



## The Mediating Role of Self-Reflection and Insight in the Relationship Between Forgiveness and Gestalt Contact Disturbances

### Gestalt Temas Engelleri ve Affedicilik Arasındaki İlişkide Kendine Yansıtma ve İçgörünün Aracı Rolünün İncelenmesi

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**ABSTRACT:** During the university period, individuals join a social environment in which they learn to establish new relationships. The emergence of these new experiences can bring about interpersonal conflicts and the process of forgiveness. Disturbances in the individual's interactions with oneself and others during this process may have negative effects on forgiveness. Some theories and models mention the important roles of self-reflection and insight into the forgiveness process. However, the relationships between Gestalt contact disturbances, forgiveness, self-reflection, and insight were not examined sufficiently. The aim of the current study is to examine the mediating roles of self-reflection and insight in the relationship between Gestalt contact disturbances (contact, full contact, dependent contact, post-contact) and forgiveness (self forgiveness and forgiveness of others) in a sample of university students. The participants were a total of 377 university students, 246 (65.3%) women and 131 (34.7%) men, who were reached by convenient and snowball sampling methods. The current study included university students aged 18-30, with an average participant age of 23.93. In the data collection process Gestalt Contact Disturbances Scale, Self-Reflection and Insight Scale and Forgiveness Scale were applied. Descriptive statistics, correlation and mediation analyses were conducted using SPSS 23.0 and PROCESS Macro 4.2 (Model-4). The findings indicated that insight had a mediating role in the relationship between contact and full contact with self-forgiveness. Self-reflection had a mediating role in the relationship between dependent contact and post-contact with self-forgiveness, while insight had a mediating role in the relationship between contact and forgiveness of others.

**Keywords:** Forgiveness, Gestalt contact disturbances, self-reflection, insight

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**ÖZ:** Üniversite sürecinde bireyler yeni ilişkiler kurmayı öğrendikleri bir sosyal çevreye katılmaktadır. Bu yeni deneyimler kişilerarası çatışmaları ve affetme sürecini beraberinde getirebilmektedir. Bu süreçte kişinin kendisi ve diğerleri ile temasındaki engellenmelerin affetme üzerinde olumsuz etkiler bırakabileceği düşünülebilir. Bazı kuram ve modellerde affedicilik sürecinde kendine yansıtma ve içgörünün rollerine değinilmektedir. Ancak, Gestalt temas engelleri, affetme, kendine yansıtma ve içgörü arasındaki ilişkilerin yeterince incelenmediği görülmektedir. Mevcut araştırmanın amacı üniversite öğrencileri örnekleminde Gestalt temas engellerinin (temas, tam temas, bağımlı temas, temas sonrası) affetme (kendini affetme ve başkalarını affetme) ile ilişkisinde kendine yansıtma ve içgörünün aracı rollerini incelemektir. Katılımcılar kolay ulaşılabilir örnekleme ve kartopu örnekleme yöntemi ile ulaşılan 246 (%65,3) kadın, 131 (%34,7) erkek olmak üzere toplamda 377 üniversite öğrencisidir. Araştırmaya 18-30 yaş arasındaki üniversite öğrencileri dahil edilmiş olup katılımcıların yaş ortalaması 23.93'tür. Veri toplama sürecinde Gestalt Temas Engelleri Ölçeği, Kendine Yansıtma ve İçgörü Ölçeği ile Affetme Ölçeği uygulanmıştır. SPSS 23.0 ve PROCESS Macro 4.2. eklentisinden (Model-4) yararlanılarak betimsel istatistik, korelasyon ve aracılık analizleri yapılmıştır. Bulgular temas ve tam temasın kendini affetme ile ilişkisinde içgörünün aracı rollere sahip olduğunu göstermiştir. Bununla birlikte, bağımlı temas ve temas sonrası kendini affetme ile ilişkisinde kendine yansıtmanın; temasın başkalarını affetme ile ilişkisinde ise içgörünün aracı rolü olduğu sonucuna ulaşılmıştır.

**Anahtar sözcükler:** Affetme, Gestalt temas engelleri, kendine yansıtma, içgörü

## 1. INTRODUCTION

University students face interpersonal difficulties in different environments and feel the need to manage these difficulties. Moir (2013) stated that individuals join a new environment in which they learn to communicate with others in this university period. University students can be expected to experience conflicts in their interpersonal relationships in this new environment and, as a result, to experience the process of forgiveness. Thompson et al. (2005) classify forgiveness as the forgiveness of others, self, and situation. Enright (1996) described forgiveness of others as “one willingly abandoning feelings of resentment, negative judgment, and indifferent behavior toward another person who has unjustly injured them while fostering the undeserved feelings of love, generosity, and compassion toward that person” (p. 113). In addition, Enright 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” (p. 115). According to Enright’s (1996) Forgiveness Process Model, in the uncovering phase, the individual discovers the mistake and its consequences. In the decision phase, they explore what forgiveness means and its functions. In the work phase, after the individual takes responsibility for the mistake, they focus on looking at themselves from a different perspective, realize that everyone can act wrongfully, and start to develop a more positive perspective toward themselves. In the outcome phase, the individual consciously gives up negative feelings that harm themselves.

Recently, there has been an increase in the number of studies in the field of forgiveness. There is a positive relationship between forgiveness and life satisfaction and subjective well-being (Eldeleklioğlu, 2015; Gull & Rana, 2013; Lawler-Row & Piferi, 2006; Yaşar, 2015), prosocial behaviors (Gassin et al., 2005; Worthington & Wade, 1999), empathy (Kaya & Orçan, 2019), self-compassion and post-traumatic growth (Gökmen & Deniz, 2020), and psychological/cognitive flexibility (Aydın & Yerin Güneri, 2022; Katovich, 2007; Küçüker, 2016; Mullins, 2021). Self forgiveness has positive associations with self-actualization (Sarı, 2014), self-love (Aydemir & Bayram, 2016), well-being, life satisfaction, forgiving others, positive emotions (Yao et al., 2017), and self-compassion (Mameghani et. al., 2020). Also, some studies reveal that self forgiveness has negative associations with being prone to shame, negative behavior evaluations and self-evaluation (Carpenter et. al., 2016), academic procrastination and perfectionism (Belgin, 2019), neuroticism (Brose et. al., 2005), and loneliness (Currin & Hubach, 2018). Based on the results of this aforementioned research, it can be thought that forgiving oneself and others makes significant contributions to improving the psychological well-being of individuals by providing improvements in areas such as post-traumatic development, life satisfaction, empathy, and flexibility, which are related to the psychological health of individuals. Although forgiveness is examined within the scope of its relationships with many variables in the literature, it is noteworthy that studies on the relationship between Gestalt contact disturbances and forgiveness are quite limited. Gökmen and Çakır (2021) concluded that contact, full contact and post-contact variables were negatively related to self forgiveness in university students. Researchers have also found that dependent contact is positively related to forgiving others, while post-contact contact is negatively related to forgiving others. Considering the interpersonal nature of the forgiveness process, it can be expected that Gestalt contact disturbances reflecting the obstructions in interpersonal relationships are related to forgiveness.

Gestalt Theory emphasizes the importance of the contact process in one’s relationship with themselves and their environment. Contact is a person staying in touch with themselves and their environment without losing their individuality (Latner, 1986). When the contact process does not occur healthily, contact disturbances arise. Contact disturbances refer to the person’s prevention of contact with the environment to avoid awareness (Jacobs, 2007) and the relational distortions that occur during the

contact phase between ‘myself’ and ‘others’ or the change in the direction of contact (Voltan-Acar, 2004). Tagay and Voltan-Acar (2012) listed some mechanisms related to contact disturbances as introjection, projection, retroflection, deflection, confluence, profection, and withdrawal contact disturbances. Introjection contact disturbance is a person's acceptance of rules and messages coming from the environment without undergoing assimilation (Kirchner, 2000). Projection refers to traits, attitudes, feelings, and behaviors that belong to an individual's personality but individuals experience them as if they do not belong to them. In projection, the individual transfers them to the people or objects in the environment but experiences them as if the people or objects in the environment transferred them instead (Perls et al., 1951). The person takes thoughts about themselves from their environment and projects them onto themselves. For example, an individual who receives negative reactions from their family may direct these negative reactions to their own personality (Brown, 2004). In deflection, the person transfers their energy to another area outside the contact, such as work and entertainment, to reduce the effect of external sensations and avoid the intense emotion that the contact creates (Caffaro, 1991). Profection is when individuals do to others what they want to be done to themselves. For example, when individuals cannot healthily express their own needs, they help others around them to meet their needs (Voltan-Acar, 2004). Withdrawal has the opposite meaning of the absence of boundaries. Instead of establishing healthy contact and getting satisfaction from it, the person unconsciously sets boundaries between themselves and their environment (Voltan-Acar, 2004). Based on these explanations, it can be concluded that these mechanisms, which are effective in the contact process, lead to some obstacles in contact with oneself and others.

