Cultural Intelligence and Attitudes Toward Violence on Tendency to Forgive Among Residents of Jos North

Haruna Ibrahim Adawa
Department of Psychology,
Rev. Fr. Moses Orshio Adasu University, Makurdi
Email: elceeadawa@gmail.com
+2349011949384

Elvis Oblu Ihaji
Department of Psychology,
Rev. Fr. Moses Orshio Adasu University, Makurdi
Email: ihajielvis@gmail.com
08039092520

Anyalewa Alan Ajonye
Department of Psychology,
Rev. Fr. Moses Orshio Adasu University, Makurdi
Email: aajonye@bsum.edu.ng
08061632375

https://doi.org/10.56201/rjhcs.v12.no8.2026.pg51.61

Abstract
This study examined cultural intelligence and attitudes toward violence as predictors of the tendency to forgive among residents of Jos North Local Government Area, Plateau State, Nigeria. A cross-sectional survey design was adopted. The target sample comprised 640 respondents selected through a multistage sampling approach, with field-level adaptations to convenience sampling where systematic selection was impracticable. A total of 615 properly completed questionnaires were returned, representing a response rate of 96.1%. Data were collected using the Cultural Intelligence Scale (CQS), Attitudes Toward Violence Scale (ATVS), and the extended Heartland Forgiveness Scale (HFS-E). The data were analysed using descriptive statistics, multiple regression, and analysis of variance, with significance set at the .05 level. The findings revealed that the four dimensions of cultural intelligence jointly and significantly predicted willingness to forgive, motivation to forgive, ability to forgive, and preference to forgive, explaining 7.4%, 5.0%, 5.8%, and 7.1% of their respective variances. Cognitive and motivational cultural intelligence significantly predicted willingness to forgive, while metacognitive and behavioural cultural intelligence significantly predicted motivation and ability to forgive. For preference to forgive, metacognitive, cognitive, and behavioural cultural intelligence were significant predictors. Furthermore, attitudes toward violence negatively predicted motivation to forgive and ability to forgive, accounting for 0.6% and 2.2% of their respective variances. However, attitudes toward violence did not significantly predict willingness

or preference to forgive. The study concludes that cultural intelligence contributes to understanding forgiveness among residents of Jos North, while favourable attitudes toward violence may undermine the motivation and perceived ability to forgive. It was recommended that community-based peacebuilding initiatives promote cultural awareness, perspective-taking, non-violent conflict resolution, and interpersonal reconciliation to strengthen peaceful coexistence in culturally diverse and conflict-affected communities.

Keywords: *cultural intelligence, attitudes toward violence, tendency to forgive, Jos North, reconciliation.*

