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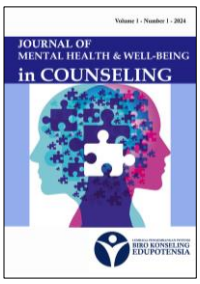

Forgivness and Personal Peacefulness among high School Adolescents: A Correlational Study

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ABSTRACT

Forgiveness and personal peacefulness are two essential indicators of positive mental health, supporting adolescents' capacity to adapt to academic, social, and emotional demands. This study aimed to examine the relationship between personal peacefulness and forgiveness among high school students. A cross-sectional quantitative design with a correlational approach was applied, involving 359 adolescents selected through purposive sampling. Personal peacefulness was assessed using the standardized Self Perception Scale (SPS), while forgiveness was measured using the Heartland Forgiveness Scale (HFS). The findings revealed a significant positive correlation between personal peacefulness and forgiveness (r = 0.593), with the dimensions of self-forgiveness and situational forgiveness contributing most substantially to multiple aspects of personal peacefulness. These results confirm that adolescents with higher forgiveness capacities toward self, others, and adverse situations tend to report greater levels of personal peacefulness. Overall, this study emphasizes the importance of developing forgiveness-based and positive psychology interventions within school guidance and counseling services to foster adolescents' mental well-being.

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Introduction

The rising prevalence of emotional distress and interpersonal conflict among adolescents has become an increasingly alarming issue in the context of mental well-being. Unresolved conflict, when not managed through healthy coping mechanisms, frequently manifests in pervasive negative emotions including anger, resentment, and social withdrawal which may ultimately hinder adolescents' psychological development (Yusuf & Arifin, 2021). Limited conflict-management capacity also contributes to reduced intrapersonal tranquility and elevates susceptibility to maladaptive or risk-taking behaviors, such as physical aggression, verbal violence, substance misuse, and cyberbullying (Ronanda et al., 2024). When left unaddressed, suppressed negative emotions may escalate into deviant behaviors that pose harm to both self and others (Nihayah et al., 2021). During this developmental stage, adolescents face complex challenges, including identity exploration, heightened academic pressure, and intensified social expectations from their surrounding environments (Mahmud, 2024). These stressors may trigger a spectrum of negative behaviors, ranging from seemingly mild verbal hostility to more severe forms of physical violence, such as street fighting, peer assault, school brawls, bullying, problematic alcohol use, non-medical drug consumption, and even criminal acts (Ulum et al., 2024). Such behaviors disrupt emotional regulation and compromise relational harmony among adolescents (Wardani et al., 2023).

Behavioral deviance can exert profound negative effects on mental well-being and personal peacefulness (Medeiros et al., 2022). Data from the Indonesian Child Protection Commission (2024) indicate that approximately 25–30% of juvenile delinquency cases involve verbal and physical violence, 15–20% involve drug abuse, and 10–15% relate to high-risk behaviors such as cyberbullying. Such forms of deviance reflect a serious emotional crisis and signal adolescents diminished capacity to attain inner calm and psychological equilibrium (Fakhril & Buchori, 2022). Adolescents engaged in these behaviors are more vulnerable to emotional distress, excessive anxiety, guilt, and even depression, which gradually erodes their self-esteem (Bobyanti, 2023). Moreover, behaviors that conflict with personal moral values often generate internal dissonance that disrupts psychological serenity (Fakhriyani, 2019). Dependence on alcohol or drugs further undermines adolescents' capacity for self-control, distancing them from a healthy and peaceful life (Sianturi et al., 2023). This phenomenon contradicts the core purpose of education, which should promote safe and peaceful school environments (Ilfiandra et al., 2021). One crucial strategy to reduce violence involves implementing psychological interventions that help adolescents regulate emotions, develop a sense of safety, and resolve conflicts peacefully (David et al., 2023).