Gestalt contact disturbances are associated with various psychological variables. Among university students, contact, full contact, and post-contact were positively related to the self forgiveness, retroflection, and diversion (Gökmen & Çakır, 2021). Contact styles were found to be positively related to positive self-perceptions, and contact was negatively related to positive self-perceptions (Akça et al., 2011). Tagay (2015) found that contact and full contact were negatively associated with self-respect, and dependent contact and post-contact were positively associated with self-respect in university students. Tagay et al. (2018) found that contact, full contact, and post-contact had positive associations with perceived abuse in a romantic relationship. Avcı (2016) showed that retroflection is negatively associated with academic procrastination, and negatively predicts confluence. Vardal (2015) concluded that there is a positive relationship between eating attitude disorder and retroflection in university students. It can be inferred that Gestalt contact disturbances are negatively associated with many positive mental health-related variables.

Gestalt contact disturbances can be thought to be related to self-reflection and insight in multiple ways. Self-reflection and insight involve the individuals' contact with themselves and self-assessment processes. Studies focusing on self-reflection explain the concept by focusing on situations such as self-evaluation and efforts to develop self-awareness. According to Valsiner and Rosa (2007), self-reflection is a phenomenological experience in which the self becomes an object for the individuals and the individuals evaluate themselves by keeping a certain distance from themselves. Valsiner and Rosa explained self-reflection by using internalization theories, conflict theories, mirror theories and rupture theories. Rupture theories state that self-reflection occurs when individuals are restrained from their actions or when they have to make a decision. According to mirror theories, others can perceive the individual's self more than the individuals' perception of themselves. Namely, others give feedback about the individual's self, just as a mirror reflects the image. Conflict theories emphasize the tension that occurs through problematic relationships between the self and others and state that self-reflection arises

from social conflicts. Internalization theories, on the other hand, focus on the individual's internalization of others' perspectives on the self and emphasize that self-reflection emerges from internal dialogues between these internalized perspectives. In summary, these theories state that self-reflection results from some processes such as decision-making, social conflict, internalizing others' perspectives, and being evaluated by others.

It is stated that self-reflection is positively related to many variables such as self-regulation, self-compassion, insight, and resilience that can support individuals' psychological health. Self-reflection provides feedback to the individual for self-regulation and improvement through self-monitoring and evaluation (Grant et al., 2002). Research has shown that self-reflection is positively related to psychological resilience, insight, positive evaluation of the future and self, social competence, social resources, family cohesion (Cowden & Meyer-Weitz, 2016), self-awareness (Harrington & Loffredo, 2010), positive self-assessment, well-being and insight (Stein & Grant, 2014), self-compassion (Samaie & Farahani, 2011), and self-concept clarity (Şimşek, 2013). Additionally, research indicates that self-reflection has a negative association with shame, personal stress (Joireman, 2004), and rumination (Samaie & Farrahani, 2011). Thus, self-reflection is associated with many mental health-related variables that can be substantial for the psychological well-being of individuals.

It is noticed that insight has similar meanings to self-reflection and is generally evaluated within the scope of self-awareness of the individual. Insight is basically the ability of individuals to perceive their inner worlds and problems. (Aslan & Altınöz, 2010). Öveç (2007) defined insight as a person's sensitivity to differences in their emotions and cognitions. According to Öveç, insight also corresponds to awareness of emotional experiences such as happiness, calmness and sadness. Messer and McWilliam (2002) have explained the important criteria in evaluating the level of insight of individuals such as defining the connections or patterns between experiences, observing their own internal processes and personality traits, evaluating their abnormal thoughts, and being aware of the motivational processes of themselves and others (as cited in Yavaşoğlu, 2010). Insight enables an individual to develop an awareness of their difficulties and shortcomings compared with others. Insightful people are aware of what other people think of them (London, 2002). Although self-reflection and insight seem to be similar concepts, according to Yavaşoğlu (2010), a person who self-reflects thinks excessively and moves away from healthy self-consciousness. Conversely, with insight, the person evaluates themselves from the outside by comparing their own behaviors and standard behaviors. Consequently, it becomes easier to reach functional self-consciousness (Yavaşoğlu, 2010). In the literature, insight has been evaluated within the scope of its relationship with many variables. Life satisfaction, subjective happiness (Lyke, 2009), psychological resilience (Cowden & Meyer, Weitz, 2016), and positive self-evaluation (Atmaca, 2016) are traits of people with higher insight. Additionally, research suggests that insight has a negative association with social anxiety (Stefan & Cheie, 2022), somatization, obsessive-compulsive disorder, depression, anxiety, alexithymia, immature defenses (Bilge & Bilge, 2021) and stress (Cowden & Meyer-Weitz, 2016), which are situations negatively associated with positive mental health of the individuals. It can be expected that processes such as reflection and deflection, which are effective in the formation of Gestalt contact disturbances, have a negative relationship with self-reflection and insight. For example, individuals' transferring their negative characteristics to other individuals during the projection process or transferring their energies to areas such as work and entertainment by removing from contact with themselves during deflection process may prevent them from using their self-reflection skills and developing insight. In addition, in theoretical models focusing on the concept of self-reflection, the role of contact with the environment in self-reflection processes is mentioned. In this sense, it was thought that Gestalt contact disturbances can be related to self-reflection and insight.

Upon examining the literature through variables that are the focus of the current research, researchers found that there are limited studies examining the relationships between Gestalt contact disturbances and forgiveness. Gökmen and Çakır (2021), in their study with university students, concluded that there is a negative relationship between self forgiveness and contact, full contact, and post-contact disturbances. They found that dependent contact is positively, and post contact is negatively associated with forgiving others. In addition to the relationship between contact disturbances and forgiveness, some researchers state that it is essential to develop insight into the forgiveness process (Enright & Fitzgibbons, 2000; Hargrave, 1994). Studies suggest the importance of being aware of others' state and being able to consider their perspective on the forgiveness process (Enright, 1996; Enright & Fitzgibbons, 2000; Hargrave, 1994; Takaku, 2001; Takaku et al., 2001). Based on this information in the literature, it can be thought that self-reflection and insight are related to forgiveness, but it is noteworthy that studies on this relationship are also quite limited.

During the university period, individuals develop new social relationships in different environments and need to manage the difficulties they encounter in their social relationships. When there are problems in managing these relational difficulties, individuals can be expected to face the forgiveness process. It is likely that the deterioration in the contact process of university students with themselves and their environment complicates the process of forgiving themselves and others. In addition, it can be thought that there are some variables that may play a role in the relationship between contact disturbances and forgiveness. It can be understood that the importance of self-reflection and insight is directly or indirectly mentioned in the literature on forgiveness. However, no study has examined the forgiveness process in terms of Gestalt contact disturbances, self-reflection, and insight. This study aims to fill the relevant gap in the literature and examine the possible roles of Gestalt contact disturbances, self-reflection, and insight into the forgiveness process. For this purpose, this study examines the mediating roles of self-reflection and insight into the relationship between Gestalt contact disturbances and forgiveness among university students aged between 18-30. Arnett (2000) classified individuals between the ages of 18-30 as young adults. Arnett stated that young adulthood is a period in which individuals face many relational difficulties such as new forms of social relationships, new relational obligations and acquiring adult roles. The research sample was selected among young adult university students between the ages of 18-30 considering that failure to manage the difficulties experienced in this period effectively can cause individuals to have difficulty in their forgiveness processes and that the issue of forgiveness gained more importance in this period. The current research answers to the following research questions:

- 1) Do Gestalt contact disturbances (contact, full contact, dependent contact, post-contact) predict forgiveness (self forgiveness and forgiveness of others) among university students?
- 2) Do self-reflection and insight predict forgiveness (self forgiveness and forgiveness of others) among university students?
- 3) Do self-reflection and insight mediate the relationships between Gestalt contact disturbances (contact, full contact, dependent contact, post-contact) and forgiveness (self forgiveness and forgiveness of others) among university students?

