Role of Shared Identity (*Kapwa*) in Forgiving Others: A Collectivistic Approach in Understanding Forgiveness

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In an attempt to indigenize psychology in the Philippines, shared identity has been used to explain concepts related to Filipino social behaviors. Since shared identity is an overarching concept that exudes Filipino behaviors in the social context, it is assumed that shared identity can further describe how and why Filipinos forgive. Thus, this study is attempted to understand forgiveness in the context of shared identity. Study I involved 30 Filipino undergraduate students to categorize people whom they interact with not one of us and one of us as well as to identify offenses that require forgiveness. Results from qualitative analyses were integrated in vignette stories which were used as priming for the experiment. In Study II, 62 Filipino undergraduate students were randomly assigned to several experimental conditions for evaluation of interaction effects of forgiveness-seeking behavior and shared identity. Results revealed that a forgiveness-seeking behavior was not being used in forgiving others; instead, it was the degree of relationship that determines one's tendency to forgive. People who have developed a more profound relationship with others may be forgiven more easily because of the nature of the relationship one has with the transgressor. Thus, the decision to forgive may be considered multilayered and it had to be examined in both micro and macro levels.

Keywords. Forgiveness, collectivist, culture, *KAPWA* [shared identity]

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In an effort to indigenize the field of psychology in the Philippines, Enriquez (1978, 1994) identified an essential core value among Filipinos, which is *kapwa* [a sense of shared identity]. As a core value, kapwa was critical in the understanding of Filipino social behaviors (Pe-Pua & Protacio-Marcelino, 2000). Specifically, *kapwa* is the overarching value that embraces other specific values for socialization leading to sociopersonal values related to shared humanity (*kagandahang-loob*). These socializations cover not only the initial (pivotal and accommodative) stage of social interactions, but as well as in maintaining relationships, specific to dignity, gratitude and companionship. In a similar context, *kapwa* appears to be the guiding value on instances that require resolving conflicts (confrontative values) to recover possible damaged relationships. Although there have been issues in empirically testing *kapwa*, it is still considered central in almost all aspects of social interactions including perhaps in the forgiveness process. Manalastas (2009) studied *kapwa* where forgiveness ranked second as a possible manifestation of the sense of shared identity. This may imply that to exhibit *pakikipagkapwa* [being with one another], *pagpapatawad* [forgiveness] is an essential behavioral indicator to characterize *pakikipagkapwa-tao* [humanness at its highest level]. Since *kapwa* is defined as a sense of shared identity and there is assumed equality between individuals (Church & Katigbak, 2005), this could be consistent with what has been hypothesized by Rungduin and Rungduin (2011) concerning the state of individuals who are in the process of achieving forgiveness. In their assertion, the transgressor and the offended both have responsibilities in the recovery of a damaged relationship; thus actions, intentions, and motivations play significant roles in the offended individual's decision to forgive eventually. As they accurately described the absence of the intention of the offended individual to restore the relationship, the transgressor will have difficulty finding appropriate forgiveness-seeking behavior to satisfy the offended. This will also hold for the transgressor who has to show the best possible forgiveness-seeking behavior for the offended to grant forgiveness.

In the context of *kapwa* individuals are considered equal and their identities are shared (Enriquez, 1978) despite differentiating behaviors manifested toward a person who is considered *ibang-tao* [not one of us] and *hindi ibang-tao* [one of us] (Pe-Pua & Protacio-Marcelino, 2000). These concepts later became the major categorization of *kapwa* (shared identity). In the earlier formulation of these concepts, there seemed to be a thin line between these concepts in terms of how *pakikipagkapwa* (being with one another) is exercised. However, in

trying to clarify how behaviors are carried-out between the two classifications, Pe-Pua and Protacio-Marcelino (2000) and Yacat and Clemente (2009) identified that the individual clearly positions others as to either *ibang-tao* or *hindi ibang-tao*. Using Yacat and Clemente's (2009) assertion, social behaviors are inclined to promote *pakikipagkapwa* (being with one another) in social relations when an individual is classified as *hindi ibang-tao*. If this is the current take on how *kapwa* (shared identity) unfolds, it could also be argued that forgiveness behavior, either to seek for it or to have it granted, will be different from one person to another depending on how an individual classifies others as *ibang-tao* or *hindi ibang-tao*. When a relational conflict emerges, the process of forgiveness, in all its aspects, may be affected by the degree of relationship that involved individuals have with one another.

