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THE ASSOCIATIONS OF CAPACITY OF SELF AND OTHER
FORGIVENESS WITH MENTALIZATION CAPACITY, DEFENSE
MECHANISMS, AND SELF-CONSTRUAL

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The Associations of Capacity of Self and Other Forgiveness
with Mentalization Capacity, Defense Mechanisms, and Self-Construct

Kendini ve Ötekini Bağışlama Kapasitesinin Zihinselleştirme Kapasitesi,
Savunma Mekanizmaları ve Benlik Kurgusu ile İlişkisi

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ABSTRACT

Forgiveness is generally defined as letting go of negative feelings and ruminations towards the person related to injurious past experiences. In psychoanalytic literature, forgiveness is defined as a developmental mental capacity which has intrapsychic, relational, and cultural dimensions. The primary purpose of this study is to examine forgiveness of self (self-forgiveness) and other (other-forgiveness) from a psychoanalytic perspective and explore possible predicting factors of forgiveness. In addition, its associations with mentalization capacity, defense mechanisms and self-construal is investigated. The associations of discrepancy between self-forgiveness and other-forgiveness with possible predictors of forgiveness were also explored as a preliminary analysis.

The current research was carried out via an online survey in order to examine these associations. By convenience sampling method, 1256 individuals were reached, and 650 of them completed the battery of study instruments. In the survey package, informed consent form, demographic information form, Heartland Forgiveness Scale (HFS), Defense Styles Questionnaire (DSQ-40), Splitting Scale (SS), Reflective Functioning Questionnaire – Short Form (RFQ-8), and Autonomous Related Self Scales (ARSS) were used, respectively.

In the current study, it has been hypothesized that mentalization capacity, defense style, splitting, and self-construal will predict self-forgiveness and other-forgiveness. In addition, it was expected that mentalization impairments of hypomentalization and hypermentalization, immature defense style, and splitting would separately predict both self-forgiveness and other-forgiveness. Related self-construal was expected to predict self-forgiveness negatively and other-forgiveness positively, while autonomous self-construal was expected to predict self-forgiveness positively and other-forgiveness negatively.

Results of two multiple regression analyses revealed that hypomentalization, autonomous self-construal, mature defense style, and splitting were significant predictors of both self-forgiveness and other-forgiveness. In addition, social support was also a significant predictor of other-forgiveness. The

strongest predictor of self-forgiveness was mature defense style, and the strongest predictor of other-forgiveness was hypomentalization. The findings of this study were discussed in terms of theoretical and clinical implications, and suggestions for further research directions were presented.

Keywords: forgiveness capacity, mentalization capacity, defense mechanisms, splitting, self-construal.

ÖZET

Bağışlama genel olarak incitici bir deneyimle ilgili kişiye karşı olumsuz duyguların ve ruminasyonların terk edilebilmesi olarak tanımlanmıştır. Psikanalitik literatürde ise bağışlama psişik, ilişkisel ve kültürel boyutları olan gelişimsel zihinsel bir kapasite olarak tanımlanmıştır. Bu çalışmanın birincil amacı, kendini ve ötekini bağışlamayı psikanalitik bir perspektiften çalışmak ve bağışlamanın olası yordayıcı faktörlerini araştırmaktır. Buna ek olarak, bağışlamanın zihinselleştirme kapasitesi, savunma mekanizmaları ve benlik kurgusu ile ilişkisini araştırmaktır. Bu çalışmada ayrıca, kendini affetme ve ötekini affetme arasındaki farkın bağışlamanın olası yordayıcıları ile ilişkileri ön analiz olarak çalışılmıştır.

Bu çalışma, bahsi geçen ilişkileri araştırmak için internet üzerinden yayılan bir anket aracılığıyla yapılmıştır. Uygun örnekleme yöntemiyle 1256 kişiye ulaşılmış, aralarından 650 katılımcı çalışma anketinin tamamını doldurmuştur. Anket paketinde, sırasıyla bilgilendirilmiş onam formu, demografik bilgi formu, Heartland Affedicilik Ölçeği (HAÖ), Savunma Biçimleri Testi (SBT), Bölme Ölçeği (BÖ), Yansıtıcı İşleyiş Ölçeği – Kısa Form (YİÖ-8) ve Özerk İlişkili Benlik Ölçeği (ÖİBÖ) kullanılmıştır.

Bu çalışma kapsamında zihinselleştirme kapasitesinin, savunma biçimlerinin, bölmenin ve benlik kurgusunun kendini ve ötekini affetmeyi yordayacağı tahmin edilmiştir. Ek olarak, zihinselleştirme kapasitesi yetersizlikleri olan, fazla kesin olmaya işaret eden hipermentalizasyon ve fazla belirsiz olmaya işaret eden hipomentalizasyon, olgun olmayan savunma biçimleri ve bölmenin ayrı ayrı hem kendini bağışlamayı hem de ötekini bağışlamayı negatif yönde yordayacağı tahmin edilmiştir. İlişkili benlik kurgusunun kendini bağışlamayı olumsuz yönde ve ötekini bağışlamayı olumlu yönde, aynı zamanda özerk benlik kurgusunun kendini bağışlamayı olumlu yönde ve ötekini bağışlamayı olumsuz yönde yordayacağı tahmin edilmiştir.

Yapılan iki regresyon analizi sonucu hipermentalizasyon, özerk benlik kurgusu, olgun savunma biçimi ve bölme hem kendini hem de ötekini bağışlamayı anlamlı düzeyde yordamıştır. Ek olarak, sosyal destek ötekini bağışlamayı

yordayan bir faktör olmuştur. Kendini bağışlamanın en güçlü yordayıcısı olgun savunma biçimleri, ötekini bağışlamanın en güçlü yordayıcısı ie hipomentalizasyon olmuştur. Çalışmanın sonuçları teorik olarak tartışılmış, klinik boyutuyla ele alınmış ve ileride yapılacak çalışmalar için öneriler sunulmuştur.

Anahtar Kelimeler: bağışlama kapasitesi, zihinselleştirme kapasitesi, savunma mekanizmaları, bölme, benlik kurgusu.

INTRODUCTION

Forgiveness has a crucial role both on sustaining self-cohesiveness and interpersonal relationships when conflicts happen. It is important to be able to let go of obsessive thinking and exhaustive feelings of grudge, bitterness, and resentment as consequence of injurious experiences of daily failures beside serious harmful actions. Since antiquity, forgiveness has a special place in many religions and different cultures as a part of human socialization. However, it has been neglected by psychology until recent years and considered as a topic of religion and philosophy.

Forgiveness has become a popular topic in psychology in recent years. It has been predominantly studied in relation to its positive contributions to health conditions, well-being, and to couple relationships. The main focus of forgiveness research in positive psychology is on understanding how it can be used as an intervention to change individuals' minds to overcome their past injuries. On the other hand, although there is still little research on forgiveness, psychoanalytic scholars approach forgiveness as a psychic capacity, which develops as a result of development of mature defense mechanisms and integration of splits.

The primary aim of this study is to examine forgiveness and its associations with psychological constructs from a psychoanalytic perspective in the cultural context of Turkey. In last decades, there has been an expanding psychoanalytic theoretical literature on forgiveness, especially on its ties to the processes of integration of the split between the absolute good and absolute bad and to the maturity of the predominantly utilized defense mechanisms, but empirical exploration has been still sparse. Thus, one major research aim of this study is to empirically examine associations of forgiveness capacity with good-bad integration and defense maturity.

Forgiveness is also related to the capacity to understand underlying mindsets of behaviors and attitudes of the self and others. People want to resolve conflicts but often fail because they cannot understand and contextualize what is hurting themselves or others. Thus, the capacity of understanding underlying

mental states of overt behaviors is essential for the resolution of intrapersonal and interpersonal conflicts by forgiving the self or other in different contexts. In this regard, there is a growing body of research on mentalization capacity, which is defined as reflective functioning capacities of understanding mutual relationships between overt behaviors and underlying intentions, desires, beliefs, etc. of self and others. Thus, another main pillar of the research interest of this study is to investigate associations between forgiveness and mentalization capacity.

Last but not the least, the cultural context is a substantial factor that shapes forgiving or unforgiving states of minds. Self is a social product, which has culturally constituted dimensions. Self-construal literature has been mainly investigating how culture shapes subjective comprehension on individuals' perception of the world, values, beliefs, attitudes, social roles, and behaviors. Thus, the current study aims to examine the associations between forgiveness and self-construal since self-construal is a very demonstrative conceptualization to understand cultural framework of forgiveness in terms of individuals' comprehension and attributions of perceptions, values, roles, and behaviors of themselves and others. The empirical literature on relationship between forgiveness and self-construal is very scarce and this study will be one of the very little studies which directly addressing this relationship.

In the current study, the associations of forgiveness capacity with mentalization capacity, defense styles, splitting, and self-construal will be investigated. In the first chapter, a detailed literature review on forgiveness, and its associations with defense mechanisms, mentalization, and self-construal will be presented. Based on this literature, hypotheses of the current study will be presented. In the next sections, the methodology and results of the analysis will be presented in the respective order. Finally, the findings of the current study in regard to literature will be discussed, clinical implications and further research directions will be introduced.

CHAPTER 1

LITERATURE REVIEW

1.1. DEFINITION AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF FORGIVENESS

North (1987) made a comprehensive definition of forgiveness that established a reference point for many studies in psychology literature (Sells & Hargrave, 1998). North defined forgiveness as voluntarily foregoing of resentment and hatred against an offender; and developing compassionate emotions towards the offender even if they deserve hate. Pingleton (1989) is another scholar who offered a clear definition for forgiveness that has been generally accepted in psychology literature. He operationally described forgiveness as the relinquishment of the right to retaliate for experienced offenses and injuries. Pingleton stressed that retaliation and retribution are natural propensities when a person is injured out of offenses, and he stated that forgiveness process is compromising these initial natural reactions to corresponding offenses. It has been a general consensus in the related literature that forgiveness is a process of release of feelings of anger (Davenport, 1991; Fitzgibbons, 1986), shame (Halling, 1994); letting go of wish for revenge (Cloke, 1993) and resentment (Enright & Human Development Study Group [HDSG], 1996), and decrease in memory recordings of offenses and wrongdoings (DiBlasio, 1992).

As studies on forgiveness (Enright & Fitzgibbons, 2000; Fisher & Exline, 2006; McCullough, Pargament & Thoresen, 2001; Thompson et al., 2005) and its relationships with psychological constructs such as empathy, remorse, guilt, shame (Fisher & Exline, 2006, 2010; Ranganadhan & Todorov, 2010) has flourished over the last decades, researchers converged on the observation that forgiveness is a complicated and multidimensional psychological mechanism (Enright & HDSG, 1996; Hall & Fincham, 2005; McCullough & Wivliet, 2002; Thompson et al., 2005; Wenzel & Woodyatt, 2012). So, along with the shared theoretical main points on

the definition and the mechanism among forgiveness researchers, disagreements and diversity were also evident.

There have been some disagreements among researchers on the definition and mechanism of forgiveness in terms of its dimensions, psychological aspects and whether it is an internal process or a voluntary decision. Enright and his colleagues (1996) emphasized voluntary aspect of forgiving toward a person who unjustly caused an injury. He stated that forgiving is willingness to quit seeking for justice and resentment; and consequent substitution of negative judgments and indifferences with positive emotions, generosity, and compassion even though the person who causes injuries undeserves these attitudes and behaviors. Thus, forgiveness is a psychological process emerging out of conscious and voluntary effort to develop empathy, generosity in place of anger, vengeance, and frustration. In parallel, McCullough and colleagues (2001) claimed that forgiveness is a process of changing vengeance and resentment with empathy and compassion so as to repair damaged relationships. They stated that good intention and conciliatory motivation toward offenders are crucial elements of forgiving.

Some scholars stated that diminishment of negative emotions and developing at least neutral emotions are sufficient transformations for forgiveness process (Edwards et al., 2002; Sells and Hargrave, 1998). On the other hand, Enright and Fitzgibbons (2000) claimed that experiencing positive emotions towards the person who offenses is a critical part of forgiveness process. At this point, Worthington (2005) argued that the psychological value of the offender is important on how forgiveness process takes place. He claimed that positive emotions are not necessary in situations of offenses by strangers, eliminating negative emotions and establishing neutrality are sufficient for forgiveness to occur. However, in situations that offenses done by significant others, substitution of negative affects with positive ones essential for complete forgiveness since sustaining relationship can only be possible in a positive balance of ongoing relationship. Besides, Thompson et al. (2005) suggested that forgiveness is not only related to negative and positive emotions towards an offender, but it is related to

developing new and mainly positive perceptions of the self out of victim, of the other out of offender, and of the world.

Researchers have defined and studied different types of forgiveness categories according to their aspects and dimensions in terms of consisting processes, interpersonal and intrapersonal dynamics (e.g., Enright & HDSG, 1996). Distinguishing forgiveness as of the self and other according to whom to forgive is one of these main distinctions. The forgiveness literature is mainly based on the forgiving of other. (e.g., Freedman & Enright, 1996; McCullough et al., 1997) and self-forgiveness has been neglected by psychological researchers (Hall & Fincham, 2008). The word ‘forgiving’ has been used solely as synonymous to other-forgiveness in many studies until last decades.

Self-forgiveness has been defined (Enright & HDSG, 1996; Hall & Fincham, 2005) as similar to the other-forgiveness that it is basically the process of diminishment of resentment, anger, and hatred towards the self along with increases in self-respect and self-compassion. Bauer et al. (1992) stated that self-forgiveness is overcoming estrangement to the self and regaining ‘at home’ experience of the self and adding that self-forgiveness become the fact when one comprehends that failures and doing harm are humane to some extent for everyone. On the other hand, Mills (1995) defined self-forgiveness as a primary phase to pass in order to sustain cohesive self-image when one feels to be in conflict with their moral self-representation.

For intrapersonal forgiveness, some dimensions and processes are different than interpersonal forgiveness since the forgiving and the forgiven are the same person. Hall and Fincham (2005) pointed to some differences. They stated that other-forgiveness is mainly related to behaviors, whereas self-forgiveness can be related to behaviors, thoughts, desires, and feelings. Moreover, empathy is a facilitating factor for other-forgiveness. On the other hand, emotional empathy is seen to be a handicap for self-forgiveness in their model. Further, Enright and his colleagues (1996) stated that reconciliation is a positive factor for other-forgiveness, but it is a must for self-forgiveness to happen at least as a reconciliation intention in mind between the injured and the injurer.

Researchers defined another distinction in forgiveness types that refer to dispositional and state forgiveness. Dispositional forgiveness is defined a psychological tendency to forgive in different conditions consisting of mental health, well-being, etc. Some scholars described dispositional forgiveness as trait forgiveness and stressed the persistency dimension of it (e.g., Davis et al., 2013; Lawler et al., 2003). On the other hand, state forgiveness is defined as related to specific offenses (Mauger et al., 1992; Thompson et al., 2005) and mainly refers to the relationship of forgiving attitude with instance-specific factors.

Forgiveness literature has been mainly focused on conscious efforts of forgiving and its contributions to interpersonal relationships. The general priority is how forgiveness can be used as an intervention for therapeutic situations. Family systemic approach emphasizes its interpersonal dynamics and reparative role in intimate relationships, whereas cognitive approach focuses on its relationships with well-being and health issues. On the other hand, psychoanalytic approach defines forgiveness as a psychic capacity and mainly focuses its unconscious aspects. The existing psychoanalytic forgiveness literature mainly forms its basis to developmental aspects of the capacity and involving mental processes besides investigating facilitating and hindering factors. In this regard, the current study adopts a psychoanalytic perspective in conceptualizing forgiveness. In the following sections, firstly the psychoanalytic conceptualization and historical development of psychoanalytic forgiveness literature will be mentioned. Then, the discussion of key related concepts and mechanisms of forgiveness in contemporary psychoanalytic literature will be presented.

1.2. FORGIVENESS IN PSYCHOANALYTIC THEORY

In psychoanalytic literature, forgiveness studies started to appear in the last decades (Akhtar, 2002; Cavell, 2003; Horwitz, 2005; LaFarge, 2009; Lansky, 2001, 2003, 2005, 2007, 2009; Schafer, 2005; Siassi, 2004, 2007, 2013; Smith, 2008; Sprengnether, 2005); and they placed the phenomenon very differently from other theoretical models (Haaken, 2002). Until the psychoanalytic contributions, the

literature had been dominated by cognitive models which stress more on conscious, intentional participation and examine its role on well-being by using it as a therapeutic tool (Haaken, 2002). The unconscious processes had been omitted in the forgiveness literature and forgiveness had been ignored in psychoanalysis as direct focus of study until recently.

Prominent psychoanalysts after Freud such as Klein, Winnicott, and Kernberg did not directly work on forgiveness but studied relevant topics, mental structures and processes or dealt with the construct in their works without explicitly naming it as forgiveness (Alford, 2014). These are psychoanalytic works, relevance of which are mentioned later by contemporary psychoanalytic scholars who work on forgiveness (see Akhtar, 2002, 2012, 2018; Alford, 2014, 2017).

Forgiveness, as a complex phenomenon, having religious and moral connotations, is a puzzling topic for psychoanalytic writers (Lansky, 2009) and so it has been left to clerical or philosophical debates until 2000s, probably due to the fear of confusion of the areas, goals, and aims or it resonate as reaction formation or inauthenticity (Akhtar, 2002, 2012; Alford, 2014; Doyle, 1999; Gartner, 1988; Horwitz, 2005; Person, 2007). This omission is also interesting since the issues related with forgiveness such as guilt, mourning, trauma, need for punishment are very topics of psychoanalysis (Akhtar, 2002, 2012, 2018).

Akhtar (2002, 2012, 2018) is one of the first scholars who commented on the neglect of forgiveness in psychoanalytic literature and drew a framework regarding why this neglect had held on until quite recently. He claimed that this omission is inexplicable since topics closely related with forgiveness such as trauma, mourning, guilt, need for punishment are very topics of psychoanalysis (Akhtar, 2002, 2012, 2018). Freud mentioned 'forgiveness' as a word for 5 times at all in his complete works (Guttman et al., 1980, cited in Akhtar, 2002). Akhtar (2018) stressed that a topic which is not mentioned directly by Freud may be ignored for a long time just for that reason. It also has social and interpersonal dimensions, which are the areas that psychoanalysis has just recently been more attentive to and focused on. Further, Akhtar (2018) claimed that forgiveness is a phenomenon with positive connotations, which might be another reason why it had

been rarely discussed in psychoanalytic studies. In addition, Akhtar (2018) remarked that religious overtones that are implicit in the forgiveness concept may lead to the neglect of it by psychoanalytic scholars.

However, forgiving the self or other are related not only to moral or religious issues, but also to more primarily intrapsychic and interpersonal psychological aspects (Martens, 2013; Person, 2007). As Akhtar (2002) put it, forgiveness is both technically and dynamically relevant and socially important so as to get attention from psychoanalysts and the topic needs to be approached in terms of developmental processes, object representations and object relational world, unconscious motivations, defenses and transformations from a psychoanalytic perspective.

With a religious and moral background, daily conceptualization of forgiveness implies a volitional act, so psychoanalysts have difficulty with defining forgiveness (Smith, 2008). It is not simply a letting go process but more of an outcome of reassessment, working through, and unconscious transformations -of underlying shame, guilt, vengeance, grudge, resentment, and splits- from having been unbearable to being rather bearable (Lansky, 2007). The distinction between forgiveness as a claimed reunion and love with the offender and as an eventual letting go of obsessive claims of sustaining justice and vilification of the offender is also important. Psychoanalytic approach claims no clear necessity of intentional action of forgiving but formulate it as a form of wish of the ego, which is motivated by a healthy narcissistic need, to reestablish the self by restoring lost relationship with an important other or with the one has an impact on the self (Siassi, 2004).

As mentioned above, in early psychoanalytic works, forgiveness had not been directly studied. However, pioneer psychoanalysts discussed relevant psychoanalytic conceptualizations such as splitting, mourning, and capacities for reparation and concern. In the first part of this section, these early psychoanalytic works will be presented. Then, in the second part, contemporary conceptualizations of forgiveness and related constructs will be presented and followed by key conceptual distinctions.

1.2.1. Historical Background of Forgiveness in Psychoanalytic Literature

1.2.1.1. Forgiveness from Kleinian Perspective

Melanie Klein's theoretical framework was grounded on Freudian drive theory in a strict sense. Yet, Klein contributed to the theory by enhancing important concepts, such as inborn constitutional drives, and introducing an object representational perspective. She focused more on inborn aggression and remarked that individuals develop a variety of mechanisms to metabolize aggression (Akhtar, 2012; Alford, 2014). Klein (1937) defined two psychic positions as paranoid-schizoid position and depressive position that are distinctive in terms of the unconscious primary conflict underlying them (Klein, 1937). According to Klein, paranoid-schizoid position begins by birth as the baby starts to relate with the part object, breast of the mother, which is experienced by the baby as split off into all-good or all-bad. Whenever aggression overwhelms baby, it is projected to the part object and then experienced as coming from outside, leading to paranoid fears with retaliation fantasies. In this position, self is mainly all-good, and the other object is all bad (Akhtar, 2012).

As Klein (1940) stated, baby perceives their mother not as an integrated person but as an all-good or all-bad, momentarily. So, there is no actual room for a real relationship with reparative potential in this dyadic relationship due to real or fantasied attacks in baby's mind. Klein (1940) articulated that the infant is able to integrate good and bad qualities of mother in the depressive position, In this position, the infant realizes that both good and bad belong to the same object, the main conflict becomes that the one who they love is at the same time the one who they hate. In paranoid-schizoid position, all-good wholeness is a fantasy to realize, whereas in depressive position one acknowledges that the ideal wholeness is a fantasy and mourns for the loss of that ideal (Alford, 2014; Rankin, 2014). However, the fear of this position is not annihilation or retaliation but the loss of the object as a result of aggressive phantasies, real attitudes, and projections of the aggression to the mother. The infant acknowledges the possibility of loss of the

loved one depressively as they acknowledge that the loved object is the same person that they attacked many times in their mind. Thus, the reparative capacity develops in the second position, depressive position. The reparative capacity and generosity arise out of infant's identification with their parents' kind attitude against their hurts they have done to them in fantasy out of their frustrations. The guilt also has a primary role for development of reparative capacity for concern and forgiveness in Klein's model (Horwitz, 2005).

Infant wishes to sustain their relationships with their parents, consequently their aggression directed to their parents and their experience of frustration in consequence of injuries and hurts resulted from parents' failures. The capacities for concern and love develop when the infant forgives their parents deep in the unconscious for frustrations and grievances they caused in the past. The infant forgives the parents since parents survive from infant's attacks and sustain their relationship with the infant (Klein, 1953). This explanation is the only statement that Klein directly addressed forgiveness for reparative capacity. That is, forgiveness concept for Klein is an emerging capacity as a result of the mourning process; and leads to the development of reparative abilities and capacity for concern. Guilt for destructive impulses and acknowledgment of aggression towards significant others, and the self as well, are main dynamics for forgiveness in Klein's works (Horwitz, 2005; Rankin, 2014). It is not clearly stated in her works, but Klein mainly stressed that the capacities of love and reparation are possible in infant's mind by means of forgiving for their suffering and injuries, and their seeking for forgiveness for their projections of aggressions to the loved ones (Alford, 2014). The recognition that they are forgiven for their attacks has a significant effect on their development of the capacity to forgive.

1.2.1.2. Forgiveness from Winnicottian Perspective

Donald Winnicott was another influential psychoanalytic theorist in British object relational school. He formed his theoretical frame on Klein's approach and provided important concepts and models on psychic developmental

processes. Winnicott also did not study forgiveness directly in his works, but we can benefit from his general conceptualization, especially the concepts of transitional experience, capacity to concern, and hope, which can be interpreted as related to the process of forgiveness, and his developmental view to understand and work on forgiveness capacity (Akhtar 2002, 2012; Horwitz, 2005; Alford, 2017).