## 2.METHOD

### 2.1. Sample

The research sample consists of young adult university students between the ages of 18-30 continuing their associate, undergraduate, graduate, and doctoral education at any university in Turkey. The researchers contacted participants via convenience and snowball sampling methods. The convenience sampling method was preferred because it was less expensive and the institutions where the researchers work were suitable to reach the university students participants. Snowball sampling, on the other hand, was used to increase the number of participants since the participants reached with convenience sampling method also met the research criteria of the people in their social circles (Acharya et al., 2013). Data were collected online ( $n = 292$ ) and face-to-face ( $n = 85$ ) using paper-pencil method. Online data were collected in the social media platforms (Facebook and Instagram) by means of questionnaires organized through Google Forms. Data were collected in the 2022-2023 spring semester. The participants of the research are mostly the students of Dicle University and Kahramanmaraş Istiklal University. Although 427 people participated in the research, analyses were carried out with the data of 377 participants. The data of 50 participants were excluded from the study due to not being a part of the student sample ( $n = 5$ ), being out of the 18–30 years age range ( $n = 11$ ), and marking questionnaires randomly ( $n = 34$ ). In the current study, G\*Power v3.1.9.6 was used to calculate sufficient sample size based on statistical power. As a result of the analysis carried out with a statistical power coefficient of 0.95, an effect size of .05, a margin of error of .05 and 3 predictor variables, it was understood that the number of people in the sample should be at least 348 to obtain consistent results for the models. Therefore, it can be stated that the sample size in the present study is sufficient. The participants mean age was 23.93 years ( $SD = 3.27$ ), 246 (65.3%) of the participants were female, and 131 (34.7%) of the participants were male. Table 1 presents the participants demographics.

**Table 1:** Participant Demographics

Variable	N	%
<b>Age</b>		
18–21	93	24.67
22–26	195	51.73
27–30	89	23.60
<b>Sex</b>		
Female	246	65.3
Male	131	34.7
<b>Education Level</b>		
Bachelor's Degree	235	62.3
Master's Degree	115	30.5
PhD	17	4.5
Associate Degree	10	2.7
<b>Field of Education</b>		
Social Sciences	142	37.7
School of Economics and Administrative	88	23.3

Sciences		
Educational Sciences	73	19.4
Engineering	25	6.6
Others	49	13
<hr/>		
<b>Income Status</b>		
Low	80	21.2
Medium	276	73.2
High	21	5.6
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## 2.2. Data Collection Tools

### 2.2.1. Demographic Information Form

In the form, questions were presented regarding age, sex, education level, field of education and perceived income level.

### 2.2.2. Gestalt Contact Disturbances Scale

The scale was developed to evaluate contact disturbances. The scale was developed in university students by Tagay and Voltan-Acar (2012). Tagay ve Voltan-Acar found that the scale consists of 24 items and four subdimensions, which are contact (Item example [IE]: I think people are more inclined to be evil), full contact (IE: There's a lot of work I can't finish because I'm procrastinating), dependent contact (IE: I live according to my family's expectations) and post-contact (IE: I stay away from the people). The dimension that includes expressions of projection is called contact, that which includes expressions of retroreflection is full contact, that which includes expressions of confluence and profection is called dependent contact, and that which includes expressions of withdrawal is called post-contact. The scale is scored along 5 points (1 = strongly disaggregate, 5 = strongly agree). The scale is evaluated over sub-dimension scores, and the total score cannot be calculated. The increase in the scores in the sub-dimensions of the scale indicates that the individuals show a higher level of related contact disturbance measured in the sub-dimension. RMSEA= 0.06, GFI= 0.92, AGFI= 0.90, CFI= 0.91, NNFI= 0.89, RMR= 0.07, SRMR= 0.06 fit indices were obtained as a result of confirmatory factor analysis. Cronbach's alpha internal consistency coefficient was 0.61 for the contact, 0.79 for the full contact, 0.75 for the dependent contact, and 0.60 for the post-contact. In the current research, internal consistency values were 0.83 for the contact, 0.84 for the full contact, 0.65 for the dependent contact, and 0.64 for the post-contact.

### 2.2.3. Self-Reflection and Insight Scale

The scale was developed to evaluate the self-reflection and insight levels in a sample of university students. Turkish adaptation of the scale, developed by Grant et. al (2002) was carried out by Yavaşoğlu (2010) in the sample of university students. The Turkish version of the scale consists of two sub-dimensions and 20 items: self-reflection (Item example (IE): I don't often think about my thoughts) and insight (IE: I usually know why I feel the way I do). The scale is scored along 6 points (1 = strongly disagree, 6 = strongly agree). The scale is evaluated over sub-dimension scores, and the total score is not



calculated. The increase in the scores in each sub-dimension means that the individuals show the relevant feature more. As a result of confirmatory factor analysis, fit indexes of  $\chi^2/df=2.53$ , RMSEA= 0.10, GFI=0.78, AGFI=0.73, CFI= 2.53, NNFI=0.88, RMR= 0.10 were obtained. Cronbach's alpha value for the entire scale was 0.83; it was 0.86 for the self-reflection and 0.74 for the insight. In the current research, internal consistency values were 0.84 for the self-reflection and 0.78 for the insight.

#### **2.2.4. Forgiveness Scale**

The scale was developed to evaluate forgiveness in a sample of university students. The scale developed by Ersanlı and Vural-Baltık (2015) consists of 13 items and two sub-dimensions, namely self forgiveness (Item example [IE]: I don't forgive myself for the mistakes I have made), and forgiving others (IE: Over time, I become more understanding towards people who hurt me). The scale is scored along 7 points (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree) and can be evaluated on the total score or sub-dimension scores. An increase in sub-dimension scores or total scores means that individuals show higher levels of forgiveness. As a result of confirmatory factor analysis,  $\chi^2/df=1.95$ , RMSEA= .07, GFI= .91, AGFI= .87, SRMR= .06, NNFI= .89, CFI= .91. Cronbach's alpha internal consistency coefficient was 0.76 for the forgiveness of others and 0.82 for the self forgiveness. In the current research, internal consistency values were 0.86 for the self forgiveness; and 0.84 for the forgiveness of others.

### **2.3. Procedure**

To conduct the research, after obtaining ethical permission from the Social and Human Sciences Ethics Committee of Dicle University, the researchers created a questionnaire set through Google Forms for online application and prepared printouts of the scales for face-to-face application. Researchers mostly reached out to those who participated online through social media platforms (Facebook and Instagram). They collected data face-to-face from participants in university classroom settings. Researchers first presented participants with the Informed Consent Form, which includes information about the research, and then asked the voluntary participants to fill out the demographic information form and scales.

### **2.4. Data Analysis**

Descriptive statistics were obtained using the SPSS 23.0. First, the data that did not meet the inclusion criteria were excluded from the data set and the internal consistency values of the scale subdimensions were calculated. Normality analyses were performed, and it was seen that the values (skewness and kurtosis) of all scale subdimensions are between -1 and +1 (Morgan vd., 2004). Also, a multicollinearity analyses based on VIF was performed, and it was seen that there is no multicollinearity problem because all VIF values of the variables were under 5 (Zhong-Lin, Ban-Ban, & Dan-Dan, 2018). Reliability analyses of the scale subdimensions were performed and all subdimensions had an acceptable level of internal consistency. Relationships between all variables were examined by Pearson correlation analyses. Parallel multimediation analyses were conducted using Hayes' (2013) PROCESS Macro 4.2. (Model-4) to examine the mediating role of self-reflection and insight in the relationships between Gestalt contact disturbances (contact, full contact, dependent contact, post-contact) and forgiveness (self forgiveness, forgiveness of others). To test the significance of indirect effects, bias-corrected bootstrap method was used with a sample size of 5000 and confidence interval of 95%. In addition, to prevent type

1 error in mediation analysis, the Bonferroni protocol was applied and the significance level (0.05) was divided into 8 as a total of 8 mediation analysis were carried out, and the adjusted significance level ( $\alpha'$ ) was obtained. In the current study, the new significance value was determined as .00625.

