

Comparison of Cognitive Emotional Regulation Styles in Offender with Violent Crime and Nonviolent Crimes

Saleh Amiri¹, Mersedeh M^{1*} and Mahdiyeh Azizi²

¹Tehran University, Iran

²Allameh Tabatabaei University, Iran.

Received January 31, 2022; Revised February 21, 2022; Accepted February 24, 2022

ABSTRACT

Introduction: In recent years, the subject of violent crimes has been the focus of many scholars in the field of sociology and psychology and criminology. The purpose of this study was to compare the styles of cognitive emotional regulation in offender with violent crime and nonviolent crimes.

Materials and Methods: This was a descriptive comparative study. The statistical population of this study was all Fars Province prisoners. In order to do this research, 40offenders with violent crime and 40non-violent offenders were selected by available sampling method. After selecting the questionnaire, the cognitive emotional regulation questionnaire was distributed among them. Then, the data were analyzed using SPSS 21and two levels of descriptive (mean and standard deviation) and inferential (t-test the mean of two independent groups) were analyzed at 95%confidence level.

Results: The results of this study showed that there is a difference between the methods of emotional regulating of the perpetrators of violent and non-violent crimes. The perpetrators commit violent crimes more uncompromising methods than non-violent offenders ($P < 0.05$).

Conclusion: Considering the findings of this research and the methods of emotional regulation of offenders with violent and non-violent crimes, attention to these cases and the teaching of emotion regulation techniques to experts in this area is recommended.

Keywords: Cognitive emotional regulation, Offender, Violent and non-violent crime

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the issue of violent crimes has become the focus of many thinkers in the field of sociology and psychology and criminology. According to Durkheim, in all societies the percentage of people is not always subject to the law, and therefore we need punishment and imprisonment in all societies. But if this percentage exceeds its normal limit, it will face serious problems [1]. Criminal behavior, which from a psychological point of view is synonymous with concepts such as crime and delinquency, is considered a voluntary act and is detached from the person because he considers himself allowed to commit it in a given situation; Behavior that is contrary to the norms and values of society. Some of the crimes are known as violent crimes, which, apart from the quantitative relation between these crimes and non-violent crimes and what percentage of the total crimes committed in a society, their qualitative impact on norms such as security Society and public order are undeniable. Although the division between violent and non-violent

crimes and legislative action based on this has not been much considered in our criminal law system, but psychology has not considered paying attention to the difference between these two types of crimes, and therefore to explain its meanings has tried. In this context, violent crimes are mainly “intentional use of force, physical force, threats, inclinations against oneself or another or on a group or society that can be without harm or with harm, death, psychological damage and developmental disabilities or various deprivations” [2].

Corresponding author: Mersedeh M, Tehran University, Iran, Tel: +09112402042; E-mail: mersedehmazloumi@yahoo.com

Citation: Amiri S, Mersedeh M & Azizi M. (2022) Comparison of Cognitive Emotional Regulation Styles in Offender with Violent Crime and Nonviolent Crimes. J Forensic Res Criminal Investig, 3(2): 116-119.

Copyright: ©2022 Amiri S, Mersedeh M & Azizi M. This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License, which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited.

