

Dispositional forgiveness approach through an ecological systems theory: A systematic review

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Article history

	Received 2025-02-13	Revised 2025-08-25	Accepted 2025-10-01	Published 2025-10-17
Keyword:	Abstract			
dispositional forgiveness; ecological systems theory; microsystem; systematic review	Research on dispositional forgiveness has primarily concentrated on the intraindividual level. The aim of this study is to analyze dispositional forgiveness using ecological systems theory, with a systematic review and thematic analysis technique. A literature search was performed from 2018 to 2025 in a range of electronic databases: Scopus, PubMed, Google Scholar, and Science Direct. Of 26,550 results from the searches, 15 articles fulfilled the inclusion criteria and were chosen for analysis. Thematic analysis indicates that dispositional forgiveness research is primarily undertaken within the microsystem, including personality, well-being, resilience, self-efficacy, emotional intelligence, self-acceptance, attachment and anxiety. Studies on macrosystem dimensions, involving cultural and historical variables that determine individual forgiveness, are limited. Researchers can use the findings of this study as a reference to perform exploratory research on cultural values and historical circumstances that influence forgiveness attributes. Empirical research is also needed, particularly on children.			
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How to cite: Sari, K., Yusuf, R., Ishak., & Mawarpury, M. (2025). Dispositional forgiveness approach through an ecological systems theory: A systematic review. *Insight: Jurnal Ilmiah Psikologi*, 27(2), 13-31. doi: <https://doi.org/10.26486/psikologi.v27i1.4453>

INTRODUCTION

As the majority of research on forgiveness has focused on offense-specific or dyadic forgiveness, scholars are emphasizing the need to study dispositional forgiveness (Berry et al., 2005; Emmons, 2000; Mauger et al., 1992; McCullough, 2000; Mullet et al., 1998; E. L. Worthington & Wade, 1999). Dispositional forgiveness refers to the tendency or desire to respond to hurtful interpersonal relationships by managing negative emotions and behaving kindly toward the transgressor (Jankowski et al., 2013; McCullough et al., 1997, 1998; Sandage & Jankowski, 2010; E. Worthington, 1998). Trait forgiveness is an individual's innate disposition to forgive others' transgressions, with forgiveness serving as a distinctive trait or personality characteristic (Berry et al., 2005). (Roberts, 1995) defines trait forgivingness as an individual's constant ability to demonstrate forgiving behavior. Some researchers use the terms trait and dispositional interchangeably (Kim & Enright, 2016; Roberts, 1995).

Trait forgivingness has three main components: forgiving oneself (forgiveness of self), forgiving others (forgiveness of others), and forgiving situations beyond one's control. (Tangney et al., 2005) describe self-forgiveness as the process of releasing self-hatred for perceived mistakes, as well as a set of motivational changes to avoid self-revenge, such as self-punishment or engaging in self-destructive behavior, and instead

become more motivated to act kindly toward oneself. Forgiving others can be regarded as an individual's readiness to stop retaining resentment, see the transgressor in a positive way, and treat the wrongdoer with compassion (Enright & North, 1998). Forgiveness for conditions beyond one's control, on the other hand, is the process of offering forgiveness to circumstances perceived to be beyond an individual's control, for example natural disasters, fate, and disease (Thompson et al., 2005). Trait forgivingness is a source of strength and positive characteristics inherent in humans, since it is linked to all faiths' teachings emphasizing the healing process. (Toussaint et al., 2019) demonstrate that trait forgivingness is far more important for long-term health than state forgiveness. Individuals that exhibit the forgivingness trait (personal or characteristic forgiveness) are seen to be more stable across time and in different settings. Trait forgivingness is connected with psychological well-being, conflict resolution skills, negative emotions, and stress (Lawler-Row & Piferi, 2006).

Research on forgiveness is primarily associated with mental health (Krause & Ellison, 2003; Seybold & Hill, 2001; Toussaint et al., 2001) and physiological influences (Berry et al., 2001; Farrow et al., 2001; Lawler et al., 2003; Witvliet et al., 2001) within the context of personal relationships (microsystem). However, there is limited research on forgiveness among family members, and forgiveness within the framework of friendships (mesosystem) has yet to be investigated (Worthington & Wade, 2019). The setting in which individuals find themselves has a significant impact on the development of dispositional forgiveness, as individual maturation occurs as a result of interactions at various ecological system stages in the environment.

