racism during life time	Female	105	2.9429	.91807	.08959	-2.567	.011
	Male	42	3.3571	.79084	.12203		
racism during past year	Female	105	2.4286	1.09067	.10644	-2.522	.013
	Male	42	2.9524	1.24846	.19264		
overall racism affects AA	Female	105	4.2095	.67504	.06588	-.810	.419
	Male	42	4.3095	.68032	.10498		
racism to close people	Female	105	3.6286	.90146	.08797	-2.931	.004
	Male	42	4.0714	.60052	.09266		
how AA regarded in USA	Female	105	1.8667	.62121	.06062	-1.647	.102
	Male	42	2.0952	1.03145	.15916		
hear about racism	Female	105	3.1333	1.05672	.10313	-.423	.673
	Male	42	3.2143	1.02495	.15815		

(table continued)

Table 9 (continued)

Variables	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t-test	Sig
think about racism	Female	105	2.9333	1.12033	.10933	1.062	.290
	Male	42	2.7143	1.15369	.17802		
stress racism cused during lifetime	Female	105	2.8667	.92056	.08984	.054	.957
	Male	42	2.8571	1.07230	.16546		
stress racism caused past year	Female	105	2.4095	1.07144	.10456	-3.362	.001
	Male	42	3.0952	1.22593	.18917		

Qualitative Analyses

Participants were asked to provide free responses to six forgiveness-related terms. They are asked to respond to the statements as they think about past mistreatments of African Americans. It is believed that asking their thoughts on such words would provide a deeper understanding about how they perceive and conceptualize the historical racial offenses and their current attitudes towards the historical perpetrator. The terms are reparations, remorse, guilt, public apology, revenge, and trust. Thematic analysis was conducted by the researcher in order to analyze the participants' responses. Several interesting themes emerged from the responses.

Reparations

Most of the participants were in favor of reparations, 25% of participants responded that it should be given like it was given to Jewish and Japanese individuals,

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and 13% of them were in favor of reparations but found it impractical to pay, or they believed it would not change anything. Some examples of responses are;

"I am unsure how helpful and effective this would be for all individuals. Some may see it as a way to not have to think about the continued mistreatment and racism that exists even today"

"Not likely, but would indicate acceptance of some responsibility and remorse for the past and continued mistreatment."

"I think that reparations would be nice to receive. However, I dont believe that people would forgive "white's any faster by receiving reparations."

"There will never be enough, nor will whites allow there to be reparations for the past mistreatments of African Americans"

"Wouldn't do anything to change the power of white privilege"

"It's not as cut-and-dried as paying people for past misdeeds. there are a lot of things to consider, such as who determines who gets money, and how much."

"They are needed given that generational wealth and intuitional privileges have benefited whites since slavery while blacks have had to work twice as hard to get the same benefits as whites"

About 10% of participants reported that reparations should be made on systemic level.

"Reparations does not necessarily mean financial payback. Reparations can

be given in other forms i.e. better school systems, housing, and

medical care."

On the other hand 25% of the participants were against the reparations.

"An insult. No amount of money could compensate."

"What is that going to help now? It has already been done"

"Americans need some sort of vehicle to emotionally heal from the

aftermath of slavery. I am not sure if reparations can accomplish

that end."

"I think it is petty to ask for reparations from a group of people who weren't

around when slavery existed."

"Come on, can't we just move on."

Approximately six percent of the participants were undecided, 4 percent believed that it

has not been given to African Americans and approximately 14% of them reported that it

is never going to happen.

"it will never happen...there is no way to determine who should get

them...not all of us have been mistreated"

Remorse

Approximately 43% of the participants responded to this term as necessary,

10% of which reported that it needs to be genuine and 10% of which reported that

remorse should not be felt for the past. Some responses were:

"I only believe that remorse is necessary if the White persons family brags about being slave owners-I have experienced this."

"It is hard to feel remorse for something that was done before you were born"

"It would be nice if whites felt more remorse about the residual and current racial attitudes that they perpetuate by embracing white privileges"

Some of the participants emphasized other ways of showing remorse

"Many of those that are directly guilty are no longer alive- so I see no place for this among white people- I think that recognition of wrongdoing is more important"

"present day white people can only be remorseful of what they do"

"show it in other ways like respect fairness"

"I don't need remorse, just acknowledgement of what happened"

About 20% of the participants reported that whites don't feel remorse.

"Individuals who feel remorse also appear to accept accountability for their part of the problem. I don't know if most Caucasians feel remorse about the mistreatment of African Americans."

Approximately 10% of the participants reported that there was no need for whites to feel remorse evidenced by statements like *"meaningless", and "what is the point"*. Interestingly, 4% of participants mentioned that Blacks feel remorse, 3% of them mentioned that government should feel remorse, and 3% of them mentioned that we should be remorseful for others.

"I feel remorse for blacks because the black community is till suffering"

"There should be remorse on the part of the government."

"may be present in the black community"

Guilt

Over 32% of the participants stated that guilt does not help/change anything, 15% of them stated that guilt should not be felt for the past.

"Get rid of the guilt and ACT positively to avoid past mistakes"

"This is not helpful at all to anyone."

