

Rumination and Self-reflection: Acting as a Buffer Between Guilt Proneness and Shame Proneness

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ABSTRACT

The self-conscious emotions of guilt and shame are substantially different, yet because they are so closely associated, their distinguishing criteria are still up for debate. While each has its own interpretation, this study is aimed to advance the understanding of whether an individual is more likely to experience guilt or shame. Humans are frequently assessing their intimate thoughts and feelings; research has looked into how frequently people introspect and the effects of self-focus on action. People engage in two types of self-analyses, according to recent research: self-reflection and self-rumination, both of which have opposing implications. A growing body of research demonstrates that one's private self-consciousness can help or hurt one's performance in a variety of domains. We distinguish self-reflection from self-rumination and guilt-proneness from shame proneness in this conceptual article. The present research will measure guilt and shame proneness in a sample of 116 young adults in the age group of 18-28 using the Guilt and Shame Process Scale (GASP) and evaluate the levels of self-rumination and self-reflection of the same using the Rumination Reflection Questionnaire (RRQ) in linear regression analysis and correlation analysis to find simple associations between the variables.

Keywords: *Guilt proneness, Shame proneness, Self-conscious emotions, Self-reflection, Rumination*

Shame and guilt share many attributes: they are both self-conscious emotions that insinuate self-reflection and self-evaluation, and they include unfavorable self-evaluations and distressing emotional reactions brought on by one's perceived failings or transgressions and those that frequently occur at the same time. On the other hand, the majority of academicians think both shame and guilt are different and that those differences matter. While we agree with the notion in general, we dispute some of the criteria utilized to differentiate between them and the widespread misconception of shame, which is generally viewed as an "ugly" or anti-social feeling compared to guilt (e.g., Tangney & Tracy, 2012).

Although the terms "shame" and "guilt" are usually used interchangeably, research shows that they have important conceptual distinctions (Tangney et al., 2007). Despite the fact that both deal primarily with self-evaluative judgments, one's evaluation's main objective is diverse. Lewis (1971) suggested that whether errors are attributable to "the self" or to

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Rumination and Self-reflection: Acting as a Buffer Between Guilt Proneness and Shame Proneness

"activity" is the key distinction. On the one hand, shame comes from having a poor opinion of one's entire self. On the opposing hand, guilt implies negative evaluations of one's behavior. Furthermore, these two emotions lead to various "action tendencies." Shame is frequently accompanied by urges to hide or run away from unpleasant feelings and events, even though a person's self-evaluation has led them to believe they are fundamentally flawed. On the other hand, those who feel guilty seem to be more likely to approach problems head-on and rationally, suggesting that guilt may be a more morally adaptive emotion. When someone has a tendency towards guilt rather than shame, they are more inclined to have the ability to distinguish between the negative evaluation of their own unpleasant behavior and the generalization of unfavorable evaluations of themselves.

In the past ten years, there has been a great deal of interest with in self-conscious emotions of shame and guilt. Despite the fact that these words are frequently used synonymously, mounting evidence points to their distinction as distinct emotions. Despite the fact that these similar emotions are unpleasant, shame is stronger, contains higher perceptions of inadequacies, is more probable to include a general assessment of the self (such as, "I am a terrible person"), and is more likely to cause a need to conceal oneself from others. Contrarily, guilt is weaker, necessitates a more in-depth examination of the triggering behavior (e.g., I hurt his feelings when I criticized his meal), and is more likely to result in a desire for reconciliation. Shame and guilt have been proven to affect interpersonal functioning in quite distinct ways. Individuals who are prone to shame, for example, have higher levels of anger arousal and are more likely to respond to anger in a destructive manner, whereas those who are prone to guilt are more likely to respond to anger constructively (Tangney, Wagner, Hill- Barlow, Marshall, & Gramzow, 1996).

Self-awareness is the ability to observe yourself clearly and objectively through reflection and introspection, which is more directly relevant to the current study. Each individual is aware of what self-awareness entails and its laymen's definition, but we don't know where it originates within ourselves, who its forerunners are, or why many of us seem to indulge in it more than others. The self-awareness theory answers these questions. Different patterns of empathetic response are predicted by shame and guilt-proneness. Whereas shame predicts higher levels of "self-oriented" personal distress, such as anxiety in emergency situations, guilt predicts higher levels of "other-oriented" perspective-taking, such as the ability to see things from another's point of view and, in some cases, higher levels of empathic concern, or warm, tender feelings for others in need. Given that high levels of personal distress and low levels of empathic concern and perspective-taking predict poorer relationship outcomes, the linkages between proneness to shame, proneness to guilt, and these various forms of empathic responding have significant consequences.