According to the ecological systems theory, broader social environments influence individual relationships. Microsystem encompasses the individual's relationship with the immediate environment, such as home and family. Family, as the smallest environment (mesosystem), interacts with elements such as cultural features, historical values, and specific settings, including natural catastrophes and conflicts (chronosystem), impacting the development of dispositional forgiveness. The purpose of this literature review is to identify the components of the ecological system that are associated with dispositional forgiveness.

METHOD

Design

The systematic review was conducted using PRISMA (preferred reporting items for systematic reviews and meta-analyses)(Sarkis-Onofre et al., 2021). This involved: (a) limiting the topic, (b) outlining the research approach, (c) identifying the literature using keywords, (d) The selection of literature or the eligibility criteria for literature selection, (e) data mining, and (f) analysis and synthesis data.

Search Strategy

This study employed a systematic literature review method, which is a research approach that maps the key concepts underpinning a study based on previous research results. This strategy is especially appropriate for research with high complexity or has not been extensively investigated (Arksey & O'Malley, 2005; Mays

et al., 2001). The identification of literature involves the use of keywords in electronic databases, including Scopus, PubMed, Google Scholar, and Science Direct, within the last seven years (2018-2025). Keywords used in all six databases included dispositional forgiveness, forgivingness, trait forgiveness or forgivingness, tendency to forgive, and propensity to forgive. The literature search was conducted between August 12, 2018 until May 13, 2025, generating a total of 26,550 items. Following a comprehensive evaluation based on predetermined eligibility criteria, 15 studies were chosen for a narrative review.

The selection of literature or the eligibility criteria for literature selection

Studies meeting the criteria for narrative analysis were included. The criteria were all selected literature written in English and addressing the topics of dispositional forgiveness, forgivingness, trait forgiveness or forgivingness, tendency to forgive, and propensity to forgive.

Table 1. *Inclusion and exclusion criteria*

<i>Inclusion criteria</i>	<i>Exclusion criteria</i>
Studies published between August 12, 2018 and June 12, 2025	Publications outside the period between August 12, 2018 and June 12, 2025
Articles written in English	Articles not written in English
Empirical research articles from electronic databases: including Scopus, PubMed, Google Scholar, and Science Direct	Non-empirical articles; theoretical articles, dissertations, books, book chapters, etc.
Articles that are open access and Accessible	Articles that are not open access and Inaccessible
Sample: individuals ranging from adolescents to the elderly, ages 12 to 89 years	Sample: individuals ranging from infancy to middle childhood (0-11 years)

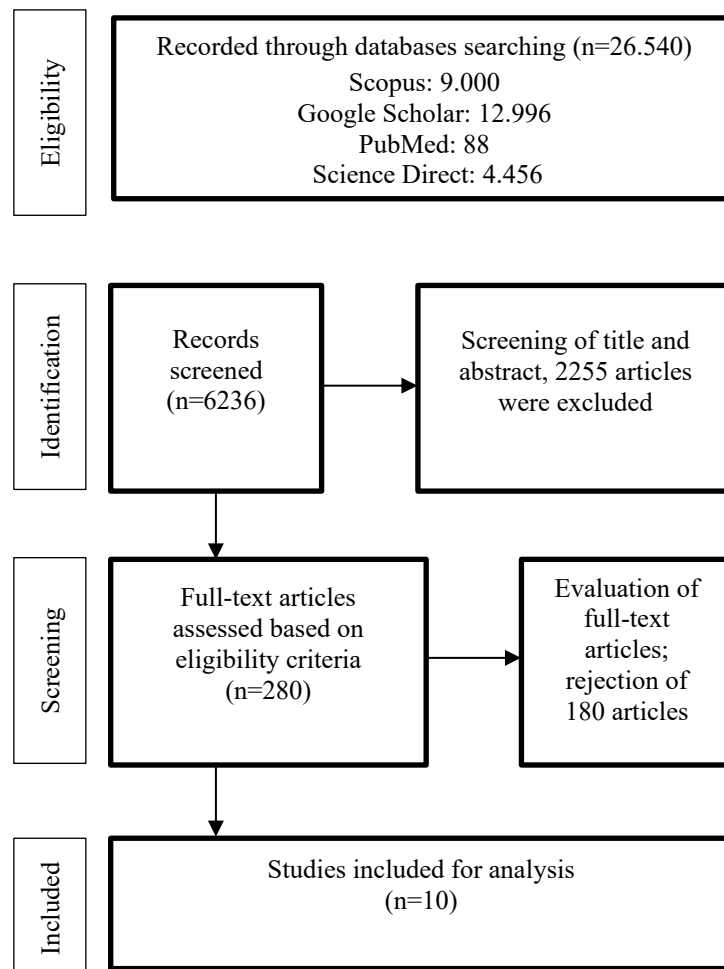


Figure 1. Extraction data flowchart

Data Mining

Data collection was organized into eight categories: research publication in English, publication year, sample characteristics, statistical analysis used, instruments used, conclusions, and elements within the ecological system.