"The present ones need not feel guilty for the sins of their fore parents"

"Should white people have guilt or their grandparents? It makes no sense"

"I don't think it is necessary for whites to be guilty but it serves no purpose

but I do believe in recognition of the harm that was done."

"Whites should accept some guilt for the continued mistreatment and racism

that occurs."

"How can one feel guilt about something they personally did not do. Guilt

brings fear which creates another problem."

"they don't need to if they are aware of racism"

On the other hand, 20% of the participants stated that Whites don't feel guilty or don't understand.

"I believe White privilege prevents them from feeling guilty"

"White don't have it in a constructive way"

Fifteen percent of the participants stated that guilt should be felt by Whites.

"I think white families that know their families owned slaves should feel

guilty. Especially if their wealth was brought from it."

"All whites should feel some degree of guilt for their foreparents behaviors.

whites should feel"

Public Apology

There was not a consensus on public apologies; 36% of the participants stated that public apologies should be given like they have been given to other minority groups.

"This can be helpful if it is followed up with actions that demonstrate the

individuals desire to do better."

"Whites have too much pride to apologize and probably feel that they'll be

made to pay out lots of money. Admission of guilt has to lead to

something and they don't want to face those consequences."

On the other hand, 34% of participants reported that it is not necessary.

"Who should apologize? The government? All White people? Doesn't serve

a purpose"

"not necessary- what good will words do if they are not backed with actions

that will alleviate the social inequalities and inequities that have

resulted from historical mistreatment of African Americans"

Sixteen percent of the participants believed that it is not going to change anything, five percent of the participants believed that it has already been done.

> *"Say it already so we can move on but don't believe it will make a difference*
>
> *in the treatment of minorities as a whole. So why bother if it doesn't*
>
> *make a change"*

Revenge

The majority of participant found revenge unhelpful, 80% of the participants stated "no need" in responding to the terms revenge 30% of which indicated that it is not constructive.

> *"This is not helpful and can be detrimental to the cause."*
>
> *"Bitterness and revenge only hurts you. As hard as it is, Black people have*
>
> *to protect their souls and spirits and getting caught up in revenge*
>
> *does not change any past discretions."*
>
> *"No, not revenge. Equity is what we should strive for."*
>
> *"Won't solve anything"*
>
> *"Pointless. The people with whom primary responsibility lies are no longer*
>
> *alive."*

Ten percent of the participants stated that revenge belongs to God.

> *"God can do sooo much more than man can ever do"*
>
> *"Not mine/ours to give"*
>
> *"Vengeance is the Lord's, He will repay."*

Nine percent believed revenge exists.

> *"I suppose some African American's are capable of feelings of revenge*
>
> *when race-based mistreatment is experienced."*

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"some blacks feel"

"Still exists in a great deal of African Americans"

Four percent believed that it does not exist.

"Best served cold?? If roles reversed, whites would NEVER have withstood

the atrocities"

Trust

When the participants responded to the term trust, 29% of them said it needs to be built and necessary in society.

"That will have to build and relationships will need to be restored between

races through the church, government and education."

"Is the ultimate goal, but will take many-many years to acheive. For trust

to be accomplished, it's going to take both sides moving closer to the

middle toward each other."

"Trust can only be developed between the races when whites are not

privileged, which is inherent."

Only 36% of them stated that it is difficult to feel.

"Difficult to establish due to the history"

"There cannot be trust as long as white people continue to act as though the

past and the present don't matter. I can trust when I see genuine

changes taking place in society."

"Although I have loved ones and white people that I admire and confide in,

there are times that I struggle to completely trust the intentions and

motives of white people towards issues that are relevant to me as an

African American"

"Very difficult to trust them"

Eleven percent of them said that trust needs to be earned.

"This is absolutely necessary to get to the next steps. But it must be earned

and not just acquired through an apology."

Six percent of the participants stated that there is no trust problem, and 20% of them
stated that trust is given on an individual basis.

"No problem with that, mistrust exists among blacks as well"

"Based on my individual interactions...I may trust one but not another...so

its relative"

V. DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to explore the concept of forgiveness of historical and current racial/ethnic offenses toward historically oppressed groups in the United States. In order to understand in what circumstances oppressed groups forgive historical and current racial/ethnic offenses, data was collected from a sample of African Americans. It is hoped that expanding our knowledge on the experiences of African Americans in terms of forgiveness of historical offenses will expand our understanding of forgiveness among other historically oppressed groups globally. Specifically the intent of this study is to explore the experiences of African Americans as one historically oppressed group in the United States, as a means of understanding the potential role, capacity, and power of forgiveness among other oppressed groups living the realities of oppression. Factors contributing to the forgiveness of historical and current racial offenses are examined. Further, the study examines whether forgiving historical racial offenses contributes to the forgiveness of current racial offenses. Also examined were potential gender differences relative to forgiveness of oppression or experiences of racism.

Research question 1: When forgiveness as a personality trait is controlled for, which specified variables will show a significant association to belief in African American's forgiveness of historical racial offenses when forgiveness?

