

Effectiveness of Forgiveness Education with Adolescents in
Reducing Anger and Ethnic Prejudice in Iran

Bagher Ghobari Bonab, Mohamad Khodayarifard, and Ramin Hashemi Geshnigani

University of Tehran, School of Psychology and Education, Tehran, Iran

Behnaz Khoei

Macquarie University, Australia

Fatemeh Nosrati

University of Tehran, School of Psychology and Education

Mary Jacqueline Song

International Forgiveness Institute, Inc., Madison, Wisconsin, USA

Robert D. Enright

University of Wisconsin-Madison, Department of Educational Psychology, and

International Forgiveness Institute, Inc., Madison, Wisconsin, USA

Journal of Educational Psychology (in press), June 8, 2020

Effectiveness of Forgiveness Education with Adolescents in
Reducing Anger and Ethnic Prejudice in Iran

Abstract

This research investigated the effectiveness of a forgiveness education program on reducing anger and ethnic prejudice and improving forgiveness in Iranian adolescents. Two hundred twenty-four (Persian, Azeri, and Kurdish) male and female students in eighth grade were selected from three provinces: Tehran, Eastern Azerbaijan, and Kurdistan. Schools were randomly assigned to two groups of experimental ($N = 123$) and control ($N = 101$) students. Measures included the Enright Forgiveness Inventory, Spielberger's State-Trait Anger Expression Inventory, and the Ethnic Prejudice Scale, administered at pretest, posttest, and follow-up. The experimental group had forgiveness education by classroom teachers. The results indicated that the experimental group was higher in forgiveness and lower in ethnic prejudice, state anger, trait anger, and anger expression compared to the control group. This difference was statistically significant in the follow-up phase. It seems that forgiveness education in schools can be an important means of reducing anger and ethnic prejudice.

Keywords: Forgiveness education, State-Trait Anger, Anger Expression, Ethnic Prejudice, Adolescents.

Educational Impact and Implications Statement: Research on forgiveness has shown its effectiveness in reducing resentment and increasing well-being. Forgiveness education in schools, as a new approach for reducing anger and ethnic prejudice, offers a unique opportunity for both psychological health and community peace. This can work in Eastern and Western cultures.

Effectiveness of Forgiveness Education with Adolescents in
Reducing Anger and Ethnic Prejudice in Iran

During one's life span, every individual encounters interpersonal situations with others that are intermingled with resentment and potential conflict. Individuals cope in different ways when they are faced with unjust situations and social stress. An individual may retaliate directly, such as taking revenge, or may avoid being in the same place with the offender. However, the expressing or the suppressing of excessive anger, or what the psychiatric community calls irritability, are both associated with negative health consequences (Johnson & Spielberger, 1992; Julius, Schneider, & Egan, 1985; Stringaris & Taylor, 2015). Anger can present within conscious awareness, and in such a case is classified as a feeling, or unconsciously persist as a negative mood for weeks (Vidal-Ribas et al., 2016). Stringaris and Taylor (2015) in reviewing a vast literature, concluded that excessive anger or irritability is seen in both children and adolescents across a wide variety of mental disorders such as Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, autism spectrum disorders, bipolar, depressive, and depressive mood dysregulation disorders. Vidal-Ribas et al. (2016) in their meta-analysis concluded that irritability is a distinct and stable dimension related to both anxiety and depression in longitudinal studies. Stringaris, Vidal-Ribas, Brotman, and Leibenluft (2017) conclude that irritability in children and adolescents is common and yet there are few published intervention studies to date with excessive anger or irritability as a central outcome variable (see, for example, Gambaro, Enright, Baskin, & Klatt, 2008).

Another risk factors which affects many children is the experience of prejudice and conflicts across ethnic/racial groups (Enright, Rhody, Litts, & Klatt, 2014; Gassin et. al., 2005; Enright, Rhody, Litts, & Klatt, 2014). The psychological outcomes of this risk (e.g., externalizing and internalizing symptoms) are usually fully mediated by anger (Nyborg & Curry, 2003). Thus, studies are needed that examine intervention approaches that can reduce both excessive anger

and prejudice especially in areas in which prejudice can present a challenge for youth. Although ethnic group differences in forgiveness have been discussed in the published literature (e.g., Hanke & Fischer, 2013), there are no published studies focused on Iran. The history of Iranian movements within different areas reveals conflicts not only across the communities but also with the central power of Tehran. Prejudices in school-aged children and adolescents have been reported among racial and ethnic groups in Iran. (Saleh, 2013)

A key challenge presented by Stringaris et al. (2017) is to empirically validate effective ways of reducing excessive anger or irritability in youth. One empirically-verified way of reducing irritability is through the process of forgiving those who have been unjust to the client (Enright & Fitzgibbons, 2015). When a person encounters an interpersonal offense and responds with the feeling of anger or irritability, emotion-focused coping has been found to be the most effective strategy (Folkman, Lazarus, Dunkel-Schetter, DeLongis, & Gruen, 1986). Forgiveness includes an emotion-focused component that affects mental health through the mechanism of stress reduction (Worthington & Scherer, 2004). Forgiveness has been described as a process that occurs after an interpersonal transgression in which negative emotions, cognitions, and behaviors associated with anger, resentment, and hostility are reduced, and instead emotions, cognitions, and behaviors associated with empathy, compassion, and benevolence toward the offender increase (Enright, 2012; Hebl & Enright, 1993; Worthington & Wade, 1999). The one who forgives: a) suffers from serious injury, yet decides to let go of hatred; b) has a moral right to be angry and resentful, but overcomes these; and c) presents with kind, compassionate, and benevolent reactions to the offender, even though there is no obligation for such kindness (Enright & Fitzgibbons, 2015). In spite of the fact that there is no consensus among researchers on a

clear definition of forgiveness (Wade & Worthington, 2005), they all acknowledge that forgiveness is not the same as compromise, reconciliation, justification, ignorance, forgetting, or denial (Enright & Fitzgibbons, 2015; Worthington, 2006; Rye et al., 2001).

The empirically-verified successes of forgiveness interventions with adults on improvement of mental health and interpersonal relations (Baskin & Enright, 2004; Gansle, 2005; Wade, Hoyt, Kidwell, & Worthington, 2014) as well as the unpleasant results of anger and aggression in schools, motivated many researchers to investigate the effectiveness of forgiveness interventions in educational settings (e. g., Enright, Knutson, Holter, Baskin, & Knutson, 2007; Gambaro, Enright, Baskin, & Klatt, 2008; Holter, Magnuson, Knutson, Knutson Enright, & Enright, 2008; Hui & Chau, 2009; Gassin, Enright, & Knutson, 2005; Taysi & Vural, 2015). The results of these studies show that school-based forgiveness interventions lead to significant anger and depression reduction and improved academic outcomes for students. In addition to school-based approaches, forgiveness education for clinically-compromised adolescents reveals the impact of forgiveness on increased hope for the future (e.g. Rahman, Iftikhar, Kim, & Enright, 2018). When children suffer hurtful situations, forgiveness can play an important role in promoting effective coping strategies and controlling their anger; this is because forgiveness has a particular connection with anger, and eliminates the resentment that is a common effect from being treated unfairly by others (Holter et. al., 2005). A forgiveness intervention can enable children to accept and even eliminate their excessive anger towards the offender (Taysi & Vural, 2015). It also can help them to develop the skill to confront and reduce the severity of other negative emotions such as anxiety and depression, and enhance the capacities of their strategic coping with these emotions throughout life (Enright, 2001, 2012; Enright & Fitzgibbons, 2015). In addition to examining mental health effects of forgiveness education, we will explore gender differences,

given the findings with adults that females are higher in forgiveness than males (Ghaemmaghami, Allemand, & Martin, 2011; Miller, Worthington, & McDaniel, 2008; Orathinkal, Vansteenwegen, & Burggraeve, 2008).

By proposing the hypothesis that a forgiveness intervention leads to improvement of inter-group conflicts, researchers have conducted some of their studies in schools and areas which have been involved in inter-group conflicts (e. g., Gassin et. al., 2005; Enright et al., 2007; Hewstone et. al., 2008). Results of these studies have indicated that school-based forgiveness interventions can improve inter-group conflicts and even reduce prejudice (see for example, Enright, Rhody, Litts, & Klatt, 2014). Researchers are of the opinion that by elevating the forgiving tendencies, forbearance and empathy can be increased, and interpersonal tension and prejudice toward others can be decreased among adolescents (Enright et. al., 2014). A survey of the literature in forgiveness shows that by making deep changes in the cognitive, affective, and behavioral systems (Enright, & Fitzgibbons, 2015), forgiveness education does more than just serve as a promising program of anger reduction in children (Taysi & Vural, 2015). Considering children's socio-cognitive development, it also familiarizes them with five moral merits: self-value, moral love and affection, empathy, respect, and generosity as the students put forgiveness into practice (Enright, & Fitzgibbons, 2000; Knutson & Enright, 2008). Moreover, by its emphasis on teaching the definition of *unconditional*, forgiveness interventions allow children to enhance an ethical principle in themselves, which is that *all humans have value by nature* (Enright, 2012; Enright, & the Human Development Study Group, 1991), and hence can decrease their prejudice towards others (Enright et. al., 2014).

The Current Study

In a structured society such as Iran, with different racial, ethnic, and religious groups (Islamic denominations/sects of Shia and Sunni), access to preventive measures to overcome the effects of racial and religious discriminations and inter-group conflicts is of great importance. Excessive anger is a maladaptive behavior that can cause injuries to others and harm interpersonal relations. The causes of such anger can be frustration and reinforcement of anger-related behavior (Shahsavarani, & Noohi, 2014). In Iran, anger in adolescents is often caused by frustration-inducing antecedents. Due to the socio-cultural situation in Iran, frustrating events for young adults are present in the environments in which adolescents live, including stereotyping caused by prejudice. Moreover, despite the prevalence of anger in Iranian schools and its challenging outcomes (Alimoradi et. al., 2016; Bazargan, Sadeghi, & Gholamali Lavasani, 2004), no program has so far been designed to reduce this phenomenon.

The Persian, Kurdish, and Azeri groups living in Iran differ in some aspect of life style, religious background (e. g., Shia and Sunni), historical background, and language differences; Azeri speak in Turkish, Kurdies speak in Kurdish, while others speak in Persian. These factors in addition to the differences in child raising practices and lifestyles, all contribute to disharmony and conflicts among these ethnic groups. Students who are living in this context can take on the affect of adults in both family and schools when those adults show discontent toward any of the other groups. Such inculturation and modeling can lead to a situation in which the adolescents reproduce adult conflicts. To our surprise, we found no studies in Iran centered on the development of prejudice in that country. The current study targeted these populations to fill the gap.