Western-based (e.g., Anderson, 2007; Fu, Watkins, & Hui, 2004) and local-based research studies (e.g., Rungduin, 2011; Rungduin & Rungduin, 2011; Rungduin, Acopio, & Rungduin, 2018; Rungduin, Rungduin, & Acopio, 2019) posited that granting and seeking forgiveness are based on the nature of relationships between the transgressor and the offender. Looking at the methodological aspects, forgiveness researchers, most of the time, explore the phenomenon of forgiveness process using the proximal relationships; for example, family members (Fincham & May, 2017; Heintzelman, Murdock, Krycak, & Seay, 2014; Hoyt, Fincham, McCullough, Maio, & Davila, 2005; Rungduin et al., 2018) and do not focus on the context of distal relationships. It may be easier to comprehend that a relationship restoration effort, such as forgiveness, is more critical in that degree of interactions than in less close relationships.

Although there are still challenges (see McCullough & Witvliet, 2002) in the study of forgiveness, it has been explored using different mediating variables, from distal variables such as sociopolitical (Montiel, 2002) and religious affiliations (Toussaint & Williams, 2008) to proximal variables such as gender (Sidelinger, Frisby, & McMullen, 2009; Toussaint & Webb, 2005) and personality (Brose, Rye, Lutz-Zois, & Ross, 2005; Maltby, Liza, Kon, & Colley, 2008). In the local setting, forgiveness is being introduced and studied much as a therapeutic approach (De Castro, 2008; Simon, 2009; Worthington et al., 2010) and fewer studies have been done to culturally evaluate this concept and determine its importance for local use.

In the latest developments of forgiveness in the Philippines, two seminal papers were conducted to expound the perspectives of the victims about their transgressors for them to offer forgiveness. For example, Rungduin et al. (2018) used descriptive and experimental

methods to explain the forgiveness-seeking scripts that victims acknoweldge to compromise forgiveness. The successful forgiveness-seeking scripts included admitting to one's mistake and providing a possible resolution to the situation which was more evident when the victim has a close relationship with the transgressor. Meanwhile, Rungduin et al. (2019) conceptualized the impact of the transgressor's traits in relation to the degree of the transgression and its priming sequence. The traits imply that forgiveness is a result of a cognitive processing consistent with the principal of automaticity than a social process. Though Rungduin et al. (2019) partially discussed the impact of interpersonal transgressions to social relations, they have yet to consider how shared identity *(kapwa)* may impact one's value systems specific for socialization, and perhaps integrate the Filipino cultures in the concept of forgiveness.

There were contradicting findings when culture is used as a mediating factor to understand forgiveness (Fu, et al., 2004; Suchday, Friedberg, & Almeida, 2006). This is especially true when behaviors exerted in valuing relationships contradict the expectations of people who come from collectivistic or individualistic orientations (Paz, Neto, & Mullet, 2008). Also, forgiveness behaviors have been evaluated based on how culturally fit it is when applied in different countries such as in China (Paz et al., 2008), India (Suchday et al., 2006), and Nepal (Watkins & Regmi, 2004). In these studies, the comparison on the forgiveness behaviors between western-oriented (individualistic) cultures and oriental-oriented (collectivistic) cultures yielded no difference such as in the context of resentment (Suwartono, Yeti, Prawasti, & Mullet, 2007), rumination (Suchday et al., 2006), and religious affiliation (Tripathi & Mullet, 2010). In these discussions, the authors were interested to explore when collectivistic cultures report similar tendency in forgiving those who come from individualistic cultures. Shin-hwan (2008), on the other hand, described individuals from collectivistic cultures as more motivated to maintain social harmony. Thus, forgiveness is more encouraged than having revenge. In the Philippines, there is a need to validate the approaches used in understanding forgiveness and use a cultural lens focusing on the Filipino core values.