The crimes of murder, kidnapping and hostage-taking, rape and armed robbery can be considered as clear examples of this particular type of crime [3]. Although the tendency to commit a crime is due to several factors, some of which have an individual and internal origin and some have a social origin, but the personal characteristics of individuals and their ability or inability to adapt to stressful situations and psychological pressures play an effective role in crime has [4]. One of the psychological variables that seems to be associated with committing a crime is emotion regulation techniques. Emotion regulation is the process by which people modify their emotions consciously or unconsciously. Emotion regulation is not just about suppressing emotions, and one should not always be in a calm, still state of emotional arousal; It involves the processes of monitoring and changing a person's emotional experiences [5]. So, when the emotions get intense or prolonged or are not compatible with the situation, they will need to be adjusted. Emotional self-regulation is the desire to control internal states, control impulses and behaviors, and conform to criteria to achieve a goal. Emotional self-regulation involves the processes by which individuals systematize their emotions as well as how and how they express them [6]. In other words, emotion regulation strategies help individuals regulate negative emotional stimuli [7]. They have introduced 9 cognitive strategies in regulating emotions, which are: rumination, acceptance, self-blame, positive re-attention, focus on planning, reviewing and re-evaluating, monitoring, catastrophizing and blaming others [8]. In the field of the relationship between emotion and delinquency, studies have been conducted that show that there is a relationship between committing a crime and delinquency with emotion and methods of emotion regulation. For example, the results of Peach and Galtaniresearch [9] showed that delinquency is associated with excitement and this component along with impulse control is one of the predictors of delinquency in individuals. The results of Ghasemzadeh [10] research showed limited access to regulation strategies. Effective emotion can separate the guilty from the healthy. Gattfredson [11], in his 1990 book *A General Theory of Crime*, cited restraint as one of the root causes of crime, arguing that people who have less control over their emotions and manifest them in the form of impulsive behaviors, physical expression of emotions and low frustration tolerance, have a wide range of criminal behaviors [11]. In other words, in these people Independent and conscious choice of the act committed, for the reasons mentioned, has less opportunity to appear and is hidden in an envelope of emotional expressions. Despite the existence of studies that have compared the methods of emotion regulation between criminals and non-criminals, but a study conducted by researchers to compare the methods of emotion regulation in people who commit violent and non-violent crimes was not found. Also, considering that the statistics show that violent crimes are also spreading in our society, it seems necessary

to find the factors that affect violent crimes. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to compare the methods of emotion regulation in criminals who commit violent and non-violent crimes.

ANALYSIS METHOD

The present study was a descriptive causal-comparative study. The statistical population of this study consisted of prisoners in Fars's province. In order to conduct this research, 40 criminals who committed violent crimes and 40 criminals who committed non-violent crimes were selected by available sampling method. Since most researchers recommended at least 30 subjects in each comparison group, the researchers also used 40 subjects in each group. The criterion for entering the research was: having a crime and having natural intelligence and the criterion for leaving was not completing the questionnaires by the subject. In order to observe ethical considerations in relation to the information gathering community, the researchers carefully monitored the completion of the questionnaire and provided the necessary explanations in this regard to the participants. These explanations included awareness of the right to choose to participate in the research, confidentiality of personal information, and the importance of participating in the research. The information was related to the subject of the research. And standard deviation, and in the inferential statistics section, Kolmogorov-Smirnov test and independent t-test were used. Tools = used in this study were: Gransfky Emotion Regulation Questionnaire: The Cognitive Emotion Regulation Questionnaire was developed by Granfski. It is a multidimensional questionnaire and a self-report tool that has a special form for adults and children. Garanovsky [12] reported good validity for this questionnaire. The questionnaire consists of 36 five-point graded questions (from always to never) that all four questions assess one factor and a total of nine factors to blame, self-blame, blame others, catastrophic, rumination, refocusing on admission planning, evaluates positive focus and positive evaluation [12]. The Persian form of this scale has been validated by Samani and Jokar [13]. In this questionnaire, individuals are asked express their response to threatening experiences and stressful life events they have just experienced by answering questions. Finally, from the sum of the individual's responses to the subscales related to acceptance, refocusing on planning, positive evaluation and positive focus, adaptive strategies in emotion regulation are obtained, and from the sum of the individual scores in the subscales related to self-blame, blaming others., Catastrophic and rumination, uncompromising strategies in emotion regulation are shown [13].

FINDINGS

The number of participants in this study was 80 men who were divided into two groups of criminals who committed violent crimes and criminals who committed non-violent

crimes. The mean age for the group of criminals with violent crimes was 32 ± 10.34 and for the group of criminals with non-violent crimes was 33.9 ± 9.87 . The results of mean scores

and standard deviation in the two groups are presented in Table 1 along with the results of t-test.