The Islamic nature of the Iranian society and the necessity of observing and following ethical mores and principles, particularly within social interactions and relations, which is enjoined by Islam and the Qur'anic verses, make the importance of forgiveness in personal and social life clearer. In Islamic culture in the context of Iranian Shiasm, the definition of forgiveness has broad commonalities with Christian-based definitions and with Western philosophical analyses (see, for example, North, 1987; Holmgren, 1993). The commonalities include the release of hostility, anger, and bitterness toward the wrongdoer and striving for mercy and acts of benevolence toward that offending person (Ghobari Bonab, et. al. 2003). There are a number of Qur'anic verses that adorn this kind of intervention program for students. In some verses, modeling this principle that "God forgives His servants," people are invited to the same path. In other words, in these verses Muslims are asked to do as their Creator does and to forgive the offenders for their misconduct. For example, God says, "Let them pardon and overlook. Would you not like that Allah should forgive you? And Allah is Forgiving and Merciful." (Qur'an, 24: 22). In light of Islam's emphasis on forgiving others, forgiveness in schools can act as a traditional, cultural, and religious method of intervention, and considering their religious beliefs, Iranian youth may be able to benefit from it. In spite of the significant successes of forgiveness education as an anger-reduction method and its related underlying emotions in various sample groups, there has been no prior study to investigate a forgiveness intervention in Iranian schools. Therefore, given the scarcity of psychological services in Iranian school settings, by conducting the current study in Iran, we aimed at investigating whether a forgiveness intervention, implemented by classroom teachers, will have a positive effect of reducing anger and prejudice, and increasing the development of forgiveness in eighth grade students. This age group was chosen

because they are in the process of developing the cognitive capacity to think abstractly and therefore to more deeply understand the concept of inherent worth, or the idea that all people, even those who behave unjustly, are special, unique, and irreplaceable. They also are entering the developmental phase in which peer-group affiliation is important. If, as happens in Iran, the students begin to form into subcultural groups with skepticism toward others, then this may be the beginning of prejudice that can lead to disrespect and inter-group conflict unless a way is found to reduce anger and prejudice.

Method

Our objective was to assess the effects of a school-based forgiveness intervention program on improving forgiveness and reducing anger and ethnic prejudice in eighth grade students in Iran. The outcomes were evaluated using a quasi-experimental design in which schools were randomly assigned to one of two treatment conditions: experimental and control groups. This quasi-experimental design is similar to other, published forgiveness education research, made necessary if the goal is to simulate actual instruction to a full class of students (see, for example, Enright et al., 2007; Holter et al., 2008). Pretest, posttest, and follow-up measurements were taken and inferential statistics (Multivariate Analysis of Variance with Repeated Measures) were used to analyze the data. Since the schools were nested in groups (i. e., nested in treatment levels) analyzing the nested effect of school in groups was necessary. We thus used a Multivariate Analysis of Variance for Repeated Measures design with school as a nested fixed factor.

Participants

Students in eighth grade (average age of 14) from three major provinces of Iran were selected: Tehran, Eastern Azerbaijan, and Kurdistan. These three provinces were representative of Iran's different ethnic and religious groups. These groups consisted of Persians, Azeri, and

Kurdish, and their religion was either Shia or Sunni. A total of 12 schools, four schools from each city (two male and two female schools), were selected. All schools in Iran are separated by gender. From each city, a male-only and a female-only school were randomly selected as the experimental group, and another male school and another female school were randomly selected as the control group. Each school had only one classroom participate in this research. In previous research (see Enright, Rhody, Litts & Klatt, 2019), forgiveness education has been studied with eight graders in United States. However, the cultural and religious context of Iran as an Islamic Shia state is different from the West. Therefore, studying the significance and applicability of forgiveness education in Iran represents a unique look at this age group in the context of forgiveness.

To select participants in the study, the following steps were taken: a) we obtained ethic committee approval from the University of Tehran; b) we then received permission from the Ministry of Education; c) next, from each city one district was chosen by means of random selection; d) finally, we selected four schools from each district by means of principal permission and cooperation. Four principals whom we approached declined participation because of a lack of time in the already-existing school curriculum.

School principals who accepted to do this project in their school were higher in education than those who were not interested. Further, most of the teachers were familiar with psychological research and their previous experience was positive. Two consent forms were obtained from parents: 1) one seeking permission for the child to participate in the forgiveness intervention; and 2) permission for the child to do the assessments at pretest, posttest, and follow-up. All parents agreed on both consent forms. A total of 224 participants were selected as the sample group, consisting of 50.4% female (experimental group = 61 subjects / control group = 52 subjects), and

49.6 % male (experimental group = 62 subjects / control group = 49 subjects). In terms of ethnicity, 35.7 % were Persian (experimental group = 43 subjects / control group = 37 subjects), 41.5 % were Azeri (experimental group = 51 subjects / control group = 42 subjects), and 28.8 % were Kurdish (experimental group = 29 subjects / control group = 22 subjects). Also in terms of religious denomination, 79.9 % of the subjects were Shia (experimental group = 96 subjects / control group = 83 subjects), and 20.1 % were Sunni (experimental group = 27 subjects / control group = 18 subjects).

Instruments

In this study, the following instruments were utilized: Enright Forgiveness Inventory (2004), Spielberger's State-Trait Anger Expression Inventory-2 (2003) and the Prejudice Scale. These instruments were distributed to the participants in the assigned groups of each school. A short qualitative interview was included at the end of the program only for five experimental students, randomly chosen, from each school.

Enright Forgiveness Inventory. Enright Forgiveness Inventory (Enright & Rique, 2004) is one of the most widely-used tools in forgiveness research. The EFI is a 60-item scale that assesses cognitive (20 items), affective (20 items), and behavioral (20 items) responses of interpersonal forgiveness toward an offending other person. It includes the absence of negative affect (e. g., "I feel angry toward the person."), the presence of positive affect (e. g., "I feel friendly toward the person"), the absence of negative cognition (e. g., "Regarding this person, I disapprove of him/her."), the presence of positive cognition (e.g., "I think this person is worthy of respect."), the absence of negative behavior (e. g., "Regarding this person, I would ignore him or her"), and the presence of positive behavior (e. g., "I would show friendship to him/ her."). Individuals are asked to focus on a particular experience of someone hurting them deeply and unfairly. On the

face sheet, they are asked to elaborate on this experience through several questions, such as rating the degree of hurt from 1 (no hurt) to 5 (a great deal of hurt), describing their relationship to the offender, the time since the offense, and to briefly describe the offense. They then are asked to hold this situation and this person in mind as they respond to each statement in the inventory on a six-point Likert scale of agreement-disagreement (1 = I completely disagree to 6 = I completely agree). Each participant then fills out the EFI with the exact same person and the exact same situation in mind at each time of assessment. Typical issues identified by participants as having been unjust and thus emotionally hurting them are in Table 3. These types of hurts were the general offense reported by the students. A high score represents higher forgiveness. This forgiveness inventory was validated in the Iranian society by Ghobary Bonab, Nasafat, Khodayari-fard, and Shokouhi-yekta (2003). In its Persian version, each subscale of the inventory is comprised of 18 items. In the Persian version, two items from each subscale were omitted because of their inadequate psychometric properties.

The maximum and minimum scores of forgiveness in this inventory are 324 and 54, respectively. In addition, the maximum and minimum scores in each of the three subscales of the affective, cognitive, and behavioral forgiveness are 108 and 18, respectively. In the current research the alpha coefficient for the EFI was 0.98, and for affective, cognitive, and behavioral domains were 0.95, 0.94, and 0.95, respectively.

Spielberger's State-Trait Anger Inventory. This popular scale has three subscales: state, trait, and anger expression (Spielberger and Reheiser, 2003). In contrast to the EFI, the participant does not focus on a particular person. State anger (for example, "I feel annoyed") is defined as a current condition, consisting of subjective feelings that vary in intensity from mild irritation or annoyance to intense fury and rage. State anger has 15 items scored on a four-point Likert

scale (1 = not at all, 2 = somewhat, 3 = moderately, 4 = very much). The range of scores for the state-anger subscale is 15 to 60, with a high score representing higher state anger. Trait anger (for example, "I am a hotheaded person") is defined as anger experienced over time (Spielberger & Reheiser, 2003). The trait-anger domain has 10 items, scored on a four-point Likert type scale (1 = almost never, 2 = sometimes, 3 = often, 4 = almost always). The range of scores is between 10 and 40, with a higher score representing more trait anger. The third dimension, anger expression, provides a general index of anger expression based on responses to: Anger Expression-Out, assessing how often angry feelings are expressed in verbally or physically aggressive behavior, such as, "I argue with others;" Anger Expression-In, assessing how often angry feelings are experienced but not expressed (suppressed), such as, "I withdraw from people;" Anger Control-Out, measuring how often a person controls the outward expression of angry feelings, such as, "I control my temper;" and Anger Control-In, which assesses how often a person tries to control suppressed anger by reducing its intensity, such as, "I try to relax." The anger expression subscale consists of 32 items on the four-point Likert scale. The range of scores is between 0 and 96 with a high score representing more external and internal anger and less internal and external control of anger. In the current study the alpha coefficient for the total anger scale was 0.87, and for its components, including state anger, trait anger, and anger expression was 0.92, 0.80, and 0.75, respectively.

The Ethnic Prejudice Scale. Based on the existing published literature, we developed a 13- item scale to measure ethnic prejudice. The review of the literature also gave us an insight about the models of prejudice as well as the appropriateness of items. For example, Akrami, Ekehammar and Araya (2000) developed a measure to assess prejudice that was very helpful in

our scale development. The aim of this initial investigation was to integrate theoretical and empirical literature to first construct an interview regarding the construct of prejudice. In addition to the literature review, data were extracted by means of projection techniques (e.g., using incomplete sentences, completion of incomplete stories) to get more precise and varied statements to structure the interviews. In the second stage, semi-structured interviews were conducted with individuals. Satiation of statements was reached in fifteen participants (8 men and 7 women).

In addition, we used the Exploratory Factor Analysis technique to extract underlying factors and components in the scale. Four scales were extracted after the Varimax Rotation approach. These factors are:

- 1) *Resentment toward the other ethnic groups*. This factor explained 20% of the total variance.
- 2) *Uneasiness with the members of the other groups*. This explained 15% of the variance.
- 3) *Unequal rights*. The third factor extracted was about the right of citizenship. This factor explained 11% of the variance.
- 4) *Stigmatization*. The fourth factor was about the stigma attached to the ethnic group (e.g., having low intelligence and lack of personal hygiene). This factor explained only 10% of the variance.

In total, 56% of the overall variance was explained by Explanatory Factor Analysis. Factor-loading of the items ranged from 0.85 to 0.52 with the mean of 0.70. This coefficient shows that factors have loaded very highly.

To test validity and reliability of the emerged factors, we also conducted a study with 224 eighth-grade students in Tehran to examine the compatibility of the observed factors to the expected ones. In this study, we used Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). The Goodness of Fit indices in this study were adequate for our purposes (see Table 1).