In the process of restoring relationships, it is not only the degree of relationship that is considered for one to forgive. The act that the transgressor does to recompense for his/her actions is also being used as basis for forgiveness (Rungduin et al., 2018). Expectedly, when the transgressor intends to recover the relationship from a damaging transgressing act, a forgiveness-seeking behavior is expected to be manifested. While, it is expected that the expression of forgiveness-

seeking behavior will lead to forgiveness, investigating about its dynamics is warranted. Also, among the areas of forgiveness research, forgiveness-seeking behaviors are considered to be one of those that have been under-researched (Howell, Dopko, Turowski, & Buro, 2011). In previous research studies exploring the forgiveness-seeking behavior in many instances, do not always lead to forgiveness. Kelley and Waldron (2005), for example, stressed that these behaviors could even alleviate the threat that an offender is experiencing towards the transgressor. It was also found out that forgiveness-seeking behavior, such as apologies even if the offended party recognizes the perception of remorse, apology awareness, and apology genuine, will not lead to granting forgiveness (Philpot & Hornsey, 2011). In a similar context, an apology can increase the positive feeling on the part of the offended party, but this does not necessarily lead to forgiving the transgressor (Wenzel & Okimoto, 2010).

Purpose of the Present Study

The indigenization process that Enriquez (1978, 1994) proposed, importation of concepts from other cultural orientations was recommended to be explored. There is a need to test these concepts for cultural fit; this process is called indigenization from without (Pe-Pua & Protacio-Marcelino, 2000). In the development of forgiveness as a psychological construct and as a useful concept in a wide range of applications, be it in therapy, counseling, or as academic intervention, the present study attempts to understand forgiveness in the concept that is considered central in the social behavior of Filipinos, which is *kapwa*.

It is argued that in adapting a Western-influenced concept such as forgiveness, it is essential to use the lens that is central to the concept. In the present study, two major objectives address the two phases of the study. In general, this study is aimed to understand the forgiveness behavior in the context of two specific mediating factors, that is, culture using the lens of shared identity through its categories (the *ibang-tao*/not one of us, and the *hindi ibang-tao*/one of us) and forgiveness-seeking behavior as one of the not so explored areas in the field of forgiveness studies. This study mainly tests three hypotheses: (1) The intention to forgive a transgressor is influenced by the degree of relationship one has with the transgressor; (2) The manifestation of forgiveness-seeking behavior influences a person's intention to forgive; and (3) The interaction between *kapwa* and forgiveness-seeking behavior.

Method of Study I

Sample

Thirty college students from a private higher education institution were recruited to answer open-ended questions. College students were selected for the study as college is the time for them to work independently. Likewise, this phase requires group collaboration in completing school activities. With the various scholastic and extra-curricular work they experience, conflicts may almost certainly emerge as they make relational associations (Rungduin et al., 2019). Among the 30 participants, 11 (36. 67%) were men, and 19 (63.33%) of them were women. The mean age was 19.7 years. They also came from various specializations in college. The inclusion criteria cover the participants who had experienced interpersonal transgressions and were able to seek forgiveness. This inclusion criteria were set to ensure that the participants had experienced the phenomenon being investigated. Those who were not enrolled in higher education, and students who openly expressed that they have not experienced any transgressions in the past three months, were excluded. The participants shared an experience of transgression as part of their study-participation.

Instrument

Forgiveness Questionnaire. A pre-survey Forgiveness Questionnaire was used to determine students' forgiveness experiences within the past six months. It has 4 item open-ended questions inquiring about: (1) The person who is most likely to characterize the *ibang-tao* and *hindi ibang-tao*; (2) the offense that requires forgiveness; (3) the specific forgiveness-seeking behavior; (4) how it impacts one's interpersonal relationship. The questionnaire was content validated by three experts in the field of forgiveness research.

Procedure

The actual survey was conducted on the last day of a school week since minimal academic classes were held during this day. In doing so, students who volunteered to participate in the survey can come without interruptions with their class schedule. On the average, participants completed the survey within 10-15 minutes. Informed consent was secured from the participants and a debriefing plan was implemented to address feelings that may have surfaced in the process of data collection. Responses were analyzed based on the similarities of responses using frequency counts.

Results

Table 1 presents that the responses of the participants were direct. There was not much elaboration on their responses, particularly in the context of their relationship with others, identification of the offense that requires forgiveness, and the forgiveness-seeking behavior. This is despite the effort to ask them to elaborate on their responses in the questionnaire.

