

The Mediating Role of Difficulties in Positive and Negative Emotion Regulation in the Relationship between Early Maladaptive Schemas and Cyber Dating Violence

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Abstract

Introduction: Cyber dating violence includes all kinds of words, attitudes and behaviors that individuals use against their partners in order to harm the partner in the digital environment. In the present study, it was aimed to examine the mediating role of difficulties in positive emotion regulation and negative emotion regulation in the relationship between early maladaptive schemas and cyber dating violence.

Method: The sample of the study consists of 298 individuals between the ages of 18-30 who are in a romantic relationship or have had a romantic relationship in the last 1 year. The data of the research was collected through Demographic Information Form, Cyber Dating Abuse Questionnaire, Young Schema Questionnaire-Short Form, Difficulty in Emotion Regulation Scale-Short Form and Multidimensional Measure of Difficulties in the Regulation of Positive Emotions.

Results: Pearson Correlation Analysis was used to determine the relationship between early maladaptive schemas, difficulty in positive emotion regulation, negative emotion regulation and applied and exposed cyber dating violence. As a result of the statistical analyzes, significant relationships were found between four schema areas, disconnection&rejection, impaired autonomy and performance, other-directedness, overvigilance&inhibition, and the digital dating violence both applied and exposed. Mediation analysis revealed that difficulty in positive emotion regulation had a partial mediator role in digital dating violence applied and exposed to four schema domains. In addition, a partial mediating role of difficulty in regulating negative emotion was found between the areas of disconnection&rejection and others-directedness schema areas and the digital dating violence exposed.

Dissusion: Individuals with an early life in an unhappy family develop schemas that cause them to turn to strategies such as fear, suppression and sabotage instead of feeling guilty for experiencing and enjoying positive emotions. At this point, the sabotage can be seen as the person being exposed to cyberbullying and/or being a cyberbully. The fact that digital dating violence seen in romantic relationships occurs especially through positive emotion regulation strategies reveals a need for how a positive emotion can be regulated especially in the adolescence and emerging adulthood group.

Conclusion: The association of early maladaptive schemas and emotion regulation difficulties with digital dating violence suggests that clinicians may be effective in developing interventions for emotion regulation skills. In particular, in terms of regulation of positive emotions, impulse control, goal-oriented behavior, ability to activate emotional strategies, acceptance of emotions and regulation of target-oriented emotions and behaviors will be important therapeutic targets. Finally, awareness of cyber dating violence, cyberbullying and/or being a cyberbully that can be seen in adolescence and emerging adulthood group should be increased and people should be aware of their possible victimization.

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