While many studies have demonstrated that proneness to shame and guilt predict different forms of empathy, less work has attempted to identify the mechanisms through which shame and guilt might impact empathic responses. One likely candidate is the self. As Tangney and Dearing (2002) note in their recent review of the literature, "shame and guilt are fundamentally tied to our perceptions of self. Equally important, Tangney and Dearing argue, is the realization that such self-relevant perceptions "can have a substantial impact on the dynamics of interpersonal relationships". Assuming this is accurate, understanding the role of self-relevant processes in shame and guilt could provide important insights into why shame-prone and guilt-prone people evidence such different forms of empathic responding and may, more generally, inform a broad array of interpersonal processes related to shame and guilt.

Rumination and Self-reflection: Acting as a Buffer Between Guilt Proneness and Shame Proneness

How might self-relevant processes help to explain the links between proneness to shame, guilt, and different forms of empathic responding? One possibility pursued in this study is that shame and guilt are associated with different forms of self-attention (i.e., self-rumination vs. self-reflection; Trapnell & Campbell, 1999; cf. Tangney & Dearing, 2002), which in turn engender distinct empathic responses. While the terms “self-rumination” and “self-reflection” are not typically used in discussing shame and guilt, theory and research suggest that these constructs—which emerged out of work on private self-consciousness—closely resemble the two distinct forms of self-attention originally described by Helen Block Lewis (1971), and which now serve as the cornerstone of contemporary work on shame and guilt by June Tangney and her colleagues. To appreciate this argument, it is useful first to examine the recent distinction between the two forms of self-attention, known as self-rumination and self-reflection, before considering their possible link with shame and guilt.

The self-awareness theory proposes that you are not your thoughts but the entity that observes them; you are the thinker, distinct from your thoughts. We can go about our day without thinking about our inner selves, just thinking, feeling, and acting as we normally do; however, we can also focus our attention on our inner selves, a skill that Duval and Wicklund (1972) termed self-evaluation, (Duval & Wicklund, 1972). When we evaluate ourselves, we can consider if we are thinking, feeling, and doing as we “should” or according to our standards and beliefs. This is referred to as comparing against our correctness requirements. We do this on a daily basis, utilizing these standards to assess the correctness of our thoughts and actions. As we analyze and judge if we are making the appropriate choices to reach our goals, using these standards is integral to developing self-control.

Guilt and shame are two emotions we all encounter at some point in our lives. They frequently happen at the same time and may even be prompted by the same event. While these emotions commonly overlap or intertwine, there are also fundamental variations between them that can influence how we think about how to control them. Primary emotions require the existence of a self to experience the state (Lewis and Michalson, 1983), whereas self-conscious emotions require the presence of a self to both produce and experience the state (Lewis and Michalson, 1983).

The intent of this research is to examine the impacts of self-rumination and self-reflection in a bid to comprehend how to evaluate a person's susceptibility to guilt and shame. This review of the literature focuses on definitions, methods of measurement, as well as the results and functions of self-rumination and self-reflection. The Rumination Reflection Questionnaire (RRQ) will be used to assess the implications of self-rumination and self-reflection in a sample of 116 participants, wherein 48 percent are females and 52 percent are males aged 18 to 28. The Guilt and Shame Process Scale (GASP) will be used to gauge guilt and shame natural inclination.

Research Objectives

- To study the relation and draw a link between Guilt and shame as self-conscious emotions and introspection with respect to self-rumination and self-reflection.
- To identify the areas of self-rumination and self-reflection that affect the proneness of an individual experiencing guilt and shame.
- To develop an intervention module for guilt negative behaviour and guilt repair.

Rumination and Self-reflection: Acting as a Buffer Between Guilt Proneness and Shame Proneness

- To develop an intervention module for shame – negative self-evaluation and shame withdrawal.