From a Winnicottian perspective, like Kleinian, forgiveness is not a conscious and intentional choice, but it is a gained capacity out of psychic transformation when a person reaches transitional space (Alford, 2014) referring to an intermediate experiential space to which both internal and external realities contribute (Gobodo-Madikizela, 2015). Forgiveness does not emerge out of apology or some other expected action by the offender, instead, it just happens through the development of a spontaneous self via transitional experience. The capacity or attitude of forgiveness does not necessarily follow remorse or regret expressed by the offender, but the relationship plays a role in the development of forgiveness capacity (Horwitz, 2005). Winnicottian psychoanalysts claim the forgiveness capacity to develop from the cultivation of concern, which is established through the child's desire for reparation and an appropriate amount of guilt after their oral sadism towards mother (Akhtar, 2018; Alford, 2017; Fonagy, 2009; Horwitz, 2005; Wangh, 2005).

Two key concepts that are object-mother and environment-mother are relevant in Winnicottian perspective of forgiveness. Winnicott (1963) defines object-mother, as the owner of the part-object that baby may get satisfaction of their urgent needs. The environment-mother is defined as the aspect of the caregiver that wards off the unpredictability and actively gives care to the infant in management of their needs. If the child's capacity for concern is supported by the environment-mother by both her survival of child's attacks in their mind and her acceptance of reparation, it enhances child's capacity to forgive by both the child's experience of being forgiven and by child's internalization of the capacity of their mother to forgive (Horwitz, 2005). The child's success in reparation and identification with their forgiving other are key elements for later capacity to forgive. As Horwitz (2005) stated, when the infant integrates their object-mother and environment-

mother in their mind, the capacity to concern transforms into a more sophisticated experience, which provides potential for forgiveness.

According to Winnicott (1963), capacity for concern can develop only if two conditions are met for the child: (1) an optimal level of guilt and (2) a reparative desire for relational downfalls of the mother. Infant explores their mother and relates with them over and over again. In consequence of their destructive impulses due to their mother's inescapable failures and their innate rage and hunger, baby observes that their mother survives in consequence of their aggression and use. They firstly learn to acknowledge mother's forgiving attitude as a result of continuing pattern of this repetitive survival of the object-mother. Within the process of ever-repeating accompany of the mother following each of the destructive instances in infant's mind, they develop forgiveness capacity by internalizing this forgiving attitude (Akhtar, 2012). In consequence of the sophisticated experience of concern for the other and concern for the relationship, the capacity to forgive emerges by the formation of the whole mother in baby's object relational world as the integration of used object-mother and environment-mother. The intrapsychic stability in baby's mind with the survival of mother and persistence of physical and mental availability of mother are the processes that indeed develop the capacity for concern (Winnicott, 1963), and besides, the capacity for forgiveness (Akhtar, 2002, 2012; Horwitz, 2005). For the former, object-mother survived in the infant's mind, and for the latter environment-mother still arouses spontaneous interest of the infant.

As Alford (2014) stated, performance or repentance of the offender is not very crucial for the possibility of forgiveness to emerge. Forgiveness is also not an intentional, deliberate action to heal oneself. From Winnicott's perspective, forgiveness capacity emerges as a byproduct as a consequence of the experience of transitional mental state where an individual is not fixated at or in need of discharging their anger, hatred, and hurts. Transitional state experience is not a cognitive insight but a mental state where the relationship with larger environment/community is more important and relevant to sustain than that of with the offender (Alford, 2017). Transitional state ensures experientially to let go of

anger, hatred, and vengeful state of mind (Alford, 2014, 2017), so genuine forgiveness can only be possible for one being in the transitional space.

In transitional space, the experience is not fixated to anger and past damage but heavily filled with senses of freedom, creativity, and security (Gartner, 1988). The righteous anger loses its meaning and goal through the experience of individuality of the self. In addition, others are perceived as more “human” from a more objective perspective as transitional space eliminates unrealistic expectations from human relatedness and provides room for forgiving of self and others as a byproduct (Alford, 2014).

Alford (2017) claimed that for the capacity of forgiveness, practices of forgiving is not the main issue, instead the mental sources which develop the capacity are relevant for the genuine forgiveness experience. He further added that there are two kinds of forgiveness from a Winnicottian perspective: (1) willed forgiveness and (2) transitional forgiveness. For the former, necessary relational conditions such as atonement of the transgressor hold so that one consciously will to forgive the offender. For transitional forgiveness, intrapsychic transformation occurs for one to be in the transitional state experience out of containment by a holding environment. So, when a person has practices of forgiving actions and attitude without intrapsychic transformations, Alford (2017) named it as willed forgiveness. However, he claimed that genuine and sustainable forgiving, which consists of overcoming fixated vengeful state of mind and letting go off grudges, can only be possible throughout psychic transformations of transitional experience since it is not only related to willed actions but also prominently related to essential changes in the state of mind along the way of harboring aggression. He called consequent forgiveness out of these psychic transformations as transitional forgiveness.

Alford (2014) remarked that hope concept in Winnicott’s works is also relevant to forgiveness capacity. The Winnicottian conceptualization of hope emerges as a consequence of the ‘I AM’ moment and it is the hope and trust of not falling again, by containment of good-enough other (Alford, 2014). If there is no hope in one’s mind, compliance and false-socialization emerge. (Winnicott, 1965).

The hope which facilitates forgiveness is not the hope that the offender is worth it. Actually, hope in forgiveness is the hope to have a relationship with the world as a secure and good-enough place to live along with the hope to have a good-enough relationship again in the world.

1.2.1.3. Forgiveness in Kernberg's Works

Kernberg is a prominent psychoanalytic theorist, who mainly worked on borderline personality organization and narcissistic pathologies. He is well-known for his integrative approach that forms its basis on Kleinian approach and Freudian drive theory model. As Martens (2013) claimed, Kernberg's theoretical perspective contributed a good framework for understanding forgiveness capacity. Kernberg (1995) linked the capacity to forgive with superego maturity, rooted upon the capability of recognition and acceptance of internal aggression and ambivalence intrinsic to intimate relations (as cited in Martens, 2013). The psychic and moral maturity comes with the acknowledgment of the loss of illusions related with self and other and being able to find possibilities of re-establishing trust despite aggressive components. However, Kernberg stressed that the kind of forgiveness that is based not on integration but on narcissistic grandiosity is not an authentic forgiveness; rather it is an immature mechanism operating via the primitive defenses. If the person defensively splits self and other dichotomously as 'innocent me' and a 'guilty other' (Siassi, 2007) with experiences of intense aggression and deprivation ever since their early significant relationships, it would be very difficult to distinguish self and other realistically and perceive the self as an integrated whole person. So, it would probably result in severe psychopathology and/or incapacity for forgiveness (Gartner, 1988).

The angry fixation upon the metaphorical bad breast sabotages the possibilities of good milk. Arising pain as consequence of frustration and emptiness may probably cause an idealization of reaction formation in order to get pleasure but in the form of refusal to forgive (Siassi, 2007). From a Kernbergian perspective, the destructive 'doings' should be distinguished from the 'wrongdoer' and the

person should be perceived not as a devil but as a whole integrated person with wishes, wounds, desires, struggles, etc. (Gartner, 1988). Consequently, one can make room for good self and object representations to be connected with positive emotions through empathy. It is important here that, once an individual move maturely beyond the need for defenses of splitting and projection, they will no longer need to create persecutory objects and would afford forgiving others with a sense of generosity and friendliness towards world.

1.2.1.4. Forgiveness in Attachment Theory

Primary focus of Attachment Theory is on how self develops in relation with significant others from early days to adulthood in terms of physical and emotional proximity to the caregiver (Bowlby, 1979, 1988). As in many other attachment studies, forgiveness research related with attachment theory is primarily getting its basis on the well-known experimental study of strange situation by Ainsworth, Blehar, Waters, and Wall (1978). Depending on how individuals react to situations of separation from the attachment figure, attachment style is broadly described as secure or insecure. Research on attachment types generally support that there is a continuity of attachment style from infancy to adulthood with a significant level of correlation (Fonagy et al., 2002).

Secure attachment is articulated to have a crucial role in psychic development of an infant in relation with primary caregiver from a psychoanalytical standpoint (Gobodo-Madikizela, 2008). Secure attachment can develop as result of having an attuned, empathic, healthily responsive, and available primary caregiver (Sandage, 2005). Caregiver's warmth and responsiveness enhances secure relationships in infants' internal working models, which promotes capacities to handle relational conflicts and attachment anxieties. So, securely attached infants are more capable of attunement, recognition, and making reparations in their significant relationships, which is basis for the capacity to forgive. Sandage (2005) claimed that infants having insecure attachment styles such as avoidant, ambivalent

or disorganized develop internal working models as internalizations of basically anxious or dismissive facial responses of primary caregivers.

Fonagy (2009) stressed that attachment is both a prerequisite of and an essential product of forgiveness. Sense of security of attachment between infant and significant others has a survival value for having adaptive social interactions later in life (Siassi, 2013). Siassi (2013) further emphasized the importance of secure bonds with primary caregivers, which safeguards the containment and unreflective trust of the individual. An expectation of security to some extent is necessary for the individual to be able to strengthen their bond and facilitate a sense of entitlement for development of the narcissistic sense of lovability and belongingness. The degree of this security and the ensuing self-regard contribute to the quality of attachment, a breakdown of which may ruin the narcissistic balance. Accordingly, Siassi (2013) claimed that fulfilled expectations facilitate forgiveness, whereas failed expectations lead to unforgiveness.

Beyond the overall sense of felt and internalized security, different types of insecure attachment were also linked to forgiveness. The insecure attachment types are basically avoidant and resistant, and their adult forms are dismissing and preoccupied, respectively as Horwitz (2005) stated. The forgiveness studies based on attachment theory are mainly focusing on the defenses used by insecure attachment types and their life-span stability to avoid further traumatization (Horwitz, 2005). Siassi (2013) remarked that insecurely attached child comes to perceive parents as the contributors of their emotional paralyses and experiences insecurity throughout their life. Children's defensive mechanisms develop to get over damping down, and the acts of parents contributing this insecure basis are perceived as unforgivable by children depending on the degree of their impacts.

Avoidant infants do not experience a sufficient sense of security for nurturance needs to be gratified, so their response to separations from caregiver are generally oblivious. Horwitz (2005) stated that these individuals are expected to have a low forgiveness capacity since they tend to show detachment patterns from people when they feel disappointed or frustrated.

Resistant/preoccupied individuals are claimed to have a non-adaptive attitude which does not give place to forgiveness. (Horwitz, 2005) Their frustration is generally inconsolable, which is a way of expressing the intensity of their disappointment to significant others. Such a continuing pattern of needing and resisting to the needed does not lend itself for letting go of injuries and pain. Instead, this resistant pattern probably leads to an unforgiving state of mind as a generalization of this reaction to all relationships.

In the last decades, mentalizing or reflective functioning capacity has come into prominence in attachment theory perspective and psychoanalytic tradition as an acquired capacity in primary attachment relationship (e.g., Fonagy, et al., 1997; Meins, 1997). Fonagy and Target (1997) defined reflective capacity to understand mutual relationship between overt behaviors and underlying mental states. The reflective capacity conceptualization may enhance the understanding of the capacity to forgive since it enables one to develop ideas about underlying mindsets. Understanding human motivation and the underlying psychic conflicts related to injuries, and offenses permit one to be able to put the harmful acts in social and psychological context, and thus, provide them with the ability to distinguish intentions, beliefs, and consequent behaviors. The capacity for good reflective functioning is associated with secure attachment and it further enhances the capacity to forgive, since it fosters cooperation and empathy (Horwitz, 2005; Mucci, 2018).

In the light of this conceptual framework, the relationship between forgiveness and mentalization capacity is one of the prominent focuses of the current study. Thus, the concept of mentalization that originated from the attachment theory will be further reviewed in detail and its theoretical and empirical associations with forgiveness will be presented in the fourth section of this chapter, entitled Mentalization and Forgiveness.

1.2.1.5. Forgiveness from Relational Psychoanalytic Perspective

In psychoanalytic tradition, relational perspective led to a shift in theory to prioritize interpersonal context while investigating mental phenomena. In this regard, relational concepts such as forgiveness come into prominence. The first comments directly on forgiveness from psychoanalytical point of view was written by Stolorow (1971) in his short article “On Forgiveness,” which was published rather long before psychoanalytic forgiveness research flourished. However, later scholars did not follow Stolorow’s conceptual framework. Since it was the first attempt in psychoanalytic tradition, some details of his attempt at conceptualizing forgiveness that precedes the ample utilization of relational concepts.

Stolorow (1971) defined forgiveness capacity as an experiential repertoire to deal with intrapsychic hate and resentment. If someone does not open a room for the possibility of forgiveness in their mind, the fear of engulfment of their good part emerges as a result of the global experience of hate. Hence, Stolorow claimed that an unforgiving person develops defenses for their consciousness not to access to their internal hate, since hate towards a person without possibility of forgiveness results in the impossibility of making that person loveable again. Consequently, as he remarked, anxiety and guilt arising out of depressive feelings of ‘self-prostitution’ in his own words, elicit pseudo-loving and pseudo-forgiving attitudes. Forgiveness, as a possibility in mind, makes hate temporary and avoids its destructive effects on the relationship with temporary hate figure. If there is a potential to forgive, there is a possibility to love the hated person again, so hate becomes more bearable. Genuine forgiveness enhances hate tolerance and facilitate joyful love relationship, since emergence of hate is not an annihilator of the relationship due to the future possibility of forgiveness.

Stolorow (1971) stated that possibility of forgiveness emerges out of processing deep hurts and primitive hatred through a more integrative processing of rage at a more mature level. Hate is self-perpetuating in some instances as one enters and gets stuck at a persistent struggle with hated person’s internalized representation. According to Stolorow, the hope to break the self-perpetuating cycle

of hate is the possibility of forgiveness in mind. He also emphasized that empathic understanding of therapist for patient's injuries and hurts has a crucial role for forgiveness possibility to emerge as a resolution for vicious cycle of hate.

From a contemporary relational psychoanalytic perspective, forgiveness is conceptualized considerably different from other perspectives. Forgiveness is described as an inherently relational phenomenon between two persons; and its intrapsychic and interpersonal dynamics are considered as mutually affecting each other (Frommer, 2005). These are similar definitions to the ones offered by the object relational perspective. However, relational psychoanalysts, portraying the nature of forgiveness as inevitably relational, further suggested that intrapsychic relational capacity cannot be thought without its reciprocal influence with interpersonal aspects in relational context and their qualities (Frommer, 2005).

Horwitz (2005) defined the capacities that enable forgiveness, not as ego capacities such as anxiety tolerance or impulse control, but as relational capacities consisting of internalized self and other representations, capacity for reparation, capacity to concern, capacity for mourning, and capacity for being alone.

Rosen (2009) described forgiveness in the theoretical framework of Jessica Benjamin's co-created-ness in analytic condition. Benjamin (2004) conceptualized co-created analytic condition as the situation that is invented and experienced by both parties simultaneously like musical improvisation and harmony. She stressed the transitional quality of the co-created play that both parties experience active creation and surrender to a new situation beyond doer / done-to dynamics. As an expansion of Benjamin's conceptualization of co-created-ness, Rosen (2009) defined a dialectical nature of the relationship between the forgiver and the atoner as a newly co-created, shared relationship experience beyond the offender – offended dynamics. He pointed that creating forgiveness is a constructed encounter created by both parties. It is not a transitive action by which the forgiver is forgiving the other; on the contrary, it is an intransitive action done by both parties, a mutually co-committed process. This process primarily begins separately in each individual, but then secondarily a mutual action develops in the way of creating forgiveness and at-one-ment together. The forgiver changes themselves, as Rosen (2009) stated.

Then this change consequently has an effect on the one who seeks forgiveness that the act of seeking forgiveness turns to an invitation to the forgiver to act on the mutual quest for creating forgiveness.

In a specific co-created situation of forgiveness, there are many relevant qualities and conditions needed to be satisfied for forgiveness to happen. These are offender's recognition of wrongdoing and atonement endeavors; the existence or absence of prior relationship and its characteristics, duration, quality; psychic cost of not forgiving, and social benefits of forgiving (Akhtar, 2002). The challenges and possibilities arise in the specific relational context; forgiving someone in an ongoing relationship is qualitatively different in many respects from forgiving a stranger (Gobodo-Madikizela, 2003, as cited in Frommer, 2005). Wrongdoing or harm in an intimate relational context destroys the relational bond and belief in love and trust whereas harm done by a stranger destroys one's sense of justice. Thus, forgiving a loved one or a stranger have different psychic motivations and degree of relevance.

Frommer (2005) pointed that claiming solely the psychic capacity of genuine forgiveness is misleading; further, there is a possibility of genuine unforgiveness. As Mitchell (2002) suggested, to love or desire another is not an act of will, but allowing oneself to fall in love can be an act of will consciously or unconsciously (cited in Frommer, 2005). Frommer applied this perspective to the question of forgiveness and emphasized the volitional component of wishing to forgive or not to forgive. Forgiveness partially involves a decision component. The decision of not forgiving does not directly mean that the mind obsessively remains in a vengeful state. Safer (1999) stressed that there is a possibility of genuine unforgiveness as long as there is a possibility of pseudo forgiveness, and acceptance of the impossibility of repair to some extent is a healthy reaction as for genuine forgiveness. Genuine unforgiveness may be a healthy reaction to a transgression, whereas an inauthentic forgiveness may be a parody of forgiveness with an absence of necessary psychic transformations. As Frommer (2005) claimed that forgiveness is not a moral necessity but a capacity for psychic survival if authentically takes place to preserve intimate relationships.

Sandage (2005) stressed the difference between recognizing the other as object or as subject in the process of forgiveness. The intersubjective capacity of recognizing other as subject develops as one survives the negating omnipotence without falling into a complete bypass of aggression (Benjamin, 1992). As Sandage (2005) puts it, complete omission of aggression and anxious effort to forgive indicates pseudo-forgiveness, while healthy forgiveness necessitates acknowledging the past and recognizing the other as a subject in a reparative attitude with creative and differentiating negation. Sandage also pointed that forgiving the other as an object is a pseudo-forgiveness, since it is a defensive process to sustain power and control on other. He further stated that pseudo-forgiveness may enhance coping with emotional difficulties, but it does not help with self or relational healing. Genuine forgiveness, involving differentiation of self and other and recognition of the other as a subject, creates an intersubjective space that both enables empathy for other and affirms that the other deserves fair treatment. Sandage added that the ability to hold empathy for the other without disregarding their responsibility as subjects is a good predictor for the development of the capacity for forgiveness.

1.2.2. Forgiveness and Key Related Concepts and Distinctions

Based on the history of forgiveness theorization from psychoanalytic perspective, some key concepts come into prominence. In this section, these related concepts and contemporary discussions will be presented. Firstly, the relationship between mourning capacity and forgiveness capacity will be mentioned. Then, prominent factors for development of forgiveness capacity consisting of resolution of splits, vengefulness, and shame will be presented. Accordingly, the discussion of the distinction between pseudo and genuine forgiveness, and some forgiveness related psychopathologies will be introduced. Last but not the least, the similarities and differences of self-forgiveness and other-forgiveness will be presented.

1.2.2.1. Mourning and Forgiveness

Mourning has drawn considerable attention from psychoanalysts and has been a popular topic for psychoanalytical scholars (Ranken, 2014; Schafer, 2005) since it was firstly studied by Freud in his primary work 'Mourning and Melancholia' (1917). He defined mourning as a long-lasting, painful and pain-releasing process following the loss of an object, which can be a loved person or an abstraction, ideal, etc. It is a psychic transformation to end grief by finding and investing to a consolation as a substitute. Klein (1940) made similar definitions for the process of mourning that it is a painful process with feelings of grief for the lost object. However, she remarked that mourning is a fundamental process for ordinary psychic development, which is experienced in the first place during the initial shifts from paranoid-schizoid position to depressive position. Kernberg (2010) described mourning from a Kleinian perspective, stating that healthy mourning facilitates the capacity for love. The capacity for love after a healthy mourning enables to be open for new emotional attachments after a loss of a significant object notwithstanding the pain of actual loss. Loewald (1962) stated that in addition to their ego, the superego of the mourner is also transformed in the mourning process. As Loewald (1962) pointed that throughout a healthy mourning process, one achieves liberation and mastery instead of intense experience of deprivation since mourning enables successful internalization and separation from the significant other that transforming ego-ideal and conscience. Berzoff (2011) further claimed that mourning reveals the potential not only to change the actual self, but also to re-structure the self-ideal through identifications with the aspects of the lost object.

The relationship between mourning and forgiveness was first mentioned, though indirectly, by Klein (1937) in her well-known work entitled *Love, Hate and Reparation*. She claimed that love towards self and others can only be possible through forgiveness as a consequence of healthy mourning of failures and injuries experienced in the relationship with parents. The recognition and acknowledgment of loss in depressive position open up a reparative potential, and the capacity to love and repair develops by the child's forgiving and demanding for forgiveness. Normal

development and persistence of significant relationships can be achieved through the capacities of mourning and forgiveness (Horwitz, 2005; Rankin, 2014). Someone cannot will to forgive any more than they can will to mourn (Cavell, 2003).

Many psychoanalytical scholars claimed that capacities for forgiveness and mourning are intimately related (Akhtar, 2002, 2012, 2018; Gartner, 1988; Horwitz, 2005; Lansky, 2004; Rankin, 2014; Siassi, 2007). Although mourning and forgiveness are generally the concepts of trauma literature, since mourning for a loss of significant other involves a great deal of pain and psychic transformation (Pivnick, 2014); the processes of forgiveness and mourning are also essential parts of daily life and ordinary elements of significant relationships from a psychoanalytical perspective (Rankin, 2014). There are different perspectives among psychoanalytical scholars on the relationship between mourning and forgiveness. Some scholars (e.g., Akhtar, 2002, 2012, 2018; Cavell, 2003; Frommer, 2005; Lansky, 2004; Siassi, 2007) claimed that mourning and forgiveness are complementary to each other and have a sequential relationship, whereas some others stated that they are parallel processes and have a mutually transformative synergetic relationship (e.g., Horwitz, 2005; Sprengnether, 2005). It is also claimed that the relationship between mourning and forgiveness is a multidimensional and sophisticated one which has both sequential and parallel aspects (e.g., Rankin, 2014).

Siassi (2007) focused on distinctive features of mourning and forgiveness as complementary processes. He defined mourning as a more passive process of accepting loss, while forgiveness as a rather active process of psychic re-organization and re-claim of the lost object, which complements the passive process of mourning. Mourning elicits the hidden longing for the world before loss or transgression and the related shame dynamics, thus the more active state of forgiving can be experienced for further psychic transformations. Siassi (2007) added that the unconscious wish to forgive is as strong as the readiness of the person for mourning psychologically.

On the other hand, Frommer (2005) claimed a sequential relationship, portraying mourning as a prerequisite for forgiveness. He added that grief and mourning are necessary but not sufficient components for the forgiveness capacity to develop. He also made a qualitative distinction between unintentional forgiveness as a consequence of grieving process and forgiveness as a deliberate effort, intentional letting go of personal claims and rights on the other. Frommer (2005) emphasized that one cannot forgive by taking willful actions; acts of forgiveness can be performed by will, but authentic forgiveness can only be achieved through processes of grieving and mourning.

Since Freud (1917) first defined mourning, general psychoanalytic view is that mourning is a process of long-lasting identification, detachment, and so freeing up libido to invest new object. Although both mourning and forgiveness are considered to be processes for dealing with painful losses, failures, and offenses; they have essential roles on daily frustrations and failures of significant relationships (Rankin, 2014). Potential for forgiveness of others and the self emerges out of acknowledging imperfections and limitations of others and the self and grieving and mourning for corresponding inadequacies (Person, 2007). They are integral aspects of all significant relationships and sufficient level of mourning and forgiveness sustain emotional attachments (Rankin, 2014). The level of mourning is a crucial dimension for forgiveness capacity to develop since denial of or pathological levels of mourning prevents one from sustaining transitional experiences of joy, spontaneity, and creativity, which enable forgiving state of mind (Person, 2007).

