

# The Dynamics of Forgiveness and Its Impact on Adolescents' Mental Health: A Qualitative Study

Irvan Usman<sup>1\*</sup>

<sup>1\*</sup>Department of Psychology, Universitas Negeri Gorontalo,  
Gorontalo, Kota Gorontalo, Indonesia

\*Corresponding author. E-mail: [irvan@ung.ac.id](mailto:irvan@ung.ac.id);

## Abstrak

Penelitian ini menyelidiki dinamika sikap memaafkan di kalangan remaja dalam mengelola konflik interpersonal baik di media sosial maupun dalam lingkungan keluarga, serta dampaknya terhadap kesehatan mental. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan fenomenologis, wawancara semi-terstruktur dilakukan terhadap 15 remaja berusia 13–18 tahun di Kota Gorontalo, yang dipilih secara sengaja berdasarkan pengalaman konflik yang signifikan. Data dianalisis menggunakan Analisis Fenomenologi Interpretatif (IPA) melalui perangkat lunak NVivo untuk mengidentifikasi tema dan subtema dari narasi mereka. Temuan tersebut menyoroti sikap memaafkan sebagai mekanisme penyelesaian konflik yang vital, khususnya dalam mengurangi dampak konflik yang berasal dari media sosial dan pertikaian keluarga. Tema-tema utama meliputi dampak buruk perundungan siber terhadap kesehatan mental, sikap memaafkan sebagai strategi penanggulangan untuk mengatasi kerusakan emosional yang disebabkan oleh konflik daring, dan peran sikap memaafkan dalam meningkatkan hubungan keluarga. Dukungan sosial dan kesadaran diri diidentifikasi sebagai faktor penting yang membentuk kemampuan remaja untuk memaafkan. Penelitian ini mengisi kekosongan dalam literatur dengan mengeksplorasi sikap memaafkan dalam konteks ganda media sosial dan keluarga, yang jarang diteliti secara bersamaan. Hal ini menggarisbawahi bahwa memaafkan merupakan faktor pelindung yang memediasi dampak emosional dari konflik, yang menawarkan wawasan baru mengenai kesehatan mental remaja. Temuan ini mendukung pengembangan intervensi yang mempromosikan pengampunan untuk meningkatkan ketahanan emosional dan merekomendasikan penelitian lebih lanjut untuk memperkuat pengampunan sebagai jalur menuju peningkatan kesejahteraan.

**Kata kunci:** *Forgiveness, Remaja, Konflik Interpersonal, Mental Health, Social Media, Fenomenologi*

## Abstract

*This study investigated forgiveness dynamics among adolescents in managing interpersonal conflicts both social media and within family settings, their impact on mental health. Using a phenomenological approach, semi-structured interviews were conducted with 15 adolescents aged 13–18 years in Gorontalo City, selected purposively based on their significant conflict experiences. Data were analyzed using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) through NVivo software to identify themes and sub-themes from their narratives. The findings highlighted forgiveness as a vital conflict resolution mechanism, particularly in mitigating the effects of conflicts stemming from social media and family disputes. Key themes included the detrimental impact of cyberbullying on mental health, forgiveness as a coping strategy to address emotional harm caused by online conflicts, and the role of forgiveness in improving family relationships. Social support and self-awareness were identified as crucial factors shaping adolescents' ability to forgive. This study fills a gap in the literature by exploring forgiveness within the dual contexts of social media and family, rarely examined together. It underscores forgiveness as a protective factor that mediates the emotional toll of conflicts, offering novel insights into adolescent mental health. The findings support the development of interventions promoting forgiveness to enhance emotional resilience and recommend further research to strengthen forgiveness as a pathway to improved adolescent well-being.*

**Keywords:** *Forgiveness, Adolescents, Interpersonal Conflict, Mental Health, Social Media, Phenomenology.*

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## 1. Introduction

Adolescence represents a critical developmental stage marked by substantial biological,

psychological, and social changes, often resulting in increased vulnerability to mental health challenges. Conflicts during this stage—whether involving peers, family members, or digital spaces—can profoundly impact adolescents' emotional well-being. Recent studies indicate that adolescents are especially vulnerable to stressors arising from interpersonal conflicts, with media and family dynamics significantly influencing their mental health outcomes (Arnett, 2020). Social media, though a widely used platform for connection and self-expression, has also become a significant source of conflict through cyberbullying and social comparison, both of which can intensify anxiety and depression (Vannucci & Ohannessian, 2019).

