



The Impact of Emotion Regulation Strategy on Help-Seeking Behavior of Dating Violence Experience

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Abstract. The stage of early adulthood in human development is to establish romantic relationships with the opposite sex. Therefore, having a romantic relationship is essential for individuals at that age. However, not all relationships would stay healthy; some cases indicated violence. Emotional violence cannot be seen in real life, and even the victims do not feel that what they are experiencing is a form of emotional violence. This study aimed to look at the impact of emotion regulation on victims of dating violence to find formal help-seeking. The data was collected from 240 respondents spread across Indonesia using the Behavior variables seeking help measured using the General Help-seeking Questionnaire – Original Version (GHSQ) scale and Emotion Regulation Questionnaire (ERQ) scale as measuring instruments. Multiple regression analysis using SPSS was performed to investigate two emotion regulation strategies that influenced the help-seeking behavior of dating violence victims. There was a statistically significant simulant influence of emotion regulation on formal help-seeking behavior with $p < 0.01$. However, on partial analysis, only cognitive reappraisal strategies were statistically significant; therefore, this study found the contribution of cognitive reappraisal strategy towards formal help-seeking behavior among victims of dating violence.

Keywords: dating, emotional regulation, emotional violence, formal help-seeking behavior

1 Background

Emerging adults best describe the search for romantic relationships with the opposite sex [1]. explained that exploration was a characteristic of Emerging adults. The need to establish relationships with the opposite sex became common in that age range; this development task led to the success of the following development task so that healthily fulfilling these needs became essential. However, in this case, if violence occurs, of course, the demands of building healthy relationships were not achieved. Dating violence was a phenomenon of violence that was rampant; the World Health Organization [2] defined violence from intimate partners (intimate partner violence) as all behaviors

committed by partners that cause physical, psychological, or sexual injuries in romantic relationships. The perpetrator of violence, who is the partner of the victim, has the goal of showing control over his partner [16].

Most violent cases in dating began with a request for evidence of affection from one of the partners. Such a request would pressure their partner's psychological aspect, which could happen repeatedly. This was a form of emotional violence. Emotional violence did not seem to have a tangible form like physical violence, but the impact felt by the individual was the same. However, physical violence was often not felt until the individual was trapped in an unhealthy relationship when dating.

Emotional violence was a form of interpersonal violence that includes all forms of non-physical violence and suffering caused by non-verbal and verbal actions. Emotional violence was done deliberately and manipulatively by controlling it. This often occurred in conjunction with other types of violence but could also occur separately. Emotional violence could have the form of discouraging, threatening, isolating, public embarrassment, endless criticism, coercive control, and gaslighting. Emotional violence often lasted longer than physical violence because there was a gradual destruction of the victim's confidence and self-esteem. Victims might be afraid to talk to anyone about the violence because the perpetrator had convinced them that no one would trust them, or they were threatened with severe consequences if they did so. The victim's perception of the situation is unrealistic. Usually, the victim did not recognize or recognize emotional violence, and they developed coping mechanisms such as denial and minimizing their natural violence as usual. This shows that the victim has difficulty in seeking help related to the condition they are experiencing.

Seeking help for psychological problems was defined as seeking help or support from others when depressed. Sources of support can be informal (e.g., parents, friends) or formal (e.g., psychologists, counselors, doctors). Search for help is a way of coping, using communication with supporting sources to gain insight into a problem and information, advice, or treatment for a problem [3]. Individuals who had psychological problems were expected to have a desire to seek help to help reduce the burden felt. Furthermore, emerging adults were one of the age ranges that most wanted to seek help from others when they had problems [4], [5], [7].

In seeking help, individuals needed to understand the emotional stimulus felt when they experience it. Individuals need a process to manage emotions and respond in the right way to achieve adaptive problem-solving. Inappropriate coping methods in dealing with these violent conditions were denial and ignoring the things experienced to protect themselves. This way, individuals coping could lead to how individuals managed emotions and found a way out to respond to perceived emotional distress; this was referred to as emotional regulation.

Regulation referred to the overall ability and strategies that affect the emotional experience, also called the regulation of influence [8]. In this study, we emphasize the crucial role of emotional regulation in the process of seeking help, enlightening the audience about its significance in the context of dating violence. Emotions were essential for individuals because that could be signals that give them messages, such as showing them when they were in danger or when something goes according to their wishes

[17]. In this case, emotional regulation could predicted how individuals ultimately respond to the "danger" of the violence they feel during the courtship period. The description above suggested the way victim use their emotion regulation strategies could influenced the process of individuals seeking help especially in formal way, like experts when experiencing violence in a relationship.