Table 1. Mean and standard deviation related to emotion regulation methods in criminals who commit violent and non-violent crimes.

Scales	The group committed violent crimes		The group committed non-violent crimes		Comparison	
	Average	Standard deviation	Average	Standard deviation	Score t	Probability value
Compromised strategies	43/24	6/76	38/34	7/49	2/436	0/156
Uncompromising strategies	39/64	8/46	52/75	9/58	6/741	0/02

As shown in **Table 1**, the results of data analysis showed that there is a difference between emotion regulation methods in criminals with violent and non-violent crimes, and people who commit violent crimes use more uncompromising strategies than criminals with non-violent crimes. But there was no significant difference between the two groups between the compromised strategies.

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to compare emotion regulation methods between perpetrators of violent crimes and non-violent crimes. The results of this study showed that criminals with violent crimes use more uncompromising strategies to regulate their emotions compared to criminals who commit violent crimes. The results of this study are in line with Robertson’s findings in 2014, which showed that destructive emotion regulation methods are associated with aggression in criminals [14] and Pitch and Galton results, which showed that delinquency is associated with emotion. Also, in line with the results of the present study, Qasemzadeh and his colleagues found that difficulty in regulating emotion is one of the problems of women prisoners and this issue leads to failure in managing the emotional states of these people. In explaining the results of the present study, it should be said that emotional skills include a wide range of dimensions that the occurrence of defects in each of these dimensions is associated with the occurrence of specific emotional disorders. According to research, the dimensions involved in the occurrence of violence and aggression are associated with deficiencies in some emotion regulation skills, such as catastrophic reading, blaming others and rumination, all of which are uncompromising methods of emotion regulation [15,16]. In this regard, Moriarty and his colleagues say that if criminals are more careful in labeling the emotional states of others, they will be able to understand and recognize their own and others' emotions by controlling anger and impulsivity, and thus their problems in controlling fear. Meaningful

relationships with your friends are resolved peacefully. When a person is pressured into committing a crime, effective emotional management reduces the incidence of crime, especially violent crime. In fact, the ability to manage emotions allows a person to use appropriate coping strategies in situations where the risk of crime is high. People with high emotional well-being are more likely to anticipate the needs of others. They better understand the unwanted pressures of others and control their emotions better, and as a result show more resistance to the crime and the problems that result from it [17]. In addition, because people with poor ability to regulate emotion in social interactions and emotional relationships also have difficulty accessing social interactions that can deter antisocial behaviors, this may be the case. Make the repetition of violent crime more stable in them [18]. In other words, one of the mechanisms for the formation of consolidated concepts of social norms, which is the individual's enjoyment of social interactions, causes these people to be disturbed and as a result have less opportunity to assess the extent to which their behavior conforms to the norms of the society in which they live have.

CONCLUSION

Crime at the moment of occurrence is an inherently psychological phenomenon. It cannot be claimed that all perpetrators have low levels of emotion regulation, but in explaining the results, it can be pointed out that in conceptualizing emotion regulation strategies, abilities have been proposed that can affect the quality of social relations and assist in delaying and controlling impulses and desires. In people with low levels of emotion regulation, such strategies are more likely to be exposed to social incompatibility, and as a result of this incompatibility, they may have more difficulty in satisfying their desires. The results obtained, in addition to specifying that in explaining the commission of crime should also consider the strategies of emotion regulation of individuals as an influential factor, the importance of teaching these strategies in families,

