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The role of Rumination, Anger and Narcissism on Forgiveness among Indians during COVID -19 Pandemic

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Abstract:

Human life is reliant on interpersonal relationships. Interpersonal interactions are fluid in nature that evolves on a continuous basis. Interpersonal relationships are primarily influenced by transgressions and the willingness to forgive the transgressor. Forgiveness is heavily influenced by narcissistic tendencies, rumination, and anger. Several studies have found correlations between narcissism and forgiveness over time. Although the link between narcissism and decreased forgiveness is well-established, nothing is known about the precise contribution of admiration and rivalry to the lack of forgiveness.

The current study focuses on the association between narcissism and lack of forgiveness as well as the moderating effects of rage and rumination among young adults during COVID 19, one of the world's biggest disasters. The study is being conducted with a sample of 200 young adults, inclusive of all genders between the ages of 18 and 30. The research was conducted in several Indian states. Data was obtained using the Narcissistic Admiration and Rivalry questionnaire developed by Beck et al. (2013) and the Transgression Related Interpersonal Motivations Inventory (TRIM) developed by McCullough et al. (1998). The statistical correlation study found a substantial association between narcissism and forgiveness, as well as a role for anger and rumination in young people.

During covid time, we realized the importance of interpersonal relationships in our life as humans are social beings. The findings of this study will assist people in being more aware of the factors that facilitate and obstruct them to grant or seek forgiveness. Consequently, the quality of interpersonal relationships improves.

Keywords: Interpersonal relationships, Narcissism, Anger, Rumination, Forgiveness

People are sociable creatures by nature. From the moment of conception till death, there is a need for human beings to depend on others and establish a connection. And later on in life we still crave and maintain the connection even though we don't need to rely on others anymore. Interpersonal relationships are a term used to describe close relationships. In interpersonal interactions, forgiveness is a necessary response to "maintain relatedness with fellow humans in the face of being wounded by them" (Fincham et al., 2005). Various researches on forgiveness have shown that individual differences affect one's response to transgressions (Fehr et al, 2010). The narcissistic personality appears to be a hindrance in enabling forgiveness. Narcissistic individuals may have great difficulty in both granting and seeking forgiveness and are known to exploit social relationships to their own advantage, which can result in the deterioration of their relationships (Miller & Campbell, 2010). When confronted with social rejection, narcissists tend to act aggressively (Twenge & Campbell, 2003).

Several studies have found correlations between narcissism and forgiveness over time. Although the link between narcissism and decreased forgiveness is well-established, nothing is known about the precise contribution of admiration and rivalry to the lack of forgiveness. Indeed, it has been proven that narcissistic people are less likely to forgive interpersonal transgressions (Eaton et al, 2006). Reduced forgiveness has been connected to narcissistic entitlement (i.e., perception of deserved preferential treatment) (Exline et al, 2004).

The Narcissistic Personality Inventory was almost solely used in studies looking at the narcissism–forgiveness link (NPI; Raskin & Hall, 1979). Although it is extensively utilized, it has been critiqued for combining both adaptive and maladaptive aspects of narcissism into a single composite. Furthermore, it has been claimed that distinguishing these aspects can help us better understand narcissism (Ackerman et al., 2011). According to the Narcissistic Admiration and Rivalry Concept (NARC; Back et al., 2013), narcissism is defined as the interaction of two distinct social strategies: first, the proclivity for assertive self-enhancement through self-promotion (admiration), and second, the natural tendency for hostile self-protection through self-defense (rivalry). Admiration is linked to adjustment indicators (such as self-assurance and problem-focused responses to transgressions), whereas rivalry is linked to maladjustment (e.g., entitlement, more hostile reactions).

Transgressions can be interpersonal stressors that cause victims to feel a sense of injustice, making them feel threatened as a result of their pain and grief (Worthington 2006). A sense of being intimidated might lead to ruminating and being angry. In terms of forgiveness, ruminating regarding the transgression may very well be detrimental. Rumination is a form of perseverative cognition that focuses on negative content, generally past and present, and results in emotional distress (Sansone & Sansone 2012). When people reflect on hurtful events, they re-experience and immerse themselves in negative thoughts and emotions, making them less likely to forgive (Wu et al., 2019).