1.2.2.2. Forgiveness and Vengeful State of Mind, Shame, and Splitting

The process of forgiveness includes multiple intrapsychic mechanisms dealing with vengeance, grudge, hatred, bitterness, and blame (Horwitz, 2005; Lansky, 2007; Siassi, 2007), which are indicative of utilization of splitting and fixation to a revanchist state of mind (Gartner, 1988; Lansky, 2009). Being able to let go of negative feelings and resentment is a complex process with conscious and

unconscious underpinnings (Akhtar, 2002; Horwitz, 2005). The actual vengeance is generally ego-syntonic to the extent that the person feels damaged by an offense and has an obsessional desire to re-establish justice, with a simplified view of the world that consists of two parties: themselves as the avenger and the other as the offender (Lansky, 2007; Person, 2007). However, authentic forgiveness can be possible not in an either/or state, in a fixated dichotomous view of world. Authentic forgiveness requires a state of mind that allows many possibilities to exist (Alford, 2017).

Forgiveness is a psychic transformation, which includes working through of vengefulness, resolution of splitting, and letting go of the obsessional state of mind that demands the undoing of the offense and its consequences. Weakening aggression, diminishing primitive defenses accompanied by an increase in mature defense use, and subsequently a healthy level of mourning process facilitates softening of the superego as both an initiator and an outcome of forgiveness (Siassi, 2007). Forgiveness is a complementary and parallel process to safeguard acquisitions of mourning and unconscious wish to forgive keep mourning process successful to reconstitute intrapsychic bonds to repair narcissistic injury (Siassi, 2004). Thus, the capacity to forgive is intimately related to the capacity to bear the shame resulting from the narcissistic injury of perceived injustice or betrayal.

From psychoanalytic perspective, conceptualization of vengeful state of mind in relation with the phenomenon of splitting is a conventional view (LaFarge, 2006). Vengefulness is a kind of fixation on the past event, which had been perceived to produce injustice, without being open to the effects of the present (Lansky, 2007).

In Kleinian terms, splitting and integration are used as key phenomena to explain the capacity and incapacity to forgive (Gartner, 1988; Haaken, 2002; Horwitz, 2005). At the very beginning of human development, while exploring their environment, baby recognizes that the loving object is at the same time the hated object. Eventually, the infant is able to integrate good and bad qualities in their object representations (Klein, 1957).

The forgiveness is integrated into Klein's developmental perspective that after metabolizing aggression with a healthy integration of object representations as whole persons with good and bad qualities as outlined above, the individual will develop the capacity to forgive the other for their experiences of frustration and also be able to seek forgiveness for their own wrongdoings against their significant others (Gartner, 1988; Horwitz, 2005; Siass, 2007). Some writers (e.g. Gartner, 1988; Lansky, 2007; Siassi, 2007) defined forgiveness on the basis of object relations theoretical perspective as the resolution of splitting and the capacity for forgiveness gets its origins from the experiences at depressive position. The resolution of splitting by the integrative representations of internal objects and healthy metabolization of aggression are the roots of both depressive position and the capacity to forgive. Forgiveness is a letting go of the fixated vengeful state of mind with obsessive preoccupation to justice demands (Lansky, 2007). Forgiveness further diminishes the experience of the self as damaged through the resolution of splitting, which is a way through readiness for mourning (Lansky, 2007). The resolution of splitting enables the injured person to be in a cooperative relationship again with the offending person or surrounding community through acceptance of failures of both parties, self and the other. The injured person let go of both their self-definition as aggrieved and their obsessive vilification of the offending person. The unconscious fantasy of retribution reverses the damage dynamics, and it releases corresponding shame-rage cycle. Lansky (2007) stressed that as a result of this resolution of shame-rage cycle and splitting through unconscious processing, injured person gets capable of leaving omnipotent state of mind and be able to tolerate their vulnerabilities, failures, and shame.

1.2.2.3. Genuine and Pseudo Forgiveness

The appearance of forgiving behaviors and taking actions accordingly may seem to be forgiveness at first glance. From a psychoanalytic perspective, the behavior is not the primary concern. The underlying transformation processes as consequence of psychic changes are essential for the authenticity of forgiveness. In

the forgiveness literature, the distinction between just appearance of forgiving actions and achieving forgiveness as result of mental processing is noted. Forgiving behaviors just in appearance is called as pseudo, superficial, or inauthentic forgiveness, whereas emergent forgiveness as result of psychic transformations is called as mature, authentic, or genuine forgiveness (Frommer, 2005; Haaken, 2002; Horwitz, 2005).

Forgiveness is neither a strategy or ethical necessity nor a prevention mechanism against mourning and grief (Alford, 2014). Inauthentic acts of forgiveness so as to meet external demands are pseudo forgiveness (Horwitz, 2005). Some examples of pseudo forgiveness are repressing anger to be able to adapt to new situations or to get along with the injuring person, and masochistic reaction formation. So, these actions may be proclaimed as high forgiveness in appearance, but beneficial outcomes do not occur as expected from a process of genuine, authentic forgiveness (Martens, 2013).

When the forgiving act is done by the forgiver as consequence of split, that portrays self as morally superior and the forgiven other as all-bad. This splitting and projection do not eradicate hostility but dispense it through the act of forgiving. As a consequence, instead of a reconciliation, internal hostility is maintained, and usually forgiven person feels insult by negative projections via immature forgiveness (Gartner, 1988). Martens (2013) also stressed that superficial forms of forgiveness emerge as a result of a split, by which self is identified with the simple opposite of the primitive, dark side of the split to avoid anger and vengefulness. To be able to protect relationships with the injuring person, the injured self is identified with forgiving aspects of ideal, all-forgiving superego by denying the consequent injury of offense and subsequent experience of anger. So, it is inevitable to experience disappointment and internal conflicts since the deep impact and genuine response of the injured self is kept hidden by repressions and splits. (Martens, 2013). Forgiveness as result of any kind of split can be considered as superficial (Person, 2007). A compulsive readiness to forgive is an early defensive position on the one hand and a habitual incapacity to forgive as a result of insecurity of attachments on the other (Haaken, 2002; Karen, 2003).

Genuine forgiveness arises from substantial intrapsychic processes, conscious and unconscious working of anger, and perception of the transgression in terms of its context with comprehension of the transgressor as a whole, integrated person (Horwitz, 2005), whereas superficial forgiveness is insincere and self-deceitful like a 'window-dressing' (Martens, 2013).

Although majority of forgiveness literature emphasized benefits and positive consequences of forgiveness from psychoanalytic perspective, there are some critical views that question both the conceptualization of and positive attributions to forgiveness process. Martens (2013) stressed that forgiving action serves a defensive function. Smith (2008) further claimed that forgiveness is not an unconscious psychic process but a conscious experience as an outcome of the unconscious process of reparation, which forgiveness is mostly confused with. Moreover, Smith (2008) stated that as the demand of forgiveness is the negation of the suffering, it trivializes the suffering of offended individual. Some part of our mind would never forget or forgive the wrongdoing and we should acknowledge it. Similarly, Alford (2014) called it 'popular forgiveness' and asserted that it offers acceptance of loss without experiencing any mourning and/or grief. Allowance of mourning and grief is the critical point to distinguish genuine forgiveness from popular, inauthentic forgiveness, since it must be acknowledged that not only a relationship or a person was lost but also a belief and a secure enough world. Thus, only a slow, intense psychic work of mourning of losses can make it possible to regain the meaning of life through genuine forgiveness (Alford, 2014).

Sometimes the social context such as hierarchical, dependent relationships of employer-employee, wife-husband, etc. make genuine forgiveness difficult, since the context interferes with the content to a great extent. Under these circumstances, forgiveness can be a tool for rationalization of self-degradation (Person, 2007). While many other critical writers (Alford, 2014; Horwitz, 2005; Martens, 2013; Person, 2007) emphasized the distinction of genuine and superficial forgiveness to claim superficial forgiveness is hazardous, Smith (2008) stated that the conceptualization of forgiveness is unnecessary, even misleading, from a psychoanalytic perspective, since it does not explain what it claims to. In addition,

he said that forgiveness as a reparative process is simply a consequence of everyday work of analysis and if we claim as it is a unitary intrapsychic process, it would be risky since we ignore it is being a form of denial of the traumatic reality and a cover for profound aggressive wishes, self-punitive reactions, internal conflicts, etc. So, Smith (2008) stressed that if we universalize the concept of forgiveness as an actual internal reparative process, we would miss the opportunity of analyzing the intrapsychic process and their transference and counter-transference manifestations.

Lastly in this section, types of inauthentic forgiveness and incapacities of forgiving psychopathology categories are mentioned. Akhtar (2018) made an elaborative work on forgiveness capacity and incapacity. He discussed types of forgiveness incapacities, inauthentic and psychopathological forms of forgiveness types as classifying them in 8 categories consisting of inability to forgive, premature forgiveness, excessive forgiveness, pseudo-forgiveness, relentless seeking for forgiveness, inability to accept forgiveness, inability to seek forgiveness, and imbalance between forgiveness capacities of forgiving the self and other.

The first type suggested by Akhtar (2018), *inability to forgive*, refers to people who cannot leave the vindictive state of mind. These people are generally the ones with paranoid, antisocial, or malignant narcissistic personalities. The second type is *premature forgiveness* that signifies an urgent and impetuous attempt at forgetting the hurt and forgiving. Mostly obsessional neurotics, who characteristically use reaction formation against aggression, are premature forgivers in order not to encounter their aggression. Another psychopathological form of forgiveness is *excessive forgiveness*, which is generally seen in masochistic personalities, who generally tend to live in the two polarities of sadistic and masochistic tendencies with a hope of some magical thing to happen in this co-dependent relationship to solve their intra-psychic problems. *Pseudo-forgiveness* is another form of psychopathological forgiveness which refers to the seeming reconciliation without internal mourning and forgiving.

Akhtar (2018) pointed that some persons are relentlessly apologizing to get forgiveness for typical failures or errors in daily life. As Akhtar claimed, this

relentless seeking for forgiveness indicates implicit hostile desires, and also serve the function to discharge sexual tension. Another pathological form of forgiveness is the *inability to accept forgiveness*. In this case, individuals mainly cannot accept forgiveness and keep suffering from remorse and its outcomes. Their primary issue is unconscious guilt; they have self-condemnation and persecutory fantasies in a loop due to their harsh superego and masochistic tendencies, as similar to repeatedly apologizing individuals. Next, Akhtar (2018) remarked that the ones who do not have the capacity for empathy also have an *inability to seek forgiveness*. Antisocial and narcissistic personalities generally fail to seek forgiveness since they are indifferent to the pain they have caused. Akhtar pointed that strict denial of the shortcomings in the self may lead to incapacities for love and remorse in order to manage paranoid anxieties and safeguard the weak sense of self-esteem.

The last category of psychopathological forms of forgiveness listed by Akhtar (2018) is *the imbalance in forgiving the other and forgiving the self*. Akhtar stated that individuals having narcissistic, paranoid, and antisocial personality problems are prone to denying their responsibility for hostile actions and also cannot empathize with others when they felt offended. There is a big discrepancy between justifying their actions and trying to comprehend the context of others' actions. As Akhtar stated, masochistic persons have the opposite tendencies that they close their eyes to transgressions towards themselves, and attentively focusing their offending actions in a painful way. They keep harshly punishing themselves as well as they forgive their real or imagined offenders easily.

1.2.2.4. Forgiving the Self and Other

Hall and Fincham (2005) claimed self-forgiveness studies have been neglected for a long time in forgiveness research. In psychoanalytical literature, self and other forgiveness has not been studied as different processes in general or they are seen to be interrelated parts of a general process of forgiveness. Forgiving self and other are claimed to be entwined from a psychoanalytical perspective, like representations of self and other (LaFarge, 2009). Although forgiveness has been

studied as either a general concept or in specific instances of forgiving an offense by another, some scholars studied self-forgiveness, seeking forgiveness as distinct concepts from other-forgiveness (e.g. Akhtar, 2002, 2012, 2018; Gartner, 1988).

The capacity of self-forgiveness, as for other-forgiveness, also develops only by psychic transformations in a relationship (Gartner, 1988). Good-bad integration and integrative self conceptualization are necessary conditions for self-forgiveness. As reviewed in the previous section, this integrative capacity develops through the achievement of depressive position, as does the general forgiveness capacity. Self-forgiveness becomes possible as a consequence of the resolution of the absolute good-bad split through substitution of former identifications with the ones belonging to new objects, who acknowledge injustice experiences and survive through shortcomings of self (Lansky, 2007). So, one can come to a resolution by integrating the representations of self as all-good and other as all-bad or vice versa (Akhtar, 2018; LaFarge, 2009; Siassi, 2007). The experience and expectation of unbearable shame is getting resolved by these psychic re-structuring and one can forgive their self for their rage and aggression (Lansky, 2007). For self-forgiveness to emerge, shame feelings must be processed since shame is a global experience of self and it is necessary for one to forgive their self to distinguish their self as agent from the actions they did (Cavell, 2003). When one re-introjects negative self-representations in a way, they can be assimilated to a point that does not overwhelm or destroy positive self-representations in an integrative transformation of self-representation (Gartner, 1988). Klein (1937) claimed that this integration takes place when the child can mourn for the failures and injuries experienced with parents.

Siassi (2007) claimed that forgiveness-of-other developmentally becomes possible only after the development of the capacity of forgiving the self. When primitive splitting and projective defenses are substituted by mature defenses and narcissistic balance of libido and aggression is ensured, one can develop self-forgiveness capacity, which then provides the basis for the internalization of general forgiving attitude. Renunciation of negative self-image and attenuation of the self-punitive superego are necessary for genuine self-forgiveness through painful

acceptance of offender as a part of community and acknowledgment of wrongdoing that is not the totality of wrongdoer as a whole person (LaFarge, 2009; Siassi, 2018). It is necessary in self-forgiveness to forgive a person who is both the offended and the offender. Unforgiving attitude, out of raw repetitive guilt cycles and self-punishments of archaic superego (Siassi, 2018) or superficial forgiveness out of self-indulgent all-forgiving superego (LaFarge, 2009), ends up with the incapability to forgive the self. So, integration of self-other representations and reconstruction of archaic superego are musts for the capacity to forgive the self.

LaFarge (2009) additionally claimed that recognition of hurt is necessary for the possibility of forgiveness to emerge. This recognition brings about the loss of omnipotent ideal and intense feelings of shame due to weaknesses and vulnerabilities that one has (LaFarge, 2009; Lansky, 2007). The individual experiences a double identification with both the injuring person and the shame of their being weak and helpless victim. LaFarge (2009) claims that due to this double identification, forgiving the self is the prerequisite of the development of the capacity to forgive.

Akhtar, who provided an encompassing conceptualization on pathological forms of forgiveness, worked also on common and differentiating dynamics of self and other forgiveness (see Akhtar, 2002, 2012, 2018). He categorized them as 'seeking forgiveness' and 'bestowing forgiveness' on the basis of underlying interpersonal and intrapsychic dynamics. As Akhtar claimed (2002, 2012, 2018), bestowing forgiveness becomes possible as a result of the mourning of atrocious experiences, whereas readiness to seek forgiveness can develop as a result of remorse brought by the acknowledgment of one's own hostility (Akhtar, 2012). Forgiveness is a task of depressive position, as Akhtar (2012) remarked, which transpires through the resolutions of splittings, grudge, and resentment. There are three leading factors for bestowing forgiveness: revenge, reparation, and reconsideration. *Revenge* psychically balances the libido-aggression equilibrium in object relational world through breaking the totally innocent victim and all-cruel offender perception. It also enhances sense of mastery and self-esteem by reforming ego into a more active position (Akhtar, 2012; Lansky, 2007). The empathy

emerges as a result, and thus, forgiveness becomes a possible next step. Another leading factor for forgiveness to happen is *reparation* through the acknowledgment of the offense by the offender (Akhtar, 2012). The acknowledgment and recognition of what had happened heals the reality testing of the offended person. If the offender further shows signs of remorse or actively apologize, forgiveness is a more possible result. Subsequently, psychological wounds and grievance of the offended person settles down. As mutual recognition by two parties of the offense provides perceptual clarity, the ego of the offended person holds a more active position in whether to forgive or not. This active position restores self-esteem and facilitates mourning. The third leading factor for forgiveness as listed by Akhtar (2012), *reconsideration*, refers to the re-structuring of the memories and their re-consideration in a transitional state of mind looking from a variety of perspectives. Reconsideration paves the way for a flexible understanding and elaborations on what had happened, and thus, triggers the deepening of the mourning for past injustices and transgressions. In sum, through revenge, reparation, and reconsideration, one achieves the capacity to own their personal destructiveness and to retain concern for the other including the offender, which in turn leads to the consolidation of mature forgiveness in psychic re-organization.

As Akhtar (2018) puts it, recognition of what had been done by the subject is a prerequisite for seeking for forgiveness.. Seeking for forgiveness necessitates both the capacity for remorse and libidinal investment in the relationship with the victim of their past offense. Offender must explicitly take responsibility to articulate public apology and feel commitment for future actions besides felt remorse to restore relationship for genuinely seeking forgiveness (Moses, 1999 cited in Akhtar, 2018). So, resolution of narcissistic resistances for recognition of hurt and faults done by the subject and ego capacities for reparation are primary aspects of seeking for forgiveness. Akhtar remarked that both forgiving and seeking for forgiveness need substantial psychic effort. Acceptance is the next step of receiving forgiveness and the offender must be able to let go of masochistic pleasure of guilt along with giving up maligned self-perception and recognizing forbearance of the offended person.

1.3. EMPIRICAL STUDIES ON FORGIVENESS

The empirical research on forgiveness started to show up in 1980s (e.g., Enright et al., 1989; Fitzgibbons, 1986; Spidell & Liberman, 1981). The cognitive models, family systemic approach, and positive psychology perspective have dominated the forgiveness research field (Haaken, 2002; McKay et al., 2007). The studies have mainly focused on exploring the facilitating role of forgiveness in psychotherapy and investigating its positive associations with positive outcomes such as well-being and mental health as well as its negative associations with negative emotions such as anger, resentment, hatred etc. (e.g., Karremans et al., 2003; Maltby et al., 2004; Ranganadhan & Todorov, 2010).

Some studies identified forgiveness as a therapeutic intervention for different injurious experiences (e.g., Freedman & Knupp, 2003; Reed & Enright, 2006; Wade & Worthington, 2005). It was reported that after forgiveness intervention programs or therapies, individuals got more successful at dealing with negative emotions arising as a result of harmful experiences (Wade & Worthington, 2005) or demonstrated an increase in positive attitudes towards significant others and positive emotions (Al-Mabuk et al., 1995; DiBlasio & Benda, 2002). Forgiveness interventions were reported to decrease negative feelings such as anxiety and depression. In addition, interventions were also reported to enhance forgiving levels of participants related to specific experiences in their lives (e.g., Coyle & Enright, 1997; Rye et al., 2005).

Besides intervention studies, the association of forgiveness with mental health related concepts has also been studied. Forgiveness was found to be positively correlated with psychological factors such as cognitive flexibility, higher life satisfaction (Maltby et al., 2004; Thompson et al., 2005; Ysseldyk et al., 2007), subjective and psychological well-being (Lawler-Row & Piferi, 2006); whereas it was found to be negatively correlated with feelings such as vengeance, and hostility (Thompson et al., 2005).

McCullough et al. (1998) stated that forgiveness plays an important role in intimate relationships, primarily it is crucial for relationships with parents. In

general, forgiving attitude is positively correlated with relationship satisfaction and closeness. Social connectedness and forgiveness found to be in a positive relationship (Bono et al., 2008; Hill & Allemand, 2010; Louden-Gerber, 2008). Tsang, McCullough, and Fincham (2006) also found in their longitudinal study that both social connectedness and forgiveness facilitate each other.

Neto and Mullet (2004) found that higher levels of interdependence with others was associated with a greater willingness to forgive, whereas higher levels of personal independence increased negative feelings such as resentment. However, Barnes et al. (2010) found that strong need for belongingness is associated with low levels of interpersonal forgiveness, rather than higher levels. The ones who have a higher level of the need to belong were likely to have lower levels of practices of forgiveness, even though they expressed higher levels in hypothetical situations.

Commitment is a key relational element that plays role in forgiveness. Relational commitment and satisfaction facilitate forgiveness (McCullough et al., 1998; Finkel et al., 2002; Karremans & Van Lange, 2004). The relationship quality and closeness also enhance forgiving attitudes (Tsang et al., 2006). In addition, as Tsang and her colleagues (2006) found that forgiveness was also reduces resentment and facilitates reaffirmation of the relationship bonds. Lower levels of avoidance and revenge along with higher level of benevolence through experience of forgiving increase relational bonds and commitment in intimate relationships (Tsang et al., 2006).

Self-esteem has been found to be a predicting factor for forgiveness (Fitzgibbons, 1986; McCullough et al., 2001). Individuals having higher self-esteem were found to have higher levels of forgiving tendencies (e.g., Johnson, 2010; Ball, 2009; Buechsel, 2010). Strelan and Zdaniuk (2015), offered an explanation for this association that lower levels of self-esteem might direct people to excessive levels of self-protection, which cause inability to use necessary psychological resources for forgiving. On the other hand, Neto and Mullet (2004) studied the relationship of forgiveness with some personality variables and expressed contrary findings that low self-esteem individuals have a higher tendency to forgive. These conflicting observations might be clarified in the light of Eaton

and her colleagues (2007) finding that individuals with defensive self-esteem are less likely to forgive when compared with the ones having secure self-esteem. Besides, Cardi et al. (2007) studied self-esteem as a moderator and found that women with a victimization history are more likely to respond positively to forgiveness instructions if they have higher self-esteem. There was no significant effect of self-esteem on response to forgiveness instructions among participants with lower self-esteem.

The studies conducted on the relationship between forgiveness and psychoanalytic constructs mentioned above such as mentalization, good-bad integration, defense mechanisms are very limited. There are very few studies on forgiveness and defense mechanisms. McCullough et al. (2001) claimed that forgiveness reduces motivations to seek revenge. Further, in their study, they found that neurotic defenses were positively correlated with the desire to take revenge. In parallel, Maltby and his colleagues found a significant negative correlation between forgiveness and neurotic defenses consisting of reaction formation, altruism, idealization, and undoing (2001, 2004). Based on the theoretical accounts, it is expected that achievement of the good-bad integration, or failure of it as characterized by splitting, would be a crucial factor in understanding forgiveness. However, it has not been studied, either as a developmental achievement or a defense mechanism within the context of forgiveness. There are also no relevant empirical studies with associated concepts such as level of personality organization that might shed light on this theoretically assumed association. Thus, this study aims at exploring integration vs. splitting as a potential predictor of forgiveness on a theoretical basis.

Alternatively, the theory points to mentalization as another construct associated with forgiveness. Again, there are no empirical studies in the forgiveness literature that directly address this association. Yet, mentalization literature includes important studies conducted on relevant constructs such as empathy, attachment style, perspective taking, intention and responsibility attributions to behaviors, which are related to basic mentalizing abilities. Details of these empirical studies will be discussed in the next section that cover the associations

between forgiveness and mentalization. Likewise, the self-representation and context were also mentioned in theory and omitted in empirical studies, except for the immediate relational context. Like mentalization, self-construal is also not directly studied before in relation to forgiveness. However, self-construal studies offer some insight as other relevant personality factors have been empirically studied. These studies will be presented in the in the subsequent section that cover the associations between forgiveness and self-construal.