Research Hypothesis

- H0 – There is a negative correlation between guilt proneness and self-reflection.
- H1 – There is a positive correlation between guilt proneness and self-reflection.
- H0 – There is a negative correlation between shame proneness and rumination.
- H2 – There is a positive correlation between shame proneness and rumination.
- H0 – There is a negative interaction between guilt proneness and self-reflection.
- H3 – There is a positive interaction between guilt proneness and self-reflection.
- H0 – There is a negative interaction between shame proneness and self-rumination.
- H4 – There is a positive interaction between shame proneness and self-rumination.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Guilt Proneness and Shame Proneness

Shame and guilt are generally regarded as feelings that affect moral behavior. Some scholars concluded that guilt more than shame stimulates moral behavior (Baumeister et al., 1995; Hoffman, 2000), but others contend that both guilt and shame might, depending on the circumstance, encourage moral behavior (Lindsay- Hartz et al., 1995). Some people think that irrespective of the situation, shame always has adverse effects. While characterizing guilt and shame, different studies have highlighted various aspects of both. Since certain gestures and expressions can distinguish the two, shame is typically listed among the five fundamental emotions in the psychology of emotion. In contrast, guilt lacks these distinct features. Based on many empirical studies it has identified eight dimensions where guilt and shame differ from one another.

Just like in "I did that horrible thing," shame is directed at the complete self, whereas guilt is focused on a specific action. Despite its lack of guilt, the self is divided into an observer and an observed self in shame and is undermined by the devaluation of society as a whole. Guilt involves mentally undoing a component of one's behavior, whereas shame involves mentally undoing a component of one's self. A person who is guilty has tension, remorse, and regret as opposed to someone who is ashamed and feels "shrinking," as if they are small, useless, and weak. Consequently, shame represents a more awful feeling than guilt.

A person who is humiliated is concerned with how others perceive them, but a person who is guilty is concerned with how they affect others. Tangney argues that these distinctions have an impact on the motivation that these emotions generate. A person who feels guilty is prompted to confess, apologize, or repair, whereas a person who feels ashamed is inspired to conceal, flee, or strike back,' behaving aggressively toward the person who has caused them shame. As a result, being shame-prone is a maladaptive trait, whereas being guilt-prone promotes moral or prosocial behavior. Tangney developed the Test of Self-Conscious Affect (TOSCA), a scenario-based test for guilt and shame proneness based on this distinction, in which respondents estimate their likelihood to react in specific ways in a set of hypothetical events.

The words "guilt" and "shame" are not mentioned. Being shame-prone has been linked to low self-esteem, anxiety, depression, and psychoticism (Tangney & Dearing, 2002), whereas being guilt-prone has been linked to positive traits including anger management (Lutwak et al., 2001) and empathy (Tangney & Dearing, 2002). (Fontaine et al., 2001). Although there

Rumination and Self-reflection: Acting as a Buffer Between Guilt Proneness and Shame Proneness

is some overlap between guilt and shame scales, Tangney and Dearing (2002) argue that shame scores should be partially led out of guilt since guilt can become maladaptive when combined with shame. No matter how powerful, shame-free guilt is never maladaptive.

Tangney's perspective on the motivational characteristics of guilt and shame has been criticized. The TOSCA items link specific emotional states to specific behavioral reactions: guilt items include prosocial behavior or intentions to behave pragmatically, whereas shame items only include avoidance (e.g., 'I would avoid seeing that friend for a while') and negative self-evaluations (e.g., 'I would feel useless and incompetent'), but no socially desirable ways to alleviate the emotion. As a result, rather than viewing guilt as an emotional state, the guilt scale can be viewed as a measure of prosocial behavior. The TOSCA guilt scale was shown to measure a different construct than other guilt measures, such as the Guilt Inventory and the Personal Feelings Questionnaire-2 (Ferguson & Crowley, 1997).

According to Tangney (1995), the disparities between her own measure and others are related to the fact that most other measures fail to distinguish between guilt and shame. Ferguson and Crowley (1997), on the other hand, point out that the measurements are likely to touch distinct stages of the guilt process. Other measures in the TOSCA represent unresolved, ongoing guilt sensations, such as 'I have lately done something I really regret,' for example (state guilt in the GI). They argue that shame and guilt are both maladaptive when a person is unable to address an issue constructively.

Researchers should utilize a range of guilt measures, according to Ferguson and Crowley, because different measures tap different types of guilt. The TOSCA, according to Luyten, Fontaine, and Corveleyn (2002), largely measures moderate and adaptive forms and components of guilt, as well as maladaptive features of shame. They discovered that items with a high loading on the guilt factor primarily referred to reparative behavior, whereas things with a high loading on the shame factor referred to low self-esteem. The correlations to other variables did not change when just the items with high factor loadings were included. It appears that reparative behavior in the TOSCA guilt items explains the majority of the findings.

