

Empathy and forgiveness on student victims of toxic relationships

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ABSTRACT

A toxic relationship shows a negative impact on the physical and mental condition of individuals who have undergone the subject. Even though the students have experienced unpleasant conditions in life, to continue her life journey, the student needs to make peace and build a concept of forgiveness for the circumstances that are formed through empathy. This research aims to determine the relationship between empathy and forgiveness in students who have been victims of toxic relationships. The method used is quantitative correlational. An equal number of 355 students who had been victims of toxic relationships came to be participants in this study, with the sampling technique used, specifically, incidental sampling. This study uses a scale, namely the Interpersonal Reactivity Index ($\alpha = 0.863$) and Transgression-Related Interpersonal Motivations -18 ($\alpha = 0.843$). The research data analysis method uses the product-moment correlation test from Karl Pearson. The results show that there was a significant positive relationship between empathy and forgiveness ($r = 0.228$ and $\text{sig} = 0.000$ ($p < 0.01$)). Empathy contributed 5.2% to forgiveness. It appears that empathy is one of the factors associated with increased forgiveness in students who have been victims of a toxic relationship.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Carrying out the function as a student who is entering a period of early adult development, it cannot be separated from how they build relationships with the surrounding environment, because this individual is in a transitional period to start the role of social [1]. The relationships that frequently exist among students are identical to relationships of love or dating. An individual tends to choose to start a relationship while She or he is at college [2]. A dating relationship generally shares mutual affection, attention, gentle, intimate, and romantic treatment [3]. However, in reality, not all love relationships can create affection and a sense of security for their partners. Romantic relationship tends to be characterized by increased negative interactions in relationships, increased levels of control, and excessive jealousy [4]. A negative relationship or what is known as a toxic relationship, will possess a bad impact on students, because one party feels unsupported, belittled, attacked, or humiliated [5]. Toxic relationship forms include physical violence, emotional violence, and sexual violence [6].

Based on the data in the National Commission on Violence Against Women's Annual Records (CATAHU), in 2020, there were 1,309 cases of dating violence recorded, which is in second place in the most prominent cases of personal violence out of 299,911 cases of violence [7]. The Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection also reported 1,356 cases of violence, with 258 cases occurring in dating

relationships. Based on reported cases, the details of violence victims were 1,232 female victims and 197 male victims [8]. These problems of violence in dating are a form of toxic relationship [1].

Responding to data on violence in dating relationships, researchers then conducted initial interviews with 7 student informants during January 2023 to see the phenomenon of toxic relationships among students. Based on the initial data found, researchers constructed that the phenomenon of toxic relationships often occurs and has even become ordinary among students. Some of the informants were still involved in toxic relationships, but others were no longer involved in toxic relationships. Various forms of bad treatment were received by the informants, both physical and verbal violence. The treatment they receive is often excessively controlled, spoken to with inappropriate sentences, and manipulated, such as being cheated on repeatedly, being beaten, and even receiving sexual violence.

This "Toxic" relationship made it difficult for the informants to accept various forms of treatment given by their partners as perpetrators. Informants feel hurt, angry, disappointed, and experience excessive resentment and bear other negative feelings both towards themselves and others. When the researchers conducted the interviews, most of the informants had not fully recovered from the previous toxic relationship treatment because the informants were still entangled in the shadows of the past, wanted to see the perpetrators feel what the informants felt, and still held grudges and great anger towards the perpetrators. These things will make the individual situation, in this case the student, will get worse. Therefore, individuals who want to live a better life than before must be able to make peace with memories in their past, one of which is by building the concept of forgiveness [9].

Forgiveness is defined as a form of cognitive and affective change in individuals, which encourages them to show good behavior toward other people who have made mistakes or hurt them [10]. Forgiveness is expected to be part of the process for individual victims of toxic relationships to be able to be free from various negative emotions within themselves, feelings of resentment, disappointment, hurt because of their past experiences, and to be able to build positive relationships with other people. Through forgiveness, it leads to the disappearance of anxiety, anger, and depression [10].