Introduction

The tendency to forgive is a central construct in social and positive psychology concerned with how individuals respond to interpersonal harm and navigate the psychological aftermath of transgressions. It reflects a relatively stable dispositional orientation toward reducing resentment, revenge, and avoidance motivations, while promoting empathy, cognitive reappraisal, and prosocial engagement toward offenders. Forgiveness is therefore not merely an emotional reaction but a complex self-regulatory process that shapes how individuals restore interpersonal balance following conflict and perceived wrongdoing. Empirical evidence consistently demonstrates that forgiveness is strongly associated with psychological well-being, reduced stress, improved emotional regulation, and enhanced relational functioning. Individuals with higher tendencies to forgive are more likely to experience lower levels of anger rumination, anxiety, and depressive symptoms, while also maintaining healthier and more stable interpersonal relationships (McCullough et al., 1997; Berry et al., 2005; Worthington & Wade, 2020). These findings suggest that forgiveness plays a protective role in psychological adjustment and social harmony, particularly in contexts where interpersonal harm is frequent or chronic. From a theoretical perspective, forgiveness is conceptualised as a multidimensional psychological process involving cognitive, emotional, and motivational transformation. Enright and Fitzgibbons (2015) describe forgiveness as a conscious restructuring of negative perceptions about an offender, resulting in increased empathy and reduced resentment. Similarly, McCullough (2008) conceptualises forgiveness as a prosocial motivational shift characterised by a decrease in avoidance and revenge motivations and an increase in benevolent intentions toward the transgressor. Within this framework, the tendency to forgive is understood as an enduring disposition that influences how individuals interpret and respond to interpersonal offenses across different contexts. Neuroscientific and cognitive research further highlights the role of executive functioning and emotional regulation in shaping forgiveness tendencies. Prefrontal cortical regions involved in cognitive control, perspective-taking, and impulse regulation have been shown to support the inhibition of revenge-oriented responses, thereby facilitating forgiveness-oriented cognition and behaviour (Ricciardi et al., 2013). Conversely, maladaptive cognitive processes such as anger rumination, hostile attribution bias, and persistent negative affect significantly reduce the likelihood of forgiveness by reinforcing retaliatory tendencies and emotional reactivity (Toussaint & Webb, 2005). These findings position forgiveness as a psychologically effortful process influenced by cognitive capacity and emotional regulation mechanisms. Attitudes toward violence are also relevant to forgiveness because they shape how individuals evaluate retaliation, punishment, and the use of force following perceived wrongdoing. Individuals who view violence as acceptable or justified may be more likely to endorse retaliatory responses, whereas less violence-supportive orientations may create greater

room for nonviolent responses to interpersonal and intergroup harm. In a conflict-affected setting such as Jos North, examining attitudes toward violence alongside forgiveness is therefore important for understanding how residents respond to experiences of injury and disagreement.

This contextual reality is particularly evident in Nigeria's Middle Belt region, especially Plateau State. Jos North Local Government Area has experienced prolonged ethno-religious conflict driven by indigene–settler tensions, political exclusion, and competition over scarce socio-economic resources (Madueke & Vermeulen, 2018; Albert, 2017). These structural and historical conditions have contributed to entrenched mistrust, social fragmentation, and weakened intergroup relationships. Continuous exposure to violence, displacement, and insecurity, as reported by the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (2024), further undermines reconciliation processes and reinforces defensive interpersonal orientations, thereby shaping residents' tendency to forgive within intergroup and interpersonal encounters. Within such post-conflict environments, forgiveness becomes not only an individual psychological process but also a socially embedded response influenced by cognitive appraisal of threat, group identity, and intergroup experiences. Empirical evidence from post-conflict settings suggests that sustained intergroup contact and structured dialogue are critical mechanisms for reducing prejudice and enhancing prosocial dispositions, including forgiveness. Pettigrew and Tropp (2006), in their meta-analytic review, demonstrated that positive intergroup contact significantly reduces intergroup anxiety and increases empathy, both of which are key antecedents of forgiveness tendencies in divided societies. In this psychosocial context, cultural intelligence (CQ) emerges as a critical explanatory factor in understanding variations in the tendency to forgive. Cultural intelligence refers to an individual's capability to function effectively in culturally diverse settings through metacognitive awareness, cultural knowledge, motivational drive, and behavioural adaptability (Earley & Ang, 2003; Ang et al., 2007). Individuals with higher cultural intelligence are better able to interpret culturally different behaviours accurately, regulate ethnocentric biases, and engage in perspective-taking across group boundaries. These cognitive and motivational capacities are directly relevant to forgiveness, as they reduce misinterpretation of intent, promote empathy, and increase willingness to reconcile following interpersonal or intergroup transgressions (Rockstuhl & Van Dyne, 2018; Caputo, 2018). In contrast, low cultural intelligence may heighten misattributions, intergroup suspicion, and defensive responses, thereby reducing the tendency to forgive. Against this backdrop, the present study examines cultural intelligence and attitudes toward violence as predictors of the tendency to forgive among residents of Jos North Local Government Area, Plateau State, Nigeria. By integrating these variables within a single predictive framework, the study seeks to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the psychosocial determinants of forgiveness in a post-conflict African setting.