2 Method

2.1 Participants

This research involved adults who were in their age that concluded in emerging adulthood age with a range of 18 - 29 years, had a romantic relationship, and were indicated to experience emotional violence in dating. Research respondents will be recruited and will fill out research questionnaires online. This research sampling technique used non-probability sampling, which is called purposive sampling. In order to matched the need to meet the criteria for respondents as victims of violence who would be screened using FPAS measuring instruments and have experienced harshness during the dating period.

2.2 Instrument

All measuring instruments used in this study are in the form of self-reports. The things measured in this study are: 1) Demographic data; 2) experiences as victims of psychological violence; 3) emotional regulation; and 4) behavior seeking help.

The demographic data collected will ask for data on age, gender, level of education, ethnicity, occupation, status of residence with whom, length of dating relationships, forms of violence experienced, respondents' perceptions of victims of violence, psychological assistance searches carried out, and those who provide support for help.

For identifying victims of violence in dating relationships, this study uses the Follingstad Psychological Aggression Scale (FPAS). Seventeen categories describe the types of violence experienced, namely threats/intimidation; destabilizing perceptions of reality; isolation/ monopolization; treatment as inferior; establishment of power through refusals; verbal abuse/criticism; jealousy/suspicion; monitoring/checking; rigid gender roles; control over personal behavior; withholding emotionally/physically; public embarrassment/humiliation; emotionally wounding behavior around fidelity; lying/deception; guilt-induction/blaming; manipulation; and attacking attractiveness/sexuality. There are three levels in the 17 categories, namely mild, moderate, and severe psychological abuse. Response options on items using the Likert scale 1 – 10, where one is given a label of no violence at all (in this case, it is called mild psychological abuse), and intervals of 2 – 9 are given a moderate psychological abuse label. The number 10 indicates extreme psychological abuse [18].

Behavior variables seeking help are measured using the General Help-seeking Questionnaire – Original Version (GHSQ) scale [9]. This scale includes the intention to seek help from 10 sources, including if the respondent does not seek help from anywhere. Respondents will provide a suitability rating on a scale of 1 – 7 for each source of assistance. The sources of assistance given by the rating are spouses, friends, parents,

other family members, mental health experts, telephone assistance services, doctors, religious leaders, other assistance, and if respondents do not seek help.

Emotional regulation variables are curated using Gross and John's [13] Emotion Regulation Questionnaire (ERQ) scale. The ERQ is divided into individual emotional regulation strategies: cognitive reappraisal and expressive suppression. This scale consists of 10 items, with a Likert scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). Six items measure cognitive reappraisal, and four items measure expressive suppression.

2.3 Data

The resulting data will be analyzed using a quantitative approach. The research method used is multiple regression analysis, a statistical technique to analyze patterns of intervariable relationships to determine independent variables' direct or indirect influence on bound variables [11].

2.4 Procedure

An overview of the stage research process and a review of research ethics are prepared as a requirement for this research. The stages of data collection implementation are as follows:

- Participants are asked to fill out the informed consent sheet they get online. If participants are willing to take part in the research, they must fill out this sheet to be able to fill in other measuring instruments. If not willing, participants are free not to proceed to fill out the questionnaire.
- Before filling out the questionnaire, researchers have included a "trigger warning" related to the possibility of negative emotions related to questions and statements based on the experience of violence in courtship. Researchers also attached a hotline and telephone access if respondents needed it. Moreover, you can stop filling out the questionnaire if you do not want to continue.
- After filling out the approval sheet, participants will fill out a series of questionnaires, namely 1) demographic data questionnaire, 2) experience as a victim of psychological violence, 3) emotional regulation, and 4) behavior seeking help.

3 Result and Discussion

The distribution of data is still in the process starting from July and will be closed at the end of August with the gradual informed consent given in the questionnaire; there is also a trigger warning related to the respondent's willingness if they do not want to continue the research referring to the unpleasant experience experienced by the respondent. The collected data has reached 240 respondents with the following information:

Table 1. Research Demographic Data

No	Demographic Data	Amount	Presentation
1	Gender		240
	Female	151	62.90%
	Male	89	37.10%
2	Education		240
	SMA/sederajat	147	61.30%
	S1	4	1.70%
	D3/D4	88	36.70%
	S2	1	0.40%
3	Long Time Dating		240
	Less than one year	47	19.60%
	1 to 3 years	177	73.80%
	3 to 5 years	14	5.80%
	More than five years	2	0.80%
4	Work		240
	University Student	138	57.50%
	Entrepreneur	16	6.70%
	Private Employee	78	32.50%
	Teacher	4	1.70%
	Health Workers	2	0.80%
	Other	2	0.80%
5	Age		240
	18	3	1.30%
	19	6	2.50%
	20	34	14.20%
	21	59	24.60%
	22	37	15.40%
	23	30	12.50%
	24	21	8.80%
	25	10	4.20%
	26	24	10.00%
	27	9	3.80%
	28	6	2.50%
	29	1	0.40%

The demographic data in the table above shows an exciting picture of the respondents. Where in terms of the proportion of victims of violence in courtship, based on gender, from this study, there are still more female respondents compared to male respondents. It is known that victims of violence, especially in courtship, are still dominated by women. This can happen because women have a greater tendency to be victims of violence and tend to report more than men. However, it does not rule out the possibility that violence in dating is very likely to occur in men. The most common violence based on records is physical violence, at 43%, followed by sexual violence, at 35%, and only followed by other types of violence, such as emotional violence and economic and activity restrictions. Of this type of violence, the most common in men is emotional violence.