Self-rumination and self-reflection

Rumination is the persistent, protracted, and recurrent negative thinking about oneself, feelings, concerns, and upsetting situations (Watkins, 2008). Depressive rumination is described as repetitive thought on the signs, causes, circumstances, meanings, implications, and effects of unhappiness and discomfort by Response Styles Theory (Nolen-Hoeksema, 1991). Rumination is recognized as a pathological process that transcends diagnoses because it has been connected to the growth and persistence of depression and a number of other illnesses. As a result, there has been a large increase in studies into rumination, as well as many review papers investigating various elements of rumination, suggesting its perceived importance (Grierson, Hickie, Naismith, & Scott, 2016; Nolen-Hoeksema et al., 2008; Nolen-Hoeksema & Watkins, 2011; Smith & Alloy, 2009; Watkins, 2008; Watkins & Nolen-Hoeksema, 2014).

Rumination, along with concern, perseverative cognition, and obsessions, has been recognized as one type of repetitive thinking about negative content in previous studies (Ehring & Watkins, 2008; Watkins, 2008). Although there is already a lot of evidence showing that these multiple types of recurrent negative thoughts are strongly connected,

Rumination and Self-reflection: Acting as a Buffer Between Guilt Proneness and Shame Proneness

have comparable outcomes, and have overlapping processes, there is still a lot of work to be done. Rumination, defined as the habit of repeatedly focusing on distressing feelings and the likely origins and implications of these symptoms, is considered to be a significant risk factor for depression. Rumination predicts the duration and intensity of depression symptoms, as well as the onset of future major depressive episodes, according to prospective research. Rumination has also been linked to less effective problem-solving skills, higher recollection of negative autobiographical memories, and enhanced impacts of a low sense of mastery on depression, according to current studies.

Self-focused attention, in addition to having undesirable consequences, can also have adaptive and beneficial consequences. Self-focused attention, including repetitive thoughts like rumination, can be regarded of as a problem-solving or self-regulation process that can help with self-awareness and psychological adjustment. Based on the motive and five-factor model of personality, Trapnell and Campbell (1999) distinguished between the rumination and reflection subtypes of private self-consciousness, and they designed the Rumination–Reflection Questionnaire (RRQ) to assess both subtypes. "Self-rumination," a negative, chronic, and persistent self-focus motivated by perceived dangers, losses, or injustices to the self, is linked to neuroticism and depression. "Self-reflection," on the other hand, is a type of self-focus motivated by curiosity or epistemic interest in the self and linked to receptivity to new experiences. Self-reflection, in theory, fosters self-awareness and improves mental wellness.

Self-awareness—the ability to reflect on and think about one's own ideas, feelings, and actions—is essential for understanding personality and motivation. Individual differences in self-focused attention have been studied in personality psychology for nearly 50 years. A scale evaluating private self-consciousness, a predisposition to focus on interior states, was included in the self-consciousness scales, the first tool for measuring dispositional self-awareness. Private self-consciousness scales, both original and amended, have been frequently utilized. The scale's inconsistent factor structure, on the other hand, posed a barrier for researchers. The private self-consciousness scale frequently broke into two facets, each with its own set of relationships, but the items that made up the facets varied, making the factor structure of the scale difficult to pin down.

Unexpected and disruptive negative and stressful situations are common. They elicit negative emotions and the need to manage emotions while draining personal resources. Although bad occurrences can be costly to an individual, it has been discovered that retelling such events through talking or writing is an adaptive process linked to emotion control, greater well-being, personal growth, and identity construction. However, other studies have discovered that storytelling is not necessarily associated with positive functioning. One form that encourages thinking and meaning-making is narrative.

Connections between prior events and the self-emerge as people describe autobiographical recollections. Narrating, on the other hand, might involve either constructive or unconstructive reasoning processes, which can affect the success of producing meaning in different ways. We propose that the narrative process resembles rumination when narrators focus more on negative consequences and negative self-views and less on constructive efforts to explain the experience (Fivush et al., 2007; Sales et al., 2013). Rumination is a maladaptive attempt to control negative emotion that fails to foster active problem-solving and constructive adjustments in the perception of the circumstance (Nolen-Hoeksema & Morrow, 1991).

