

Investigating the Relationship between the Individuals' Communication Skills and Crime Perpetration amongst Shiraz's University Students and Prisoners

Abstract

Paying attention to such a phenomenon as crime and its related global statistics makes it clear that the social harms, criminality, and the increase in the rate of crime perpetration are universal matters with which all the countries are engaged in one way or another. Therefore, presently the world is intensively in need of a solid determination and a pervasive effort to reduce the opportunities and purge the criminal motivations in the individuals. The present study investigates the relationship between the educated persons' communication skills and crime perpetration amongst Shiraz's university students and prisoners. This study is an applied research using a descriptive-survey method. The study population included all the university students and prisoners in Shiraz. The study samples have been selected based on the convenience method. The study samples were 243 individuals (161 university students and 82 prisoners) chosen using the Cochran formula. The researcher used a self-constructed questionnaire to gather the required information. The study's theoretical foundations have been helpful in the construction of the questionnaire. For data analysis, the Pearson correlation test, regression test, and univariate variance analysis (ANOVA) were applied. These analyses were done using SPSS, version 16. The results indicated no significant relationship between communication skills and crime tendency amongst Shiraz University's students.

Keywords: *communication skills, educated individuals, crime perpetration, prisoners in Shiraz*

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Introduction

Crime includes a method of behavior that violates the law (Giddens, 2007, p.152). Tared defines crime as an abuse of rights and duties. Sociologists and social psychologists consider the opposition to the social traditions and customs a crime (cited in Kaffashi and Eslami, 2009, p.58). The occurrence of crimes and the subsequent pursuit and punishment of the criminals and fighting with the abnormalities entail extensive judicial and constabulary formations, vast facilities, and the expenditure of extravagant governmental budgets, in general, the society's public sector. Undoubtedly, identifying the crime-generating factors is the initial step in fighting the social deviations so that the crime occurrence can be prevented or, at least, the amount of crime perpetration can be decreased by removing these factors or reducing their effects. A glance at the statistics and figures reveals that every day, the rate of crime is increasing in our society. Comparing the ratio of prisoners to the country's population for 21 years, i.e., from 1979 to 2000, is well-indicative of this increase. In 1979, there were only 41 individuals in the prisons per every 100 thousand persons of the population, whereas this figure was increased to 130 prisoners in 1986 and 247 prisoners in 2000 (Bagheri and Moltafet, 2010, p.61).

The high prevalence of risky behaviors amongst the youth and adolescents in Iran reflects the emergence of a social problem that has caused a lot of subtle worries at various managerial, academic, and public levels of society. The average age that which the youth start smoking is 16.6 in Iran (Ja'afarzagdegan, 2001), and a large ratio of the country's addicts have started

drug abuse from 17 to 22 years of age (Madani and Razzaghi, 2002). Pourasl, Vahidi, Fakhari, Rostami, and Dastgiri (2007) studied 1785 students in Tabriz and found out that 12.7% of them have used alcohol and 2% have experienced drugs and narcotics. Ayatollahi, Mohammadpour, and Raja'eifard (2005) found out that 16.9% of the students have tried smoking and 2.8% are regular smokers.

As one subsystem of the cultural policies, education can have a large deal of effect on the reduction in the crime rates (Bagheri and Moltafet, 2010, p.81). The scientific and educational poorness paves the way for falling into crime and criminal activities, therefore, proposing that the higher the individuals' education levels are elevated, the higher the crime perpetration rate is reduced. Thus, it is seen that the elevation of the academic and scientific education levels overlap with the elevation of the cultural education in suppressing crime tendencies in such a way that the elevation of the cultural teachings and education through enhancing the individual moralities can bring about reductions in the extent of the individuals' willingness for engaging in crime as well as heightening the levels scientific education (Daghighi Asli et al., 2009, p.87).

Illiteracy or low education levels are currently being poised as unique or determinant factors concerning criminality. Based on the investigations performed on 100 criminals, more than 74% of them were found to belong to families with illiterate or less educated fathers. This percentage is 90 for the mothers (Najafi Tavana, 2010, p.211). Even the parents' enjoyment of the higher and acceptable academic education levels can influence their attitudes and approaches towards their parenting skills,

communication with one another, and relationship with children to decrease their mistreating and neglect towards them (Mo'azzami and Mahdavi, 2010, p.99). Lower education levels and illiteracy are big problems that should be seriously counteracted through people's synergy and assistance from the officials' because this phenomenon, illiteracy or low literacy, is troublesome not only from the perspective of criminology but also from the social points of view and, meanwhile preventing the elevation of the political and social culture types, it adversely sways the individual life (Najafi Tavana, 2010, p.212).

