Personality Traits and Self-Forgiveness:

Exploring the roles of Authentic and Hubristic Pride

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Personality Traits and Self-Forgiveness: Exploring the roles of Authentic and Hubristic Pride

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Abstract

Whilst the empirical exploration of forgiveness has grown extensively over the past 30 years, the study of self-forgiveness remains a relatively new topic of interest. Furthermore, few studies have sought to explain how individual difference variables relate to dispositional self-forgiveness. The aim of the present study was to explore how the two facets of pride (authentic and hubristic) relate to and predict our current understandings of self-forgiveness. A secondary aim of this study was to confirm previous findings on shame and guilt-proneness and determine whether pride is still related to self-forgiveness after controlling for these two variables. A convenience sample of 206 participants aged between 18 and 50+ years were recruited from the *University of Adelaide* first-year psychology pool and through advertising on *Facebook* and the *Relationships Australia* database. Participants completed an online questionnaire that measured self-forgiveness and various personality variables. Quantitative analysis involved Pearson's correlations and conducting three hierarchical multiple regressions. Results indicated that hubristic pride was a significant predictor of genuine self-forgiveness, with authentic pride approaching the borderline of significance. Both pride variables explained an additional 2.90% of the variation in genuine self-forgiveness, with authentic pride being positively related and hubristic pride being negatively related. The results of the present study highlight the impact of dispositional pride as a useful explanatory concept for understanding how individuals perceive, reflect, and move towards the process of genuine self-forgiveness after committing a transgression.

Keywords: Self-Forgiveness, Authentic Pride, Hubristic Pride, Shame-Proneness, Guilt-Proneness

1. Introduction

In a world where humans are social creatures who crave meaningful connections, it is quite natural to encounter troubles and conflicts in relationships with others. Due to these troubles and conflicts, sometimes we hurt people and sometimes we are hurt by people. Maintaining social harmony therefore depends on an individual's capability and willingness to repair the damage that these conflicts cause in interpersonal relationships (Exline et al., 2005). Self-forgiveness, when considered as a concept that can restore interpersonal harmony and lead to positive emotions, has begun to be examined in this context (Oral & Arslan, 2017).

Whilst the empirical exploration of forgiveness has grown extensively over the past 30 years, the study of self-forgiveness remains a relatively new topic of interest, often being referred to as the 'neglected stepchild' of the forgiveness literature (Hall & Fincham, 2005). Although recent research on dispositional self-forgiveness has accelerated in the last decade, there is no current consensus among researchers regarding a single theoretical definition of self-forgiveness (Costa et al., 2021; Griffin et al., 2018) It is therefore necessary to deepen our comprehension of this concept and to understand the impact it has on personal development by first exploring the conceptualisation of this topic (Costa et al., 2021).

1.1 Defining and Conceptualising Self-Forgiveness

The earliest definition of self-forgiveness in the psychological literature was provided by Enright and the Human Development Group (1996, p.115), who defined self-forgiveness as "a willingness to abandon self-resentment in the face of one's own acknowledged objective wrong, while fostering compassion, generosity, and love toward oneself". This definition has been mirrored across much of the psychological literature, with slight nuances

provided from other researchers (Cornish & Wade, 2015; Hall & Fincham, 2005; McCullough et al., 2000; Wohl et al., 2008).

At present, the psychological literature conceives genuine self-forgiveness as an internal process involving the following steps: (1) the individual perceives that they have been hurtful or damaging towards another person and this transgresses important personal values and moral standards they hold, (2) the individual accepts responsibility for committing the wrongdoing and seeks to act in a restorative manner by interpreting and resolving their negative self-condemning emotions and behaviours, and (3) the individual makes a shift towards evaluating themselves in a more positive self-regard that is *conditional* upon not repeating the offense again (Costa et al., 2021; Strelan, 2017; Woodyatt, Worthington, et al., 2017).

Ultimately, self-forgiveness is marked by the tendency to respond to personal transgressions with self-benevolence instead of self-punishment (Carpenter et al., 2016). However, the challenge with dispositional self-forgiveness in both research and clinical practice seems to be that self-forgiveness has been conceptualised as either (1) a dispositional tendency to release self-condemnation, or (2) an end-state where individuals release their self-condemnation and show compassion and love towards oneself (Woodyatt, Worthington, et al., 2017). The problem here is that it can be difficult to distinguish between different responses to the self following a transgression, and even more difficult to capture what genuine self-forgiveness truly looks like.

1.2 Distinguishing between responses to the self following a transgression

Wenzel, Woodyatt, and Hedrick (2012) highlighted the aforementioned concerns of conceptualising self-forgiveness as simply self-acceptance or a lack of self-condemnation. In

their study, they conceptualised genuine self-forgiveness as a process of severing the link between accepting responsibility for a wrongdoing and experiencing negative self-regard. This has received the most empirical support (Griffin et al., 2018).

In a follow up study, Woodyatt and Wenzel (2013) adopted a process-oriented approach to self-forgiveness that conceptually distinguished between three possible responses to the self following an interpersonal transgression: self-punitiveness, pseudo self-forgiveness, and genuine self-forgiveness. These will now be explored.

1.2.1 Self-Punitiveness

Self-punitiveness refers to experiencing intense feelings of shame and self-condemnation following a wrongdoing, where an individual's negative emotional response to the self impacts their ability for restoration with others (Woodyatt, Worthington, et al., 2017). When an individual focuses on self-punitiveness, they aim to repair their wrongdoing by denigrating themselves (Griffin et al., 2018).

In this way, self-punitiveness and genuine self-forgiveness share the acceptance of responsibility for an offense, but diverge in how the individual evaluates themselves and the victim following the offense. An individual with genuine self-forgiveness seeks to restore justice through restoration, whereas an individual with self-punitiveness seeks to restore justice by exercising self-punishment (Griffin et al., 2018). For this reason, researchers have found that self-punitiveness is negatively related to self-esteem and is unrelated to empathy for the victim involved (Griffin et al., 2018).

1.2.2 Pseudo Self-Forgiveness

If self-punitiveness represents an individual internalising their self-condemnation, then pseudo self-forgiveness represents externalising it (Woodyatt & Wenzel, 2013). Self-

exoneration, known in the literature as "pseudo self-forgiveness" results when an individual claims to have forgiven themselves, but in reality denies any wrongdoing (Hall & Fincham, 2005). This is often seen through denial of responsibility, self-deception, rationalisation, victim blaming, and victim derogation as a response to the individual's self-regard being threatened (Hall & Fincham, 2005; Woodyatt & Wenzel, 2013).

Like genuine self-forgiveness, pseudo self-forgiveness may reduce a negative internal state, but it does not truly address interpersonal restoration. The individual reaches the final stage of positive self-regard by merely avoiding the reality of their wrongdoing (Griffin et al., 2018). This mindset diminishes the experience of the victim, avoids responsibility, and reduces the likelihood that the individual will behave differently in the future (Woodyatt & Wenzel, 2013).

1.2.3 Genuine Self-Forgiveness

When we consider the concept of genuine self-forgiveness as constructive behaviour change, a notable point becomes clear: an individual needs to respond with *responsibility* and *remorse* (unlike pseudo self-forgiveness) *whilst still maintaining a positive sense of self-regard following the wrongdoing* (unlike self-punitiveness) (Woodyatt & Wenzel, 2013). Understandably, it is a distressing process that involves persistent self-reflection and a conscious effort to repair and change (Strelan, 2017). However, it allows an individual to create an authentic engagement with the consequences of their wrongdoing, and supports a reconstruction of their sense of values and meaning (Woodyatt, Worthington, et al., 2017). This recognises one's intrinsic worth as a person and ultimately demonstrates the acceptance of being imperfect (Cornish & Wade, 2015).