Anger is an emotion defined by hostility toward someone or something you perceive has wronged you on purpose. Research suggests that anger is a proximal predictor of forgiveness (Lynch et al, 2021). When people have a tendency to grow angry quickly, they are less prone to forgive. (McCullough et al., 2007) established that the link between rumination and forgiveness is mediated by anger toward the transgressor. According to Pingleton (1989: 27), forgiveness recognises, predicts, and strives to minimise the lex talionis, or law of the talon - the human organism's ubiquitous, almost instinctual proclivity for revenge and retribution in the face of hurt and pain at the hands of another. As a result, forgiveness can be regarded as the polar opposite of the individual's natural and anticipated reaction to violation and abuse. People are naturally social beings. Human beings need to rely on others and develop connections from conception to death. It was uncertain how much relationship augmentation or decrease would apply to various types of relationship. The COVID-19 global pandemic has caused a significant shift in communication patterns as a result of the lockdown imposed to restrict disease spread and social isolation. This was important to prevent the viral infection, but it has clearly had a severe impact on mental health and has heightened feelings of loneliness.

As a result, the importance of interpersonal interactions is highlighted. According to different research, forgiveness is a necessary response in interpersonal interactions to retain relatedness with fellow humans in the face of being hurt by them, and forgiveness is highly influenced negatively by narcissistic characteristics, rumination, and rage. Hence the current research focuses on establishing the role of rumination, anger, and narcissism on forgiveness among the young adults during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Aim: The major objective of the research is to find out the role of Rumination, Anger and Narcissism on Forgiveness among Indians during COVID -19 pandemic.

Methods:

Hypothesis:

- H1 There is a significant relationship between narcissism and forgiveness among young adults.
- H2 There is a significant relationship between anger and forgiveness among young adults.
- H3 There is a significant relationship between rumination and forgiveness among young adults.
- H4 There is no gender-wise, significant difference in the level of forgiveness among young adults.

Sampling: This study enlisted the participation of 200 young adults between the age of 18-30, from various Indian states, inclusive of all genders. The correlational research design and simple random sampling method was used to analyze whether there is a role of narcissism, anger and rumination on forgiveness.

Measures: The following instruments were used to collect data from the sample:

Participants were asked to give their demographic details, Age, occupation and complete the narcissism questionnaire. For narcissism, the Narcissistic Admirations and Rivalry Questionnaire was used (NARQ; Back et al., 2013). The NARQ is based on the notion that narcissism can be broken down into two positively associated dimensions: admiration and rivalry. These dimensions each have different cognitive, affective-motivational, and behavioural aspects and are the result of two distinct interpersonal strategies: the tendency to approach social admiration through self-promotion (assertive self-enhancement) and the tendency to avoid social failure through self-defence (antagonistic self-protection).

Participants were asked to rate their current anger toward the transgressor, on a face valid single item by Fatfouta et al, 2014. For rumination, participants were also asked how much they ruminated about the transgression currently, on a face-valid single item by Fatfouta et al, 2014. For forgiveness, the Transgression-Related Interpersonal Motivations Inventory was used (TRIM; McCullough et al., 1998). The TRIM is a self-report questionnaire that looks at three different reasons why people forgive: avoidance, benevolence, and revenge-based transgression. It assesses individuals’ current motivations toward a real-life transgressor..

Results:

NARCISSISM AND FORGIVENESS

CORRELATIONS

		Narcissism	Forgiveness
Narcissism	Pearson Correlation	1	.080
	Sig. (2-Tailed)		.231
	N	200	.200
Forgiveness	Pearson Correlation	.080	1
	Sig. (2-Tailed)	.231	
	N	200	200

TABLE 1

Table 1 shows the Pearson correlation obtained is 0.080 which indicates a positive relationship between narcissism and forgiveness. Hence, we can conclude that when narcissism increases, forgiveness also increases. Since, p-value is 0.231, which is greater than the significant level so the null hypothesis is accepted. Since p value >0.01, there is no statically significant correlation between the two variables narcissism and forgiveness.

CORRELATIONS

		Anger	Forgiveness
Anger	Pearson Correlation	1	.291
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	200	200
Forgiveness	Pearson Correlation	.291	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	200	200

TABLE 2

ANGER AND FORGIVENESS

Table 2 shows the Pearson correlation obtained is 0.291 which indicates a positive relationship between anger and forgiveness. Hence, we can conclude that when narcissism increases, forgiveness also increases. Since, p-value is 0.000, which is less than the significant level so the null hypothesis is rejected. Since p value <0.01, there is statically significant correlation between the two variables anger and forgiveness.

Rumination and Forgiveness:

CORRELATIONS

		Rumination	Forgiveness
Rumination	Pearson Correlation	1	.209
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.002
	N	200	200
Forgiveness	Pearson Correlation	.209	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.002	
	N	200	200

TABLE 3

Table 3 shows the Pearson correlation obtained is 0.209 which indicates a positive relationship between rumination and forgiveness. Hence, we can conclude that when narcissism increases, forgiveness also increases. Since, p-value is 0.002, which is greater than the significant level so the null hypothesis is accepted. Since p value >0.01, there is no statically significant correlation between the two variables rumination and forgiveness.