Table 2. ANOVA

	Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1331.922	2	665.961	34.311	<.001 ^b
	Residual	4600.062	237	19.410		
	Total	5931.983	239			

a. Dependent Variable: Formal Help-seeking Behavior

b. Predictors: (Constant), Cognitive Reappraisal, Emotional Suppression

Table 2 obtained the result of p-value <0.05; this showed that regulating emotions through cognitive reappraisal and expressing emotions significantly affects the behavior of formal help-seeking.

Table 3. Contribution

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.474a	.225	.218	4.40563	1.550

a. Predictors: (Constant), Cognitive Reappraisal, Emotional Suppression

b. Dependent Variable: Formal Help-seeking Behavior

Based on Table 3, R squared at 0.225, or 22.5 %, the contribution of emotional regulation to formal help-seeking behavior. Meanwhile, 77.5% were influenced by other factors not studied in this study.

Table 4. Coefficients Regression

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	Constant)	-.851	1.497		-.568	.570
	ES	.161	.114	.120	1.408	.160
	CR	.360	.081	.378	4.440	<.001

a. Dependent Variable: Formal Help-seeking behavior

Based on Table 4, separately analyzed, the result showed that cognitive reappraisal significantly influenced formal help-seeking behavior. Seeking help is a way to overcome, using communication with supporting sources to gain insight into a problem and information, advice, or treatment for a problem [12]. Individuals who have psychological problems are expected to have a desire to seek help to help reduce the burden felt. For victims who experience violence, asking for help becomes something that requires more significant consideration because of the treatment received before. Victims who have previously been threatened and under pressure from their partners report that they are made to feel embarrassed, underestimated, or humiliated by perpetrators of violence, so it becomes challenging to find help.

In seeking help, individuals need to understand the emotional stimulus they experience. They need a process to manage emotions and respond in the right way to achieve adaptive problem-solving. The individual's coping with situations caused by unpleasant

emotional stimuli can lead to how they manage emotions and find a way to respond to the perceived pressure. Emotional regulation is the overall ability and strategy that affects emotional experience [8]. According to Gross [13], emotions can lead to a series of coordinated behaviors, experiences, and physiological responses that affect a person's response to the challenges and opportunities he perceives. English [14] reveals that emotions arise when a person faces a situation and interprets it as a relevant goal so that the individual's meaning in the situation that leads to that goal is what directs to emotions. Emotions are essential for individuals because they can be signals that give them messages, such as showing when individuals are in danger or when something goes according to their wishes [17]. In this case, emotional regulation can predict how ultimately individuals respond to the "danger" of the violence they feel during the courtship period.

Lack of ability to regulate emotions can result in negative emotional excitement and inaccurate and adaptive identification of emotions. In this study, the strategy in emotion regulation focuses on cognitive reappraisal, which is an individual strategy for managing emotions based on the antecedent of the cause. An antecedent-focused strategy refers to the things we do before the tendency of emotional responses has become fully active and has occurred, changing our peripheral behavior and physiological responses. The research results show a positive direction of cognitive reappraisal toward the behavior of seeking help. This shows that the more focused the individual is on the cause of the emergence of emotional stimulus, the more likely the individual is to seek help when experiencing violence. Cognitive reassessment will provide cognitive changes that involve interpreting potentially emotional situations by changing their emotional impact [15].

4 Conclusion

The efforts of victims of dating violence, particularly those enduring emotional abuse, to seek help were significantly influenced by their use of emotional regulation through Cognitive Reappraisal strategies. Emotional regulation involved two main strategies: Cognitive Reappraisal and emotional suppression, which account for 22.5% of the variance in victims' efforts to seek professional help. However, it was primarily the Cognitive Reappraisal strategy that impacted these efforts. This strategy affected the coordination of behavior, experiences, and physiological responses, thereby shaping how victims reacted to perceived challenges and opportunities. Effective emotion regulation enabled victims to select appropriate strategies. According to this study, Cognitive Reappraisal, which involved managing emotions based on their antecedent causes, directed victims to seek professional help when experiencing dating violence. This strategy focused on antecedents and actions taken before emotional responses became fully active, influencing behavior and physiological responses. Consequently, victims were more likely to choose positive behaviors in response to their challenges.

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