



## **FORGIVENESS AMONG JAVANESE ETHNIC STUDENTS: A MOUNTAINOUS, HIGHLAND, LOWLAND, AND COASTAL CULTURE BACKGROUND COMPARISON**

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**Abstract:** It has been repeatedly documented in the scientific literature that culture plays an important role in forgiveness. However, research of mountainous, highland, lowland and coastal culture related to forgiveness was rare. The goal of this study was to describe the comparison of forgiveness among Javanese ethnic students who had been raised in mountainous, highland, lowland, and coastal culture background. Forgiveness Scale developed to obtain the data was adapted from TRIM and has been tested for its reliability and validity using the Rasch model. Descriptive statistics, Kruskal-Wallis (H) test, and Mann-Whitney (U) posthoc test were used to analyze the data. The result showed an insignificant difference in forgiveness but showed a significant difference in lessen-avoidance motivation. This finding had practical implications in multicultural counselling, especially in promoting forgiveness to various counselees. For a more comprehensive understanding, further research in forgiveness motives is required.

**Keywords:** coastal, culture, forgiveness, highland, lowland, mountainous.

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Forgiveness is a unique gift. Theoretical review shows that forgiveness is classified as one of the character strengths in the dimension of temperance that protects a person from anger, resentment, and hurt (Peterson & Seligman, 2004). From the motivational aspect, forgiveness is inferred from low *revenge* and *avoidance* motivation combined with high *benevolence* motivation. Forgiveness is a composite of motivation change indicated by reducing *revenge* motivation, reducing *avoidance* motivation, and increasing

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*benevolence* motivation to the transgressors (McCullough, Worthington, & Rachal, 1997; McCullough, 2008). There is no coercion in forgiveness. When a person experiences negative treatment from transgressor, they can choose to remain hurt and betrayed or choose to free their selves from these negative feelings through forgiveness.

Empirical studies suggest that forgiveness is positively related to psychological variables such as mental health and well-being (Akhtar & Barlow, 2018; Baldry et al., 2017; Bono, Mccullough, & Root, 2008; Field, Zander, & Hall, 2013; Rowan, 2018). Forgiveness is a positive response when a person experiences negative treatment (Donnoli & Wertheim, 2012; Pallone, 2017; Ryan, 2017). Through forgiveness, hurt, anger, and resentment replaced with a sense of peace (Post & Neimark, 2011). In counselling and psychotherapy, forgiveness intervention can be used to help the counselee (Balkin, Harris, Freeman, & Huntington, 2014; Eckstein & Mcrae, 2009; Patrick, Beckenbach, Sells, & Reardon, 2012).

Forgiveness is a dynamic and contextual process (Hanke & Fischer, 2013). This is related to the social, cultural, and moral context that is passed on to the next generation (Feigenblatt, 2010; Matsumoto, 2008), and also related to communication (Guerrero & Bachman, 2010; Thorson, 2018), and interactional pattern (Finkel, Rusbult, Kumashiro, & Hannon, 2002; Schumann, 2012). Collective and individualistic cultures, for example, both built different forgiveness.

History shows that forgiveness was been becoming one of the Indonesian people personalities. Forgiveness in Indonesian culture was shown through the character of the *maja labo dahu* in Bima (Tasrif & Komariah, 2018), work value in the *Wedhatama* (Istiqomah, Muslihati, & Atmoko, 2017), Banyumas *dablongan* t-shirt design (Dadan, 2016), the nature of *samodra* as leadership value of *Hasta Brata* (Hamim, 2014), and social identity in Indonesian children's novels (Suyatno, 2014). Javanese ethnic in Indonesian had been having noble values and ways of life that is close to forgiveness. Compliance with etiquette (*unggah-ungguh*) and ability to hide feelings had been being the characteristic of Javanese culture (Handayani & Novianto, 2004). This Javanese culture value is ideal for the development of forgiveness.