1.3 Predictors of Self-Forgiveness

Clearly, the process of self-forgiveness appears to be important in cultivating personal growth and renewed mental health (Cornish & Wade, 2015). Research supports this assertion; self-forgiveness is associated with psychological and relational well-being (Cornish & Wade, 2015), cognitive flexibility (Fisher & Exline, 2010), lowered anxiety, depression, and rumination (Thompson et al., 2005), self-compassion (Hall & Fincham, 2005), self-trust (Woodyatt & Wenzel, 2013), and value reaffirmation (Carpenter et al., 2016).

Interestingly, a large body of research on forgiveness has demonstrated that individual difference variables impact the way individuals respond to transgressions (Fatfouta et al., 2015). However, only a few studies have explored this in relation to dispositional self-forgiveness (Carpenter et al., 2016). The vast majority of the literature on self-forgiveness has focused on an individual's shame and guilt-proneness. Shame and guilt, which are considered self-conscious emotions (emotional reactions to the self), are relevant in understanding our sense of self and our consciousness of others' reactions to us (McGaffin et al., 2013). However, another self-conscious emotion that has received marginal empirical attention is pride. This is where our interest is drawn for this project.

1.4 Exploring Pride

Pride can be broadly defined as a positive emotional response or attitude to something that displays an intimate connection with oneself (Tracy & Robins, 2007). It is considered a self-conscious emotion that plays a fundamental role in status and attainment (Bolló et al., 2018). Indeed, the act of increasing one's self-enhancement involves the increasing of one's pride – the two are linked, with pride being a primary emotion that drives our own sense of worth (Tracy & Robins, 2007).

Research has found that our regulation of pride is intrinsically linked to the regulation of our self-esteem, which influences a wide range of intrapersonal and interpersonal processes (Tracy & Robins, 2007). Despite this, pride has received little empirical attention, and researchers do not agree upon one single definition of pride (van der Sarr, 2016). This has resulted in findings that pride is associated with both positive and adverse social consequences (Carver & Johnson, 2010).

On the one hand, dispositional pride reinforces adaptive behaviours, such as achievement, goal regulation, and self-worth (Tracy & Robins, 2007). However, it may also contribute to narcissism, hostility, and relational conflict (Uji et al., 2012). It appears clear that conceptualising pride as a single emotion limits an understanding of the divergent effects it may have (Ho et al., 2016). To assist with this paradoxical nature of pride, Tracy and Robins (2007) distinguished the achievement-oriented form from the self-aggrandising form by postulating two distinct facets of pride, which they coin authentic and hubristic pride.

1.4.1 Authentic and Hubristic Pride

Authentic pride is derived from goal attainments, and is considered a prosocial, achievement-oriented emotional response (e.g., "I did *that* well") (Carver & Johnson, 2010). Hubristic pride, on the other hand, is derived from global beliefs about personal skills and strengths, and is considered a self-aggrandising and egotistical-oriented emotional response (e.g., "*I* did that well") (Ho et al., 2016). In this way, the two facets of pride can be conceptualised by an individual's self-evaluation of "doing" [authentic pride] versus an individual's self-evaluation of "being" [hubristic pride] (Carver & Johnson, 2010).

Theorists have postulated different adaptive functions for these facets of pride; namely, that authentic pride may have been evolved to promote mastery learning and

relationship building (i.e., to understand a subject matter fully) whereas hubristic pride may have been evolved to motivate performance learning and social validation (i.e., to be perceived as looking good) (van der Sarr, 2016). This distinction is important, as emerging research shows that authentic and hubristic pride differ in personality correlates and outcomes (Ho et al., 2016).

Indeed, research findings indicate stark differences between these two facets. Authentic pride is related to motivation and altruism, whereas hubristic pride is related to measures of impulsivity and aggression (Carver & Johnson, 2010). When it comes to perceptions of failure or wrongdoing, one study found that individuals with authentic pride tended to search for the root cause internally (by evaluating their capabilities), whereas individuals with hubristic pride tended to search for the root cause externally (by evaluating their outside world) (Ślaski et al., 2019). It therefore appears unsurprising that individuals with high authentic pride are likened to being accepting and collaborative with others, whilst individuals with high hubristic pride are considered conflict-prone and disregarding of other's needs (Bodolica & Spraggon, 2011). These findings indicate that an individual's dispositional pride may play a key role as a dominant emotion involved with processing and responding to conflict and forgiveness.

1.4.2 Positioning Pride in our Understanding of Self-Forgiveness

To date, there is marginal information regarding the relationship between pride and forgiveness. Further to this, the relationship between the two facets of pride and self-forgiveness is currently not present in the psychological literature. As pride plays a critical role in many domains of our psychological functioning, its absence in the forgiveness literature is curious (Ślaski et al., 2019). Therefore, exploring dispositional pride in the forgiveness framework presents a gap in the scientific literature that needs to be addressed.

Tracy and Robins (2007), who were the first researchers to provide support for the theoretical distinction between two facets of pride, postulated that the relationship between authentic and hubristic pride appears similar to the relationship between shame and guilt. Comparing these self-conscious emotions, Tracy and Robins (2007) note that hubristic pride and shame appear to have maladaptive correlates, whereas authentic pride and guilt appear to have more adaptive correlates. A secondary aim of our study is to therefore confirm previous findings on shame and guilt with self-forgiveness, but more importantly, to assess whether pride is still related to self-forgiveness after controlling for the two variables that we know are most strongly implicated in self-forgiveness research.

1.5 Exploring Shame and Guilt

As we have discussed, genuine self-forgiveness involves working through perceptions of shame, guilt, and other negative evaluations in order to release oneself from self-condemnation and work towards self-benevolence (Woodyatt, Wenzel, et al., 2017). Guilt-proneness is characterised by an individual's tendency to fault their actions, which often results in remorse and motivations for interpersonal reconciliation (Tangney et al., 2007). In contrast, shame-proneness is characterised by an individual's tendency to fault the self (Tangney et al., 2007). Essentially, guilt-proneness is considered an adaptive tendency to focus on repairing one's actions rather than letting them fester, whereas shame-proneness can result in self-destruction, defensiveness, and avoidance (Hall & Fincham, 2005; Tangney et al., 2007). Indeed, shame and guilt are hypothesised to be the primary emotional covariates of self-forgiveness (Hall & Fincham, 2008).

Consistent with this, research findings have found that guilt and shame-proneness have opposite relationships with self-forgiveness (Carpenter et al., 2016), with multiple studies finding that guilt-proneness predicts increased self-forgiveness and shame-proneness

predicts decreased self-forgiveness (Carpenter et al., 2016; Fisher & Exline, 2010; McGaffin et al., 2013; Rangganadhan & Todorov, 2010; Woodyatt, Worthington, et al., 2017). In relation to pride, one study found that shame-proneness prompted hubristic pride and externalisation, whilst guilt-proneness inclined an individual towards authentic pride, but deterred externalisation (Uji et al., 2012). This raises interest in understanding how pride, shame, and guilt all relate to one another, and what these relationships can tell us about self-forgiveness.