In this question participants rated their responses as to what extent they believe African Americans have forgiven Whites for the past mistreatments. Here the focus is on their perception of African Americans' forgiveness as a group rather than their own individual perceptions of acts of forgiveness. Factors under study such as remorse, reparations, seeking forgiveness and religion were found to be significant contributors to African Americans' perception of forgiveness of historical racial offenses. In this case forgiveness as a personality trait (forgivingness) was controlled for, and the results show that forgivingness has no significant contribution on the dependent variable. Specifically, results show that if a person believes that whites have shown remorse for the past treatments they are more likely to think that African Americans have forgiven whites for the past mistreatments. Previous studies on forgiveness have shown that forgiveness is greater when the offender offers an apology or shows remorse (Hewstone et al., 2004; Weiner, Graham, Peter, & Zmuidinas, 1991). Similarly sincere apologies, remorse, and the acknowledgment of wrong-doing might reduce feelings of revenge (McCullough et al., 1998; Ohbuchi, Kameda & Agerie, 1989; Weiner et al., 1991).When remorse is shown, transgressors are judged considerably more favorably than when it is not exhibited (Gold & Weiner, 2000). It is suggested that the reason that remorse has a positive effect on the victim is that it provides anticipation of positive future behavior (Gold & Weiner, 2000). Remorse can lead to acceptance of the grievance and of the offender's need to be forgiven (Hewstone et al., 2004). The results of this study are consistent with the overall findings of forgiveness literature. Specifically for African Americans in order to believe that African Americans as a group have forgiven past

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mistreatments they think whites should have shown remorse, have sought forgiveness and have offered reparations. These factors are all indicators of the admission of the wrongs done and can be perceived as an attempt for a new start. Therefore, it is clear that admission of wrongs done is needed for forgiveness of the past.

Results also indicate that, if reparations were made, the participants believe that it is more possible that African Americans in general would forgive whites for the historical offenses. Reparations are a controversial issue today in the African American community. There is limited information in the academic literature that examines how African Americans in general feel about slavery reparations, proposed forms of compensation and what they think about reparations already awarded to others like Japanese Americans (Campo, Mastin, & Frazer, 2004).

In the qualitative portion of the study, when participants were asked to indicate their thoughts on reparations almost half of the participants were favored reparations. Some of these participants stated that it should be paid as it has been paid to other groups, some believed that reparations should be given but is not practical or debt too much to pay and some of them stated about systemic reparations.

Generally, supporters of slavery reparations do so for two reasons (1) the value of uncompensated labors of slaves and (1) the violation of civil rights through segregation (Campo, Mastin & Frazer, 2004; Westley, 1998). Marable (2001) states that reparations are not about money but about the truth being told; reparations would aid in changing the way Americans think and feel about slavery, and the segregation and discrimination against African Americans. The results of this study show that African Americans are in

need of an acknowledgment of the historical mistreatments, either by reparations and/or making systemic changes in society.

Results also indicate that more religious people tend to believe that African Americans in general have forgiven whites for the historical racial offenses. Forgiveness literature indicates that more religious people have a greater tendency to forgive than less religious individuals (Enright et al., 1989; Enright & Coyle, 1998; Gorsuch & Hao, 1993; Meek, Aalbright & McMinn, 1995; Poloma & Gallup, 1991). Religion and a strong sense of spirituality have historically played an important role in coping with difficulties in the life of African Americans (Boyd-Franklin, 1989; Constantine, Miville, Warren, & Lewis-Coles, 2006; Frazier, 1964; Mattis, 2002; Moore, 1991) providing material and spiritual support (Hunt & Hunt, 2001).

Research Question 2: When forgiveness as a personality trait is controlled for, which specified variables will show a significant association to one's forgiveness of historical racial offenses?

In this question participants have rated their response to what extent as an individual they have forgiven White Americans for the historical offenses. Acknowledgement of wrongdoing by the historical offender will increase the likelihood of forgiveness of historical offenses. As discussed above, similar with remorse and seeking forgiveness acknowledgement of past mistreatments can be considered as a sign of the future positive behavior, and therefore increase the likelihood of forgiveness. In case of apology, participants rated their response to what extent they believe whites owe an apology to African Americans. The results show a negative relationship which

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indicates that the more significant the act of apologizing is viewed to be as important to the individual, the less forgiving they are of whites. This finding is not unusual as a human condition or expected need. The literature shows that apology facilitates forgiveness (Cody & McLaughlin, 1990; Darby & Schlenker, 1982, 1989; Fincham & Kashdan, 2004; Ohbuchi, Kameda, & Agarie, 1989). Montiel (2002) describes apology as the offender's external expression of remorse acknowledging that he or she has wounded an individual; however, remorse is an internal experience of regret. In life, there are apologies without remorse, and vice versa. Therefore it is interesting to note that for an individual to forgive the historical offenses external expression of remorse is needed. This may be due to the fact that the act of oppression relative to slavery was a public offense, indeed a national shame in America. Consequently it is consistent and reasonable that African Americans would expect a public apology as a demonstration of remorse. However it should be noted that for African Americans as a group forgiving Whites a receipt of apology is not viewed as necessary as a genuine act of being remorseful. An apology may or may not be genuine, however remorsefulness is, and therefore has a greater sense of value and meaning to African Americans as a group.