### 3. FINDINGS

#### 3.1. Descriptive Statistics and Correlation Analysis

Table 2 presents the Cronbach’s alpha, mean, standard deviations, skewness, kurtosis and correlations.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics and Pearson’s Correlations

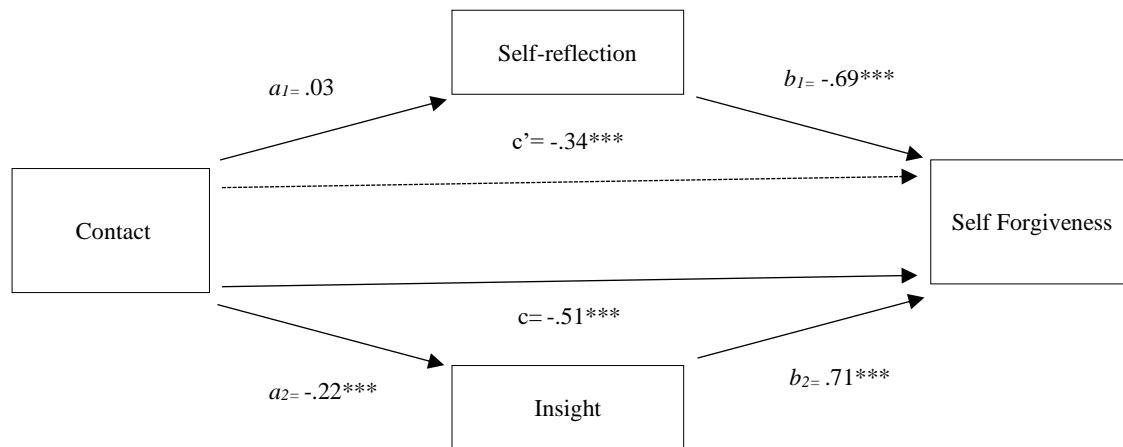
	Descriptive statistics					Pearson’s correlations							
	A	M	SD	Skew.	Kurt.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
<b>1. Cont.</b>	0.83	3.06	0.97	0.08	-0.67	1							
<b>2. F. Cont.</b>	0.83	2.50	0.84	0.42	-0.33	.29**	1						
<b>3. D. Cont.</b>	0.65	3.43	0.66	-0.35	-0.08	.10*	.21**	1					
<b>4. P. Cont.</b>	0.64	3.38	0.80	-0.20	-0.32	.38**	.26**	.15**	1				
<b>5. S. Ref.</b>	0.84	4.44	0.78	-0.32	-0.25	.03	.05	.22**	.16**	1			
<b>6. Insight</b>	0.78	4.11	0.83	-0.09	-0.08	.25**	.55**	-.07	-.06	.15**	1		
<b>7. S. Forg.</b>	0.86	4.26	1.63	-0.12	-0.81	.31**	.44**	.22**	.19**	.28**	.36**	1	
<b>8. Forg. O.</b>	0.84	4.08	1.18	-0.23	-0.14	.21**	-.02	.22**	-.08	.10*	-.04	-.01	1

Not. \* $p < 0.05$ , \*\* $p < 0.01$ , Skew.: Skewness, Kurt.: Kurtosis, Cont.: Contact, F. Cont.: Full Contact, D. Cont.: Dependent Contact, P. Cont.: Post-Contact, S. Ref.: Self-Reflection, S. Forg.: Self forgiveness, Forg. O.: Forgiveness of Others

#### 3.2. Mediation Analysis

Researchers conducted eight multimediation analyses that could separately evaluate the mediating effects of self-reflection and insight in the relationship between Gestalt contact disturbances and forgiveness. The first multimediation model examining the mediating roles of self-reflection and insight in the relationship between contact and self forgiveness is significant ( $R^2 = 0.29$ ,  $F(3.373) = 49.97$ ,  $p < .00625$ ), wherein it explains 29% of the variance related to self forgiveness. Accordingly, the total effect of contact on self forgiveness is negatively ( $B = -0.51$ ,  $SE = 0.08$   $t = -6.22$ ,  $p < .00625$ ) significant. Contact explains 9% of self forgiveness when mediator variables are not in the model ( $R^2 = 0.09$ ,  $F(1.375) = 38.63$ ,  $p < .00625$ ). After controlling for the mediating effects of self-reflection and insight, the direct effect of contact on self forgiveness was negatively ( $B = -0.34$ ,  $SE = 0.08$ ,  $t = -4.44$ ,  $p < .00625$ ) significant. Upon examining the direct connections in the model, the direct effect of contact on self-reflection was insignificant ( $B = 0.03$ ,  $SE = 0.04$ ,  $t = 0.67$ ,  $p = .503$ ) and that on insight was

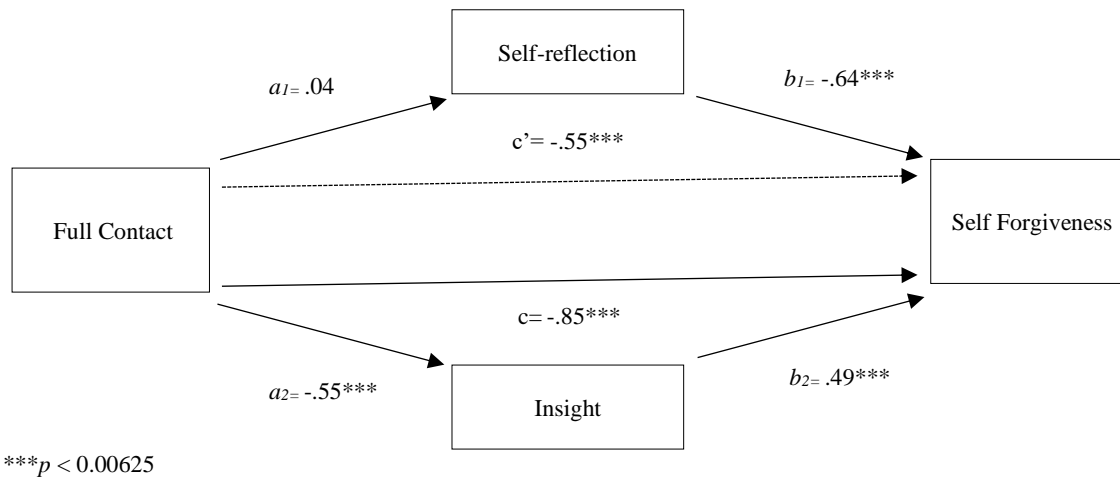
negatively ( $B = -0.22$ ,  $SE = 0.04$ ,  $t = -5.11$ ,  $p < .00625$ ) significant. Examining the effect of other variables, the direct effect of insight on self forgiveness was positively ( $B = 0.71$ ,  $SE = 0.09$ ,  $t = 7.92$ ,  $p < .00625$ ) significant and that of self-reflection on self forgiveness was negatively ( $B = -0.69$ ,  $SE = 0.09$ ,  $t = -7.43$ ,  $p < .00625$ ) significant. Bootstrapping analyses to determine the significance of indirect effects indicated that the total indirect effect of contact on self forgiveness through self-reflection and insight was negatively ( $B = -0.17$ ,  $SE = 0.04$ ,  $CI = -0.26$  to  $-0.09$ ) significant. The individual indirect effects of contact on self forgiveness through insight was negatively ( $B = -0.15$ ,  $SE = 0.04$ ,  $CI = -0.23$  to  $-0.09$ ) significant. Figure 1 presents these findings.



\*\*\* $p < 0.00625$

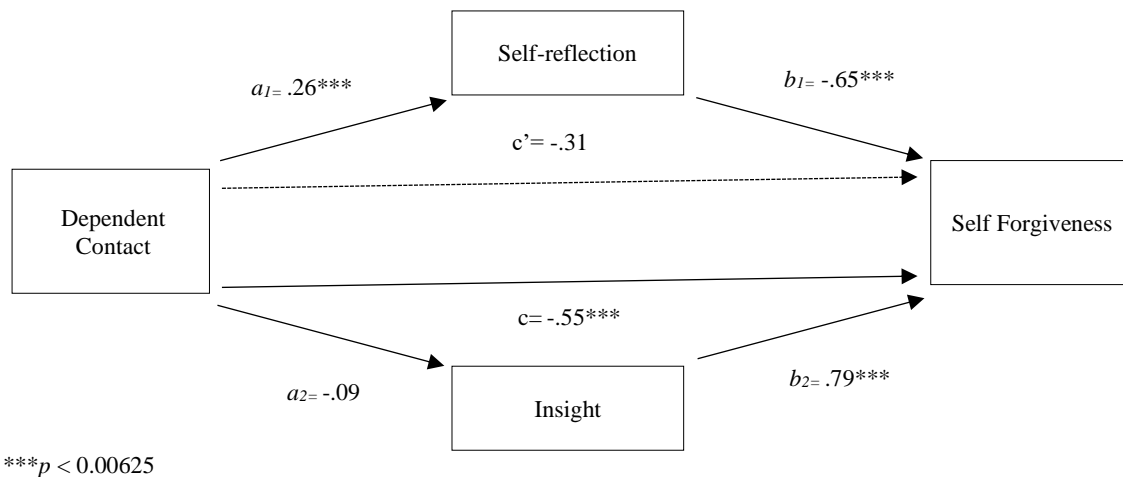
**Figure 1:** The Mediating Role of Self-Reflection and Insight in the Relationship Between Contact and Self Forgiveness