1.6 The Current Study

Clearly, authentic and hubristic pride represent two facets of the same emotional construct, but there are stark differences in how they are conceptualised and the impact this has on an individual's personal and social life (Bodolica & Spraggon, 2011). The current study therefore extends the literature by providing a new insight into the self-forgiveness literature by exploring how authentic and hubristic pride relate to and predict our current understanding of self-forgiveness.

As majority of the self-forgiveness literature has been explored through the lens of shame and guilt, it will be interesting to explore the predictive value of pride in relation to shame and guilt-proneness. As we have seen, both shame and guilt hold inverted relationships with self-forgiveness. Yet interestingly, (although opposite), the way an individual relates to their world based on their feelings of pride or shame is almost equivalent (Bodolica & Spraggon, 2011). For this reason, scholars call shame and pride the dominant "emotions of self-assessment", because they represent a self-evaluation by the individual: if I am ashamed or proud, I am ashamed or proud *of* myself (Salice & Sánchez, 2016). Both emotions feature the notion that one is in the spotlight – for pride, the individual expands, and for shame, the individual shrinks (Salice & Sánchez, 2016). It could therefore be speculated

that previous findings of shame and self-forgiveness will parallel our current findings of pride and self-forgiveness in our study. Controlling for the effects of shame and guilt-proneness in our study will provide a key indication into the predictive ability of pride.

Accordingly, we hypothesise that the process of genuine self-forgiveness may be explained, to some degree, by an individual's dispositional pride. As perceived transgression severity and other forgiveness responses such as self-punitiveness and pseudo self-forgiveness are recognisably strongly implicated in self-forgiveness (Hall & Fincham, 2008) and we anticipate that individuals may elect to respond to questions in a socially desirable format, it was considered appropriate to control for these effects by including these variables in our investigation too.

1.7 Aims and Hypotheses of the Current Study

The current study had three main aims. As this is the first study of its kind, the first aim was to consolidate and characterise the current literature on dispositional pride and self-forgiveness. Following this, the second aim of the study was to explore how different types of dispositional pride predict different responses to committing transgressions and how this compares to previous findings on shame and guilt. The third aim of this study was to determine the effectiveness of authentic and hubristic pride in predicting self-forgiveness after controlling for other personality predictors and potential confounding factors. Based on these aims, the following hypotheses were proposed.

Hypothesis 1: Authentic pride will have a stronger and more positive relationship with guilt-proneness, genuine self-forgiveness and self-punitiveness than hubristic pride.

Hypothesis 2: Hubristic pride will have a stronger and more positive relationship with shame-proneness and pseudo self-forgiveness than authentic pride.

Hypothesis 3: Dispositional pride will hold predictive value for self-forgiveness after controlling for a range of personality and background variables. Specifically, there will be a positive relationship between authentic pride and genuine self-forgiveness and a negative relationship between hubristic pride and genuine self-forgiveness after controlling for shame-proneness, guilt-proneness, transgression severity, social desirability bias, self-punitiveness and pseudo self-forgiveness.

2. Method

2.1 Participants

The study recruited a convenience sample of 206 participants, including 143 women (69.40%) and 61 men (29.60%). Participants were aged between 18 and 50+ years (55.80% of participants were aged between 18-24 years). Participants were recruited from the *University of Adelaide* first-year psychology pool (N = 82) and through advertising on *Facebook* and the *Relationships Australia* database (N = 124). First-year psychology students accessed the survey via the *University of Adelaide Research Participation System*, Facebook users accessed the survey via University groups (i.e., *University of Adelaide Psychology Students*, *Dissertation Survey Exchange*, and *University Survey Exchange*) and individuals involved with receiving support from *Relationships Australia* could access the survey from their database. As an incentive for completing the survey, first-year students received course credit. Eligible participation required 18+ years of age, proficiency in English, and the ability to recall and reflect on a transgression committed to another person.

2.2 Materials

Participants accessed the survey hosted on the online survey software Qualtrics where a survey battery composed of six standard measures was constructed for data collection. A pilot study was conducted on a small sample of ten participants to determine the appropriate time taken to complete the survey as well as any readability or technical issues. This process led to some minor formatting adjustments, but no other issues were identified. All ten participants understood all sections of the survey and completion required approximately 10 minutes.

2.2.1 Demographic Information

Standard demographic information was obtained from all participants, including their age, sex, highest level of education completed, current employment status, current relationship status, and ethnicity.

2.2.2 Conflict and Forgiveness

Participants were asked to describe a previous transgression they had committed against someone else in the past. After completing this, participants were asked to self-describe (a) their relationship to this person, (b) the timeframe in which the transgression occurred, (c) the perceived severity of their actions (on a 5-point Likert-scale from 1 *(Not at all hurtful)* to 5 *(Extremely hurtful),* (d) whether the participant believes the described individual has forgiven them, and (e) whether the participant has forgiven themselves for committing the transgression.

2.2.3 Authentic and Hubristic Pride

Dispositional pride was measured using the 14-item *Authentic and Hubristic Pride Scales* (Tracy & Robins, 2007). This measure comprises a series of adjectives and emotions that reflect authentic pride (7 items, e.g., “like I am achieving”, “fulfilled”) and hubristic pride (7 items, e.g., “conceited”, “pompous”). Respondents indicated the extent to which they agreed each item represents them, on a 5-point Likert-scale from 1 *(Not at all)* to 5 *(Extremely).* Higher scores indicated a stronger association with the self-described adjectives and total scores included the sum of all items. Both of these scales have previously demonstrated high internal consistency (Cronbach’s $\alpha = 0.89$ for the authentic scale and 0.85 for the hubristic scale) (Carver & Johnson, 2010). The Cronbach’s α reported in our study was 0.90 for authentic pride and 0.89 for hubristic pride.

2.2.4 Self-Deceptive Enhancement and Impression Management

To measure socially desirable responding, the shorter version of the *Balanced Inventory of Desirable Responding* (BIDR-16) was used (Paulhus, 1998). This measure is comprised of a 16-item format that measures two components of social desirability: self-deceptive enhancement and impression management. The BIDR asks participants to rate the extent to which they agree with a list of behavioural statements on a 7-point Likert scale from 1 (*Not True)* to 7 (*Very True).* Items included examples such as, *"I have not always been honest with myself".* Higher scores indicated a stronger association with the self-described behaviours and total scores included the sum of all items.

Although internal consistencies of the BIDR-16 have been found to be low-to-moderate (i.e., Cronbach's $\alpha = <0.70$) these are comparable with the results of the original BIDR-40, and reflect the notion that interpretations to questions about self-deceptive enhancement and impression management can result in a broad range of interpretations (Hart et al., 2015). Furthermore, in four studies where the BIDR was shortened from 40 items to 16 items, the BIDR-16 was able to retain its two-factor structure, reliability, and validity (Hart et al., 2015). The Cronbach's α reported in our study was 0.62 for self-deceptive enhancement and 0.70 for impression management.

2.2.5 Self-Forgiveness

Self-forgiveness was measured using the *Differentiated Process Scales of Self-Forgiveness* (Woodyatt & Wenzel, 2013). This measure is comprised of a 20-item format that asks participants to rate the extent to which they agree with forgiveness-based statements following a committed transgression (the transgression participants described at the beginning of the survey). The forgiveness-based statements are categorised into three differentiating components: genuine self-forgiveness, pseudo self-forgiveness, and self-

punitiveness. Respondents indicated the extent to which they agreed each item represents them, on a 6-point Likert-scale from 0 *(Do not agree at all)* to 6 *(Strongly Agree).* Items included examples such as, *"I have tried to think through what I did what I did"* and *"I deserve to suffer for what I did"*. Higher scores indicated a stronger association with the self-described statements and total scores included the sum of all items.