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were tested at the 0.05 level of significance:

i. Cultural intelligence will significantly influence the tendency to forgive among residents of Jos North, Nigeria.

ii. Attitude toward violence will significantly influence the tendency to forgive among residents of Jos North, Nigeria.

Method

The study adopted the cross-sectional survey design. This design is appropriate because it allows the researcher to collect data from a diverse group of individuals at a single point in time, thereby providing a comprehensive snapshot of psychosocial constructs as they are expressed within the population. The approach facilitates the examination of relationships between variables - such as cultural intelligence, attitudes toward violence, conflict resolution style and the tendency to forgive among the residents of Jos North without the need for repeated measurements over time.

Population

The study population comprised residents of Jos North across different ethnic, religious, gender, age, and educational categories. The population was taken as 643,200, representing the 2022 projected population of Jos North. The projection is reported by City Population from National Population Commission of Nigeria and National Bureau of Statistics population data. The 2006 census population of Jos North was 437,217, providing the underlying census base for the projection. The 643,200 figures was therefore used as the population basis for sampling and proportional allocation across the 14 wards.

Sample and Sampling Technique

The sample size for this study is determined using the Krejcie and Morgan formula (1970). The formular has a confidence level of 95% and 5% margin error. Using proportionate sampling, this formula ensures that each ward contributes to the total sample in proportion to its share of the total population. For a population of 643,200, the Krejcie and Morgan (1970) sample-size table gives a minimum sample of approximately 384 respondents at a 95% confidence level and 5% margin of error. Because the study used a multistage community sampling approach, a design effect (DEFF) of 1.5 was applied, giving 576 respondents. Allowing approximately 10% for nonresponse or unusable questionnaires increased the target to approximately 640 respondents. Accordingly, 640 questionnaires were targeted for administration across the 14 wards.

Adjust for nonresponse/unusable questionnaire, allowing for 10% nonresponse (refusals, absent, incomplete(s): The required sample for simple random sampling was 384. To account for the multistage sampling structure, a design effect of 1.5 was applied, producing a design-adjusted sample of 576. Allowing approximately 10% for nonresponse produced a final target of 640 respondents. Proportionate allocation was then used to distribute the target sample across the 14 wards according to their estimated shares of the 643,200 population. The final analysis was based on 615 properly completed and usable questionnaires.

Where: n_h = sample size for each ward; N_h = population estimate for each ward; N = total population (643,200); and n = total target sample size (640).

Using proportionate sampling, this formula ensures that each ward contributes to the total sample in proportion to its share of the total population.

The study was designed around a multistage sampling framework to obtain broad geographical coverage of Jos North Local Government Area. The first stage involved the 14 council wards, with the target sample allocated proportionately according to the estimated population distribution used for the study. The second stage involved identifying residential localities or clusters within the wards. The third stage involved the selection of households and eligible adult respondents within the selected localities. Although multistage systematic sampling was the planned procedure, its implementation was affected by field conditions, including difficulties with street identification, the absence of standardized household numbering in some areas,

accessibility constraints, community entry challenges, respondent movement, and security concerns. Consequently, the sampling procedure was adapted during fieldwork. Systematic selection was followed where a workable sampling frame and access permitted; where these conditions were not available, eligible and willing respondents were recruited conveniently within the selected wards and localities.

The adaptation was made to maintain coverage across all 14 wards while allowing the field team to respond to the practical conditions encountered in the study area. Five trained research assistants supported data collection under the researcher's supervision. Only adults who had lived in Jos North for at least six months were eligible to participate, and one eligible adult respondent was recruited from a selected household or accessible residential location. Thus, the study should be described as a multistage sampling design with field-level adaptation to convenience sampling rather than as a purely probability-based multistage sample.