Rumination and Self-reflection: Acting as a Buffer Between Guilt Proneness and Shame Proneness

Although it is widely agreed that self-rumination or brooding results in a maladaptive self-focus and is linked to depression, the adaptive nature of contemplation is still debated. Although self-reflection was assumed to have roles of self-regulation or psychological adjustment, previous research found only favorable associations with openness or other constructive cognitive styles but no direct link with manifestations of distress such as sadness or anxiety. Furthermore, the results for thoughtful thinking are varied. Reflective thinking has been linked to adaptive primary and secondary coping strategies such as problem-solving and diversion, according to studies supporting its adaptive function (Burwell & Shirk, 2007).

METHODOLOGY

Sample

The study used a correlational study design while using random sampling in a total of 116 adult participants – 55 women and 61 men – between the ages of 18 to 28 – who completed the Guilt and Shame Proneness Scale (GASP) and Rumination and Reflection Questionnaire (RRQ) as part of the research project.

Instruments

Two measures were used in this study,

Guilt and shame proneness was measured by Guilt and Shame Proneness Scale (GASP; Cohen et al., 2011) - GASP consists of 4 different subscales: Guilt negative behavior evaluation, guilt repair, shame negative self-evaluation, and shame withdrawal. It has 16 items intended to ask the respondents to imagine themselves in different situations and afterward ask what is the likelihood they would act, feel, or think in a certain manner. The scale is a 7-point Likert scale, ranging from (1) very unlikely to (7) very likely. This scale is reported to have a Cronbach's alpha of .60 (Cohen et al., 2011).

Self-rumination and self-reflection were measured using the Rumination Reflection Questionnaire (RRQ for short; Trapnell and Campbell's, 1999) - The rumination-reflection questionnaire contains 24 questions in a 5-point likert scale. It has 12 items under the factor of rumination and 12 items under self-reflection. Data were acquired via online questionnaires. Participation was anonymous and voluntary; no compensation was given.

Procedure

The Guilt and Shame Process Scale (GASP) were used to assess guilt and shame proneness and the Rumination Reflection Questionnaire (RRQ) to assess the effects of self-rumination and self-reflection in a sample of 116 individuals between the ages of 18-28, wherein, 48% are female and 52% are male. Data was acquired via online questionnaires after collecting the informed consent. Participation was anonymous and voluntary; no compensation was given.

RESULTS

All statistical analysis was done by means of Microsoft Excel. The assumption of correlation and interaction between the variables was checked using correlation on all the required Variables. Further, the covariances of the variables were tested along with a linear regression analysis to determine how much of the variance in the dependent variables of Guilt and Shame Proneness could be explained by the independent variables of self-rumination and self-reflection.

Table 1.1 Descriptive Statistical Analysis of Guilt Proneness, Shame Proneness, Self-rumination, and Self-reflection.

Descriptives

	Guilt Proneness	Shame Proneness	Rumination	Self- Reflection
N	116	116	116	116
Mean	42.1	33.9	43.6	43.1
95% CI mean lower bound	40.7	32.6	42.0	41.7
95% CI mean upper bound	43.6	35.3	45.3	44.5
Median	44.0	33.0	45.0	42.5
Sum	4889	3933	5063	4997
Standard deviation	7.94	7.35	8.98	7.64
Variance	63.0	54.0	80.7	58.3
Minimum	14.0	15.0	12.0	12
Maximum	55.0	54.0	60.0	59
Skewness	-0.860	0.0645	-0.790	-0.449
Std. error skewness	0.225	0.225	0.225	0.225
Kurtosis	0.837	0.0519	0.981	1.25
Std. error kurtosis	0.446	0.446	0.446	0.446
Shapiro-Wilk W	0.952	0.992	0.962	0.967
Shapiro-Wilk p	< .001	0.708	0.002	0.005

Note. The CI of the mean assumes the sample means to follow a t-distribution with N - 1 degrees of freedom

The above-mentioned Table 1.1 is titled “Descriptive Statistical Analysis of Guilt Proneness, Shame Proneness, Self-rumination, Self-reflection.” Illustrates the mean, median, mode, standard deviation, standard error, and sample variances of the four variables in this research.

Table 2.1 Covariances of the variables

	Guilt Proneness	Shame Proneness	Rumination	Self-reflection
Guilt Proneness	62.45266052			
Shame Proneness	22.41044887	53.5168698		
Rumination	3.388005351	10.71648335	79.98714328	
Self-reflection	15.15242271	0.602184899	14.46707788	57.8129459

Rumination and Self-reflection: Acting as a Buffer Between Guilt Proneness and Shame Proneness

Table 2.1 titled “Covariances of the variables,” illustrates the amount of covariance between the variables of guilt-proneness, shame proneness, self-rumination, and self-reflection. Thus, you can see that there is a positive interaction between Guilt and Shame Proneness.