The model examining the mediating roles of self-reflection and insight in the relationship between full contact and self forgiveness is significant ( $R^2 = 0.30$ ,  $F_{(3,373)} = 54.25$ ,  $p < .00625$ ), wherein all variables explain 30% of the variance related to self forgiveness. Full contact alone explained 19% of the variance ( $R^2 = 0.19$ ,  $F_{(1,375)} = 89.57$ ,  $p < .00625$ ). Accordingly, the total effect of full contact on self forgiveness is negatively ( $B = -0.85$ ,  $SE = .09$ ,  $t = -9.46$ ,  $p < .00625$ ) significant. After controlling for the effect of mediating variables, it was determined that the direct effect of full contact on self forgiveness was negatively ( $B = -0.55$ ,  $SE = 0.10$ ,  $t = -5.42$ ,  $p < .00625$ ) significant. Additionally, the direct effect of full contact on self-reflection was insignificant ( $B = 0.04$ ,  $SE = 0.05$ ,  $t = .88$ ,  $p = .377$ ), whereas that on insight was negatively ( $B = -0.55$ ,  $SE = 0.04$ ,  $t = -12.88$ ,  $p < .00625$ ) significant. After controlling for the effect of other variables in the model, the direct effect of self-reflection on self forgiveness was negatively ( $B = -0.64$ ,  $SE = 0.09$ ,  $t = -6.94$ ,  $p < .00625$ ) significant and that of insight on self forgiveness was positively ( $B = 0.49$ ,  $SE = 0.10$ ,  $t = 4.77$ ,  $p < .00625$ ) significant. After bootstrapping analyses, it was found that the indirect effect of full contact on self forgiveness through self-reflection and insight variables was negatively ( $B = -0.30$ ,  $SE = 0.07$ ,  $CI = -0.45$  to  $-0.16$ ) significant. The individual indirect effect of full contact on self forgiveness through insight was negatively ( $B = -0.27$ ,  $SE = 0.07$ ,  $CI = -0.42$  to  $-0.14$ ) significant. Figure 2 presents these findings.



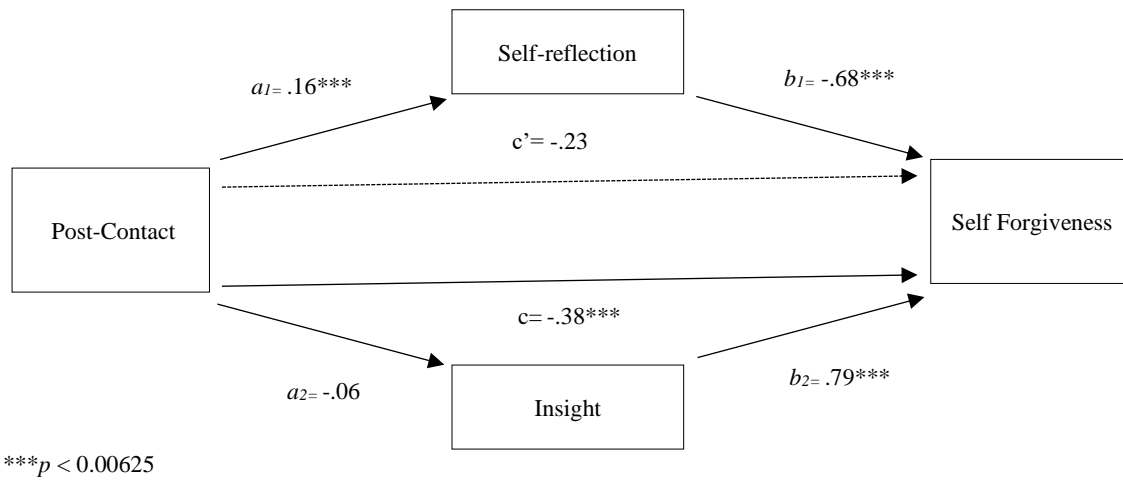
**Figure 2:** The Mediating Role of Self-Reflection and Insight in the Relationship Between Full Contact and Self Forgiveness

The model examining the mediating role of self-reflection and insight in the relationship between dependent contact and self forgiveness is significant ( $R^2 = 0.26$ ,  $F_{(3,373)} = 44.55$ ,  $p < .00625$ ), wherein it explains 26% of the variance related to the self forgiveness. Dependent contact alone explains 5% of self forgiveness ( $R^2 = 0.05$ ,  $F_{(1,375)} = 19.77$ ,  $p < .00625$ ). Accordingly, the total effect of dependent contact on self forgiveness is negatively ( $B = -0.55$ ,  $SE = 0.12$ ,  $t = -4.45$ ,  $p < .00625$ ) significant. When mediating variables were not included in the model, the direct effect of dependent contact on self forgiveness was insignificant ( $B = -0.31$ ,  $SE = 0.11$ ,  $t = -2.74$ ,  $p > .00625$ ). Additionally, the direct effect of dependent contact on insight was insignificant ( $B = -0.09$ ,  $SE = 0.06$ ,  $t = -1.34$ ,  $p > .00625$ ) and on self-reflection was positively ( $B = 0.26$ ,  $SE = 0.06$ ,  $t = 4.44$ ,  $p < .00625$ ) significant. After controlling for the effects of other variables in the model, the direct effect of insight on self forgiveness was positively ( $B = 0.79$ ,  $SE = 0.09$ ,  $t = 8.93$ ,  $p < .00625$ ) significant and that of self-reflection on self forgiveness was negatively ( $B = -0.65$ ,  $SE = 0.10$ ,  $t = -6.81$ ,  $p < .00625$ ) significant. As a result of bootstrapping analyses, the total indirect effect of dependent contact on self forgiveness through insight and self-reflection was negatively ( $B = -0.24$ ,  $SE = 0.07$ ,  $CI = -0.37$  to  $-0.12$ ) significant. The individual indirect effect of dependent contact on self forgiveness through self-reflection was negatively ( $B = -0.17$ ,  $SE = 0.05$ ,  $CI = -0.28$  to  $-0.09$ ) significant. Figure 3 presents these findings.



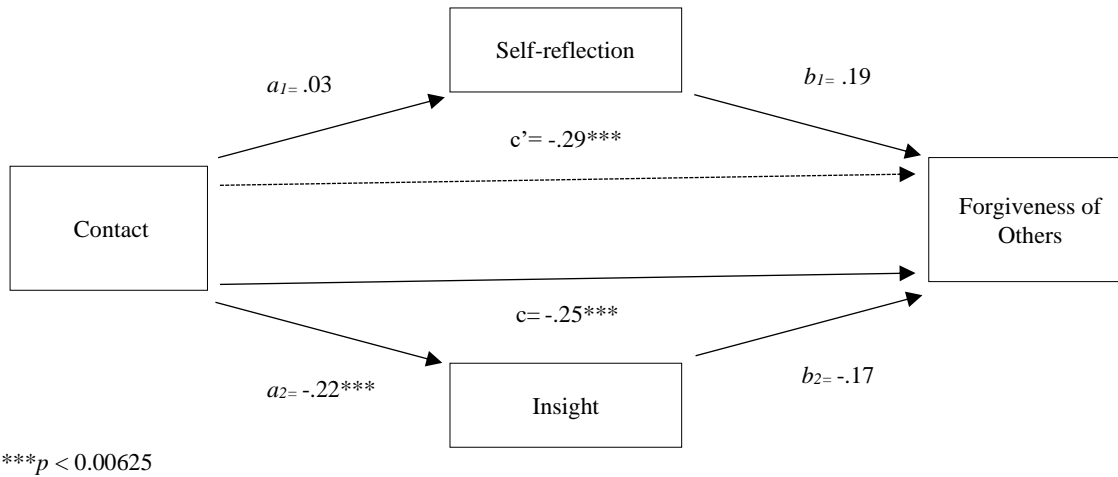
**Figure 3:** The Mediating Role of Self-Reflection and Insight in the Relationship Between Dependent Contact and Self Forgiveness