Instruments

The following instruments were used in the study;

Cultural Intelligence Scale (CQS): The Cultural Intelligence Scale (CQS) developed by Ang et al. (2007) was used to assess the capability to function effectively in culturally diverse settings. It consisted of 20 items: 4 measuring metacognitive CQ, which reflects the mental capability to acquire and evaluate cultural knowledge and focuses on awareness and monitoring of cognitive processes; 6 measuring cognitive CQ, which reflects general knowledge and knowledge structures about cultures and cultural differences; 5 measuring motivational CQ, which reflects the mental capacity to direct and sustain energy toward functioning and performing in intercultural situations; and 5 measuring behavioural CQ, which reflects the capability to flex behaviour to fit different cultural contexts. The items were rated on a 7-point scale ranging from 1 (very strongly disagree) to 7 (very strongly agree). The scale has demonstrated acceptable internal consistency, with reported Cronbach's alpha coefficients of .77 for metacognitive CQ, .84 for cognitive CQ, .77 for motivational CQ, and .84 for behavioural CQ.

Attitudes Toward Violence Scale (ATVS): The Attitudes Toward Violence Scale (ATVS) is a self-report instrument developed by Anderson et al. (2006). It consists of 20 items measuring an individual's beliefs and attitudes about the acceptability and justification of violence in different contexts. The items are rated on a 7-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (not at all agree) to 7 (very much agree). The scale has demonstrated acceptable reliability and validity in research on attitudes toward violence, with the present study using the modified version described in the research procedure.

Heartland Forgiveness Scale Extended Version (HFS-E): The Heartland Forgiveness Scale Extended Version (HFS-E) was used to assess dispositional tendency to forgive. The instrument is based on the Heartland Forgiveness Scale developed by Thompson et al. (2005), which conceptualises forgiveness as a general disposition involving responses to oneself, other people, and situations beyond personal control. For the present study, the extended version used a multidimensional format covering willingness to forgive, motivation to forgive, ability to forgive, and preference to forgive. Items were rated on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). The initial version contained 25 items. Following pilot item analysis, two items (E2 and E6) were removed, leaving 23 items for the main study. Higher scores represented a stronger tendency to forgive.

Data Collection Procedure

The research procedure was conducted in three phases: pre-field preparation, field data collection, and post-field data processing. During the pre-field phase, the researcher obtained an introductory letter from the Department of Psychology, Rev. Fr. Moses Orshio Adasu University, Makurdi, and sought administrative permission from the Office of the Chairman of Jos North Local Government Area. Five research assistants were selected and trained on the study objectives, questionnaire administration, ethical procedures, informed consent, confidentiality, and culturally sensitive interactions with respondents. Field data collection covered the 14 council wards of Jos North Local Government Area. Although the study initially adopted a multistage systematic sampling technique, challenges relating to street identification, household numbering, accessibility, and community entry necessitated some adjustments. A total of 640 questionnaires were administered to eligible adult respondents, of which 615 were properly completed and returned, representing a response rate of 96.1%. Informed consent was obtained from participants, and alternative eligible households within the same localities were approached when selected households were inaccessible, respondents were unavailable, or participation was declined. After data collection, all returned questionnaires were checked for completeness, accuracy, and consistency. Questionnaires with substantial missing responses or inconsistencies were excluded, while valid responses were coded and entered into the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) for analysis. Data cleaning was conducted to identify and correct errors, missing values, inconsistencies, unusual response patterns, and outliers. These procedures helped to ensure that the final dataset was accurate, reliable, and suitable for statistical analysis.

Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), version 28. The dataset was first screened for accuracy, missing values, and outliers prior to analysis. The assumptions underlying parametric testing, including normality, linearity, homoscedasticity, and multicollinearity, were assessed to confirm the suitability of the data for inferential statistics. Multicollinearity among predictor variables was examined using Pearson correlation coefficients among the independent variables. Inter-correlations below.90 indicated that there were no significant multicollinearity concerns among the predictor variables. Descriptive statistics, including frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations, were used to summarize participants' sociodemographic characteristics and study variables. Multiple regression analysis (standard/simultaneous entry method) was employed to test the hypotheses concerning the predictive influence of cultural intelligence, attitudes toward violence. All analyses were conducted at the 0.05 level of significance.