1.4. MENTALIZATION AND FORGIVENESS

Mentalization is a key concept for development of forgiveness capacity. As the existing literature suggests, forgiveness is associated with understanding, awareness, and processing of underlying mental states of self and other. In this section, firstly definition and theoretical background of mentalization will be mentioned. Then, impairment of mentalizing functions consisting of hypomentalization and hypermentalization will be presented. Finally, existing empirical literature on relevant psychological constructs with mentalization capacity will be presented.

1.4.1. Definition and Theoretical Background of Mentalization

The concept of mentalization was first mentioned by French scholars Pierre Marty and Pierre Luquet in the 1960s referring to the imaginative capacity, which operates via mental functions consisting of symbolization and representation, to be able to understand mental phenomena (Freeman, 2016; Ringel, 2011). There are different approaches to mentalization in psychoanalytical school. First approach, which is called French school of mentalization (Freeman, 2016), emerged out of the studies of Marty on somatization, and mainly focuses on mental elaborations of affective world through representations and symbolizations (Marty, 1991 as cited in Freeman, 2016). The second approach to mentalization is initiated by Fonagy and Target (1997). They defined mentalization as a capacity of reflective

functioning, which enables individuals to interpret underlying mental states of actions, thoughts and attitudes of the self and others.

Along with stressing the centrality of attachment theory, Fonagy and his colleagues provided a new model based on integration of different perspectives from neuroscience, evolutionary science, attachment theory, psychoanalysis, and developmental psychology (Freeman, 2016). From this approach, the mentalization capacity is a consequence of developmental processes of marked feedbacks and contingent mirroring reactions of caregiver within the context of significant attachment relationship. This mentalization capacity conceptualization has an important contribution to the concept that there are implicit aspects of mentalization which are fully unconscious processes of automatic sensing and reflection on other people's feelings (Allen, Fonagy, & Bateman, 2008). It gives individuals the chance to generate ideas and respond to not only explicit, apparent manifestations but also to covert, hidden considerations, feelings, and intentions of people (Horwitz, 2005).

Mentalization is basically the capacity to interpret actions, behaviors, and thoughts of the self and others -both implicitly and explicitly- in terms of underlying mental states and intentions (Bateman & Fonagy, 2006). Fonagy and his colleagues (2002) claimed that mentalization capacity involves both explicit and implicit, unconscious processes, which occur automatically. They emphasized the crucial distinction of reflective function with self-reflection and introspection that reflective function is an entirely unconscious self-organization and has an impact on the self. On the other hand, self-reflection and introspection are volitional mental actions of applying theory of mind for individuals to their self. The reflective functioning capacity is related with empathy for others, psychological mindedness, and mindfulness for self and others. Besides, cognitive emotional capacities play role in reflective functioning to make meaning of intentions and mental states for actions and attitudes (Fonagy et al., 2002).

The capacity to mentalize develops as a consequence of early attachment relationships with significant others and is essential for the organization of the self and regulation of the affects along with attention monitoring. It emerges out of mirroring and other relational functions developed during early attunement with

caregiver. Within this context, during the development of new social-cognitive capacities, failures, and disturbances of attachment lead to problems and vulnerabilities that may in turn cause self-fragmentation and deteriorations in the development of mentalization capacity (Fonagy et al., 2002; Fonagy & Luyten, 2009) The secure attachment has a key role for the emergence of the early capacity of mentalization (Fonagy, et al., 2002).

The mentalization capacity is not an inborn capacity but a group of skills learned through early interactions with caregiver (Fonagy et al., 2002; Fonagy & Luyten, 2009; Ringel, 2011). For mentalization capacity, namely reflective functioning capacities to develop, markedness and contingency are two necessary qualities for mirroring function of the caregiver (Allen & Fonagy, 2006; Fonagy & Target, 1996). The contingency of mirroring is procured when caregivers congruently and accurately match the mental state of the infants, and the markedness of mirroring is secured when caregivers express affective responses coupled with the indication that these affective expressions are not belong to them but to the infants (Busch, 2008; Freeman, 2016). So, infants can learn that these responses are related with their feelings which aids them in transforming and modulating their affects. If mirroring is not congruent, they may develop a narcissistic structure, since they cannot match their internal state with a constitutional self-state. (Busch, 2008). If mirroring is unmarked, the infants may experience caregivers' expressions as externalization for their feelings and may develop a tendency to experience emotions on the basis of other people (Fonagy et al., 2002). Lastly, if caregivers' expressions are congruent with the internal state of infants but unmarked, it may be an overwhelming experience for infants that they may feel affective responses of the caregivers are their real emotions, not the ones belong to infants. So, it may cause infants to experience their state as poisonous and it does not help regulating their internal states.

1.4.2. Mentalization Impairments

Fonagy et al. (2016) stressed two main categories of impairments in reflective functioning, which may result in proneness to developing psychopathology. The first one is called *hypomentalizing*, which is a way of concrete thinking or being in a mental state of psychic equivalence that leads to confusion and uncertainty when trying to comprehend complexity of mental states. Individuals who hypomentalize have inability to think complex relations and difficulty on modeling mind of the self or others. Borderline Personality Disorder, Eating Disorders and Depression are prominent disorders that hypomentalizing is related to. Fonagy and colleagues (2016) stressed further that hypomentalizing individuals still perform their impairment even if they are aware of the problem in their thinking way.

The other impairment in reflective functioning is called *hypermentalizing*, or pseudo-mentalizing, which indicates an overly preoccupied mind for interpreting mental states and intentions of others while being inattentive to the mental state of the self (Busch, 2011; Fonagy et al., 2016). Hypermentalizing individuals generate mental representations related with subjective experience and intentions of others in regard to their actions without any clear evidence or realistic support. Their models for others' minds are biased and based on inaccurate overelaborations. So, Fonagy et al. (2016) suggested that many hypermentalizing individuals may think that they are good mentalizers, since they have a sense to have good and detailed inferences related with subjective experiences, feelings, and intentions of others (2016). So, their biased models based on inaccurate overelaborations also relevant for their self-evaluations.

Recognition of the human limitations of mentalizing abilities of the self and acknowledging the partial obscurity of mental states are prominent characteristics of genuine mentalization capacity (Allen et al., 2008; Fonagy et al., 2016). Genuine mentalization requires true curiosity and respect for opaqueness for other's minds with a humble attitude (Midgley et al., 2013). Individuals having good reflective functioning are the ones who are certain and accurate to some extent about mental

states of others and the self along with knowing that their certainty is bounded with the opaque nature of mental states (Fonagy et al., 2016).

1.4.3. Association of Mentalization with Forgiveness

As mentioned above, mentalization capacity mainly forms a basis for understanding underlying mental states of overt behaviors of self and others. Further, it is related to accurately attributing and distinguishing intentions, desires, affects and corresponding behaviors. They are crucial for the development of forgiveness capacity since situating injurious actions into their social and psychological contexts provides room for reparation of relationships and resolution of resentments towards the self or other.

Siassi (2013) remarked that mentalization facilitates capacities to understand internal forces and relationship representations which shape behavior of self and others. These capacities serve as self-reflecting and self-observing functions of superego along with regulatory functions for the organization of the psyche. Siassi further stressed that through identification with the benign, non-retaliatory aspects of the significant other by the chance of experiencing of loving and being loved in the relationship, one can develop a more benign superego with capacities of self-understanding and mentalization. The development of the capacity for mentalization as a consequence of diminishment of the hatred and transformation of the guilt in a more constructive manner facilitate a more benign superego and capacity for forgiveness (Siassi, 2013). When one can see the offender as an integrative person with good and bad aspects, self-reflective capacities of a more mature superego would get congruent with self-reflective functions of the ego. Then, guilt related with own hatred gains constructive aspects to get into action in the relationship. As Holmes (2011) stated, an individual internalizes their parents not only as regulators of drives, but also as an attachment representation of the care-seeker and care-giver dyad.

The improved reflective and self-reflective functions enhance one's capacity for empathy with the processing of other person's motivations, beliefs and

intentions, which have crucial role on relieving injuries and hurts experienced by the offense. The development of the capacities for considering circumstances, contextual aspects, and human limitations of the offender, which are mainly capacities for reality testing and mentalization, further facilitate the wish to forgive the intimate other (Siassi, 2013). Siassi emphasized that the mentalization is related with the true forgiveness in its facilitating role of separating the offense from the person so that there is a possibility of compensation with kind and genuine effort of the offender. The necessary condition is not forgetting the offense, but balancing its consequent feelings of hatred and wish for retaliation with hope and good feelings by seeing the realistic potential of the other to sustain good and secure aspects of the relationship.

Kristeva and Rice (2002) offer a different conceptualization claiming that the offended person can forgive the offense as long as they partially and momentarily experience identification with the offending person and the action itself. As a result of temporarily holding the state of mind of the offender, the offended person can arrive at an integration of good and bad aspects of the offender and so be able to achieve metacognitive perspective by working of split parts of the mind and letting go of negative dependence of the bad internal object. They can renounce the ambivalent attachment with the transgressor and internalize a good and stable object through good reflective functioning and secure attachment. So, both attachment style and mentalization capacity play role on the capacity to forgive and overcoming human origin trauma. (Mucci, 2018)

Besides shared mechanisms of attachment relationship and forgiveness experience, Fonagy (2009) claimed that forgiveness is commonly thought to be associated with experience of wholeness or ideal completeness with simultaneous activation of mentalizing functions conceptually. He claimed that an idealized state and fantasies of divine being in almost all religions take their root in the need for the idealized state of being fully forgiven and completely mentalized by other, which, as acknowledged by everyone, cannot be accomplished in reality. So, people generally fall into a world of imagination and have the fantasy of an omniscient mentalizing being in order to meet their needs to fully understand the other and to

be fully understood by them. Siassi (2013) stressed a similar point that we have a fantasy of absolute divine perfection and only when we substitute it by the reality of imperfections, frailties, and vulnerabilities of our humble humanity, we can achieve the capacity to forgive. One can regulate self-criticism, and thus, has a forgiving attitude towards the self and the other only when they let go of the grudge, vengefulness, and related guilt thanks to realistic expectations and capacity to mentalize (Fonagy, 2009; Siassi, 2013). The forgiving state of mind develops under an internal loving atmosphere and capacity to concern for the self and other through empathic attunements and intuitive reflective and self-reflective functioning.

1.4.4. Empirical Studies on Mentalization-related Concepts and Forgiveness

There has been very limited theoretical work partially or directly on the relationship between mentalization and forgiveness from psychoanalytic perspective in recent years (e.g., Siassi, 2018; Fonagy, 2009). Further, there is limited empirical work that directly addresses the relationship between mentalization and forgiveness, none of which discusses the issue from a psychoanalytic standpoint. So, in this section, firstly the studies using neuroimaging techniques and self-report forgiveness measures to examine directly the relationship between forgiveness and mentalizing abilities will be mentioned. Then, some indirect limited empirical studies on the relationship of forgiveness with different mentalizing abilities and related concepts will be presented. In this regard, the studies examining the relationship of forgiveness with mentalizing abilities of empathy and understanding intention will be presented. Finally, the empirical literature on the relationship between forgiveness and attachment style, a crucial determinant of the development of mentalization capacity, will be presented.

Mentalization perspective, besides psychoanalytical tradition, is constituted upon integration of different theoretical perspectives consisting of neuroscience, evolutionary science, attachment theory, and developmental psychology (Freeman, 2016). There are very few and recent studies on mentalization and forgiveness (e.g., Billingsley, 2017; Li & Lu, 2017) and they examined the relationship of forgiveness

with mentalizing functions such as theory of mind and perspective taking through neuroimaging techniques. Moreover, some researchers (e.g., Chung, 2014; Friesen et al., 2005; Lawler et al., 2006; Konstam et al., 2001; Tirtashi et al., 2013; Tsang & Stanford, 2006) studied associations of forgiveness with reflective functioning processes consisting of intention, theory of mind, attachment styles and empathy, which are basic related concepts to mentalization.

Forgiving entails a complex multi-level processing of information which require mentalizing abilities consisting of the representations of intentions, desires, emotions, perspective taking, and capacity for theory-of-mind (Billingsley, 2017). The neuroscientific research on forgiveness is basically using imaging techniques of neural activations with the conceptualization of forgiveness as the global tendency of individuals to forgive across real or hypothetical situations or relationships (Fourie et al., 2020). The recent neuroimaging studies are classified into three categories consisting of social scenarios involving others, economic decision making, and real or imagined forgiveness. Their general findings suggested that forgivability is mainly related with the brain regions responsible for cognitive control, perspective taking, and social valuation (Fourie et al., 2020), which are also crucial mechanisms of mentalizing functions.

Bestowing forgiveness was found to be correlated with neural activations associated with mentalizing activities such as theory of mind, empathy, affective regulation through cognition, and in brain regions responsible for inhibition of spontaneous aggressive responses (Ricciardi et al., 2013; Will et al., 2015). For example, in a study using resting-state functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) technique and measuring forgiveness tendency via self-report scale, the results are in parallel with literature (Li & Lu, 2017). It was found that the individual differences in the spontaneous activity of brain regions related with mentalizing, and empathic response are compatible with their differences in the tendency to forgive. The studies conducted in populations with traumatic brain injuries and with autism spectrum disorder also showed that damage or impairment in the brain regions related with mentalizing abilities such as representing intentions, perspective taking, empathic response result with a decreasing level of forgivability

(Billingsley, 2017; Li 2017). The results also showed that functionality of theory-of-mind elicits an increase in forgiveness for accidental harms, whereas it decreases level of granting forgiveness for unsuccessful but intentional harm attempts (Billingsley, 2017).

Attributing intentions and responsibility to actions is a key factor in reflective functioning (Fonagy & Target, 1997). Distinguishing and attributing intentions are also crucial for forgiveness (Fincham, 2000). As Friesen et al. (2005) stated, attributions for intentions predict forgiveness. In their study, intentional attributions to injurious actions of partners in intimate relationships and relationship quality predict higher levels of forgiveness. Furthermore, many studies showed that attributing intention to harmful actions plays a negative role on forgiveness (e.g., Ahmed et al., 2007; Gauche & Mullet, 2005). So, distinguishing intentional and unintentional actions accurately and their intended and accidental results are prominent for internal forgiveness processes.

Worthington and Wade (1999) described empathy as the ability to understand cognitive and affective experience of others. Fliess (1942) defined empathy psychoanalytically as a process of acquiring perception and faculty of elaboration of another person by transiently introjecting the object and later on projecting the introject of that object again onto the object. It is a tricky process to introject other's mind from without having the object within. As Luyten and Fonagy claimed (2015) that empathy is a primary psychological component of mentalizing about others. Many studies demonstrated consistent results that empathy enhances forgiving attitude (Enright & HDSG, 1996; Enright et al., 1992; Freedman & Enright, 1996; McCullough & Worthington, 1994; McCullough et al., 1997; McCullough et al., 1998; Rhode, 1990; Tsang & Standford, 2006). The facilitating role of empathy on forgiveness is operative for both forgiving the self and other people as Wright, Turner and McCarty (2017) found in their study on undergraduate students.

Affective empathy is claimed to be as the one of essential determinants of forgiveness (McCullough et al., 1998). In a study conducted with 138 graduate students in an urban northeastern university in U.S.A., affective empathy and

perspective taking, which are crucial dimensions of mentalization, were found to have significant relation with forgiving other. In addition, guilt-driven individuals are more prone to forgive with lesser level of externalization (Konstam et al., 2001). Konstam and colleagues further claimed that forgiveness is closely related with the ability of empathy, and it is used in forgiveness therapies to enhance restoration of injured feelings and facilitate forgiveness. Fincham, Paleari and Regalia (2002) found parallel results in their study on Italian married that positive affective reactions and emotional empathy level facilitate forgiveness via more benign causal and responsibility attributions for hypothetical partners violence and positive relationship quality. Making accurate attributions to thoughts, intentions, beliefs of others is a crucial aspect of good reflective functioning along with empathy (Luyten & Fonagy, 2015). Zeichmeister and Romero also found in their study (2002) that individuals in victim role who are high in perspective taking forgive more than the ones who are low in perspective taking.

Attachment system is claimed to be one of the important precursors of quality of reflective functioning (Luyten & Fonagy, 2015) since secure attachment facilitate regulative capacity of stress and emotions, relaxations of hypervigilance and so enhance controlling mentalizing (Fredrickson, 2001 as cited in Luyten & Fonagy, 2015). There are lots of studies in recent years to examine the relationship between forgiveness and attachment styles, and found significant associations between them (e.g., Burnette et al., 2007; Lawler et al., 2006; Tirtashi et al., 2013; Tsang et al., 2006; Webb et al., 2006). The enhancing role of secure attachment on the capacity to forgive is a general suggestion of existing research (e.g., Burnette et al, 2007; Lawler et al., 2006), whereas the insecure attachment was commonly reported to have a negative association with forgiveness (Chung, 2014; Tirtashi et al., 2013). Furthermore, there is a bidirectional facilitating relationship between forgiveness and secure attachment style as the study of Tsang et al. (2006) demonstrated.

Lawler and colleagues (2006) investigated the role of attachment styles on forgiveness of offenses in close relationships by assessing forgiveness levels via self-reports along with physiological responses. They found that secure attachment

predicts forgiveness. Securely attached individuals demonstrated lower levels of blood pressure both when they wanted to recall a memory of betrayal, and recovery condition, in addition to their higher scores of trait and state forgiveness on self-report measures. On the other hand, insecurely attached individuals were more prone to avoid the relationship with offenders and showed higher levels of blood pressures. In addition, it was found that secure attachment has a positive correlation with forgiveness along with mediation of empathy in the study with 312 university students (Edwards, 2007). Secure attachment and forgiveness are found to be highly correlated, and positive feelings related with conflicts and empathy mediate the positive relation between secure attachment and forgiveness. Insecurely attached individuals are less empathetic and more prone to feel threatened due to relationship conflicts (Edwards, 2007).

1.5. SELF-CONSTRUAL AND FORGIVENESS

Self-construal types define individual differences in terms of subjective comprehension of perception of the world, values, beliefs, social roles, and behaviors in cultural contexts. It is one of the main research interests of the current study that how cultural differences of individuals in terms of self-construct shape forgiving attitudes. In this section, the definition and general theoretical framework of self-construal will be presented. Kağıtçıbaşı's model will be described, respectively. In the following sections the theoretical and empirical ties between forgiveness and self-construal will be cited.

1.5.1. Definition and Conceptual Framework of Self-Construal

Kağıtçıbaşı (1998) defined self as a 'social product,' so it differentiates from personality which is roughly stable and is not affected from social environment much. Self as a social product is shaped in the family, thereby affected from the culture. Self-construal is a subjective comprehension that has effects on perception of the world, beliefs, attitudes, values, social roles, and behaviors. (Markus &

Kitayama, 2003). Independent and interdependent self-construals are parts of self-schemata, which are managing and regulating the actions and experiences of the self (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). Independent self is directing and organizing actions in regard to own thoughts and feelings, whereas interdependent self is taking direction from reference to social relations that actions and behaviors are mainly organize according to thoughts and feelings of significant others. The predominant characteristics of the independent self are autonomy and separateness whereas the interdependent self is characterized by dependency and connectedness. However, some scholars (Guisinger & Blatt, 1994; Harter, 1999; Kağıtçıbaşı, 1998, 2005) have a critical view to conceptualize self-construal in the model based on independent and interdependent self-schemata. They mainly claim that autonomy and relatedness are essential incorporable human needs to be satisfied together.

Self-Determination Theory has been influential on contemporary perspectives that claims autonomy and relatedness, along with competence, are fundamental human needs, as different from most theories in individualistic Western Culture. Satisfaction of these basic needs enhances mental health and well-being. (Chirkov et al., 2003; Ryan & Deci, 2000; Ryan, Deci, & Grolnick, 1995). Autonomy is defined as the individuals' capability of initiating their own actions and regulating them according to own will. Relatedness is defined as the feeling of belongingness, and competence is the experience of efficacy of individuals on their social and physical world. (Ryan & Deci, 2000; Ryan, Deci, & Grolnick, 1995). Self-Determination Theory also suggests that satisfying these innate psychological needs safeguard the secure attachment relationships with significant others, which is important in this context. Even though there are some cultural differences in conceptualization and socialization of these psychological needs, it was stressed that they are universal psychological human needs (Ryan & Deci, 2000).

1.5.2. Kağıtçıbaşı's Model of Autonomous-Related Self

Kağıtçıbaşı (2005) established an autonomous-related self model akin to the framework of Self Determination Theory by pointing to how autonomy and

relatedness vary in different cultural contexts. There are similar recent interpersonal models from different theoretical orientations to explain the relationship of autonomy and relatedness in a parallel perspective with self-determination theory as with concepts of agency and communion, self-definition and sociotropy (Benjamin, 2005; Horowitz & Strack, 2011; Horowitz et al., 2006; Kiesler, 1983; Leary, 1957; Pincus, 2005; Wiggins, 1991, 2003, as cited in Luyten & Blatt, 2013).

Autonomy and relatedness are seen as primary human needs by various theories ranging from psychoanalytic tradition to evolutionary psychology perspective (Kağıtçıbaşı, 2005). Western theories have a general tendency to perceive individual autonomy along with agency are fundamental needs of humans and separation as a crucial stage of human development. Kağıtçıbaşı emphasized that autonomy and agency are not opposites or antithesis of relatedness, yet they are complementary to each other.

Some cultural perspectives question the importance, sometimes even the presence, of autonomy in collectivist cultures (see Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Oishi, 2000). The essential claim of Kağıtçıbaşı (2005) on this point is that both separate and related selves can be volitional and autonomous at the same time. The link between autonomy and relatedness is orthogonal and they are both consisting of dimensions of self-construal. Autonomy is the volitional action of individual with a sense of agency without pressure. Thus, in Kağıtçıbaşı's model, autonomy and relatedness are two basic dimensions of self-construal (Kağıtçıbaşı, 2005), which have an orthogonal relationship on four different self types in the autonomous-related self model (Kağıtçıbaşı, 2005).

First dimension is on the spectrum of relatedness and separateness (Kağıtçıbaşı, 2005). It is related with the degree of interpersonal distance, basically related with if a person is separate with clear boundaries and long interpersonal distance or have a connected self with more intimate relationship, in fusion with other. The second dimension is related with how much autonomously functioning a person, that is how agentic a person is. More agentic individuals are more autonomous, whereas the ones who are functioning with a control to other persons are heteronomous individuals. This dimension is more akin to Piaget's (1948)

conceptualization of autonomous morality vs. heteronomous morality related with moral development of a child. Autonomous self has a sense of agency with self-control, whereas heteronomous self-construal has the feeling of other-governing. Interpersonal distance and agency dimensions do not predict, determine, or shape each other, they are more of in an empirical relationship rather than logical (Kağıtçıbaşı, 2005).

There are four type of self-construals in Kağıtçıbaşı's model out of the two dimensions of autonomy and relatedness. The first type is heteronomous-related self, which is an other-governing self type with a low relational distance. It is a self-type emerges out of total interdependent family model with obedience. The autonomous-separate self is high in self-governing and has more distant relational, which develops out of independent type family model with an orientation of self-reliance. The third type of self is autonomous-related self, which is remarked as the healthy developmental model along with a note that healthy development should be assessed in a more culturally sensitive understanding (Kağıtçıbaşı, 2005). It develops in the psychological interdependence family model with an orientation of both order setting control and autonomy orientation. The last type is heteronomous-separate self, which is said to be observed in hierarchical neglecting or indifferent families. She noted that actual situations have much more degree of variety of these prototypical characterizations.

The most problematic self type is heteronomous-separate self among four self types, whereas the healthiest one is autonomous-related self since both autonomy and relatedness are essential human needs (Kağıtçıbaşı, 2005). The satisfaction of both at the same time enhance well-being and mental health.

