



# Association of Forgiveness in Relation to Rejection Sensitivity in Adults

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## Abstract

Both social acceptance and the desire to not be ignored or rejected is a central source of motivation of a human in their social surroundings. Sensitivity to rejection is therefore a pivotal aspect and predictor of life satisfaction, sharing an inverse relationship with the latter. Yet another aspect that is an essential predictor of a satisfactory life is forgiveness, and the two share a direct relationship, this ability is linked to one's capacity to accept rejection. Taking the same premises into consideration, the present study aimed targeted to evaluate the alliance between sensitivity towards rejection (rejection sensitivity) and the forgiveness in both unmarried males and females, residing in the area of Delhi-NCR, India. For the same a total number of 70 unmarried people, 35 males and 35 females were chosen between the age range of 20-30 through the process of random sampling. Data was collected using the Heartland Forgiveness Questionnaire (HFS) developed by Thompson et al and Rejection Sensitivity RS-Adult Questionnaire constructed by Berenson et al. Results were computed using mean, standard deviation, and Pearson product-moment correlation. The hypothesis was significant at 0.01 level and it was assessed that forgiveness is negatively correlated with rejection sensitivity.

**Key Words**—rejection sensitivity, forgiveness, unmarried adults

## I. Introduction

### A. Rejection Sensitivity

Living being, especially humans are radically motivated to achieve a sense of belongingness and to be accepted by others. Loneliness, depression anxiety anger often emerges in response to being rejected by a group of choice or desire. In addition to this rejection may also lower the person's ability to cope and handle their future relationships. Being liked and appreciated by the ones we adore or admire is an important source of satisfaction & motivation, those who are highly concerned with rejection tend to have a quality known as rejection sensitivity. People who are sensitive towards rejection frequently respond to rejection either with strong bitterness and malevolence or with extreme withdrawal and anxiousness. In its original form, rejection sensitivity was thought of as the tendency to attribute rejection to personal shortcomings and characteristics.

### B. Rejection Sensitivity as Defensive Motivational System

A study indicated that when rejection cues are recognized and faced, a protective motivational system becomes immediately activated. Rejection sensitivity (RS) is the inclination to anxiously expect, rapidly perceive, and powerfully react to rejection. This method aids those with high rejection sensitivity in sensing rejection in social situations and reacting accordingly. The negatively classified stimuli that individuals with strong rejection sensitivity are exposed to trains them for activities that try to defend themselves through fight or flight responses.

### C. Forgiveness

Forgiveness is essential to our happiness and completion of our goals, and it must be a part of our daily routine. There is no need to be enraged or angry and refuse to forgive. Whatever the case may be, it generally entails a decision to let go of hatred and vengeful thoughts. Forgiveness does not include dismissing or pardoning the harm done to you, nor does it imply making amends with the person who did the wrongdoing. Forgiveness creates a sense of peace that allows you to go forward with your life. Forgiveness refers to the act of letting go of unfavourable feelings toward someone who has caused you hurt or indignation.

## II. Review of Literature

Four studies on social rejection and anxiety were done by Downey and Feldman (1996). As a result of this cognitive-affective processing propensity, intimate relationships are harmed. A measure that operationalizes the anxious-expectations component of rejection sensitivity is described in Study 1. People who are anxiously anticipating rejection are more likely to detect purposeful rejection in others' ambiguous behaviour, according to Study 2. People who enter romantic partnerships with nervous expectations of rejection are more likely to perceive purposeful rejection in their new partners' insensitive behaviour, according to study 3. Rejection-sensitive persons and their love partners are dissatisfied with their relationships, according to Study 4. Rejection-sensitive men displayed envy, while rejection-sensitive women displayed animosity and a lack of support, which may have contributed to their partner's discontent.

In a study of older persons, Chow et al. (2007) discovered that individuals in late adulthood have higher levels of depression, poorer social functioning, increased loneliness, and lower life satisfaction. In older persons with strong (vs. low) discriminative capability, the link between age-based rejection sensitivity and poor psychological health was reduced.

In a longitudinal study involving 184 teenagers between the ages of 16 and 17, Marston, E. G., et al. (2010) looked at the impact of rejection sensitivity in late adolescent social and emotional development. Over a three-year period, higher rejection sensitivity was linked to increased depressed and anxiety symptoms, leading to the conclusion that rejection sensitivity has a detrimental effect. Over a three-year period, rejection sensitivity was also connected to a reduction in peer-reported social competence among teenagers. At the age of 16 and 17, males were found to have stronger rejection sensitivity than females.