Hypothesis 1:

This hypothesis stated that cultural intelligence will significantly influence the tendency to forgive among residents of Jos North, Nigeria. This hypothesis was tested using multiple regression analysis, and the result is presented in Table 2.

Table 1:

Summary of multiple regression analysis showing the influence of cultural intelligence on the tendency to forgive among residents of Jos North, Nigeria. Table 1: Summary of multiple regression analysis showing the influence of cultural intelligence on the tendency to forgive among residents of Jos North, Nigeria. Table 1: Summary of multiple regression analysis

showing the influence of cultural intelligence on the tendency to forgive among residents of Jos North, Nigeria.

DV	Predictor(s)	*β*	*T*	*p*	*R*	*R²*	*F*	*df*	*p*
Willingness to Forgive	Constant				.273	.074	12.215	4, 607	<.001
	Metacognition	.093	1.514	>.05					
	Cognitive	-.214	-4.460	<.001					
	Motivation	.202	2.905	<.01					
	Behavioural	.076	1.447	>.05					
Motivation to Forgive	Constant				.223	.050	7.922	4, 608	<.001
	Metacognition	.143	2.299	<.05					
	Cognitive	-.066	-1.360	>.05					
	Motivation	.030	.429	>.05					
	Behavioural	.119	2.246	<.05					
Ability to Forgive	Constant				.241	.058	9.380	4, 607	<.001
	Metacognition	.189	3.049	<.01					
	Cognitive	-.059	-1.225	>.05					
	Motivation	.013	.189	>.05					
	Behavioural	.105	1.983	<.05					
Preference to Forgive	Constant				.266	.071	11.534	4, 607	<.001
	Metacognition	.175	2.843	<.01					
	Cognitive	-.188	-3.907	<.001					
	Motivation	-.005	-.078	>.05					
	Behavioural	.197	3.766	<.001					

As shown in Table 1, the four dimensions of cultural intelligence (metacognitive, cognitive, motivational, and behavioural) jointly and significantly predicted all four dimensions of the tendency to forgive: willingness to forgive, $R = .273$, $R^2 = .074$, $F(4, 607) = 12.215$, $p < .001$; motivation to forgive, $R = .223$, $R^2 = .050$, $F(4, 608) = 7.922$, $p < .001$; ability to forgive, $R = .241$, $R^2 = .058$, $F(4, 607) = 9.380$, $p < .001$; and preference to forgive, $R = .266$, $R^2 = .071$, $F(4, 607) = 11.534$, $p < .001$. The four dimensions of cultural intelligence jointly accounted for 7.4% of the variance in willingness to forgive, 5.0% of the variance in motivation to forgive, 5.8% of the variance in ability to forgive, and 7.1% of the variance in preference to forgive. On the strength of this result, Hypothesis One, which stated that cultural intelligence would significantly influence the tendency to forgive among residents of Jos North, Nigeria, was accepted.

At the level of individual predictors, only the cognitive dimension ($\beta = -.214$, $t = -4.460$, $p < .001$) and the motivational dimension ($\beta = .202$, $t = 2.905$, $p < .01$) independently and significantly predicted willingness to forgive; the metacognitive dimension ($\beta = .093$, $t = 1.514$, $p > .05$) and the behavioural dimension ($\beta = .076$, $t = 1.447$, $p > .05$) did not. For motivation to forgive, only the metacognitive dimension ($\beta = .143$, $t = 2.299$, $p < .05$) and the behavioural dimension ($\beta = .119$, $t = 2.246$, $p < .05$) were significant independent predictors; the cognitive dimension ($\beta = -.066$, $t = -1.360$, $p > .05$) and the motivational dimension ($\beta = .030$, $t = .429$, $p > .05$) were not. For ability to forgive, the metacognitive dimension ($\beta = .189$, $t = 3.049$, $p < .01$) and the behavioural dimension ($\beta = .105$, $t = 1.983$, $p < .05$) significantly and independently predicted the outcome,