The increasing use of social media among adolescents has elicited both optimism and concern. Platforms like Instagram and TikTok, although facilitating self-expression, have inadvertently created new opportunities for conflict. Cyberbullying, exposure to unrealistic standards, and social comparison are prominent challenges that adolescents face today. Such conflicts often result in emotional scars which, if unresolved, can lead to long-term psychological issues (Patchin & Hinduja, 2020). Research shows that cyberbullying substantially impacts adolescents' emotional well-being, frequently leading to increased levels of anxiety, depression, and reduced self-esteem (Hamm et al., 2015; Nixon, 2014). Additionally, the curated nature of social media content promotes unrealistic comparisons, intensifying feelings of inadequacy and social anxiety (Keles et al., 2020). These digital conflicts are further exacerbated by the permanence and visibility of online interactions, complicating reconciliation and emotional recovery (Anderson et al., 2022). Furthermore, familial conflicts—including parental divorce, strained relationships, and intergenerational value clashes—have been associated with increased rates of adolescent stress and anxiety (Coyne et al., 2021).

Family conflicts—such as parental discord, sibling rivalry, and intergenerational value clashes—are significant stressors for adolescents, frequently heightening their vulnerability to mental health challenges. Research indicates that adolescents frequently exposed to familial conflicts exhibit elevated levels of anxiety, depression, and emotional dysregulation compared to peers from harmonious family environments (Wang et al., 2021). Parental separation or divorce, in particular, has been associated with feelings of insecurity and a reduced sense of emotional support, both of which adversely affect adolescents' psychological well-being (Amato, 2019). Moreover, strained communication patterns and a lack of parental warmth can hinder adolescents' ability to develop healthy coping mechanisms, thereby exacerbating their emotional struggles (Yap & Jorm, 2015). These findings highlight the pivotal role of family dynamics in shaping adolescents' mental health and underscore the importance of interventions aimed at addressing familial stressors and fostering positive relationships.

Forgiveness has been recognized as a potentially effective mechanism for mitigating the adverse effects of such conflicts. Forgiveness, defined as a conscious and deliberate decision to release feelings of resentment or vengeance toward an offender, can enable individuals to reframe their perspectives on conflict, resulting in emotional and psychological relief (Worthington & Scherer, 2021). For adolescents, forgiveness can function as a coping strategy to reduce the emotional burden of conflicts and build resilience. However, the specific role of forgiveness in adolescent mental health, particularly within the contexts of social media and familial conflicts, remains insufficiently explored.

Existing literature highlights the significance of forgiveness in reducing stress and enhancing mental health among adults (McCullough et al., 2000). However, few studies have explored its role in adolescents, who face distinct developmental challenges. Research has shown that forgiveness is linked to reduced levels of depression, anxiety, and anger in adults, indicating its potential value in addressing adolescent-specific mental health concerns (Toussaint et al., 2018). Nevertheless, the relevance of these findings to adolescents necessitates further investigation.

In social media contexts, forgiveness is especially challenging because of the persistent and pervasive nature of online interactions. Unlike face-to-face conflicts, social media conflicts frequently leave a digital trail, complicating the process of moving on (Hinduja & Patchin, 2019).

Adolescents often struggle to forgive when repeatedly confronted with hurtful comments or posts, which amplify feelings of resentment. This distinctive digital dynamic highlights the need for tailored interventions to foster forgiveness in online environments.

