

RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN MODELS OF FAMILY EDUCATION AND DEVIANT BEHAVIORS AMONG TEENAGERS

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Abstract

Background: An important predictor of adolescents' developmental outcomes is a model of family education, described in terms of parental behaviors. Various parental behaviors were strongly associated with increasing risk of deviant behaviors at school. **Methods:** The study was conducted on 566 adolescents, comprising 280 males (49.5%) and 286 females (50.5%), of grade 11th and 12th, of age rang 16-17 years from different government colleges in Vietnam. There were 2 self-reported scales to be used: Parental behavior scale; Adolescent deviant behaviors; Data was analyzed by using reliability analysis to examine the psychometric properties of the scales. **Results:** There was a strong, negative correlation between school deviant behaviors in adolescents and the parental support model (with $r_{\text{father}} = -.53$, $r_{\text{mother}} = -.61$, p -value $< .01$); a strong, positive correlation between the school deviant behaviors and the parental psychological control model (with $r_{\text{mother}} = .45$ and $r_{\text{father}} = .47$, p -value $< .01$). **Conclusions:** In family education, positive behaviors used by parents such as supportive, warmth and moderate control would have a positive impact on the adolescent's behavioral development; conversely, parents' psychological control would negatively affect and give rise to deviant behaviors among adolescents.

Keywords: Family educational model, parenting behavior, deviant behavior, adolescents, relationships.

1. Introduction

Over the past 10 years, incidences of deviant behaviors among adolescents in Vietnam have become more serious. Recent studies on deviant behaviors have mostly referred to noticeable slices, such as school violence, sexual violence, spreading bad news on the internet, acts in violation of laws, abortion, unsafe sex (SAVY 2, 2010), cheating, being rude to teachers, using drugs, bullying schools ... (Hoang Gia Trang, 2003/2015); of which, acts of bullying, insulting, threatening others in public places have become more striking. It seems that the family, school and society are gradually losing control over adolescents with deviant behaviors and the use of educational authority to deal with these problems has not had expected outcomes.

The World Health Organization defines adolescence as the period between child and adult age, from 10 to 19 years. Despite the differences in the concepts of adolescence, all studies in the world and in Vietnam confirm that this is a period of storm and stress with strong changes in all aspects: biological, cognitive, emotional, behavioral and, interpersonal relationships (Truong Thi Khanh Ha, 2013). This age is influenced by diversified environmental-related effects (especially from family-attached relationships, interpersonal relationships outside the family) and thus, the frequency of deviant behaviors, risky behaviors in adolescents also becomes more numerous than other age groups (Eisenberg, Damon & Lerner, 2006).

Deviant behaviors are considered socially unacceptable behaviors (Cheng, 2012), an unusual, abnormal, unexpected behavior, attitude, opinion or different from the behaviors, attitudes and opinions of the majority; these may be antisocial behaviors (Eisenberg, Damon & Lerner, 2006; Giacalone & Greenberg, 1997), or dysfunctional, inadequate behaviors (Vardi & Weitz, 2004; Mushtaq & Kausar, 2018). It is important to consider factors for decreasing (protective factors) or increasing (risk factors) these behaviors. The protective factors are related to individual characteristics of the student and the family environment, school environment. Protective factors may be a social support from people who are

important, meaningful and positive to young people (Bearn et al., 2002; Burton & Marshall, 2005), a feeling of belonging an environment (Coker & Borders, 2001). An important predictor of adolescents' developmental outcomes is a model of family education, described in terms of parental behaviors. Various parental behaviors were strongly associated with increasing risks of deviant behaviors at school (Barrera & Li, 1996; Rutter, Giller & Hagel, 1998; Brook & al., 1997). Numerous studies have shown that family education had a significant influence on adolescent deviant behaviors (Cheng, 2001), such as parental supervision and control (Laser, Luster & Oshio, 2007). Weak parental involvement and low parental control are related to deviant behaviors in children (Sampson & Laub, 1994: 523).

In Vietnamese culture, parenting is greatly influenced by three traditional religions (including Buddhism, Confucianism and Taoism), ancestor cult and collective values (Coulet, 1933, cited by Tran Thu Huong, 2007; Luong Can Liem, 1992/2005). The attachment among family members is also a protective factor against deviant behaviors. In contrast, the majority of adolescents who have ever engaged in risky behavior refer to causes such as family conflict and lack of harmony with parents.

Therefore, this study aims to find and clarify the relationship between family education models (modeled by parental behaviors) and deviant behaviors among Vietnamese teenagers (focusing on high school students). At the same time, some independent variables such as age, gender, academic achievement, parental educational level and occupation, were included in the analysis to examine their influence on the above relationship and to find a predictive model for deviant behaviors.