Forgiveness of Javanese ethnic students who are transitioning from late adolescents to early adulthood is characterized by the search for self-identity,

the improvement of more mature social protection patterns, and the transition of egocentric views into empathy. This transition is a time of the problem, a time of emotional tension, and a time of value changing (Hurlock, 1990). However, empirical studies of forgiveness showed that the forgiveness level of students in Java was moderate-high (Habibi & Hidayati, 2017; Kusprayogi & Nashori, 2016). The research found that forgiveness of male student of UMM was majority high, whereas female students forgiveness were moderate (Utami, 2015). In contrast, another research found male students had a higher level of forgiveness than the forgiveness level of the female (Khasan, 2019), whereas the other found no differences in forgiveness between a male and female student (Nashori, Iskandar, Setiono, & Siswadi, 2013). Further, his findings revealed that there were significant differences in forgiveness in vary level of education, but no differences of forgiveness in adolescents, early adulthood, middle adulthood, or late adulthood.

This research aims to develop existing literature through the exploration of demographic variables on Javanese ethnic, especially on students who had been raised in mountainous, highland, lowland, and coastal culture background in Salatiga and its surroundings. Salatiga is an ideal place for the research because it is well known as “Indonesia Mini” which won the contest of the most tolerant city in 2015 and 2017 (Kompas Regional, 24<sup>th</sup> February 2018). Another reason is the representative topography of Salatiga which is located in the foothill of Mount Merbabu and surrounded by small mountains of Telomoyo, Ungaran, Payung, and Rong. Students came from mountainous and highland on the west, south, and east sides of Salatiga (Wonosobo, Temanggung, Magelang, Boyolali), the students came from the lowland and coast on north and northeast side of this town (Semarang, Jepara, Demak, Kudus) (salatiga.go.id). Although came from different topographical regions, the students had the same orientation of collectivistic cultural values. Therefore, the forgiveness of the students from the four backgrounds can be compared. This comparative quantitative study aims to compare the forgiveness of Javanese ethnic students who had been raised in the mountainous, highland, lowland, and coastal culture in Salatiga and its surroundings. The hypothesis of this study is: at least one group of Javanese ethnic students who had been raised in the mountainous, highland, lowland, and coastal culture background had significant forgiveness differences.

## **METHOD**

### **Respondents**

This study used purposive random sampling by distributing instruments to 554 respondents. The requirements required were (1) Javanese, (2) 18-24 years old, and (3) had been raised in mountainous, highland, lowland, or coastal culture in Salatiga and its surroundings. Some 482 respondents fulfilled the requirements, 89 men (18%) and 393 females (82%) aged  $19.22 \pm 1.35$ . Respondents who had been raised in the mountainous were 91 respondents (M= 17, F= 74), in the highland were 115 respondents (M= 24, F= 91), in the lowland were 242 respondents (M = 39, F = 203), and in the coast 34 respondents (M= 9, F= 25). Determination of ethnicity, sex, age, and background of respondents was based on their answer in the self-identity form.

### **Instrument**

Quantitative data were collected using a five-point Likert Scale questionnaire. The Forgiveness Scale was adapted from Transgression-Related Interpersonal Motivations (TRIM) developed by McCullough (Boyle, Saklofske, & Matthews, 2015). TRIM measures forgiveness from motivational aspect including (1) revenge motivations (TRIM-R); (2) avoidance motivations (TRIM-A), and (3) benevolence motivations, (TRIM-B). Revenge and avoidance motivation was negatively related to forgiveness, whereas benevolence motivation was positively related to forgiveness. In the Forgiveness Scale, revenge and avoidance motivations were converted into "lessen revenge motivation" and "lessen avoidance motivation" by reversing the scoring procedure. Therefore, it became positively related to forgiveness. Some statements were changed, resulting in 18 items of forgiveness scale (9 favourable items, 9 unfavourable items). Two items were dropped after the reliability and validity test, rested 16 valid items (6 items of "lessen revenge motivation", 4 items of "lessen avoidance motivation", and 6 items of "benevolence motivation"). The valid items were 7 favourable items and 9 unfavourable items. The answers and scores of favourable items ranked in "strongly agree" (5 scores), "agree" (4 scores), "neutral" (3 scores), "disagree" (2 scores), and "strongly disagree" (1 score ), whereas unfavourable items' answers and scores ranged in "strongly disagree" (5 scores), "disagree" (4 scores), "neutral" (3 scores), "agree" (2 scores), and "strongly disagree" (5 scores).