Personal peacefulness is a fundamental psychological attribute closely linked to an individual's capacity to maintain emotional stability, cope effectively with stress, and establish harmonious social relationships. It can be conceptualized as a stable dispositional trait, reflected through a consistent internal state of peace, encompassing self-acceptance, self-compassion, and enduring patterns of interpersonal harmony over time (Nelson, 2014). This continuity not only represents emotional steadiness but also demonstrates an adaptive ability to respond constructively to diverse life challenges (Zacher & Rudolph, 2021). From a positive psychology perspective, personal peacefulness is not merely defined by the absence of conflict, but more importantly by the presence of proactive inner resources such as empathy, compassion, and self-acceptance that contribute to positive mental well-being (Smith & Greenberg, 2020). Additionally, positive mental well-being includes not only freedom from psychological disorder, but also the presence of emotional flourishing, subjective happiness, and the optimal functioning of interpersonal and community relationships (Keyes & Lopez, 2002). In other words, personal peacefulness should be understood holistically as the persistent presence of peace-oriented attitudes within oneself, extended into social engagement, nurtured within peer collectives, and ultimately fostering broader psychosocial alignment and life coherence (Ilfiandra et al., 2021). This state becomes particularly vital during adolescence, a developmental stage marked by rapid psychological, emotional, and social transitions, where internal equilibrium plays a decisive role in shaping healthy personal identity and adaptive personality development (Murty, 2022).

One psychological mechanism that has the potential to strengthen personal peacefulness is forgiveness. Forgiveness functions as an emotional regulation process capable of reducing anger, releasing resentment, and restoring affective balance, thereby assisting individuals in attaining inner calm (Ho et al., 2017). Forgiveness is conceptualized as an intrapersonal process that promotes the disengagement of negative emotions, the cultivation of empathy, and the reconstruction of meaning surrounding painful experiences (Thompson et al., 2005). Theoretically, forgiveness is also regarded as a central pathway toward achieving both personal and social peace (Van Tongeren, 2024; Moran, 2024). Empirical evidence suggests that the capacity for forgiveness can be developed through structured practice, enabling individuals to accept past adversities without holding grudges, which ultimately fosters harmony in social relationships and personal life domains (Aziza et al., 2024; Aziza et al., 2024). The ability to forgive is particularly crucial, as it supports the repair of interpersonal relationships following conflict, facilitating renewed social engagement. Moreover, forgiveness contributes to the reduction of negative psychological responses that frequently emerge in post-conflict interactions (Mullet et al., 2023). Consequently, forgiveness not only yields substantial benefits for interpersonal dynamics but is also profoundly linked to an individual's psychological well-being and state of lasting personal peacefulness.

A growing body of research indicates that individuals with a higher degree of personal peacefulness tend to demonstrate a greater capacity for forgiveness across multiple domains, including self-forgiveness, forgiveness toward others, and situational forgiveness. Personal peacefulness is believed to facilitate forgiveness by decreasing negative cognitive bias, enhancing empathic concern, and supporting cognitive reappraisal of conflict-related experiences (Luberto et al., 2022; Rahman et al., 2023). Furthermore, individuals exhibiting elevated personal peacefulness commonly show stronger empathic abilities, greater tolerance, and a more stable inclination toward prosocial behaviors (Martela & Ryan, 2020). Forgiveness is also recognized as a critical intrapersonal skill for adolescents in navigating everyday interpersonal conflicts, such as peer disputes, social misunderstandings, and social pressures that frequently trigger negative emotional reactions. Engaging in forgiveness enables adolescents to break free from cycles of retaliation and impulsive tendencies, fostering healthier social bonds and reinforcing their personal peacefulness (Glavas, 2023). In addition, learning to forgive contributes substantially to establishing more harmonious environments. Ultimately, forgiveness serves not only

as a tool for conflict resolution but also as an essential component in sustaining intrapsychic peace and promoting constructive social interactions (Taylor et al., 2022).

Research on forgiveness and adolescent mental well-being has grown substantially, yet studies that specifically examine the relationship between personal peacefulness and forgiveness remain notably scarce, particularly within the context of Indonesian adolescents. Most prior investigations have concentrated on the effects of forgiveness in reducing stress or improving social relationship quality, while personal peacefulness has typically been treated as a subdimension of broader well-being frameworks rather than as an autonomous psychological construct (Nelson, 2014; Smith & Greenberg, 2020). The novelty of this study lies in its empirical examination of the association between these two constructs during adolescence, a developmental stage characterized by heightened emotional conflict, academic pressure, and identity instability. By analyzing personal peacefulness encompassing self-acceptance, emotional stability, and intrapersonal harmony as well as forgiveness as an adolescent emotional mechanism that mitigates anger and resentment (Ho et al., 2017; Thompson et al., 2005) this research contributes a new perspective for understanding psychological foundations that enable adolescents to release negative affect. This study also provides theoretical contributions by integrating two constructs that have historically been explored in isolation, along with practical implications for education and counseling, offering empirical groundwork for the development of more targeted interventions aimed at strengthening personal peacefulness through structured cultivation of forgiveness.