Considering the above-presented materials, the occurrence and expansion of crime happen amongst the individuals usually when they are in their youth or adolescence periods; the grounds are set for crime perpetration and inclination towards drug and alcohol abuses, sexual risk-taking, running away from home, robbery, violence and so forth when the biological and psychological pressures of puberty peak and communicational and social challenges are realized among one's own family and peers as well as when underachieving in the academic competitions and also when falling short of establishing healthy and sound communications and being non-resilient (Zadehmohammadi and Ahmadabadi, 2009, p.469). Therefore, this period of human beings' life is very critical and sensitive, so the community's reaction to the juvenile delinquents should be well-contemplated and based on well-examined principles and scales so that it can be fruitful and pave the way for their societal return (Ghorban Hosseini, 1992, p.28). In this regard, the present study targets the relationship between the educated individuals' communication skills and the crime perpetration among the prisoners and the university students in Shiraz.

Study's Theoretical Foundations:

The Role of the Group of Friends in Inclination towards Crime Perpetration:

Unfortunately, one of the issues with which most families are faced is the parents' and their children's lack of intellectual understanding therefore, the familial atmosphere and environment are guided towards unrest and turbulence as a result of this disagreement. The children would be stressed and have a psychological-mental imbalance in such families instead of feeling secure and comfortable. Such familial environments cause the children to be absorbed towards the greater community and friends and find them more sympathetic and kinder than their parents to the extent that they would more readily accept their way of thinking and prefer it to their parents stepping into the road of insecurity and corruption. Every individual living in society might feel anxiety and discomfort due to hitting a barricade on their way while searching for personal needs and the inability to remove these barriers; people usually prefer an informal talk with

others about such issues. As a result of this, they also tend to talk amongst themselves about how to satisfy these needs leading to the establishment of friendly relationships as well as small informal groups and sets (Shari'atmadari, 2011).

Although the parents keep on influencing their children well into their adolescence, the larger effect role is played by friends' as the adolescents emotionally distance themselves away from their parents during this period and become more inclined to spend their time with their friends. Adolescents consider this period the best time of their lives, and they prefer to do both their school and non-school activities with their friends. Performing things like sports activities, hanging around, riding in each other's cars, and even fighting and quarreling and sabotaging activities are among the things adolescents usually engage in with their friends (Karabasi and Vakilian, 2010). If adolescents feel an increasing compelling force from their friends' side to becoming like them in thinking and acting, they would feel more inconsistency with their parents at home because friends sometimes find doing something a sign of courageousness while parents are constantly forbidding it. Thus, the adolescents try coordinating with and resembling their friends more and more to the extent that they would easily accept their friends' illegal and immoral suggestions and prefer their friends' values to their parents' (Karabasi and Vakilian, 2010).

"The direct application of the criminality patterns transferred in the peers' group to the adolescents is one of the most common elaborations about the juvenile delinquency underlined by the subcultures' theoreticians like Kohn and Matza" (Bayat et al., 2008, p.112).

"Marton believes that some of the adolescents from the deprived social classes form peer groups to get involved in criminal behaviors because some of their needs, especially the emotional ones, can be only satisfied outside the family and school" (Bayat et al., 2008, p.112).

"If there can be one sure reality in criminology, it would be that a part of the chronic juvenile delinquents tries socializing with friends who also have problems with the criminal justice system. The more the number of an adolescent's criminal friends, the more s/he would be inclined towards crime perpetration" (Walk Lite, 2007, p.155). When generational conflicts arise in the society and gaps are created psychologically and socially between the parents and children, and the two consecutive generations fail to reach a common point and mutual understanding, the new generation would change its pattern and preferred group. It would no longer choose family as its group of choice. Under such circumstances, there would be a higher likelihood of befriending the delinquents. If the socialization is continued with such individuals, the ground would be set for the socializing friends' deviation. Of course, there is a discrepancy

that befriending the delinquents and criminals is a factor in falling into crime perpetration. The antisocial, deviated, and delinquent adolescents socialize with individuals who have thoughts the same as theirs (Mo'azzami, 2010).

The Role of Education in Crime Reduction:

If a person knows an issue, s/he will persuade him or herself to do an action in addition to that. Regarding moral actions, Plato and Socrates believe that it suffices one to know about a good thing for doing it. A person that knows and recognizes a good thing is improbable not to do it. The reason for not doing good things is the lack of knowledge about it and ignorance. Therefore, ignorance should be uprooted to root out immoralities and corruption (Rahimi, 2010).

Besides, academic idealism, setting excellent academic goals for the children and guiding and encouraging children and adolescents towards becoming educated, and providing all the required facilities for their education are more frequently seen among the educated parents (Mo'azzami and Mahdavi, 2009, p.99). The very complicated process of the child's growth and the sensitivity of the childhood is indicative of the idea that the parents cannot easily play a favorable and optimal role regarding their children's growth and education in case of not have the required knowledge (Mo'azzami and Mahdavi, 2009, p.102). The author believes that the social rank influences the goals and values that the parents of a family believe in for their children and themselves, and these values and perspectives of the parents influence their children with the effects emerging in the way parents treat their children and on what they expect from them. Therefore, the problem of illiteracy should be seriously fought back with the assistance of the society and officials' because not only is it a fundamental cause of crime but also the sociological scourge that needs to be removed from the community, meanwhile preventing the elevation of the political and social culture, adversely influences the individual life" (Najafi Tavana, 2010, p.212).