Data Analysis and Synthesis

The data analysis and synthesis used the thematic approach by (Lucas et al., 2007), where selected studies are grouped into different topics. Thematic synthesis enables the formulation of conclusions from the examination of diverse studies by focusing on shared elements as a central point. During this phase, information gathered was evaluated using insights derived from the eight categories applied for data extraction. We analyzed and categorized themes based on the recognition of the principal emerging issues. The topics identified by each researcher were compared, then the themes were organized around common dimensions. This final stage was revisited until both researchers were in consensus that all studies could be understood within the suggested thematic dimension.

Table 2. *Matrix of Articles Included in the Review*

Authors, years	Samples (N)	Method	Statistical Analysis	Instrument	Results	Country	Elements in the Ecological System
Kaleta, K. & Mroz, J (2018)	153 adults (20-55 years old)	Correlation	Correlation analysis Multiple regression analysis	NEO-FFI Personality Inventory by Costa and McCrae; The Heartland Forgiveness Scale	1. Neuroticism, agreeableness, and extraversion are all significant indicators of the forgivingness dimension. 2. Agreeableness has a considerable positive correlation with both general forgivingness and forgivingness toward others.	Poland	Microsystem
Navon, M. & Ben-Ari, O.T (2019)	287 drivers (129 males & 158 females) (18-72 years old)	Correlation	Correlation analysis Hierarchical regression analysis	Multidimensional Driving Style Inventory (MDSI) Difficulties in Emotion and Regulation Scale (DERS), Trait Forgivingness Scale (TFS)	1. Drivers with maladaptive driving behavior (reckless and careless, angry and hostile, anxious) struggle to control their emotions and have low levels of trait forgiveness. 2. Drivers with a patient and thorough driving style experience fewer difficulties with emotional regulation and have a high level of trait forgiveness.	Israel	Microsystem
Karduz, F.F.A & Sar, A.H. (2019)	24 university students (17 females and 7 males) in their third and fourth years of education, divided into the experimental group (6 females and 6 males) and the control group (11 females and 1 male)	Experiment (pretest-posttest control group design)	Correlation analysis, Hierarchical regression analysis,	The Big Five Inventory, Heartland Forgiveness Scale	1. The psycho-education program has the potential to improve the tendency to forgive across all personality types (openness to experience, conscientiousness, extraversion, and agreeableness). 2. The psycho-education programs	Turkey	Microsystem

Authors, years	Samples (N)	Method	Statistical Analysis	Instrument	Results	Country	Elements in the Ecological System
					significantly lower neuroticism. 3. The psychoeducation program can improve the tendency to forgive in areas such as self-forgiveness, forgiving others, and forgiving the situation. 4. The psychoeducational program is effective in increasing the tendency to forgive.		
Chen, Z.J., Bechara, A.O., Worthington, E.L., Davis, E.B., & Csikszentmihalyi, M. (2019)	Study 1 272 conflict survivors (18-89 years old) Study 2 Land disaster survivors of the mudslide in Mocoa, where 63.3% are also victims of armed conflict (respondents are conflict survivors due to both human-made disaster and conflict).	-	Structural equation modelling (SEM)	PTSD Checklist (PCL-5), Psychological Distress Scale-10, Brief Religious COPE (RCOPE), Trait Forgivingness Scale (TFS), Dispositional Hope: the 12- item Herth Hope Index (HHI), Psychological Well-being: the 25-item Positive Psychotherapy Inventory (PPTI)	1. The trauma is associated to high levels of negative religious coping, which promotes low forgiveness and hope. 2. Negative religious coping will have a negative impact on survivors' personalities and well-being. 3. Results from Study 2 (landslide disaster): the emergence of trauma, but survivors can interpret it more positively due to the prevalence of positive religious coping, resulting in higher virtue values (dispositional forgiveness and hope).	USA	Chronosystem
Barcaccia, B., Pallini, S., Pozza, A., Milioni, M., Baiocco, R.,	773 adolescents (12-18 years old), who are middle and high school students	-	Structural equation modelling (SEM)	Trait Forgivingness Scale (TFS),	1. Adolescents with high forgivingness scores are likely to have a high Hedonic Balance (HB), low levels of	Italy	Microsystem