Based on the preceding exposition, this study aims to analyze personal peacefulness and forgiveness among senior high school adolescents, and to examine the relationship between the two constructs as interrelated psychological factors that collaboratively support mental well-being and the quality of social relationships. This inquiry focuses on the extent to which Adolescents capacity for holistic self-acceptance, self-compassion in response to personal failure or perceived limitations, and the practice of self-kindness in challenging contexts may be associated with their tendency to engage in self-forgiveness, forgiveness toward others, and forgiveness of situations beyond personal control. By providing a comprehensive mapping of both variables, the findings of this study are expected to offer an empirical foundation for the development of guidance and counseling services oriented toward strengthening adolescents' personal peace and their capacity to forgive. Ultimately, this research intends to support improved mental health outcomes, higher-quality social interactions, and positive school-based adaptation within the educational.

Method

Participants

The research method employed in this study is a descriptive method with a quantitative approach. This study aims to examine the relationship between personal peacefulness and forgiveness. The study involved 359 participants, all of whom are active senior high school students at the time of data collection within the educational context of Indonesia. Participants were selected using purposive sampling, based on the criterion that all respondents were enrolled as active students during the data-gathering period. Participation in the study was voluntary, and all students received a detailed explanation of the research objectives prior to providing their informed consent to participate.

Measure

Self-Perception Scale (Nelson, 2014)

The Self Perception Scale (SPS) developed by Nelson (2014) was used to measure students' level of personal peacefulness. This scale assesses three core dimensions: self-acceptance, self-compassion, and self-kindness. The instrument consists of multiple statements rated on a six-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 6 (*strongly agree*). The SPS has undergone a conceptual adaptation process to ensure its relevance and appropriateness for the context of senior high school students. Reliability testing yielded a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.78, indicating satisfactory internal consistency and strong measurement reliability in capturing the construct of personal peacefulness.

Heartland Forgiveness Scale (Thompson et al., 2005)

Forgiveness in this study was measured using the Heartland Forgiveness Scale (HFS), originally developed by Thompson et al. (2002) and later translated and adapted in 2016 by Julia Suleeman and Zivana Sabili—lecturers from the Faculty of Psychology at Universitas Indonesia—using a back-translation procedure to ensure linguistic and conceptual equivalence. The scale evaluates the tendency to forgive across three dimensions: self-forgiveness, forgiveness toward others, and situational forgiveness. The instrument comprises 18 items rated on a four-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 4 (*strongly agree*), intentionally applied to minimize neutral response selection. An adaptation process was conducted to establish the instrument's suitability for the psychosocial characteristics of senior high school adolescents. Reliability testing produced a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.65, indicating that the scale demonstrates an acceptable level of reliability for assessing forgiveness tendencies within the scope and context of this research.

Procedure

This study employed a quantitative descriptive method with a correlational research design aimed at examining the relationship between personal peacefulness and forgiveness among students. The research procedure began with the selection of participants through purposive sampling, consisting of all Grade XI students who met the defined research criteria. Data collection was carried out through face-to-face administration of two instruments: the Self Perception Scale (SPS) to assess personal peacefulness, and the Heartland Forgiveness Scale (HFS) to evaluate forgiveness tendencies. Prior to questionnaire completion, all students were provided with informed consent outlining the study objectives, instructions for responding, and assurances of data confidentiality. Participation was entirely voluntary, and the study deliberately excluded the collection of personal identifiers, including student names and school identification numbers. Survey completion was conducted in the classroom with direct guidance from the researcher to ensure clear comprehension of each statement item. The study was implemented in accordance with established research ethics principles, emphasizing participant rights protection and the confidentiality of responses. Upon data acquisition, completeness checks were performed before analyzing the inter-variable association using the Pearson correlation coefficient to obtain scientifically accountable and reliable results.