Using a stratified cluster sampling method, Li, X. (2011) investigated the effect of rejection sensitivity, self-esteem, and social support on social anxiety. A total of 349 samples were obtained for this study. According to the findings, social anxiety is linked to rejection sensitivity.

## III. Methodology

### A. Statement of the Problem

The present study aimed to identify the relationship between rejection sensitivity and forgiveness in adults and also to examine the relationship between rejection sensitivity and forgiveness.

### B. Objectives

To study rejection sensitivity among adult unmarried males.

To study rejection sensitivity among adult unmarried females.

To study forgiveness among adult unmarried males.

To study forgiveness among adult unmarried females.

### C. Hypothesis

There is no correlation between forgiveness and rejection sensitivity.

### D. Scope and Significance

The present study, if it yields sufficient results could be significant in assessing and treating various types of mental and behavioural disorders and besides this the knowledge can also be used to have more in-depth knowledge about crimes associated with rejection.

### E. Sample

The sample consisting of 70 adults who meet the criteria were included in the study where 35 participants are male and other 35 are female. The population to be studied consisted of adults who are unmarried. Sample was randomly selected from the Delhi-NCR, India on the basis of their availability. Adults who agreed to take the test (questionnaire) were included through random selection

#### Inclusion Criteria

- Adults aged 20-30.
- Adults who are unmarried.
- Adults who are able to read, speak and understand English.

#### Exclusion Criteria

- Participants with lower socio-economic status.
- Married adults.

### F. Tools

1. Rejection Sensitivity Questionnaire - Adult Version (A-RSQ)
2. Heartland Forgiveness Scale (HFS)

### G. Procedure

Main study consisted of the following main steps:

- Listing the places that constitute the sampling frame.
- Randomly selecting sample from the places.
- Main data collection from the sample.

Main data collection involved the following steps:

- Consent was taken from the participants if they want to fill the questionnaire and they were also asked if they can read, speak and understand English.
- Adults who cannot speak, write and understand English were excluded.
- Some participants get the test mailed to them because of the shortage of time and the other filled the test instantly.
- Data was collected from the participants who filled the test/questionnaire.
- The questionnaires to be mailed by the participants were collected the next day.
- All essential ethical considerations were followed while conducting the research.

**H. Variable**

1. Rejection Sensitivity
2. Forgiveness

**I. Statistical Analysis**

1. Mean and Standard deviation for study variables were calculated.
2. Pearson product moment correlation was computed to study the relationship between concerned variables

**IV. Results and Discussion**

Table 4.1 Descriptive Statistics for Female Unmarried Adults

| # | Variables             | Mean  | SD   |
|---|-----------------------|-------|------|
| 1 | Rejection Sensitivity | 10.49 | 2.73 |
| 2 | Forgiveness           | 78.3  | 9.31 |

Table 4.2 Descriptive Statistics for Male Unmarried Adults

| # | Variables             | Mean  | SD    |
|---|-----------------------|-------|-------|
| 1 | Rejection Sensitivity | 10.35 | 3.06  |
| 2 | Forgiveness           | 78.23 | 11.82 |

Figure 4.1 Shows the Mean for Male and Female Adults with respect to Forgiveness and Rejection Sensitivity.

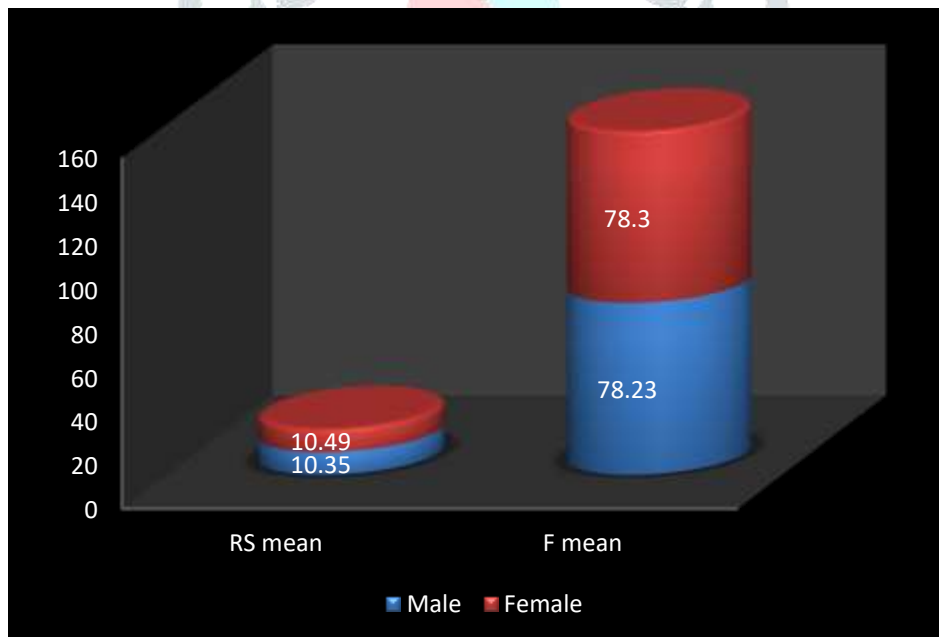


Figure 4.2 Shows the SD for Male and Female Adults with respect to Forgiveness and Rejection Sensitivity.