Items were analyzed based on item-total correlations. This scale was given to an expert panel to determine the poor items based on face validity. The panel members were advised to rate each item based on the relevance and appropriateness of each item. Inappropriate items were deleted. After deleting ineffective items, members of the panel rated the total items of the scale in terms of precision, exhaustiveness, and exclusiveness of the defined construct. The subjects' answers were based on a five-point Likert type scale, with 1: completely disagree and 5: completely agree. For example, some sample questions of this scale are as follows: "People from other ethnicities are not intelligent or honest," "It is difficult for me to feel close (empathize) with someone from another race or ethnic group." The highest score for this scale is 65 and the lowest is 13. A high score is interpreted as a high level of prejudice. The alpha coefficient in this study was 0.80.

Qualitative Interview Following the Forgiveness Program. To date, no forgiveness education program has a follow-up with students to gather qualitative impressions about their experiences with this curriculum. Therefore, for us to gain insight into the students' impressions of the forgiveness program, four questions were asked in an oral-interview format (see Table 9). These questions centered on the usefulness of the program for them. This was not done as a fidelity check but only to receive feedback from the students once the forgiveness education was completed. The short interviews were conducted by trained Master students in psychology and transcribed into a written format. Extraction of the statements was accomplished by the principal

investigator, a research assistant, and a professor in counseling psychology. Inter-rater agreement of these three raters was 0.76 ($Kappa = 0.76$).

Educating the Teachers

Before initiating the forgiveness education programs, an eight-hour educational workshop was held for the teachers in the experimental group. In this workshop the goals of the forgiveness education programs, the phases of forgiveness (Enright, 2001), and their contents were explained. An educational instruction booklet was developed by the researchers for the teachers and was applied to guide them in implementing the forgiveness education program. This booklet contained necessary points in the education of forgiveness to students, its methods, as well as protecting students' rights. For example, defining forgiveness, its related constructs, its foundational principles for youth (unconditional inner value, empathy, kindness, respect, and generosity), the necessity of forgiveness education for students and its advantages, the objectives of each session, and other concepts were explained in this booklet.

The Process of Implementation

Three days after the pretest, the teachers of the experimental group began the forgiveness education programs. These weekly sessions continued for 15 weeks, each session lasting for 75 minutes. The teachers, during the sessions, followed and implemented the instructions in the booklets.

To enhance the validity of the education and research, a member of the research team called the teachers in the experimental group each evening of the day before a forgiveness class, and asked them if they had any questions about the materials and procedures of the lessons to be taught. They did not have any major questions. Some of them had questions regarding proce-

dures for presenting materials and content of the worksheets. In addition, we provided instructions about the procedures of delivery and content of the upcoming class. The average length of these conversations was about 45 minutes.

To ensure fidelity of teaching forgiveness, two procedures were used. First, at the end of each week's lesson, teachers were instructed to fill out a questionnaire in the manual, intended to verify that all the teachers worked according to the manual's directions. These questions focused on whether the students found the activities meaningful, responded well to the questions or activities, and found the activities, concepts, or questions meaningful. Second, two assistants conducted two observation sessions (for each teacher) to monitor accuracy and credibility of the forgiveness education programs taught by teachers and gave them informative and corrective feedback. The agreement between the observers was 75%. One week after the conclusion of the forgiveness program, the posttest was administered, and follow-up data were gathered three months after the posttest.

Contents of the Program

In addition to the teacher's manual, a student-book also was developed by the researchers. The student's book is a 15-week curriculum based on the Forgiveness Process Model (Enright & Fitzgibbons, 2000; 2015). The model describes what people do cognitively, behaviorally, and emotionally as they move through the forgiveness process. The model has twenty units across four phases. In the Uncovering Phase, people injured by others' injustices against them become aware of their anger and how they are responding. In the Decision Phase, injured people examine options for responding to the transgressor and choose to work toward forgiveness. In the Work Phase, injured people reframe the offender and cultivate empathy and compassion for

the person. In the Discovery and Release from Emotional Prison Phase, injured people see that they are not alone, find meaning in the injury they experienced, and find new purpose in life.

The fifteen sessions of the forgiveness education program were applied by the classroom teachers. Prior to the teachers in the experimental group receiving training, these sessions were validated by experts in the Department of Education at the University of Tehran and by a panel of teachers. The students' book consisted of two major parts: The first part focused on lessons about forgiveness. Homework and exercises were provided at the end of each lesson. The second part focused on tales about forgiveness. A summary of lessons in the first part are:

- 1- What is forgiveness?
- 2- What forgiveness is not
- 3- Advantages and benefits of forgiveness
- 4- The gift of forgiveness for the forgiver and the forgiven
- 5- Encountering with hurt feelings and anger
- 6- Empathy: forgiving others comes gradually with understanding others
- 7- Inherent value of persons
- 8- How we become aware of inherent value of others
- 9- Generosity and benevolence in living with others
- 10- How do we need to think about forgiving others?
- 11- Decision to forgive and commitment to forgive
- 12- Are you ready to forgive?
- 13- How it feels to forgive; working toward forgiving
- 14- Offering the gift of forgiveness to other persons
- 15- Asking for forgiveness; I need to be forgiven.

Each lesson began with a review of the previous week's content, then teachers presented new forgiveness concepts, first through a story and then describing an aspect of the forgiveness process. For example, for Lesson 7, a story centering on the worth of all people is first presented and is followed by explanations of what inherent worth actually is. In these programs necessary explanations were provided for students in each lesson. Sessions concluded with a review and explanation of the homework along with instructions. Hands-on activities were used to simplify teaching and instruction of abstract concepts. Students were challenged to master the meaning of abstract concepts such as kindness, forgiveness, love, mutual respect, empathy, and generosity by performing these hands-on tasks and completing worksheets. Group activities helped students deepen their understanding of forgiveness.

For the story section of the manual, stories were developed on the basis of Islamic and Iranian culture about a student who had encountered an unjust hurt. In these stories the person who was hurt narrated the forgiveness journey in different phases (from the moment of uncovering to the deepening phase of forgiveness; see Enright, 2001 for a description of these phases of forgiveness). The objective behind making these narratives was to simplify the presented concepts in the lessons of the previous chapters and to allow the students to imitate and model the hero of the story. Qur'anic verses, poems, and historical epic heroes were incorporated into these stories. The narratives were validated by story-writing experts. This research was approved by the Ethics Committee of the University of Tehran, Iran.

As one story example, five groups of students in one classroom were assigned to do competitive art projects. A student, Morteza, accidentally runs into Bahman and the collision causes the water-color paint which Bahman was holding to spill all over Vali Asr's Group Pro-

ject, ruining it. When Morteza pins the blame on Bahman, and others believe this, Bahman develops much resentment and thoughts of revenge. With the aid of the school counselor, Bahman is taught to forgive Morteza, to see his inherent worth, with the consequence of improved psychological and relational health for Bahman. Control group classrooms received education-as-usual, with no mention of the word “forgiveness” in their everyday instruction.

Results

After entering the data into the SPSS software, first the outliers and the missing data were detected and eliminated. Descriptive data including the means and standard deviations for the experimental and control groups in the pretests, posttests, and follow-up assessments are presented in Table 2.

We first pooled the sample at pretest and correlated forgiveness and all anger variables (forgiveness and state anger, $r = -0.17$; forgiveness and trait anger, $r = -0.14$; forgiveness and anger expression, $r = -0.14$) and forgiveness and prejudice ($r = -0.11$). Forgiveness was associated with all dimensions of anger ($p < 0.05$). However, the relation between forgiveness and prejudice was not significant ($p > 0.05$).

Gender differences were examined at pretest. Statistically significant differences in forgiveness (males: $M = 182.29$, $SD = 63.06$; females: $M = 203.72$, $SD = 63.08$; $F(1, 222) = 6.46$, $P = 0.01$) and prejudice (males: $M = 51.53$, $SD = 11.42$; females: $M = 47.80$, $SD = 11.03$; $F(1, 222) = 6.20$, $P = 0.01$) were found. No gender differences were found at pretest for state anger, trait anger, and anger expression. As in the previous research with adults, discussed above, females tend to be higher than males in forgiveness. It remains to be seen whether males or females benefit more from the forgiveness program.

At pretest, as shown in Table 2, participants were approximately at the midpoint (189) of the forgiveness scale. In other words, the participants in both groups had much room to develop in forgiving those who had hurt them. Typical issues identified by participants as having been unjust and thus emotionally hurting them are in Table 3. We categorized reported themes and extracted major categories of hurt experienced by the participants, presented in Table 4. Some students did not report the nature of their hurt, considering it as a confidential matter. In accordance with participants' reports, the major offenders were father (4.9 %), mother (10.3 %), sister (4.5%), brother (1.8%), classmate (27.7%), friend (20.1%), neighbor (11.6%), relatives (11.6%), and other (7.6%).

At pretest, participants in both groups were about at the midpoint of both Trait Anger and Anger Expression, while they were showing less State Anger relative to the midpoint of 37. As an entire group, the participants were showing some ethnic prejudice, which was approximately one standard deviation above the midpoint (39) of the scale. This shows that there was room for development in this area.

To test the statistical significance of differences, inferential tests were utilized. Prior to using Multivariate Analysis of Variance with Repeated Measures, the underlying assumptions of this test were examined. The results of the Leven's test, examining the equality of variances, confirmed the null hypothesis ($p > 0.01$) and indicated that the variances of all dependent variables were equal across groups. In addition, the Sphericity Assumption was examined. Mauchly's Test of Sphericity indicated that the assumption of sphericity was met for prejudice ($\chi^2 (2) = 3.525, p = 0.172$); trait anger ($\chi^2 (2) = 1.478, p = 0.478$) and anger expression index ($\chi^2 (2) = 0.966, p = 0.617$). These results supported the null hypothesis ($p > 0.01$) and confirmed the

equality of variance of the differences between each pair of conditions. Mauchly's Test of Sphericity indicated that the assumption of sphericity had been violated for forgiveness ($\chi^2 (2) = 11.420, p = 0.003$) and its subscales: affect ($\chi^2 (2) = 9.276, p = 0.010$); behavior ($\chi^2 (2) = 8.168, p = 0.017$); cognition ($\chi^2 (2) = 17.198, p = 0.001$) and also state anger ($\chi^2 (2) = 28.137, p = 0.001$); therefore to overcome this problem, a Greenhouse-Geisser correction was used.