Analysis Data

Data analysis in this research was carried out through several key procedures. First, descriptive statistics were applied to illustrate the overall score tendencies of the personal peacefulness variable, including the minimum, maximum, mean, and standard deviation values. This step was intended to profile the distribution of students' scores at the group level on the dependent variable. Second, the association between forgiveness and personal peacefulness was examined using the Pearson correlation method to identify both the magnitude and direction of the relationship between the primary variables. Pearson correlation was selected on the basis that the data satisfied the assumptions of linearity and demonstrated distributional characteristics suitable for a parametric analytical approach. Third, a subsequent correlational analysis was conducted to assess the relationships between respective forgiveness dimensions measured by the Heartland Forgiveness Scale (HFS) and the psychological components of personal peacefulness measured by the Self Perception Scale (SPS). This stage enabled a more fine-grained and comprehensive understanding of inter-component relational patterns across both constructs. Collectively, these analytical procedures provided a systematic approach for identifying which forgiveness dimension demonstrated the strongest linkage to students' personal peacefulness. Finally, this analysis framework allowed the researchers to determine the relative weight of each forgiveness component, thereby revealing which aspect contributes most substantially to the enhancement of student personal peacefulness.

Results

As indicated in Table 1, which presents the demographic profile of the respondents, the majority of participants were aged 16 years, with female students comprising a larger proportion than male students. Most respondents were enrolled in the science track (IPA), and the majority reported residing with their parents,

suggesting a relatively stable form of family support. All respondents identified their religious affiliation as Islam, and most indicated daily engagement in religious practices. Additionally, more than half of students reported having experienced interpersonal conflict and emotional distress within the past six months, yet nearly all acknowledged having made attempts to forgive, whether partially or fully. These demographic and emotional experience variations provide an essential contextual framework for interpreting students' personal peacefulness as a component of adolescent mental well-being. The data is presented as follows:

Table 1. Demographic Context of Personal Peacefulness

Demographic Profile	Frequency (F)	Persentase (%)
Gender		
Male	130	36,21%
Female	229	63,79%
Total	**359**	**100%**
Age (Tahun)		
15	27	7,52%
16	250	69,64%
17	79	22,01%
18	3	0,83%
Total	**359**	**100%**
Academic Major		
IPA	234	65,18%
IPS	125	34,82%
Total	**359**	**100%**
Residence Status		
Living with parents	345	96,10%
Dormitory	3	0,84%
Boarding house (kos)	5	1,39%
Living with grandparents	3	0,84%
Living with mother	1	0,27%
Living with relatives	2	0,55%
Total	**359**	**100%**
Have you experienced personal or interpersonal conflict in the last 6 months?	**SS**	
Yes	163	45,40%
No	196	26,18%
Total	**359**	**100%**
Have you been emotionally hurt by others?		
Yes	265	73,82%
No	94	26,18%
Total	**359**	**100%**
Have you ever forgiven someone who hurt you? (if yes)		
Yes, fully	2	0,56%
Partially	356	99,16%
Never done before	1	0,28%
Total	**359**	**100%**

Based on residence status, nearly all participants reported living with their parents, totaling 345 students (96.10%). A very small proportion resided in residential institutions, including 3 students in dormitories (0.84%) and 5 students in boarding schools (1.39%). Other residence options emerged in only minimal proportions, comprising 3 students living with grandparents (0.84%), 1 student living with the mother only (0.27%), 2 students residing with relatives or extended family (0.55%), and 1 student living independently (0.28%). In terms of academic concentration, the most dominant group was students enrolled in the natural science specialization specifically the IPA with 234 students (65.18%), while the remaining 125 students (34.82%) were from the social science concentration. Regarding recent interpersonal conflict exposure, 163 students (45.40%) reported having experienced interpersonal conflicts within the past six months, whereas 196 students (54.60%) reported no such experience. Concerning emotional injury, 265 students (73.82%) acknowledged having felt emotionally hurt by others, while 94 students (26.18%) stated that they had never experienced emotional hurt within the same period. Within the forgiveness domain, 356 students (99.16%) indicated that they had engaged in forgiveness toward individuals who had previously hurt them, whether partially or comprehensively. Only 1 student (0.28%) reported having never forgiven before, and 2 students (0.56%) reported full forgiveness explicitly. No participant indicated a categorical refusal to forgive. These findings depict a sample predominantly consisting of mid-

adolescent students, largely enrolled in science oriented academic programs, nearly all residing in stable parental homes, and exhibiting a notably high tendency for forgiveness despite frequent exposure to interpersonal emotional injury and social conflict.