GENDER BASED CORRELATION

DESCRIPTIVES

GENDER	N	Mean
Female	111	52.23
Male	87	53.45
Transgender female	1	56.00
Transgender male	1	51.00
Total	200	53.32

TABLE 4

From **Table 4** we can conclude that there no gender-wise, significant difference in the mean of level of forgiveness among young adults.

ANOVA

Forgiveness

	Sum of squares	dtf	Mean square	f	sig
Between Groups	15.019	3	5.006	.107	.956
Within Groups	10368.043	222	46.703		
Total	10383.062	225			

TABLE 5

From **Table 5**, we can conclude that the value of F is 0.107 and p-value =0.956 (which is more than the .05 alpha level). This means there is a statistically no significant difference in between within groups as determined by one-way ANOVA.

Discussion: Drawing on a heterogeneous sample, the current study examined the role of narcissism, rumination, and anger on forgiveness among young adults during the COVID-19 Pandemic.

The present study consists of a population of 200, inclusive of 87 males, 111 females,1 transgender male, and 1 transgender female. The statistical analysis of the collected data revealed a positive correlation between narcissism, anger, rumination, and forgiveness. The result concluded that there is a significant relationship between anger and forgiveness with a p-value <0.01. It was also found that there is no significant relationship between narcissism, rumination, and forgiveness as the p-value >0.01. It was also found that there is no gender-wise, significant difference in the level of forgiveness among young adults. Thereby the study concludes that the greater the levels of narcissism, anger, and rumination, the greater the levels of forgiveness among young adults of all genders.

A large body of research demonstrates that the role of anger, rumination, and narcissism is linked to negative interpersonal outcomes and lack of forgiveness, our research paper elucidates that there is a positive correlation between narcissism, anger, rumination, and forgiveness which can be interpreted as the distressing outcome of the global pandemic. This has led to the realization that there has been a significant need for interpersonal interactions and restorations of relationships during the COVID-19 pandemic, making people more likely to facilitate and accept forgiveness. Understanding the relationship between these variables could improve the quality of interpersonal relationships.

This has led to the realization that there has been a significant need for interpersonal interactions and restorations of relationships during the COVID-19 pandemic, which has made people more inclined toward facilitating forgiveness and accepting forgiveness.

The quality of the interpersonal relationship could be enhanced by understanding the relationship between these variables. The need of the time is human connection and a person to rely on and share the feeling of anxiousness, restlessness, and the uncertainty of the situation wanting to compare their emotions to those of others.

Limitations/Future Directions: While our small sample size allowed us to detect the observed effects with sufficient precision (Schönbrodt & Perugini, 2013), some of the effects were rather small in magnitude (e.g., the significant suppression of the role of narcissism and rumination on forgiveness) and thus require interpretative caution. Another topic to consider is the use of single-item measures of rage and rumination. Despite the fact that this has been proved to yield reliable data, future research should include multi-item measurements of these constructs. We also advocate for the use of non-self-report measures, because individuals are not always conscious of their thoughts and feelings toward their transgressor. Observations of behaviour or indirect measures of forgiveness could be used as such (Fatfouta, Schröder-Abé, & Merkl, 2014).

Because of the cross-sectional character of our research, causal pathways relating to admiration, competition, and lack of forgiveness cannot be proven. Longitudinal or experimental studies that look at this more fully are undoubtedly an area for future research to look into the post-COVID 19 situation. Other conceptualizations and measurements of narcissism may potentially be used in such investigations to assess the generalizability of the current study.

Future studies could use experience-sampling designs to investigate whether there are any changes in present relations on a daily basis and with different sorts of infractions. Finally, it would be worthwhile to investigate the narcissism–forgiveness link in close (i.e., romantic) relationships in greater depth, focusing on narcissists' reactions to partner offences.

The results of this study can be helpful in personal counselling where clients showing narcissistic personality traits can be made aware of the factors facilitating and obstructing

forgiveness and can be trained to grant or seek forgiveness which will in turn help them to enhance the quality of their interpersonal relationships.

Conclusion: The current study showed that there is positive correlation of Rumination, Anger, and Narcissism on Forgiveness among Indians during COVID -19 Pandemic one of the world's biggest disasters. It also adds to our limited understanding of how the lack of interpersonal connections during COVID 19 altered the dynamics of the role of narcissism, anger, and rumination on forgiveness. Further research is required to find other cognitive mechanisms of this link and, ultimately, to further define the causal linkages between these factors. Hence, the study can be provided with some ways to enhance forgiveness among the young adults which helps them lead a happy and peaceful life with community.

The results of this study can be helpful in personal counselling where clients showing narcissistic personality traits can be made aware of the factors facilitating and obstructing forgiveness and can be trained to grant or seek forgiveness which will, in turn, help them to enhance the quality of their interpersonal relationships.

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