The results of the MANOVA with repeated measures were significant in the effects of the between-groups comparison [Hotelling's Trace = 0.571, $F_{(8,215)} = 15.356, p = 0.0005$, Effect Size (Partial Eta Squared) = 0.364]. This indicates that the mean scores of the two groups were different. Furthermore, the effects of within-groups showed that the impact of time was significant [Hotelling's Trace = 0.325, $F_{(16,207)} = 4.211, p = 0.0005$, Effect Size (Partial Eta Squared) = 0.246]. This shows that the mean score of the participants has been significantly different in pretest, posttest, and follow-up. The effects of the interaction of treatment by time for the within-groups is more crucial to the researchers because it determines whether the change patterns of the mean in the pretest, posttest, and follow-up scores is different in the experimental and control groups. In the current study, the effects of the interaction of treatment by time were significant [Hotelling's Trace = 0.232, $F_{(16,207)} = 3.007, p = 0.0005$, Effect Size (Partial Eta Squared) = 0.189]. In other words, participants in the experimental group responded differently to the instruments during the time of posttest and follow-up compared to those in the control group. To follow-up the results and to determine which one of the dependent variables has had changes in the between-groups and within-groups comparisons (see Table 5), an ANOVA with repeated measures was utilized.

As displayed in Table 5, the results of the ANOVA tests of between-subjects effects showed that, putting aside the within-subjects differences across different times (i.e., posttest and

follow-up), there are significant differences between the two groups in forgiveness ($F_{(1, 10.83)} = 19.76, p = 0.001$, Effect Size (Partial Eta Squared) = 0.646), in ethnic prejudice ($F_{(1, 10.18)} = 10.74, p = 0.008$, Effect Size (Partial Eta Squared) = 0.514), in state anger ($F_{(1, 10.35)} = 15.20, p = 0.003$, Effect Size (Partial Eta Squared) = 0.596), in trait anger, ($F_{(1, 11.75)} = 15.72, p = 0.002$, Effect Size (Partial Eta Squared) = 0.572), and in anger expression ($F_{(1, 11.01)} = 16.28, p = 0.002$, Effect Size (Partial Eta Squared) = 0.597). As indicated in the text, all Eta Squares were higher than 0.14 which were considered large effect sizes (Cohen, 1973). This indicated that the magnitude of forgiveness in students in the experimental group had increased after receiving forgiveness education programs (see Table 2). In addition to the reduction of the ethnic prejudice in students in the experimental group, their state anger, trait anger, and anger expression had reduced as well (see Table 2).

As shown in Table 5, the results of the ANOVA tests of within-subjects effects showed that in terms of the effects of time, the profiles of the mean scores in different times (pretest, posttest, and follow-up) were not the same; they were significantly different for all variables ($p < 0.05$) except for state anger. For this intervention research, the effects of the interaction of time by treatment were more crucial. The effects of treatment between groups across time showed that the profiles of the means of the experimental group compared to those of the control group across different times of measurement (pretest, posttest, and follow-up) in forgiveness ($F_{(2, 444)} = 6.20, p = 0.002$), in ethnic prejudice ($F_{(2, 444)} = 12, p = 0.0005$), in state anger ($F_{(2, 444)} = 9.58, p = 0.0005$), in trait anger ($F_{(2, 444)} = 3.53, p = 0.03$), and in anger expression ($F_{(2, 444)} = 4.42, p = 0.013$) were not the same. This shows that the change pattern in the mean of the experimental and control groups was not linear. This indicates that the experimental treatment was effective.

In other words, these results indicate that because of the forgiveness education programs, students in the experimental group showed more improvement on all variables compared to those in the control group throughout the times of posttest and follow-up. This implies that the forgiveness education programs have been effective in increasing forgiveness and reducing prejudice, state anger, trait anger, and anger expression in the students in the experimental group (descriptive data presented in Table 2).

As seen in Table 5, analyzing the nested effect of schools in groups showed the school effects in the affective dimension of forgiveness, forgiveness, trait anger, and anger expression were not significant ($p > 0.05$). However, nested effects of school in behavior and cognition dimensions of forgiveness and ethnic prejudice were significant ($p < 0.05$). This indicates that the school effect does not affect most variables. Descriptive data about variables that were significant are displayed in Table 6. The school effect in our research probably was due to socio-cultural idiosyncrasies of the participants in these different schools. However, by extracting nested variables, error variance is reduced. Tests of within-groups contrasts show the mean scores of the pretest, posttest, and follow-up in Table 7. This table shows that in the interaction of treatment by time, the difference between the means of pretest and posttest scores, as well as the difference between the means of the pretest and follow-up scores of all dependent variables were significant ($p < 0.05$). This shows that not only were the profiles of the means in the two groups at different times (pretest and posttest) significantly different ($p < 0.05$) but also the means of the experimental group have changed and these changes were stable throughout time (pretest to follow-up) ($p < 0.05$). For example, in the experimental group, the mean of anger expression scores at the posttest compared to that at the pretest has been reduced by 6.98, which is statistically significant ($F_{(1, 222)} = 4.68, p = 0.032$). This shows that the forgiveness education programs have

been able to reduce anger expression in students and enabled them to gain more control over their anger. A reduction also is visible in the mean of anger expression scores at the follow-up compared to that at the pretest by 8.07. This difference also is statistically significant ($F_{(1, 222)} = 8.52, p = 0.004$), and shows that the changes made through the forgiveness education programs have long-term stability. The difference in the mean of the anger expression scores at the post-test and follow-up is not significant ($F_{(1, 222)} = 0.37, p = 0.546$). This, too, shows that the changes in the experimental group have been stable throughout time (see Table 7 for more details on other variables).

Gender Differences

To assess whether males and females responded differently to the forgiveness program, we performed gain scores t-tests between experimental groups for males and females. The analysis showed that both males and females benefitted from the program in forgiveness; however, males benefitted significantly more than female students on the forgiveness variable (males: $D(\bar{bar}) = 71.50, SD(\bar{bar}) = 93.73$, females: $D(\bar{bar}) = 21.87, SD(\bar{bar}) = 87.54, t_{gain} = 3.03, p = 0.003$). In contrast, there were no differences between males and females in prejudice (males: $D(\bar{bar}) = 9.08, SD(\bar{bar}) = 19.41$, females: $D(\bar{bar}) = 7.64, SD(\bar{bar}) = 17.03, t_{gain} = 0.44, p = 0.66$), state anger (males: $D(\bar{bar}) = 6.90, SD(\bar{bar}) = 10.05$, females: $D(\bar{bar}) = 2.95, SD(\bar{bar}) = 12.47, t_{gain} = 1.94, p = 0.06$), trait anger (males: $D(\bar{bar}) = 2.45, SD(\bar{bar}) = 7.03$, females: $D(\bar{bar}) = 1.80, SD(\bar{bar}) = 7.87, t_{gain} = 0.48, p = 0.63$), and anger expression (males: $D(\bar{bar}) = 9.66, SD(\bar{bar}) = 15.31$, females: $D = 4.25, SD = 19.90, t_{gain} = 1.69, p = 0.09$).

Statistical Analyses for the Angriest Students

Because many of the forgiveness education journal articles center on clinically-compromised students (see, for example, Gambaro et al., 2008; Park et al., 2013), we thought it important

to assess the effectiveness of this program for those students who are the angriest and least forgiving. To assess whether those who have the most anger benefitted from this intervention, we selected a sample of 20 students from the control group (10 males and 10 females) and 20 students from experimental group (10 males and 10 females) with the highest anger scores and the lowest forgiveness scores and performed a MANCOVA as the statistical tool. The results of the statistical analysis showed a significant difference between control and experimental groups (Hotelling's Trace = 6, $F_{(4, 31)} = 46.49, p < 0.01$). Univariate analysis showed a significant difference, favoring the experimental group, in state anger ($F_{(1, 34)} = 93.64, p < 0.01$), trait anger ($F_{(1, 34)} = 35.13, p < 0.01$), anger expression ($F_{(1, 34)} = 10.73, p < 0.01$) and forgiveness ($F_{(1, 34)} = 6.47, p < 0.01$). For further information, see Table 8. This indicates that students with the highest anger and lowest forgiveness benefitted significantly from the program.

Qualitative Data Described

Inferential statistics were not done on these qualitative data. As described above, five students were randomly selected from each school of the experimental groups for these post-intervention interviews. Students' interview responses were read and discussed by the three persons described in the Methods section. The most frequently stated themes that emerged for the three coders are these: enhanced cognitive knowledge of forgiveness; willingness to forgive; feeling freedom from the hurt; reduction in anger and a previous willingness to seek revenge; and understanding the innate value of humanity. In addition, students learned to be sensitive to others and reduced prejudice toward them. In general, participants after forgiving can free themselves from mental rumination, anxiety, hostility, and anger and have an increased willingness to forgive. Please see Table 9 for sample student responses to this interview. The qualitative data support the quantitative results reported above.

Summary of the Findings

The main findings are as follows:

- 1) Ethnic prejudice, state anger, trait anger, and anger expression were reduced significantly. Forgiveness increased substantially. These results were maintained across time.
- 2) Male students benefitted more than female students in forgiveness; however, for the other variables there were no significant differences between males and females from the program.
- 3) Students with the highest levels of anger and lowest levels of forgiveness benefited from the program, similar to previous studies with clinically-challenged youth.

Discussion

The current study was the first attempt to implement forgiveness education programs in the Islamic cultural context of Iranian schools. This study aimed at testing the effectiveness of forgiveness education programs by classroom teachers on improving forgiveness in eighth grade students, as well as reducing their anger and ethnic prejudice. This study did not aim at compelling the participants to forgive, rather by utilizing the forgiveness education program and teaching its fundamental principles based on Islamic Iranian culture, attempts were made to increase their willingness to try forgiveness if they chose to do so. Also, the students used forgiveness by their own choice as a means of reducing hurt and anger caused by unjust encounters. The results of this study show that forgiveness education leads to forgiveness of others in the three domains of affect, cognition, and behavior in Iranian adolescents, and these changes were stable across time. These results were in line with those of several other studies (e. g., Taysi, E., & Vural, 2015; Gambaro et. al., 2008; Enright et. al., 2007).

It seems that through the forgiveness education programs, students have been able to reduce rumination and thoughts of revenge about the transgression which is one of the main cognitive factors sustaining the desire for retaliation and deterring forgiveness (Bono & McCullough, 2006; McCullough, Worthington, & Rachal, 1997) and to devote energy toward improving emotional wounds and positive emotions (Reed & Enright, 2006). In this study, the experimental group showed substantial change in their forgiveness, improving about two-thirds of a standard deviation (from the pretest to the follow-up test). At follow-up the experimental group was over 50 points higher than the midpoint (of 189) on the forgiveness scale.

Forgiveness education programs, through facilitating empathy for the offender, have provided the motivational changes underlying forgiveness (McCullough, Luna, Berry, Tabak, & Bono, 2010; McCullough et. al., 1998; McCullough et. al., 1997) and have led to increasing forgiveness in students. These results were not surprising in the Iranian Muslim students since examining the Qur'anic verses, Islamic traditions, and the Prophet's sayings all point to the emphasis on forgiving others for their wrongdoings. For example, God states that, "[O Messenger] take to forgiveness, enjoin what is good, and veer away from the ignorant ones" (Qur'an, 7: 199). In some verses of the Qur'an, by calling people to model God's way of forgiving other persons, Muslims are invited to this path, i.e., God wants Muslims to forgive the wrongdoers and their wrongs, just as their Creator does: "Let them pardon and overlook. Would you not like that Allah should forgive you? And Allah is Forgiving and Merciful" (Qur'an, 24: 22). Therefore, considering the emphasis of Islam on forgiving others, forgiveness can be counted as a cultural, and religious intervening treatment, which is how Iranian adolescents with their religious beliefs can benefit.