Item reliability, person reliability, and person–item reliability were analyzed using the Rasch model with the Winsteps®. From reliability categorization, namely "weak" ( $\alpha < 0.67$ ), "sufficient" ( $0.67 < \alpha < 0.80$ ), "good" ( $0.81 < \alpha < 0.90$ ), "very good" ( $0.91 < \alpha < 0.94$ ), and "excellent" ( $\alpha > 0.94$ ) (Sumintono & Widhiarso, 2015), the person–item reliability of Forgiveness Scale measured with the alpha Cronbach (KR-20) was “very good” ( $\alpha = 0.92$ ). This result indicates that the instrument was suitable for the respondents. Analysis of the person reliability showed three respondents had an extreme maximum score. The person reliability which measures the consistency of respondents’ answers was classified as "good" ( $\alpha = 0.89$ ), either "extreme respondents" were included or not, whereas the item reliability was “excellent” ( $\alpha = 0.99$ ). The output of the summary statistic and item dimensionality was presented in Table 1.

**Table 1. The output of Summary Statistic and Item Dimensionality of Forgiveness Scale**

	Output	Result
Item	Item reliability	0.99
	Separation index (G)	8.91
	Strata (H)	12.21
Person	Mean	62.9
	Person reliability	0.89
	Separation index (G)	2.88
	Strata (H)	4.17
Instrument	Alpha Cronbach (KR-20)	0.92
	Raw variance explained by measures	46.7%
	Unexplained variance in 1st contrast	9.7%

The separation index (G) of Forgiveness Scale item was 8.91 and it was able to separate strata (H) into 12 groups ( $H = 12.21$ ). Forgiveness Scale’s items were classified as "excellent" because of was able to make 12 levels of separation based on the difficulty level (Sumintono & Widhiarso, 2015). Separation of person strata was classified as "very good", which was able to divide the respondents' forgiveness into four levels ( $H = 4.17$ ).

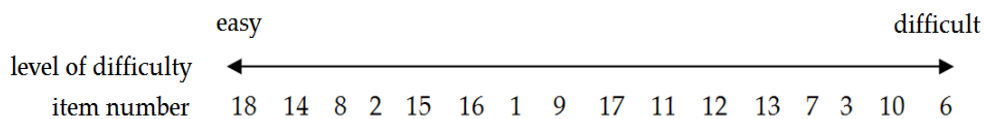
The item dimensionality test showed raw variance data explained by measure was very good (46.7%), that was to say construct validation was empirically almost the same as the value predicted by the Rasch model (47.2%). The variance which could not be explained by the instrument was 9.7%. Thus, the Forgiveness Scale fulfils the requirements of unidimensionality, that was (1) the variance which could be explained by the instrument at least 20% and (2) the variance which could not be explained by the instrument did not exceed 15% (Sumintono & Widhiarso, 2015).

The criteria used to determine valid items in the Rasch model were based on criteria (1)  $0.5 < \text{MNSQ} < 1.5$ ; (2)  $-2.0 < \text{ZSTD} < +2.0$ ; and (3)  $0.4 < \text{Point Measure Corr} < 0.85$  (Bond & Fox, 2015; Boone, Staver, & Yale, 2014; Sumintono & Widhiarso, 2015). Because the sample was more than 300 respondents, the ZSTD criteria could be ignored. From these criteria, item number 4 was misfit ( $\text{MNSQ} = 2.88$ ;  $\text{Point Measure Corr} = 0.14$ ), as well as item number 5 ( $\text{MNSQ} = 1.79$ ). MNSQ item fit ranged from 0.70-1.28. The discriminating power of items measured in the Point Measure Corr was categorized as "very good" ( $> 0.40$ ), "good" (0.30-0.39), "sufficient" (0.20-0.29), "unable to discriminate" (0.00-0.19), and "requires examination of items" ( $< 0.00$ ) (Alagumalai, Curtis, & Hungi, 2005). Within this range, the discriminating power of Forgiveness Scale items was very good (PT-Measure corr= 0.61-0.75). Misfit order items were presented in Table 2.