McCullough states that forgiveness consists of three aspects. The first is avoidance motivation, namely, decreased motivation to avoid people who have hurt the individual. The second is revenge motivation, namely, the decrease in motivation to take revenge on people who have hurt them. The third is benevolence motivation, that is, the motivation or desire to do good to people who have hurt them [10]. A person, in this case a student who is a victim of a toxic relationship, who has low levels of forgiveness or is unable to forgive others, will give rise to various feelings of insecurity and comfort within herself, become emotionally unstable, and affect their relationships with other people. Students who are unable to forgive can also not experience happiness in their lives [11]. On the other hand, individuals who have good forgiveness are unable to overcome and restore their interpersonal relationships with other people, thereby enabling individuals to live a better life [12].

Through good forgiveness, it can also trigger positive emotional responses in students, bring peace in their lives, and give them the ability to control themselves [13]. Whether or not forgiveness is formed is influenced by six factors, including empathy, assessment of the perpetrator, level of injury, personality characteristics, quality of interpersonal relationships, and apology. When individuals apologize to other people, definitely the individual must have empathy within themselves and try to understand the causes of other people's behavior [14]. Empathy is defined as a process in which an individual, in this case a student who is a victim of a toxic relationship, is able to feel the emotions or feelings of other people, is able to understand the circumstances or misfortunes experienced by others, and has a tendency to take other people's points of view [15]. Empathy has two concepts, according to Rogers. The first is seeing the internal frame of mind of other people and the second is understanding other people as if they were in other people's lives [16].

Empathy is formed based on four aspects [15]. The first aspect is perspective taking, which is related to how individuals are able to take other people's points of view. Secondly is fantasy, which influences the emotional reactions that will be caused by individuals. Thirdly, empathic concern, which is an individual's empathetic feelings that focus on problems faced by other people. Fourth is personal distress, which is oriented towards personal anxiety in responding to unpleasant things [15]. A student who has low empathy will not be able to control the various negative emotions he or she feels, which can interfere with individual self-actualization [17]. Students who have low empathy also have a tendency to behave aggressively towards other people [18]. Conversely, a student who has good empathy can control the negative emotions, contributing to the moral development of others [19]. Through good empathy, students will also have the desire to help other people [20].

A student's ability to forgive is influenced by how the individual is able to understand other people's conditions or empathize. When students who are victims of toxic relationships forgive the people who have hurt them, they will feel calm and peaceful within themselves because when individuals forgive, inner changes occur [21]. Therefore, empathy is a very important element in forgiveness because through empathy, individuals are able to forgive and develop positive feelings towards the person who hurt them [10]. Individuals

who have low empathy tend to find it difficult to forgive others because they are unable to understand the conditions experienced by other people [22].

Research conducted by Sagafia and Salve shows that there is a positive relationship between empathy and forgiveness in adolescents who have a cheating parent ($r = 0.383$) [23]. The higher the student's empathy, the higher the forgiveness. The better a person's sense of empathy, the better forgiveness he or she will show to those who hurt him or her. Jiang (2020) also said that empathy has a positive correlation with forgiveness among adolescents ($r = 0.33$) [24]. Adolescents who have relatively high empathy have a tendency to focus on other people's experiences and to be objective and not selfish. In contrast to research conducted by Kim, Kaplan, Oliver, and Whitmoyer on Christian students, it shows that there is no correlation between empathy and forgiveness because it is caused by the gender of the subject and the type of empathetic interaction that exists between the subjects [25].

Based on the existing phenomenon, students who are victims of toxic relationships still have negative feelings within themselves, which make them feel uncomfortable with themselves and with others because they have not been separated and are still trapped in their 'toxic' past. Students still find it difficult to be able to make peace with the things they have experienced because they still hold grudges against people who have hurt them [26], [27]. Adolescents experience toxic relationships, which cause harm to themselves physically, mentally, and academically, making them more cautious in dating and believing that toxic relationships cannot be repaired [28]. This makes students need to empathize and provide forgiveness to individuals who have hurt them so that they can find inner peace and be able to move on to continue living together with the people around them. Forgiveness promotes adaptive social relations and thriving [29]. Therefore, the researchers desire to research the relationship between empathy and forgiveness in students who are victims of toxic relationships.