The interaction between Guilt proneness and Self-reflection is higher than that between Guilt Proneness and Self-rumination. Similarly, there is a higher positive interaction between Shame Proneness and Self-rumination compared to Shame Proneness and Self-reflection. Thus, this results in the acceptance of our H3 and H4.

Table 3.1 Correlation matrix of guilt-proneness, self-reflection, and rumination.

Correlation Matrix

	Guilt proneness	Self-Reflection	Rumination
Guilt proneness	—		
Self-Reflection	0.252**	—	
Rumination	0.048	0.213*	—

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

From the table Table 3.1 Correlation matrix of guilt-proneness, self-reflection, and rumination there is a positive correlation between them. However, the correlation between guilt-proneness and self-reflection is a higher positive correlation than between guilt-proneness and rumination. Thus, accepting the H1 of this research. This is further illustrated in the given figures.

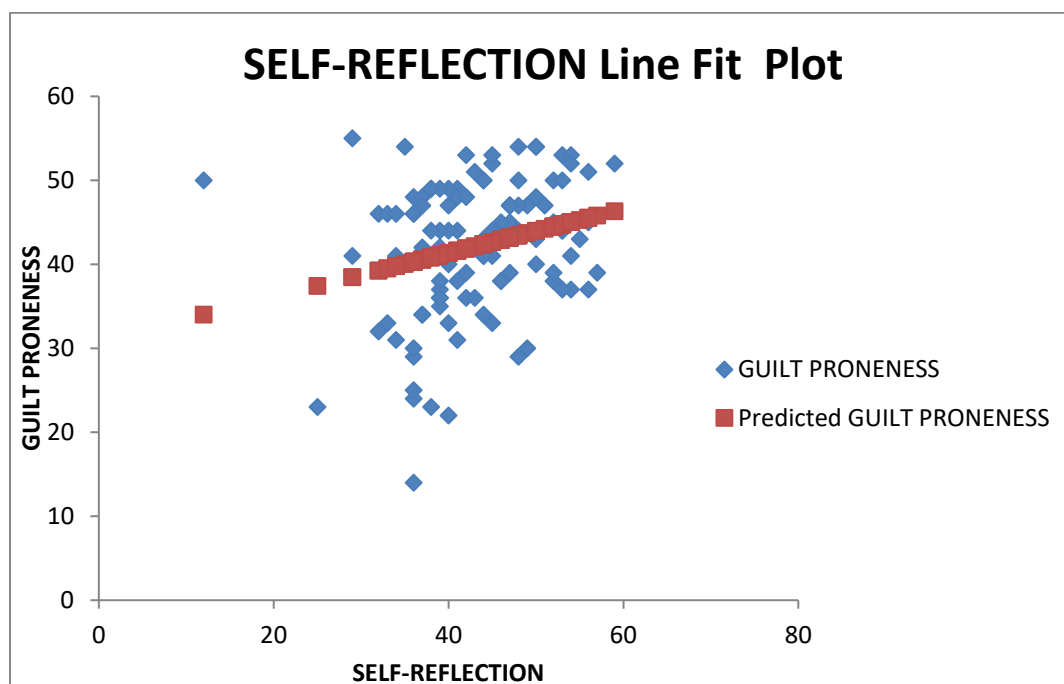


Figure 1.1 Correlation between Guilt Proneness and Self-reflection

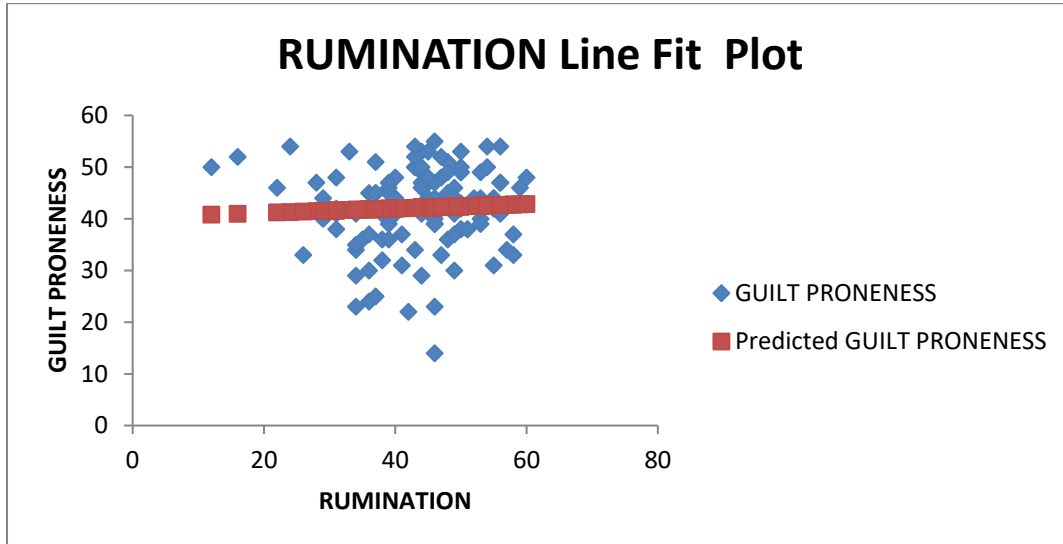


Figure 2.1 Correlation between Guilt Proneness and Rumination

Table 4.1 Correlation matrix of shame proneness, rumination, and self-reflection.

Correlation Matrix

	Shame Proneness	Rumination	Self-Reflection
Shame Proneness	—		
Rumination	0.164	—	
Self-Reflection	0.011	0.213*	—

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