**Table 2. Item Misfit Order**

TOTAL SCORE	TOTAL COUNT	MEASURE	MODEL S. E.	INFINIT MNSQ	ZSTD	OUTFIT MNSQ	ZSTD	PT-MEASURE CORR.	EXP.	EXACT OBS%	MATCH EXP%	Item
1409	482	61.61	.62	2.49	9.9	2.88	9.9	A .14	.67	30.7	50.1	4
1779	482	45.96	.68	1.74	9.3	1.79	9.7	B .43	.62	59.9	55.1	5
1786	482	45.63	.69	1.09	1.3	1.28	3.9	C .61	.62	64.3	55.3	1
1589	482	54.38	.65	1.12	1.7	1.13	2.0	D .68	.65	52.2	52.9	3
1683	482	50.33	.67	1.08	1.1	1.11	1.6	E .63	.63	55.3	54.1	17
1686	482	50.20	.67	1.03	.5	1.02	.3	F .68	.63	58.9	54.2	9
1933	482	38.36	.72	.95	-.8	.91	-1.3	G .60	.58	61.4	56.6	18
1425	482	60.99	.62	.86	-2.3	.92	-1.3	H .66	.66	52.8	50.5	6
1477	482	58.95	.63	.86	-2.3	.90	-1.6	I .69	.66	58.2	51.4	10
1830	482	43.53	.70	.89	-1.8	.86	-2.2	i .70	.61	64.5	55.6	14
1634	482	52.47	.66	.86	-2.2	.87	-2.0	h .68	.64	60.8	53.6	12
1794	482	45.25	.69	.75	-4.2	.73	-4.4	g .71	.61	63.5	55.4	16
1604	482	53.75	.65	.71	-4.8	.75	-4.2	f .70	.64	66.0	53.2	13
1822	482	43.92	.69	.74	-4.4	.73	-4.5	e .71	.61	72.2	55.5	8
1817	482	44.16	.69	.72	-4.8	.72	-4.7	d .69	.61	68.3	55.5	2
1811	482	44.44	.69	.71	-4.8	.71	-4.8	c .72	.61	66.6	55.5	15
1637	482	52.34	.66	.67	-5.6	.71	-4.8	b .73	.64	66.6	53.6	11
1604	482	53.75	.65	.69	-5.2	.70	-5.1	a .75	.64	59.3	53.2	7
1684.4	482.0	50.00	.67	1.00	-1.1	1.04	-.8			60.1	54.0	
145.3	.0	6.38	.03	.44	4.4	.52	4.5			8.8	1.8	

The item difficulty level was indicated by the measured value in the item measure order. The higher the value of the measure, the more difficult the item agreed by the respondent. The order of item difficulty level was presented in Figure 1.



**Figure 1. The item difficulty of Forgiveness Scale**

### **Procedure**

The Forgiveness Scale was distributed to respondents by being informed that it was voluntary participation, respondents' identities would be kept confidential, and the answers did not affect any assessment. After completion, the questionnaires were collected to the researcher. Questionnaires that fulfil the research requirements were used for analysis.

### **Data Analysis**

Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, the Kruskal-Wallis (H) test and the Mann-Whitney (U) posthoc test with SPSS. The categorization of forgiveness descriptions was determined into five categories based on hypothetical statistics, namely "very high" ( $\mu + 1.5\sigma \leq X$ ); "high" ( $\mu + 0.5\sigma \leq X < \mu + 1.5\sigma$ ); "moderate" ( $\mu - 0.5\sigma \leq X < \mu + 0.5\sigma$ ), "low" ( $\mu - 1.5\sigma \leq X < \mu - 0.5\sigma$ ), and "very low" ( $X < \mu - 1.5\sigma$ ) (Azwar, 2012). The data normality was tested using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test which was considered representative for analyzing more than 200 sample data. Forgiveness differences in the group of respondents whose data distribution was not normal were analyzed using the Kruskal-Wallis (H) test and the Mann-Whitney (U) posthoc test continuously.

## **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS**

### **Description of students' forgiveness**

The research found that the forgiveness of Javanese students of IAIN Salatiga who had been raised in the mountainous, highland, lowland, and coastal culture was "high" (46.06%), "moderate" (31.54%), "very high" (3.73%), "low" (0.62%), and "very low" (0.21%). The mean and standard deviation of forgiveness was  $56.46 \pm 8.87$ . The highest mean was obtained by students who had been raised in coastal culture background ( $58.74 \pm 8.29$ ), mountainous culture ( $57.54 \pm 11.75$ ), highland culture ( $56.37 \pm 8.11$ ), and lowland culture ( $55.78 \pm 7.97$ ). Statistical descriptions were presented in Table 3. The frequency in Table 3 was transformed into Figure 2 to illustrate student forgiveness comparisons.

