



Research paper

## The Mediating Role of Religious Orientation in the Relationship between Cognitive Emotion Regulation Strategies and Corona Anxiety

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### Abstract

The aim of this study was to investigate mediating role of religious orientation in the relationship between cognitive emotion regulation and corona anxiety. The research design was descriptive -correlational of path analysis type and which 480 were selected by convenience sampling. They responded to Corona anxiety scale of Alipour and et al, cognitive emotion regulation questionnaire of Garnefski and Kraaij and religious orientation scale of Allport and Ross. Statistical analysis of data was performed using structural equation model of path analysis type. The results showed there was a negative correlation between adaptive of emotion regulation with corona anxiety and a positive correlation between maladaptive of emotion regulation and corona anxiety. Also, emotion regulation had a significant relationship with corona anxiety both directly and indirectly through external and internal religious orientation. The goodness-of-fit indices also indicated the good fit of the proposed model.

**Keywords:** Cognitive emotion regulation, corona anxiety, religious orientation.

### Introduction

The spread of the coronavirus was unique due to the speed of its transmission, which caused an epidemic situation in global health in less than a few months around the world (Betthäuser, et al., 2023). As a result of the increasing number of infected cases and deaths caused by it, psychological problems, including depression (Minervini, et al., 2023), stress and anxiety have been created in both medical staff and community members (Freiling, and et al., 2023), that this anxiety experienced by different people during the corona era, included physical, psychological symptoms and even symptoms of death anxiety (Guner, et al., 2023). Corona anxiety has been highlighted as an important marker in mental health during the coronavirus pandemic and is characterized by a handful of physical symptoms such as loss of appetite, dizziness, insomnia, and nausea. Therefore, based on what has been said and considering the increase in the prevalence of anxiety in different strata of Iranian society, it is necessary to identify effective cognitive, emotional and religious processes on anxiety so that more effective treatment strategies can be carried out to reduce anxiety symptoms. Therefore, according to

what has been said, the research hypothesis was that religious orientation plays a mediating role in relationship between cognitive regulation of emotion and Corona anxiety.

## Method

The present research was descriptive-correlational. The statistical population in this research included adults in Tehran city in year 2020. The sample size was selected based on Kline model and with convenience sampling method of 480 adults. In such a way that the online version of the questionnaires was prepared and its link was distributed in student groups, educational centers and government organizations so that people who wish to participate in the research answer the items of the questionnaires. Statistical analysis of data was performed using structural equation model using SPSS and AMOS-24 statistical software.

## Tools

**Corona Disease Anxiety Scale (CDAS):** (Alipour, et al., 2020) this scale includes 18 items that measure two dimensions namely psychological symptoms with 9 items and physical symptoms with 9 items, scoring by 5-point Likert scale. The reliability of the scale was also checked with Cronbach's alpha method coefficients for psychological symptoms were 0.88, physical symptoms 0.86 and for the total scale 0.99 has been reported (Alipour, et al., 2020).

**Cognitive Emotion Regulation Questionnaire (CERQ):** (Garnefski and Kraaij, 2007) this questionnaire includes 36 items, scoring by a 5-point Likert scale. This questionnaire was translated in Iran by Hassani (2011) and its Cronbach's alpha ranged from 0.76 to 0.92 and its validity was through principal component analysis. In the present study, Cronbach's alpha coefficient for maladaptive strategies of cognitive emotion regulation was 0.76, adaptive strategies of cognitive emotion regulation 0.70 and for total score was 0.86.

**Religious Orientation Scale (ROS)** (Allport and Ross, 1967) this scale includes 21 items that measure two dimensions namely external religious with 12 items and internal orientation with 9 items, scoring by 5-point Likert scale, from 1 to 4. In the research of Allport and Ross (1967), the correlation coefficient between external and internal religious orientation was found to be -0.21 and significant at the level of 0.01 (Allport & Ross, 1967).