From Table 4.1 Correlation matrix of shame proneness, rumination, and self-reflection there is a positive correlation between them. However, the correlation between shame proneness and rumination is a higher positive correlation than between Shame proneness and Self-reflection. Thus, accepting the H2 of this research. This is further illustrated in the given figures.

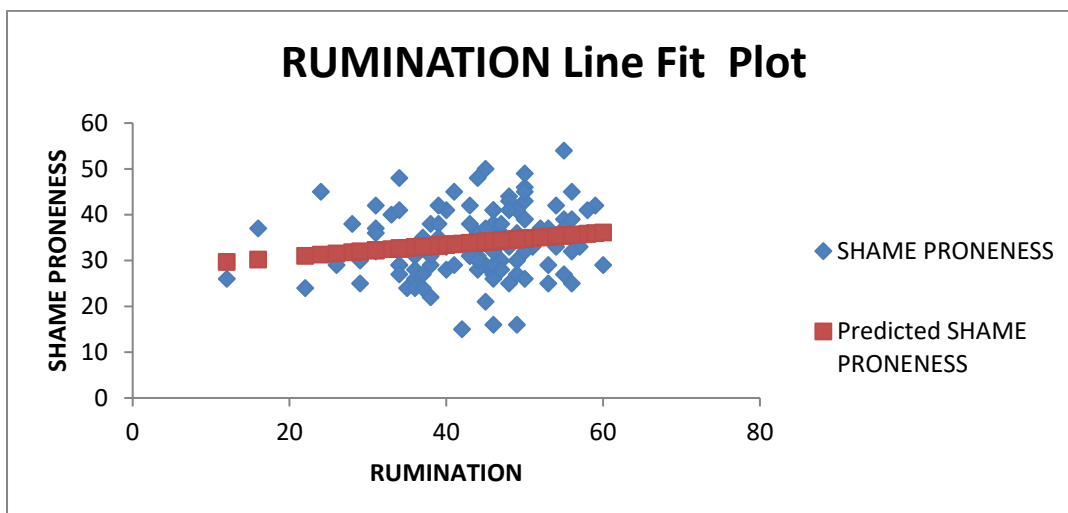


Figure 1.1 Correlation between Shame Proneness and Rumination



Figure 4.1 Correlation between Shame Proneness and Self-reflection

DISCUSSION

The results of the present study conclude that; (H0) There is a negative correlation between guilt-proneness and self-reflection (H1 accepted). (H0) There is a negative correlation between shame proneness and self-rumination (H2 accepted). (H0) There is a negative interaction between guilt-proneness and self-reflection (H3 accepted). There is a negative interaction between shame proneness and self-rumination (H4 accepted).

Shame and guilt are unpleasant emotions implying a negative self-evaluation against one's own standards; both of them can be experienced either publicly or privately; the same kind of fault can elicit both; both can trigger either self-defensive or reparative action tendencies; both can have either adaptive or maladaptive implications; and both can involve the self. Thus, the given research illustrates the distinguishing effects of the factors, that is, self-rumination and self-reflection, in measuring the two self-conscious emotions. In our view, the distinguishing criteria we have suggested allow us to account for both the similarities and the differences between the proneness to shame and guilt. They explain how rumination can elicit shame rather than guilt; or, conversely, how self-reflection character can elicit guilt rather than shame.