Table 1

Distribution of the Participants' Responses to the Qualitative Questions (N=30)

Responses	f	%
Not one of us		
Strangers	3	10
Friends	6	20
Enemies	5	16.67
Acquaintance (person does know by name)	14	46.67
Previous romantic interest	2	6
Total	30	100
One of us		
Everyone	2	6.67
Family members (i.e. parents; mother; older brother)	19	63.33
Romantic interest (i.e. girlfriend; special someone)	2	6.67
Friends (i.e. best friend; close friend)	7	23.33
Total	30	100
Offense requiring forgiveness		
Can't remember anything	1	3.33
Being sexually abused	3	10
Lying/ Betrayal	12	40
Bullying	3	10
Backstabbing	4	13.33
Disrespecting	1	3.33
Being given false accusations	3	10
Being offended	3	10
Total	30	100
Forgiveness-seeking behavior		
Give something as a peace offering	4	13.33
Saying sorry personally and explaining	24	80
Writing a letter and saying sorry	2	6.67
Total	30	100

In the identification of the *ibang-tao*, 14 (46.67%) of the participants classified those that they do not know personally as *ibang-tao* and in a similar view, those that they consider strangers

(10%). They classified their enemies (16.67%) and former romantic partners (6%) as *ibang-tao*. Perhaps the negative emotions that these people brought at that time made them classify these people as an 'outsider' in their existing living space. Interesting to this result is the classification of their friends (20%) as *ibang-tao*. This may be possible if participants, especially those who classify their friends as *ibang-tao*, place friendship on a continuum, that is, with friends being least close to be associated a *ibang-tao*, to friends that are closest, associated with the *hindi ibang-tao*. According to the participants, it is the amount of emotional investment that they considered in identifying these people. They accurately identified that the relationships mentioned do not require them to have deep emotional concerns for the person.

In the *hindi ibang-tao* category, family members (63.33%) were among those identified. This indicates that the family is the first group of people whom individuals normally interact with. Likewise, family is considered integral to one's self, and the respondents find a sense of strong relatedness with them. This is the same with the *ibang-tao*, friends (23.33%) can also belong in this category. This affirms the previous explanation that participants of this survey possibly perceive a wide range of continuum of relationships with friends. Because friendship is generally unstable compared with family, it might also be difficult to permanently place this type of relationship alongside family. The participants identified *hindi ibang-tao* as part of their family and some friends, in the context that their relationships with these people are irreplaceable; thus, they are considered *hindi ibang-tao* and the quality of relationship is considered as permanent and long-lasting. According to Carr and Wang (2012), the family is described as a non-voluntary relationship. These types of relationships typically do not choose to enter themselves; thus, it entails an automatic membership. In the Filipino context, giving high valuation towards family relation is considered a significant value (Pe-Pua & Protacio-Marcelino, 2000).

In the survey of the offense that requires forgiveness, a significant frequency was recorded pointing to the act of lying/betrayal (40%) as a primary offense. This result indicates that trust is an essential value they consider, and if this is violated, the person who has committed such an act to seek for forgiveness personally. This may also imply that these actions break the emotional bond that ties the relationship. In addition, being truthful in relationships maintains and sustains this bond. In a similar line of thought, backstabbing (13.33%) and false accusations (10%) also work on the issue of violating the trust that has been established in the relationship. Coleman's model (Hill, 2001) of

forgiveness emphasized the restoration of trust as one of the phases to achieve forgiveness. This recognizes that in the process of transgression, trust is a primary value that is challenged by a transgressing act.

In terms of the reconciliatory actions, it is consistent among the participants survey that saying sorry (80%) is a prerequisite action for forgiveness. However, saying such word appeared not to be enough, but instead, acceptance of such depends also on how the transgressor explains the occurrence of a transgressing act. As expected, these explanations will be able to provide other information, such as the intention of seeking forgiveness (Lann, 2010; Rungduin & Rungduin, 2011), which will be used by the offended in granting forgiveness. Also, these explanations influence the decision to grant forgiveness and reinforces the intention of the offended to grant it.

Taking off from the results of Study 1, the researchers set up a 2 x 2 factorial experiment. In this study, categories of *kapwa* (shared identity) that are *ibang-tao* and *hindi ibang-tao* were investigated to determine the influence of the forgiveness behavior and whether the forgiveness-seeking behavior is shown or not in the process. This study addresses three concerns: firstly, whether *kapwa*; secondly, forgiveness-seeking behavior can influence the decision of granting forgiveness; and thirdly, whether these factors interact with one another to reinforce the choice of a person to forgive.