2. Methods

This research was conducted on 566 students in Vietnamese high schools, including 280 males (49.5%) and 286 females (50.5%), of grade 11th (n = 405) and 12th (n = 161), of age rang 16-17 years, from October 2019 to September 2020. The majority of participants (88.3%) were intact families. The level of students' academic achievement varied, around 7.2% of them had a good level (n = 41), 10.4% were at weak and average level (n = 59), and 82.3% were fairly good (n = 466). This was a cross-sectional research. The convenience sampling was performed.

Parental Behaviors Scale (Family Education) were measured using a 23-item scale proposed by Brian, Barber, Stolz, Olsen, Collins and Burchinal (2005), and 2 items built by research team. This 25-item scale was a child-report measure which comprised of three subscales: Parental Support, Parental Psychological Control and Behavioral Control. The alpha's Cronbach coefficient of the whole scale for the father is: .71 and for the mother is .65. *Parental support* was measured using the 10-item subscale from the revised Child Report of Parent Behavior Inventory (Schaefer, 1965; Schuldermann & Schuldermann, 1988). The alpha's Cronbach coefficient of this sub-scale for fathers is: .85 and for mothers is .73. The *parental psychological control* subscale consisted of 8 items extracted from Psychological Control Scale-Youth Self-Report (PCS-YSR; Barber, 1996) and 2 items which were built to rely on cultural characteristics of Vietnamese students in high. The alpha's Cronbach coefficient of this sub-scale for the father is: .77 and for the mother is .83. *Parental behavioral control* was measured using 5-item scale that was opted in family research with adolescents (e.g., Brian, Barber, Stolz, Olsen, Collins and Burchinal, 2005). The alpha's Cronbach coefficient of the sub-scale in the father is: .71 and in the mother is .66.

Adolescent-Reported Deviant Behaviors Checklist enumerated 37 problem behaviors in Vietnamese high-school students. To design a scale adapted to the sociocultural, educational and political characteristics in Vietnam, the research team has consulted, synthesized and opted for 27 items in international self-report delinquency studies (e.g., Elliot & Agenton, 1980; Junger - Tas, Terlouw & Klein, 1994; Ni He & Marshall, 2012). The remaining 10 items were designed by the research team based on the behavioral cultural rules of the Ministry of Education and Training in Vietnam, in consultation with head teachers and asking students about problematic behaviors occurring at school. This scale is structured into 4 sub-scales, including: 1/The violation of learning rules and school rules (17 items, $\alpha=.91$); 2/School conducts (8 items, $\alpha=.87$); 3/Bullying behaviors at school (7 items, $\alpha=.87$); and 4/Behavior related to sexuality (5 items, $\alpha=.85$).

3. Results of research

3.1. Evaluations of school deviant behaviors in adolescents

Independent sample T- test analyses of school deviant behavior groups between two groups of boys and girls showed that the boys had higher levels of school deviant behaviors than girls in all 4 groups of school deviant behaviors (see *Table 1*).

Table 1. Comparison of the average scores of school deviant behaviors in high school students.

Groups of school deviant behaviors	Boys		Girls	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Violation of learning rules and school rules $t_{(566)}=3.96, p=.000$	2.06	0.73	1.87	0.37
School conducts $t_{(566)}=4.95, p=.000$	1.89	0.85	1.62	0.35
Bullying behaviors at school $t_{(566)}=4.66, p=.000$	1.73	0.78	1.48	0.37
Behavior related to sexuality $t_{(566)}=6.364, p=.000$	1.66	0.81	1.32	0.33

As can be seen, the deviant behaviors in school often and firstly belonged to the behaviors related to learning; in other words, deviant behaviors frequently revolved around issues associated with a student's consciousness, attitudes, responsibilities and obligations. Comparing groups of students with different school deviant behaviors with the Independent sample T-test and the One-way ANOVA statistical methods, the research team noted that private school students had more school deviant behaviors than public school students in all four groups of deviant behaviors. Students with average academic performance had a higher level of deviant behaviors than the groups of students with good and excellent performance, especially in the two groups of deviant behaviors as regards to violations of learning rules and school conducts. The less time parents spent with their children (1 hour or less), the higher the student's level of deviant behavior, and vice versa. The time that parents spent with their children is a proof of a family's quality of life, and at the same time shows parents' concerns for their children and the feelings of members of their family. Parental marital status influenced the degree of deviant behaviors in high school students. For intact families, the level of school deviation among students was lower than for "separated" or "divorced" families. This means that, in insufficient families, children might lack the attention, care and supervision of a parent. The traumas that children had to suffer from living in an insufficient family can also cause the occurrence of their deviant behaviors.

3.2. Parenting behavior models reported by adolescents

Table 2. Comparison of the average scores for all dimensions of the parenting behaviors reported by students.