Authors, years	Samples (N)	Method	Statistical Analysis	Instrument	Results	Country	Elements in the Ecological System
Mancini, F., & Vecchio, G.M. (2019)				The State-Trait Anger Expression Inventory-2 Child and Adolescent (STAXI-2 C/A), Hedonic Balance (HB) assessed using the PANAS, the Children's Depression Inventory (CDI)	depression, and a lower tendency to become angry. 2. Forgiveness is only positively correlated with Hedonic Balance (HB). Adolescents who forgive have high HB scores, showing that they have effective anger-management strategies. 3. Adolescents with a great ability to forgive others will have a high level of Subjective Well-Being (SWB). 4. Forgiveness has no direct effect on Hedonic Balance (HB) or depression.		
Kravchuk, S. (2021)	615 Ukrainian students (317 females and 298 males)	Correlation	Correlation analysis, Multiple regression analysis	Trait Forgiveness Scale (TTF), Psychological Resilience Scale (PRS-11), Freiburg Personality Inventory, Hardiness Scale	1. ↑ tendency to forgiveness, ↑ psychological resilience 2. ↑ Challenge, personal growth, sociability, control, tendency to forgiveness, personal self- efficacy, commitment, self- acceptance, management of the environment, ↑ psychological resilience	Ukraine	Microsystem
Dewitte, L., Martin, A., Allemand, M., & Hill, P.L. (2021)	Research data was collected across a number of years, most recently in 2010 (n=1,050), 2012 (n=722), 2014	Longitudinal	Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA)	Tendency to Forgive Scale (TTF) Romantic partner subscale of the experiences in	1. The level of forgivingness and attachment-anxiety did not show a consistent correlation over time. 2. Cross-lagged relations, anxiety and avoidance	USA	Microsystem

Authors, years	Samples (N)	Method	Statistical Analysis	Instrument	Results	Country	Elements in the Ecological System
	(n=665). Younger adults, their siblings, partners, parents, and grandparents were surveyed using a questionnaire. The subjects included individuals who were dating, married, and in a cohabiting relationship. In T1 (Time 1), there were 514 subjects, and in T2 (Time 2), there were 417 subjects.			close relationship, Relationship Structure Questionnaire.	3. positively predicted each other over time. Levels of forgivingness negatively predicted levels of attachment-anxiety 2 years later.		
Allemand, M., Grunenfelder-Steiger, A.E., Fend, H.A., & Hill, P.L. (2022)	1,350 adults (45 years old)	This study used a longitudinal design. Self-control is assessed annually between the ages of 12 and 16, while forgiveness is assessed at the age of 45.	Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA)	Tendency to Forgive Scale (TTF) Self-control with eight self report items asking participants' ability to stick with their goals.	1. Levels of self-control during adolescence were significantly associated with forgivingness over three decades later. 2. Both the level and change in self-control during adolescence were associated with later forgivingness. Youth with higher initial levels of self-control and those who experienced an increase in this disposition over time tended to exhibit higher levels of forgivingness later in life. 3. The role of early self-control in later forgivingness persisted even when accounting for gender, SES,	Switzerland	Microsystem