Method of Study II

Sample

A total of 62 university students from a teacher-education institution were recruited to participate in the experiment. They were all taking Psychology as their specialization. Their age range from 16 to 24 years and with mean of 17 years. Since females are dominant in number both in the university and in the different program levels, most of the participants of the experiment were female (79%). The uneven distribution of male and female respondents in the experiment is assumed not to influence the results since many research findings have confirmed that gender differences do not influence one's forgiveness behavior (Lawler-Row, Scott, Raines, Edlis-Matityahou, & Moore, 2006; Toussaint & Webb, 2005). Students without experiences in relation to the topic(s) being investigated were not recruited to be part of the experiment.

Instrument

Manipulation measure. Four vignette stories were developed containing an interaction between *kapwa* and forgiveness-seeking behavior. The vignettes were controlled with a word count of 608 across all the stories. The plot focused on not being able to pay money borrowed from: (a) A family-member with forgiveness-seeking behavior; (b) A family member without forgiveness-seeking behavior; (c) A close friend with forgiveness-seeking behavior; and (d) A close friend without forgiveness-seeking behavior. The manipulation measure determines whether these characteristics become evident among the respondents during the implementation of the experiment. In the two variables that were manipulated, six items were developed. Scoring for these items was equally distributed. Participants were asked to respond to the statement based on the following behavioral qualifiers ranging from *strongly disagree* (1) to *strongly agree* (4). Items were also in the context of the vignette stories that they read.

The items for *kapwa* described the extent of the relationship between the characters of the story, indicating a higher score as being inclined to describe a *hindi ibang-tao* relationship. Sample items for this measure are: The nature of their relationship is very clear, and they have a deep sense of relationship. On the other hand, a higher score in the forgiveness-seeking measure indicates the degree to which forgiveness-seeking behavior is observed. Sample items are there is no reconciliation between them and the mother of *Mato/Maui* [asked for forgiveness].

Dependent measure. This instrument measures the extent by which respondents intend to forgive the transgressor in the story. Items of this measure do not account for the factors, processes, and motivations in forgiving others. This consists of 7 items using a 4-point Likert scale with 1 (*extremely agree*) as the interpreted to be a low intention to 4 (*extremely disagree*) as interpreted to be high intention to forgive. Examples of these items are even if my mother/ Maui did not ask for forgiveness, I am still willing to forgive her and because of what happened, I cannot trust my mother/Maui anymore. The Cronbach alpha for this scale was found to be .66.

Procedure

Four vignette stories were developed to address the issues of this study. Primarily, the relationship of the characters, the conflict, and forgiveness-seeking behavior were determined by the not one of us

and one of us, offense, and forgiveness-seeking behaviors results of Study 1, respectively. The vignette stories were written in Filipino and were controlled through the length of all the stories. The development of the vignette stories is illustrated in Table 2.

Table 2

Distribution of Vignette Stories Using Forgiveness-Seeking Behavior

Shared Identity	Present	Absent
Not one of us	Vignette 1	Vignette 2
One of us	Vignette 3	Vignette 4

The same characters and descriptions of their relationships were the same for the vignette stories 1 and 2 "not one of us" and vignette stories 3 and 4 "one of us". The distinction between vignette stories was only on the forgiveness-seeking behavior where vignette stories 1 and 3 expressed a forgiveness-seeking behavior in the story, while vignette stories 2 and 4 did not.

After the development of the vignette stories, coordination was made with faculty members of a teacher-education institution for the experiment. The participants were recruited and consent was provided by the students to participate in the study, who were at that time were aged 18-20 years old. During the administration of the experiment, student recruits were not assigned to their seats and were given the liberty to choose where they would want to sit in the classroom. The experiment material consisted of three pages. On the first page, the informed consent and the preliminary instruction concerning the experiment were given while, the second and third pages were the materials directly needed for the experiment. The second page contained the vignette story assigned to a participant, while the third page covered the dependent measures. The vignette stories were systematically arranged according to the above sequence to ensure random assignment. Two-way Analysis of Variance was used to determine whether the identified independent factors affect the granting of forgiveness as well as their possible interaction.

Results

Before analyzing the experimental data, a manipulation check was first determined. This assures the creation of the four different conditions. Primarily, the data were analyzed using the two-way analysis of variance. This permits the identification of the effect of each independent variable as well as the interaction that possibly

exists between *kapwa* and the presence of forgiveness-seeking behavior.