In this regard, Garo states that we should be waiting for crime reduction after reducing illiteracy if ignorance is deemed as one of the primary criminality factors. This is while literate individuals perpetrate many crimes, including criminal forgery, fraud, and bankruptcy. So, the multiplicity of the crimes is not at all low amongst the literate persons compared to the illiterate ones. It has to be stated that knowledge has a relative effect on crime perpetration willingness. On the one hand, knowledge and education can be at the service of mankind, and, on the other hand, they can propel certain kinds of crime. For example, the increase in the education level amongst the men in Iran has been found to cause a reduction in domestic violence cases against women, which is per se followed by a decrease in the family quarrels that may end in crime. Apart from the individuals' education levels, attention should also be paid to the educational environment wherein the

individual grows. After the family environment, school plays a major role in the individuals' socialization. It is an environment wherein individuals of the same age but from various social classes and teachers with different discretions may influence an individual (Bokhara'ei, 2007, pp.201-202).

Role of Education in the Crime's Quantity and Quality:

Education level is among the important factors constituting personality; especially in Iran, it is a determinant of social prestige. Nowadays, researchers have agreed that academic learning and the elevation of education are amongst the strongest inhibitors preventing individuals from crime perpetration and keeping them away from engaging in antisocial activities. That is because the educated individuals are less willing to perpetrate crimes and they are rarely found inflicted with social abnormalities due to their enjoyment of this mighty power; in case other factors are putting a lot of pressure on them with one being unable to resist them, the educated and well-reared persons are found to less frequently engage in violent crimes that could lead to merciless bloodshedding and perpetuating such horrible crimes as manslaughter, various intentional murders, battery and so forth; they usually avoid any abuse and misemploy whereas the illiterate persons cannot control themselves in what they do and can less frequently turn their faces away from antisocial behaviors and bar the criminal actions due to the lack of a zealous literacy in them. For the same reason, illiterate criminals account for the majority of the crimes studied in the research. In this regard, Doctor De Griff agrees with the above statement based on the results obtained from the studies by Bonger, who depicts crimes and illiteracy at one another's side and states that it holds in most European countries. Illiteracy is considered the essential factor of crimes because a notable majority of the criminals have been among the most illiterate and poorest people (Mazlouman, 1974).

Ducpetianx examined prisoners and charitable organizations and found direct relationships between illiteracy and crime perpetration meanwhile researching the association between poverty and criminality; he states that ignorance and illiteracy are among the important factors of criminality. Based on this research, Ducpetianx believed that a nation's ethics and security perfectly depend on the economic power of the individuals and their level of education and literacy. Due to the same reason, Largie writes: "research is well-indicative of the idea that the criminals have been more illiterate persons or, at least, less literate persons." Various and abundant statistics have also confidently and surely proved that the amount of criminality is reduced with the increased levels of education (Mazlouman, 1974).

One can believe that becoming a well-educated social member would not affect crime reduction. Rather, it leads to differences in the types and qualities of crime in that the literate persons

less frequently engage in the battery than the illiterate persons. They are more willing to perpetrate intellectual crimes accompanied by deception and tricks such as forgery, fraud and treason, misuse of trust, and so forth (Najafi Tavania, 2010 Kaynia, 1997).

Furthermore, carefully scrutinizing the crimes' statistics or studying the crime perpetrators enables the determination of a relationship between the level of education and crime execution and even the type of the crimes perpetrated by the educated individuals and the method of perpetrating criminal actions differ from the other criminals in such a way that the jurists have recognized some of the crimes as white-collar transgressions with them being crimes perpetrated by individuals who feature well-decorated and well-ornamented appearances and are from higher social-economic classes.

Study Methodology:

This study is applied research, and the descriptive-survey method has been applied for its implementation. The study population included all Shiraz University's students and prisoners of Shiraz. Convenience was the sampling method of interest. In this research and for collecting the information through responding to the questions, the field method and researcher-constructed questionnaire and interview were mostly applied. The questions were formed by studying the books, articles, journals, and internet-based information banks; the study's background and theoretical foundations were also compiled in the same way.