whereas the cognitive dimension (β = -.059, t = -1.225, p >.05) and the motivational dimension (β =.013, t =.189, p >.05) did not. Finally, for preference to forgive, the metacognitive dimension (β =.175, t = 2.843, p <.01), the cognitive dimension (β = -.188, t = -3.907, p <.001), and the behavioural dimension (β =.197, t = 3.766, p <.001) were significant independent predictors, while the motivational dimension (β = -.005, t = -.078, p >.05) was not. Notably, the cognitive dimension of cultural intelligence was a consistent negative predictor across willingness and preference to forgive, suggesting that a purely cognitive understanding of cultural norms, without corresponding metacognitive or behavioural adaptation, may not translate into a greater disposition to forgive.

Hypothesis 2:
This hypothesis stated that attitudes toward violence will significantly influence the tendency to forgive among residents of Jos North, Nigeria. This hypothesis was tested using simple linear regression, and the result is presented in Table 2.

Table 2:
Summary of multiple regression analysis showing the influence of attitudes toward violence on the tendency to forgive among residents of Jos North, Nigeria. Table 2: Summary of multiple regression analysis showing the influence of attitudes toward violence on the tendency to forgive among residents of Jos North, Nigeria. Table 2: Summary of multiple regression analysis showing the influence of attitudes toward violence on the tendency to forgive among residents of Jos North, Nigeria.

DV	Predictor(s)		*β*	*t*	*p*	*R*	*R²*	*F*	*df*	*p*
Willingness to Forgive	Constant					.020	.000	.231	1, 604	>.05
	Attitudes Towards Violence		-.020	-.480	>.05					
Motivation to Forgive	Constant					.079	.006	3.835	1, 605	<.05
	Attitudes Towards Violence		-.079	-1.958	<.05					
Ability to Forgive	Constant					.148	.022	13.606	1, 604	<.001
	Attitudes Towards Violence		-.148	-3.689	<.001					
Preference to Forgive	Constant					.007	.000	.032	1, 604	>.05
	Attitudes Towards Violence		-.007	-.180	>.05					

As shown in Table 2, attitudes toward violence significantly predicted motivation to forgive, R =.079, R^2 =.006, F(1, 605) = 3.835, p <.05, and ability to forgive, R =.148, R^2 =.022, F(1, 604) = 13.606, p <.001, accounting for 0.6% and 2.2% of the variance in these outcomes, respectively. The standardized coefficients indicated that attitudes toward violence was a significant negative predictor of both motivations to forgive (β = -.079, t = -1.958, p <.05) and ability to forgive (β = -.148, t = -3.689, p <.001), such that more favourable attitudes toward violence were associated with lower motivation and ability to forgive.

By contrast, attitudes toward violence did not significantly predict willingness to forgive, R =.020, R^2 =.000, F(1, 604) =.231, p >.05, or preference to forgive, R =.007, R^2 =.000, F(1, 604) =.032, p >.05. Taken together, these findings offer partial support for Hypothesis Two, which stated that attitudes toward violence would significantly influence the tendency to forgive among residents of Jos North, Nigeria: the hypothesis was supported for the motivational and ability dimensions of forgiveness but not for the willingness and preference dimensions.