The original results obtained by Woodyatt and Wenzel (2013) reported high internal consistency across the three differentiated components of self-forgiveness; genuine self-forgiveness (α = 0.85); pseudo self-forgiveness (α = 0.81) and self-punitiveness (α = 0.85). The Cronbach's α reported in our study was 0.89 for genuine self-forgiveness and self-punitiveness, and 0.80 for pseudo self-forgiveness.

2.2.6 Shame and Guilt

To measure dispositional shame and guilt, the *Guilt and Shame-Proneness Scale* (GASP) was used (Cohen et al., 2011). This measure is comprised of a 16-item format that asks participants to rate the likelihood of experiencing guilt and shame-proneness to a series of situational responses. These are categorised into the following four subscales: Shame Withdraw, Shame Negative Self Evaluation, Guilt Repair, and Guilt Negative Behaviour Evaluation.

Questions were answered on a 7-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 = (*Very Unlikely*) to 7 = (*Very Likely).* Higher scores indicated a stronger association with the situational responses and total scores included the sum of all items. Items include examples such as, *"After realising you have received too much change at a store, you decide to keep it because the salesclerk doesn't notice. What is the likelihood that you would feel uncomfortable about keeping the money?"*.

The GASP demonstrates a Cronbach's α range of 0.60-0.80 (Cohen et al., 2011). Researchers have found that many guilt and shame measures have a broad range of alpha coefficients due to the scenario-based structure of the measures. However, by retaining an alpha coefficient of 0.60 or higher, the GASP is considered to share the same reliability as other guilt and shame-proneness scales, and is therefore considered an appropriate measure to use (John & Benet-Martinez, 2000). The Cronbach's α reported in our study was 0.65 for Shame Withdraw, 0.70 for Shame Negative Self Evaluation, 0.66 for Guilt Repair, and 0.61 for Guilt Negative Behaviour Evaluation.

2.3 Procedure

The current study was approved by the *University of Adelaide Human Research Ethics Subcommittee* (Approval Number: *21/48*). Participants received a brief description of the study before choosing to partake in the survey. This information was available on the *Research Participation System* for first-year psychology students and on the University Facebook groups and *Relationships Australia* database. Participants accessed a web URL on *Qualtrics* that contained the study to be completed. This remained available online for a duration of 10 weeks (15/06/2021– 24/08/2021).

After confirming their eligibility, participants were required to read the explanatory statement that outlined the aims of the study and the potential benefits and risks to participants. Participants were informed that their involvement was voluntary, anonymous, and that they could withdraw from the study at any time without comment or penalty. Participants were notified that the data collected for the study would be encrypted and stored securely, and that any presentation of the results would be anonymous and based on aggregated data.

After providing consent, participants were directed to the online survey and spent, on average, 10 minutes completing the survey. Upon completion, first-year students provided a special five-digit code that was used to recognise their participation and award course credit. Sensitive information was not identifiable with participants' results in the study. The contact details of the researchers, ethics committee and counselling services were provided to all participants.

3. Results

3.1 Data Screening and Quality Control

Data were analysed using SPSS Statistics® Version 27. Prior to analysis, data were screened for missing values, outliers, and invalid values. Frequencies and descriptive statistics were generated for each of the variables, presented in Tables 1 and 2. A total of 206 respondents participated in this study, with no missing cases or incorrect response input. The internal consistency reliability measure reported acceptable results for all psychometric measures. Variable associations were examined using Pearson correlation analyses. The principal analysis was conducting a two-stage hierarchical multiple regression that examined whether authentic and hubristic pride held predictive ability over (1) genuine self-forgiveness, (2) self-punitiveness, and (3) pseudo self-forgiveness after controlling for other personality and background variables.

3.2 Power Analysis

A priori power analysis was conducted using G*Power 3.1.9.2. The results indicated the following sample sizes were required to achieve a power level of 0.95 when adopting a significance criterion of $\alpha = 0.05$ and measuring medium effect sizes: $N = 115$ for a bivariate correlation model and $N = 178$ with eleven predictors in a hierarchical multiple regression model. Therefore, the study had sufficient statistical power for all statistical analyses that were conducted. Descriptive statistics are provided in Tables 1 and 2.

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics of the Current Sample (N = 206)

Variable	Characteristic	*N*	%
Gender	Male	61	29.60
	Female	143	69.40
	Non-binary/Other	2	1.00
Age Group	18-24 years	115	55.80
	25-35 years	79	38.30
	36-50 years	7	3.4
	50+ years	5	2.4
Highest Level of Education Completed	Less than High School Degree	4	1.90
	High School Degree or equivalent	53	25.60
	TAFE Certificate/Apprenticeship	9	4.30
	University, but no degree	25	12.10
	Bachelor Degree	54	26.10
	Honours/Graduate Diploma Degree	31	15.00
	Masters/PhD Degree	30	14.50
Current Employment Status	Student	117	56.50
	Employed, working Full-Time	66	31.90
	Employed, working Part-Time	59	28.50
	Not employed	3	1.40
	Other	3	1.40
Current Relationship Status	Single	96	46.40
	In a relationship	87	42.00
	Engaged/Married	21	10.10
	Separated/Divorced	1	0.50
	Other	1	0.50
Racial/Ethnic Group	Caucasian	145	70.40
	Indigenous/Torres Strait Islander	3	1.50
	African American	4	1.90
	Asian	46	22.30
	Middle Eastern	6	2.90
	Other	3	1.50

Note. N = Sample Size; % = Percentage of Sample.

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics of the Personality Predictor Scores in the Current Sample (N = 206)

Variable	Mean	*SD*	Min	Max	Cronbach's α
Authentic Pride	21.79	5.45	7.00	34.00	0.90
Hubristic Pride	11.80	4.86	7.00	32.00	0.89
Genuine Self-Forgiveness	38.80	8.27	10.00	49.00	0.89
Self-Punitiveness	16.50	8.96	7.00	47.00	0.89
Pseudo Self-Forgiveness	17.41	7.80	6.00	37.00	0.80
Shame Withdraw	12.93	4.84	4.00	27.00	0.65
Shame Negative Self Evaluation	23.29	4.13	11.00	28.00	0.70
Guilt Repair	22.46	4.22	5.00	28.00	0.66
Guilt Negative Behaviour Evaluation	21.94	4.46	5.00	28.00	0.61
Self-Deceptive Enhancement	30.91	6.56	12.00	50.00	0.62
Impression Management	33.65	7.67	13.00	51.00	0.70

Note. N = Sample Size; SD = Standard Deviation; Min = Minimum; Max = Maximum.

3.3 Exploring the Relationship between Pride, Shame, Guilt, and Self-Forgiveness Responses

Pearson's rank-order correlations were used to examine the relationship between all personality and background variables in the study (Table 3). The results indicated mixed findings. Our first hypothesis predicted that authentic pride would have a stronger and more positive relationship with guilt-proneness, genuine self-forgiveness, and self-punitiveness than hubristic pride. There was no significant relationship detected between authentic pride and guilt-proneness. However, there was a statistically significant and negative correlation between hubristic pride and the guilt-proneness subscales: Guilt Repair was ($r_s(95) = -0.16$, $p < 0.05$) and Guilt Negative Behaviour Evaluation was ($r_s(95) = -0.21$, $p < 0.05$).