The qualitative findings provide greater depth with respect to African Americans' belief regarding the act of apologizing. Slightly more than half of the participants (52%) believe it is due to African Americans, and less than half the participants believed that apology was not necessary. The variety of responses to apology shows that some form of acknowledged remorsefulness is needed. The apology does not necessarily have to be in the form of an apology particularly if it is not one accompanied by remorsefulness.

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Trust is assessed on two levels; individual and group levels. First, participants asked to rate their response on whether as an individual they have difficulty in trusting Whites. On the group level, the more participants believed that African Americans as a group had difficulty trusting whites; the less likely they were to forgive whites for the past mistreatments or historical offenses. It is interesting to note that the individuals own trust towards whites did not significantly contribute to forgiveness. It shows that, since the offense is towards the group; the perception of that group's trust determines forgiveness. This finding also can be considered as an indicator of the importance of group identification. Similar with this finding, in the intergroup forgiveness study in Northern Ireland, it is reported that without trust built to the other group, full forgiveness was not possible (Hewstone et al., 2001).

An interesting finding is that the more African Americans are revengeful to Whites, the more they are apt to report the ability to forgive the historical offenses. This may be equal to the longstanding adage of an eye for an eye or a tooth for a tooth. Revenge is generally considered to be an outward act or demonstration of one's lack of forgiveness (McCullough et al., 1997; Minnow, 1998; Scobie & Scobie, 1998; Worthington & Enright et al., 1998). However, in intergroup violence situations, ideas of revenge may be a reflection of the survivors desire to keep faith with the lost incurred as a result of the mistreatment or offensive act (Ignatieff, 1998). In this case it is possible that participants may have feelings or emotions of revenge to honor the sufferings of the past so as not to betray or forget the impact of the act, yet the act(s) may be forgiven cognitively or behaviorally. The individual because of their religious upbringing may

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have feelings of guilt for having feelings of revenge toward the oppressor; but seek to put these feelings aside so that cognitively and behaviorally they can respond in ways consistent with their religious beliefs. That of being able to forgive wrongs of other human beings toward them or their loved ones. The qualitative findings are supporting this explanation. The majority of the participants reported that revenge is not needed (49%) and not constructive (30%). However, although one may not think that revenge is needed, or necessary to act on, the results show that feelings of revenge contribute to forgiveness. The individual recognizes that their feelings are not consistent with their religious beliefs, so they seek to forgive and be forgiving.

Enright (1999, 2000) defined forgiveness as a multidimensional construct which is the interplay between cognition, emotion, and behavior. He suggests that forgiveness is not merely an act or behavior but rather forgiveness can occur on cognitive and affective levels as well. Therefore, according to this definition, it is possible to forgive cognitively but still find it hard to let go on the emotional level. In this study, forgiveness is measured only on the behavioral level; therefore, one possible explanation is that participants have forgiven behaviorally but there still is a residual of negative emotions that remained unsolved. These are emotions that the individual must constantly seek to control and bring into subjection.

Similar to the findings of the previous research question, religion was found to be a significant contributor for one's forgiveness of historical racial offenses. Contrary to this, in their intergroup forgiveness study in Ireland, Hewstone et al. (2001) found that religious beliefs were not highly correlated with intergroup forgiveness; however, it is

important to note that they studied forgiveness between two conflicting religious groups. As indicated earlier, traditionally religion has been an important coping resource of strength for African Americans (Boyd-Franklin, 1989; Frazier, 1964; Moore, 1991). The literature suggests that African Americans tend to have higher levels of religious participation than other groups in the U.S. (Christian & Barbarin, 2001; Constantine, Lewis, Conner, & Sanchez, 2000; Hunt & Hunt, 2002). The unique history of African Americans being enslaved and other forms of oppression has contributed to a distinctive religiosity in African American communities (Hunt & Hunt, 2002). African Americans use formal religious and spiritual involvement to cope with social adversities such as race, class, and gender oppression (Dodson & Townsed-Gilkes, 1986; Mattis 2001), family and parenting stress, and psychological distress of daily hassles (Baer, 1993). It also has been documented that religion plays a role in shaping African Americans' cognitive outcomes (i.e., interpretations and appraisals of events), including a role in framing such events in times of adversity (Brodsky, 2000; McAdoo, 1995). Therefore, findings of this study support the notion that their religious faith helps African Americans to cope with historical adversities.

It should be noted that in this current study, age was not found to be a significant factor in any of the offense situations. Contrary to this finding in this study, earlier literature suggests that older people tend to be more forgiving (Enright et al., 1992; Girard & Mullet, 1997; Park & Enright, 1997; Subkoviak et al., 1995). One possible reason for the lack of age as a contributing factor in this study is that younger individuals might be more willing to forgive historical offenses because they are less likely to have

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experienced historical adversities. The age range of the participants is 21-64, therefore whether the individuals have experienced segregation or not is not a significant factor for forgiving historical offenses. Perhaps historical mistreatments are not forgotten, thus an indication of trans-generational transmission of group traumas (Harel, 2000).

Research Question 3: When forgiveness as a personality trait is controlled for, which specified variables will show a significant association to one's forgiveness of current racial offenses?