Family dynamics introduce an additional layer of complexity to the forgiveness process. Adolescents facing familial conflicts frequently grapple with unresolved tensions that may impede their psychological growth. Parental support, communication patterns, and family cohesion play a critical role in shaping adolescents' capacity to forgive and move beyond conflicts (Katz & Woodin, 2021). Consequently, understanding the interplay between forgiveness and family relationships is essential for designing effective interventions.

Despite these insights, research on the dynamics of forgiveness among adolescents, especially within digital and familial contexts, remains limited. Most existing studies have focused on the role of forgiveness in adult populations or explored it within narrow interpersonal contexts (Enright & Fitzgibbons, 2015). This gap underscores the need for a comprehensive examination of how forgiveness functions among adolescents confronting unique challenges in contemporary society.

Theoretical perspectives on forgiveness further highlight its importance in adolescent development. The process model of forgiveness, encompassing stages such as uncovering anger, decision-making, and fostering compassion, is especially relevant to adolescents navigating emotional regulation and identity formation (Enright, 2001). Understanding how adolescents advance through these stages enables researchers to develop more effective interventions to support their mental health.

Empirical studies have highlighted the moderating role of social support in promoting forgiveness. Adolescents who receive strong peer and parental support are more likely to practice forgiveness, which positively influences their psychological well-being (Worthington et al., 2016). This finding emphasizes the importance of cultivating supportive environments that promote forgiveness as an effective coping mechanism.

This study aims to bridge these gaps by exploring the dynamics of forgiveness among adolescents in managing conflicts originating from social media and family relationships. Employing a phenomenological approach, this research seeks to offer nuanced insights into how forgiveness supports adolescents' mental health and to identify the factors that shape their capacity to forgive.

This study holds significance not only for its theoretical contributions but also for its practical implications. Understanding the mechanisms of forgiveness in adolescents enables mental health professionals to design interventions that foster emotional resilience and relational harmony. Additionally, the findings can guide educational programs designed to equip adolescents with the skills needed to navigate interpersonal conflicts more effectively.

In summary, this research is driven by the increasing recognition of forgiveness as a critical factor in addressing adolescent mental health challenges. By concentrating on the distinct contexts of social media and familial conflicts, this study seeks to offer a comprehensive understanding of forgiveness as a protective factor, thereby contributing to the broader discourse on adolescent well-being.

## **2. Method**

This chapter describes the research design, participant selection, data collection procedures, and data analysis methods used in this study to examine the dynamics of forgiveness among adolescents navigating interpersonal conflicts. A phenomenological approach was employed to achieve an in-depth understanding of adolescents' subjective experiences, with a focus on conflicts within social media and family contexts. The detailed methodology is presented below.

**Research Design**

This study employed a qualitative phenomenological approach, particularly well-suited for exploring individuals' lived experiences and uncovering the essence of phenomena. The phenomenological method emphasizes understanding participants' perceptions and interpretations of their experiences, making it an appropriate framework for examining the intricate dynamics of forgiveness in adolescents (Moustakas, 1994). This approach enables researchers to explore in depth how adolescents perceive and navigate conflicts in their personal lives and the ways forgiveness contributes to their mental health.

**Participant Selection****Population and Sampling**

The study focused on adolescents aged 13–18 years who had experienced significant interpersonal conflicts, either in social media contexts or within their families, in Gorontalo City. A purposive sampling technique was utilized to ensure the inclusion of participants with relevant experiences. This approach facilitated the selection of participants capable of providing rich and meaningful insights into the research questions (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

**Inclusion Criteria**

1. Adolescents aged between 13 and 18 years.
2. Participants who reported experiencing interpersonal conflicts in social media or family settings.
3. Participants who provided consent to participate in the study and were willing to share their experiences.

**Exclusion Criteria**

1. Adolescents with no significant history of interpersonal conflicts.
2. Participants who were unwilling or unable to provide informed consent.

The final sample consisted of 15 adolescents, ensuring diverse representation in terms of age, gender, and socio-economic backgrounds to capture a wide range of experiences.