There was no significant relationship detected between authentic pride and genuine self-forgiveness. The relationship between hubristic pride and genuine self-forgiveness demonstrated a significant, weak-to-moderate negative relationship ($r_s(95) = -0.26$, $p < 0.05$). As for the relationship between pride and self-punitiveness, contrary findings were discovered. Authentic pride was significantly and moderately correlated, though this was a negative relationship ($r_s(95) = -0.29$, $p < 0.001$). Hubristic pride yielded a weak but significant and positive correlation to self-punitiveness ($r_s(95) = 0.18$, $p < 0.05$).

Overall, these findings reveal that our first hypothesis was not supported. Hubristic pride mostly performed as anticipated (i.e., statistically significant negative relationships with guilt-proneness and genuine self-forgiveness). However, authentic pride was unexpectedly negatively correlated with both guilt-proneness and self-punitiveness, and although a positive correlation was found with genuine self-forgiveness, this was incredibly small. Most importantly, all findings with authentic pride and the listed variables were not statistically

significant, meaning we cannot make clinical conclusions based on these outcomes without considering they may have occurred by chance alone.

Our second hypothesis predicted that hubristic pride would have a stronger and more positive relationship with shame-proneness and pseudo self-forgiveness than authentic pride. These findings were more supportive. Shame Withdraw, a subset of the GASP scale that measures shame-proneness, had a moderate and positive correlation with hubristic pride ($r_s(95) = 0.28$, $p < 0.001$), and a weak-to-moderate, negative correlation with authentic pride ($r_s(95) = -0.22$, $p < 0.001$). However, it's other subset, Shame Negative Self Evaluation, had a negative relationship between both hubristic pride ($r_s(95) = -0.31$, $p < 0.001$) and authentic pride ($r_s(95) = -0.20$, $p < 0.05$).

As anticipated, pseudo self-forgiveness demonstrated a positive, weak-to-moderate relationship with hubristic pride ($r_s(95) = 0.25$, $p < 0.001$). These findings partially support our second hypothesis. Hubristic pride was significantly and positively related to Shame Withdraw, whilst authentic pride was significantly and negatively related. However, hubristic pride and authentic pride were both significantly negatively related to Shame Negative Self Evaluation, with hubristic pride surprisingly having a stronger negative relationship. This outcome suggests that the relationship between hubristic pride and shame-proneness may be dependent on how shame is expressed as a behaviour. Though hubristic pride had a statistically significant and positive relationship with pseudo self-forgiveness, the findings between authentic pride and pseudo self-forgiveness were not significant, therefore we cannot comment on this outcome.

Table 3

Pearson's Correlation Matrix of Predictor Variables in the Current Sample

Scale	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1. Authentic Pride											
2. Hubristic Pride	0.19**										
3. Genuine Self-Forgiveness	0.09	-0.26**									
4. Self-Punitiveness	-0.29**	0.18**	0.19**								
5. Pseudo Self-Forgiveness	-0.13	0.25**	-0.38**	0.01							
6. Shame Withdraw	-0.22**	0.28**	-0.10	0.28**	0.25**						
7. Shame Negative Self Evaluation	-0.20**	-0.31**	0.27**	0.07	-0.09	0.14					
8. Guilt Repair	-0.02	-0.16*	0.21**	0.02	-0.09	0.06	0.49**				
9. Guilt Negative Behaviour Evaluation	-0.03	-0.21**	0.35**	0.04	-0.07	0.07	0.62**	0.62**			
10. Relationship Severity	0.20	0.04	0.30**	0.20**	-0.16*	0.02	-0.01	-0.05	-0.06		
11. Self-Deceptive Enhancement	0.34**	0.06	-0.01	-0.37**	0.02	-0.15*	-0.28**	0.02	-0.03	-0.05	
12. Impression Management	0.01	-0.39**	0.16*	-0.11	-0.12	-0.13	0.13	0.41**	0.37**	-0.14*	0.30**

Note. Pearson's rank-order correlation coefficient values as depicted by r_s values.
***. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).*
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).*

3.4 Exploring Pride as a Predictor of Genuine Self-Forgiveness

A series of three two-stage hierarchical multiple regressions were conducted with genuine self-forgiveness, self-punitiveness, and pseudo self-forgiveness as the dependent variables, respectively (Tables 4-6). The variables that we anticipated to be strongly implicated in self-forgiveness were entered on the first step. These included: shame-proneness, guilt-proneness, transgression severity, impression management, and self-deceptive enhancement. Two of the self-forgiveness response variables were also entered on the first step. This was altered subject to the dependent variable of interest, as a way of determining how they influence with one another. Authentic and hubristic pride were entered on the second step, in order to demonstrate their relative effects.

When genuine self-forgiveness was measured as the dependent variable, the results from our first regression in Model 1 indicated that guilt-proneness, shame-proneness, transgression severity, impression management, self-deceptive enhancement, self-punitiveness and pseudo self-forgiveness contributed significantly to the regression model, R^2 = 0.36, $F(9, 195) = 11.91$, $p < 0.000$; adjusted R^2 = 0.33. These variables accounted for 35.50% of the variation in genuine self-forgiveness. Introducing authentic and hubristic pride in Model 2 explained an additional 2.90% of the variation in genuine self-forgiveness and led to a statistically significant increase in R^2 of 0.38 $F(2, 193) = 4.57$, $p < 0.01$; adjusted R^2 = 0.35. Genuine self-forgiveness was more strongly related to hubristic pride (β =-0.35) than authentic pride (β =0.19).

When all variables were entered into Model 2 of the regression model, transgression severity, Guilt Negative Behaviour Evaluation, self-punitiveness, pseudo self-forgiveness, and hubristic pride were significant predictors of genuine self-forgiveness. Together, the 11

predictors accounted for 38.40% of the variation in genuine self-forgiveness, indicating a medium effect size, $d = 0.61$.

When self-punitiveness was measured as the dependent variable, the results from our second regression in Model 1 indicated that guilt-proneness, shame-proneness, transgression severity, impression management, self-deceptive enhancement, genuine self-forgiveness and pseudo self-forgiveness contributed significantly to the regression model, $R^2 = 0.26$, $F(9, 195) = 7.41$, $p < 0.000$; adjusted $R^2 = 0.22$. These variables accounted for 25.50% of the variation in self-punitiveness. Introducing authentic and hubristic pride in Model 2 explained an additional 8.00% of the variation in self-punitiveness and led to a statistically significant increase in R^2 of 0.34, $F(2, 193) = 11.58$, $p < 0.000$; adjusted $R^2 = 0.30$. Self-punitiveness had a similar relationship to both pride variables, but was more strongly related to hubristic pride (β =0.28) than authentic pride (β =-0.25). Together, the 11 predictors accounted for 33.50% of the variation in genuine self-forgiveness, indicating a medium effect size, $d = 0.52$.

The results from our final regression measuring pseudo self-forgiveness as the dependent variable indicated that guilt-proneness, shame-proneness, transgression severity, impression management, self-deceptive enhancement, genuine self-forgiveness and self-punitiveness contributed significantly to the regression model, $R^2 = 0.21$, $F(9, 195) = 5.66$, $p < 0.000$; adjusted $R^2 = 0.17$. These variables accounted for 20.70% of the variation in pseudo self-forgiveness. Introducing authentic and hubristic pride in Model 2 led to a non-significant outcome. The pride variables explained an additional 1.40% of the variance in pseudo self-forgiveness, leading to an increase in R^2 of 0.22, $F(2, 193) = 1.75$, $p > 0.05$; adjusted $R^2 = 0.17$. However, as this was a non-significant finding, we cannot make clinical conclusions on this outcome. Together, the 11 predictors accounted for 22.10% of the variation in pseudo self-forgiveness, indicating a small effect size, $d = 0.28$. Like self-punitiveness, pseudo self-

forgiveness also had a similar relationship to both pride variables, but was more strongly related to hubristic pride (β =0.12) than authentic pride (β =-0.11).