**Table 3. Summary of Forgiveness Description**

Description		Statistic			Category										Total	
N	Mean	Std. Dev.	very high		high		moderate		low		very low		N	%		
			N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%		
<i>Lessen revenge motivation</i>																
M	91	22.66	4.21	41	8.51	30	6.22	16	3.32	2	0.41	2	0.41	91	18.88	
H	115	22.26	4.11	44	9.13	42	8.71	24	4.98	4	0.83	1	0.21	115	23.86	
L	242	21.73	4.08	88	18.26	83	17.22	55	11.41	12	2.49	4	0.83	242	50.20	
C	34	22.06	3.90	10	2.07	15	3.11	7	1.45	2	0.41	0	0.00	34	7.05	
T	482	22.05	4.10	183	37.97	170	35.26	102	21.16	20	4.15	7	1.45	482	100.00	
<i>Lessen avoidance motivation</i>																
M	91	12.97	3.50	15	3.11	26	5.39	33	6.85	12	2.49	5	1.04	91	18.88	
H	115	12.82	3.42	22	4.56	28	5.81	40	8.30	20	4.15	5	1.04	115	23.86	
L	242	12.69	3.08	42	8.71	46	9.54	106	21.99	34	7.05	14	2.90	242	50.21	
C	34	14.35	3.18	12	2.49	13	2.70	6	1.24	2	0.41	1	0.21	34	7.05	
T	482	12.89	3.27	91	18.87	113	23.44	185	38.38	68	14.11	25	5.19	482	100.00	
<i>Benevolence motivation</i>																
M	91	21.91	7.57	28	5.81	34	7.05	22	4.56	6	1.24	1	0.21	91	18.88	
H	115	21.30	4.53	37	7.68	38	7.88	30	6.22	7	1.45	3	0.62	115	23.86	
L	242	21.36	4.04	76	15.77	82	17.01	71	14.73	10	2.07	3	0.62	242	50.20	
C	34	22.32	4.68	14	2.90	10	2.07	8	1.66	1	0.21	1	0.21	34	7.05	
T	482	21.52	5.04	155	32.16	164	34.01	131	27.17	24	4.97	8	1.66	482	100.00	
<i>Forgiveness</i>																
M	91	57.54	11.75	18	3.73	44	9.13	25	5.19	3	0.62	1	0.21	91	18.88	
H	115	56.37	8.11	20	4.15	56	11.62	33	6.85	6	1.24	0	0	115	23.86	
L	242	55.78	7.97	38	7.88	106	21.99	86	17.84	12	2.49	0	0	242	50.2	
C	34	58.74	8.29	9	1.87	16	3.32	8	1.66	1	0.21	0	0	34	7.05	
T	482	56.46	8.87	85	17.62	222	46.06	152	31.54	22	4.56	1	0.21	100	100	
M= mountainous			H= highland			L= lowland			C= coast			T= total				

The categorization of forgiveness descriptions was determined based on hypothetical statistics into five categories, namely "very high" ( $64 \leq X$ ); "high" ( $53.34 \leq X < 64$ ); "moderate" ( $42.67 \leq X < 53.34$ ), "low" ( $32 \leq X < 42.67$ ), and "very low" ( $X < 32$ ) (Azwar, 2012). Lessen revenge motivation ( $\mu = 18$ ;  $\sigma = 4$ ) and benevolence motivation ( $\mu = 18$ ;  $\sigma = 4$ ) were categorized as "very high" ( $24 \leq X$ ); "high" ( $20 \leq X < 24$ ); "moderate" ( $16 \leq X < 20$ ), "low" ( $12 \leq X < 16$ ), and "very low" ( $X < 12$ ). Lessen avoidance motivation ( $\mu = 12$ ;  $\sigma = 2.67$ ) was categorized as "very high" ( $16.01 \leq X$ ); "high" ( $13.34 \leq X < 16.01$ ); "moderate" ( $10.67 \leq X < 13.34$ ), "low" ( $8 \leq X < 10.67$ ), and "very low" ( $X < 8$ ). The results of categorization were tabulated in Table 3 which generally showed that the level of forgiveness was high. Lessen revenge motivation and benevolence motivation were high, whereas lessen avoidance motivation was moderate. The graphic in Figure 2 showed lessen avoidance motivation was more difficult to be agreed upon by respondents than the others.