Four different experimental conditions were formed to test the impact of *kapwa* and the presence of forgiveness seeking behaviors. For each variable, two subcategories were tested; for *kapwa*, it is *the hindi ibang-tao* and *ibang-tao;* and for forgiveness seeking behavior is the presence or absence of such action. In terms of the *kapwa* comparison, the experiment was able to establish two different conditions under this variable ($t = 7.89$, $df = 58$, $p < .00$). This means that the participants were able to distinguish the kind of relationship as the *one of us* and *not one of us.* In terms of the forgiveness seeking behavior, the experiment established that participants were able to differentiate the vignettes in terms of stories that sought for forgiveness and those that did not ($t = 7.00$, $df = 58$, $p < .05$).

Table 3 presents the descriptive statistics of the results of the measure in terms of the intention to forgive the transgressor based on the two variables of interest, *kapwa*, and forgiveness seeking behavior. Among the results, those who read the vignettes that involved the one of us expressed the highest intention to forgive the transgressor ($M = 3.40$, $SD = 0.36$), especially with the story expressing a forgiveness-seeking behavior. In the context of forgiveness seeking behavior, those who have read the vignette story whose transgressor manifested forgiveness-seeking behavior expressed higher intention to forgive ($M = 3.20$, $SD = 0.42$) compared with those who have not expressed a forgiveness seeking behavior ($M = 3.12$, $SD = 0.43$).

To test the influence of *kapwa* and forgiveness seeking behavior on the intention to forgive a transgressor, a two-way analysis of variance was utilized. The results of such analysis are presented in the table given below.

Table 3

Descriptive Statistics of Intention to Forgiveness

Shared Identity	Forgiveness-Seeking Behavior Present		Forgiveness-Seeking Behavior Absent		Total	
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
Not one of us	2.99	0.34	2.86	0.36	2.93	0.35
One of us	3.43	0.38	3.36	0.36	3.40	0.36
Total	3.20	0.42	3.12	0.43	3.16	0.42

Notably, the absence of the influence of forgiveness seeking behavior $F (1, 58) = 1.74$, $p > .05$) and its interaction with the *kapwa* (shared identity); $F (1, 58) = .004$, $p > .05$) on the intention to forgive

the transgressor can be seen. The influence of *kapwa* has more become evident based on the results $F (1, 58) = 30.014, \ p < .00$). This indicates that the participants considered the degree of the relationship more critical in his/her decision to forgive others.

Discussion

This study aimed to understand forgiveness behavior in the context of two specific mediating factors, that is, culture in the sphere of *kapwa* via its categories, not one of us, and the one of us and forgiveness-seeking behavior as one of the not so explored areas in the field of forgiveness studies. This study mainly tested three hypotheses: firstly, the intention to forgive a transgressor in influenced by the degree of relationship one has with the transgressor; secondly, the manifestation of forgiveness seeking behavior influences the intention to forgive; and thirdly, these two factors are significantly interacting with one another. This study supports only the first hypothesis, while the analysis of the results did not support the second and third hypotheses. Findings support the hypothesis that *kapwa,* through its categories *hindi ibang-tao*(HIT) and *ibang-tao* (IT), indicating the intention to forgive a transgressor, they highly consider the depth of their relationship with the transgressor. Primarily, the study proved that the type and quality of relationships people share are important in determining the extent of being forgiven. The results of this study indicate that people tend to classify others initially in their interaction as not one of us and one of us (Yacat & Clemente, 2009) and use them in forgiving and other behaviors related to forgiveness. Being family is integral in forgiving a person and people would most likely overlook the forgiveness-seeking behaviors of their family members. Mainly, it appears that people who have been categorized as HIT provided a higher propensity to forgive another person compared with a person who is categorized otherwise. This result is consistent with the assertion of Shin-hwan (2008) and Exline, Worthington, and McCullough (2003) describing people coming from a collectivistic culture as capable of forgiveness as they are driven by one's relationship with the transgression. This means that people who are high in emotional comfortability and who have developed a profound relationship with others may be forgiven more easily because of the nature of the relationship. The relationship takes the front seat before the transgression. Despite the absence of an action, the relationship facilitates the granting of forgiveness. This indicates that those who have been categorized as HIT may be forgiven even if they have not either admitted their transgression or has expressed the desire to be