In this question participants were asked to think about an incident when they were offended by a White individual. The variables under investigation were offender's apology, remorse and accepting responsibility, perceived severity, intentionality of the offense, personal closeness of the offender, and trust towards the offender. It is very interesting that none of these factors were significant determinants of forgiveness of the current racial offenses. However, the personality trait of tendency to forgive significantly contributed to forgiveness of current offenses. It is important to note that with respect to forgiving historical offenses other factors played an important role. However, if the individual experiences a current event or offense only personality or tendency to forgive had a significant contribution to forgiving.

It is clear that with respect to intergroup forgiveness of historical offenses conditions like the offenders' apology or remorse is required for forgiveness. However, forgiving current experiences of racial offenses is more of an intrapersonal act. It does not appear to be dependent on the offender's actions or some other condition. The data from this current study appears to indicate that some people are more ready to forgive, or

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have a tendency to forgive offenses and they do not need any external conditions to forgive.

Andrews (2000) proposes two different models of forgiveness: negotiated and unilateral forgiveness. In negotiated forgiveness, forgiveness transpires through actual dialogue between the offender and the victim. In this case, the offender seeks forgiveness, apologizes, owns the responsibility, and acknowledges the wrongdoing. In contrast, unilateral forgiveness is a process which is contained entirely within the individual; it neither engages with nor is in any way dependent upon the position of the offender. Enright and colleagues (et al., 1994) describes it as an "an unconditional gift." Results from this current study are consistent with that idea that forgiving current individual experiences of racial offenses takes place as an act of unilateral forgiveness. On the other hand, if the offense is historically towards the identified group of people, it takes place as negotiated forgiveness. These findings highlight the complexity of the forgiveness research.

Research Question 4: Is there a relationship between experiences of racism and forgiveness of historical racial offenses and forgiveness of current racial offenses?

Results in this current study show a negative relationship between experiences of racism and forgiveness indicating that as racist experiences increases forgiveness of historical and current racial offenses decreases. Therefore the more the person experiences negative events, the less he/she is willing to forgive the past and current offenses. One of the main correlates of intergroup forgiveness is found to be the cancellation of consequences (Enright, Santos, & Al-Mabuk, 1989). Therefore,

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forgiveness appears to be easier if the harmful consequences disappears (McLernon et al., 2004). In the case of African Americans as they continue to experience racism- related events, the harmful act or the consequences of harmful acts maintains which in turn decreases the likelihood of forgiveness.

Research Question 5: Is there a relationship between forgiveness of historical racial offenses and current racial offenses?

Results indicate that the more people have forgiven the historical offenses, the more they tend to forgive their experiences of current offenses or vice versa. Forgiving historical offenses makes it easier for the individual to forgive current offenses, or forgiving current offenses makes easier to forgive historical offenses. If the individual forgives current racial offenses, it is likely that they think about historical racial offenses. Another explanation can be if they have difficulty forgiving historical offenses, the residual negative feelings make it harder to forgive current offensive experiences.

Research Question 7: Is there difference between males and females forgiveness of historical and current racial offenses?

The results show that there is no gender difference in forgiving *historical* racial offenses; however, males tend to forgive *current* offenses more than females. Research generally supports that gender does not contribute any difference in forgiveness; women and men are equally forgiving (Toussaint & Webb, 2004). In other studies, it is also reported that males are less likely to grant forgiveness than females (Worthington, Sandage, & Berry, 2000). Hammond, Banks and Mattis (2006) studied African American males' experiences of racism and their forgiveness of racist transgressions. Their study

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suggests that men who have more traditional masculinity ideology were less willing to grant forgiveness for racial offenses.

However in this study, males were found to be more forgiving than females. The current results also indicate that males experience more racism related experiences than females. This finding might be an indication of using forgiveness as a coping mechanism.

In this study, African American males reported more racism related life events and more vicarious racism experiences than females.   The results of current study show that males reported more experiences of racism overall their lifetime, in the past year and reported more racism related stress than females. Therefore, one possible reason for the findings in this study is that African American males experience so many micro and macro levels of racism on a daily basis that they would be angry all the time if they did not forgive at least at the emotional level. It has been well documented in the literature that African American males experience discrimination (Pieterse, carter, (Western & Pettit, 2005). (Jackson, Volckens, 1998) and this experience is more intense for African males than females (Sidanius & Pratto, 1999). Additionally, there is a greater cost to African American males for responding to acts of oppression and racism. Costs often tied to loss of job, life, limb, and personal safety. They may even be jailed for speaking out against acts of racism and oppression. Thus, perhaps forgiveness is used as a coping mechanism of survival.

Hammond, Banks and Mattis (2006) also found that more frequent experiences of racism were correlated with more likelihood of granting forgiveness among African American males. They found that African American males were embracing and had more

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positive views and attitudes of and behaviors towards transgressors when they forgave. One possible reason for this is that within the African American community, women are the matriarchs and nurtures of their families and thus, are less apt to forgive attacks on the family structure and are perhaps freer than their males to respond overtly to acts of racism and oppression. When the male in the home seeks to protect his family and pays the cost for that protection, often the African American female is left to care for the family alone and this may create enormous feelings that are difficult to handle emotionally, cognitively, and behaviorally.