Self and development of self have been dealt from Western individualistic cultural perspective and the social norms and necessary conditions for healthy development of the self are generally defined by this perspective (Kağıtçıbaşı, 2005). Agency is the essential outcome of healthy development and separation is a necessary condition to sustain healthy developmental line according to individualistic Western cultural perspective and it is generally presented as the universal human nature. However, autonomy-heteronomy and relatedness-

separateness are dimensions of self-construal, which are dominantly shaped by culture and family. So, autonomy and relatedness are fundamental human needs to be improved together for healthy development.

1.5.3. Association of Self-Construal with Forgiveness

The relationship between forgiveness and self-construal has been mainly discussed on differences of forgiveness conceptualizations and practices of Eastern and Western cultures. Especially, the differences of individualistic and collectivistic forgiveness conceptualizations were stressed. (Kadiangandu et al., 2007; Hook et al., 2009). Individuals with independent (autonomous) self-construal generally perceive forgiveness as an intra-personal process, whereas individuals with interdependent (related) self-construal perceive forgiveness as a dimension of interpersonal relationships. Hook and colleagues (2009) further stated that processing specific offenses or forgiving the offending person is not central issue in forgiveness decisions in collectivistic cultures. Rather, injured individuals with interdependent self-construal concern social harmony and relational repair in containing social group when forgiving a person. On the other hand, mainly in individualistic cultures, forgiveness interventions and forgiving strategies so as to promote individuals' forgivability are mainly focusing on safeguarding inner peace of people who have difficulties related to harmful experiences.

1.5.4. Empirical Studies on Self-Construal and Forgiveness-related Concepts

In the existing empirical literature, very limited studies have examined the relationship between forgiveness and self-construal, none of which investigated self-forgiveness. Empirical literature on self-construal and forgiveness has focused on differences of independent and interdependent self-construals in terms of decisional and emotional aspects of forgiveness. The relationship between decisional forgiveness, which is based on conscious decision to forgive, and

interdependent self-construal is found to be mediated by the motivation to maintain relationships (Major et al., 2020).

Another study that conducted to examine forgiveness-related concepts in collectivistic culture found that people with collectivistic (related) self-construal have a higher tendency to forgive decisional, rather than emotional (Hook et al., 2009). The researchers claimed that the participants with collectivistic self-construal prioritize interpersonal harmony and reconciliation, rather than emotional peace of themselves. Furthermore, Zhang et al. (2019) conducted a study based on a sample consisting of participants from U.S. and Chinese culture to examine associations of self-construal and other-forgiveness. They reported that independent self-construal is found to be negatively associated with other-forgiveness, whereas interdependent self-construal is found to be positively associated with other-forgiveness in both cultures. In parallel, Neto and Mullet (2004) found that interdependence fosters willingness to forgive others, whereas independence from others keeps resentment feelings more persistent.

Based on existing literature, self-construal shapes individuals' forgiveness conceptualizations, psychological processes related to interpersonal and intra-personal dimensions of forgiveness, and motivations to forgive. So, in the current study, significant associations between self-construal and forgiveness are expected and predicting role of self-construal type on self-forgiveness and other-forgiveness will be investigated.

1.6. CURRENT STUDY

The main aim of the current study is to explore forgiveness from a psychoanalytic perspective. The forgiveness topic has recently been drawn attention in psychoanalytic literature. However, to the author's knowledge there has been no empirical study conducted directly addressing forgiveness and its associations from a psychoanalytic standpoint. Thus, the current study has an aim to contribute to the ever-developing literature on forgiveness. Forgiveness is a multidimensional process which has intrapsychic, relational, and cultural aspects.

In this regard, the current study will focus possible predicting factors of forgiveness in terms of intrapsychic and relational capacities, and cultural differences of individuals.

In psychoanalytic literature, forgiveness has been mainly discussed in relation to integration of splitting of good and bad representations. So, the current study firstly expects relationships between resolution of the splitting and forgiveness. It is expected that integration of good-bad splitting facilitates forgiveness of self and others. Another prominent factor in the literature that predicts forgiveness is psychic maturity, which is widely defined as developing psychic mechanisms to deal with both negative affective components, to metabolize aggression by using more mature mechanisms instead of splitting and projections. In the current study, defense maturity is thought to be demonstrative of psychic maturity of individuals, and so, defense maturity is expected to be a predicting factor of forgiveness.

Besides abovementioned intrapsychic indicators, relational capacities to understand mutual relationships of overt behaviors and underlying mental states are essential for development of forgiveness capacity. Thus, looking from an attachment relational perspective, mentalization capacity emerges as a prerequisite for forgiveness.

In a wider relational context, cultural differences of individuals of how self is constructed in relation to others shape forgiving attitudes. Self-construct in a wider relational context is operationalized by self-construal since it is thought to be a good reflection of individual differences in terms of subjective comprehension of perception of the world, values, beliefs, social roles, and behaviors. Especially, the dimensions of relational distance and autonomy of the self-functioning are expected to be predictive factors of self and other forgiveness. So, the current study expects associations between forgiveness and self-construal.

In addition, based on the existing literature, genuine forgiveness capacity implies development of both self-forgiveness and other-forgiveness capacities together. However, although both capacities of self-forgiveness and other-forgiveness share common prerequisites of psychic maturity and integrative object

representations, different factors may lead to impairments of either self-forgiveness capacity or other-forgiveness capacity. Imbalance of forgiveness capacities is considered an indication of a general incapacity of genuine forgiveness. So, the balance between both capacities is considered to be a possible indicator of the development of genuine forgiveness capacity of self and others. Thus, the level of discrepancy between self and other forgiveness thought to be a possible negative predicting factor of forgiveness capacity. In the current study, the association of mentalization capacity with the balance of self and other forgiveness is considered to worth investigating.

To sum up, the primary aim of the current study is to predict forgiveness of self and other in a sample from Turkey. The associations of self and other forgiveness with mentalization capacity, defense mechanisms, splitting, and self-construal will be examined. The current study will be one of the first empirical studies that directly aims to address relationships between forgiveness and mentalization.

Within the scope of this study, following hypotheses are specified:

1. Mentalization capacity, Self-construal, Splitting, and Defense Styles will predict Self-Forgiveness.
 - a. Self-forgiveness will be negatively predicted by both types of impairment in mentalization, Hypomentalization and Hypermentalization.
 - b. Self-forgiveness will be positively predicted by Autonomous self-construal and negatively predicted by Related self-construal.
 - c. Splitting will predict self-forgiveness negatively.
 - d. Maturity of defenses will predict self-forgiveness positively.
 - e. The strongest predictor of this proposed model predicting self-forgiveness will be defense maturity.
2. Mentalization capacity, Self-construal, Splitting, and Defense Styles will predict Other-Forgiveness.
 - a. Other-Forgiveness will be negatively predicted by both types of impairment in mentalization, Hypomentalization and Hypermentalization.

- b. Other-Forgiveness will be negatively predicted by Autonomous self-construal and positively predicted by Related self-construal.
- c. Splitting will predict other-forgiveness negatively.
- d. Maturity of defenses will predict other-forgiveness positively.
- e. The strongest predictor of this proposed model predicting other-forgiveness will be mentalization.

As mentioned above, associations of main constructs with the discrepancy between self- and other-forgiveness will be examined. Due to the scarcity of literature, no hypotheses were specified as to the discrepancy; the aim of this study is to provide a preliminary exploratory inspection.

CHAPTER 2

METHOD

In this chapter, the sampling method and participant profile, the instruments, the procedure of the study, and data analysis strategies are described, respectively.

2.1. PARTICIPANTS

The current study aimed to investigate associations of self and other forgiveness with mentalization, self-construals, defense styles, and splitting use among adults in Turkey. The only participation criterion for this study was set as being 18 or older to ensure voluntary participation.

The data was collected via an online survey. While the total number of the participants who attempted to fill the survey was 1256, the number of the participants who completed the survey was 650. There was no missing data, all data collected from 650 participants were included in the study.

In terms of gender of participants, 238 (37%) of them identified themselves as male, 407 (63%) as female; whereas and 4 participants marked other and 1 participant preferred not to disclose. The ages of the participants ranged from 18 to 75 with a mean of 35.37 ($SD = 11.46$).

The majority of the sample of this study consisted of highly educated participants. The participants who indicated their education level as a post-graduate degree (master or PhD) constituted 39% ($n = 272$) of the study sample, stated it as BA level constituted 49% ($n = 336$), stated it as high school level constituted 5% ($n = 34$), and stated it as lower than high school constituted %1 ($n = 6$) of the study sample.

The majority of the participants were currently employed (62.5%), whereas 28% of them were unemployed, and 4% of the participants declared their working status as other than employed or unemployed. Approximately half ($n = 320$; 49%) of the participants defined themselves as having a middle-level income, 147 (23%) of them as low-middle, and 134 (21%) of them as middle-high. Only 33 (5%) of

them declared themselves as having low-level income and 13 (2%) of them as high-level income.

In terms of relationship status, majority of the sample were in a relationship (61%), whereas 29% of the sample declared that they were not in a relationship and 4% of the participants defined their relationship status as other. For the participants who were currently involved in a relationship, the durations were ranging between 0 to 46 years with a mean of 6.56 ($SD = 9.85$). The mean relationship satisfaction of the sample was 7.58 ($SD = 1.92$).

In terms of living status, 37% was living with spouse and/or children, 17% was living with parents, 14% was living alone, 12% was living with friends, 5% was living with their partners, and 3.5% was living with relatives such as cousin. The rest of the participants (4%) marked the other option for their living status.

The majority of the participants ($n = 436$; 69%) rated the level of social support they receive from their family and social environment as 7 or greater on a 10-point scale. Nearly half of the participants ($n = 319$; 49%) declared that they have gotten psychological support from a mental health professional at least once in their life, and among them, 93 participants reported that they were currently getting psychological support.

2.2. INSTRUMENTS

2.2.1. The Heartland Forgiveness Scale (HFS)

The Heartland Forgiveness Scale (HFS) is a self-report measure developed for assessing dispositional forgiveness in terms of the dimensions of forgiving self, other, and situation. (Thompson et al., 2005). The scale contains 18-items that were organized into 3 sub-scales, namely forgiveness of self, forgiveness of other, and forgiveness of situation. First 6 items are to evaluate forgiveness of self, items 7-12 are to evaluate forgiveness of others, and items 13-18 are to evaluate forgiveness of situation. The participants rate each item according to the degree of fitness of the statements to their situation ranging from 1 (almost always false of me) to 7 (almost

always true of me). The highest possible score is 126 and the lowest is 18. Higher scores indicate higher level of forgiveness. Based on results of three studies which investigate the reliability and validity of the scale, The Cronbach's alpha values were found to be between .72 and .76 for Self-Forgiveness subscale, and between .78 and .81 for Other-Forgiveness sub-scale. The construct validity and predictive validity of HFS were supported by Thompson et al. (2005) that HFS was stated as a good measure of dispositional forgiveness.

The Turkish adaptation study of HFS was conducted by Bugay and Demir (2010; See Appendix A). The Cronbach's alpha value was calculated as .81 for the total forgiveness score; .64 for Self-Forgiveness subscale; .79 for Other-Forgiveness subscale; and .76 for the forgiveness-of-situation subscale. In addition, Bugay and Demir (2010) stated that Turkish adaptation of HFS demonstrated an adequate level of criterion validity when compared to other relevant measures.

In the current study, The Cronbach's alpha values were found to be .71 for Self-Forgiveness and .82 for Other-Forgiveness.

2.2.2. Defense Style Questionnaire

The Defense Style Questionnaire (DSQ) was used to assess the level of immature and mature defense use of the participants in this study. It is a Likert type self-report measure consisting of 40 items developed for assessing how people use of 20 different defense mechanisms by Andrews, Singh, and Bond (1993). The participants are required to answer each item according to how the statement fits their situation ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 9 (strongly agree). The scale provides scores for three dimensions reflecting utilization of immature defenses, neurotic defenses, and mature defenses. The defense mechanisms grouped under Immature Defense Style are acting out, autistic fantasy, denial, devaluation, displacement, dissociation, isolation, passive aggression, projection, rationalization, somatization, and splitting. The Neurotic Defense Style consists of pseudoaltruism, idealization, reaction formation, and undoing; Mature Defense Style consists of sublimation, humor, anticipation, and suppression. The internal

consistency as measured by Cronbach's alpha values were found to be .80 for Immature Defense Style, .58 for Neurotic Defense Style, and .68 for Mature Defense Styles, respectively. The study conducted by Andrews and his colleagues (1993) supported construct validity of DSQ-40.

The Turkish adaptation study of DSQ (See Appendix B) was conducted by Yılmaz, Gençöz, and Ak (2007). The Cronbach's alpha values for the Turkish version were found as .83, .61, and .70 for Immature, Neurotic, and Mature Defense Styles, respectively. The criterion validity of DSQ and concurrent validity of mature defenses and immature defenses subscales were supported (Yılmaz et al., 2007).

As identified above, immature and mature defense styles will be assessed in the current study. As calculated with the data of this study, the Cronbach's alpha values were found to be .76 for Immature Defense Style, and .64 for Mature Defense Style.

2.2.3. Splitting Scale

Splitting Scale (Gerson, 1984) is used in this study to further assess splitting specifically, in addition to the defense styles. Immaturity of defense styles as measured by DSQ offers a broad assessment on the level of utilization of a wide-array of relatively reality-distorting mechanisms, whereas Splitting Scale is used to capture the specific variance due to the participants' separation of good and bad representations of self and other as indicated to be crucial for forgiveness.

Splitting Scale is a self-report 14 items Likert type measure developed by Gerson (1984) for assessing degree of splitting defense use of people. Participants are expected to answer each item according to the fitness of the statements to their situations on a 7-point scale ranging from 1 (not true at all for me) to 7 (completely true for me). The items of the scale were mainly constructed upon the theoretical basis of Kernberg (1975) and Kohut (1971) on splitting defense (Gerson, 1984).

The items of the Splitting Scale were divided into sub-categories in terms of the relationship of splitting with the dimensions of separation of good and bad

representations of self and other (9 items), anger as an emotion in the genesis of splitting (2 items), idealization (2 items), grandiosity (2 items) and identity diffusion (1 item). The total score of Splitting Scale is calculated by summation of all items; the highest possible score is 98 and the lowest is 14. The Cronbach's alpha for the scale was reported as .70, and test-retest reliability was reported as .84. Gerson (1984) reported a satisfactory validity for the Splitting Scale.

The Turkish adaptation study of the Splitting Scale was conducted by Alkan (2010; See Appendix C). The Cronbach's alpha of Turkish version was found as .70, and test-retest reliability was found as .85. In the current study, the Cronbach alpha value was calculated to be .70 for this scale. Alkan (2010) reported that Turkish adaptation of Splitting Scale had a moderate concurrent, predictive, and discriminant validity in her study.

2.2.4. Reflective Functioning Questionnaire (RFQ-8) - Short Version

Reflective Functioning Questionnaire (RFQ) is a self-report Likert type measure developed by Fonagy et al. (2016) for assessing mentalizing functions. The original version consists of 26 items for participants to answer ranging from 1 (totally disagree) to 7 (totally agree). The Cronbach's alpha values were found as varying between .64 and .71.

In this study, the short version of RFQ (See Appendix D), which consists of 8 items, was used. There are two outputs of the RFQ-8 consisting of the uncertainty score and certainty score, both of which are assessing perception of people about mental states of others. Fonagy and his colleagues (2016) reported construct validity of RFQ-8 – short version as satisfactory.

The short version of Reflective Functioning Questionnaire (RFQ) has not been adapted to Turkish yet and the Turkish version of the questionnaire items were obtained from the web site of the developers (UCL, 2019). However, the questionnaire has been used in several master thesis studies (i.e., Yayla, 2020; Gör, 2021). Yayla (2020) reported the Cronbach's alpha values as .73 for Certainty and as .68 for Uncertainty subscales; while Gör (2021) reported the Cronbach's alpha

values as .76 and .58 for Certainty and Uncertainty subscales, respectively. In the current study, Cronbach's alpha values were found to be .76 for Certainty subscale, and .75 for Uncertainty subscale.

2.2.5. Autonomous and Related Self Scales

Autonomous and Related Self Scales (See Appendix E) is a self-report measure developed by Kağıtçıbaşı et al. (2006) to assess one's self-construal in terms of interpersonal distance (separation-relatedness) and autonomy (autonomy-heteronomy). The items are grouped into 3 factors as Autonomous Self, Related Self, and Autonomous-Related Self, each of which consists of 9 items. The participants are expected to rate answer each item according to the degree of fitness of the statements to their situation on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

According to the most recent version of the psychometric properties of the measure as reported by Kağıtçıbaşı et al. (2013), the measure had good internal consistency as indicated by Cronbach's alpha values of .72 for Autonomous Self, .76 for Related Self and .80 for Autonomous-Related Self. In the current study, The Cronbach's alpha values are found to be .79 for Autonomous Self and .72 for Related Self subscales, respectively. Aydın (2019) reported that Autonomous Related Self Scales showed an adequate level of construct validity.

2.2.6. Demographic Information Form

The Demographic Information Form was generated by the researcher to obtain data related to background characteristics of the participants of this study. The form consists of questions as regards to participants' age, gender, level of education, working status, perceived socioeconomic level, living conditions, relationship status, physical and mental health conditions (See Appendix F).

2.3. PROCEDURE

First, ethics approval was obtained from Istanbul Bilgi University Ethics Committee. Subsequent to Ethics Approval, study materials were delivered via an online survey platform. Initially, an informed consent was shared with participants, including information on the purpose of the study, confidentiality of their data, their right to quit the study at any time, and they received the contact information of researcher in case of questions or concerns related with the study and their participation. Upon the approval of the informed consent, study instruments of Demographic Information Form, Heartland Forgiveness Scale, Autonomous and Related Self Scales, Defense Style Questionnaire, and Reflective Functioning Scale – Short Form were presented in the above order. It took approximately 20 minutes to complete all scales. No identifying information was asked to participants during their participation, and all data obtained from participants were kept confidential.

2.4. DATA ANALYSIS

The dependent variables of this research were Self-Forgiveness and Other-Forgiveness, as measured by Heartland Forgiveness Scale (HFS). There were four main study constructs consisting of seven potential predictors: (A) Mentalization, operationalized as reflective functioning impairments of (1) Hypomentalization and (2) Hypermentalization as measured by Reflective Functioning Questionnaire ; (B) Self-construal, operationalized as (3) Autonomous Self-Construal and (4) Related Self-Construal, as measured by Autonomous Related Self Scales, (C) Defense Maturity that had two potential indicators (5) Mature Defense Style and (6) Immature Defense Style, as measured by Defense Styles Questionnaire, and (D) the failure to integrate good and bad, operationalized as (7) Splitting that was measured by Splitting Scale.

First, the data were controlled in case of any missing values and descriptive analysis were conducted. Next, the data were checked for assumptions of normality. Then, a set of preliminary analyses were conducted to see whether any of the

demographic characteristics were significantly associated with forgiveness to warrant their inclusion in the suggested model as a control. Another set of preliminary correlational analyses were conducted to examine associations among the potential predictors to check for multicollinearity as well as to examine association of the predictors with forgiveness to confirm or refute their inclusion in the model.

In order to test the hypotheses of the study two stepwise regression analyses were conducted with Self-Forgiveness and Other-Forgiveness as dependent variables; and Hypermentalization, Hypomentalization, Autonomous Self, Related Self, Mature Defense Use, Immature Defense Use, and Splitting as predictor variables. Regression was preferred as it provides the strength and direction of the association of each predictor with forgiveness while the others are controlled and further allows for the comparison of their strength.

Finally, with the exploratory aim of this study regarding the discrepancy between self-forgiveness and other-forgiveness, correlational analyses and group comparisons were conducted with the discrepancy score as the dependent variable.

CHAPTER 3

RESULTS

The results of the current study are reported in this chapter. Firstly, the descriptive statistics of all study variables and scales are presented. Then, results of the preliminary analyses were reported, in which the findings of ANOVAs that compare the forgiveness means of several demographic variables and Pearson Correlation Analyses of the associations among study variables are presented. As the main analyses of the current study, the results of two stepwise regression analyses are reported to show the degree of comparable effects of Self-Construal, Defense Styles, Splitting and Mentalization on Self-Forgiveness and Other-Forgiveness. In addition, the associations of main study variables with discrepancy between Other and Self-Forgiveness were presented as a further exploration.

3.1. DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

The descriptive statistics for the study variables were computed; the distributions and central tendencies of study variables were examined. The minimum and maximum values, means, and standard deviations are shown in Table 3.1.

It is observed that in this sample, the mean values were approximate to mid-points for all variables except reflective functioning. Self-Forgiveness and Other-Forgiveness mean scores are relatively close to each other. On the other hand, mean score of Hypomentalization is considerably low and mean score of Hypermentalization is also closer to the scale minimum. It was further noted that Hypermentalization and Mature Defense Use mean scores were considerably higher than Hypomentalization and Immature Defense Use means scores, respectively.

Table 3.1 Descriptive Statistics of Study Variables

	Min	Max	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Self-Forgiveness	7	42	27.39	6.33
Other-Forgiveness	6	42	25.28	7.69
Hypermentalization	.00	3.00	1.05	.78
Hypomentalization	.00	3.00	.66	.65
Autonomous Self	10	43	27.60	5.59
Related Self	9	45	31.34	5.01
Splitting	18	87	51.98	11.33
Mature Defense	1	9	5.08	1.37
Immature Defense	1.58	7	3.98	.91

Despite the lower means of reflective functioning scores, skewness and kurtosis values of all variables were within the acceptable range and all variables approximately normally distributed. Homoscedasticity and multicollinearity assumptions were met for the corresponding analyses for this study.

3.2. PRELIMINARY ANALYSES

Prior to the main analyses to identify the predictors of Self-Forgiveness and Other-Forgiveness, three sets of preliminary analyses were conducted: (1) the associations of demographic variables with forgiveness and (2) the associations of the potential predictors among each other (3) the correlations of potential predictors with forgiveness.

3.2.1. Demographic Characteristics and Forgiveness

The relationships between demographic variables and dependent variables were checked to see whether there are any significant and meaningful associations that would require their inclusion as control variables in further analyses. One-way

Between-Subjects ANOVA analyses were conducted to compare the forgiveness means of different demographic groups and correlation coefficients were computed for age and social support. There was no significant relationship of Self-Forgiveness and Other-Forgiveness with age, gender, relationship status, and working status. However, having an ongoing psychological problem, getting psychological support, social support level and relationship satisfaction level have significant effects on either Self-Forgiveness and/or Other-Forgiveness.

Having a psychological problem affecting daily life was found to be significantly associated with Self-Forgiveness, $F(1, 644) = 17.563, p < .01$. Participants who reported that they currently experience a psychological problem ($M = 24.73, SD = 6.78$) have lower levels of Self-Forgiveness scores than the ones who declared that they have no ongoing psychological problem ($M = 27.78, SD = 6.18$).

Self-Forgiveness means significantly differed for also the categories of getting psychological support, $F(2, 646) = 15.67, p < .01$. The participants who have never gotten psychological help ($M = 28.03, SD = 6.13$) had significantly higher Self-Forgiveness scores than the ones who were currently getting psychological help ($M = 24.08, SD = 6.29$). Their Self-Forgiveness scores was also higher than the ones who got psychological help and terminated ($M = 27.85, SD = 6.25$), even though the difference was not significant. Among the ones who have gotten psychological help at least once in their life, the participants that were currently getting psychological help had significantly lower Self-Forgiveness scores than the ones who terminated.

The social support level was significantly, yet weakly, correlated both with Self-Forgiveness $r_s(650) = .126, p < .01$, and Other-Forgiveness, $r_s(650) = .124, p < .01$. As the level of perceived social support from families and social environment increases, both Self-Forgiveness and Other-Forgiveness increase.

The relationship satisfaction was found to have a weak positive correlation with Self-Forgiveness, $r_s(433) = .154, p < .01$. The Self-Forgiveness score is increasing along with the higher satisfaction levels of the relationships of participants.