One of the other findings of this research was the effect of forgiveness education on the reduction of ethnic prejudice and its stability and maintenance over time. The change in the experimental group was almost a full standard deviation from the pretest to the follow-up. With a midpoint of 39, the experimental group reached that midpoint at follow-up. This finding, showing reduced ethnic prejudice, is in line with the findings of previous studies (e. g., Enright et. al., 2014). In contrast, the control group remained relatively high in ethnic prejudice across the entire time of the study. It seems that the empathy created by the effect of forgiveness had an influence on the reduction of ethnic prejudice and Muslim youths' inter-group conflicts. Prejudice is usually a pre-judgement and a negative or antagonistic perspective toward a different group, which is based on processes that are intermingled with errors and mostly accompanied by lack of knowledge and false information. When students become educated about: a) concepts such as people's inherent worth and their equality as persons, b) respect and unconditional acceptance of others, c) detachment of wrong behavior from people's personality and character, d) generous attributions and appraisals for the transgressor's behavior, e) recognition of one's own flaws and shortcomings, and f) accepting everyone's capacity for committing wrong, then their perspective and point of view of others and the way they relate to others change. This leads to reduction of ethnic prejudice and inter-personal tensions. Islamic instructions, as the religious-cultural background of the forgiveness program, have helped the Iranian youth in this aspect, too. For instance, God has emphasized the inherent value of persons and their respectability in many verses of the Qur'an: "And We have certainly honored Adam's children [humankind] ..." (17: 70); or God has emphasized people's equality: "O mankind! We created you from a single (pair) of a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, that ye may know each other (not that ye may despise each other). Verily the most honored of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous person. Allah has full

knowledge and is well acquainted” (49: 13). Overall, this research showed that forgiveness can act as an effective tool to reduce ethnic prejudice and improve people’s perspectives of other people in other tribes and ethnicities. Consequently, in a structured society (with multi-ethnicity and multi-religious denominations), forgiveness education can be considered as a means to overcome the destructive effects of chronic prejudice and inter-group conflicts.

Anger reduction replicates studies done in Northern Ireland, Pakistan, South Korea, and the United States (see, for example, Enright et al., 2007; Gambaro et al., 2008; Holter et al., 2008; & Park et al., 2013; Rahman, Iftikhar, Kim, & Enright, 2018;). The current study showed that forgiveness education is effective in reducing state anger (by about two-thirds of a standard deviation), trait anger (by about half a standard deviation), and anger expression (by about two-thirds of a standard deviation). The largest gain was in anger expression, where experimental participants started at about the midpoint of that scale and went about three-quarters of a standard deviation (at pretest) to well below that midpoint score. They still have room to grow in their anger expression because the follow-up score of approximately 36 is not approaching the lowest possible score of zero on this scale. Yet, their expression of anger in the classroom and other environments, by self report, has been reduced.

The results here have clinical importance, given the findings with those students who are the angriest and the least forgiving. Their pattern of change, when comparing experimental and control groups, was similar to the entire sample assessed here. Because it is more of a challenge to reduce anger in those adolescents who show deeper irritability (see, for example, Stringnaris & Taylor, 2015), these results are encouraging. The control group showed a consistent pattern of results across the testing times, exhibiting virtually no change in forgiveness or in the anger variables. In contrast, the experimental participants in this most-angry and least-forgiving group

gained 40 points in forgiving and went below the midpoint in the state anger scale and close to that midpoint in trait anger.

Anger has been known to be the initial emotion to being hurt and to aggression, which is triggered upon an unfair hurt (Worthington, 2006). By making certain changes in the cognitive, affective, and behavioral domains (Enright, & Fitzgibbons, 2015), forgiveness targets the anger which is created by the effects of the unjust harm and sufferings (Holter et. al., 2008; Baskin & Enright, 2004). Students who go through the forgiveness education program have been able to consider factors in the environment or other uncontrollable circumstances that may have influenced the offender's behavior and provide generous attributions and appraisals for the transgressor's behavior. This is not to say that the students condone inappropriate behavior. Instead, they separate persons and their actions. This reduces feelings of anger and prevents negative reactions and facilitates forgiveness instead (Bono & McCullough, 2006). Also, students in forgiveness education are made aware of times when they have committed similar behaviors to that of an offender or of possible situations in which they might be capable of behaving similarly under like circumstances. This leads to students becoming more able to empathize with the offender (Takaku, 2001) and decreases feelings of anger toward that person. Overall, forgiveness education programs help adolescents to understand the offender as well as the hurt, from different perspectives, and to allow them to control the expression of anger and reduce it.

In school settings there are always students who for many reasons become involved in verbal aggression or physical violence, and encounter interpersonal conflicts. In addition to the problems and side effects for the victims, aggressive and violent behaviors can cause many behavioral problems in the offenders as well (Sringnaris & Taylor, 2015). In light of the stability of the changes in the cognitive, affective, and behavioral domains as a result of forgiveness education,

these programs, both for the general population of students and those with the most anger, can be a suitable method for addressing anger management issues as well as the prejudices that are often related to anger.

The consequence of reduction in the wide variety of anger variables (state, trait, and expression) as well as in prejudice has implication for individuals' health, flourishing, and growth as well as social peace and tranquility in adolescents (Stringaris & Taylor, 2015). In multi-cultural societies with different sects, denominations, and ethnic groups, such as Iran, the application of forgiveness should assist adolescents in keeping their anger within temperate limits. This should lead to greater tolerance when interacting with others, which may lead to reduced aggression, all necessary for a community to flourish and grow. Since forgiveness is a major philosophical and religious construct to which individuals can choose and learn to be committed, forgiveness can be developed in important community settings such as families, schools, and places of worship, thus becoming established as a valued cultural norm.

Males and females both gained from this program. While there were some differences between them in their pattern of improvement, for the most part both males and females were similar on most of the dependent variables. The one notable exception is in the forgiveness variable on which males in the experimental group were found to benefit more than females. This may be the case because the males, who started below (175.95) the mid-point (189) of the forgiveness scale, had more room to grow in this variable. The females in the experimental group at pretest already were substantially higher (215.80) than the midpoint on the forgiveness scale. In our forgiveness therapy studies with adults (Enright & Fitzgibbons, 2015), a typical finding is this: When experimental group participants make substantial progress, they only get to the midpoint

of the scale. Thus, in all likelihood, the females in our study already were sufficiently high in forgiving as to not need to gain as much as the males needed to gain, because the males in the experimental group at pretest started 13 points below the midpoint of the forgiveness scale.

There were some limitations in conducting this study. The followings are some of them: a) since forgiveness is affected by psychological development of the participants, we cannot generalize the results beyond the current age-level studied; and b) schools were selected based on administrators' interest and thus there was not initial random selection of schools for participation, although randomization did occur for those schools that agreed to participate. For the future, we are interested in extending the study in Iran and other Middle Eastern communities to include a wide variety of populations across age groups, with different socio-cultural backgrounds. The use of different models of measurement including interviews and situational observation also may provide new perspectives on the effectiveness of this work.

In conclusion, the application of forgiveness should help adolescents not only to improve in their own psychological well-being but also to begin seeing the inherent worth in those toward whom they are in conflict. Forgiveness education, then, offers a unique opportunity for both psychological health and community peace.

References

- Alimoradi, K., Moeini, B., Pakizeh, A., Mesrabadi, J., Davari, H., Raeisi, A., & Ostovar, A. (2016). Predictive factors of aggressive behaviors in guidance and high school male students, based on the theory of planned behavior. *Journal of Iran South Med*, 19, 106-118. [Persian]
- Baskin, T. W., & Enright, R. D. (2004). Intervention studies on forgiveness: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Counseling and Development*, 82, 79-90.
- Bazargan, Z., Sadeghi, N., & Gholamali Lavasani, M. (2004). Study of verbal aggression in Tehran middle schools. *Journal of Psychological Research*, 7 (3): 7-28. [Persian]
- Bono, G., & McCullough, M. E. (2006). Positive responses to benefit and harm: Bringing forgiveness and gratitude into cognitive psychotherapy. *Journal of Cognitive Psychotherapy*, 20: 147-158.
- Cohen, J. (1973). Eta-squared and partial eta-squared in fixed factor ANOVA designs. *Educational and Psychological Measurement*, 33, 107–112.
- Enright, R. D. (2001). *Forgiveness is a choice: A step-by-step process for resolving anger and restoring hope*. Washington DC: American Psychological Association.
- Enright, R. D., & Fitzgibbons, R. (2000). *Helping clients forgive: An empirical guide for resolving anger and restoring hope*. Washington DC: American Psychological Association.
- Enright, R. D., & Fitzgibbons, R. (2015). *Forgiveness therapy: An empirical guide for resolving anger and restoring hope*. Washington DC: American Psychological Association.
- Enright, R. D., Knutson, J., Holter, A. C., Baskin, T., & Knutson, C. (2007). Waging peace through forgiveness in Belfast, Northern Ireland II: Educational programs for mental health improvement of children. *Journal of Research in Education*, 17, 63-78.

- Enright, R. D., & Rique, J. (2004). *The Enright Forgiveness Inventory: Sampler set, manual, instrument, and scoring guide*. Menlo Park, CA: Mind Garden.
- Enright, R. D., Rhody, M., Litts, B., & Klatt, J. S. (2014). Piloting forgiveness education in a divided community: Comparing electronic pen-pal and journaling activities across two groups of youth. *Journal of Moral Education, 43*, 1-17.
- Enright, R. D., & the Human Development Study Group. (1991). the moral development of forgiveness. In W. Fitzgibbons, R., Enright, R., & O'Brien, T. F. (2004). Learning to forgive. *American School Board Journal, 191*, 24-26.
- *Fincham, F. D., & Beach, S. R. H. (2002). Forgiveness in marriage: Implications for psychological aggression and constructive communication. *Personal Relationships, 9*, 239-251.
- Folkman, S., Lazarus, R. S., Dunkel-Schetter, C., DeLongis, A., & Gruen, R. J. (1986). Dynamics of a stressful encounter: Cognitive appraisal, coping, and encounter outcomes. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 50*, 978-992.
- Gambaro, M. E., Enright, R. D., Baskin, T., & Klatt, J. (2008). Can school-based forgiveness counseling improve conduct and academic achievement in academically at-risk adolescents. *Journal of Research in Education, 18*, 16-27.
- Gansle, K. A. (2005). The effectiveness of school-based anger interventions and programs: A meta-analysis. *Journal of School Psychology, 43*, 321-341.
- Gassin, E. A., Enright, R. D., & Knutson, J. A. (2005). Bringing peace to the central city: Forgiveness education in Milwaukee. *Journal of Theory into Practice, 44*, 319-328.
- Ghaemmaghami, P., Allemand, M., & Martin, M. (2011), forgiveness in young age, middle age, and older adults: *Age and gender matter. Journal of adult development, 18*, 192-203.