educational centers and correctional education in order to prevent premature ejaculation. Therefore, developing an emotional skills training program can teach appropriate and effective strategies to the individual. This program can be injected into existing intervention programs in the field of therapies based on cognitive processing of emotional information and increase its effectiveness. At the theoretical level, the findings of the present study led to the development of new hypotheses and perspectives in crime prevention studies, which are important for criminal psychologists, criminologists and lawyers. However, in some of the laws and regulations of the Iranian judiciary, such as Articles 203 and 286 of the Code of Criminal Procedure adopted in 1392, and Articles 47 and 64 of the Executive Regulations of the Prisons and Security and Educational Measures approved in 1384 to psychological issues such as the formation of criminal records or presence And the use of experts in this field has been mentioned, but it seems that this amount of use and application of psychological topics should be on a broader level and by involving the whole process of trial as well as highlighting and independent the role of experts in the field of psychology and related sciences. In addition, given the importance of this discussion, the training of skilled professionals aware of interdisciplinary issues and the development of sciences such as forensic psychology and criminal psychology is more than necessary.

REFERENCES

- Ullrich S, Marneros A (2004) Dimensions of personality disorders in offenders. *Crim Behav Ment Health* 14(3): 202-213.
- Caspi A, Moffitt TE, Silva PA, Stouthamer LM, Krueger RF, et al. (1994) Are some people crime-prone? Replications of the personality-crime relationship across countries, genders, races, and methods. *Criminology* 32(2): 163-196.
- Ferguson CJ, Cruz AM, Martinez D, Rueda SM, Ferguson DE, et al. (2008) Personality, parental, and media influences on aggressive personality and violent crime in young adults. *J Aggress Maltreatment Trauma* 17(4): 395-414.
- Garousi M, Alilou M (2007) A comparison of personality characteristics and coping styles in criminal and normal subjects. *J Contpsy* 2(1): 25-31.
- Grandey AA (2000) Emotional regulation in the workplace: A new way to conceptualize emotional labor. *J Occup Health Psych* 5(1): 95.
- Hariri AR, Holmes A ((2006) Genetics of emotional regulation: The role of the serotonin transporter in neural function. *Trends Cogn Sci* 10(4): 182-191.
- Calkins SD, Gill KL, Johnson MC, Smith CL (1999) Emotional reactivity and emotional regulation strategies as predictors of social behavior with peers during toddlerhood. *Soc Dev* 8(3): 310-334.
- Garnefski N, Kraaij V, Spinhoven P (2001) Negative life events, cognitive emotion regulation and emotional problems. *Pers Individ Differ* 30(8): 1311-1127.
- Peach HD, Gaultney JF (2013) Sleep, impulse control, and sensation-seeking predict delinquent behavior in adolescents, emerging adults, and adults. *J Adole Health* 53(2): 293-309.
- Ghasemzadeh M, Jafari H, Ahmadi (2018) Effect of psychological factor on crime and the necessity to pay attention to it in legal systems and judicial processes (studying and comparing women offended and healthy in the city of Esfahan. *J Pazhu* 9(25): 69-85.
- Gottfredson MR, Hirschi T (1990) A general theory of crime. Stanford University Press.
- Garnefski N, Kraaij V (2007) The cognitive emotion regulation questionnaire. *Eur J Psy Asses* 3: 141-149.
- Samani S, Sadeghi L (2010) Psychometric properties of the cognitive emotion regulation questionnaire. *Psy Methods Models* 1(1): 51-62.
- Robertson T, Daffern M, Bucks RS (2014) Maladaptive emotion regulation and aggression in adult offenders. *Psychol Crime Law* 20(10): 933-954.
- Berkowitz L (1990) On the formation and regulation of anger and aggression: A cognitive-neoassociationistic analysis. *Am Psychol* 45(4): 494.
- Musher-Eizenman DR, Boxer P, Danner S, Dubow EF, Goldstein SE, et al. (2004) Social-cognitive mediators of the relation of environmental and emotion regulation factors to children's aggression. *Aggress Behav* 30(5): 389-408.
- Moriarty N, Stough C, Tidmarsh, Dennisin S (2001) Deficit in emotional intelligence underlying adolescent set offending. *J Adole* 24: 743-751.
- Baron SW (2003) Self-control, social consequences, and criminal behavior: Street youth and the general theory of crime. *J Res Cri Deli* 40(4): 403-425.