**Data Collection****Preparation**

A semi-structured interview guide was designed based on a thorough review of relevant literature. The guide featured open-ended questions intended to elicit detailed narratives of participants' experiences with interpersonal conflicts and forgiveness. Key areas of inquiry focused on the nature of conflicts experienced, emotional responses, the process of forgiveness, and its perceived impact on mental health.

**Procedure**

Individual interviews were conducted between February 15 and March 9, 2024, in private and comfortable settings to ensure participants felt at ease when sharing their experiences. Each interview lasted approximately 60 minutes and was audio-recorded with participants' consent to ensure accuracy in data collection. When participants exhibited hesitation, additional rapport-building measures were employed to foster trust and openness.

**Ethical Considerations**

Ethical approval was granted by the appropriate institutional review board. Informed consent was obtained from participants and their legal guardians in the case of minors. Participants were assured of confidentiality, with pseudonyms applied in all transcriptions and reports to safeguard their identities.

**Data Analysis****Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA)**

Data were analyzed using the Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) framework, which entails a detailed examination of participants' lived experiences (Smith et al., 2009). IPA was

selected for its capacity to uncover deep, contextualized insights into forgiveness as experienced by adolescents.

### Analysis Process

- a. Transcription: Audio recordings of the interviews were transcribed verbatim to ensure participants' narratives were accurately captured.
- b. Initial Reading and Familiarization: Transcripts were reviewed multiple times to achieve an immersive understanding of the data.
- c. Identifying Themes: Emerging themes were identified by coding significant statements and phrases relevant to the research objectives.
- d. Developing Sub-Themes: Thematic clusters were created by grouping related codes, resulting in the identification of sub-themes.
- e. Interpretation: The themes were interpreted in relation to the research questions and existing literature, with a focus on participants' subjective meanings and experiences.

### Use of NVivo Software

NVivo software was employed to manage and organize data throughout the coding process. The software facilitated systematic analysis, enabling the researcher to efficiently identify patterns and relationships within the data.

### Reliability and Validity

To ensure the rigor and credibility of the study, the following measures were implemented:

1. Triangulation: Data from interviews were cross-validated with field notes to corroborate the findings.
2. Member Checking: Participants were invited to review the transcripts and preliminary findings to verify their accuracy and authenticity.
3. Audit Trail: Comprehensive documentation of the research process was maintained to ensure transparency and replicability.

### Limitations

Although the phenomenological approach offered valuable insights into participants' experiences, the findings are confined to the context of the selected sample. The generalizability of the findings is limited by the qualitative nature of the study and its emphasis on specific conflict settings (social media and family).

## 3. Result

This section outlines the findings obtained through Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) of interviews conducted with adolescents aged 13–18 years in Gorontalo City. The identified themes illuminate the dynamics of forgiveness as experienced within social media and family conflict settings, along with their impact on mental health. The data are organized thematically and supported by participants' narratives.

### Impact of Social Media Conflicts on Mental Health

Conflicts on social media, especially cyberbullying and social comparisons, were commonly identified as sources of emotional distress. Participants reported experiencing feelings of anger, humiliation, and reduced self-esteem as a result of negative online interactions. For example, one participant shared, *"Reading those comments made me feel worthless, like I didn't belong anywhere."* These accounts highlight the detrimental psychological effects of social media conflicts on adolescents (Patchin & Hinduja, 2020).

Another participant emphasized how the lingering nature of social media conflicts intensifies their emotional impact. For instance, one participant stated, *"Those hurtful comments don't disappear—they're always there, and every time I see them, I feel angry all over again."* This observation underscores the chronic emotional strain resulting from repeated exposure to conflict-



related content, consistent with prior research (Vannucci & Ohannessian, 2019).

### **Forgiveness as a Coping Strategy for Social Media Conflicts**

Forgiveness emerged as a key strategy for managing distress caused by social media conflicts. Adolescents who engaged in forgiveness reported experiencing emotional relief and a sense of empowerment. One participant shared, *"Forgiving helped me let go of the anger; it felt like a weight had been lifted."* This statement aligns with research indicating that forgiveness alleviates emotional burdens and fosters resilience (Worthington & Scherer, 2021).