It has been argued that racism experiences are correlated to increased stress and lower mental health (pieterse carter, (Clark, Anderson, Clark, & Williams, 1999; Harrell, 2000) Sanders-Thompson (2002). Harrell (2000) proposed a model of racism-related stress in which she identified six types of race-related stressors: (a) racism related life events, (b) vicarious racism experiences, (c) daily racism micro stressors, (d) chronic–contextual stress, (e) collective experience of racism, and (f) trans-generational transmission of group traumas. There are health-related costs to experiences of racism. Forgiveness may become an essential tool to managing these stressors on one's health.

Limitations of the Study

The results of this study should be interpreted with caution due to several limitations of the study. First, it is important to note that self-report measures have been used in this research; this may have caused some under-reporting or social desirability effects. In particular, since the social desirability effect was not controlled, it is possible that participants may have been responding the surveys in a way that reflects response

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bias. However, there is no evidence to believe that the participants of this study would exhibit more response bias than any other groups in general.

Another limitation of the study is related with the sample. As this was an on-line survey, it limited the participation in this study to those who had access to a computer. Thus participants in this study may not reflect the larger African American community in general. Consequently, generalization of the results is limited. Additionally, due to relatively lower reliability of the forgiveness surveys and Trait Forgivingness Scale, the results should also be interpreted with caution.

Finally, limited independent variables were used to test the dependent variable, therefore the variables used in this study do not provide a comprehensive explanation for the dependent variable, and other factors should be taken into consideration for future research. Experiences of oppressed groups may vary; therefore the results are limited in explaining the experiences of other racial/ethnic groups.

Implications for Counseling and Counselor Education

This study aimed to explore the factors that contribute to forgiving historical and current racial offenses. Only the variable of personality trait proved to be a significant determinant of forgiveness of *current* racial offenses. This study has several implications to counseling, counselor education and psychology and positive psychology literature. This work contributes significantly developing an interest in counseling and counselor education in the field of forgiveness.

Counseling and psychotherapy reflect the sociopolitical realities of the larger society. The ethnic, racial relations outside of the counseling have direct effect on the

counselor/client relationship. It is the fact that members of historically racial/ethnic underrepresented groups face with many challenges throughout their lives, any type of – any must function in a world that hurls numerous types of –isms, stereotypes, and prejudices as a daily reality of life for many. The concept of forgiveness can provide a useful tool to counselors in helping clients cope with these negative experiences.

Counselors can assist the diverse groups of clients to deal with their historical trauma, their memories with the past and their experiences today. Forgiveness has been used as a therapeutic tool. It is believed to provide an effective means of promoting personal and relational development (i.e. Affinito, 2002; Aponte, 1998; DiBlasio, 1998; Holmgren 2002). Therefore the results of this study can be utilized in counseling for advocating and empowering diverse populations. The counselor educators can also utilize the results in their work in training counselors, reminding their students that healing from historical and current experiences of discrimination and racism takes time and is a difficult process. The counselors in training should take into consideration these factors.

Feelings and attitudes about past and current mistreatments of one's social-ethnic group and racism related experiences, racism related stress and factors related with forgiveness are the subjects that might come up in any counseling session. Therefore formal counselor training should address past and current racism as well as forgiveness of such offenses.

Counselors' and counselor educators' focus should be beyond the individual problems of current and possible future clients; they should also focus on the societal problems that effect clients' well being. The knowledge on the circumstances effecting

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forgiveness of historical and current racial offenses will provide a unique insight into the effects of historical and current racism on individuals.

This information also provide an insight for counselors and counselor educators to work with clients and students of majority groups, understanding of the effects of racism on generations and encourage them to work to alleviating racism and oppression on societal level. Trust can be re-built, interracial/ ethnic relations can be improved and historical wounds can be healed. Forgiveness can facilitate this process. Members of the majority group must be sensitive to and be knowledgably about the power of acknowledging remorse for past historical wrongs as current benefices of White privilege.

Studies on forgiveness of racial/ethnic offenses are scarce in the literature. For the most part current research on forgiveness focuses on individuals' forgiveness of offenses in close relationships (Hammond et al., 2006). Therefore, this study provides a significant contribution to the literature by focusing on transgressions which take place in a larger socio-economic context. Specifically, the studies on racism related experiences of oppressed groups and the relationship dynamics of racially/ethnically diverse groups and traditionally dominant groups has generally been focused on negative dimension. In this sense, this study provides a valuable insight into the experiences of oppressed groups. This study will build a base of literature in the topic of forgiveness and experiences of oppressed groups. Additionally, this study provides early data on forgiveness of historical and current racial offenses which future researchers can use as comparative data for other oppressed groups.

Implications for Future Research

This study examines the complicated nature of attitudes towards historical and current experiences of racism and complicated nature of forgiveness. In fact this study poses more questions than answers. Given the fact that there are limited studies which investigated the sociopolitical issues and forgiveness, future research is needed to further investigate groups' granting and/or seeking forgiveness for the past and current offenses.