3.2.2. Associations among the Predictors

As outlined in the Introduction, the potential predictors to be tested in this study were identified as Mentalization, Defense Maturity, Splitting, and Self-Construal. Since each measure offers more than one relevant score and as they are expected to be associated with each other, their initial independent correlations were checked to be able to note down any overlapping variance (See Table 3.2.).

Table 3.2 Correlations Between Hypothesized Predictors of Forgiveness

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
(1) Hypomentalization	-	-.58**	-.15**	-.15**	.18**	.46**	.43**
(2) Hypermentalization	-.58**	-	.10*	-.11**	-.08*	-.45**	-.31**
(3) Autonomous Self	-.15**	.10*	-	-.48**	.13**	-.06	-.18**
(4) Related Self	-.15**	-.11**	-.48**	-	.00	.00	.20**
(5) Mature Defense Style	.18**	-.08*	.13**	.00	-	.39**	.25**
(6) Immature Defense Style	.46**	-.45**	-.06	.00	.39**	-	.45**
(7) Splitting	.43**	-.31**	-.18**	.20**	.25**	.45**	-

* The correlation is significant at the .05 level

** The correlation is significant at the .01 level

Observed correlations were within the expected ranges and did not raise any issues as to the uniqueness of their variance as the highest shared variance observed was 34% among Hypomentalization and Hypermentalization.

3.2.3. Correlations of Forgiveness with Predictors

As this study formulated the potential predictors mainly on the basis of theory and secondary empirical observations, prior to model testing, the associations between Self-Forgiveness and Other-Forgiveness with Hypermentalization and Hypomentalization, Autonomous Self and Related Self, Mature and Immature Defense Use, and Splitting were examined via Pearson Correlation Analyses. The results are shown in the Table 3.3.

Table 3.3 Correlations of Self-Forgiveness and Other-Forgiveness with Potential Predictors

	Self-Forgiveness	Other-Forgiveness
Hypomentalization	-.318**	-.165**
Hypermentalization	.259**	.104**
Autonomous Self	.251**	-.065
Related Self	-.184**	.022
Mature Defense Style	.195**	.053
Immature Defense Style	-.155**	-.101*
Splitting	-.278**	-.153**

* The correlation is significant at the .05 level

** The correlation is significant at the .01 level

3.2.3.1. Correlations of Self-Forgiveness with Predictors

As presented in Table 3.3., Self-Forgiveness was significantly correlated with all potential predictors suggested in this study. Self-Forgiveness score was found to have a moderate negative correlation with Hypomentalization, , $r(650) =$

-.318, $p < .01$; and a moderate positive correlation with Hypermentalization, $r(650) = .259, p < .01$. This initial observation lends support for Hypomentalization being a negative predictor indication that as uncertainty regarding the mental states of self and others increase, self-forgiveness decrease. On the other hand, Hypermentalization appeared as a potential predictor in the contrary direction, as being too certain mental states of self and others was associated with higher levels of self-forgiveness.

The rest of the correlations of Self-Forgiveness namely, positive correlation with Autonomous Self-Construal, $r(650) = .251, p < .01$; negative correlation with Related Self-Construal, $r(650) = -.184, p < .01$; positive correlation with Mature Defense Style, $r(650) = .195, p < .01$; negative correlation with Immature Defense, $r(650) = -.155, p < .01$; and negative correlation with Splitting, $r(650) = -.278, p < .01$, were all significant and in the expected direction.

3.2.3.2. Correlations of Other Forgiveness with Predictors

As presented in Table 3.3., Other-Forgiveness was significantly correlated with mentalization impairments, defense immaturity, and splitting. Self-construals and defense maturity were not associated with Other-Forgiveness.

Other-Forgiveness scores were found to be weakly negatively correlated with Hypomentalization, $r(650) = -.165, p < .01$; and weakly positively correlated with Hypermentalization, $r(650) = .104, p < .01$. As in Self-Forgiveness, both impairments were confirmed as potential predictors, however being too certain seemed to positively predict Other-Forgiveness on the contrary to the initial expectation.

Other-Forgiveness level was not found to be significantly associated with Self-Construal types of Autonomous Self-Construal and Related Self-Construal. Although Other-Forgiveness had a positive correlation with Related Self-Construal and negatively correlated with Autonomous Self-Construal, the relationships were not significant and were too weak to be interpreted.

The negative correlations of Other-Forgiveness with Immature Defense Style, $r(650) = -.101, p < .05$; and with Splitting, $r(650) = -.153, p < .01$, were weak, yet significant and in the expected direction. Mature Defense Style did not have a significant correlation with Other-Forgiveness. It was noted that the level of immaturity of defenses was a potential negative predictor of Other-Forgiveness, whereas level of mature defenses was not a potential positive predictor.

3.3. FACTORS THAT PREDICT FORGIVENESS

The descriptive statistics and the preliminary analyses demonstrated the general statistical relationships between independent and dependent variables. Mentalization Capacity, Defense Styles and Self-Construct are multidimensional psychological constructs, which have interrelated dimensions. So, comparative predictive powers of all dimensions of them are needed to be identified. Further, the effects of demographic variables consisting of Having an Ongoing Psychological Problem, Getting Psychological Support, Social Support Level and Relationship Satisfaction Level on Self-Forgiveness and Other-Forgiveness were found to be significant in the preliminary analysis and they were considered to put into analyses.

So, two stepwise multiple regression analyses were conducted to see predicting factors of Self-Forgiveness and Other-Forgiveness including all independent variables and control variables. The dependent variables for each analysis were Self-Forgiveness and Other-Forgiveness, respectively. The independent variables as possible predicting variables for both Self-Forgiveness and Other-Forgiveness in Multiple Regression Analyses were determined as all the study variables which showed a significant correlation with either of the dependent variables to see comparable predictive powers of them for both. Mentalization impairment scores of Hypermentalization and Hypomentalization; Self-Construct variables of Autonomous Self, and Related Self; Defense Styles variables of Immature Defense Use, and Mature Defense Use; and Splitting were assigned as independent variables.

3.3.1. Factors That Predict Self-Forgiveness

A stepwise regression analysis was conducted to determine the factors that predict Self-Forgiveness. Four of the tested variables entered the equation: Hypomentalization, Mature Defense Style, Splitting, and Autonomous Self-Construal. The general summary of the models is shown in Table 3.4. The final model explains approximately 23% of the variance of Self-forgiveness.

Table 3.4 Summary of the Stepwise Regression Analysis for Self-Forgiveness

Model	R	R ²	Adj. R ²	SE of the Estimate	R ² Change	F Change	df1	df2
1	.33 ^a	.107	.105	6.00	.107	75.91	1	635
2	.42 ^b	.177	.174	5.76	.070	53.93	1	634
3	.46 ^c	.214	.211	5.63	.038	30.25	1	633
4	.48 ^d	.234	.229	5.57	.019	15.99	1	632

a. Predictors: (Constant), Hypomentalization
b. Predictors: (Constant), Hypomentalization, Mature
c. Predictors: (Constant), Hypomentalization, Mature, Splitting_Score
d. Predictors: (Constant), Hypomentalization, Mature, Splitting_Score, Autonomous_Self
e. Dependent Variable: Self-Forgiveness

At the first step of the regression analysis, Hypomentalization entered the model with a significant contribution that accounted for 10.7% of the variance. At the second step, Mature Defense Use entered and contributed significantly to the model by accounting for an additional 7% of the variance. At the third step, Splitting was added to Hypomentalization, and Mature Defense Use and contributed significantly to the explained variance by accounting for an additional

3.8%. At the last step, Autonomous Self-Construal contributed the model significantly by accounting for an additional 1.9 % of the explained variance in Self-Forgiveness. Hypermentalization, Related Self-Construal, Immature Defense Use, and demographic control variables regarding current psychological problem, psychological help, and social support did not contribute significantly to the model.

As stated above, the final model includes Hypomentalization, Mature Defense Use, Splitting, Autonomous Self-Construal, which account for 23.4% of the variance in Self-Forgiveness together. The standardized and unstandardized coefficients of significant predictor variables are shown in Table 3.5.

Table 3.5 Results of the Stepwise Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting the Self-Forgiveness

Model	B	B SE	β	t	Sig.
Constant	23.62	1.71		13.83	.000
Hypomentalization	-2.64	.38	-.27	-6.92	.000
Mature Defenses	1.30	.17	.28	7.62	.000
Splitting	-.11	.02	-.19	-4.81	.000
Autonomous Self	.16	.04	.15	4.00	.000

Broadly considered, decreases in Hypomentalization and Splitting as well as increases in Mature Defense Style and Autonomous Self-Construal resulted in increases in Self-Forgiveness. Namely, one unit change in the Mature Defense Style score increases Self-Forgiveness by 1.301; one unit increase in Hypomentalization decreases Self-Forgiveness by 2.644; one unit increase in Splitting score decreases Self-Forgiveness by .108; and lastly, one unit increase in Autonomous Self score increases Self-Forgiveness by .163.

When the associations are evaluated regarding the hypotheses of this study, it is observed that all four of the initially identified constructs – mentalization, self-construal, splitting, and defense style- appeared as significant predictors, roughly

supporting the first hypotheses. As to the specific associations, Hypothesis 1a expected Hypomentalization and Hypermentalization to be negative predictors of Self-Forgiveness. This expectation was partially supported that Hypomentalization is a significant negative predictor. However, Hypermentalization was not included in the model as a significant predictor, and the initial correlation suggested that it is positively associated with Self-Forgiveness. Similarly, Hypothesis 1b that expected Autonomous self-construal to be positively and Related self-construal to be negatively associated with Self-Forgiveness is partially supported by the inclusion of Autonomous Self as a predictor. On the other hand, although their initial negative correlation was supportive of this hypothesis, Related Self did not appear as a significant predictor of Self-Forgiveness, when other variables were controlled. Hypothesis c, suggesting a negative prediction of Self-Forgiveness by splitting and Hypothesis d, suggesting a positive prediction of Self-Forgiveness by defense maturity were both supported by the inclusion of Splitting with a negative coefficient and Mature Defense Style with a positive coefficient in the final model. It could be noted that among the two indicators of defense maturity, namely high levels of mature defense and low level of immature defense style, despite the similar levels of their initial correlations, only Mature Defense Style uniquely accounted for a significant level of variance.

The last clause of the first hypothesis, Hypothesis 1e, specified defense maturity as the strongest predictor. Comparisons of the standardized coefficients (See Table 3.5) reveal that Mature Defense Style ($\beta = .28$) and Hypomentalization ($\beta = -.27$) had the strongest predictive powers that are very close to each other. The strongest predictor being the Mature Defense Style supports the hypothesis. Nevertheless, it should be noted that Hypomentalization that explains the highest amount of unique variance in Self-Forgiveness also has a very close predictive power. In addition, it should again be noted that although the maturity of the defense appeared as the strongest predictor, immaturity measure was not included in the equation.

3.3.2. Factors That Predict Other-Forgiveness

A stepwise regression analysis was conducted to determine the factors that predict Other-Forgiveness. Five of the tested variables entered the equation: Hypomentalization, demographic variable of Social Support, Autonomous Self-Construal, Mature Defense Style, and Splitting. The general summary of the models is shown in Table 3.6. The final model explains approximately 6.7% of the variance of Other-forgiveness. Although the final model contained five different predicting factors, the explained variance of the Other-Forgiveness was remained very low.

Table 3.6 Summary of Stepwise Regression Analysis for Other-Forgiveness

Model	R	R ²	Adj. R ²	SE of the Estimate	R ² Change	F Change	df1	df2
1	.17a	.029	.027	7.64	.029	18.84	1	635
2	.20b	.039	.036	7.61	.010	6.79	1	634
3	.22c	.046	.042	7.59	.007	4.67	1	633
4	.24d	.056	.050	7.55	.010	6.87	1	632
5	.26e	.069	.062	7.51	.013	8.49	1	631

a. Predictors: (Constant), Hypomentalization

b. Predictors: (Constant), Hypermentalization, Social Support

c. Predictors: (Constant), Hypermentalization, Social Support, Mature Defense

d. Predictors: (Constant), Hypermentalization, Social Support, Mature Defense, Splitting

e. Predictors: (Constant), Hypermentalization, Social Support, Mature Defense, Splitting, Autonomous Self

f. Dependent Variable: Other-Forgiveness

At first step of the regression analysis, Hypomentalization entered the model with a significant contribution that accounted for 2.9 % of the variance. At the second step, Social Support entered and contributed significantly to the model by accounting additional 1.0 % of the variance. At third step, Autonomous Self-

Construal entered the model and contributed significantly by accounting for an additional .7 % of variance. At the fourth step, Mature Defense Use is added to Hypomentalization, Social Support, Autonomous Self-Construal, and contributed the model significantly to the explained variance by accounting for an additional 1.0 %. At the last step, Splitting contributed the model significantly by accounting for an additional 1.3 % of the explained variance in Other-Forgiveness. The Related Self-Construal, Immature Defense Use, Hypermentalization, demographic control variables regarding current psychological problem, and psychological help variables did not contribute significantly to the model.

As stated above, the final model includes Hypomentalization, Mature Defense Use, Splitting, Autonomous Self-Construal, Social Support, which account for 6.9 % of the variance in Other-Forgiveness together. The standardized and unstandardized coefficients of significant predictor variables are shown in Table 3.7.

Table 3.7 Results of the Stepwise Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting the Other-Forgiveness

Model	B	B SE	β	t	Sig.
Constant	30.00	2.62		11.47	.000
Hypomentalization	-1.65	.52	-.14	-3.16	.002
Social Support	.279	.15	.08	1.93	.054
Mature Defenses	.74	.23	.13	3.19	.001
Splitting	-.09	.03	-.14	-3.09	.002
Autonomous Self	-.16	.06	-.12	2.91	.004

The final model revealed that all predicting variables had lower beta values to predict Other-Forgiveness as compared to the model for self-forgiveness. Overall, decreases in Hypomentalization and Splitting as well as increases in Mature Defense Style, Autonomous Self-Construal, and Social Support resulted in increases in Other-Forgiveness. That is, one unit change in the Mature Defense Style score increases Other-Forgiveness by .741, one unit increase in

Hypomentalization decreases Other-Forgiveness by 1.654, one unit increase in Autonomous Self score increases Other-Forgiveness by .163, one unit increase in Splitting score decreases Other-Forgiveness by .094, and lastly one unit increase in Social Support score increases Other-Forgiveness by .279.

When the associations are evaluated regarding the hypotheses of this study, it is observed that all four of the initially identified constructs – mentalization, self-construal, splitting, and defense style- appeared as significant predictors, roughly supporting the first hypotheses. As to the specific associations, Hypothesis 2a expected Hypomentalization and Hypermentalization to be negative predictors of Other-Forgiveness. This expectation was partially supported that Hypomentalization is a significant negative predictor. However, Hypermentalization was not included in the model as a significant predictor, and the initial correlation suggested that it is positively associated with Other-Forgiveness. Similarly, Hypothesis 2b that expected Autonomous self-construal to be negatively and Related self-construal to be positively associated with Other-Forgiveness is partially supported by the inclusion of Autonomous Self as a predictor. On the other hand, Related Self did not appear as a significant predictor of Other-Forgiveness, when other variables were controlled. Hypothesis c, suggesting a negative prediction of Other-Forgiveness by Splitting and Hypothesis d, suggesting a positive prediction of Other-Forgiveness by defense maturity were both supported by the inclusion of Splitting with a negative coefficient and Mature Defense Style with a positive coefficient in the final model. It could be noted that among the two indicators of defense maturity, namely high levels of mature defense and low level of immature defense style, despite the similar levels of their initial correlations, only Mature Defense Style uniquely accounted for a significant level of variance.

The last clause of the second hypothesis, Hypothesis 2e, specified mentalization as the strongest predictor. Comparisons of the standardized coefficients (See Table 3.7) revealed that Hypomentalization ($\beta = -.14$), Splitting ($\beta = -.14$), and Mature Defense Style ($\beta = .13$) had the strongest predictive powers that are very close to each other. The strongest predictor being the mentalization

supports the hypothesis. Moreover, Hypomentalization explains the highest amount of unique variance in Other-Forgiveness, although it should be noted that the explained variance in Other-Forgiveness was very low. In addition, it should again be noted that although Hypomentalization appeared as the strongest predictor, Hypermentalization measure was not included in the equation.

3.3.3. Comparison of the Factors that Predict Self and Other forgiveness

Same independent variables were entered into regression analyses as predictor variables, and two different models were identified for Self-Forgiveness and Other-Forgiveness consisting of different significant predictors. The regression model for Self-Forgiveness is more explanatory than the one for other forgiveness, whereas Other-Forgiveness consists of more predictor variables. The model for Self-Forgiveness explains 23.4% of the variance, on the other hand, the model for other forgiveness explains 6.9%, which was considerably low compared to the model for Self-Forgiveness. For Self-Forgiveness Hypomentalization, Autonomous Self, Mature Defense Use, and Splitting were in the model as predictors, whereas Social Support also entered into the model for Other-Forgiveness in addition to the same predictors.

3.4. DISCREPANCY BETWEEN SELF-FORGIVENESS AND OTHER FORGIVENESS

The balance between Self-Forgiveness and Other-Forgiveness is not a direct research interest of this study. However, some psychoanalytic scholars (e.g. Akhtar, 2018; Horwitz, 2005) stressed that healthy psychic organization involves realistic integrative self and other representations and it implies a balance between self and other forgiveness capacities. Thus, some descriptive statistics and exploratory associations with study variables are presented.

3.4.1. Descriptive Statistics of the Discrepancy

Initially descriptive statistics for the Discrepancy between Self-Forgiveness and Other-Forgiveness were examined. Of the sample, 352 (54%) participants had higher Self-Forgiveness scores than Other-Forgiveness, 265 (41%) participants had higher Other-Forgiveness scores than Self-Forgiveness, and 33 (5%) of them had equal scores on both Self-Forgiveness and Other-Forgiveness. Discrepancy score was computed by calculating the absolute value of the difference between Self-Forgiveness and Other-Forgiveness. Absolute value was used, since the aim was to broadly explore correlates of the imbalance, regardless of the specific direction of it as towards self or other. The range of discrepancy scores was between 0 and 34, and the mean was 7.2.

3.4.2. Association of the Discrepancy with Demographic Characteristics

The associations of Discrepancy with different demographic variables - consisting of age, gender, income level, education level, psychological difficulty, psychological help, social support, and relationship satisfaction- were analyzed via non-parametric correlations and mean comparisons. No significant associations were found.

3.4.3. Association of the Discrepancy with Study Variables

To be able to depict a broad picture of how the Discrepancy between Self-Forgiveness and Other-Forgiveness is associated with the hypothesized potential predictors of forgiveness in this study, namely Mentalization, Defense Maturity, Splitting, and Self-Construal, Pearson Correlation Analyses were conducted (See Table 3.8).

Table 3.8 Correlations of Discrepancy with Main Study Variables

	Discrepancy
Hypomentalization	.114**
Hypermentalization	.080*
Autonomous Self	.106**
Related Self	-.023
Mature Defense Style	.094*
Immature Defense Style	.076
Splitting	.077*

* The correlation is significant at the .05 level

** The correlation is significant at the .01 level

There were significant but weak positive correlations of Discrepancy with Hypomentalization , $r(650) = .114$, $p < .01$, and Autonomous Self, $r(650) = .106$, $p < .01$.

CHAPTER 4

DISCUSSION

4.1. SUMMARY OF THE MAIN FINDINGS

The first main hypothesis (Hypothesis 1) was that hypomentalization and hypermentalization, autonomous self, related self, mature and immature defenses, and splitting will predict self-forgiveness. It was partially supported. Regarding to the results of the multiple stepwise regression analysis; hypomentalization, autonomous self, splitting and mature defenses significantly predict self-forgiveness. Hypermentalization, related self, and immature defenses did not add significant contribution to explain the variability of self-forgiveness. Furthermore, all directions of the predictive relationships were in line with the expectations of this study except hypermentalization. Autonomous self, and mature defense predicted self-forgiveness positively, whereas hypomentalization, related self, immature defense, and splitting predicted negatively, as expected, even though the predictive power of related self and immature defense were not significant.

The last hypothesis (Hypothesis 1e) related to self-forgiveness was that the strongest predictor of self-forgiveness will be defense maturity was supported. Consistent with the expectations, mature defense was the strongest predictor of self-forgiveness, while it should be noted that immature defense did not significantly predicted self-forgiveness.

The second main hypothesis (Hypothesis 2) was that hypomentalization and hypermentalization, autonomous self, related self, mature and immature defenses, and splitting will predict other-forgiveness. It was partially supported. Regarding to the results of the multiple stepwise regression analysis, hypomentalization, autonomous self, mature defense, and splitting significantly predict other-forgiveness. In addition, social support level was also adding significant predictive power to the model, while hypermentalization, related self, and immature defense did not have significant predictive contribution. Furthermore, in line with the expectations that related self, and mature defenses

predicted other-forgiveness positively, whereas hypomentalization, autonomous self, immature defense, and splitting predicted other-forgiveness negatively. Contrary to the expectations, hypermentalization had a positive association with other-forgiveness but its predictive power on other-forgiveness was not significant. Finally, the hypothesis (Hypothesis 2e) that the mentalization capacity will be the strongest predictor of other-forgiveness was supported in the stepwise regression model. However, it should be noted that hypermentalization did not add predictive contribution of other-forgiveness.

In addition, although not hypothesized, it was examined whether the level of discrepancies between self-forgiveness and other-forgiveness will differ significantly across the levels of main study variables. Results revealed that mean of discrepancies differed significantly but weakly across the levels of Hypomentalization, Autonomous Self-Construal.

4.2. PREDICTING FACTORS OF FORGIVENESS

4.2.1. Predictors of Self-Forgiveness

Study constructs consisting of autonomous self, related self, hypermentalization, hypomentalization, mature defense, immature defense, and splitting along with demographic control variables consisting of age, gender, social support, relation satisfaction, and psychological help were analyzed as possible predictors of self-forgiveness. Hypomentalization, autonomous self, mature defense use, and splitting were observed to predict self-forgiveness significantly in the analysis.

First of all, at least one study variable had significant predictive power to explain variability in self-forgiveness from each study construct consisting of mentalization capacity, self-construal, defense maturity, and splitting. The expectations of the current study supported by the final regression model. The predicting factors at the final model explained 23.7% of the variance of self-forgiveness.

The strongest predictor of self-forgiveness was mature defense use. It was expected in this study that level of dominant defense mechanisms is a strong determinant of self-forgiveness capacity. It should be noted that the difference between comparable predictive values of mature defenses, splitting and hypomentalization were not remarkable. However, it is worthy of consideration that why mature defenses predict self-forgiveness more strongly than those of immature defenses and splitting. Siassi (2007) stressed that self-forgiveness capacity develops only when primitive splitting and projective defenses are substituted by mature defenses and narcissistic balance between libido and aggression is satisfied.

For self-forgiveness, offender and offended, forgiveness seeker and forgiver are the same person, the self; and it generates more complexity and difficulty. Good-bad integration and eliminating immature defenses are important along with relational and mentalizing capacities (Horwitz, 2005; Fonagy, 2009). However, more psychic restructuring is necessary to have a mental capacity to resolve self-punitive desires, shame experience and expectations as consequence of double identification both to vulnerable part and injuring part of the self (LaFarge, 2009; Lansky, 2007). So, reformation of self-punitive superego and renunciation of negative self-image are crucial. In this regard, developing more mature defenses is prominent for self-forgiveness capacity to have more integrative self and other representations and to sustain narcissistic balance. Once mature defenses develop which enable forgiveness capacity, the need for creating persecuting devils, and so immaturely having relationships with the World through splitting and projection is disappearing to a considerable extent (Gartner, 1988). This may be the baseline why development of mature defenses has a stronger predictive power on explaining self-forgiving attitudes than immature defenses and splitting.