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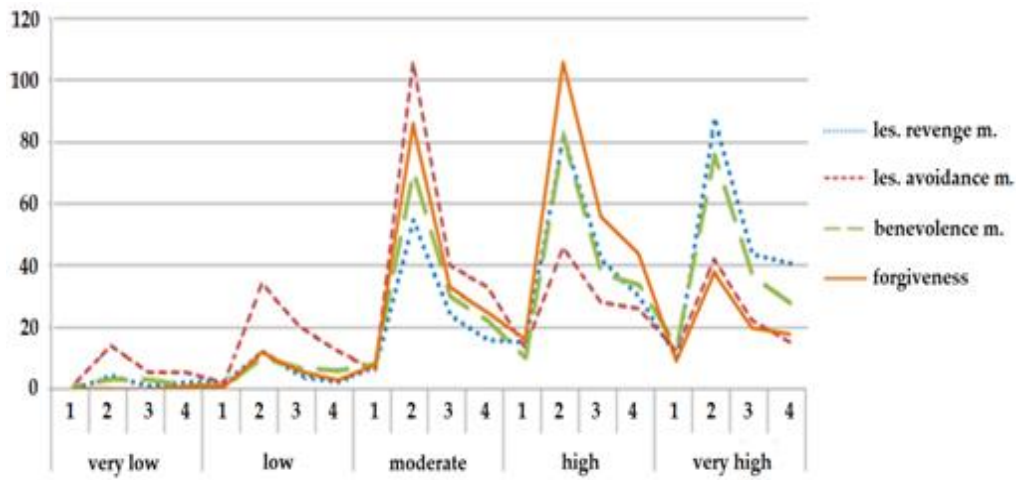


Figure 2. Forgiveness comparison

**Hypothesis test results**

Hypothesis testing was preceded by data normality testing using Kolmogorov-Smirnov with Lilliefors significance correction for a more accurate result. Table 4 showed Asymp.sig value (p) <0.05 therefore H<sub>0</sub> was rejected. This means that the forgiveness data of Javanese students from the mountainous, highland, lowland, and coastal culture background was not normally distributed. Nonparametric statistics were needed for further hypothesis testing.

**Table 4. The Result of Data Normality Testing**

Kolmogorov-Smirnov <sup>a</sup>		mountainous (df 91)	highland (df 115)	lowland (df 242)	coast (df 34)
<i>Lessen revenge motivation</i>	Statistic	.130	.084	.111	.124
	Asymp.sig. (p)	.001	.045	.000	.200*
<i>Lessen avoidance motivation</i>	Statistic	.138	.101	.163	.191
	Asymp.sig. (p)	.000	.006	.000	.003
<i>Benevolence motivation</i>	Statistic	.199	.086	.086	.125
	Asymp.sig. (p)	.000	.037	.000	.198
<i>Forgiveness</i>	Statistic	.153	.069	.051	.094
	Asymp.sig. (p)	.000	.200*	.200*	.200*

\*. This is a lower bound of the true significance.

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

The Kruskal-Wallis (H) hypothesis test results presented in Table 5 showed Asymp.sig (p) of *Lessen avoidance motivation* was 0.009, therefore H<sub>0</sub> was rejected. Its mean at least one /more of Javanese ethnic student from mountainous, highland, lowland, and coastal culture background was

significantly different. The higher the H value, the greater the group differences. Lessen revenge motivation, benevolence motivation, and total forgiveness showed no differences among the group.