- Ghobari Bonab, Bagher; Nasafat, Mortaza, Khodayarifard, Mohammad and Shokoohi Yekta, Mohsen (2003). *Investigating psychometric properties of the Enright forgiveness inventory and standardization among college students in the University of Tehran*. Unpublished research project, University of Tehran, School of Psychology and Education, Tehran, Iran.
- Hanke, K. & Fischer, R. (2013). Socioeconomic and socio-political correlates of interpersonal forgiveness: A three-level meta-analysis of the Enright Forgiveness Inventory across 13 societies. *International Journal of Psychology*, 48, 514-526.
- Hewstone, M., Kenworthy, J. B., Cairns, E., Tausch, N., Hughes, J., Tam, T., Pinder, C. (2008). Stepping stones to reconciliation in Northern Ireland: Intergroup contact, forgiveness and trust. *Social Psychology of Intergroup Reconciliation*, 199-226.
- Holter, A. C., Magnuson, C. M., Knutson, C., Knutson Enright, J., & Enright, R. D. (2008). The forgiving child: the impact of forgiveness education on excessive anger for elementary-aged children in Milwaukee's central city. *Journal of Research in Education*, 18, 82-93.
- Hui, E. K., & Chau, T. S. (2009). The impact of a forgiveness intervention with Hong Kong Chinese children hurt in interpersonal relationships. *British Journal of Guidance & Counseling*, 37, 141-156.
- Johnson, E. H., & Spielberger, C. D. (1992). Assessment of the experience, expression, and control of anger in hypertension research. In E. H. Johnson, W. D. Gentry, & S. Julius (Eds.), *Series in health psychology and behavioral medicine: Personality, elevated blood pressure, and essential hypertension* (pp. 3-24). Washington, DC, US: Hemisphere Publishing Corp.
- Julius, S., Schneider, R., & Egan, B. (1985). Suppressed anger in hypertension: Facts and problems. *Anger and Hostility in Cardiovascular and Behavioral Disorders*, 1, 27-38.

- Khodayarifard, M., Gholamali Lavasani, M., Akbari Zardkhaneh, S., & Liaghat, S. (2007). *The study of psychometric properties and normalization of Spielberger's State-Trait Anger Expression Inventory – 2 (STAXI-2) among of students*. Research report, Iran, University of Tehran. [Persian]
- Knutson, J. A., & Enright, R. D. (2008). *The adventure of forgiveness: A guided curriculum for children, ages 6–8 [First-Grade Curriculum]*. Madison, WI: International Forgiveness Institute.
- *Krahé, B. (2013). *The social psychology of aggression*. New York: Psychology Press.
- *Lysaker, P. H., Tsai, J., Yanos, P., & Roe, D. (2008). Associations of multiple domains of self-esteem with four dimensions of stigma in schizophrenia. *Schizophrenia Research*, 98 (1): 194-200.
- *McCullough, M. E., Fincham, F. D., & Tsang, J. A. (2003). Forgiveness, forbearance and time: the temporal unfolding of transgression – related interpersonal motivations. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 84, 540- 557.
- McCullough, M. E., Luna, L. R., Berry, J. W., Tabak, B. A., & Bono, G. (2010). On the form and function of forgiving: Modeling the time-forgiveness relationship and testing the valuable relationships hypothesis. *Journal of Emotion*, 10, 358-376.
- McCullough, M. E., Worthington, E. L., & Rachal, K. C. (1997). Interpersonal forgiving in close relationships. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 73, 321-336.
- McCullough, M.E., Rachal, K.C., Sandage, S.J., Worthington, E.L., Jr., Brown, S.W., & Hight, T.L. (1998). Interpersonal forgiving in close relationships. II: Theoretical elaboration and measurement. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 75, 1586-1603.

- Miller, A.J., Worthington, E.J., & McDaniel, M.A. (2008). Gender and forgiveness: A met-analytic review and research agenda. *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology, 27*, 843-876.
- Nyborg, V. M., & Curry, J. F. (2003). The impact of perceived racism: Psychological symptoms among African American boys. *Journal of Clinical Child and Adolescent Psychology, 32*, 258–266.
- Orathinkal, J., Vansteenwegen, A. and Burggraeve, R. (2008). Are demographics important for forgiveness? *The family journal, 16*, 20-27.
- Park, J.H., Enright, R.D., Essex, M.J., Zahn-Waxler, C., & Klatt, J.S. (2013). Forgiveness intervention for female South Korean adolescent aggressive victims. *Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology, 20*, 393-402.
- Rahman, A., Iftikhar, R., Kim, J. J., & Enright, R. D. (2018). Pilot study: Evaluating the effectiveness of forgiveness therapy with abused early adolescent females in Pakistan. *Spirituality in Clinical Practice, 5*, 75-87.
- Reed, G. L., & Enright, R. D. (2006). The effects of forgiveness therapy on depression, anxiety, and posttraumatic stress for women after spousal emotional abuse. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, 74*, 911-920.
- Rye, M. S., Loiacono, D. M., Folck, C. D., Olszewski, B. T., Heim, T. A., & Madia, B. P. (2001). Evaluation of the psychometric properties of two forgiveness scales. *Current Psychology: Developmental, Learning, Personality, Social, 20*, 260–277.
- Saleh, A. 2013. *Ethnic identity and the state in Iran*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Shahsavarani, A. M., & Noohi, S. (2014). Explaining the bases and fundamentals of anger: A literature review. *International Journal of Medical Reviews, 1*, 143-149.

- Spielberger, C., Reheiser, E. (2003). Measuring Anxiety, Anger, Depression, and Curiosity as Emotional States and Personality Traits with the SIAI, STAXI and STPI. *Comprehensive handbook of psychological assessment, Vol. 2. Personality assessment*, New York: John Wiley & Sons.
- Stringaris, A. & Taylor, E. (2015). *Disruptive mood*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
- Stringaris, A., Vidal-Ribas, P., Brotman, M.A., & Leibenluft, E. (2017). Practitioner review: Definition, recognition, and treatment challenges of irritability in young people. *Journal of Child Psychology*, 59, 721-739.
- Taysi, E., & Vural, D. (2015). Forgiveness education for fourth grade students in Turkey. *Journal of Child Indicator Research*, 9, 1095-1115.
- Takaku, S. (2001). The effects of apology and perspective taking on interpersonal forgiveness: A dissonance-attribution model of interpersonal forgiveness. *Journal of Social Psychology*, 141, 494-508.
- Vidal-Ribas, P., Brotman, M.A., Valdivieso, I., Leibenluft, E., & Stringaris, A. (2016). The status of irritability in psychiatry: A conceptual and quantitative review. *Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry*, 55, 556-570.
- Wade, N.G., Hoyt, W.T., Kidwell, J.E.M., & Worthington, Jr., E.L. (2014). Efficacy of psychotherapeutic interventions to promote forgiveness: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 82, 154-170.
- Wade, N. G., & Worthington, E. L. (2005). In search of a common core: a content analysis of interventions to promote forgiveness. *Psychotherapy: Theory, Research, Practice, Training*, 42:,160–177.

Worthington, E. L. (2006). *Forgiveness and reconciliation: Theory and application*. New York: Brunner-Routledge.

Worthington, E. L., & Scherer, M. (2004). Forgiveness is an emotion-focused coping strategy that can reduce health risks and promote health resilience: Theory, review, and hypotheses. *Psychology & Health, 19*, 385-405.

Worthington, E. L., & Wade, N. G. (1999). The psychology of forgiveness and forgiveness and implications for clinical practice. *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology, 18*, 385-418.

Table 1

Indices of “Goodness of Fit” of Data in Structural Equation Modeling for The Ethnic Group Prejudice Scale

| Goodness of Fit Indices | Chi Sq | RMSEA | GFI | AGFI | CFI | TLI |
|-------------------------|------------------------------|-------|------|------|------|------|
| Magnitude | 96.71 (dm 59) P < 0.01 | 0.055 | 0.99 | 0.90 | 0.93 | 0.93 |

Table 2***Means, Std. Error of Mean, and Standard Deviations of the Dependent Variables***

| Variables | Treatment | Pre test | | | Post test | | | Follow-up | | |
|---------------------|-------------------|------------|------|-----------|-----------|------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| | | M | SE | SD | M | SE | SD | M | SE | SD |
| Affect | Experi- mental | 60.67 | 2.08 | 23.1 2 | 77.50 | 2.11 | 23.4 3 | 77.10 | 2.11 | 23.3 7 |
| | Control | 59.27 | 2.47 | 24.8 0 | 64.89 | 2.42 | 24.2 8 | 61.78 | 2.56 . | 25.6 9 |
| Behavior | Experi- mental | 67.54 | 1.95 | 21.6 7 | 82.72 | 1.84 | 20.4 2 | 80.45 | 1.92 | 21.3 2 |
| | Control | 65.67 | 2.14 | 21.5 1 | 69.83 | 2.28 | 22.9 5 | 68.28 | 2.30 | 23.0 6 |
| Cogni- tion | Experi- mental | 67..50 | 2.08 | 23.1 2 | 82.54 | 1.90 | 21.0 6 | 83.20 | 1.67 | 18.5 6 |
| | Control | 64.97 | 2.26 | 22.6 8 | 67.53 | 2.33 | 23.4 6 | 66.30 | 2.39 | 24.0 2 |
| Forgive | Experi- mental | 195.7 2 | 5.72 | 63.4 7 | 242.60 | 5.66 | 62.7 2 | 241.04 | 5.41 | 59.9 5 |
| | Control | 189.9 1 | 6.41 | 64.4 6 | 202.26 | 6.55 | 65.8 2 | 196.36 | 6.82 | 68.5 4 |
| Ethnic Prejudice | Experi- mental | 48.76 | 1.11 | 12.2 6 | 40.39 | 1.04 | 11.5 5 | 38.36 | 1.10 | 12.1 4 |
| | Control | 50.73 | 1.01 | 10.1 0 | 49.25 | 1.04 | 10.4 1 | 49.98 | 1.05 | 10.5 1 |
| State anger | Experi- mental | 24.86 | 0.88 | 9.77 | 19.92 | 0.49 | 5.47 | 18.02 | 0.33 | 3.66 |
| | Control | 27.10 | 1.18 | 11.8 3 | 26.48 | 1.17 | 11.8 0 | 26.82 | 1.15 | 11.5 7 |
| Trait anger | Experi- mental | 21.96 | 0.50 | 5.59 | 19.83 | 0.48 | 5.29 | 19.64 | 0.41 | 4.51 |
| | Control | 22.17 | 0.65 | 6.52 | 22.52 | 0.61 | 6.17 | 22.12 | 0.65 | 6.51 |