Discussion of Findings

The first hypothesis examined whether cultural intelligence was significantly associated with the tendency to forgive. The findings revealed that cultural intelligence has a statistically significant positive association on forgiveness, although the effect size was relatively modest, accounting for approximately 5% to 7.4% of the variance. This indicates that while cultural intelligence is a meaningful predictor, it operates as a secondary explanatory variable, complementing rather than dominating the psychological processes underlying forgiveness. The finding that cultural intelligence, comprising metacognitive, cognitive, motivational, and behavioural dimensions significantly and jointly predicts all four facets of the tendency to forgive (willingness, motivation, ability, and preference to forgive) supports hypothesis one and aligns with prior work establishing CQ as a multidimensional predictor of interpersonal outcomes. Agyei and Mtembu (2023) similarly found that the four CQ constructs jointly predicted interactional adjustment among Chinese expatriates in Ghana, with dimensions varying in independent strength. This suggests that forgiveness, like interactional adjustment, is not reducible to a single facet of cultural intelligence but emerges from the interplay of how individuals process and act on cultural cues. The modest variance explained (5.0%–7.4%) mirrors broader CQ literature, where such dimensions function as partial rather than dominant predictors. The differential pattern of contributions, cognitive CQ negatively predicting willingness to forgive while motivational CQ predicted it positively, can be interpreted through Zoughbi and Rainey's (2015) comparative work on collectivist versus individualist forgiveness conceptualizations. Their finding that collectivist (Congolese) participants viewed forgiveness as interpersonal and reconciliatory, while individualist (French) participants viewed it as intrapersonal, suggests cognitive schemas about group membership shape forgiveness approaches. In a plural setting like Jos North, cognitive CQ may heighten awareness of group distinctions between transgressor and victim, suppressing willingness to forgive, while motivational CQ reflecting genuine drive to engage across cultural lines—more directly fosters forgiving readiness. Knowledge of cultural differences alone, without accompanying motivation, does not translate into forgiveness. The consistent significance of metacognitive and behavioural CQ across ability, motivation, and preference to forgive resonates with Exline et al.'s (2018) empathy-based mechanisms of forgiveness. Their studies showed forgiveness is facilitated through perspective-taking and recognizing shared human frailty processes mirroring metacognitive CQ's capacity to monitor and adjust cultural assumptions. Behavioural CQ, reflecting adaptive cross-cultural conduct, likely serves as the practical vehicle translating empathic understanding into forgiving behaviour, consistent with Exline et al.'s (2018) argument that empathy reduces moral distancing from offenders. The second hypothesis examined the relationship between attitude toward violence and the tendency to forgive. The findings indicated that attitude toward violence significantly and negatively predicts forgiveness, such that individuals who endorse violent or retaliatory beliefs are less likely to forgive interpersonal transgressions. This suggests that violent cognitive orientations function as inhibitive psychosocial mechanisms that undermine conciliatory

interpersonal responses. The finding that, attitudes toward violence significantly and negatively predicted motivation to forgive and ability to forgive, while showing no significant relationship with willingness or preference to forgive, presents a nuanced picture partially supporting hypothesis two. This selective pattern where attitudes toward violence undermine the internal, effortful dimensions of forgiveness but leave the more evaluative dispositional dimensions unaffected resonates with Boon et al.'s (2022) demonstration that attitudes toward forgiveness are moderately ambivalent rather than uniform. Their finding that highly ambivalent individuals scored similarly to anti-forgiveness individuals in actual forgiving tendencies suggests permissive attitudes toward violence do not translate into wholesale rejection of forgiveness as a value, but instead erode the internal resources needed to enact it, while surface-level endorsement of forgiveness as an abstract preference remains relatively intact.

The negative association with ability to forgive aligns with Kazeem's (2019) findings among Nigerian youth, where substantial proportions held positive attitudes toward war-related violence, corporal punishment, and penal code violence, with traits like neuroticism and agreeableness positively correlated with such attitudes. This suggests the psychological architecture underlying tolerance for violence may simultaneously compromise the emotional regulation and perspective-taking that ability to forgive depends on. Given Jos North's history of intercommunal conflict, permissive attitudes toward violence possibly an adaptive response to a volatile environment may diminish residents perceived capacity to forgive without rejecting forgiveness as a broader value, consistent with Okedo-Alex et al.'s (2021) finding that normative disapproval of violence and practical tolerance of violence-related beliefs can coexist within the same population. The negative association with motivation to forgive is illuminated by Ogungbamila's (2021) finding that host communities' support for retaliation shaped displaced victims' forgiveness levels, indicating attitudes toward violence are reinforced by the surrounding social climate rather than operating purely as individual traits. This is further supported by Ermer et al.'s (2022) finding that forgiveness judgments were highly context-dependent, varying with severity and perpetrator characteristics, suggesting attitudes toward violence selectively suppress the situationally-sensitive motivational and capacity dimensions of forgiveness, while dispositional preferences shaped by religious or cultural ideals as seen in Akinwale and Ojakorotu (2023) remain comparatively insulated.

