

Study on Effects of Supports from Social Environments of Adolescents on their Risky Behaviors

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Abstract. The purpose of this study is to investigate how the supports from social environments of adolescents influence their risky behaviors. For the study, a survey was conducted with a sample of adolescents in C-si of Gyeongsangnam-do. SPSS 18.0 program was used for statistical analysis on the result. The analysis showed that the supports from social environments significantly influence the risky behaviors of adolescents. Also it was found that responsibility tends to mediate the relationship with risky behaviors. The implication of this study is that it provides the fundamental information for policies, which can solve the problems with risky behaviors of adolescents.

Keywords: Social environmental factor, risky behavior, responsibility

1 Introduction

1.1 Necessities for the Research

Recently, South Korea was reported to be having the highest suicide rate in OECD countries. With this report, suicide is now considered to be a serious social issue that families, schools and the whole society need to work on, instead of personal problems of individuals or families of the victims. According to National Statistics Office, as of 2013, the most frequent cause of death of adolescents (aged 9 – 24) is intended self-injuries (suicides), followed by accidents and malignant neoplasm (cancer) [1]. Consequently, the society requires various policies regarding such issues, in accordance with the changing social perceptions on adolescence issues. Life stress and depression were the most relevant factors of suicidal impulse of adolescents, but it can be inferred that the supports of family, friends and teachers, a mediating factor, serves to lower the depression level and to suppress suicidal impulses. Especially the support of family has the strongest mediating effect to lower the suicidal impulse and depression of adolescents. Also it was found that the better the cohesiveness, capacity of

positive receptivity and crisis management ability of a family are, the stronger the mediating effect thereof there is. Moreover, of the school environmental factors, grades, academic stresses, peer supports, school violence and supports of teachers are found to be influential [2, 3]. Accordingly, there are many studies [2, 3, 4] on the influences of suicides attempts of adolescences, school violence, suicidal behaviors and psychological factors on the adolescences' perception on suicides. Yet, there still is a lack of studies on the effects of social environmental factors on the risky behaviors of adolescences. Therefore, this research aims to analyze the effects of the supports from social environments of adolescences on their risky behaviors

1.2 Research Question

The detailed research questions of this study are as follows.

First, how do the supports from social environments influence the risky behaviors of adolescences?

Second, how does the responsibility influence the supports on surrounding environment of adolescences and on the mediation of their risky behaviors?

2 Research Methods

2.1 Research Targets

For the study, a survey was conducted with a sample group of adolescences, living in C-si. Before conducting the survey, the purpose of the survey and methods of filling in the survey sheet were explained to the respondents in details. Any survey sheets that were not returned or contained some omitted terms were excluded in statistical analysis.

2.2 Research Tools

The investigation tool was subdivided into the terms regarding social demographical characteristics, social environmental factors and factors of risky behaviors, of which the detailed scales and variables are as follows. For the social demographical variable, gender, age group, school grades, family structure and economic states were considered. The social environmental factor was further divided into the supports from surrounding adults and that of teachers. For the scales of social environmental factors and factors of risky behaviors, a scale for school violence, developed by Yoo HyeonOk [5], and a scale for game addiction and suicidal pulses, developed by Kwon HyeonYong [6], was used respectively.

2.3 Data Processing and Analysis

This study was conducted under a significant level of 5% and SPSS 18.0 program was used for statistical analysis. Frequency analysis was conducted to investigate the general issues, including the demographical characteristics. Factorial analysis and reliability analysis were also conducted to secure the validity and reliability of the measurements made in the process of verifying the hypothesis. In order to find the focused convergent validity and discriminant validity of the research model, the average variance extracted value (AVE) and concept reliability (CR) were applied.

3 Research Result

3.1 Social Demographical Traits

The sample of adolescences in this study consisted of more females than males with the largest age group of '16 – 18.' There were more high school students than middle school students and the majority were found to be ranked in the middle or middle-high for their school grades. Most of the students has responded to be 'living with parents.'

3.2 Effects of Social Environmental Factors on Risky Behaviors

As a result of analyzing the social environmental factors, it was found that the supports from surrounding adults and teachers have significant influences. In other words, it was revealed that adolescences tend to show less risky behaviors when there are adults or teachers, who encourage, like and understand them.

3.3 Effects of Responsibility on the Supports on Surrounding Environments of Adolescences and on the Mediation of Risky Behaviors

The effects of responsibility on the surrounding environment of adolescences were analyzed and it was investigated that the responsibility tend to mediate the relationship between the supports on the surrounding environment and the risky behaviors. Such result implies that even with low supports from surrounding adults or teachers, highly responsible students are less likely to show risky behaviors, act violently and have suicidal impulse.

3.4 Verification of the Research Question

An analysis on the effects of the supports from social environments were analyzed showed that the supports from surrounding adults and teachers significantly influence the risky behaviors of adolescences. Moreover, the responsibility was found to be mediating the relationship between the supports from surrounding environment and risky behaviors.

4 Discussions and Conclusion

The purpose of this study is to investigate effects of the supports from social environments of adolescences on their risky behaviors. As a result, it was found that the supports from social environments of adolescences significantly influence their risky behaviors, and that the responsibility mediates the relationship between supports from social environments and game addiction. Such result accords with a research result of Kim SeongSoo [7], which showed that there is a mediating effect in the relationship between the supports of surrounding adults and teachers on the risky behaviors. Based on the above research results, the following suggestions are drawn.

First, since the supports from social environments of adolescences influence their risky behaviors, it was revealed that it is unlikely for an adolescence to display risky behaviors when they feel they are supported by surrounding adults or teachers. Thus, there is a necessity for finding various ways to spend many time with adults, who like, encourage and understand them. Also they are required to put efforts on earning the supports from teachers.

Second, the responsibility is a mediating factor in the relationship between the supports from social environments and the risky behaviors. Thus, there is a necessity for development of educational programs that helps adolescences to grow responsibilities at their school and home. Such result is considered to serve as information for improvement measures of enhancing the responsibilities of adolescences.

In the future, a detailed study on how the degrees of influences of different risky environment factors vary upon depending on the supports from surrounding environment of adolescences.

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