This study aims to determine the relationship between empathy and forgiveness in students who are victims of toxic relationships. Then the hypothesis in this research is that there is a positive relationship between empathy and forgiveness in students who are victims of toxic relationships. The higher the empathy possessed by a student who is a victim of a toxic relationship, the higher her forgiveness will be. On the other hand, the lower the empathy a student who is a victim of a toxic relationship has, the lower her forgiveness will be

2. METHOD

2.1. Research design and participants

This type of research is quantitative research with a correlational design to determine the relationship between empathy and forgiveness. The population in this study is Indonesian female students who are victims of toxic relationships. The sampling technique used was non-probability incidental sampling. The researcher will provide informed consent to the participant before the participant fills out the questionnaire to ask for the participant's consent to be part of the research and to ensure that the participant understands the purpose of the research. This study used inclusion criteria to determine research participants and as one of the steps to control confounding variables. The inclusion criteria were having been treated in a toxic relationship by a partner who was at risk of physical, mental, social, and spiritual health problems. For quantitative studies, a minimum sample size of 30 individuals is typically deemed suitable for adequate participant engagement. From the questionnaires that have been distributed, 355 respondents who met the criteria were obtained and then used as participants in this study. The approval of this research is 140/PU-F.Psi/VIII/2023 from the Faculty of Psychology, Satya Wacana Christian University, Indonesia. Participant demographic data are presented in Table 1.

2.2. Method of collecting data

Measurement in this study used a psychological scale consisting of an empathy and forgiveness scale. The empathy scale was measured using the Interpersonal Reactivity Index (IRI) from Davis (1980), which refers to aspects of empathy, namely perspective taking, fantasy, empathic concern, and personal distress. On the empathy scale, there are 36 items [15], which were then translated into Indonesian and validated by three expert judgments. Measurement of validity on the empathy scale uses construct and content validity, which aim to see the suitability of items with the theoretical basis used and the suitability of items with participant characteristics. The answer response on the empathy scale uses the Likert model with four options, namely very suitable, suitable, unsuitable, and very unsuitable. The results of the item discrimination test showed that 24 items met the criteria for the coefficient ($p > 0.30$) with an item total correlation value ranging from 0.302-0.606 and a scale Cronbach alpha value of 0.863 (very reliable).

The Forgiveness Scale is measured using the transgression-related interpersonal motivations (TRIM-18) from McCullough [10], which is based on the aspects of avoidance motivation, revenge motivations, and benevolence motivations. On the forgiveness scale, there are 17 items, which were then translated into

Indonesian and validated by three expert judgments. Measurement of validity on the forgiveness scale uses construct and content validity, which aim to see the suitability of items with the theoretical basis used, and the suitability of items with participant characteristics. The answer response on the empathy scale uses the Likert model with four options, namely very suitable, suitable, unsuitable, and very unsuitable. The results of the item discrimination test showed that all items met the coefficient criteria ($p > 0.30$) with item total correlation value ranging from 0.374-0.586 and a scale Cronbach alpha value of 0.843 (very reliable).

2.3. Data analysis technique

The data analysis technique used to measure the relationship between empathy and forgiveness is the product-moment correlation test from Karl Pearson. Before testing the hypothesis, an assumption test will be carried out, which consists of normality and linearity tests. All data testing is done with the help of statistical calculations, namely the IBM program SPSS series 25 for Windows.

Table 1. Participant demography data

Characteristics of Participants	Description	Frequency	Percentage	
Age	18 years old	20	5.6	
	19 years old	51	14.4	
	20 years old	102	28.7	
	21 years old	78	22	
	22 years old	60	16.9	
	23 years old	22	6.2	
	24 years old	12	3.4	
	25 years old	10	2.8	
	Length of toxic relationship	<6 months	85	23.9
6 months - 1 year		96	27	
1 - 2 years		78	22	
2 - 3 years		49	13.8	
3 - 4 years		18	5.1	
4 - 5 years		13	3.7	
>5 years		16	4.5	
Length of post- break up Toxic relationship		<6 months	117	33
		6 months - 1 year	65	18.3
	1 - 2 years	69	19.4	
	2 - 3 years	51	14.4	
	3 - 4 years	17	4.8	
	4 - 5 years	23	6.5	
	>5 years	13	3.7	

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Descriptive analysis

In Table 2, the empathy scores obtained by most of the participants are in the high category with a percentage of 58% (mean 72.75 and standard deviation of 10.417). Meanwhile, the forgiveness scores obtained by most of the participants were in the high category with a percentage of 56.3% (mean 51.06 and standard deviation of 7.87).