Based on this outcome, our final hypothesis was partially supported. Indeed, pride demonstrated a predictive relationship with different types of self-forgiveness responses. Once the other relevant measures had been controlled for, hubristic pride was a significant predictor of genuine self-forgiveness, with authentic pride approaching the borderline of significance. Whilst authentic pride was positively related to genuine self-forgiveness, hubristic pride was negatively related but had a stronger relationship. These findings suggest that the ways in which individuals value and define pride play an important role in predicting genuine self-forgiveness.

For the regression analyses, the most salient finding was that the pride variables uniquely explained 8.00% of the predictive ability for self-punitiveness. Interestingly, neither pride variables sustained significance in predicting pseudo self-forgiveness. Furthermore, consistent with previous findings, guilt-proneness was a significant predictor of genuine self-forgiveness, whilst shame-proneness was a significant predictor of self-punitiveness and pseudo self-forgiveness. These results demonstrate notable trends in how pride influences different responses to the self following a transgression.

Table 4

Hierarchical Multiple Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Genuine Self-Forgiveness in the Current Sample

Predictor Variables	B	SE	β	*t*	*p*	95% CI	R^2	Adjusted R^2	ΔR^2
Step 1									
Model 1							0.36	0.33	**0.36**
Constant	18.40	5.15		3.57	0.00**	8.24, 28.56			
Transgression Severity	1.87	0.45	0.25	4.21	0.00**	1.00, 2.75			
Self-Deceptive Enhancement	0.98	0.09	0.08	1.13	0.26	-0.07, 0.27			
Impression Management	0.06	0.08	0.06	0.80	0.42	-0.09, 0.21			
Guilt Repair	-0.13	0.15	-0.07	-0.84	0.40	-0.43, 0.17			
Guilt Negative Behaviour Evaluation	0.56	0.16	0.30	3.56	0.00**	0.25, 0.87			
Shame Withdraw	-0.16	0.11	-0.10	-1.51	0.13	-0.38, 0.05			
Shame Negative Self Evaluation	0.20	0.16	0.10	1.27	0.21	-0.11, 0.52			
Self-Punitiveness	0.17	0.06	0.19	2.86	0.00*	0.05, 0.29			
Pseudo Self-Forgiveness	-0.30	0.07	-0.28	-4.63	0.00**	-0.43, -0.17			

Step 2									
Model 2							0.38	0.35	**0.03**
Constant	19.70	5.69		3.46	0.00*	8.48, 30.91			
Transgression Severity	1.73	0.44	0.24	3.91	0.00**	0.86, 2.60			
Self-Deceptive Enhancement	0.10	0.09	0.08	1.16	0.25	-0.07, 0.28			
Impression Management	-0.01	0.08	-0.01	0.15	0.89	-0.17, 1.47			
Guilt Repair	-0.09	0.15	-0.04	0.58	0.57	-0.39, 0.21			
Guilt Negative Behaviour Evaluation	0.55	0.16	0.30	3.54	0.00**	0.24, 0.86			
Shame Withdraw	-0.07	0.11	-0.04	-0.60	0.55	-0.28, 0.15			
Shame Negative Self Evaluation	0.11	0.17	0.06	0.68	0.50	-0.21, 0.44			
Self-Punitiveness	0.23	0.06	0.24	3.63	0.00**	0.10, 0.35			
Pseudo Self-Forgiveness	-0.26	0.07	-0.25	-4.01	0.00**	-0.39, -0.13			
Authentic Pride	0.19	0.10	0.12	1.89	0.07	-0.01, 0.39			
Hubristic Pride	-0.35	0.12	-0.20	-2.78	0.01**	-0.59, -0.10			

Note. Bolded values reach statistical significance. B = unstandardised beta coefficients; SE = standard error of the coefficients; β = standardised beta coefficients; t = obtained t-value; p = probability; R^2 and Adjusted R^2 = proportion of variance explained; ΔR^2 = change in R^2 between equations.
***. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).*
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).*

Table 5

Hierarchical Multiple Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Self-Punitiveness in the Current Sample

Predictor Variables	B	SE	β	*t*	*p*	95% CI	R^2	Adjusted R^2	ΔR^2
Step 1									
Model 1							0.26	0.22	**0.26**
Constant	17.21	6.07		2.84	0.01**	5.24, 29.17			
Transgression Severity	0.92	0.54	0.12	1.71	0.09	-0.14, 1.98			
Self-Deceptive Enhancement	-0.49	0.10	-0.36	-5.19	0.00**	-0.68, -0.31			
Impression Management	0.03	0.09	0.02	0.29	0.77	-0.15, 0.20			
Guilt Repair	0.08	0.18	0.04	0.43	0.67	-0.28, 0.43			
Guilt Negative Behaviour Evaluation	-0.02	0.19	-0.01	-0.09	0.93	-0.39, 0.36			
Shame Withdraw	0.47	0.12	0.26	3.89	0.00**	0.23, 0.71			
Shame Negative Self Evaluation	-0.28	0.19	-0.13	-1.53	0.13	-0.65, 0.08			
Genuine Self-Forgiveness	0.23	0.08	0.22	2.86	0.01**	0.07, 0.40			
Pseudo Self-Forgiveness	0.06	0.08	0.05	0.73	0.47	-0.10, 0.22			

Step 2									
Model 2							0.34	0.30	**0.08**
Constant	14.99	6.51		2.30	0.02*	2.15, 27.83			
Transgression Severity	0.99	0.51	0.12	1.91	0.06	-0.03, 1.99			
Self-Deceptive Enhancement	-0.43	0.10	-0.31	-4.48	0.00**	-0.61, -0.24			
Impression Management	0.11	0.09	0.10	1.25	0.21	-0.07, 0.29			
Guilt Repair	0.02	0.17	0.01	0.14	0.89	-0.31, 0.36			
Guilt Negative Behaviour Evaluation	-0.02	0.18	-0.01	-0.11	0.91	-0.38, 0.34			
Shame Withdraw	0.27	0.12	0.15	2.21	0.03*	0.03, 0.52			
Shame Negative Self Evaluation	-0.17	0.19	-0.08	-0.90	0.37	-0.53, 0.20			
Genuine Self-Forgiveness	0.28	0.08	0.26	3.63	0.00**	0.13, 0.44			
Pseudo Self-Forgiveness	0.01	0.08	0.01	0.07	0.94	-0.15, 0.16			
Authentic Pride	-0.41	0.11	-0.25	-3.75	0.00**	-0.63, -0.20			
Hubristic Pride	0.52	0.14	0.28	3.78	0.00**	0.25, 0.79			

Note. Bolded values reach statistical significance. B = unstandardised beta coefficients; SE = standard error of the coefficients; β = standardised beta coefficients; t = obtained t-value; p = probability; R^2 and Adjusted R^2 = proportion of variance explained; ΔR^2 = change in R^2 between equations.
***. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).*
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).*

Table 6

Hierarchical Multiple Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Pseudo Self-Forgiveness in the Current Sample