However, participants also highlighted the difficulties of practicing forgiveness in a digital environment. The permanence and public visibility of online conflicts frequently impeded the forgiveness process. As one participant expressed, *"How can I forgive when I keep seeing that post every day? It's like a wound that never heals."* These findings underscore the need for interventions tailored to support forgiveness in digital spaces, where conflicts tend to be more persistent.

### **Family Conflicts and Emotional Well-Being**

Family conflicts, including arguments with parents or siblings and the impact of parental separation, were identified as major stressors. Participants reported feelings of neglect, frustration, and sadness arising from unmet familial expectations. One participant stated, *"When my parents fought, it felt like our home was falling apart."* This observation aligns with findings by Coyne et al. (2021), which highlight the profound psychological toll that familial discord imposes on adolescents.

Moreover, some participants reported feeling misunderstood or neglected by family members, which intensified their emotional struggles. As one participant shared, *"My dad always criticized me for my grades. I felt like I was never good enough in his eyes, and it made me so sad."* These accounts underscore how unresolved family conflicts can heighten adolescents' risk of developing anxiety and depression.

### **The Role of Forgiveness in Family Relationships**

Forgiveness served a transformative role in repairing and strengthening family bonds. Adolescents who forgave family members reported enhanced communication and greater emotional closeness. For instance, one participant shared, *"After forgiving my dad, we could finally talk without arguing, and it felt like we understood each other better."*

The process of forgiveness within families was supported by open communication and expressions of remorse. This finding aligns with previous research emphasizing the role of family support in fostering forgiveness (Katz & Woodin, 2021).

### **Interactions Between Social Media and Family Conflicts**

Interestingly, social media was identified as a contributing factor to family conflicts. Participants reported disagreements concerning excessive screen time, inappropriate online behavior, or differing perspectives on social media use. For example, one participant stated, *"My parents couldn't understand why I was always on my phone, and it led to constant arguments."*

These findings indicate that social media not only acts as a platform for peer conflicts but also intensifies familial tensions. Addressing these interactions necessitates a holistic approach that accounts for both digital and familial dynamics.

### **Factors Influencing Adolescents' Capacity to Forgive**

The capacity to forgive was shaped by various factors, including social support, self-awareness, and cultural or familial norms. Adolescents with strong emotional support from friends, family, or counselors were more likely to forgive and move forward. One participant noted, *"Having someone to talk to made it easier to let go of the anger."* This observation aligns with studies highlighting the pivotal role of social support in fostering forgiveness (Toussaint et al., 2018).

Conversely, adolescents lacking support or encountering societal stigma regarding forgiveness faced greater difficulties with the process. These barriers underscore the importance of interventions that normalize forgiveness as a constructive and adaptive response to conflict.

### **Adolescents' Narratives of Transformative Forgiveness**

Several participants shared transformative experiences of forgiveness that significantly impacted their lives. These narratives frequently featured a shift in perspective, with adolescents reframing conflicts as opportunities for personal growth. As one participant stated, *"Forgiving helped me see things differently—it wasn't about letting them win; it was about finding peace for myself."*

This theme underscores the potential of forgiveness to alleviate emotional distress while also fostering the development of resilience and emotional intelligence in adolescents.

### **Gender Differences in Forgiveness Practices**

Subtle gender differences in forgiveness practices were observed. Female participants were more inclined to articulate their emotions and pursue reconciliation, whereas male participants tended to focus on releasing anger without necessarily prioritizing relationship restoration. These findings align with previous research that highlights gender-specific approaches to emotional regulation (Enright & Fitzgibbons, 2015).

### **Cultural Influences on Forgiveness**

Cultural and familial values played a significant role in shaping participants' attitudes toward forgiveness. Adolescents from collectivist cultures prioritized maintaining harmony and familial unity, which frequently served as a motivation for forgiveness. Conversely, participants from individualistic cultures placed a stronger emphasis on personal boundaries and self-preservation. These findings underscore the importance of culturally sensitive approaches to forgiveness interventions (Worthington et al., 2016).