Authors, years	Samples (N)	Method	Statistical Analysis	Instrument	Results	Country	Elements in the Ecological System
Cowden, R.G., Chen, Z.J., Bechara, A.O., & Worthington, E.L. (2023)	Colombian young adults (n= 1,575)	Longitudinal research where data was collected over three different time periods: 2017, 2018, & 2019	Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA).	Trait forgivingness scale (TFS)	and conduct problems in adolescence. 1. ↑ dispositional forgiveness, ↑ All aspects of psychological distress are largely associated with aspects of psychological well-being. 2. ↑ dispositional forgiveness, ↑ almost all aspects of social well-being 3. Did not show a statistically significant effect on social support and physical health	USA	Chronosystem
Lampropoulou, A., Lianos, P., & Poullos, A. (2023)	1,378 middle and high school adolescents (606 males & 772 females)	ANOVA correlation analysis	Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA).	Heartland Forgiveness Scale (HFS), NEO-PI-R, Family Relationship Scale (FRS), School as a Caring Community Profile-II, School climate, and, in particular, adolescents' perceptions of their school as a caring community were evaluated with SSCP-II.	1. ↓ neuroticism, ↑ extraversion agreeableness and the quality of communication with the mother will be ↑ forgiveness of the self. 2. ↑ openness to experience, agreeableness, quality of communication with the father, positive behavior, positive attitude, and ↓ lack of respect at school will ↑ forgiveness of others. 3. ↓ neuroticism, ↑ extraversion agreeableness and positive behavior at school will ↑ forgiveness of situations.	Greek	Microsystem & Mesosystem
Sechi, C., Cabras, C., & Sideli, L. (2024)	481 adolescents (229 female & 252 males), ages between 14 and 19.	Correlation	Structural equation modelling (SEM)	Florence Cyberbullying–Cyber-victimization Scales (FCBVSs)	1. Adolescents who experienced cybervictimization were more prone to engage in	Italy	Microsystem & Mesosystem

Authors, years	Samples (N)	Method	Statistical Analysis	Instrument	Results	Country	Elements in the Ecological System
				Heartland Forgiveness Scale (HFS).	cyberbullying compared to those who had not been victimized online. 2. ↑ dispositional forgiveness ↓ aggressive behavior in cyber bullying. 3. Dispositional forgiveness and cyberbullying behavior was found to be significant exclusively among female adolescents.		
Lan, Q., Yan Y., Xiao, Y., Yang, M., Xue, M., Yang, Y., Li, XH., Wang, C., Zhao, W., & Gong, P. (2025)	Study 1: 852 college students. Study 2: 100 couples (200 individuals).	Study 1: Multiple regression Study 2: metric to assess the psysiological response to stress during conflict	Linear regression analysis	Heartland Forgiveness Scale (HFS); Situational forgiveness was measured; a 10- minute conflict discussion with a partner; Participant's negative affect during discussion was measured using the negative affect subscale from the positive and negative affect schedule.	1. Stronger trait forgiveness and more favorable forgiveness responses after conflict are displayed by those with higher cumulative genetic effects associated with the HPA axis. 2. Trait forgiveness is greatly influenced by the cumulative genetic effects associated with the HPA axis.	China	Microsystem
Buchi, C.G., Nwankwo, O.D., & Nwazuluah, C.A. (2025)	204 undergraduate students at Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka (88 males & 116 females), ages 18-35	Correlational design	Linear regression analysis	The religious affiliation scale (RAS), The Schutte Self- Report Emotional	The propensity to forgive was highly predicted by religious membership. The propensity to forgive among undergraduates was significantly influenced by emotional intelligence.	Nigeria	Microsystem & Mesosystem

Authors, years	Samples (N)	Method	Statistical Analysis	Instrument	Results	Country	Elements in the Ecological System
				Intelligence Test (SSEIT), Bolton Forgiveness Scale (BFS)			
Tamayo, K.R., Rungduin, D.C., & Rungduin, T.T. (2025)	Sample from Metro Manila Philippines, ages 18-69 years old	Cross-sectional design	One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA)	Heartland Forgiveness Scale (HFS)	Tendency to forgive is a consistent personality trait over time. Between the ages of 30 and 50, individuals generally exhibit a stable tendency toward forgiveness.	Philippines	Microsystem
Cowden, R.G., Worthington Jr., E. L., Chung, C.A., De Kock, J.H., Weziak- Bialowolska, D., Yancey, G., Shiba, K., Padgett, R.N., Bradshaw, M., Johnson, B.R., & VanderWeele, T.J. (2025)	22 countries (Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Egypt, Germany, Hongkong (S.A.R. of China), India, Indonesia, Israel, Japan, Kenya, Mexico, Nigeria, the Philippines, Poland, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Tanzania, Turkiye, United Kingdom, United States	Longitudinal studies: Research data was obtained from the Global Flourishing Study (GFS), a five-year longitudinal cohort study with nationally representative samples from 22 geographically and culturally diverse countries	Meta-Analysis	-	1. Nigeria, Egypt, and Indonesia reported the highest levels of forgiveness, whereas Turkiye, Japan, and Hong Kong showed the lowest levels. 2. An increase in age was consistently linked to greater levels of forgiveness. 3. The highest levels of forgiveness were observed in individuals who attended religious services more than once a week, while the lowest levels were found among those who never participated in such services.	USA	Exosystem