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------|-------|------|-----------|-------|------|-----------|-------|------|-----------|
| Anger ex- pression | Experi- mental | 44.01 | 1.14 | 12.6 1 | 37.03 | 1.12 | 12.4 5 | 35.94 | 1.23 | 13.6 5 |
| | Control | 45.58 | 1.27 | 12.7 9 | 43.89 | 1.33 | 13.3 2 | 44.26 | 1.40 | 14.0 4 |

Table 3

Verbatim Examples of Transgressions Reported by Participants

-
1. My father came home and fought me for not cleaning my room. I went to my room and started crying. At the same time he told me that I should stay at home and he left the home to join my brother to spent leisure time with him. I became miserable and even I thought about suicide. While I was vacuuming the house, he came home and started to talk to me. However, I was not approachable. I withdraw back. I wanted to say, "Dad, you don't care about me."
 2. My classmate harshly annoyed me. He was emphasizing my weakness and calling me out in class. He bothered me so much. I will never forgive him.
 3. My sister took away my stationary without permission, and accidentally she broke it. I became very angry at first, but gradually my anger went away, and I controlled myself. She didn't apologize, and acted as if I am the one who should apologize. I am hurt and don't want to forgive her.
 4. One of my classmates humiliated me. She scorned me in class. She used to make me angry and irritable all the time in school. I decided to change school in order to get rid of her. I think she is cruel and malicious.
 5. One of my classmates called me a liar in the class while I was telling the truth. I think he was projecting his own weakness onto me.
 6. I was his friend and helped him a lot. I did a lot of favors for him, but he was not honest with me. In addition, he revealed my secrets everywhere, even though I had reminded him not to tell my secret to others.
 7. The teacher discriminated against students and gave more advantage to some of them. I had gotten a high position in school. I was higher than my friend in math and other courses. However, my teacher sent him to an international competition instead of me. I became very disappointed because the teacher's behavior was not just.
 8. A boy older than me in the neighborhood abused me sexually. One day when I was playing around in the neighborhood, he took me to a private place and abused me sexually.
-

Table 4***Major Categories of Hurt Reported by Participants***

| Hurts | Plenty |
|--|---------------|
| Abuse (sexual/personal/physical) | 21 |
| Humiliation | 31 |
| selfishness | 2 |
| Backbiting | 1 |
| inattention | 4 |
| Insult | 3 |
| unresponsive | 6 |
| discrimination | 5 |
| unfaithfulness | 3 |
| Contention | 7 |
| interference | 2 |
| Disclosing/uncovering the secret | 2 |
| Theft | 1 |
| Lack of independence/harm of independence | 1 |

Table 5

Univariate Analysis of Variance for Between-Groups Effects in Forgiveness, State-Trait Anger, and Anger Expression

| Source | Variables | Mean Square | F(df) | Sig | Partial Eta Squared |
|-----------|------------------|-------------|-------------------|--------|---------------------|
| Treatment | Affective | 12102.71 | 13.92 (1 , 10.91) | 0.003 | 0.561 |
| | Behavior | 10470.58 | 12.13 (1 , 10.71) | 0.005 | 0.531 |
| | Cognitive | 19032.79 | 18.68 (1 , 10.62) | 0.001 | 0.638 |
| | Forgiveness | 123859.81 | 19.76 (1 , 10.83) | 0.001 | 0.646 |
| | Ethnic prejudice | 8955.86 | 10.74 (1 , 10.18) | 0.008 | 0.514 |
| | State anger | 6352.90 | 15.20 (1 , 10.35) | 0.003 | 0.595 |
| | Trait anger | 490.43 | 15.72 (1 , 11.75) | 0.002 | 0.572 |
| | Anger expression | 4183.71 | 16.28 (1 , 11.01) | 0.002 | 0.597 |
| Time | Affective | 8089.09 | 14.54 (2 , 444) | 0.0005 | 0.061 |
| | Behavior | 5814.54 | 12.56 (2 , 444) | 0.0005 | 0.054 |
| | Cognitive | 5549.88 | 11.79 (2 , 444) | 0.0005 | 0.050 |
| | Forgiveness | 57718.94 | 14.22 (2 , 444) | 0.0005 | 0.060 |
| | Ethnic prejudice | 2061.93 | 18.08 (2 , 444) | 0.0005 | 0.075 |
| | State anger | 777.77 | 12.05 (2 , 444) | 0.0005 | 0.051 |

| | | | | | |
|--------------------|------------------|----------|-----------------|--------|-------|
| | Trait anger | 84.10 | 2.82 (2 , 444) | 0.060 | 0.013 |
| | Anger expression | 1514.74 | 9.60 (2 , 444) | 0.0005 | 0.041 |
| Treatment * | Affective | 3016.06 | 5.42 (2 , 444) | 0.005 | 0.024 |
| | Behavior | 2107.75 | 4.56 (2 , 444) | 0.011 | 0.020 |
| | Cognitive | 3383.84 | 7.19 (2 , 444) | 0.001 | 0.031 |
| | Forgiveness | 25173.68 | 6.20 (2 , 444) | 0.002 | 0.027 |
| | Ethnic prejudice | 1368.32 | 12 (2 , 444) | 0.0005 | 0.051 |
| | State anger | 617.98 | 9.58 (2 , 444) | 0.0005 | 0.041 |
| | Trait anger | 105.12 | 3.53 (2 , 444) | 0.030 | 0.016 |
| | Anger expression | 697.22 | 4.42 (2 , 444) | 0.013 | 0.020 |
| School (Treatment) | Affective | 886.34 | 1.45 (10 , 212) | 0.160 | 0.064 |
| | Behavior | 887.70 | 1.86 (10 , 212) | 0.053 | 0.081 |
| | Cognitive | 1052.09 | 2.11 (10 , 212) | 0.025 | 0.090 |
| | Forgiveness | 6408.85 | 1.58 (10 , 212) | 0.116 | 0.069 |
| | Ethnic prejudice | 879.92 | 7.39 (10 , 212) | 0.0005 | 0.258 |
| | State anger | 437.18 | 3.67 (10 , 212) | 0.0005 | 0.148 |
| | Trait anger | 30.63 | 0.77 (10 , 212) | 0.661 | 0.035 |
| | Anger expression | 260.72 | 1.31 (10 , 212) | 0.227 | 0.058 |

Table 6

Means and Standard Deviations of the Variables for Which Nested Effects of Schools Were Significant

| Group | Variable | City (gender) | Pre test | Post test | Follow up | Group | Pre test | Post test | Follow up |
|--------------|-----------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| | | | M (SD) | M (SD) | M (SD) | | M (SD) | M (SD) | M (SD) |
| Experimental | Behavior | Azer (Boy) | 59.55 (23.11) | 93.62 (13.90) | 91.66 (22.79) | Control | 63.10 (22.59) | 73.71 (24.14) | 70.86 (24.18) |
| | | Azer (Girl) | 68.05 (22.43) | 83.38 (22.56) | 74.76 (20.68) | | 67.90 (25.82) | 71.86 (26.39) | 66.14 (28.36) |
| | | Kurd (Boy) | 64.87 (17.66) | 82.67 (12.95) | 78.13 (18.06) | | 65.36 (13.57) | 71.27 (17.96) | 71.55 (11.73) |
| | | Kurd (Girl) | 77.29 (15.37) | 72.86 (22.85) | 84.64 (21.85) | | 66.73 (17.76) | 70.64 (21.93) | 76.82 (17.92) |
| | | Tehran (Boy) | 59.22 (22.10) | 72.17 (21.63) | 73.22 (20.70) | | 65.59 (26.60) | 61.41 (18.99) | 60.41 (24.67) |
| | | Tehran (Girl) | 78.12 (19.06) | 82.69 (21.31) | 76.62 (18.28) | | 65.70 (17.99) | 69.55 (24.73) | 68 (21.62) |
| | Cognition | Azer (Boy) | 56.66 (23.26) | 92.07 (17.30) | 94.07 (15.57) | Control | 62.19 (22.97) | 75.10 (19.11) | 72.33 (21.63) |
| | | Azer (Girl) | 74.43 (23.15) | 83 (23.85) | 78.62 (19.81) | | 65.19 (26.91) | 72.14 (27.11) | 64.86 (27.43) |
| | | Kurd (Boy) | 62.47 (17.01) | 80.40 (14.77) | 80.40 (18.10) | | 72 (18.07) | 67.55 (18.85) | 72.55 (17.08) |
| | | Kurd (Girl) | 70.64 (21.42) | 75.86 (25.64) | 86.57 (18.49) | | 57.64 (17.26) | 62.45 (19.42) | 65 (21.44) |
| | | Tehran (Boy) | 62.67 (21.59) | 70.61 (17.65) | 76.56 (15.32) | | 64.65 (25.91) | 55.88 (20.94) | 56.29 (25.45) |
| | | Tehran (Girl) | 78.54 (22.68) | 84.62 (21.42) | 79.19 (18.99) | | 68.10 (20.41) | 67.45 (27.57) | 67.25 (25.58) |
| Experimental | Ethnic | Azer (Boy) | 47.90 (14.04) | 37.52 (12.41) | 36.28 (13.51) | Control | 52.05 (11.48) | 49.43 (9.66) | 49.29 (9.97) |

| | | | | | | | |
|-------------|---------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Prejudice | Azer (Girl) | 48.62 (10.69) | 36.95 (12.16) | 35.62 (12.40) | 47.90 (9.88) | 47.52 (10.79) | 48.19 (11.56) |
| | Kurd (Boy) | 55.07 (4.46) | 52.07 (7.44) | 47.60 (10.41) | 59.55 (5.47) | 58.45 (5.37) | 58.82 (4.47) |
| | Kurd (Girl) | 55.36 (8.48) | 36.07 (6.20) | 39.71 (11.76) | 53.73 (9.30) | 50.82 (10.46) | 49.36 (11.43) |
| | Tehran (Boy) | 50.67 (13.99) | 38.61 (10.01) | 37.06 (10.61) | 49.71 (7.61) | 50.88 (6.37) | 51.76 (6.99) |
| | Tehran (Girl) | 41.31 (11.41) | 43.19 (10.93) | 37.73 (10.85) | 46.70 (10.32) | 43.55 (12.32) | 46.55 (12.28) |
| | Azer (Boy) | 26.90 (9.78) | 17.59 (3.28) | 17.14 (3.37) | 25.24 (10.82) | 21.19 (8.74) | 23.76 (9.09) |
| | Azer (Girl) | 22.24 (10.52) | 20.24 (6.02) | 17.62 (3.57) | 23.24 (9.82) | 21.67 (8.38) | 23.67 (8.96) |
| | Kurd (Boy) | 26.53 (7.43) | 18.93 (5.04) | 18.20 (3.61) | 32.91 (13.19) | 34.09 (8.67) | 31.91 (12.09) |
| | Kurd (Girl) | 27.21 (12.52) | 19.14 (4.04) | 18.14 (3.80) | 25.82 (12.29) | 31.27 (13.48) | 28.82 (14.71) |
| | Tehran (Boy) | 23.94 (10.05) | 21.50 (5.62) | 18.89 (4.38) | 26.94 (11.47) | 25.41 (9.79) | 24.47 (8.63) |
| State anger | Tehran (Girl) | 23.12 (8.44) | 22.15 (6.82) | 18.54 (3.55) | 30.75 (13.25) | 31.15 (15.34) | 31.45 (14.61) |