Table 2. Categorization of research variables

Variable	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Standard deviation	Percentage	Information
Empathy	40	93	72.75	10.417	58	High
Forgiveness	21	67	51.06	7.87	56.3	High

3.2. Normality assumption test

From the normality test results, the K-S-Z value of the empathy variable was 1.049 with sig. = 0.221 ($p > 0.05$), and the K-S-Z value of the forgiveness variable is 1.323 with sig. = 0.060 ($p > 0.05$). The significance value of each variable is more than 0.05, indicating that the empathy and forgiveness variables are normally distributed. These results indicate that both research variables have good quality. The normality of data is a reference for conducting correlational analysis [30].

3.3. Linearity assumption test

From the results of the linearity test, the calculated $F_{\text{linearity}}$ is obtained as 21.651 with sig. = 0.000 ($p < 0.05$), which shows the relationship between empathy and forgiveness in student victims of toxic relationships is linear. This means that a good correlation must have a linear relationship between the two variables being measured.

3.4. Hypothesis testing

The Karl Pearson correlation test in Table 3, a correlation coefficient between empathy was obtained by 0.228 with sig = 0.000 ($p < 0.01$), which means that there is a significant positive relationship between empathy and forgiveness in student victims of toxic relationships. This shows that the higher the empathy, the higher the forgiveness of students who are victims of toxic relationships. Furthermore, based on the results of the correlation test between each aspect of empathy with each of the aspects of forgiveness in Table 4, it shows that the all aspect of empathic is significantly positively related to all aspect of forgiveness. The data in Table 5, shows that empathy as a significant predictor of forgiveness on student victims of toxic relationships. The effective contribution given by empathy to the forgiveness variable is 5.2% (R^2), meaning that empathy is one of the factors associated with forgiveness on student victims of toxic relationship.

Table 3. Correlation between empathy and forgiveness

	Forgiveness	
Empathy	Pearson Correlation	0.228**
	Sig. (1-tailed)	0.000
	N	355

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed).

Table 4. Correlation between aspects of empathy and aspects of forgiveness

	Mean (SD)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Perspective Taking	11.84 (2.499)	1						
Fantasy	8.43 (1.889)	0.594**	1					
Empathic Concern	25.00 (3.572)	0.569**	0.524**	1				
Personal Distress	27.47 (4.212)	0.636**	0.627**	0.731**	1			
Avoidance Motivation	18.22 (3.079)	0.098*	0.119*	0.133**	0.134**	1		
Revenge Motivation	14.97 (2.559)	0.133**	0.177**	0.254**	0.221**	0.624**	1	
Benevolence Motivation	14.79 (5.625)	0.129**	0.177**	0.195**	0.193**	0.747**	0.550**	1

** $p < 0.01$ level of significance, * $p < 0.05$ level of significance

Table 5. Regression analysis of empathy and forgiveness on student victims of toxic relationships

Criterion	Predictors	β (Unstandardized coefficients)	β (Standardized coefficients)	t value
Forgiveness	Empathy	0.166	0.228	4.408**

$R^2 = 0.052$, Adjusted $R^2 = 0.049$, ** $p < 0.01$ level,

Cluster data in Table 6, based on age, shows that most participants aged 18 years have empathy in the low category ($N = 16/80\%$), age 19 years in the low category ($N = 38/74.5\%$), age 20 years in the high category ($N = 77/75.5\%$), age 21 years in the high category ($N = 51/65.4\%$), age 22 years in the high category ($N = 39/65\%$), age 23 years in the high category ($N = 17/77.3\%$), age 24 years in the high category ($N = 9/75\%$), and age 25 years in the high category ($N = 6/60\%$). For forgiveness, most participants aged 18 years were in the low category ($N = 12/60\%$), aged 19 years in the low category ($N = 29/56.9\%$), aged 20 years in the high category ($N = 68/66.7\%$), aged 21 years in the high category ($N = 67/85.9\%$), age 22 years in the high category ($N = 41/68.3\%$), age 23 years in the high category ($N = 14/63.6\%$), age 24 years in the high category ($N = 7/58.3\%$), and age 25 years in the high category ($N = 7/70\%$).