The model examining the mediating roles of self-reflection and insight in the relationship between post-contact and self forgiveness is significant ( $R^2 = 0.26$ ,  $F_{(3,373)} = 44.00$ ,  $p < .00625$ ), wherein it explains 26% of the variance related to self forgiveness. Accordingly, the total effect of post-contact on self forgiveness is negatively ( $B = -0.38$ ,  $SE = 0.10$ ,  $t = -3.72$ ,  $p < .00625$ ) significant. Post-contact explains 4% of self forgiveness when mediator variables are not in the model ( $R^2 = 0.04$ ,  $F_{(1,375)} = 13.83$ ,  $p < .00625$ ). After controlling for the mediating effects of self-reflection and insight, the direct effect of post-contact on self forgiveness was insignificant ( $B = -0.23$ ,  $SE = 0.09$ ,  $t = -2.51$ ,  $p > .00625$ ). Upon examining the direct connections in the model, the direct effect of post-contact on self-reflection was positively ( $B = 0.16$ ,  $SE = 0.05$ ,  $t = 3.11$ ,  $p < .00625$ ) significant and that on insight was insignificant ( $B = -0.06$ ,  $SE = 0.05$ ,  $t = -1.12$ ,  $p > .00625$ ). Examining the effect of other variables, the direct effect of insight on self forgiveness was positively ( $B = 0.79$ ,  $SE = 0.09$ ,  $t = 9.02$ ,  $p < .00625$ ) significant and that of self-reflection on self forgiveness was negatively ( $B = -0.68$ ,  $SE = 0.10$ ,  $t = -7.12$ ,  $p < .00625$ ) significant. Bootstrapping analyses to determine the significance of indirect effects indicated that the total indirect effect of post-contact on self forgiveness through self-reflection and insight was negatively ( $B = -0.15$ ,  $SE = 0.05$ ,  $CI = -0.26$  to  $-0.05$ ) significant. The individual indirect effects of post-contact on self forgiveness through self-reflection was negatively ( $B = -0.11$ ,  $SE = 0.04$ ,  $CI = -0.18$  to  $-0.04$ ) significant. Figure 4 presents these findings.



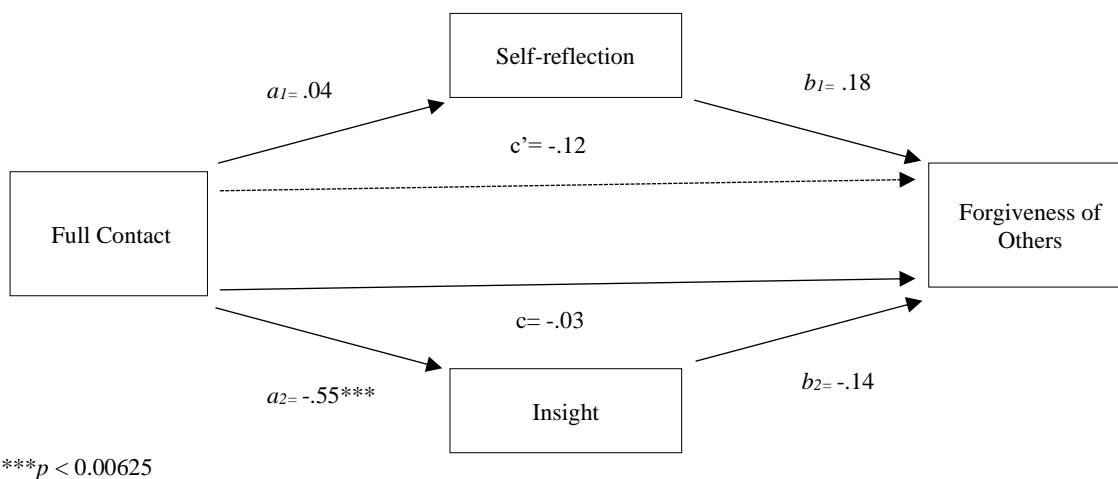
**Figure 4:** The Mediating Role of Self-Reflection and Insight in the Relationship Between Post-Contact and Self Forgiveness

The model examining the mediating roles of self-reflection and insight in the relationship between contact and forgiveness of others is significant ( $R^2 = 0.07$ ,  $F(3.373) = 8.84$ ,  $p < .00625$ ), wherein all variables explain 7% of the variance related to forgiveness of others. Contact alone explains 4% of the variance ( $R^2 = 0.04$ ,  $F(1.375) = 16.84$ ,  $p < .00625$ ). The total effect of contact on forgiveness of others is negatively ( $B = -0.25$ ,  $SE = 0.06$ ,  $t = -4.10$ ,  $p < .00625$ ) significant. After controlling for the effect of mediating variables, the direct effect of contact on forgiveness of others was negatively ( $B = -0.29$ ,  $SE = 0.06$ ,  $t = -4.65$ ,  $p < .00625$ ) significant. Additionally, the direct effect of contact on self-reflection was insignificant ( $B = 0.03$ ,  $SE = 0.04$ ,  $t = 0.67$ ,  $p > .00625$ ) and on insight was negatively ( $B = -0.22$ ,  $SE = 0.04$ ,  $t = -5.11$ ,  $p < .00625$ ) significant. The direct effect of self-reflection on forgiveness of others was insignificant ( $B = 0.19$ ,  $SE = 0.08$ ,  $t = 2.43$ ,  $p > .00625$ ) and that of insight on forgiveness of others was insignificant ( $B = -0.17$ ,  $SE = 0.07$ ,  $t = -2.24$ ,  $p > .00625$ ). After the bootstrapping analyses, the indirect effect of contact on forgiveness of others through self-reflection and insight variables was positively ( $B = 0.04$ ,  $SE = 0.02$ ,  $CI = 0.00$  to  $0.10$ ) significant. The individual indirect effect of contact on forgiveness of others through insight was positively ( $B = 0.04$ ,  $SE = 0.02$ ,  $CI = 0.00$  to  $0.01$ ) significant. Figure 5 presents these findings.



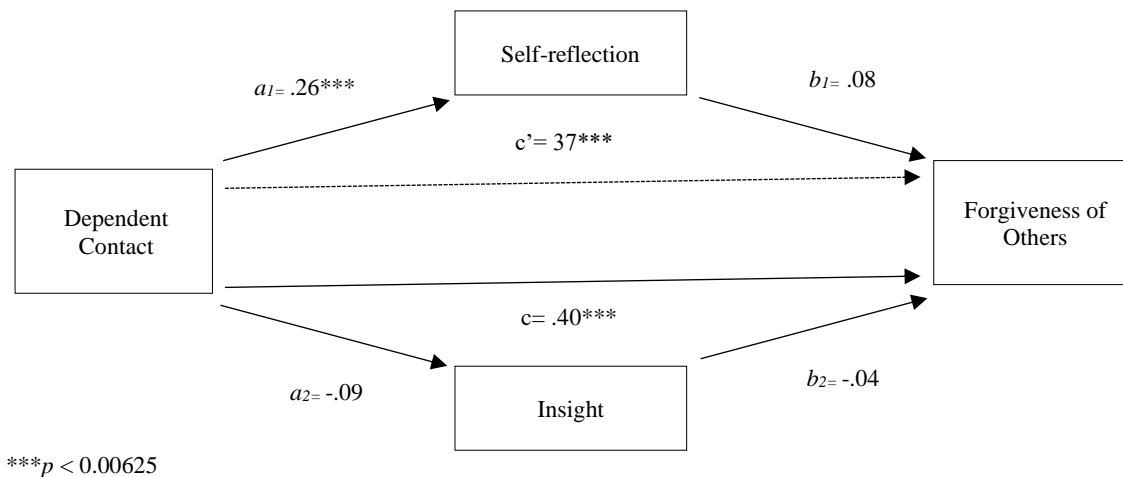
**Figure 5:** *The Mediating Role of Self-Reflection and Insight in the Relationship Between Contact and Forgiveness of Others*

The model examining the mediating roles of self-reflection and insight in the relationship between full contact and forgiveness of others is insignificant ( $R^2 = 0.02$ ,  $F(3.373) = 1.39$ ,  $p > .00625$ ), wherein it explains 2% of the variance related to forgiveness of others. Accordingly, the total effect of full contact on forgiveness of others is insignificant ( $B = -0.03$ ,  $SE = 0.07$ ,  $t = -0.43$ ,  $p > .00625$ ). Full contact explains 1% of forgiveness of others when mediator variables are not in the model ( $R^2 = 0.0005$ ,  $F(1.375) = .18$ ,  $p > .00625$ ). After controlling for the mediating effects of self-reflection and insight, the direct effect of full contact on forgiveness of others was insignificant ( $B = -0.12$ ,  $SE = 0.09$ ,  $t = -1.33$ ,  $p > .00625$ ). Upon examining the direct connections in the model, the direct effect of full contact on self-reflection was insignificant ( $B = 0.04$ ,  $SE = 0.05$ ,  $t = .88$ ,  $p > .00625$ ) and that on insight was negatively ( $B = -0.55$ ,  $SE = 0.04$ ,  $t = -12.88$ ,  $p < .00625$ ) significant. Examining the effect of other variables, the direct effect of insight on forgiveness of others was insignificant ( $B = -0.14$ ,  $SE = 0.09$ ,  $t = -1.60$ ,  $p > .00625$ ) and that of self-reflection on forgiveness of others was insignificant ( $B = 0.18$ ,  $SE = 0.08$ ,  $t = 2.21$ ,  $p > .00625$ ).