Table 2. Distribution of Personal Peacefulness

Scale	Mean	Standard Deviation
Total Personal Peacefulness	47.705	8.490
Self-Acceptance	22.919	4.519
Self-Compassion	11.964	2.895
Self-Kindness	12.822	3.134
Total Forgiveness	49.905	5.032
Self-Forgiveness	16.193	2.452
Other Forgiveness	17.704	2.119
Situational Forgiveness	16.008	2.298

Table 2 presents the score distribution for personal peacefulness and forgiveness among students. The overall Personal Peacefulness score falls within the moderate category (M = 47.705; SD = 8.490), indicating that students demonstrate a reasonably adequate level of inner calm and emotional regulation, although moderate inter-individual variability remains evident. Among the personal peace dimensions, the highest mean score emerged on self-acceptance (M = 22.919; SD = 4.519), suggesting that students tend to show greater strength in accepting themselves compared to practicing self-compassion (M = 11.964; SD = 2.895) and self-kindness (M = 12.822; SD = 3.134), both of which also fall within moderate ranges.

Meanwhile, the Total Forgiveness score was relatively high (M = 49.905; SD = 5.032), reflecting a well-developed capacity for forgiveness within the sample. At the dimension level, the highest mean score was found in forgiveness toward others (M = 17.704; SD = 2.119), indicating that students more readily forgive other individuals compared to self-forgiveness (M = 16.193; SD = 2.452) and situational forgiveness (M = 16.008; SD = 2.298). These findings point to interpersonal forgiveness as the most salient and developed domain of forgiveness among students, implying that the ability to reconcile with others is more strongly established than intrapersonal or situational forms of forgiveness. Overall, the results suggest that forgiveness in relational contexts represents the predominant strength within the broader forgiveness construct as measured by the Heartland Forgiveness Scale (HFS), while personal peacefulness was captured using the Self Perception Scale (SPS).

Table 3. The Correlation Between Personal Peacefulness and Forgiveness

Scale	Forgiveness	Self-Forgiveness	Other Forgiveness	Situational Forgiveness
Personal Peacefulness	0,593	0,501	0,215	0,568
Self-Acceptance	0,489	0,442	0,138	0,472
Self-Compassion	0,473	0,451	0,141	0,423
Self-Kindness	0,466	0,302	0,251	0,466

Table 3 outlines the overall correlation analysis between personal peacefulness and forgiveness among senior high school students. The findings reveal that the total forgiveness score is positively and significantly correlated with the total personal peacefulness score ($r = 0.593$; $p < 0.001$), which, based on Cohen's correlation coefficient effect size guidelines, falls within the *large effect* category. This result suggests that students who exhibit a higher capacity for forgiveness are more likely to report stronger experiences of personal peace. All personal peacefulness dimensions self-acceptance, self-compassion, and self-kindness also show significant positive correlations with total forgiveness, although the strength of association varies across dimensions. The highest correlations were observed in self-acceptance ($r = 0.489$; $p < 0.001$) and self-compassion ($r = 0.473$; $p < 0.001$), both of which correspond to a *medium-to-large effect* range, highlighting that adolescents' ability to fully accept themselves and display intrapersonal compassion when facing shortcomings serve as strong psychological facilitators of forgiveness. In comparison, the lowest correlation was found in self-kindness ($r = 0.466$; $p < 0.001$), categorized within the *moderate effect* range, although it remains statistically significant in explaining its contribution to students' personal peacefulness development. Collectively, these results emphasize that self-related positive appraisals are core intrapersonal resources that support forgiveness, with interpersonal forgiveness tendencies playing a meaningful role in shaping adolescents' adaptive personal peacefulness.

Additionally, the analysis across the three forgiveness dimensions reveals a consistent relational pattern. Self-forgiveness shows the strongest correlation with personal peacefulness ($r = 0.501$), indicating that adolescents' ability to reconcile with their own mistakes represents the most essential intrapersonal component

in cultivating inner calm. Situational forgiveness also demonstrates a robust association (r = 0.568), corresponding to a medium-to-large effect size based on Cohen's criteria, suggesting that the capacity to forgive external circumstances beyond personal control contributes meaningfully to strengthening students' emotional stability. In contrast, other-forgiveness displays the weakest correlation (r = 0.215), falling within the small effect range, implying that forgiving others may be relatively more challenging for adolescents and exerts a smaller influence on personal peace compared to the other two dimensions. Taken together, these findings indicate that intrapersonal forgiveness processes particularly self-acceptance, self-compassion, and most prominently self-forgiveness are more strongly associated with adolescents' personal peacefulness than interpersonal forgiveness. This further confirms that the ability to accept oneself and release internal emotional burdens serves as the primary psychological foundation for fostering inner harmony in adolescence.