	T-value = 2						
	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Sig. (2-tailed)</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>M.D</i>	<i>95% C.I</i>	
						-	+
Supportive Father	-9.417	565	0.00	1.78	-.21692	-2.622	-.1717
Psychological control of Father	.099	565	0.92	2.00	.00199	-.0373	.0413
Behavior control of Father	-13.787	565	0.00	1.66	-.33834	-.3865	-.2901
Supportive Mother	2.030	565	0.04	2.04	.04527	.0015	.0891
Psychological control of Mother	3.739	565	0.00	2.08	.07827	.0372	.1194
Behavioral control of Mother	-13.751	565	0.00	1.70	-.31625	-.3614	-.2711

The data in Table 2 were analyzed by the One sample T-test with T-value = 2 showing that, of three dimensions of parenting behaviors reported by high school students, the psychological control aspect was still the common behavior above all others in parents, followed by the parental support aspect (it should be noted that the students' assessment of this aspect for mothers was quite far from fathers' support), and finally was the behavioral control.

The results on the manifestation levels of parenting behaviors showed that, among three mentioned groups, the psychological control dimension was "high" (strong/tight), being the most dominant; in which, the distance between fathers (53.4%) and mothers (67.3%) was quite clear. Second was the dimension of strong parental support, this rate was 64.8% for mothers, while 41.7% for fathers. As many as two-third of the students on the survey rated their parents having loose behavioral control, only 32.3% for their fathers and 35.9% for their mother as having strict behavioral control.

Thus, the fact that children evaluated the mother's behavioral aspects (strong supportive behavior, at the same time, tight psychological control) higher than the father's ones clearly reflected the role and cohesion of father and mother in Vietnamese families; in which, the presence and influence of the mother dominates in the early stages of development of the child.

3.3. Correlation between school deviant behaviors in adolescents and parenting behaviors

The results in Table 3 pointed out: 1/There was a strong, negative correlation between school deviant behaviors in general and the parent support group with $r_{\text{father}} = -.53$, $r_{\text{mother}} = -.61$; 2/There was a strong, positive correlation between the school deviant behaviors and the psychological control group; in which, the correlation coefficients for mother and father were: $r_{\text{mother}} = .45$ and $r_{\text{father}} = .47$. This was also a significant correlation level, showing that in the family, a parent, especially the mother, strengthened

his/her management, supervision and manipulation of his/her child psychologically, the higher the risk of the child's school deviant behavior; 3/There was an negative, weak correlation between school deviant behaviors and behavioral control group; in which, the level of negative correlation for father ($r_{\text{father}} = -.30$) was higher than for mother ($r_{\text{mother}} = -.17$).

Table 3. Correlation coefficient between school deviant behaviors in general and parenting behaviors.

<i>Dimensions of parenting behaviors (n=566)</i>	<i>School deviant behaviors in students</i>
Supportive Father	-.53**
Psychological control of Father	.45**
Behavioral control of Father	-.30**
Supportive Mother	-.61**
Psychological control of Mother	.47**
Behavioral control of Mother	-.17**

**p <.01

The different groups of deviant behaviors had a quite tight correlation with three dimensions of parenting behaviors. Parent support dimension had a strong, negative correlation with all 4 groups of school deviant behaviors in high school students, in which, the correlation coefficients for mothers were higher than those for fathers. Parental Psychological control dimension had a significantly positive and quite tight with all four groups of deviant behaviors at school; in which, the correlation level for fathers and for mothers was quite similar, with p -value<.01. Finally, the parental behavior of psychological control was positively and quite strongly correlated with all four groups of deviant behaviors in high school students, with the r coefficient ranging from .39 to .46. So it can be affirmed that if the father or mother uses psychological control behavior, the child's trauma is the same.

4. Discussions and conclusions

In Vietnamese folk, when it comes to family education, people often refer to the idiom: "A child is spoiled by his mother, a grandchild is spoiled by his grandmother". However, the power in the Vietnamese family belong to the man, because they are responsible for making money, as well as economic holders in the family (land, farmland, and property are all owned by the father and "only pass in to the son") (Nguyễn Từ Chi, 1989). Thus, whether the father has implicitly assigned the responsibility of raising and educating the children through the woman (wife, mother); on the surface, does the father seem less present or absent in relationships with the child than the mother's image?

There was a question to be asked: why did students value their mothers both strongly supporting their children and controlling them psychologically closely? From a practical point of view, parental behaviors (or parental education in the family) and school deviant behaviors in high school students were correlated. The supportive behavior was considered as the most ideal of the three types of parenting behaviors. Mothers' supportive behaviors had an effective role of controlling, eliminating and minimizing the level of deviation more than that of fathers. Besides, the parental control of the child's behaviors was inversely correlated with all four groups of deviant behaviors, in which the father's supervision had more impact on the child's behaviors than that of the mother.

There may be a question posed instead of the conclusion of this paper, which is: whether parents have a lot of support and effective control in their children's behaviors is the best educational method to produce fewer school deviant behaviors in children or not? And vice versa, a weak support (neglect) and overly high psychological control and too high or too low behavioral control of parents are the highest risk for the formation and development of school deviant behaviors in high school students or not?

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