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The literature search for dispositional forgiveness, forgivingness, trait forgiveness/forgivingness, tendency to forgive, and propensity to forgive returned a total of 26,550 articles. Following this, 15 articles were chosen based on eligibility criteria for evaluation. Table 2 presents data for these 15 articles and summarizes the features of their investigations. Notably, the studies are on dispositional forgiveness, forgivingness, trait forgiveness/forgivingness, tendency to forgive, and propensity to forgive which are mostly concerned with internal characteristics (intraindividual), including well-being, personality, emotion regulation, attachment, self-control, self-efficacy, and anxiety. Furthermore, they explore external factors (interpersonal relationships) such as family relationships, school climate dimensions, school context (cyberbullying) and religious community and membership. Research on dispositional forgiveness was also conducted in the context of disasters.

As has been shown in the literature review, dispositional forgiveness research during the periods from 2018 to 2025 can be divided into numerous ecological system elements. Nine studies examine the microsystem with a variety of focuses, including personality, attachment, well-being, emotion regulation, self-control, resilience, and emotional intelligence, while three studies examine both the micro and mesosystems, focusing on cybervictimization and cyberbullying, school climate dimension, and religious community membership. Two studies examine the chronosystem in the disaster context (natural and human-made disaster), and one study examines the ecosystem, focusing on cross-national differences in dispositional forgiveness across 22 countries.

Several instruments were used in these studies. Four studies used the Trait Forgiveness Scale (TFS) developed by (Berry et al., 2005), six studies used the Heartland Forgiveness Scale (HFS) developed by (Thompson et al., 2005), and three studies used the Tendency to Forgive (TTF) scale developed by (Brown, 2003). Meanwhile, only one study used the Bolton Forgiveness Scale (BFS). All studies employed quantitative methodologies, such as correlation, experimentation, longitudinal studies, structural equation modeling (SEM), and meta-analysis.

The thematic analysis revealed that the microsystem appeared to be a relevant context for understanding dispositional forgiveness in studies from 2018 to 2025. The microsystem refers to an individual's smallest environment and others who have direct contact with them. Dispositional forgiveness research is primarily concerned with intraindividual factors such as personality, attachment, well-being, emotion regulation, self-control, self-efficacy, self-acceptance, and resilience. According to (Burnette et al., 2007), attachment and forgiveness are components of trust, communication, empathy, and emotional regulation, which involve psychological changes between oneself and others (perpetrators). (Enright, 2001) states that, in order to forgive, people must be able to sympathize and overcome their doubt, guilt, and resentment. Individuals with insecure attachments are less able to empathize with perpetrators and regulate their negative feelings. (Liao & Wei, 2015) found a negative relationship between anxious attachment and self-forgiveness, as well as forgiveness for others. Other studies found that those with high degrees of anxious attachment are less likely

to forgive (Burnette et al., 2007; Webb & Sheeran, 2006). Individuals with stable attachment, on the other hand, can empathize and regulate anger, both of which are components of the forgiveness process (Farrow et al., 2001; Konstam et al., 2001; McCullough et al., 1997; Paleari et al., 2005 as quoted in Burnette et al., 2007). Individuals with stable attachment have various beneficial forgiveness qualities, such as self-regulation, empathy, and agreeableness (Macaskill et al., 2002; McCullough et al., 2001, 2003).

Agreeableness is one of the attributes in the Big Five personality factors related with empathy and positive relationships, such as kindness, trust, and the ability for intimacy (Asendorpf & Wilpers, 1998; Graziano et al., 1996). As reported in John's (1990) research, a person's forgiving attitude is closely related to their agreeableness. Several studies have also revealed a positive correlation between agreeableness and a tendency to forgive (Ashton et al., 1998; Berry et al., 2001; Mauger et al., 1992; McCullough & Hoyt, 2002; Symington et al., 2002). As stated by (Balliet, 2010), extraversion and openness to experience have a weaker positive association than conscientiousness. As a result, more research is needed to investigate the relationship between these three characteristics and forgiveness.