### **Forgiveness and Mental Health Outcomes**

Forgiveness was linked to improved mental health outcomes among participants. Adolescents who practiced forgiveness reported reduced levels of anxiety, depression, and anger, along with enhanced emotional well-being. One participant remarked, *"Forgiving didn't just help me feel better about the situation; it made me feel better about myself."* These findings highlight the therapeutic potential of forgiveness as a coping mechanism for adolescents dealing with interpersonal conflicts.

### **Challenges in Promoting Forgiveness**

Participants highlighted several challenges in practicing forgiveness, such as the fear of appearing weak, concerns about experiencing further harm, and a lack of clarity about the meaning and process of forgiveness. Addressing these challenges through education and supportive interventions could enable adolescents to adopt forgiveness more readily.

### **The Role of Interventions in Enhancing Forgiveness**

Participants expressed a need for guidance in understanding and navigating the forgiveness process. Structured interventions, including counseling or educational programs, were proposed as potential methods for fostering forgiveness. As one participant stated, *"I think if someone had taught me how to forgive, it wouldn't have been so hard."*

### **Summary of Findings**

In summary, the findings underscore the intricate interplay between social media, family dynamics, and forgiveness in influencing adolescents' mental health. Forgiveness emerged as a powerful mechanism for conflict resolution and fostering emotional resilience, though it presents significant challenges that require targeted interventions.

#### 4. Discussion

The findings of this study highlight the complex dynamics of forgiveness among adolescents, especially in the contexts of social media and familial conflicts. These insights provide a deeper understanding of the psychological and relational factors shaping forgiveness processes and their broader implications for mental health. By situating these findings within the framework of existing literature, this discussion highlights new contributions to the field while exploring implications for theory and practice.

The persistent influence of social media on adolescents' mental health is evident in the significant distress caused by cyberbullying and online conflicts. Participants reported feelings of anger, humiliation, and prolonged anxiety, which align with research emphasizing the detrimental psychological impact of negative online interactions (Vannucci & Ohannessian, 2019). The unique persistence of social media conflicts due to the digital permanence of content exacerbates this distress, underscoring the importance of resilience-based interventions tailored to digital environments. These findings expand on prior research by identifying forgiveness as a mechanism to mitigate such impacts, even when challenges like repeated exposure to hurtful content exist.

Forgiveness is identified as an effective mechanism for emotional regulation and relational repair among adolescents, both online and within familial contexts. This study corroborates the findings from Worthington and Scherer (2021), who identified forgiveness as an emotion-focused coping strategy that alleviates psychological distress. Adolescents described experiencing a sense of emotional relief and empowerment through forgiveness, suggesting its potential to serve as a process for fostering resilience. This research advances existing knowledge by emphasizing the importance of fostering forgiveness in digital settings, an area that remains underexplored in the current body of literature.

Family conflicts add further complexity to the emotional and relational experiences for adolescents. Participants frequently associated unresolved familial tensions with feelings of isolation and emotional distress, consistent with findings by Coyne et al. (2021), who identified familial discord as a significant contributor to adolescent mental health issues. However, this study provides new insights into the ways in which forgiveness functions as a transformative process in family dynamics. Adolescents who forgave family members reported strengthened bonds and enhanced communication, highlighting forgiveness as a relational tool for fostering emotional intimacy and reducing familial stress.

Forgiveness is a fundamental factor in resolving family conflicts and fostering emotional closeness among adolescents and their family members. Studies indicate that adolescents who forgive family members for past conflicts experience reduced emotional distress and enhanced relational satisfaction (Karremans & Van Lange, 2021). Forgiveness facilitates open communication, decreases hostility, and promotes mutual understanding, which is essential for repairing strained family bonds (Allemand et al., 2015). Additionally, expressions of remorse and empathy by family members significantly enhance adolescents' capacity to forgive, highlighting the reciprocal nature of the forgiveness process within family dynamics (McNulty, 2016). The benefits of forgiveness extend beyond individual well-being, as it fosters a harmonious family environment that supports adolescents' psychological growth and resilience (Fincham et al., 2020). These findings underscore the transformative potential of forgiveness as a tool for addressing familial tensions and improving overall mental health outcomes.