**Table 5. The result of hypothesis testing**

Hypothesis testing			<i>Lessen revenge mot.</i>	<i>Lessen avoidance mot.</i>	<i>Benevo- lence mot.</i>	<i>Forgive- ness</i>
Kruskal- Wallis (H) test	Chi-Square (Kruskal-Wallis H) Df Asymp. Sig.		5.196 3 .158	11.688 3 .009*	1.970 3 .579	5.890 3 .117
Mann- Whitney (U) posthoc test	mountainous- highland mountainous- lowland mountainous- coast highland- lowland highland- lowland lowland- coast	Mann-Whitney Asymp. Sig. (2- tailed) Mann-Whitney Asymp. Sig. (2- tailed) Mann-Whitney Asymp. Sig. (2- tailed) Mann-Whitney Asymp. Sig. (2- tailed) Mann-Whitney Asymp. Sig. (2- tailed) Mann-Whitney Asymp. Sig. (2- tailed)	4799.500 .306 9278.000 .026* 1335.500 .238 12931.500 .278 1859.000 .663 4001.000 .794	5163.000 .869 10472.500 .488 1056.500 .006* 13417.000 .582 1347.000 .006* 2626.000 .001*	5174.500 .891 10900.500 .887 1345.000 .261 13902.500 .989 1683.000 .217 3500.500 .157	4997.000 .579 9999.000 .196 1307.500 .183 13248.000 .464 1572.000 .083 3150.000 .027*

a. Grouping Variable: background

\* Significant at 95%

The post-hoc Mann-Whitney (U) test results in Table 5 showed that groups in Lessen avoidance motivation that had significant differences were the mountainous and coast ( $p= 0.006$ ), highland and coasts ( $p= 0.006$ ), and lowland and coasts ( $p= 0.001$ ). Because of Asymp.sig ( $p$ )  $<0.05$ ,  $H_0$  was rejected. It means that there were significant differences in Lessen avoidance motivation among mountainous-coast, highland-coast, and lowland-coast culture. Significant differences were also found between the mountainous-lowland culture in Lessen revenge motivation ( $p= 0.026$ ) and between the lowland and coastal culture in generally forgiveness ( $p= 0.027$ ).

The results of the data analysis showed that (1) majority of the forgiveness level of Javanese ethnic students from mountainous, highland, lowland, and coastal culture background in Salatiga and its surroundings was

high, lessen revenge motivation was high, lessen avoidance motivation was moderate, and benevolence motivation was high; and (2) there was a significant difference in Lessen avoidance motivation between mountainous-coast, highland-coast, and lowland-coast students, but were not differ significantly in Lessen revenge motivation, benevolence motivation, and in generally forgiveness. Comparison of the forgiveness was presented in Table 6.

**Table 6. The Forgiveness Comparison of Javanese Ethnic Students**

Forgiveness	Mountainous	Highland	Lowland	Coast
<i>Lessen revenge motivation</i>	high	high	high	high
<i>Lessen avoidance motivation</i>	moderate	moderate	moderate	high
<i>Benevolence motivation</i>	high	high	high	high
Forgiveness (total)	high	high	high	high

----- different significantly

## Discussion

The discussion focused on (1) high category of the forgiveness of Javanese ethnic students and (2) significant differences in Lessen avoidance motivation among students from mountainous, highland, lowland, and coastal culture background. Research findings were discussed through collective culture and social harmony, withdrawal and avoidance coping strategies, and the topographical conditions.

### *Collective culture and social harmony*

The findings of this study indicated that the forgiveness of Javanese ethnic students from the mountainous, highland, lowland, and coastal culture background in Salatiga and its surroundings were classified as high, benevolence motivation was classified as high, lessen revenge motivation was classified as high, and lessen avoidance motivation was classified as moderate. These findings were in line with previous research. Utami found that forgiveness of male students in UMM was high and that of female students was moderate (Utami, 2015). The self-forgiveness of Undip Semarang students was moderate, whereas interpersonal forgiveness and situation forgiveness were high (Habibi & Hidayati, 2017). Kusprayogi & Nashori also

found that majority of the UII Yogyakarta student forgiveness was moderate (Kusprayogi & Nashori, 2016). There was no extreme difference between these studies. Apart from the research subjects, differences occurred could be caused by differences in categorization procedure that classifies forgiveness into five levels and three levels.