Discussions

The findings of this study are consistent with a substantial body of prior research, both internationally and within the Indonesian context, which emphasizes forgiveness as a key predictor of personal peacefulness and emotional stability. Thompson et al. (2005) demonstrated that forgiveness—including both self-forgiveness and forgiveness of others—is strongly associated with reductions in negative emotional states such as anger, guilt, and lingering resentment, all of which are known to undermine inner calm. From a positive psychology perspective, Ho et al. (2017) and Van Tongeren (2024) further assert that forgiveness plays a central role in fostering both intrapersonal and interpersonal harmony, thereby enabling individuals to experience more enduring forms of inner peace. Locally, the present findings align with those of Lubis et al. (2023) and Aisya et al. (2024), who reported that forgiveness is closely linked to emotion regulation, self-acceptance, and mental well-being among adolescents. Rahman et al. (2023) also confirmed that forgiveness significantly contributes to emotional stability and healthy social interactions, particularly within school populations. Collectively, these findings reinforce the empirical consensus that forgiveness serves as a foundational psychological mechanism in cultivating personal peacefulness among adolescents.

Theoretically, the results of this study strengthen the conceptualization of personal peacefulness as a core indicator of mental well-being within the framework of positive psychology. Nelson (2014) contends that personal peacefulness comprises self-acceptance, self-compassion, and self-kindness—dimensions that jointly function to alleviate intrapsychic conflict and enhance emotional stability. These findings also support the view of Smith and Greenberg (2020), who propose that personal peacefulness is not merely the absence of distress but the presence of empathy, self-acceptance, and the capacity to confront challenges without becoming trapped in cycles of rumination. The consistency of these results is also substantiated by Neff (2023), who explains that self-compassion facilitates self-reconciliation and promotes greater willingness to forgive, especially in situations characterized by guilt or self-disappointment. Thus, personal peacefulness may be understood as an integrative construct that unifies emotional, intrapersonal, and relational aspects of mental health (Keyes & Lopez, 2002). These combined insights underscore that inner peace cannot be explained solely by the absence of negative emotions; rather, it emerges through the development of adaptive psychological capacities, self-acceptance, and the ability to release painful emotional experiences.

Practically, the findings of this study carry important implications for schools and guidance and counseling services. Given that forgiveness is strongly associated with personal peacefulness, schools must design intervention programs that go beyond merely reducing problematic behaviors and instead emphasize emotional regulation and personal conflict management. The REACH forgiveness model (Worthington, 2001) offers an evidence-based approach to helping students process negative emotional experiences through the stages of recall, empathize, altruistic gift of forgiveness, commit, and hold on. This model has been shown to effectively enhance forgiveness, reduce emotional tension, and elevate mental well-being. Furthermore, the integration of mindfulness and self-compassion into classical guidance services is highly relevant, as both approaches have been demonstrated to improve emotional awareness, reduce rumination, and foster self-acceptance (Rahmawati et al., 2025; Germer & Neff, 2022). The mindful self-compassion approach conceptually supports adolescents' social functioning through intrapersonal reconciliation, which serves as a key foundation for developing personal peacefulness and forgiveness capacity (Sugara et al., 2025). School counseling programs may also strengthen preventive efforts by prioritizing emotional regulation training, empathy enhancement, and self-esteem restoration recommendations that align with Luberto et al. (2022), who emphasize the importance of inner peace for psychological balance in adolescents.

Accordingly, schools may develop programs such as personal peacefulness classes, forgiveness workshops, mindfulness training sessions, and REACH-based interventions as strategies to enhance students' personal peacefulness and mental well-being. The implementation of these programs serves not only as a response to emotional distress or interpersonal conflict but also as a preventive measure aimed at reinforcing

long-term psychological resilience. Overall, this study contributes to the development of more holistic school-based mental health policies by highlighting the importance of forgiveness skills, emotional regulation, and inner harmony. Future research is recommended to employ longitudinal or experimental designs to observe the development of personal peacefulness over time and to evaluate the effectiveness of forgiveness- and mindfulness-based interventions. Additionally, further investigation is warranted into the roles of resilience, coping strategies, and social support as potential mediators or moderators in the relationship between forgiveness and personal peacefulness, as suggested by positive mental health theory (Keyes & Lopez, 2002; Smith & Greenberg, 2020).