The next data related to the length of time undergoing toxic relationships, shows that most participants undergoing toxic relationships of less than 6 months have high empathy ($N = 64/75.3\%$), participants who undergo within 6 months to 1 year in the high category ($N = 68/70.8\%$), participants who undergo within 1-2 years in the high category ($N = 45/57.7\%$), participants who undergo within 2-3 years in the low category ($N = 27/55.1\%$), participants who undergo within 3-4 years in the low category ($N = 11/61.1\%$), participants who undergo within 4-5 years in the low category ($N = 9/69.2\%$), and participants who undergo more than 5 years in the low category ($N = 13/81.3\%$). Whereas forgiveness shows that most participants underwent a toxic relationship for less than 6 months in the high category ($N = 46/54.1\%$), participants who underwent 6 months to 1 year in the high category ($N = 59/61.5\%$), participants who underwent 1-2 years in the high category ($N = 41/52.6\%$), participants who underwent within 2-3 years in the low category ($N = 26/53.1\%$), participants who underwent within 3-4 years in the low category ($N = 13/72.2\%$), participants who underwent within 4-5 years in the low category ($N = 10/76.9\%$), and participants who underwent within more than 5 years in the low category ($N = 14/87.5\%$).

Then, data related to the length of post-break up toxic relationship, showed that most participants who had broken up less than 6 months had low empathy (N = 69/59%), participants who had broken up within 6 months to 1 year in the low category (N = 51/78.5%), participants who had broken up within 1-2 years in the low category (N = 38/55.1%), participants who have broken up within 2-3 years in the high category (N = 28/54.9%), participants who have broken up within 3-4 years in the high category (N = 10/58.8%), participants who have broken up within 4-5 years in the high category (N = 12/52.2%), and participants who have broken up in more than 5 years in the high category (N = 9/69.2%). Meanwhile, forgiveness shows that most participants who have broken up for less than 6 months have low forgiveness (N = 72/61.5%), participants who have broken up within 6 months to 1 year in the low category (N = 55/84.6%), participants who have broken up within 1-2 years in the low category (N = 35/50.7%), participants who had broken up within 2-3 years in the high category (N = 27/52.9%), participants who had broken up within 3-4 years in the high category (N = 12/70.6%), participants who had broken up within 4-5 years in the high category (N = 13/56.5%), and participants who had broken up within more than 5 years in the high category (N = 8/61.5%).

Table 6. Clustering empathy and forgiveness based on demographic data

Description	Empathy				Forgiveness			
	Low		High		Low		High	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Age								
18 years old	16	80	4	20	12	60	8	40
19 years old	38	74.5	13	25.5	29	56.9	22	43.1
20 years old	25	24.5	77	75.5	34	33.3	68	66.7
21 years old	27	34.6	51	65.4	11	14.1	67	85.9
22 years old	21	35	39	65	19	31.7	41	68.3
23 years old	5	22.7	17	77.3	8	36.4	14	63.6
24 years old	3	25	9	75	5	41.7	7	58.3
25 years old	4	40	6	60	3	30	7	70
Length of toxic relationship								
<6 months	21	24.7	64	75.3	39	45.9	46	54.1
6 months - 1 year	28	29.2	68	70.8	37	38.5	59	61.5
1 - 2 years	33	42.3	45	57.7	37	47.4	41	52.6
2 - 3 years	27	55.1	22	44.9	26	53.1	23	46.9
3 - 4 years	11	61.1	7	38.9	13	72.2	5	27.8
4 - 5 years	9	69.2	4	30.8	10	76.9	3	23.1
>5 years	13	81.3	3	18.7	14	87.5	2	12.5
Length of post-break up toxic relationship								
<6 months	69	59	48	41	72	61.5	45	38.5
6 months - 1 year	51	78.5	14	21.5	55	84.6	10	15.4
1 - 2 years	38	55.1	31	44.9	35	50.7	34	49.3
2 - 3 years	23	45.1	28	54.9	24	47.1	27	52.9
3 - 4 years	7	41.2	10	58.8	5	29.4	12	70.6
4 - 5 years	11	47.8	12	52.2	10	43.5	13	56.5
>5 years	4	30.8	9	69.2	5	38.5	8	61.5

N = Frequency, % = Percentage

3.5. Discussion

The research results show that the hypothesis of this study is accepted, that there is a significant positive relationship between empathy and forgiveness in students who are victims of toxic relationships. Based on the results of the correlation analysis showed that there was a positive relationship between empathy and forgiveness, with a correlation coefficient of $r = 0.228$ and a significance level of 0.000 ($p < 0.01$). That is, the higher the empathy, the higher the level of forgiveness for students who are victims of toxic relationships. The results of this study are in line with the findings of Ma Jiang, who states that forgiveness can occur due to significant empathy for individuals [24].

