CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Advent of Positive Psychology has opened new vistas for growth and enhancement of mental health. Forgiveness a significant virtue, is an important behavioral dimension for promoting prosocial behavior in society. Forgiveness is at the forefront of relational, emotional, spiritual and physical development and a key factor in holistic health. Forgiveness as an attitude on the part of the forgiver, benefits both the forgiver and the forgiven. Forgiving individuals also exhibit lower negative emotions. The tendency to forgive has been found to be associated with emotional stability and social harmony. The aim of the present investigation was to study the correlates of Interpersonal Forgiveness in terms of Personality, Religiosity, Positive and Negative Affect, Satisfaction with Life, and Anger Experienced and Anger Expressed among adolescents.

Two measures of Forgiveness i.e State and Trait Forgiveness were selected. Overall the results showed that Trait Forgiveness measure was a more robust measure as regards relationship with Spirituality and Religious Well Being is concerned. Trait Forgiveness was related with Spiritual Well being, meaning and purpose in life. People who were more forgiving showed better mental health. However no relationship of forgiveness was found with Physical Health.

As regards Personality and Forgiveness, Extraversion was found to be positively related with Forgiveness while Neuroticism and Psychoticism was found to be negatively related with Forgiveness.

Forgiveness was found to be positively related with positive emotions viz Hope, Happiness, Optimism and Gratitude and negatively related with Anger Experienced.

Gender differences emerged on various dimensions of State Forgiveness and Forgiveness of Situation with males being higher than females.
The clear cut implications of the study are that as expected forgiveness promotes mental health, spiritual well being and positive emotions like hope, happiness, gratitude and optimism.

Results show that forgiveness suppresses negative rumination and promotes satisfaction with life. More forgiving people have larger emotional support networks. People who report higher bonding have been shown to have higher secretions of neuropeptides like oxytocin and prolactin. Prolactin lower blood pressure, heart rate and physiological reactivity. As forgiveness improves interpersonal relations and bonding, forgiving people may have more health related benefits. Forgiving people have been found to be more outgoing, optimistic, gregarious and less anxious.

It goes without saying that training programs to foster forgiveness/forgiveness therapy may have far reaching effects and the younger the age at which intervention starts, the better will be the benefits. In the words of Kaufman (1984), Fitzgibbons (1986) and Hope (1987), forgiveness is a therapeutic tool and helps prevent hatred and restore sanity. Those who forgive, benefit from a concomitant decrease in anger, depression, anxiety and bitterness.

The present study with a moderate sample size is a pointer towards designing intervention studies in larger samples to promote forgiveness among adolescents. Effectiveness of intervention studies has been reported by Baskin and Enright (2004), Coyle and Enright (1997), Lin et al. (2004), Luskin et al. (2005) in western population. This shall go a long way in promoting Well Being among individuals and society.

Jesus Christ, Mahatma Gandhi and Swami Dayanand Saraswati lived lives, which exemplified forgiveness as an ultimate tool in political, social and spiritual upliftment. As a research endeavor in India, present investigation endorses as well as emphasizes upon the understanding and practice of forgiveness at interpersonal, inter group and international levels for enhancing harmony, happiness and peace.