For data collection, the researcher used a researcher-constructed questionnaire. To do so, assistance has been sought in the theoretical foundations of the research. To assess the questionnaire's validity, the preliminary questionnaire was seminally prepared and codified, and it was subsequently provided to the supervising and advising professors. Next, to increase its validity, the questionnaire was administered to several university students and several prisoners who were also the participants in the study's sample. Their ideas and notions

Table 1: the results of the Pearson correlation between the educated individuals' communication skills and the tendency for crime perpetration from the perspective of university students

α	Number	Significance level (sig.)	Pearson correlation coefficient ®	The determination coefficient (r ²)
0.05	161	0.312	-0.067	0.44

The results presented in table 1 above show that the significance value (p-value) is equal to 0.312. Because it is larger than 0.05, the correlation between these two variables is not statistically significant. In other words, there is no significant relationship between the communicational skills and crime perpetration tendency amongst Shiraz's university students. This is while the amount of this relationship for 230 data is equal to -0.067, indicating a very low correlation for it is close to zero. The determination coefficient is equal to

about the items were investigated in terms of the items' being ambiguous or having other problems of the like. In the end, the questionnaire was corrected according to the comments of several professors, and the final form of the questionnaire was codified and used. In this research, the determination of the questionnaires' reliability, the Cronbach's alpha coefficient was calculated. The codified questionnaire was administered to 30 participants, and the completed questionnaires were collected. Then, Cronbach's alpha was computed for the whole questionnaire, and next, the alpha coefficient was calculated for every one of the items. The overall alpha coefficient was obtained equal to 0.88.

Using the Cochran formula, the study sample was estimated to equal 243 individuals (161 university students and 82 prisoners). In the thought of some questionnaires not being returned, the researcher distributed 170 questionnaires amongst the sample composed of the university students and 110 questionnaires amongst the sample consisting of prisoners; finally, 166 questionnaires were returned by the university students and 90 questionnaires by the prisoners. Out of the questionnaires above, five filled by the university students and eight filled by the prisoners were found faulty and hence discarded. Eventually, the analyses were carried out on 161 questionnaires filled by the university students and 82 questionnaires that the prisoners had filled.

Findings:

Results indicated that 60.24% of the respondents are male, and 39.76% are female. The highest frequency of the university students' age (37.40%) pertained to the 20-24 age range, and the lowest frequency (33.9%) was pertinent to the above 31 age range. The highest frequency of the prisoners' age (20.39%) belonged to the 26-35 age range, and the lowest frequency (9.4%) was above the 45 age range. The highest education level frequency (92.32%) pertained to below guidance school, and the lowest frequency (0%) was pertinent to above MA amongst the prisoners.

individuals' communication skills and the tendency for crime

0.44%, indicating that communicational skills account for 0.44% of the crime perpetration tendencies from the perspective of Shiraz University's students.

To investigate how much this very low association is and to what extent the communicational skills can predict the crime perpetration tendency from the perspective of the university students, regression analysis was conducted. Table (2) summarizes the model used for answering the questions above.

Table 2: the results of regression analysis for the relationship between the communication skills and crime perpetration from the perspective of the university students

Variable statistical indices	B	The standard error (Std. Error)	β	Determination coefficient ($r^2\%$)
Constant	16.90	0.748	0.067	22.60
Communicational skills (x)	-0.234	0.231		-1.01

As is observed in the table, the independent variable (communicational skill) has been found with a negative coefficient (-0.234), meaning that a unit of change in the amount of the independent variable (communicational skills) brings about a reduction of 0.234 in the dependent variable (the tendency for crime perpetration). In other words, the change in the communication skills of a unit causes the crime perpetration tendency to be decreased by an amount equal to 0.234. The linear regression model with acceptable goodness of fit takes the following form:

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1$$

$$\text{Crime perpetration tendency} = 90.16 + (-0.234) \times (\text{communicational skills})$$

The determination coefficient has been calculated equal to 0.44, indicating that the communicational skills account for 0.44% of the crime perpetration tendency's variations in a linear relationship from the perspective of Shiraz University's students.

Conclusion:

The present study aimed at investigating the relationship between the educated individuals' communicational skills and crime perpetration tendency amongst Shiraz's university students and prisoners. The results indicate no significant relationship between the communication skills and crime perpetration tendencies among Shiraz University's students. However, the amount of this relationship's significance for 230 data was found to equal -0.670, indicating that there is a correlation between the independent and dependent variables, therefore, to investigate the extent of this relationship or, rather, how much the communicational skills can predict the crime perpetration tendency from the perspective of the university students, a regression analysis was conducted whose results are expressive of the idea that the independent variable (communicational skills) is negatively correlated for a value of -0.234. This amount of correlation coefficient means that a unit change in the independent variable (communicational skills) reduces 0.234 units in the predicted amount of the dependent variable (crime perpetration tendency). The determination coefficient is equal to 0.44%, indicating that 0.44% of the changes in the crime perpetration tendency can be explained by the university students' communication skills in a linear relationship viewpoint.

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Conflict of interest

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Ethics Statement

All Permissions to conducting this research has been approved.

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