The interplay between social media and family relationships introduces distinct challenges. Disputes over screen time, online behavior, or the interpretation of digital content often trigger or intensify familial conflicts. While existing literature has largely treated social media and family dynamics as separate domains, this study's findings suggest a significant interrelationship, particularly in adolescents' lives (Hinduja & Patchin, 2019). The recognition of this overlap invites further research into integrative approaches to resolve conflicts within both digital and



familial domains.

One significant contribution of this study lies in identifying social support, self-awareness, and cultural norms as pivotal factors influencing adolescents' ability to forgive. This finding aligns with Toussaint et al. (2018), who demonstrated the role of supportive relationships in facilitating forgiveness. Adolescents with robust emotional support systems exhibited a greater propensity for forgiveness, emphasizing the importance of cultivating environments where empathy and understanding thrive. This research advances existing frameworks by emphasizing the intersection of cultural and developmental contexts in shaping forgiveness processes.

The therapeutic potential of forgiveness is demonstrated by the positive mental health outcomes reported by participants. Adolescents who forgave their offenders experienced reduced anxiety, anger, and depression, and improved emotional well-being. These findings reinforce forgiveness as a vital component of mental health interventions for adolescents (Toussaint et al., 2018). The practical implications suggest the integration of forgiveness-based exercises into counseling and educational programs, particularly for adolescents facing high levels of interpersonal conflict.

This study also identifies critical barriers to forgiveness, such as fear of appearing weak, concerns about repeated harm, and misconceptions about the forgiveness process. These challenges underscore the need for interventions that normalize forgiveness as a strength rather than a vulnerability (Cornish & Wade, 2015). By reframing forgiveness through psychoeducation and experiential learning, adolescents may develop enhanced confidence and emotional resilience in navigating conflicts.

Cultural variations in forgiveness practices highlight those adolescents from collectivist cultures value familial harmony, whereas those from individualist cultures focus on personal boundaries. This observation aligns with research on cultural differences in conflict resolution strategies (Enright & Fitzgibbons, 2015). These findings underscore the importance of developing culturally sensitive interventions that respect diverse values and expectations while promoting forgiveness as a universal coping mechanism.

Gender differences emerged, with female participants demonstrating a greater propensity for reconciliation, and male participants prioritizing emotional independence. These findings resonate with existing literature on gendered approaches to emotional regulation (Katz & Woodin, 2021). Such insights highlight the importance of tailoring forgiveness interventions to meet gender-specific needs and preferences, ensuring their effectiveness across diverse adolescent populations.

Theoretical contributions of this study lie in integrating forgiveness into broader discussions of adolescent development and mental health. By framing forgiveness as a developmental process influenced by social, cultural, and psychological factors, this research provides a nuanced perspective to address gaps in existing theoretical frameworks. The findings underscore forgiveness as not only an outcome but also a dynamic process shaped by adolescents' emotional and cognitive development.

From a practical standpoint, this research offers actionable insights for educators, counselors, and policymakers. For instance, integrating forgiveness training into school curricula may equip adolescents with essential skills to manage interpersonal conflicts more effectively. Similarly, family counseling programs that emphasize forgiveness and empathy may foster relational harmony and improve emotional well-being within families.

In conclusion, this study underscores the transformative role of forgiveness in resolving adolescent conflicts, both in digital and familial contexts. By situating these findings within the existing literature, this research provides novel theoretical and practical contributions, emphasizing the importance of forgiveness as a developmental and relational tool. Future research is encouraged to expand upon these findings by examining longitudinal effects and designing targeted interventions to establish forgiveness as a fundamental component of adolescent mental health

and resilience.