4.2.2. Predictors of Other-Forgiveness

Study constructs consisting of autonomous self, related self, hypermentalization, hypomentalization, mature defense use, immature defense use, and splitting use along with demographic control variables consisting of age,

gender, social support, relation satisfaction, and psychological help were analyzed as possible predictors of other-forgiveness. Hypomentalization, autonomous self, mature defense use, splitting, and social support were significant predictors of other-forgiveness.

It is also notable for other-forgiveness that at least one study variable had significant predictive power to explain variability in other-forgiveness from each study construct consisting of mentalization capacity, self-construal, defense maturity, and splitting along with a demographic variable of social support. The expectations supported by the final regression model. The predicting factors at the final model explained 6.7% of the variance of other-forgiveness.

The strongest predictor of other-forgiveness was mentalizing impairment of hypomentalization. Mentalization capacity was expected in this study to have more predictive power than other constructs to explain the variance of other-forgiveness.

The integration of good-bad splitting and diminishment of resentment are essential processes to form a basis for forgiving capacity of both self and other (Lansky, 2007). However, the capacity for concern, empathy and understanding underlying intentions are distinctive capacities to satisfy integration of splitting for forgiving other (Akhtar, 2012; Horwitz, 2005; Sandage, 2005). For development of a genuine capacity to forgive others, recognition of subjective other and differentiation of self and other are crucial to constitute intersubjective space that enabling empathy for other (Sandage, 2005). Thus, mentalizing capacities and related psychic functions are prominent for capacity to forgive others. The mentalizing functions defined as capacities and relevant cognitive emotional processes for understanding self and other as mental beings and making meaning of human motivations, intentions, desires, and underlying psychic conflicts of overt behavior and attitudes (Fonagy et al., 2002, Fonagy, 2006). Understanding underlying mindset is prominent psychic abilities to put offending or injurious actions and attitudes into mental context, which will lead to an integrative understanding of the human condition of the other.

4.2.3. Comparison of Self-Forgiveness and Other-Forgiveness

At first glance, it is remarkable that predicting study variables of both self-forgiveness and other-forgiveness were the same saving that social support entered the model for other-forgiveness additionally. Apart from the social support as predicting factor of other-forgiveness, firstly hypomentalization, then mature defense, splitting, and lastly autonomous-self entered into the stepwise regression model of both self-forgiveness and other-forgiveness, respectively. In the final model for both, hypomentalization and mature defenses were stronger predictors. While the mature defense use is the strongest predicting factor for self-forgiveness, it is hypomentalization for other-forgiveness.

It is promising that predicting factors of self-forgiveness and other-forgiveness were mainly the same since forgiving self and other are entwined processes from a psychoanalytical perspective, as like representations of self and other (LaFarge, 2009). Both self-forgiveness and other-forgiveness capacities require processing accompanying negative affects such as aggression, hatred, guilt etc. as result of injuring experiences, and also healthy integration of positive and negative qualities of self and others in more realistic human representations.

Although there was no big difference, the strongest predictor of self-forgiveness was mature defenses and it was hypomentalization for other-forgiveness. As mentioned above, relational mentalizing functions such as empathy for others are more facilitating processes for forgiving others but it may be a complicating factor for self-forgiveness since being more attuned to injurious experiences as consequence of the actions of self make forgiving harder. More mature defenses are needed both to confront with the bad side of the self, satisfy integrity and handle the ambiguity of integration of the good and bad representations of the self. On the other hand, empathy for others and understanding the underlying mental context of the actions of others are essential parts of the resolution of resentment and splitted representations of others.

Social support was a predicting factor in the regression model for other-forgiveness while its effect was not significant for self-forgiveness. Results seem

reasonable since relational reparative capacity develops in a holding, supportive environment (Winnicott, 1965). Reparative and cooperative relationship through the acceptance of injuries and failures is only possible through good-enough relationships with the offended person or surrounding social environment. If one experiences and expects support and trusts in their social relationships, it will lead a hope to regain the experience of the World as a secure and good-enough place to live and re-institute and have good-enough relationships (Alford, 2014). It is not necessarily the relationship with the offended persons but more importantly to be able to trust reparative capacity of the relationship with significant others.

Last but not the least, there was a considerable level of difference between the predictive powers of the final models of self-forgiveness and other-forgiveness. In this study, the main focus was understanding capacities which enable forgiving self and other. However, there are factors in terms of contextual, interpersonal, and past experiential dimensions of forgiving tendencies other than psychological and relational capacities. So, besides forgiveness capacity, contextual dimensions are also important both for forgiving the self and other, and it may explain an important part of the variability in the self-forgiveness and other-forgiveness.

Specifically for other-forgiveness, forgiving others qualitatively different from forgiving self since forgiving other has inevitably interpersonal dimensions. In this regard, forgiveness of other has an intersubjective, co-created nature between forgiver and atoner (Rosen, 2009). The mindset, attitudes, and behaviors of offending person during and after injuring experiences has crucial aspects for the process of other-forgiveness, as well as the qualities of injuring experiences consisting of severity, intentionality, level of interpersonal intimacy etc. (Haaken, 2002). Even though the capacities to understand mindsets of the injuring other is really important since understanding intentions, desires, responsibilities of other play a crucial role to generate realistic representations; there are still possibilities of offensive desires, intentional harms, and denial of the responsibility by the offending other that predict reparative potential. Furthermore, there are cross-cultural differences of forgivability of different situations (Akhtar, 2018). Thus, as different from self-forgiveness, contextual factors such as qualities of injuring

experiences, other-person-related dimensions and interpersonal relational dimensions may also have prominent predicting role on forgiving attitudes for other caused injuries in addition to mental capacities and self-construal. This may be an important reason why the model for other-forgiveness explained a comparatively and considerably low variance.

4.3. MENTALIZATION AND FORGIVENESS

In this study, there were two hypotheses (1a and 2a) related to the associations of mentalization capacity with self-forgiveness, and other-forgiveness, respectively. Both hypotheses expected that mentalization capacity positively predicts self and other forgiveness. The expectations of this study partially supported. It was unexpected that hypermentalization had a positive association both with self-forgiveness and other-forgiveness. However, hypomentalization was found to be significantly negatively correlated with both self-forgiveness and other-forgiveness, as expected.

There have been many studies documenting that secure attachment predicts high levels of forgiveness since secure bonds with significant other enhances recognition, attunement, empathic responsiveness, and reparative capacity (e.g. Horwitz, 2005; Mucci, 2018; Sandage, 2005). In the last decades, mentalizing functions has become a popular topic (e.g. Bateman & Fonagy, 2006; Freeman, 2016; Ringel, 2011) integrating attachment theory and psychoanalytic perspectives, which is described as developmentally acquired reflective functioning processes by virtue of secure early attachment relationship with significant other consisting of mirroring and other relational functions developed through attunement with caregiver (Fonagy et al., 2002; Fonagy & Luyten, 2009). The capacity for reflective functioning provides a good basis for forgiveness since it is a capacity to understand underlying mindset of overt behaviors and distinguishing interrelationships of intentions, motivations, desires and their consequent actions (Fonagy, 2009; Horwitz, 2005). In this regard, the expectation of this study is that well mentalizing people will be more forgiving as they can situate both their and other people's

harmful actions into social and psychological context. So, it was expected that people with mentalization impairments of hypermentalization and hypomentalization would have lower forgiveness of self and other levels. The results for hypomentalization were in line with expectations of the study, but results revealed that hypermentalization contrarily had positive associations with both self-forgiveness and other-forgiveness.

Hypomentalization is the mentalizing impairment of individuals who have difficulty on comprehending complexity underlying mental states of self and other, whereas hypermentalization, defined as pseudo-mentalization, reflects excessive certainty and preoccupation on interpreting mental states and intentions of others along with not paying enough attention to the mind of the self (Busch, 2011; Fonagy et al., 2016). The hypothesis of negative association of hypomentalization with self and other forgiveness both confirmed. However, the results revealed a positive association of hypermentalization with self and other forgiveness on the contrary to expectations.

One possible reason why hypermentalization had a positive association with forgiveness may be related to cultural context in Turkey. However, the associations of hypermentalization with other study variables of the current study indicated that what the hypermentalization subscale of RFQ-8 reflects inconsistent results. It is significantly negatively associated with all mature and immature defenses and splitting, although the negative association with immature defenses and splitting were stronger. Furthermore, some other studies (Çuçülayef, 2020; Gör, 2021; Yayla, 2020) in Turkey also stressed inconsistent findings related to hypermentalization subscale of RFQ-8.

Some studies based on Western samples also questioned the validity of RFQ whether it is a good instrument to assess mentalization impairments. (e.g. Meulemeester et al., 2018; Müller et al., 2020; Spitzer et al., 2020). Müller et al. (2020) claimed that there are statistically problematic dimensions of RFQ-8 hypermentalization subscale in terms of its item contents, scoring procedure and its associations with psychopathology. In general, hypermentalization subscale is claimed to cover adaptive characteristics of individuals, which correlates mental

health. As their findings revealed, it is not a good instrument to cover unipolar mentalizing construct. Müller et al. stated that RFQ-8 is well at measuring hypomentalization impairment, while they found no supportive evidence for its assessment of hypermentalization. In addition, it was suggested that a revision for RFQ-8 short version as 6-item by excluding two items for only unipolar assessment of hypomentalizing impairment satisfies high level of internal consistency along with significant correlations with expected psychopathologies (Müller et al., 2020; Spitzer et al., 2020).

Meulemeester et al. (2018) also noted that further research should be conducted whether hypermentalization subscale cover a mentalizing impairment of being too certain about underlying mental states or genuine mentalization. Furthermore, Handeland et al. (2019) examined concurrent validity of RFQ-8 by comparing its results with maternal PDI (Slade et al., 2003) on same sample of mothers who have substance use disorder. They found significant correlation of Hypomentalization dimension of RFQ-8 with low levels of PDI, implying impairment as expected, whereas Hypermentalization dimension of RFQ-8 was not found to be correlated with low levels of PDI, unexpectedly. So, mentalization researchers should take into consideration the validity problem of certainty dimension of RFQ-8 and further research should be conducted on this issue.

4.4. SELF-CONSTRUAL AND FORGIVENESS

There were two hypotheses (1b and 2b) related to self-construal and forgiveness associations in this study. Two dimensions of self-construal consisting of related self-construal and autonomous self-construal, were used for examining their relationships with forgiveness. The associations of autonomous self-construal and related self-construal with self-forgiveness were in line with the expectations of this study that autonomous self-construal had a positive association and related self-construal had a negative association with self-forgiveness. The relationships of both autonomous self-construal and related self-construal with other-forgiveness were also consistent with the expectations but the associations were not significant.

The autonomous self-construal was negatively correlated with other-forgiveness, whereas related self-construal was positively correlated. Furthermore, autonomous self-construal had a significant predictive power both on self-forgiveness and other-forgiveness, whereas related self-construal did not.

The Woodyatt et al. (2017) stated that self-forgiveness is a way of taking control of both personal emotions and interpersonal situation after some injurious situations happen. People who have higher agency mind controlling the situation more and also be able to achieve it more easily (Dat & Okimoto, 2018). People who are high in autonomous self-construal, more agentic persons in other words, are expected to have more control on their functioning (Kağıtçıbaşı, 2005), and so expected to have higher self-forgiveness levels. The results were confirming theoretical expectations of this study that participants who have higher autonomy levels were scoring higher in self-forgiveness.

The related self-construal is defining the dimension of interpersonal distance and how clear self-other boundaries are in intimate relationships (Kağıtçıbaşı, 2005). People with related-self-construal have higher levels of belongingness and connectedness feelings (Dat & Okimoto, 2018). Injuries caused by the self elicit guilt and shame feelings not just due to performing a wrong, but also due to the feeling that they caused a damage to cohesion and harmony of the group that they belonged to. So, the expectation of this study was that participants who score high in related-self-construal would score lower in self-forgiveness since it is more complicated for related selves. The findings were in line with the expectation. Moreover, interpersonal closeness found to be a facilitating factor for empathy (Joireman et al., 2002) and empathic concern for others were claimed to be one of the negative correlates of self-forgiveness (Fincham & Hall, 2005; Macaskill, 2002). It may also be a reason why participants who were high in related-self-construal had low scores in self-forgiveness since empathic concern is an inhibiting factor for self-forgiveness.

According to the research, some relational dimensions such as relational commitment (Finkel et al., 2002; Karremans & Van Lange, 2004), relational distance (Tsang et al., 2006), and interdependence with others (Neto & Mullet,

2004) predict interpersonal forgiveness positively. In addition, there are number of studies that found facilitating effect of social connectedness on other-forgiveness (e.g. Hill & Allemand, 2010; Louden-Gerber, 2008; Tsang et al., 2006). In the light of these findings, positive association between related self-construal and other-forgiveness was expected in the current study. This hypothesis was not confirmed. Although the existing literature in line with the expectation of positive association between related self-construal and other-forgiveness, Barnes et al. (2010) found a contrary result that the strong need for belongingness is associated with lower levels of interpersonal forgiveness. In this regard, the level of the need for belongingness may have interfered the association between related self-construal and other-forgiveness in the current study.

Individuals with autonomous self-construal have sense of agency and control on their actions with reference to their own thoughts and feelings (Kağıtçıbaşı, 2005; Ryan & Deci, 2000). As a similar conceptualization to autonomous self-construal, independent self-construal, implied the prioritization of ego focused goals, emotions, and desires (Markus and Kitayama, 1991). Neto and Mullet (2004) stated that people having independent self-construal was found to have long-lasting resentment to the persons who injure them. So, the expectation of the current study was that autonomous self-construal would be negatively associated with other-forgiveness. However, the results revealed that the association between autonomous self-construal and other-forgiveness was not significant but at the same time it had a significant predictive power on other-forgiveness. One possible reason for this unexpected result may be due to the fact that autonomous self-construal has also forgiveness promoting dimensions besides negatively affecting ones. More autonomous people have higher levels of control and agency on their functioning (Kağıtçıbaşı, 2005) and experiencing the self as a competent agent has a facilitating effect on reparative capacities in interpersonal relationships with motivational component of wish to repair (Siassi, 2013). So, the association may not have been significant since autonomous self-construal contains both facilitating and inhibiting dimensions for other-forgiveness.

4.5. SPLITTING, DEFENSE MECHANISMS, AND FORGIVENESS

In line with the expectations (Hypotheses 1c and 2c), splitting was found to be significantly associated with both self-forgiveness and other-forgiveness in reverse direction. Furthermore, the expectation of the negative relationship between forgiveness and immature defenses and positive relationship between forgiveness and mature defenses (Hypotheses 1d and 2d) also supported both for self-forgiveness and other-forgiveness. Splitting and defense mechanisms are both key concepts in psychoanalytic forgiveness literature but there have been no empirical studies conducted yet. The current study was the first attempt to examine the relationship of forgiveness with splitting and defense maturity.

The psychoanalytic tradition deals with forgiveness differently from other psychology disciplines. From a psychoanalytic perspective, forgiveness is seen as a developmental psychic capacity and process of forgiveness has multiple interpersonal and intrapsychic dimensions, including mechanisms to deal with resentment, vengeance, hatred etc. (Horwitz, 2005; Lansky, 2007; Siassi, 2007). Experienced offenses and frustrations cause vengeful state of mind if aggression is not healthily metabolized. In addition, conflicting good and bad dimensions of the representations of others reveals ambiguity and distress (Haaken, 2002). So, the process of forgiveness prominently contains integration of the good-bad splits and developing more mature defenses both to deal with ambiguity of self and other representations (Horwitz, 2005) and to metabolize aggression (Akhtar, 2012; Alford, 2014). The findings supported the current study expectations that participants who reported less splitting and immature defenses, and more mature defenses demonstrated higher self and other forgiveness levels.

Since forgiveness is mainly related with disturbing or painful experiences with negative feelings, the central psychic capacities in forgiveness are integration of good-bad representational splitting to eliminate unrealistic all-bad representations of self and others through development of psychic maturity and metabolization of negative affective components of injuring experiences. So, it is reasonable that two essential factors of good-bad integration and development of mature defenses to

process affective component are more predictive factors for development of genuine, mature forgiveness than existence of immature defenses.

4.6. BACKGROUND CHARACTERISTICS AND FORGIVENESS

Results revealed that there was no significant relationship with demographic variables consisting of age, gender, relationship status, and working status. However, psychological problem and psychological support, social support and relation satisfaction were significantly associated with either/or self-forgiveness and other-forgiveness.

Having an ongoing psychological problem seemed to have a negative effect on self-forgiveness. It is reasonable to say that psychological difficulties have an inhibitory effect on forgiveness by taking into consideration that there are variety of difficulties in terms of their qualitative and quantitative dimensions. However, why its effect on self-forgiveness was significant, whereas it was not the case for other-forgiveness needs further investigation.

The conditions of getting psychological support have a significant effect on Self-Forgiveness. The association seemed surprising at first glance that individuals who have never gotten psychological support can forgive the self at the highest level, while the least forgiving ones were currently getting psychological support. It may be thought in parallel to the association of psychological difficulties with self-forgiveness. The existence of the difficulty may be primary reason why the ones who getting psychological support fail more than the ones who have never gotten. It should be noted that further research can be conducted to examine the relationship between psychological difficulties, support and forgiveness.

The level of social support had a significant effect on both self-forgiveness and other-forgiveness levels. Although it was not hypothesized, it is very promising that the ones who feel support from their social environment develop a more forgiving attitude since secure attachments with significant others (Fonagy, 2009; Siassi, 2013) and facilitating experience of social environment (Alford, 2014) form relational basis for capacity to forgive. Further discussion was held on the

relationship between social support and forgiveness at section 4.2. Predicting Factors of Forgiveness.

Results revealed that the relationship satisfaction level has a significant effect on self-forgiveness. In parallel to abovementioned theoretical discussion of social support, satisfactory significant relationship is expected to enhance forgiveness capacity. Specifically for self-forgiveness capacity, integrative self-representation is one of the essential prerequisites. From a psychoanalytic perspective, all self-representations are formed through a relationship with others (Gartner, 1988). Satisfactory relationships with secure bonds are primary facilitators of both acknowledgment and acceptance of negative self-representations without their destroying of good self-representations in the process of integrating good and bad aspects of the self into a more realistic human representation.

4.7. THE ASSOCIATIONS OF DISCREPANCY BETWEEN SELF AND OTHER FORGIVENESS WITH MAIN STUDY VARIABLES

It was examined that whether the level of discrepancies between self-forgiveness and other-forgiveness will have significant associations with the main study variables. Results revealed that high hypomentalyzing participants had a significantly more imbalanced forgiveness scores between self and other comparing to low hypomentalyzing ones.

As Akhtar (2012) stated that imbalance between self and other forgiveness capacities implies psychopathology, mean discrepancies are expected to be higher for the higher levels of both hypomentalyzation and hypermentalization impairments. From a psychoanalytic perspective, ego capacities to handle aggression and resentment, relational capacities for empathy and reparation, and integrative realistic self and other representations are prominent psychic elements for development of forgiveness capacity. As Debray (1991) stated, mentalization is substantially related to anxiety tolerance and emotion regulation, resolution of intrapsychic and relational conflicts with others. Thus, mentalizing functions were

expected to be primary capacities for forgiveness of both self and other in this study.

Allen and Fonagy (2006) defined proper mentalizing as interpretive and imaginative thinking about self and other as representational agents based on empathy, psychological mindedness, and mentalized affectivity. These mentalizing functions provide balanced view of self and other in terms of understanding both self's and other's psychic conflicts, mindsets, and interpersonal perspectives besides affective regulation of the self. Capacity to situate self and other into their mental contexts accurately will lead to healthy integrated representations of self and others, which is essential prerequisite of forgiveness capacity. In other words, genuinely mentalizing people have capacity to have proper and realistic representations of self and other and have higher capacity of monitoring intrapsychic and relational conflicts. So, it is promising to expect that impairment of any mentalizing functions will lead to difficulties of forgiving either self or other, or both, while properly mentalizing people are expected to genuinely forgive both self and other in balanced manner.

4.8. SUGGESTIONS, LIMITATIONS AND FURTHER RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

First limitation of this study was the data collection via self-report. Participants may have a tendency to report socially desirable responses or do not want to think on some items that may evoke intense emotions. Moreover, self-evaluations contain inevitable biases and also participants may not observe some important psychological dimensions.

The second limitation noted by the researcher was the sampling method of this study being a non-probability convenience sampling, which arises some limitations on distribution of the participants profile in terms of demographic differences and representativeness of the population. In addition, the participants who filled the survey are volunteers. So, prosocial tendencies may be determinative

on the profile of study sample, which may interfere results of the study but cannot be controlled.

The theoretical framework of the current study is mainly from psychoanalytic perspective and examination of study constructs includes elements related to unconscious aspects of mind. The study constructs of the current study are multidimensional psychological constructs and participants' conceptualization of them is also important. Moreover, forgiveness is prominently related to injuring, harmful, painful, etc. negative experiences at different levels for each participant. Thus, it is also important that whether participants think specific experiences while filling the survey and the qualities of injuring experience in terms of severity, time, intimacy of the injuring person etc. In quantitative research, the differences and details of forgiveness conceptualizations and effect of salient experiences of participants are misleading. However, face-to-face interviews may satisfy a richer study design to capture emergent crucial aspects in the narrative and non-verbal interactions of participants with researcher. Qualitative designs or mixed designs may be beneficial to examine associations of study variables of the current study.

In the current study, the associations between forgiveness capacity and mentalization capacity was investigated. The mentalization capacity was measured through the participants scores on two impairment subscales: hypomentalization and hypermentalization. However, the study sample was selected from a non-clinical population. So, results did not reflect severe impairments of mentalizing functions and analyses on impairment scores of non-clinical groups may lead to misinterpretation of associations. In this regard, further studies may investigate the relationship between mentalization impairments and forgiveness by focusing on clinical samples, especially on individuals who have mentalization impairments such as borderline personality disorder.

The mentalization capacity was measured by Reflective Functioning Questionnaire (RFQ-8) – Short Version, developed by (Fonagy et al., 2016) which has two scores of mentalization impairments of hypomentalization and hypermentalization. However, no reliability and validity study of Turkish adaptation has been conducted yet. So, it was another limitation of the current study.

In the current study, forgiveness attitudes were mainly examined from a psychoanalytic perspective as a psychic capacity. However, theoretical background of Heartland Forgiveness Scale was not developed in the psychoanalytic theoretical framework, which mainly measures dispositional forgiving attitudes. Thus, conceptualization of forgiveness is different from the current study's understanding of the construct. So, developing psychoanalytic forgiveness measures may contribute for further research to study forgiveness as a psychic capacity.

Many scholars stressed the important distinction of genuine and pseudo forgiveness. The primary aim of the current study was to investigate the associations of genuine forgiveness capacity with some constructs. However, the forgiveness scores of Heartland Forgiveness Scale were representing how forgiving the individuals are without reflecting the distinction of genuine and pseudo forgiveness. So, further research may be conducted to assess genuine forgiveness with some other study designs and measurement methods.

The contextual factors such as interpersonal relational dimensions, social and psychological support, the degree of intimacy with offending person(s), qualities of injuring experiences are determinative factors for both self-forgiveness and other-forgiveness. The current study focused on the mental capacities and differences of self-construal but further study may further examine associations between forgiveness and contextual factors.

In the current study, preliminary analyses were conducted to examine associations of discrepancy between self-forgiveness and other-forgiveness with mentalization, defense styles, splitting, and self-construal. The literature has been sparse on the balance of self and other forgiveness but it is meaningful to expect a balanced forgiveness capacity based on the psychoanalytic forgiveness literature that forgiveness capacity develops through the development of integrated human representations of self and others. So, further research may be conducted to investigate associations of imbalances of the forgiveness capacities with other psychological constructs. In addition, the discrepancy was analyzed on the absolute value of the difference between self-forgiveness and other-forgiveness in the present study. Detailed analyses were not conducted since discrepancy was

analyzed as a preliminary exploration regarding the scope of this study. Further research may focus different aspects of discrepancy in terms of levels and directions of the difference and its possible associations with psychological constructs.