Implications

The findings of this study present important implications for the field of guidance and counseling, particularly in efforts to enhance students' personal peacefulness through strengthening forgiveness capacity. The result indicating that the majority of students fall into the moderate category of personal peacefulness suggests that adolescent psychological conditions are relatively stable, yet still exhibit vulnerable aspects that require preventive and curative attention within school settings. This condition aligns with the developmental phase of adolescence, which involves substantial academic pressure, complex peer dynamics, and identity formation processes, during which negative emotions—such as anger, guilt, and emotional distress—can easily disrupt inner tranquility. In this context, forgiveness functions as a critical psychological mechanism that enables adolescents to release emotional burdens and reduce maladaptive rumination. Proactive interventions, including the implementation of peaceful school programs, have been shown to create positive and harmonious learning environments that can support academic achievement (Putra & Dewi, 2022). Furthermore, personal peacefulness conceptualized as an inner state of stability and psychological harmony by Kristen Neff (2023) can be strengthened through forgiveness-based strategies, especially when students develop unconditional self-acceptance and self-compassion practices.

From both theoretical and practical perspectives, this study highlights the necessity of integrating forgiveness and self-compassion strategies into school-based guidance and counseling services. Forgiveness has demonstrated significant contributions to students' personal peacefulness, suggesting that counseling approaches centered on forgiveness processes such as the REACH Forgiveness Model developed by Everett Worthington can serve as effective frameworks to support students in alleviating emotional wounds and promoting inner calm. Moreover, mindfulness and self-compassion exercises can foster students' awareness of emotions in a non-judgmental manner, while encouraging adaptive self-kindness, an approach consistent with prior findings from Rahman et al. (2023) and Germer & Neff (2022), which confirm the effectiveness of these strategies in improving emotional regulation and mental well-being. Schools are also encouraged to facilitate structured psychosocial support systems through classical guidance and group counseling formats to promote developmental resilience among students. Supported by consistent collaboration among counselors, teachers, parents, and the broader school environment, strengthening forgiveness capacity not only addresses short-term emotional distress but also builds sustainable psychological foundations that support long-lasting personal peacefulness throughout adolescence.

Conclusions

Based on the findings of this study, a significant positive relationship was identified between forgiveness and personal peacefulness among adolescents. This indicates that the higher an adolescent's capacity to forgive whether forgiving oneself, others, or situational circumstances the greater the level of personal peacefulness they experience. Personal peacefulness, encompassing dimensions such as self-acceptance, self-compassion, and self-kindness, plays a crucial role in fostering emotional stability, reducing intrapsychic conflict, and enhancing the quality of adolescents' social relationships. Furthermore, descriptive findings revealed that the majority of students fall into the moderate category of personal peacefulness, suggesting a need to further develop emotional skills that support optimal inner calm. Overall, this study underscores that programs designed to strengthen forgiveness, cultivate self-acceptance, and improve emotional regulation are highly strategic in assisting adolescents to achieve more stable and adaptive psychological functioning. The findings also highlight the importance of approaches that not only reduce distress but also actively develop forgiveness capacity as a component of positive mental health.

Practically, these results have important implications for school-based guidance and counseling services. Given the variability in adolescents' ability to forgive themselves, forgive others, and release negative emotional experiences, students require counseling interventions that support emotion regulation, alleviate psychological wounds, and foster intrapersonal harmony. In this context, the REACH Forgiveness Model represents a relevant approach, as it empirically facilitates the forgiveness process through the stages of recall, empathize, altruistic

forgiveness, commit, and hold on, thereby directly contributing to the enhancement of inner peace. Mindfulness and self-compassion interventions are also highly suitable, as they increase self-awareness, reduce rumination, strengthen emotional stability, and facilitate the process of releasing painful experiences. Accordingly, implementing interventions based on forgiveness, mindfulness, and personal-peace-oriented counseling is particularly relevant for promoting adolescents' optimal mental well-being, improving social relationship quality, and enhancing their adaptive capacity in response to developmental demands and school environmental dynamics. This study affirms that strengthening forgiveness is not only an indicator of individual psychological success but also a foundational element for sustaining adolescents' overall mental well-being.

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