In this study only limited variables were taken into consideration. Future research is needed to further elaborate intergroup forgiveness and other relating variables such as racial identity development, social network support, gender identity etc. This study focused on African Americans experiences in the United States; further research is needed with different historically oppressed groups in the United States as well as in other countries in the global society. It is imperative that we explore the historical transgressions and forgiveness between various nations. Gender differences with respect to forgiveness were observed in this study. Males were identified as being more forgiving of current racial offenses. The African American culture reflects a matriarchal system, and these results might be the product of such system. Further research is needed to explore forgiveness in other ethic groups with patriarchal orientation.

This study is correlational in nature; in some cases it is difficult to predict the direction of the relationship. For example it is difficult to assess the direction of the relationship between forgiving historical and forgiving current racial offenses. More controlled, experimental research is needed in the future. It also should be kept in mind

that this study is a cross-sectional study which examines a segment of time in participants' life which is not reflective of more longitudinal process of forgiveness. Future research is needed to explore how people grant forgiveness for both historical and current racial offenses across their life time.

This study assessed forgiveness with a single item; further research needed to explore forgiveness with a more multidimensional focus. For example how forgiveness of historical and current racial offenses takes place on behavioral, emotional and cognitive levels. Future research is also needed to explore unilateral and negotiated forgiveness in terms of individual offenses and offenses which are sociopolitical in nature.

The relationship between mental health and racism related experiences and forgiveness has been documented in literature. However future research may need to focus on interrelated factors of forgiveness and racial discrimination and mental health. In other words how forgiveness plays a moderating role in negative effects physical and mental health effects of discrimination.

Further research is also needed to explore more deeply African Americans' perceptions of forgiveness related factors. Some examples of these factors can be public apology, collective guilt assignment, and or reparations. Future research should also focus on the role of racial contact and forgiveness of both historical and current racial offenses.

This study focused on granting forgiveness and experiences of the offended in sociopolitical context. Further research is needed to explore forgiveness seeking and experiences of the offender for sociopolitical transgressions.

In this study the surveys to explore forgiveness of historical and racial offenses were developed by the researcher. Generally, studies focused on intergroup forgiveness either develops questions specific to the study or adopts interpersonal forgiveness scales in intergroup context. Future research is needed to develop a specific scale to assess intergroup or sociopolitical forgiveness across different groups.

This study yielded interesting results in terms of gender differences. Further research is needed to explore gender differences in conceptualization, understanding and process of forgiveness and experiences of racism.

Forgiveness is a complicated phenomenon, putting forgiveness in a sociopolitical context even makes it more complicated. What needs to be present in order for forgiveness takes place for sociopolitical transgressions such as racism, sexism, heterosexism, ageism etc. do these conditions for forgiveness change with the context and type of the offense. For example for an ethnic minority female is it easier to forgive sexist offenses than racist offenses or vice versa? How individuals forgive current interpersonal experiences of discrimination? What steps do they pass through? Is forgiving past historical offenses towards the identified group different than forgiving current offenses? What is the process of forgiveness for males and females? Is there a difference in the process? Who grants forgiveness? Can groups grant it? Can groups seek forgiveness from other groups? In intergroup conflict and forgiveness do offender's actions make a difference? Who has the power to grant forgiveness? Which is more dominant in which situation; unilateral or negotiated forgiveness? As stated before, this study generates more questions than answers. There is more to investigate in terms of forgiveness in

sociopolitical context. The focus on positive intergroup relationships, such as forgiveness, can be an important part of peace development. Therefore the developments in the research of intergroup forgiveness would be beneficial.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

PARTICIPANT INFORMED CONSENT FORM

AUBURN UNIVERSITY

Auburn University, Alabama 36849-5222

Counselor Education, Counseling Psychology   Telephone: (334)844 5160
and School Psychology   Fax: (334) 844 2860
2084 Haley Center

INFORMATION SHEET
for Research Study Entitled
--- FORGIVENESS OF HISTORICAL AND CURRENT RACIAL OFFENSES: A STUDY OF INTERGROUP FORGIVENESS AMONG AFRICAN AMERICANS---

You are invited to participate in a research study to investigate contributing factors of forgiveness. This study is being conducted by Bengu Erguner-Tekinalp under the supervision of Dr. Renee A. Middleton. I hope to understand the extent to which minority groups undergo the process of forgiving historical and current racial/ethnic offenses.

If you decide to participate, you will fill out couple of questionnaires which can be completed about 30 minutes. There is no risk and compensation associated with participating to the study. Any information obtained in connection with this study will remain anonymous. The server for the website is located at Auburn University. Information collected through your participation will be used to fulfill an educational requirement (doctoral degree), may be published in a professional journal, and/or presented at a professional meeting. You have the right to withdraw from participation at any time, without penalty, however, after you have provided anonymous information you will be unable to withdraw your data after participation since there will be no way to identify individual information.

Your decision whether or not to participate will not jeopardize your future relations with Auburn University or Department of Counselor Education, Counseling Psychology and School Psychology.

If you have questions later, I will be happy to answer them.