Because a person can take on so much responsibility that it becomes unhealthy, guilt in ambiguous situations may be linked to both psychological symptoms and reparative behavior. Even when there are no measures to change the situation, guilt is adaptive, according to Tangney and Dearing (2002), because one can always choose to behave differently in the future when presented with a similar scenario. But what if you're not sure what you should have done or how you could have made a difference? It's reasonable to believe that shame is most adaptive when a person knows what has to be done to make things right. The question then becomes whether the person is motivated to accomplish it. To feel guilty quickly leads to persistent guilt. Hoffman (2000), on the other hand, feels that guilt in ambiguous situations (which he refers to as "virtual guilt") can also motivate prosocial behavior because, even if the person is not accountable for the situation, it is typically possible to better things.

Rumination and Self-reflection: Acting as a Buffer Between Guilt Proneness and Shame Proneness

According to some experts, depending on the situation, both guilt and shame can be adaptive or maladaptive. Lindsay-Hartz, de Rivera, and Mascolo (1995) argue that the adaptive value of emotion can be evaluated by examining the role the feeling performs in a given situation. In some circumstances, guilt can be used as an ineffective defense. Because he or she cannot accept the idea that there are unpleasant, uncontrollable circumstances, such as sickness, a person may feel guilty about them.

Future Implications

It has been discovered that the tendency to feel guilty in ambiguous situations (when one has little control over the event and hence cannot be held responsible) was just as strongly linked to psychological symptoms (anxiety, sadness, and externalizing) as the tendency to feel shame. Because it is difficult to discover a solution to resolve confusing circumstances.

Additionally, rumination has been shown in experimental research to have negative causal effects on mood and mood-related cognition in the near term, and if it occurs chronically or frequently, it will inevitably lead to emotional problems. Typically, these experiments compared a standardized rumination induction, in which participants are instructed to think about prompts focusing on their feelings, symptoms, and their causes and consequences, to a distraction induction, in which participants are instructed to imagine visual scenarios unrelated to the self or feelings. The first negative effect of rumination discovered in experimental investigations is that it exacerbates and prolongs current emotional states such as sadness, anger, anxiety, and melancholy while also expanding and polarising any cognitive material focused on during rumination (Watkins, 2008). with rumination exacerbating whatever negative mood is currently active in the individual. Rumination leads to more negative thoughts about the past, present, and future in persons who are already depressed or dysphoric. This emphasizes the possible ramifications of excess rumination in an individual or when ruminating on the negative possible circumstances. Thus, there is a scope and requirement for studying rumination in different influential aspects of social behavior along with various social constructs and other pathological disorders that is, mood disorders or personality disorders.

Shame and guilt are situation-specific and short-lived emotions. Shame-proneness and guilt-proneness are personality traits that lead to feelings of shame and guilt in a range of settings. Anger, hostility, social anxiety, self-consciousness, and a reduced capacity for empathy are all associated with shame-proneness. Guilt-proneness, on the other hand, appears to be unrelated to interpersonal adjustment, possibly because guilt is linked to the devaluation of an action rather than the self. The subject of what very shame-prone people do poorly in their relationships and what guilt-prone people do properly has yet to be investigated. This question can be answered using social cognitive theory. A social cognitive approach to personality and psychological adjustment is concerned with understanding people's desires, thoughts, feelings, and actions in specific situations and types of situations rather than general dispositions and their relationships to other dispositions (e.g., negative affectivity, capacity for empathy).

To further understand the link between shame-proneness, guilt-proneness, and interpersonal ineffectiveness, we must look at what shame-prone and guilt-prone people want, think, feel, and do when confronted with interpersonal difficulties. Because shame involves a strong focus on oneself. A person experiencing shame is more likely to have trouble coming up with appropriate solutions to interpersonal issues. More crucially, the person experiencing shame may have a set of interpersonal beliefs about himself or herself that makes it difficult

for him or her to employ the abilities that he or she possesses. Therefore, implying the possible effects of self-reflect, awareness, and insight on experiencing these self-conscious emotions. This expands the question of the role an individual plays in experiencing emotions that may have negative implications on oneself and increases the importance of studying these possibilities to enhance the understanding and develop preventive measures for the same.

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Conflict of Interest

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