Predictor Variables	B	SE	β	*t*	*p*	95% CI	R^2	Adjusted R^2	ΔR^2
Step 1									
Model 1							0.21	0.17	**0.21**
Constant	26.94	5.22		5.16	0.00**	16.64, 37.24			
Transgression Severity	-0.53	0.49	-0.08	-1.09	0.28	-1.49, 0.43			
Self-Deceptive Enhancement	0.08	0.09	0.07	0.89	0.38	-0.10, 0.26			
Impression Management	-0.09	0.08	-0.09	-1.11	0.27	-0.24, 0.07			
Guilt Repair	-0.12	0.16	-0.06	-0.73	0.47	-0.43, 0.20			
Guilt Negative Behaviour Evaluation	0.25	0.17	0.15	1.49	0.14	-0.08, 0.59			
Shame Withdraw	0.32	0.11	0.20	2.91	0.01**	0.10, 0.54			
Shame Negative Self Evaluation	-0.11	0.17	-0.06	-0.68	0.50	-0.45, 0.22			
Genuine Self-Forgiveness	-0.33	0.07	-0.35	-4.63	0.00**	-0.47, -0.19			
Self-Punitiveness	0.05	0.06	0.05	0.73	0.47	-0.08, 0.17			

Step 2									
Model 2							0.22	0.18	0.01
Constant	26.36	5.93		4.45	0.00**	14.67, 38.05			
Transgression Severity	-0.46	0.49	-0.07	-0.94	0.35	-1.42, 0.50			
Self-Deceptive Enhancement	0.09	0.09	0.07	0.91	0.34	-0.10, 0.27			
Impression Management	-0.05	0.09	-0.05	-0.60	0.55	-0.22, 0.12			
Guilt Repair	-0.13	0.16	-0.07	-0.82	0.42	-0.45, 0.19			
Guilt Negative Behaviour Evaluation	0.25	0.17	0.14	1.45	0.15	-0.09, 0.58			
Shame Withdraw	0.26	0.12	0.16	2.24	0.03*	0.03, 0.49			
Shame Negative Self Evaluation	-0.08	0.18	-0.04	-0.45	0.65	-0.43, 0.27			
Genuine Self-Forgiveness	-0.29	0.07	-0.31	-4.01	0.00**	-0.44, -0.15			
Self-Punitiveness	0.01	0.07	0.01	0.07	0.94	-0.13, 0.14			
Authentic Pride	-0.16	0.11	-0.11	-1.49	0.14	-0.37, 0.05			
Hubristic Pride	0.20	0.13	0.12	1.49	0.14	-0.07, 4.63			

Note. Bolded values reach statistical significance. B = unstandardised beta coefficients; SE = standard error of the coefficients; β = standardised beta coefficients; t = obtained t-value; p = probability; R^2 and Adjusted R^2 = proportion of variance explained; ΔR^2 = change in R^2 between equations.
***. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).*
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)*

4. Discussion

4.1 Overview

The primary purpose of this study was to investigate whether personality factors, specifically the two facets of pride, would increase our understandings of the different ways in which individuals respond to transgressions. As this relationship has not been explored in the psychological literature before, we were predominately interested in testing whether genuine self-forgiveness could be explained by characteristics of pride. Given the research literature on other personality characteristics and social constructs such as shame, guilt, self-punitiveness, pseudo self-forgiveness, transgression severity, and social desirability, these variables were also included in our study. Investigating the ways in which genuine self-forgiveness, a relatively new construct in the forgiveness literature, was related to the two facets of pride provided notable insight.

After controlling for the aforementioned variables, results indicated that hubristic pride was a significant predictor of genuine self-forgiveness, with authentic pride approaching the borderline of significance. Both pride variables explained an additional 2.90% of the variation in genuine self-forgiveness, with authentic pride being positively related and hubristic pride being negatively related. Both pride variables explained an additional 8.00% of the variation in self-punitiveness, and a non-significant outcome was detected for pseudo self-forgiveness. The results of the present study highlight the impact of dispositional pride as a useful explanatory concept for understanding how individuals perceive, reflect, and move towards the process of genuine self-forgiveness after committing a transgression.

4.2 Summary of Findings

The current study had three main aims. The first aim was to consolidate and characterise the current literature on dispositional pride and self-forgiveness. An extensive exploration of the scientific literature revealed that this is the first study of its kind, with majority of the previous research focusing on shame and guilt-proneness. This provided theoretical motivation to create our additional aims of the study, which were to evaluate previously documented findings and to determine the effectiveness of pride variables in predicting self-forgiveness.

Previous findings on self-forgiveness have concluded that both shame and guilt hold inverted relationships with genuine self-forgiveness. As pride and shame are the predominant emotions of self-assessment, it was speculated that hubristic pride would act similarly to shame in its negative relationship with self-forgiveness. As guilt is an important emotion that regulates our moral behaviour, it was also speculated that authentic pride would behave in the same adaptive way that guilt does with self-forgiveness.

Accordingly, we hypothesised that authentic pride would have a stronger and more positive relationship with guilt-proneness, genuine self-forgiveness, and self-punitiveness than hubristic pride. The data revealed non-significant results for authentic pride, thus not supporting our hypothesis. However, a significant relationship between authentic pride and self-punitiveness was detected, though this was negatively related. In contrast, findings on hubristic pride were all statistically significant, revealing a negative relationship with guilt-proneness and genuine self-forgiveness, and a positive relationship with self-punitiveness. Whilst hubristic pride performed mostly as expected, these findings suggest that the ways in which individuals responded to the measure of authentic pride had a clear impact on the way they responded to the measures of self-forgiveness, self-punitiveness and guilt-proneness.

This raises questions over how authentic pride is evaluated and interpreted as a clinical instrument.

Our second hypothesis predicted that hubristic pride would have a stronger and more positive relationship with shame-proneness and pseudo self-forgiveness than authentic pride. The data revealed statistically significant findings: hubristic pride was positively related to Shame Withdraw, whilst authentic pride was negatively related. However, both pride variables were negatively related to Shame Negative Self Evaluation, with hubristic pride surprisingly having a stronger negative relationship. Hubristic pride had a confirming positive relationship with pseudo self-forgiveness, and findings between authentic pride and pseudo self-forgiveness were non-significant, thus partially supporting our hypothesis.

These findings are in line with previous studies conducted by Tracy and colleagues (2007; 2009), who concluded in their studies that hubristic pride was positively correlated with shame-proneness and authentic pride was negatively correlated. However, the ways in which individuals express their shame may relate to pride differentially; indeed, Tracy and Robins (2007) commented that hubristic pride may, in part, be a defensive response to underlying feelings of shame. This could provide a potential explanation for why hubristic pride was related to shame as a withdraw behaviour, but not as a negative self-evaluation.

The consideration of hubristic pride as having maladaptive correlates, such as being related to self-aggrandising and disagreeable qualities, provides a plausible explanation for its positive relationship to pseudo self-forgiveness, which is characterised by the same features (Hall & Fincham, 2005; Tracy & Robins, 2007). It is important to note that most of the observed correlations had small-to-moderate effect sizes, which may not be practically important. In addition, as correlations only assess the degree of association between

variables, our results cannot be used to identify causal relationships among the variables, which limits our findings.