**Figure 6:** The Mediating Role of Self-Reflection and Insight in the Relationship Between Full Contact and Forgiveness of Others

The model examining the mediating roles of self-reflection and insight in the relationship between dependent contact and forgiveness of others is significant ( $R^2 = 0.05$ ,  $F(3.373) = 7.01$ ,  $p < .00625$ ), wherein all variables explain 5% of the variance related to forgiving others. Dependent contact alone explains 5% of the variance on forgiveness of others ( $R^2 = 0.05$ ,  $F(1.375) = 19.76$ ,  $p < .00625$ ). Accordingly, the total effect of dependent contact on forgiveness of others is positively ( $B = 0.40$ ,  $SE = 0.09$ ,  $t = 4.45$ ,  $p < .00625$ ) significant. After controlling for the effect of mediator variables, the direct effect of dependent contact on forgiveness of others was positively ( $B = 0.37$ ,  $SE = 0.09$ ,  $t = 4.03$ ,  $p < .00625$ ) significant. Additionally, the direct effect of dependent contact on self-reflection was positively ( $B = 0.26$ ,  $SE = 0.06$ ,  $t = 4.44$ ,  $p < .00625$ ) significant and that on insight was insignificant ( $B = -0.09$ ,  $SE = 0.06$ ,  $t = -1.34$ ,  $p > .00625$ ). The direct effects of self-reflection ( $B = 0.08$ ,  $SE = 0.08$ ,  $t = 1.05$ ,  $p > .00625$ ) and insight ( $B = -0.04$ ,  $SE = 0.07$ ,  $t = -0.60$ ,  $p > .00625$ ) on forgiveness of others were insignificant. After the bootstrapping analyses, the indirect effect of dependent contact on forgiveness of others through self-reflection and insight variables was insignificant ( $B = 0.03$ ,  $SE = 0.03$ ,  $CI = -0.02$  to  $0.08$ ). Figure 7 presents these findings.

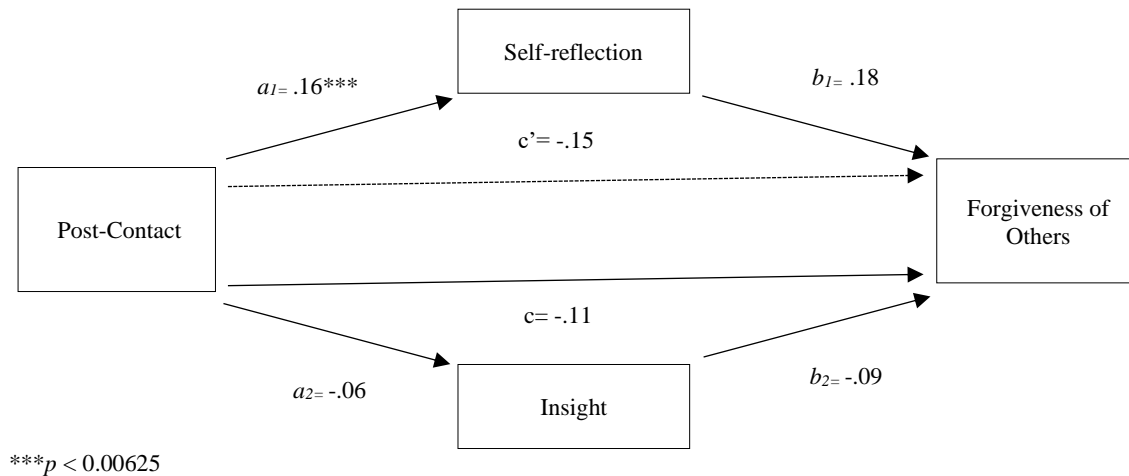


**Figure 7:** The Mediating Role of Self-Reflection and Insight in the Relationship Between Dependent Contact and Forgiveness of Others

The model examining the mediating roles of self-reflection and insight in the relationship between post-contact and forgiveness of others is insignificant ( $R^2 = 0.02$ ,  $F(3.373) = 2.77$ ,  $p > .00625$ ), wherein it explains 2% of the variance related to forgiveness of others. Accordingly, the total effect of post-contact on forgiveness of others is insignificant ( $B = -0.11$ ,  $SE = 0.08$ ,  $t = -1.49$ ,  $p > .00625$ ). Post-contact explains 1% of forgiveness of others when mediator variables are not in the model ( $R^2 = 0.01$ ,  $F(1.375) = 2.21$ ,  $p > .00625$ ). After controlling for the mediating effects of self-reflection and insight, the direct effect of post-contact on forgiveness of others was insignificant ( $B = -0.15$ ,  $SE = 0.08$ ,  $t = -1.91$ ,  $p > .00625$ ). Upon examining the direct connections in the model, the direct effect of post-contact on self-reflection was positively ( $B = 0.16$ ,  $SE = 0.05$ ,  $t = 3.11$ ,  $p < .00625$ ) significant and that on insight



was insignificant ( $B = -0.06$ ,  $SE = 0.05$ ,  $t = -1.12$ ,  $p > .00625$ ). Examining the effect of other variables, the direct effect of insight on forgiveness of others was insignificant ( $B = -0.09$ ,  $SE = 0.07$ ,  $t = -1.18$ ,  $p > .00625$ ) and that of self-reflection on forgiveness of others was insignificant ( $B = 0.18$ ,  $SE = 0.08$ ,  $t = 2.33$ ,  $p > .00625$ ). Figure 8 presents these findings.



**Figure 8:** *The Mediating Role of Self-Reflection and Insight in the Relationship Between Post-Contact and Forgiveness of Others*

#### 4. DISCUSSION and RESULT

This study examined the mediating role of self-reflection and insight in the relationship between Gestalt contact disturbances (contact, full contact, dependent contact, post-contact) and forgiveness (self forgiveness and forgiveness of others) among university students. Before the mediation analyses, correlation analyses were performed to examine the relationships between Gestalt contact disturbances and forgiveness. As a result of correlation analysis, contact was negatively associated with insight, forgiveness of self and others; while full contact was found to be negatively associated with insight and self forgiveness. Dependent contact is positively associated with self-reflection and forgiving others, and negatively associated with self forgiveness. Post contact was found to be positively associated with self-reflection, and negatively associated with self forgiveness. When the relationship between the mediators and dependent variables were examined, it was seen that self-reflection is negatively associated with self forgiveness, and positively associated with forgiving others. However, insight was positively associated with self forgiveness. Mediation analyses determined that insight had a mediating role in the relationship of contact and full contact with self forgiveness and in the relationship of contact with forgiveness of others. Analyses also showed that self-reflection had a mediating role in the relationship of dependent contact and post-contact with self forgiveness.

Findings from the mediation analyses showed that insight mediated the negative relationship between contact and self forgiveness. Contact is the external reflection of traits that one does not accept in their personality. Being uncomfortable with these traits may lead that person to use contact frequently. These people may have lower levels of self-acceptance regarding traits that they consider negative. However, people who are successful in the process of self forgiveness may have more positive self-evaluations, so they may use contact less. Supporting this relationship, one study found that there was a

negative relationship between contact and positive self-perception among university students (Akça et al., 2011). However, Gökmen and Çakır (2021) concluded that contact was positively associated with self forgiveness. No other study directly examines the relationship between contact and self forgiveness. The inconsistency between these findings may be due to the differences in the measurement tools on forgiveness. Therefore, there is a need for more studies to discuss different findings. The current study also showed that contact had a negative relationship with insight. Similarly, it is stated that people using projection could not develop insight (Polster, & Polster, 1973). Researchers also found a positive relationship between insight and self forgiveness. Contact is characterized by reflecting the negative characteristics of the individual to others around them. In other words, individuals who use this contact barrier experience their own negative characteristics as if they are coming from outside. This may prevent them from developing insight into the negative characteristics of the individual. Also, models developed to explain the forgiveness process state that the development of insight and understanding toward oneself, others, and a mistake is an important component of the forgiveness process (Enright & Fitzgibbons, 2000; Hargrave, 1994). Furthermore, self forgiveness leads to the insight that one needs to change (Flanagan, 1997). Based on our research findings, one can understand that contact and insight are important variables in self forgiveness.