Table 7

Contrasting Pretests, Posttests, and Follow-Ups in Forgiveness, Ethnic Prejudice, State-Trait Anger, and Anger Expression

| Source | Variable | Time | Sum of Square | Mean Square | F (df) | Sig |
|------------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------|-------------|----------------|-------|
| Treatment * Time | Affective | pre vs. post | 6963.72 | 6963.72 | 5.44 (1, 222) | 0.021 |
| | | pre vs. follow up | 10727.60 | 10727.60 | 9.25 (1, 222) | 0.003 |
| | | post vs. follow up | 405.02 | 405.02 | 0.45 (1, 222) | 0.502 |
| | Behavior | pre vs. post | 6735.61 | 6735.61 | 6.48 (1, 222) | 0.012 |
| | | pre vs. follow up | 5881.99 | 5881.99 | 5.97 (1, 222) | 0.015 |
| | | post vs. follow up | 28.91 | 28.91 | 0.04 (1, 222) | 0.845 |
| | Cognitive | pre vs. post | 8632.76 | 8632.76 | 7.67 (1, 222) | 0.006 |
| | | pre vs. follow up | 11469.16 | 11469.16 | 11.41 (1, 222) | 0.001 |
| | | post vs. follow up | 201.12 | 201.12 | 0.29 (1, 222) | 0.591 |
| | For-giveness | pre vs. post | 66162.85 | 66162.85 | 7.05 (1, 222) | 0.009 |
| | | pre vs. follow up | 83834.61 | 83834.61 | 9.75 (1, 222) | 0.002 |
| | | post vs. follow up | 1044.63 | 1044.63 | 0.16 (1, 222) | 0.685 |
| | | pre vs. post | 2625.70 | 2625.70 | 10.23 (1, 222) | 0.002 |

| | | | | | |
|------------------|--------------------|---------|---------|----------------|--------|
| Ethnic prejudice | pre vs. follow up | 5160.17 | 5160.17 | 24.04 (1, 222) | 0.0005 |
| | post vs. follow up | 424.06 | 424.06 | 1.99 (1, 222) | 0.159 |
| | pre vs. post | 1034.69 | 1034.69 | 6.26 (1, 222) | 0.013 |
| State anger | pre vs. follow up | 2392.68 | 2392.68 | 17.94 (1, 222) | 0.0005 |
| | post vs. follow up | 280.51 | 280.51 | 3.17 (1, 222) | 0.076 |
| | pre vs. post | 342.90 | 342.90 | 5.43 (1, 222) | 0.021 |
| Trait anger | pre vs. follow up | 285.17 | 285.17 | 4.71 (1, 222) | 0.031 |
| | post vs. follow up | 2.66 | 2.66 | 0.05 (1, 222) | 0.826 |
| | pre vs. post | 1547.62 | 1547.62 | 4.68 (1, 222) | 0.032 |
| Anger expression | pre vs. follow up | 2518.14 | 2518.14 | 8.52 (1, 222) | 0.004 |
| | post vs. follow up | 117.53 | 117.53 | 0.37 (1, 222) | 0.546 |

Table 8

Means, Std. Error of Mean, and Standard Deviations of the Dependent Variables in Individuals with the Highest Anger and Lowest Forgiveness

| Variables | Treatment | Pre test | | | Post test | | | Follow-up | | |
|------------------|--------------|----------|------|-------|-----------|------|-------|-----------|------|-------|
| | | M | SE | SD | M | SE | SD | M | SE | SD |
| Forgive | Experimental | 101.65 | 6.07 | 27.17 | 137.95 | 6.21 | 27.77 | 141.80 | 6.34 | 28.35 |
| | Control | 103.65 | 3.31 | 14.81 | 104.10 | 5.18 | 23.17 | 99.95 | 5.02 | 22.47 |
| State anger | Experimental | 41.50 | 1.03 | 4.61 | 29.50 | 0.69 | 3.10 | 25.05 | 0.28 | 1.23 |
| | Control | 46.60 | 1.47 | 6.59 | 44.50 | 1.80 | 8.04 | 44.65 | 1.80 | 8.06 |
| Trait anger | Experimental | 30.80 | 0.48 | 2.17 | 28.45 | 0.49 | 2.21 | 26.80 | 0.56 | 2.50 |
| | Control | 31.85 | 0.79 | 3.48 | 31.85 | 0.70 | 3.12 | 31.85 | 0.82 | 3.64 |
| Anger expression | Experimental | 61.55 | 1.10 | 4.94 | 54 | 1.02 | 4.54 | 55.85 | 1.22 | 5.47 |
| | Control | 63.10 | 1.77 | 7.91 | 60.25 | 0.99 | 4.41 | 62.95 | 1.70 | 7.61 |

Table 9

Sample of Students' Responses to the Semi-Structured Interview about Forgiveness

Q1: How do you evaluate the forgiveness classes? Do you think that these classes are useful? How?

R 1: I am very glad that you conducted forgiveness education in our school. These classes are useful for me. If I rate them in accordance with their usefulness, I give them 10 out of 10. From what I learned, I was able to really forgive the two people who had hurt me, because it made me realize that I was also involved in the hurt. I contemplated that in this situation of hurt, I recognized my own flaws and shortcomings. In addition, I learned to distinguish forgiveness from pseudo-forgiveness such as forgetting. Currently, I feel good about my friend.

R2: If I want to rate the utility of these classes, I rate them 10 out of 10, because these classes helped me to get a broader view of the hurt and offensive, and to take everything into consideration, including the good things he did to me. I also modified my scripts about the wrong and wrongdoer.

R3: I give 9 out of 10 to my own classes on forgiveness. I learned to recognize forgiveness from pseudo-forgiveness and how to forgive someone. Currently, I recognize that what I was doing before attending these classes was not forgiveness. I realized that the offender is like me: a human; his situation may have stimulated him to hurt me.

R4: I rate the forgiveness classes 8 out of 10 because currently I consider the hurt much less than I felt previously. I have no tendency to retaliate against the person for the wrong against me. It is possible that she had a history of hurt and she projected the wrongdoing onto me.

Q2: Will you introduce the forgiveness programs to others (such as to your family members or your friends)? How will you do that?

R1: Sure, I will do that, because the forgiveness classes helped me to get rid of hate and hostility; therefore, it will have the same effect for others, too. Certainly, these individuals have been hurt by others and repeatedly have been contemplating these issues. Forgiveness education causes a person to contemplate human innate value. I will recommend forgiveness classes to my friends. I will tell them if you want to get free from the hurt, choose forgiveness.

R2: Sure, I will do that. I will tell them that forgiveness teaches individuals how to live. They will teach individuals certain skills and mastery to help them in conflicting situations to find a solution. They will teach you to be kind, empathic, and to see individuals' strengths and weaknesses parallel to each other.

R3: Sure, I will do that. Obviously, I will educate my peers about forgiveness, because we are in puberty and we experience pathology more than other age groups. Also, we need to be able to more easily learn how to forgive individuals. I will tell them that the forgiveness classes help you to change your beliefs and not just think of others as bad and evil.

R4: Sure, I will do that. I could not forgive my brother, but after attending these classes, my attitude has been changed. I don't hate him anymore. I suggested attending forgiveness classes to my mother, because I think she could benefit from these classes. I have told my mom that attending these classes teaches you to be kind to and merciful with others. Moreover, these classes teach us to be empathetic with others. I will tell her, "If you forgive others, you will benefit from it."

Q3: Do you think these classes had an effect on your behavior with your offender or others? How has it affected your behavior?

R1: Sure, it has affected my behaviors in relation to the offender. For instance, my own behavior caused a hurt to my friend. When I became aware of this event, I apologized to my friend. In another instance, one of my classmates injured me. After attending these classes, I forgave him and as a result, I am not avoiding him anymore. Currently, my relationship with him has improved. Before attending these classes, I used to become very angry and my relationships with others was very limited.

R2: Sure, it has affected my behavior –especially with my family members. I think forgiveness is a gift I deliver to the offender. We give them the opportunity to understand their wrong and repent from inappropriate reactions. I had the history of hurt in the family -especially to my younger brother, but after attending these classes I could forgive my brother and our relation very much improved. Currently I can control my anger. As a result I become tranquil, I don't break dishes rather I am at peace, I absorb my anger.

R3: Certainly, As a result of attending these classes, my attitude toward the offender has been changed. I can control my anger and irritations. I also learned that all of us are equally important to God. I discovered when I am frustrated/irritated, I don't interact appropriately with others. This makes me to become like offender, because I am causing pain for others. Before attending the forgiveness classes, my relation with my teacher was not good. Currently, when a teacher is yelling at me, I say to myself, maybe his family has frustrated him.

R4: Yes, these classes about forgiveness training were useful. I think when I take out the memory of hurt, I become very relaxed. These classes taught me that if I forgive others, I get the benefit from it. Before attending these classes, when I was thinking on my hurt, I become annoyed and frustrated. When I heard the name of the offender, I got angry and wanted to go to his house and beat him. It was enough that, if I heard the offender's name, I started to become anxious

Q4: Do you think that forgiveness classes helped you to forgive your offender? How did it help you?

R1: Yes, a great deal, in terms of my previous state of mind, it helped me very much. In the current time I am not thinking about the wrong that happened. These classes were very useful for me. This is a major improvement that the hurt is not occupying me anymore. These classes were beneficial not only for me but also for my family because whenever I was angry, I irritated them.

R2: Sure, these classes helped me a great deal. I really understood the meaning of forgiveness. With not forgiving him, I hurt myself -e. g., my heart rate became irregular. I became stressful. Stress has a negative effect on my school achievement. Before attending the forgiveness classes in the middle of the exam time, these irritating thoughts invaded my mind and I became powerless and hopeless and couldn't reserve energy for school or prepare for exams. However, when I understood the meaning of forgiveness, my situation changed. One of my friends hurt me and I thought that we will live like enemies, but the forgiveness classes helped me to forgive him.

R3: Yes, it has helped me. As a result of understanding, currently I can figure out if I have forgiven someone or not.

R4: Yes, these classes helped me. As a result, I can control destructive behavior including anger. Working in the forgiveness classes caused me to prevent outbursts of anger and violence.