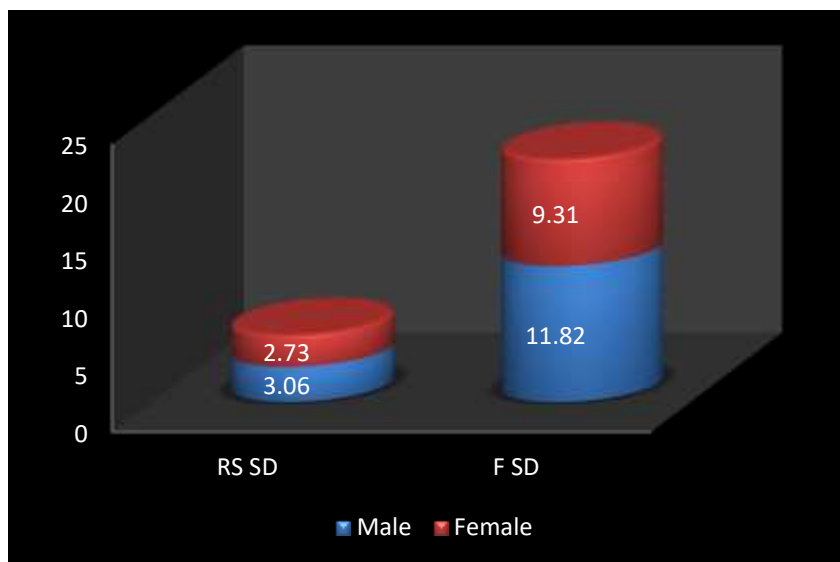


Table 4.3 Correlation matrix for Rejection Sensitivity and Forgiveness in Male and Female unmarried adults

|                                 | Forgiveness (Males) | Forgiveness (Females) | Rejection Sensitivity (Females) |
|---------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------------|
| Rejection Sensitivity (Males)   | -0.25               | -0.20                 | 0.44                            |
| Rejection Sensitivity (Females) | -0.68               | -0.25                 |                                 |
| Forgiveness (Females)           | 0.10                |                       |                                 |

In order to investigate the significance of nature and degree of relationship of Forgiveness and Rejection Sensitivity in Unmarried Male and Female Adults, the Pearson Product-Moment Correlation was computed. The correlation Matrix 4.5 depicts inter-correlations among Forgiveness and Rejection Sensitivity in Unmarried Male and Female Adults.

It can be observed that Forgiveness is significantly negatively correlated with rejection sensitivity. Forgiveness in Males is significantly negatively correlated with Rejection Sensitivity in Males ( $r = -0.25$ ;  $p < 0.01$ ) and Rejection Sensitivity in Females ( $r = -0.68$ ;  $p < 0.01$ ).

Forgiveness in Females is significantly negatively correlated with Rejection Sensitivity in Males ( $r = -0.20$ ;  $p < 0.01$ ) and Rejection Sensitivity in Females ( $r = -0.25$ ;  $p < 0.01$ ).

Rejection Sensitivity in Males is found to be significantly positively correlated with Rejection Sensitivity in Females ( $r = 0.44$ ;  $p < 0.01$ ) and Forgiveness in Females is significantly positively correlated with Forgiveness in females ( $r = 0.10$ ;  $p < 0.01$ ).

**V. Conclusion**

The present study was aimed to of studying the prevalence of forgiveness in relation to rejection sensitivity among unmarried adults of Delhi-NCR, India. The main purpose of this study is to identify the relationship between rejection sensitivity and forgiveness in adults. The data was collected from 70 unmarried individuals of age range 20-30 where 35 are males and 35 are females. It was found that forgiveness is negatively correlated with rejection sensitivity. Apart from this it was found that there is positive correlation between forgiveness among males and forgiveness among females & rejection sensitivity among males and rejection sensitivity among females. That shows rejection sensitivity and forgiveness is not influenced by gender roles. It is something innate.

**VI. Limitations and Future Suggestions**

1. The geographical area of the study was restricted
2. These findings may(not) be generalized

3. Study should be and can be conducted with a bigger and more global population

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