Conclusion

This study examined cultural intelligence and attitude toward violence on forgiveness among residents of Jos North, Nigeria. The findings show that forgiveness is a multidimensional psychosocial construct influenced more by interpersonal processes and cognitive emotional factors than by demographic characteristics. Cultural intelligence significantly and positively predicted forgiveness, indicating that greater intercultural awareness, adaptability, and empathy enhance forgiving tendencies in diverse social settings. In contrast, attitude toward violence negatively predicted forgiveness, suggesting that violent orientations reduce willingness to forgive.

References

Albert, I. O. (2017). *Reconceptualising ethnic and religious conflicts in Nigeria*. Ibadan University Press.

Anderson, C. A., Benjamin, A. J., Wood, P. K., & Bonacci, A. M. (2006). Development and testing of the Velicer Attitudes Toward Violence Scale: Evidence for a four-factor model. *Aggressive Behavior, 32*(2), 122–136. https://doi.org/10.1002/ab.20112

Ang, S., Van Dyne, L., Koh, C., Ng, K.-Y., Templer, K. J., Tay, C., & Chandrasekar, N. A. (2007). Cultural intelligence: Its measurement and effects on cultural judgment and decision-making, cultural adaptation, and task performance. *Management and Organization Review, 3*(3), 335–371. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1740-8784.2007.00082.x

Berry, J. W., Worthington, E. L., Jr., O'Connor, L. E., Parrott, L., & Wade, N. G. (2005). Forgivingness, relationship quality, stress while imagining relationship events, and physical and mental health. *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 52*(4), 610–621. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-0167.52.4.610

Caputo, A. (2018). Cultural intelligence as a predictor of decision-making styles. *Journal of Management Development, 37*(7), 493–507. https://doi.org/10.1108/JMD-01-2017-0023

City Population. (2022). *Jos North (Local Government Area, Nigeria): Population statistics, charts, map and location*. https://www.citypopulation.de/en/nigeria/admin/plateau/NGA032005__jos_north/

Earley, P. C., & Ang, S. (2003). *Cultural intelligence: Individual interactions across cultures*. Stanford University Press.

Madueke, E. C., & Vermeulen, S. (2018). Ethno-religious conflicts and insecurity in Nigeria's Middle Belt. *Conflict Studies Quarterly, 24*, 45–62.

McCullough, M. E., Worthington, E. L., Jr., & Rachal, K. C. (1997). Interpersonal forgiving in close relationships. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 73*(2), 321–336. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.73.2.321

Ricciardi, E., Rota, G., & Pietrini, P. (2013). The brain's response to forgiveness: A neuroimaging perspective. *Social Cognitive and Affective Neuroscience, 8*(6), 684–690. https://doi.org/10.1093/scan/nss094

Thompson, L. Y., Snyder, C. R., Hoffman, L., Michael, S. T., Rasmussen, H. N., Billings, L. S., Heinze, L., Neufeld, J. E., Shorey, H. S., Roberts, J. C., & Roberts, D. E. (2005). Dispositional forgiveness of self, others, and situations. *Journal of Personality, 73*(2), 313–359. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-6494.2005.00311.x

Toussaint, L. L., & Webb, J. R. (2005). The role of rumination in forgiveness. *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology, 24*(6), 794–814. https://doi.org/10.1521/jscp.2005.24.6.794

Worthington, E. L., & Wade, N. G. (2020). *Handbook of forgiveness* (2nd ed.). Routledge.