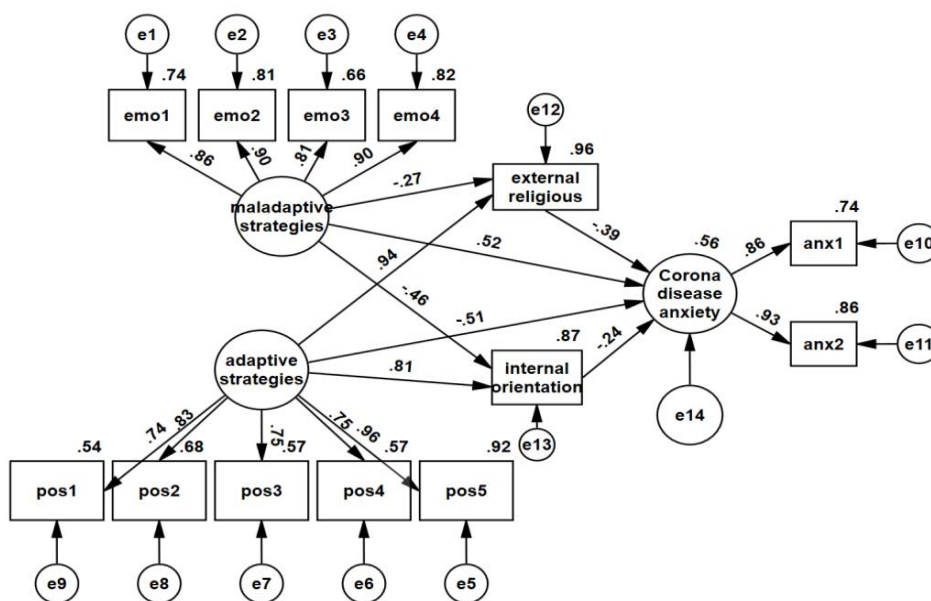
## Results

**Table1. The standard coefficients of the direct paths of the model**

Predictor variable	Criterion variable	Beta	SE	CR	p
maladaptive emotion regulation	corona anxiety	0.52	0.14	4.89	0.001
adaptive emotion regulation	corona anxiety	-0.51	0.30	-2.29	0.022
external religious orientation	corona anxiety	-0.39	0.29	-2.18	0.029
internal religious orientation	corona anxiety	-0.24	0.17	-2.43	0.015

As can be seen in Table 1, the standard and direct coefficient of maladaptive emotion regulation ( $\beta = 0.52$ , sig = 0.001), adaptive emotion regulation ( $\beta = -0.51$ , sig = 0.022), external religious orientation ( $\beta = -0.39$ , sig=0.029) and internal religious orientation ( $\beta = -0.24$ , sig=0.015) have a direct and significant effect on Corona anxiety. The results of the bootstrap method for examining mediating or indirect paths are presented and results showed external and internal

religious orientation plays a mediating role in the relationship between cognitive regulation of emotion and Corona anxiety.



**Figure 1: The Obtained model of the mediating role of religious orientation in the relationship between cognitive emotion regulation strategies and corona anxiety**

## Discussion and Conclusion

Thus, the Corona anxiety is influenced by cognitive emotion regulation and external and internal religious orientation. The way religion shows us is the remembrance of God, which transforms the fear of death into peace and removes the fear of the onslaught of problems and troubles. Remembrance of God removes various apprehensions and fears. Performing religious rituals and rituals, which are only a part of remembering God, reduces anxiety and brings peace to the human heart. Belief in God also gives meaning to one's life. Most psychologists have implicitly accepted the relationship between the meaning of life and the feeling of mental peace and security. The increase in reaction and positive emotions, including hope, optimism, calmness, and the decrease in reaction and negative emotions, such as Corona anxiety, are considered psychological consequences of the role of religion. Due to the spread of the corona virus, it was not possible to implement the random cluster sampling method, etc., for this reason, the available sampling method was used, and therefore, one should act cautiously in generalizing the results.

This finding can be used to design an intervention to reduce anxiety symptoms in the adult community during the outbreak of infectious diseases.

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#### **Conflicts of interest**

Authors found no conflict of interests.



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