Bengu Eguner-Tekinalp
2084 Haley Center
Auburn University
Auburn, AL 36849
e-mail: erguntb@auburn.edu
Phone: 334 844 1974

For more information regarding your rights as a research participant you may contact the Auburn University Office of Human Subjects Research or the Institutional Review Board by phone (334)-844-5966 or e-mail at hsubjec@auburn.edu or IRBChair@auburn.edu.

HAVING READ THE INFORMATION PROVIDED, YOU MUST DECIDE

WHETHER TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS RESEARCH PROJECT. IF YOU DECIDE

TO PARTICIPATE, THE DATA YOU PROVIDE WILL SERVE AS YOUR

AGREEMENT TO DO SO.

APPENDIX B

DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONS AND FORGIVENESS OF HISTORICAL OFFENSES

Your Gender: Male   Female   Your Age: _____

The following questions are designed to identify your thoughts and feelings regarding the mistreatment of African Americans such as slavery, Tuskegee experiment, segregation, voting rights etc. Please read each question carefully and mark one answer that best fits your agreement or disagreement. There are no right or wrong answers. State your opinions as accurately as possible by placing your mark on the most appropriate box.

	1 Strongly disagree	2 disagree	3 neutral	4 agree	5 Strongly agree
I think white people show/have shown remorse about historical mistreatments about African Americans					
All Whites should feel guilty about the past treatments of African Americans					
Given all the mistreatments of African Americans in the past, I have difficulty in trusting whites					
I believe whites ought to acknowledge the past mistreatments by making reparations					
I believe whites need to acknowledge the past mistreatments of African Americans					
I believe all whites should feel guilty about the past mistreatments of African Americans					
I find it easier to forgive whites when I think that mistreatment of minorities existed throughout the world history					
After all the mistreatments, African Americans in general have difficulty in trusting whites					
My religious beliefs have helped me forgive Whites.					
Whites have difficulty seeking forgiveness from African Americans					
Whites owe African Americans an apology					
African Americans in general are revengeful toward whites					
Forgiveness is important in my church but I still find it difficult to forgive Whites.					
The fact that mistreatments of minorities has happened throughout the history does not help me feel less angry					
I would find it easier to forgive Whites if they ask for forgiveness for past mistreatments					
African Americans have forgiven whites for the past mistreatments					

As an individual to what extent you have forgiven White Americans for the past mistreatments

Not at all   trying to forgive   complete forgiveness

As you think about past mistreatments of African Americans, what do you think about

the following statements?

Reparations _____

Remorse _____

Guilt _____

Public apology _____

Revenge _____

Trust _____

APPENDIX C

FORGIVENESS OF CURRENT RACIAL OFFENSES

FORGIVENESS OF CURRENT RACIAL OFFENSES

For the following questions please think about a time that you experienced a racial

offense by a White American

How long ago did it happen?

Has this person apologized for the offense? Yes   No

	Very much	Much	Somewhat	Not much	Not at all
How deeply were you hurt when you experienced the offense?					
How intentional was the offense?					
How close was your relationship with this person?					
How much has this person shown remorse for the offense?					
How much has this person accepted responsibility for the offense?					
To what extent can you trust this person now?					

To what extent have you forgiven this person for the offense?

Not at all   trying to forgive   complete forgiveness

APPENDIX D

TRAIT FORGIVINGNESS SCALE

TRAIT FORGIVINGNESS SCALE

Indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with each statement below by using the following scale

	Strongly disagree	disagree	neutral	agree	Strongly agree
People close to me probably think I hold a grudge too long.					
I can forgive a friend for almost anything.					
If someone treats me badly, I treat him or her the same.					
I try to forgive others even when they don't feel guilty for what they did.					
I can usually forgive and forget an insult.					
I feel bitter about many of my relationships.					
Even after I forgive someone, things often come back to me that I resent.					
There are some things for which I could never forgive even a loved one.					
I have always forgiven those who have hurt me.					
I am a forgiving person.					

APPENDIX E

RACISM AND LIFE EXPERIENCES SCALE-BRIEF VERSION

Racism and Life Experiences Scale-Brief Version (RaLES-B)

	Not at all	A little	some	A lot	extremely
Overall DURING YOUR LIFETIME, how much have you personally experienced racism, racial discrimination, or racial prejudice?					
DURING THE PAST YEAR, how much have you personally experienced racism, racial discrimination, or racial prejudice?					
Overall, how much do you think racism affects the lives of people of your same racial/ ethnic group?					
Think about the people close to you, your family and friends. In general how much has racism impacted their life experiences?					

	Very negatively	Negatively	Neutrally	Positively	Very positively
In general, how do you think people from your racial/ethnic group are regarded in the United States?					

	Everyday	At least once a week	About once or twice a month	A few times a year	Once a year or less
In general, how frequently do you hear about incidents of racial prejudice, discrimination, or racism from family, friends, co-workers, neighbors etc.					

	Rarely or never	A little	Sometimes	Often	Very often
In general, how much do you think about racism?					

	None	A little	Some	A lot	Extreme
In general, how much stress has racism caused you DURING YOUR LIFE TIME?					

	None	A little	Some	A lot	Extreme
In general, how much stress has racism caused you DURING THE PAST YEAR?					