Forgiveness and Spirituality

BrookeLyn Dietz
Holly Sly
Introduction

- Purpose
  - Discover possible correlations between well-being and forgiveness
    - Identify any correlations between forgiveness levels, well-being, and parental marital status
- Hypothesis
  - Levels of forgiveness will positively correlate with levels of spiritual well-being
Research Questions

- Does spiritual well-being correlate with forgiveness levels?
- Does parental marital status affect well-being and forgiveness levels?
Forgiveness involves being willing to let go of resentment, negative judgment, and behavior toward someone who has wronged us while also expressing kindness, care, and even love towards them (Maldonado, 2009).

Various definitions for well-being

- “life satisfaction, happiness, and quality of life” (Anderson, Jané-Llopis, & Cooper, 2011)
Forgiveness plays a role in an individual’s personal, as well as spiritual, life (Lampman, 1999)

Negative correlation between spiritual disappointment with God and dispositional forgiveness and spiritual well-being (Strelan, Acton, & Patrick, 2009)
Previous research studies have used a variety of forgiveness scales
  ◦ The Heartland Forgiveness Scale (Thompson et al, 2005)
    • Low, Moderate, High
  ◦ The Forgiveness Scale (Rye et al, 2001)
    • Absence of Negative, Presence of Positive
  ◦ Forgiveness Likelihood Scale (Rye et al, 2001)
    • Varying circumstances
Methods

- **Participants**
  - 370 undergraduate students – Cedarville University
  - Between ages 18–24
  - Males and females

- **Instruments**
  - The Heartland Forgiveness Scale
  - Forgiveness Likelihood Scale
  - The Forgiveness Scale
  - The Spiritual Well-Being Scale
Methods

- Procedures
  - Email to student body
    - Freshman, Sophomores, and Juniors
  - Survey through Survey Monkey
  - Demographic questionnaire
    - Basic demographics
    - Family structure
  - Forgiveness and Spirituality scales
## Results

### Descriptive Statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scales</th>
<th>Maximum score possible</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Religious Well-being</td>
<td>60.00</td>
<td>50.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Existential Well-being</td>
<td>60.00</td>
<td>47.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Well-Being</td>
<td>120.00</td>
<td>97.72</td>
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<tr>
<td>Absence Negative Subscale</td>
<td>50.00</td>
<td>37.79</td>
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<tr>
<td>Presence Positive subscale</td>
<td>25.00</td>
<td>17.35</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Heartland Forgiveness Scale</td>
<td>124.00</td>
<td>89.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Forgiveness Likelihood</td>
<td>50.00</td>
<td>35.83</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Std. Deviation

- Religious Well-being: 10.12
- Existential Well-being: 8.99
- Total Well-Being: 17.26
- Absence Negative Subscale: 6.92
- Presence Positive subscale: 3.51
- Total Heartland Forgiveness Scale: 15.16
- Total Forgiveness Likelihood: 8.24
## Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Correlations</th>
<th>1.</th>
<th>2.</th>
<th>3.</th>
<th>4.</th>
<th>5.</th>
<th>6.</th>
<th>7.</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Religious Well-being</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Existential Well-being</td>
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<td>.642**</td>
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<td>3. Total Well-Being</td>
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<td>.916**</td>
<td>.896**</td>
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<td>4. Absence Negative Subscale</td>
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<td>.466**</td>
<td>.418**</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Presence Positive subscale</td>
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<td>.370**</td>
<td>.425**</td>
<td>.516**</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Total Heartland Forgiveness Scale</td>
<td>.411**</td>
<td>.593**</td>
<td>.549**</td>
<td>.683**</td>
<td>.445**</td>
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<td>7. Total Forgiveness Likelihood</td>
<td>.343**</td>
<td>.329**</td>
<td>.379**</td>
<td>.491**</td>
<td>.580**</td>
<td>.473**</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parental Marriage</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>T Value</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Religious Well-being</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>327</td>
<td>51.15</td>
<td>9.69</td>
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<tr>
<td>Existential Well-being</td>
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<td>45.87</td>
<td>13.09</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Well-Being</td>
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<td>47.37</td>
<td>8.61</td>
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<td>Presence Positive</td>
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<td>32</td>
<td>43.28</td>
<td>11.81</td>
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<tr>
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<td>16.50</td>
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<tr>
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<td>89.83</td>
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<td>Total Heartland Forgiveness Scale</td>
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<td>330</td>
<td>38.04</td>
<td>6.64</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Forgiveness Likelihood</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>35.28</td>
<td>9.16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* P< .05
+ P<.10
Data analysis confirmed our hypothesis

- Forgiveness scores (IV) positively correlated with well-being scores
  - Higher forgiveness levels indicated more positive responses and less negative responses
  - Positive correlation between higher forgiveness levels and increased willingness to forgive across various circumstances
Conclusion

- Overall, students with married or single parents scored higher on all scales.
  - A statistically significant difference exists in the absence of the negative scale and all well-being scales.
**Conclusion**

- **Further studies**
  - Larger sample sizes
  - Samples from non-religious affiliated universities
    - Existential well-being may have a more important role than religious well-being in a non-religious community
    - Parental marital status may have a stronger effect in a non-religious community