## **5. Conclusion and Suggestion**

This study offers valuable insights regarding the dynamics of forgiveness among adolescents, particularly in the contexts of social media and familial conflicts. Forgiveness is identified as a crucial mechanism for reducing emotional distress and enhancing relational harmony, highlighting its significant role in promoting mental health and resilience. The findings underscore the profound impact of forgiveness on reducing anxiety, depression, and anger while enhancing emotional well-being and interpersonal relationships. By examining adolescents' experiences, this research advances understanding of the psychological and social factors that shape forgiveness processes during a pivotal developmental stage.

The results highlight the unique challenges posed by social media conflicts, which are characterized by their persistence and public nature, to adolescents' mental health. Forgiveness in such contexts is shown to offer emotional relief and empowerment, although its efficacy is often hindered by recurring reminders of harm through digital content. Similarly, unresolved family conflicts are demonstrated to create emotional burdens that forgiveness may help alleviate by fostering communication and emotional closeness. These findings highlight the interconnectedness of digital and familial dynamics in shaping adolescents' emotional experiences and the transformative potential of forgiveness in these domains.

### **Practical Implications for Adolescent Mental Health**

The study's findings present significant implications for designing mental health interventions for adolescents. Forgiveness-based approaches may be integrated into counseling, educational settings, and family therapy programs to provide adolescents with the tools necessary to effectively manage interpersonal conflicts. For instance, school-based programs may incorporate psychoeducational components on the benefits of forgiveness, alongside exercises designed to enhance empathy and emotional regulation skills. These programs should specifically address the challenges posed by social media, equipping adolescents with strategies to manage digital conflicts while fostering a culture of accountability and empathy in online interactions.

For families, interventions that encourage open communication, active listening, and shared values are recommended to cultivate environments that facilitate forgiveness. Workshops or counseling sessions that include all family members may strengthen familial relationships and resolve underlying barriers to forgiveness. Recognizing cultural and gender-specific differences in forgiveness practices, interventions should be customized to address the unique needs and values of diverse adolescent groups.

Mental health professionals are encouraged to incorporate forgiveness training into therapeutic practices for adolescents experiencing prolonged emotional distress stemming from interpersonal conflicts. Techniques such as narrative therapy, mindfulness, and role-playing scenarios may be employed to facilitate forgiveness and build resilience. Furthermore, digital platforms may be developed to support restorative practices, incorporating features such as private conflict resolution mechanisms and moderation tools that promote constructive dialogue.

### **Recommendations for Future Research**

While this study provides valuable insights, it identifies several areas requiring further investigation. Longitudinal research is necessary to investigate the evolution of forgiveness practices over time and their enduring effects on mental health and interpersonal relationships. Investigating the developmental trajectories of forgiveness across different stages of adolescence and early adulthood may yield a more nuanced understanding of its role in emotional and cognitive development.

Future studies are encouraged to examine the potential integration of forgiveness into digital tools and platforms. For example, the development of applications or social media features aimed at

fostering empathy, accountability, and conflict resolution could provide adolescents with accessible and immediate resources for managing conflicts. Research into the effectiveness of such tools may guide the creation of technology-enhanced interventions for adolescent mental health.

Additionally, greater emphasis should be placed on examining the cultural, gender, and socioeconomic determinants of forgiveness practices. Comparative studies across diverse cultural and demographic contexts may reveal universal principles and culturally specific nuances in forgiveness processes. These insights are likely to inform the development of interventions that are both efficacious and culturally appropriate.

In conclusion, forgiveness is established as a critical component of adolescent mental health, providing a pathway to emotional resilience and relational harmony in addressing social media and familial conflicts. This study provides a foundation for future research and practical applications, underscoring the importance of interdisciplinary initiatives to position forgiveness as a protective factor in adolescent well-being. By addressing the challenges and harnessing the opportunities identified, stakeholders in education, mental health, and technology may develop supportive environments that empower adolescents to flourish emotionally and relationally.

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