4.9. CLINICAL IMPLICATIONS

First and foremost, beyond the discussion of the capacity to forgive, there are some specific contexts that unforgiveness should be considered as a healthy response to traumatic experiences. It is noteworthy to say that not all painful experiences are forgivable at all. Especially for kind of traumas such as Holocaust, massacres, tortures, sexual abuse, etc., and if offending individual(s) do not take responsibility, survivors probably not forgive in order to sustain their agency and self-cohesion, or they may try to forgive such offenses as a manic defense to overcome overwhelming experiences of trauma. In such extreme situations, it is rather important that expectations of forgiveness may also have destructive consequences for survivors and may cause guilt feelings due to their unforgiveness (Akhtar, 2018). There is a room for genuine unforgiveness and clinicians should be attentive of not falling in omnipotent fantasy of fully overcoming all devastating consequences of traumas by the means of forgiveness. In clinical situation, the primary aim is not to foster forgiveness but search for healthy ways of processing affective components of traumatic experiences as well as re-instituting self-cohesiveness and agency. All in all, the genuine forgiveness capacity does not mean indiscriminately forgiving in all situations; it rather involves genuine unforgiving in some traumatic situations.

In significant relationships; injuries, unmet expectations, disappointments, and frustrations are inevitable. In psychotherapy, patterns of these injuries and related affective components are worked through so as to establish and sustain healthy self and other representations and relational repertoire. The integrative representations of self and others, accurate attributions to underlying mindsets of overt behaviors and psychic processing of affective components of injurious experiences in the narrative of patient are evidences for forgiveness capacity, which

are also indicative of therapeutic change. Therefore, forgiveness has a crucial role in therapeutic change and signs of genuine forgiving discourses for significant others should be considered as important elements. Psychotherapist should be attentive of capacities or incapacities related to forgiveness and authenticity of their forgiving attitudes in the narratives of patients.

In couple psychotherapy, conflict resolution is a substantial part of therapeutic change. So, reparative capacities are important part of the psychotherapy and forgiveness of past injuries to sustain relationship is a prerequisite for therapeutic resolution of conflicts. If the relationship get stuck into an impasse, capacities related to forgiveness may be explored and relevant interventions may be considered to get over impasses.

Hypomentalization was found to be a significant predictor of self and other forgiveness in this study. It indicated that individuals, who have difficulty on comprehending complex relationships and have limited capacity to model mental states, tend to have problems on forgiving self and others for their failures and may have difficulty on tolerating negative feelings of harmful experiences. Thus, while working on unforgiving attitudes of individuals in clinical condition, it may help to explore mentalizing abilities and impairments for understanding the underlying difficulty of unforgiving state of mind. Uncertainty intolerance may lead difficulties of forgiving. Furthermore, interventions which facilitate mentalizing abilities may enhances genuine forgiveness capacity of individuals. In general, mentalization intervention programs may be considered in stressful situations arising from interpersonal conflicts in different social contexts such as family and couple relationships, business disputes, long-lasting teamwork, etc.

Results of the current study also revealed that defense maturity and splitting are significant predicting factors of forgiveness. However, mature defense use and splitting seemed to be more prominent than immature defense use. It reflected that once achieving psychic maturity and developing mature defenses as substitution of splitting are more determinative on forgiveness capacity than general frequency of immature defense use. It may indicate that when working on forgiveness, the primary focus should be on finding mature substitutions of splitting so as to satisfy

healthy integration of self and other representations since emergence of mature defense mechanisms seemed to be more predictive on development of forgiveness capacity than existence of immature defenses.

Last but not the least, self-construal was found to have significant associations with self and other forgiveness. Especially for self-forgiveness, autonomous self-construal found to be an enhancing factor, while related self-construal seemed to be a hindering factor. Thus, how self is shaped by cultural context should be taken into consideration while investigating difficulties in forgiveness. Furthermore, different focuses of intervention may be developed for individuals with autonomous self-construal and related self-construal to facilitate development of more balanced forgiveness capacity of self and other.

CONCLUSION

The present study is one of the first studies to investigate relationships between forgiveness and mentalization capacity, defense mechanisms, and self-construal in the cultural context of Turkey. The main aim of this study was to investigate relationships between these constructs from a psychoanalytic perspective and to provide empirical evidence to limited literature on these relationships. There has been a growing body of psychoanalytic theoretical literature on development of capacity to forgive self and others and their relationships with integration of good-bad splittings and defense mechanisms. However, to the author's knowledge, there has been no empirical study on their associations from a psychoanalytic standpoint. In addition, there has been very limited research on the relationships of forgiveness with mentalization and self-construal. Therefore, the present study primarily aimed to contribute empirical psychoanalytic literature on the associations of these constructs. Moreover, some psychoanalytic scholars stated that genuine forgiveness implies a balance between the capacities of self-forgiveness and other-forgiveness. Due to scarcity of the literature, the associations of the discrepancy between self-forgiveness and other-forgiveness with study constructs were analyzed as a preliminary exploration for further research within the scope of this study.

Results revealed that mentalization capacity, defense mechanisms and self-construal were significant predictors of forgiveness of self and other. Namely, mentalization impairment of hypomentalization, mature defense style, splitting, and autonomous self-construal were significant predictors of both self-forgiveness and other-forgiveness. In addition, social support also a significant predictor of other-forgiveness.

To conclude, this study pointed the importance of mentalization capacity, integration of good-bad splittings, and maturity of the predominantly utilized defense mechanisms for the development of capacity to forgive self and others. Also, this study provides preliminary findings and suggestions for future research,

as well as it contributes to clinical perspectives on the development of forgiveness capacity.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Heartland Affedicilik Ölçeği

Hayatımız boyunca, kendi davranışlarımız, başkalarının davranışları veya kontrolümüz dışındaki durumlar nedeniyle olumsuz olaylar yaşayabiliriz. Bu olumsuz yaşantıların ardından belli bir zaman geçtikten sonra, kendimiz, diğer insanlar veya yaşanan durumlar hakkında olumsuz duygu veya düşüncelerimiz olabilir. Bu tür olumsuz olaylara genel olarak nasıl tepki verdiğinizi düşününüz ve aşağıda verilen her ifadenin yanına, tarif edilen olumsuz duruma genellikle nasıl tepki verdiğinizi ifade eden sayıyı işaretleyiniz.

			Bana hiç uygun değil 1 7 Bana çok uygun						
1	İşleri berbat ettiğimde önce kötü hissetmeme rağmen zamanla kendimi rahatlatabilirim.		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2	Yaptığım olumsuz şeyler için kendime kin tutarım.		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3	Yaptığım kötü şeylerden öğrendiklerim onlarla baş etmemde bana yardımcı olur.		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4	İşleri berbat ettiğimde, kendimi kabul etmek benim için gerçekten çok zordur.		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5	Yaptığım hatalara, zamanla daha anlayışlı olurum.		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6	Hissettiğim, düşündüğüm, söylediğim ya da yaptığım olumsuz şeyler için kendimi eleştirmeyi durduramam.		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7	Yaptığının yanlış olduğunu düşündüğüm kişiyi cezalandırmayı sürdürürüm.		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	Beni incitenlere karşı zamanla daha anlayışlı olurum.		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9	Beni incitenlere karşı katı olmaya devam ederim.		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10	Başkaları bana geçmişte zarar vermiş de olsa, eninde sonunda onları iyi insanlar olarak görebilirim.		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11	Başkaları bana kötü davranırsa, onların hakkında kötü düşünmeye devam ederim.		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
12	Biri beni hayal kırıklığına uğrattığında, bu olayı eninde sonunda geçmişte bırakabilirim.		1	2	3	4	5	6	7

13	Kontrol edilemeyen nedenlerden dolayı işler ters gittiğinde, onlar hakkında olumsuz düşüncelere takılıp kalırım.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14	Hayatımdaki kötü durumlara zamanla daha anlayışlı olabilirim.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
15	Hayatımdaki kontrol edilemeyen durumlar yüzünden hayal kırıklığına uğrarsam, onlar hakkında olumsuz düşünmeyi sürdürürüm.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
16	Hayatımdaki kötü durumlarla eninde sonunda barışıyorum.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
17	Kimsenin hatası olmayan olumsuz durumları kabullenmek benim için gerçekten çok zordur.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
18	Kimsenin kontrolünde olmayan kötü durumlarla ilgili olumsuz düşüncelerimden, eninde sonunda kurtulurum.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

APPENDIX B

SBT (Savunma Biçimleri Testi)

Lütfen her ifadeyi dikkatle okuyup, bunların size uygunluğunu yan tarafında 1 den 9 a kadar derecelendirilmiş skala üzerinde seçtiğiniz dereceyi çarpı şeklinde (X) işaretlemek suretiyle gösteriniz.

Örnek:

Bana hiç
uygun değil

Bana
çok uygun

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
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1	Başkalarına yardım etmek hoşuma gider, yardım etmem engellenirse üzülürüm.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
2	Bir sorunun olduğunda, onunla uğraşacak vaktim olana kadar o sorunu düşünmemeyi becerebilirim.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
3	Endişemin üstesinden gelmek için yapıcı ve yaratıcı şeylerle uğraşırım(resim, el işi, ağaç oyma).	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
4	Arada bir bu gün yapmam gereken işleri yarına bırakırım.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
5	Kendime çok kolay gülerim.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
6	İnsanlar bana kötü davranmaya eğilimlidir.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
7	Birisi beni soyup paramı çalsa, onun cezalandırılmasını değil ona yardım edilmesini isterim.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
8	Hoş olmayan gerçekleri, hiç yokmuşlar gibi görmezlikten gelirim.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
9	Süpermen' mişim gibi tehlikelere aldırım.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	İnsanlara, sandıkları kadar önemli olmadıklarını gösterebilme yeteneğimle gurur duyarım.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
11	Bir şey canımı sıktığında, çoğu kez düşüncesizce ve tepkisel davranırım.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
12	Hayatım yolunda gitmediğinde bedensel rahatsızlıklara yakalanırım.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
13.	Çok tutuk bir insanım.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
14.	Her zaman doğruyu söylemem.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
15.	Sorunsuz bir yaşam sürdürmemi sağlayacak özel yeteneklerim var.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
16.	Seçimlerde bazen haklarında çok az şey bildiğim kişilere oy veririm.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
17.	Birçok şeyi gerçek yaşamımdan çok hayalimde çözerim.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

18.	Hiçbir şeyden korkmam.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
19.	Bazen bir melek olduğumu, bazen de bir şeytan olduğumu düşünürüm.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
20.	Kırıldığımda açıkça saldırgan olurum.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
21.	Her zaman, tanıdığım birinin koruyucu melek gibi olduğunu hissederim.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
22.	Bana göre, insanlar ya iyi ya da kötüler.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
23.	Patronum beni kızdırırsa, ondan hıncımı çıkarmak için ya işimde hata yaparım ya da işi yavaşlatırım.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
24.	Her şeyi yapabilecek güçte, aynı zamanda son derece adil ve dürüst olan bir tanıdığım var.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
25.	Serbest bıraktığımda, yaptığım işi etkileyebilecek olan duygularımı kontrol edebilirim.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
26.	Genellikle, aslında acı verici olan bir durumun gülünç yanını görebilirim.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
27.	Hoşlanmadığım bir işi yaptığımda başım ağrır.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
28.	Sık sık, kendimi kesinlikle kızmam gereken insanlara iyi davranırken bulurum.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
29.	Hayatta, haksızlığa uğruyor olduğuma eminim.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
30.	Sınav veya iş görüşmesi gibi zor bir durumla karşılaşacağımı bildiğimde, bunun nasıl olabileceğini hayal eder ve başa çıkmak için planlar yaparım.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
31.	Doktorlar benim derdimin ne olduğunu hiçbir zaman gerçekten anlamıyorlar.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
32.	Haklarım için mücadele ettikten sonra, girişken davrandığımdan dolayı özür dilemeye eğilimliyimdir.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
33.	Üzüntülü veya endişeli olduğumda yemek yemek beni rahatlatır.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
34.	Sık sık duygularımı göstermediğim söylenir.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
35.	Eğer üzüleceğimi önceden tahmin edebilirsem, onunla daha iyi baş edebilirim.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
36.	Ne kadar yakınırsam yakınyım, hiçbir zaman tatmin edici bir yanıt alamıyorum.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
37.	Yoğun duyguların yaşanması gereken durumlarda, genellikle hiçbir şey hissetmediğimi fark ediyorum.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
38.	Kendimi elimdeki işe vermek, beni üzüntülü veya endişeli olmaktan korur.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
39.	Bir bunalım içinde olsaydım, aynı türden sorunu olan birini arardım.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

40.	Eğer saldırganca bir düşüncem olursa, bunu telafi etmek için bir şey yapma ihtiyacı duyarım.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
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APPENDIX C

BÖLME ÖLÇEĞİ

Aşağıdaki cümleleri okuyup sizin için ne derece doğru olduklarını aşağıdaki 1 ile 7 arasındaki ölçeği kullanarak değerlendiriniz. Size uyan derecenin rakamını soruların yanındaki boş kutulara yazınız. Lütfen soruları hiç boş bırakmadan eksiksiz cevaplayınız.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Hiç doğru değil	Çok az doğru	Biraz doğru	Bir dereceye kadar doğru	Oldukça Doğru	Çok Doğru	Tam Doğru

ÖRNEK MADDELER

1. Bana yakın birinin eleştirildiğini duymaktan nefret ederim.	
2. Ne zaman gerçekten harika bir insanın yanında olsam kendimi aptal gibi hissediyorum.	
3. Kızgın ve öfkeli olduğumda etrafımdaki herkes çok kötü, berbat ve rezil gibi görünür.	
4. İnsanların bana hayran olmasından ne kadar hoşlandığımı arkadaşlarım bilmez.	
5. Sevdiğim insanlara öfkelenmek benim için zordur.	
6. Birinin beni hayal kırıklığına uğratması benim için çok acı vericidir.	
.....	

Tüm ölçek için: F. Sevinç Göral Alkan'a ulaşabilirsiniz.

APPENDIX D

REFLECTIVE FUNCTIONING (YANSITICI İŞLEYİŞ) ÖLÇEĞİ- KISA FORM

Lütfen aşağıdaki cümleleri dikkatlice okuyunuz. Her bir cümle için, cümleye ne kadar katıldığınızı ifade etmek üzere 1 ile 7 arasında bir numara seçip cümlenin yanına yazınız. Cümleler üzerinde çok fazla düşünmeyin- ilk tepkiniz genellikle en iyisidir. Teşekkür ederiz.

1'den 7'ye kadar olan aşağıdaki ölçeği kullanın:

Kesinlikle katılmıyorum	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Kesinlikle katılıyorum
-------------------------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	------------------------

1. İnsanların düşünceleri benim için bir bilinmezdir.
2. Neyi neden yaptığımı her zaman bilmem.
3. Sinirlendiğimde, neden söylediğimi gerçekten bilmediğim şeyler söylerim.
4. Sinirlendiğimde, sonradan pişman olacağım şeyler söylerim.
5. Eğer güvensiz hissedersen, diğerlerini sinirlendirecek şekilde davranırım.
6. Bazen neden yaptığımı gerçekten bilmediğim şeyler yaparım.
7. Ne hissettiğimi her zaman bilirim.
8. Güçlü duygular genellikle düşüncelerimi bulanıklaştırır.

APPENDIX E

Autonomous Related Self Scales – Özerk İlişkili Benlik Ölçeği

1.Kararlarımda yakınlarımdan etkisi çok azdır.	1	2	3	4	5
2.Bana çok yakın olsa bile bir kişinin hayatıma karışmasından hoşlanmam.	1	2	3	4	5
3.Kendimi yakınlarımdan bağımsız hissederim.	1	2	3	4	5
4.Hayatımı, kendimi çok yakın hissettiğim kişilerin düşüncelerine göre yönlendiririm.	1	2	3	4	5
5.Kendimle ilgili bir konuda bana çok yakın olan kişilerin fikirleri beni etkiler.	1	2	3	4	5
6.Kararlarımı alırken yakınlarıma danışırım.	1	2	3	4	5
7.Kişisel konularda, çok yakın hissettiğim kişilerin aldığı kararları kabul ederim.	1	2	3	4	5
8.Genellikle kendime çok yakın hissettiğim kişilerin isteklerine uymaya çalışırım.	1	2	3	4	5
9.Kararlarımı yakınlarımdan isteklerine göre kolayca değiştirebilirim.	1	2	3	4	5
10. Kendimi çok yakın hissettiğim insanların desteğine ihtiyaç duyarım.	1	2	3	4	5
11. Yakın ilişkilerimde belirli bir mesafeyi korumak isterim.	1	2	3	4	5
12. Genelde kişisel şeyleri kendime saklarım.	1	2	3	4	5
13. Kişiliğimin oluşmasında bana yakın olan insanların etkisi büyüktür.	1	2	3	4	5
14. Kendime çok yakın hissettiğim kimseler sık sık aklıma gelir.	1	2	3	4	5
15. Bana yakın olsalar bile, insanların benim hakkımda ne düşündüğünü önemsemem.	1	2	3	4	5
16. Yakınlarım hayatımda ilk önceliğimdir.	1	2	3	4	5
17. Yakınlarımla aramdaki bağ, kendimi huzur ve güven içinde hissetmemi sağlıyor.	1	2	3	4	5
18. Özel hayatımı çok yakınım olan birisiyle bile paylaşmam.	1	2	3	4	5
19. Hem yakın ilişkileri olmak hem de özerk olmak önemlidir.	1	2	3	4	5
20. Planlar yaparken yakınların önerileri dikkate alınsa bile, son karar kişiye ait olmalıdır.	1	2	3	4	5
21. Çok yakın ilişkiler içindeki kişi kendi kararlarını veremez.	1	2	3	4	5
22. İnsan çok yakınlarının fikirlerine karşı çıkabilmelidir.	1	2	3	4	5
23. Yakınlarımdan düşüncelerine önem vermem, kendi düşüncelerimi göz ardı etmem anlamına gelir.	1	2	3	4	5
24. Bir kişiye çok yakın olmak, bağımsız olmayı engeller.	1	2	3	4	5
25. Bir kimse kendini hem yakınlarına bağlı hem de bağımsız hissedebilir.	1	2	3	4	5
26. Özerk olabilmek için yakın ilişki kurmamak gerekir.	1	2	3	4	5
27. Bir kimse hem yakınlarına bağlı olabilir hem de fikirleri ayrı olduğunda fikrine saygı duyulmasını isteyebilir.	1	2	3	4	5

APPENDIX F

Demografik Form - Kişisel Bilgiler

1.Cinsiyetiniz:

- Kadın Erkek Diğer

2.Yaşınız: ____

3.Öğrenci misiniz?

- Evet Hayır

4.Öğrenciyseniz, devam ediyor olduğunuz okulu belirtiniz.

- Lise
 Üniversite (Lisans)
 Üniversite (Yüksek Lisans/Doktora)

5.Öğrenci değilseniz, en son bitirdiğiniz okulu lütfen belirtiniz.

- İlkokul terk
 İlkokul
 Ortaokul
 Lise
 Üniversite (Lisans)
 Üniversite (Yüksek Lisans / Doktora)

6.Şu anda çalışıyor musunuz?

- Evet Hayır
 Diğer (Lütfen belirtiniz): _____

7.Lütfen medeni durumunuzu en iyi tanımlayan seçeneği işaretleyin.

- İlişkisi var
 İlişkisi yok
 Diğer (Açıklayınız): _____

8.İlişkiniz varsa, lütfen ne kadar süredir devam ettiğini belirtin.

____yıl,
____ay

9.İlişkiniz varsa, genel olarak ilişkinizden memnuniyet derecenize en uygun gelen sayıyı seçiniz.
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
 10

10.Çocuğunuz var mı?

Evet Hayır

11. Kendinizi aşağıdaki gelir seviyelerinden hangisinin içinde görüyorsunuz?

Alt Alt-Orta Orta
 Orta-Üst Üst

12.Lütfen yaşadığınız yerde kimlerle yaşadığınızı belirtiniz.

- Eş ve/veya çocuklar
 Ebeveyn(ler)
 Kardeş, kuzen vs.
 Sevgili, partner
 Ev arkadaşı
 Yalnız
 Diğer (lütfen belirtiniz): _____

13.Lütfen aileniz veya sosyal çevreniz tarafından hissettiğiniz destek derecesine en uygun gelen sayıyı seçiniz.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
 10

14. Gündelik hayatınızı etkileyen fiziksel ya da kronik bir rahatsızlığınız varsa lütfen belirtiniz.

Hayır

Evet (Lütfen belirtiniz): _____

15. Gündelik hayatınızı etkileyen psikolojik / psikiyatrik bir rahatsızlığınız varsa lütfen belirtiniz.

Hayır

Evet (Lütfen belirtiniz): _____

16. Daha önce psikolojik yardım (psikoterapi, psikolojik danışmanlık, vs.) aldınız mı?

Evet, aldım ve halen devam ediyor.

Evet, aldım ve sonlandı.

Hayır, hiç almadım.

APPENDIX G

KATILIMCI ONAM FORMU

Sayın Katılımcı,

Bu araştırma İstanbul Bilgi Üniversitesi Klinik Psikoloji (Yetişkin Alt Dalı) Yüksek Lisans Programı öğrencisi Alkım Göktaş tarafından, Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Alev Çavdar Sideris danışmanlığında bir tez çalışması kapsamında yürütülmektedir. Araştırmanın amacı, Türkiye’deki yetişkinlerin bağışlama tutumlarının birtakım psikolojik süreçlerle ilişkisini araştırmaktır. Bu ankete katılmak için 18 yaş veya üzerinde olmanız gerekmektedir.

Sizlere yöneltilen soruların doğru veya yanlış cevapları yoktur. Çalışmanın amacına ulaşabilmesi için sizden ricamız verilen anketlerdeki sorulara olabildiğince eksiksiz ve içtenlikle size en uygun gelen yanıtları vermenizdir. Bu çalışmadan elde edilecek bilgiler tamamen bilimsel amaçlı kullanılacak olup kişisel bilgileriniz kesinlikle gizli tutulacaktır. Tüm soruların yanıtlanması 20 ile 25 dakika arası sürmektedir. Çalışmanın güvenilirliği sebebiyle soruların tamamının yanıtlanması oldukça önemlidir.

Çalışma esnasında kimliğiniz veya kimliğinizi belirleyecek hiçbir bilgi sizden talep edilmeyecek, sadece temel demografik bilgileri doldurmanız talep edilecektir. Verdiğiniz cevaplar gizli tutulacaktır ve üçüncü kişilerle paylaşılmayacaktır. Verileriniz, grup puanları şeklinde analiz edilecektir; bireysel bir değerlendirme yapılmayacaktır. Bu çalışmaya katılmak tamamen gönüllülük esasına dayanmaktadır. Bu formu okuyup onay vermeniz çalışmaya katılmayı kabul ettiğiniz anlamına gelmektedir. Ancak, çalışmaya katılmama veya katıldıktan sonra herhangi bir aşamada çalışmayı bırakma hakkına sahipsiniz. Yapılan çalışma ile ilgili soru sormak ya da yorumda bulunmak isterseniz çalışmanın yürütücüsü Alkım Göktaş ile a.....@gmail.com adresi üzerinden iletişim kurabilirsiniz. Çalışmaya olan katkınızdan ötürü teşekkür ederiz.

* Çalışmaya katılmak istiyorsanız, lütfen onaylayınız.

Şartları okudum, çalışmaya katılmayı kabul ediyorum.

I. ETHICS BOARD APPROVAL

Ethics Board Approval is available in the printed version of this dissertation.