The high level of forgiveness among Javanese ethnic students became empirical evidence of research which suggested that people from interdependent relation/collective cultures tend to be more forgiving than people from relatively individualistic cultures (Kadiangandu, Mullet, & Vinsonneau, 2001). Collectivism was characterized by (1) a close relationship between individuals based on social norms and (2) prioritizing collective goals rather than personal goals, therefore, encourage decisions to forgive (Hook, Worthington, & Utsey, 2009). The culture of the community formed the motives of forgiveness. Self-oriented in individualistic culture formed forgiveness related to personal motives such as mental health, well-being, and personal peace; whereas interdependent relations oriented not collective culture formed forgiveness related to efforts to maintain a social relationship (Bedford & Hwang, 2003; Hook et al., 2009; Scobie, Scobie, & Kakavoulis, 2002).

Collectivism promoted forgiveness as a way to maintain social harmony and as conflict management (Fu, Watkins, & Hui, 2004; Leung, Brew, Zhang, & Zhang, 2011; Sandage & Williamson, 2005). As a collective culture, the culture of peace in Java was relatively high (Eliasa, 2017). Javanese ethnic communities had a "*rukun*" value that promotes peaceful interaction with one another and avoids potential conflicts (Karina, 2014; Rufaedah, 2012; Suseno, 2001). This "*rukun*" value was manifested by prioritizing community interests rather than personal interests. Collective values encourage a person to be willing to control his personal feelings to comply with the norms of social harmony (Karremans et al., 2011). Negative thoughts, feelings, or actions that arose as a result of mistakes made by the offender deliberately set aside or changed into positive thoughts, feelings, or actions. Collective culture in Javanese ethnic encourages students to forgive for maintaining social harmony. Vice versa, social harmony encourages the emergence of forgiveness.

### ***Withdrawal and avoidance coping strategies***

The level of Lessen avoidance motivation among Javanese ethnic students was "moderate", which was the lowest compared to lessen revenge motivation, benevolence motivation, and general/total forgiveness. It could be interpreted that students had motives to avoid transgressor or negative experience. It was undeniable that Javanese did tend to avoid conflicts and prefer to live together in harmony (Suratno & Astiyanto, 2009). Stereotypes were inherent to Javanese ethnic as a closed and reserved ethnic group (Puspitaningrum, 2018). Javanese tend to try to solve their problems themselves and were reluctant to ask for help from others. But if they were unable to overcome the problem, they tend to avoid the problem, or withdrawn from the problem, or cover up the problem because of "*isin*" /ashamed. The findings of this study support Chang and Jung's research that avoidance and withdrawal coping strategies were more widely used by Asian-American than that by the European-American (Phinney & Haas, 2003).

### ***Topographical conditions***

Significant differences in Lessen avoidance motivation between students from the mountainous and coastal cultures, highland and coastal cultures, and lowland and coastal cultures indicate that the students from coastal culture value became the dominant differentiator in lessen avoidance motivation. Their lessen avoidance motivation was the highest. It means that their tendency to avoid the perpetrators, places, or situations related to negative events was lower than that in the other three groups. Topographical conditions became one of the factors causing these attitudes. Topographical conditions affect human activities, human personalities, and culture of the people live nearby (Hu et al., 2019). Culture influences the way persons interact with each other (Riswanto, Mappiare-AT, & Irtadji, 2017). So far, coastal communities were faced with harsh and hot topographical conditions. The sea provides fish as a livelihood, but its availability cannot be controlled by humans, in contrast to agriculture and plantations which are relatively more controllable. Following their environment, the characteristics of coastal communities generally assertive, straight forward, spontaneous, openness, and had a high tolerance attitude (Fajrie, 2017; Satria, 2015). This combination of characteristics minimizes the motive for avoidance.

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The collective culture that promotes social harmony encourages the high level of forgiveness among Javanese ethnic students who had been raised in the mountainous, highland, lowland, and coastal culture in Salatiga and its surroundings. In a certain extent, topographical conditions shape the culture, ways of interaction, and forgiveness tendencies of students who had been raised in their environment. This complex set of results has practical implications in counselling. Significant differences in one aspect indicate that in some extent the findings of this study are useful in multicultural counselling especially to promote forgiveness to the various characteristic of counselees. In the other hand, insignificant differences and the numbers of outlier indicate that individual forgiveness is unique. Therefore, to get a more comprehensive understanding, an overview of forgiveness motives needs to be examined through further research.

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