In another micro-context, multiple studies show a relationship between well-being and dispositional forgiveness. Well-being is defined as a state of happiness, health, and general prosperity (McMahon et al., 2010). Individuals who can forgive themselves and others tend to have higher levels of life satisfaction, lower rates of depression, and lower levels of anxiety about mortality (Krause & Ellison, 2003; Toussaint et al., 2001). Dispositional forgiveness predicts psychological well-being; conversely, it tends to correlate negatively with indicators of psychological disturbances (maladjustment) (Berry et al., 2005; Harris & Thoresen, 2005; Hill & Allemand, 2011; Lawler-Row & Piferi, 2006; Sandage & Jankowski, 2010; Witvliet et al., 2001 as cited in Jankowski et al., 2013).

Moreover, studies on dispositional forgiveness have been carried out within both microsystem and mesosystem contexts, particularly in educational settings involving cybervictimization and cyberbullying, dimensions of school climate, and affiliation with religious communities. Field data show that bullying is ubiquitous in both the classroom and personal or public domains. According to a survey conducted by Indonesia's Ministry of Women Empowerment and Child Protection (KPPPA) on bullying cases in schools, three out of four children and adolescents have experienced one or more forms of violence, with the perpetrators often being friends or peers (the UNICEF, 2020). Furthermore, 45% of adolescents aged 14 to 24 have experienced online bullying (cyberbullying). Other types of violence occur in personal (2,098 incidents), public (1,276 cases), and state domains (68 cases) (Komnas Perempuan, 2023). Forgiveness is associated with psychological well-being, conflict resolution abilities, negative emotions, and stress (Lawler-Row & Piferi, 2006). The current meta-analytic research assessed how treatments aimed at educating children and adolescents about forgiveness. Intervention involving forgiveness education was found to lead to favorable results related to anger and forgiveness among the 20 studies that made up this research synthesis (Rapp et al., 2022). According to (Akhtar & Barlow, 2018), the forgiveness intervention group had a medium effect in lowering hatred and rage. (Wade et al., 2014) conducted a meta-analysis of therapeutic forgiveness

interventions and found that individuals who received therapy expressed much more forgiveness toward a particular offender than those who did not receive treatment. Research has shown that individuals with religious affiliations are generally more inclined to forgive and more actively pursue forgiveness compared to their non-religious counterparts (Toussaint & Williams, 2008), which may contribute to their favorable views on forgiveness (Matuszewski & Moroń, 2022). A strong commitment to religious beliefs is positively associated with a greater tendency to forgive others (Fox & Thomas, 2008), which is likely to be influenced by religious doctrines that promote values such as compassion and forgiveness.

Furthermore, only two studies apply the chronosystem, specifically in the context of natural and human-made disasters. In some studies, forgiveness has been identified as a coping mechanism for individuals experiencing high levels of stress and trauma (Ben-Tzur et al., 2021; Noh et al., 2012; Ochu et al., 2018; Weinberg et al., 2017).

Meanwhile, no studies on dispositional forgiveness have been identified to apply the macrosystem. The macrosystem refers to the broader cultural, social, and historical ideals that shape an individual's values and expectations within their culture and society. The scarcity of study investigating cultural and historical values in depth to teach forgiving characteristics emphasizes the importance of qualitative studies. Qualitative research is essential for investigating cultural and historical values associated to the intergenerational transfer of forgiving traits inherited from ancestors as cultural norms and values can play an indirect role in shaping individuals' tendencies to forgive (Cowden, 2024). Forgiveness as a personal trait must be taught because it requires shifting negative feelings, thoughts, and behaviors in a more positive direction, hence reducing stress. Forgiving is regarded as a coping mechanism (Chi et al., 2019; Worthington & Scherer, 2004 referenced in Cabras et al., 2022), and it is an essential part of conflict resolution (Denham et al., 2005; Laursen et al., 1996).

CONCLUSION

Research on dispositional forgiveness has primarily focused on the application of the microsystem, with only a few studies extending to the chronosystem. However, no studies have focused on the macrosystem's influence. The majority of dispositional forgiveness research has concentrated on personality, well-being, resilience, self-control, self-efficacy, emotional intelligence, self-acceptance, attachment, and anxiety. However, no studies have been identified in the context of the macrosystem that refers to cultural norms. Cultural orientation, particularly along with the individualism–collectivism dimension, has an impact on dispositional forgiveness. Researchers are encouraged to conduct more exploratory research on cultural and historical norms that teach forgiveness. This study found no dispositional forgiving studies involving young participants, which can be a noteworthy area for investigation in the future. Empirical research is needed to identify whether children learn character qualities from adults or by repeating routines.

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