Empathy is connected to the ability of students to enable them understand other people through the other person's point of view [15]. Participants in this study were described as having empathy abilities that were in the high category, namely 206 participants or 58%. This shows that students who are victims of toxic relationships are able to take a perspective or are able to see a problem that occurs from another person's perspective, are furthermore able to enter the world of other people's emotions, have good attention to the condition of other people, as well as the individual. Those who have high empathy show discomfort when facing or seeing the suffering experienced by others. This is supported by research conducted by Vagharseyyedin, which states that empathy is one of the predictors of forgiveness [31].

Forgiveness is related to how individuals are able to lessen their desire to continue to avoid individuals who have hurt them, reduce their motivation to take revenge, and have the motivation to do good. Participants

in this study were described as having high levels of forgiveness, this shows that students who are victims of toxic relationships have a desire to reduce the conflict or tension that has occurred with the perpetrator or person who has hurt them, have low motivation to take revenge on the person who has hurt them and have the desire to do good to others who have hurt her [32].

Participants in this study were classified as high in seeing and understanding things from other people's perspectives. Understanding everything, including understanding other people's feelings, thoughts, and perspectives, is also called perspective taking [15], [33]. Empathy is related to how individuals try to position themselves to be in other people's positions, the ability to feel and understand other people's experiences, so this makes individuals who have the ability to empathize able to understand what is needed by people who have made mistakes, namely, the need to be forgiven.

In this study, students who are victims of toxic relationships have good perspective-taking, which shows that students have good perspective-taking abilities or are able to see from another person's point of view. This makes students able to understand the conditions or problems they are facing wisely. so that he is able to forgive those who have hurt her. The results of this study support the research of Flynn [34]. This is also in line with the findings from Xiao *et al.* research, where through empathy, students have a policy of being able to help others by providing forgiveness [35].

Fundamentally, empathy involves an ability to enter or be involved in the emotional world of others. In this study, students have good fantasy abilities, which shows that students who are victims of toxic relationships are able to understand more deeply how other people's conditions are. The results of this study also support research conducted by Sach *et al.* [36]. In this research, students who were victims of toxic relationships had good abilities in the aspect of empathic concern, which is an individual's ability to pay attention to the suffering or problems experienced by other people. The results of this research also support research from Kimmes, which in this research shows that students who are victims of toxic relationships are affectively able to feel what other people feel because students know what is needed by individuals who have made mistakes, namely the need to be forgiven [37].

The findings in this study indicate that students who are victims of toxic relationships have high anxiety when facing unpleasant situations. This makes students who feel hurt give forgiveness to gain peace of mind. It also shows that students are able to get out of the zone that makes their minds unpleasant, thus eliminating the discomfort experienced through forgiveness. This supports the statement which states that through empathy it will make students give forgiveness in order to get calm and feel happy in the lives of students who are victims of toxic relationships [38].

This research gives meaning to the readers, in which students who are victims of toxic relationships who experience various conflicts in their lives are able to build the concept of forgiveness for perpetrators because they have good empathy. This is in line with research conducted by Kamas that empathy in women is higher than in men [39]. The results of this study also provide a view that even though students have been in painful conditions for themselves, students are able to build a concept of forgiveness, because basically building a concept of forgiveness is not an easy thing so that it can have a good impact on them personally to continue improve their lives and social relationships with their environment. This research also provides a positive picture for readers that in order to achieve peace in life, individuals need to develop empathy within themselves regardless of the various life problems that individuals experience which in turn can help individuals to build the concept of forgiveness. This helps participants not to return to a toxic circle but helps participants to continue to live a positive life process. This research clearly has limitations, in which the researcher found an obstacle, namely that it was quite difficult to find participants who wanted to open up about the toxic treatment that students experienced. This research also only involved female students.

4. CONCLUSION

This study concluded that there is a significant positive relationship between empathy and forgiveness in college students who are victims of toxic relationships. These results indicate that empathy is one of the factors associated with forgiveness. That is, when there is an increase or decrease in empathy, then there is a relationship with an increase or decrease in forgiveness. Therefore, peace in one's life can be obtained through forgiveness, so it is important for individuals to explore empathy within themselves, despite the various life challenges faced, this process can help individuals build the concept of forgiveness and create harmony in their lives. Based on the results of the research that has been done, suggestions for further research that will examine empathy and forgiveness should be measured in various genders so that differences in the level of empathy and forgiveness can be known in students who have been victims of toxic relationships.

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