This study determined that insight had a mediating role in the negative relationship between full contact and self forgiveness. Full contact disturbance characterized by retroreflection may cause an individual to approach themselves with an accusatory and negative attitude (Blumenthal, 2000; Prosnick & Woldt, 2015; Reynolds, 1996). Bugay (2010) touched upon the negative effect of an individual's self-blaming attitude in the process of self forgiveness. According to our results, full contact, characterized by retroreflection, is negatively associated with insight. Similarly, Perls (1969) stated that retroreflection does not take part in one's self-awareness. Individuals who frequently use retroreflection disturbance direct negative messages from the environment to themselves. This may cause them to focus on negative messages in their self-evaluation. Thus, the level of insight decreases as the individual moves away from more realistic assessments of themselves.

This study determined that self-reflection had a mediating role in the negative relationship between dependent contact and self forgiveness. This negative relationships between dependent contact, which is characterized by confluence and dependence on others, and self forgiveness can be evaluated through self-destructive attitudes. Also, it is mentioned that people with dependent personality traits tend to be self-destructive (Beattie, 1987). Similarly, the findings of an experimental study conducted with suicide survivors stated that self forgiveness is possible only when one stops blaming themselves (Testoni et al., 2019). However, self forgiveness, by definition, includes approaching oneself with positive attitudes. In this mediation model of the current study, self-reflection and dependent contact were also positively related. No research has been found in the literature that directly examines the relationships between self-reflection and dependent contact, but the relationships between these two concepts can also be evaluated through rumination and emotion regulation difficulties. The participants may have evaluated the self-reflection items as rumination. In parallel, there are some researchers who associate self-reflection with rumination (Nolen-Hoeksema, Wisco, & Lyubomirsky, 2008; Yavaşoğlu, 2010). According to Josefsson et al. (2017), ruminative thinking is a structure that triggers many compelling emotions and thoughts. In that case, individuals may be expected to experience emotion regulation difficulties due to these compelling emotions and thoughts. In such a situation, individuals may need another one at an intense level to regulate their emotions. This may be related to the development of dependent contact by the individuals. In support of this, Çakmak Tolan and Tümer (2022) concluded that

addiction in interpersonal relationships is positively related to emotion regulation difficulties. In the present study, it was also concluded that there is a negative relationship between self-reflection and self forgiveness. This negative relationship between self-reflection and self forgiveness is an unexpected result because it is stated that the process of self forgiveness involves self-reflective thinking (Woodyatt et al., 2017). The negative correlation obtained in the current study may be due to the fact that the scale evaluating forgiveness in the current study does not distinguish between true forgiveness and pseudo forgiveness. Self-reflection may be more positively related to the process of true forgiveness. In addition, the participants of the current study may have evaluated the self-reflection items as rumination. Consistent with this, some studies indicate that there are negative relationships between rumination and self forgiveness (Dixon et al., 2014; Onal, & Yalçın, 2017). As a result, the situations arising from the measurement tool and the evaluation of the items in the measurement tools by the participants may have affected the negative relationship obtained between self-reflection and self forgiveness.

It was found that self-reflection had a mediating role in the negative relationship between post-contact and self forgiveness. Post-contact is characterized by the withdrawal from the interpersonal relationships. Self forgiveness can also be evaluated in the context of interpersonal relationships. Individuals receive various messages from the others whom they made mistakes in the process of forgiving themselves. Consistent with this, there are research results that conclude that the positive and compassionate messages that individuals who make mistakes in their interpersonal relationships receive from the victims of the mistakes are effective in forgiving themselves (Hall & Fincham, 2008). However, the withdrawal from social interactions of individuals who use post contact in an unhealthy way may make it difficult for them to receive these healthy messages. In the current study, it was also concluded that post-contact and self-reflection was positively related. Negative relationships between post-contact and self-reflection can also be evaluated through rumination. The participants of the current study may have evaluated the items evaluating the concept of self-reflection as ruminative thinking. In parallel with this, it has been stated that individuals who engage in self-reflection think excessively about themselves and move away from healthy self-awareness (Yavaşoğlu, 2010). In support of this, it was observed that there were positive significant relationships between rumination and all Gestalt contact disturbances sub-dimensions (Tagay, Voltan Acar, & Cırcır, 2023).

It was determined that insight mediated the negative relationship between contact and forgiveness of others. Contact occurs when individuals reflects their negative characteristics that they do not want to have. In the process of forgiveness, a positive perspective develops towards other individuals who make mistakes over time (Enright, 1996). However, in the process of forgiving others, reflecting these negative characteristics on others may make it difficult to forgive, because constantly reflecting negative characteristics on other individuals may prevent the development of a positive perception about other individuals who make mistakes and the forgiveness process. It was also found that insight was negatively associated with forgiveness of others. One can evaluate the negative relationship between insight and forgiveness of others through the perceived severity of the mistake and the emotions related to it. Individuals developing a higher level of insight in self forgiveness process may make it easier for them to focus more on the effects of the mistake on themselves, and this may make it harder to forgive the person who made the mistake. Supporting this relationship, studies show that the perceived severity of the mistake has a negative relationship with forgiveness of others (Boon & Sulsky, 1997, Girard & Mullet, 1997; Hall & Fincham, 2008; Ohbuchi, Kameda, & Agarie, 1989; Şahin, 2013).

#### **4.1. Strengths**

No research has examined the mediating roles of self-reflection and insight in the relationship between Gestalt contact disturbances and forgiveness. Thus, it is believed that the current research will make a significant contribution to the literature. While self-reflection and insight can be used interchangeably in the literature, they were found related to Gestalt contact disturbances and forgiveness in different ways. Furthermore, our findings are valuable in terms of psychotherapy practices. Clinicians focus on factors that hinder the forgiveness process, such as Gestalt contact disturbances, and their support in making changes in these areas can facilitate the forgiveness process. Additionally, self-reflection has a mediating role in the relationship between some contact disturbances and forgiveness. It is understood that some theories and models regarding forgiveness also mention the importance of self-reflection processes. However, some researchers state that self-reflection contains negative components. In the research, it was understood that self-reflection showed negative relationships, especially with self forgiveness. In this respect, research findings also indicate that the nature of the self-reflection process may have different effects on individuals' self forgiveness processes. Based on these findings and the information in the literature, the current study is important in that it emphasizes that experts working in the field of self forgiveness should analyze the self-reflection processes of their clients and develop healthy self-reflection skills.

#### **4.2. Limitations**

There are some limitations of this study. Because the current study is correlational in nature, the cause and effect relationship cannot be established. Also, because the study was conducted with university students, the results may not be generalizable with the other samples. Another limitation is about the forgiveness variable. It was not made a distinction between true forgiveness and pseudo forgiveness. This may have affected the results. In addition, the majority of the participants of the current study are students of Dicle University and Kahramanmaraş İstiklal University. The fact that the participants were not selected from different regions and universities may have limited the heterogeneity of the sample and its adequate representation of the population.

#### **4.3. Suggestions**

Examining the relationships between contact disturbances and forgiveness will increase knowledge on the subject. It is recommended that future research test the findings from the current research using different methods, such as qualitative and longitudinal. In addition, although the theories and models point to the importance of insight in the process of forgiving others, in the current research, it was found that insight showed negative relationships with forgiving others. This might be due to the fact that the current study did not distinguish between true forgiveness and pseudo forgiveness. It is important to note this distinction in future research because true forgiveness and pseudo forgiveness may be related in different ways to the variables of this study.

The results of this research may also be useful for those working with university students in the fields of psychotherapy or psychological counselling. Self-reflection showed particularly negative relationships with self forgiveness. Although self-reflection is generally thought to be a healthy process, some researchers state that the self-reflection process can carry ruminative features and distract the person from healthy self-awareness. It may be recommended that experts working in the field focus on reducing unhealthy self reflection such as rumination and self-criticism, and on developing healthy self-

reflection skills in supporting clients' self forgiveness processes. In the current research, it was understood that insight showed positive relationships especially with self forgiveness. Based on this, it may be useful for experts to focus on developing insight in supporting self forgiveness processes in their clients.

#### **Declaration of Contribution Rate of Authors**

The authors contributed equally to the research.

#### **Disclosure Statement**

The authors report there are no competing interests to declare.

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