The third aim of this study was to determine the effectiveness of authentic and hubristic pride in predicting genuine self-forgiveness, with several personality predictors being considered. Findings from the first two hypotheses had implications for our results, as it was found that authentic pride predominately delivered non-significant findings. When genuine self-forgiveness was measured as the dependent variable, the results from our first regression indicated that transgression severity, Guilt Negative Behaviour Evaluation, self-punitiveness, pseudo self-forgiveness, and hubristic pride were all significant predictors of genuine self-forgiveness. These findings partially supported our hypothesis, as results for hubristic pride were statistically significant, but authentic pride remained non-significant. Furthermore, as self-punitiveness and pseudo self-forgiveness were both significant predictors of genuine self-forgiveness, being able to concisely distinguish between these individual responses to transgressions confirms the continued challenge in conceptualising genuine self-forgiveness as a separate entity that can be defined and measured (Woodyatt, Worthington, et al., 2017).

Two further regression analyses were conducted, with both self-punitiveness and pseudo self-forgiveness being measured as the dependent variables. This was to further determine the predictive ability of authentic and hubristic pride above and beyond these variables. Results from our second regression demonstrated statistically significant findings: both pride variables explained an additional 8.00% of the variation in self-punitiveness. This increase in percentage suggests that pride plays a notable role in increasing the likelihood of an individual responding to a transgression with self-punitiveness as opposed to genuine self-forgiveness. Interestingly, the results revealed that hubristic pride was positively related to

self-punitiveness, and authentic pride was negatively related. This was an unexpected finding, as previous research has found that those high in authentic pride tend to internally evaluate their behaviour, whereas those high in hubristic pride tend to search for external explanations for their behaviour (Ślaski et al., 2019). It was therefore anticipated that individuals higher in authentic pride would be more likely to engage in self-punitiveness than those high in hubristic pride.

Contrariwise, in their study, Tracy and Robins (2007) found a positive correlation between both pride variables and narcissism, with authentic pride being positively related to self-esteem and hubristic pride being negatively related. Though our study did not focus on these variables, these findings demonstrate a similar trend to our results. If narcissism and self-esteem were to potentially have the same effects in our study as they did for Tracy and Robins (2007), a possible explanation for this finding could be that individuals higher in hubristic pride may be more likely to engage in self-punitiveness due to their lower self-esteem and wanting to externally disguise their shame, by internally punishing themselves. Nevertheless, as we have no direct evidence from our study that narcissism and self-esteem are related to these variables, this is purely speculative. It does, however, suggest that hubristic pride is more complex than it first appears, as it may be distinct from both shame and narcissism despite being positively related to both self-punitiveness and pseudo self-forgiveness.

Results from our third regression detected non-significant findings for the pride variables and pseudo self-forgiveness. Interestingly, before the pride variables were entered, the regression model was statistically significant. This finding therefore indicates that after accounting for all other variables, authentic and hubristic pride did not explain a statistically significant amount of variance for predicting pseudo self-forgiveness. Accordingly, a clinical

conclusion cannot be made about this outcome without considering it may have occurred by chance alone. Given the previous correlation finding between hubristic pride and pseudo self-forgiveness however, more research may be needed to reconcile these differences.

4.3 Limitations and Methodological Considerations

This study had several limitations and methodological considerations. Firstly, participants were recruited via a convenience sample, which provides a relatively narrow cross-section of participants. Consequently, 69% of our participants were female and 29% were male. Though sex differences were not the focus of our study, previous research has found that females score higher on overall self-forgiveness than compared to their male counterparts (Miller et al., 2008; Mudgal et al., 2019). Although our sample had sufficient power in detecting the interaction effect, these factors may have resulted in a misrepresentation of the population as a whole, which limits the external validity and reliability of our results.

Another limitation was employing self-report measures, as this leaves the data potentially vulnerable to social desirability bias. As participants were not monitored in a controlled scientific setting, it is possible that participants may have tailored their responses to portray a specific self-image and thereby obfuscated the data. However, to address this potential problem, two social desirability scales were utilised in our analyses. This was a valuable tool, as results revealed that the self-deceptive enhancement scale was moderately correlated with authentic pride and the impression management scale was moderately correlated with guilt-proneness. These findings may influence the reliability of our results and should be interpreted cautiously. It is important to note that both social desirability scales were not significant predictors of genuine self-forgiveness and their correlation strength was negligible.

Furthermore, there are methodological considerations to contemplate when assessing the measures that were used in this study. As all of our measures asked participants to report their own emotional experiences, it is extremely difficult to ascertain objectivity due to differences in personal interpretations of the questions. This is particularly relevant for the *Authentic and Hubristic Pride Scales* (Tracy & Robins, 2007). The scale has received critique from Holbrook and colleagues (2014) who raised concerns over the accuracy of such self-reporting, particularly for the hubristic pride subscale, as it asks participants to self-rate characteristics that may be perceived as negative (e.g., being arrogant, pompous).

Tracy and Robins (2014) responded to this critique, commenting that their pride measure was vulnerable to the same problems that are intrinsic to all self-report measures: that there is no way to be certain that participants' responses are veridical or if they reflect more abstract conceptualisations of the self that are prone to unmerited displays of pride. Moreover, to mitigate this concern, socially desirable responding was measured and controlled for in our study. It is also important to note that a weak relationship was observed between socially desirable responding and both pride variables in our study. As this measure is the first attempt to empirically distinguish between authentic and hubristic pride, these present findings point to the need for continued research developments on the way dispositional pride is defined and measured.

4.4 Significance and Implications for Future Research

By exploring the relationship between dispositional pride and self-forgiveness, our findings revealed promising outcomes for the direction of future self-forgiveness research. Indeed, genuine self-forgiveness and self-punitiveness could be explained, to some degree, by characteristics of pride. The study had several strengths, which included a sample size

sufficiently large to conduct all the required analyses, the use of validated measures, and a population for whom forgiveness and personality traits are likely to be relevant constructs.

As the two facets of pride are very recent to the psychological literature, these findings are consistent with current studies that indicate the pride facets behave similarly to the relationship between shame and guilt (Tracy & Robins, 2007). Moreover, our findings indicate that exploring the two facets of pride as two distinct emotions, rather than a spectrum of the same overarching emotion, warrant priority in current research. In an effort to generalise results, future research should seek to explore self-forgiveness and the two facets of pride cross-culturally and within a broader clinical population. The current study should also be replicated, as this will establish a greater body of evidence in these research areas and confirm the theoretical framework that has been put forward for pride and self-forgiveness.

4.5 Conclusion

To conclude, self-forgiveness is a cognitive, behavioural, and emotional process that is associated with a wide range of intrapersonal and interpersonal benefits (Cornish & Wade, 2015; Costa et al., 2021). Given these benefits, mental health practitioners are encouraged to consider working through the process of genuine self-forgiveness with clients who are struggling with the moral and personal consequences of hurting someone.

As recent studies have demonstrated, self-conscious emotions and personality traits can largely impact the ways in which individuals respond to transgressions. As pride has received marginal empirical attention, understanding how clients relate to both authentic and hubristic pride, and how this links to shame and guilt, may be a relevant mechanism in helping one restore their sense of self and move towards the process of genuine self-forgiveness.

As the first study of its kind, the findings presented in this study have promising theoretical and practical implications. These results provide meaningful insight and up-to-date forgiveness research into how individual difference variables can be used to predict different responses to the self following a transgression. As the process of engaging in genuine self-forgiveness is important for maintaining social harmony, the ability to understand the role of dispositional personality traits, such as pride, is paramount in directing future research and intervention.

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Contribution Statement

EL was responsible for study design and conceptualisation, data curation and formal analysis, and the writing of the manuscript; PS contributed to study design, analysis, and assisted with data interpretation and manuscript revisions.

Appendices

Appendix A (Instructions to Authors)

PERSONALITY AND INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES

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