forgiven. This could also be contextualized in instances where closer relationships are considered more important than the distal type of relationship, forgiveness is not given of heavier emphasis in the latter type. Instead, relinquishing a relationship may be a natural option for them. The HIT relationship, however, is following a different route, such that because the relationship is perceived to be long-term and emotional investment has been given, forgiving the person can be an approach to maintain and/or renew the relationship. This notion can be more salient if the relationship with the transgressor is considered permanent such as family relationships. Since the relationship with family members, especially with parents, is highly regarded in the Filipino culture, it is enough basis for one to change his/her perspective about the transgression and eventually decide to forgive. Aside from explaining this as the level of cultural values, this phenomenon can also be explained by the extent of empathy one feels towards people who are considered in-group, similar to the concept of HIT. People who are considered as part of the in-group may yield a higher level of empathic reaction compared with those who are considered an out-group, like IT. Furthermore, the result of this study is consistent with Fincham and May (2017), where they identified forgiveness as a facilitating agent in restoring closeness and commitment in a relationship (Kelley & Waldron, 2005).

In terms of forgiveness-seeking behavior, young adults shared that granting forgiveness is not also determined only by expressing a forgiveness-seeking behavior such as being sorry for what has been done. This indicates that describing what has been the action is perhaps as crucial to seeing an individual doing or saying it. For example, there are nuances in the act of saying sorry that may also be relevant in the evaluation of such actions. In the perspective of Kelley and Waldron (2005), the variance the apology is effective if how it is communicated by the transgressor is accounted. Highlighting the ability to adequately explain the situation and personal variable of the transgression can be distinguished as to whether the apology will carry weight in forgiving. Despite being sorry, it is also said that showing sincerity (Rungduin & Rungduin, 2011; Sidelinger, Frisby, & McMullen, 2009) in the expression of apologies strengthens the possibility that forgiveness would be granted. In terms of restoring relationships, expressions of forgiveness-seeking do not always lead to its restoring the relationship, and instead, in some instances, it leads to adverse outcomes (Kelley & Waldron, 2005; Struthers, Eaton, Santelli, Uchiyama, & Shirvani, 2008). To understand it, it can be assumed that forgiveness and forgiveness-seeking behavior may not always take the same route cognitively, emotionally, and behaviorally.

While forgiveness is an outcome-oriented process, forgiveness-seeking behavior is a route that leads to reach forgiveness. However, in the process of taking this route, actions may trigger specific memories in the offended individual that may prevent one from granting forgiveness (Cioni, 2006).

Limitations and Recommendations

The present study certainly has limitations. First, the number of participants in the experiment is quite limited and, therefore, might have also provided a limited sample of responses with how Filipinos forgive. A larger sample of participants can broaden the perspective with how Filipinos regard relationship and forgiveness-seeking behavior while they consider forgiving transgressors. In addition getting an equal number of male and female respondents may provide the gender perspective in the kapwa and forgiveness-seeking behavior constructs. Secondly, while it is interesting to explore *kapwa* as a cultural construct through its *ibang-tao* and *hindi ibang-tao*, it may be more informative to explore relational forgiveness if *ibang-tao* (not one of us) separately from the *hindi ibang-tao*. Up to this day, it is not clear whether these categories exist in a single continuum, where *ibang-tao* is located at one end, and *hindi ibang-tao* is at another end, or that they have separate continuum for each other. Thus, this study only explored a single style of relationship for each category. For example, the one of us category is only represented by the family relationship. It might also be interesting to look at the variety of relationships within the one of us category and its possible relationship, whether causal or not, to the propensity to forgive the transgressor. Third, the study only focused on one type of forgiveness-seeking behavior which is saying sorry. It might also be interesting to explore other forgiveness-seeking behavior that Filipinos exercise in order to attain forgiveness. Lastly, there has been a growing number of findings in terms of the reliable mediating power of religious affiliation in the process of forgiveness. The Philippines being a Christian country, can be a subject of study on forgiveness and determine whether Filipinos sense of religiosity elevates the motivation to forgive.

There are challenges in the study of *kapwa*/shared identity and the understanding of Filipino behavior in general. This research has two significant contributions to the existing knowledge about Filipino behaviors. First, *kapwa*, if to understand, is dynamic that examining it via its categories may not be enough. This requires the inclusion of

many of its components, such as of values, and those probably have not yet been discovered about it. Second, the forgiveness behavior of Filipinos is as complex as *kapwa*. The decision to forgive may be considered multilayered that it has to be examined in both micro and macro levels of relationships and the different dynamics within a society. More importantly it is likewise worthy to explore the intrapersonal and interpersonal aspects and differences of forgiveness for example, self-forgiveness versus forgiving a significant others.

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