

Associations among the Parent-Adolescent Relationship, Aggression, and Delinquency among Filipino Adolescent Boys and Girls

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The present study looked into similarities of patterns of association between the quality of parent-adolescent relationship and adolescent externalizing problem behaviors, aggression and delinquency for Filipino male and female adolescents. There are 212 females and 176 males. The over-all mean age is 17.36 with a standard deviation of 0.73. Female respondents ($M = 17.31$, $SD = 0.71$) are younger than male respondents ($M = 17.40$, $SD = 0.76$). The results of the study in two different samples indicate that there is no significant difference between Filipino boys and girls in the way that adolescent disclosure is related to delinquency and the way negative quality of parent-adolescent relationship is related to aggression. It was found out that parental support was not related to aggression or delinquency for Filipino male and female adolescents.

Keywords: Parent-adolescent relationship, aggression, delinquency

Researchers all over the world have examined relationships between parent-child relationships and externalizing problem behavior in adolescents: namely aggression and delinquency. Steinberg and Silk (2002) described three parenting domains which reflects important aspects of parent-adolescent relationship: namely the harmony domain, autonomy domain, and conflict domain (Eichelsheim, et. al, 2008). On harmony domain, Barnes et al., (2006) and Meeus et al. (2004) found out that higher levels of perceived parental support are directly or indirectly, related to lower levels of adolescent delinquency and aggression. Children with high levels of perceived parental support when compared to other children have more friends, are more emphatic, more popular, inclined to approach others and respond to others with more positive affect and are more self-confident and more cooperative (Berber et al., 2005). However, several studies have also shown that with increasing age, perceived parental support

becomes less important (Meuss et al., 2004; Scholte et al., 2001). While on autonomy domain, disclosure was associated with lower levels of adolescent adjustment problems (Barnes, et al., 1992; Barnes, et al., 2006; Soenens, et. al., 2006; Stattin & Kerr, 2000). Smith and Krohn (1995) found that being less involved with parents in activities was significantly related to delinquent behavior for Hispanic adolescents. Delinquent behavior is a behavior that typically takes place outside the home, outside the family setting. The more adolescents disclose to their parents about their activities outside the home the lower their levels of delinquency (Eichelsheim et al., 2008). Feiring (1993) found that parental awareness of children's friends is an important part of parenting. Parents knowing their children's friends can have a two-fold effect: it can preempt their children's involvement in negative social activities, and it kept parents aware of their children's social behavior (Moore, 2008). Parents who monitor their children's friendships and activities tend to raise more socially adept children (Bearman, 1999). Rosenbaum (1999) found that adolescents who have strong bond with their parents are less likely to be delinquent. Researches on conflict domain, showed that negative quality of the parent-child relationship is often found to be a strong predictor of adolescent externalizing problem behavior (Buehler, 2006; Low & Stocker, 2005). Soenens et al. (2006) and Statin (2000) found strong associations with negative quality of parent-adolescent relationship and adolescent delinquency. The researchers claimed that the extent to which adolescents quarrel or disagree with their parents is not related to the level of delinquency but to the adolescents' level of aggression. Negative quality of mother-child relationship was found to act as mediator to the relation between maternal depressive symptoms and adolescent externalizing problem behavior (McCarthy & McMahan, 2003). However, most of these studies were conducted using Caucasian samples. Even if they provide valuable information and insights between associations of parent-child relationship and adolescent problem behavior, it would be interesting to investigate if these findings are universal across ethnic groups. The ethnic equivalence model (Lamborn, & Felbab, 2003) suggests that family influences go past ethnicity, which means that there are no differences in the way parenting is related to adolescent outcomes across ethnic groups (Eichelsheim, et al, 2008). The ethnic equivalence model was found to be true in many studies. It showed that there is no ethnic difference found in the association of parent-adolescent relationship and adolescent externalizing problem behavior (Dekovic, et. al., 2004; Forehand, et. al., 1997; German-Smith, et. al, 1996; Rowe, 1994; & Vazsonyi, et al., 2006). Vazsonyi et al. (2006) found that family processes that affect adolescent development, show a large degree of universality across gender and ethnicity. Eichelsheim et al. (2008) showed that no gender and ethnic interaction indicated that the existing theory on association between parent-adolescent relationships and externalizing problem behaviors are suitable not only for adolescents of different ethnic origin but also for both boys and girls. However, researches on harsh punishment seemed to be an exception. Lansford et al. (2004) and Smith (1995) found that there are differences across ethnic groups in associations between harsh punishment and adolescent problem behavior.

In the present study, I would like to look into the patterns of association between negative quality of parent-adolescent relationship, adolescent disclosure, perceived parental support, aggression and delinquency, if they are the same with

Filipino male and female adolescents. The main research question of the present study is if parenting and quality of the parent-adolescent relationship are related to aggression and delinquency for Filipino adolescents. In the present study, it is hypothesized that there are no differences in the patterns of association between Filipino boys and girls. It is expected that perceived parental support and adolescent disclosure are negatively related to both delinquency and aggression. For negative quality of parent-adolescent relationship it is expected to be positively related to both delinquency and aggression. Eichelsheim et al. (2008) showed that the existing theory on association between parent-adolescent relationships and externalizing problem behaviors are suitable not only for adolescents of different ethnic origin but also for both boys and girls. Higher levels of perceived parental support are directly or indirectly, related to lower levels of adolescent delinquency and aggression (Barnes, et al, 2006; Meeus, et al., 2004). Eichelsheim et al. (2008) found that higher level of adolescent disclosure was related to lower level of delinquency. Negative quality of the parent-child relationship is often found to be a strong predictor of adolescent externalizing problem behavior (Buehler, 2006; Low & Stocker, 2005).

Methods

This part presents the methodology of the research. It includes research design, participants, instruments administered for data gathering, data gathering procedure, and data analysis employed to be able to answer the research questions.

Research Design

The present study, made use of cross-sectional descriptive research design. It covered groups of individuals differing on the basis of specified criteria (for example, gender) at the same point in time.

Participants

The questionnaire was originally distributed to 410 college students in Metro Manila. However, after removing participants due to over age, 16-18 years old only, or inability to answer the questionnaire properly 388 respondents remained in the study. There are 212 females and 176 males. The over-all mean age is 17.36 with a standard deviation of 0.73. Female respondents ($M = 17.31$, $SD = 0.71$) are younger than male respondents ($M = 17.40$, $SD = 0.76$).

Instruments

Negative Quality of Parent-Adolescent Relationship. Network of Relationship Inventory (NRI) was used to measure negative quality of the parent-adolescent relationship. The two subscales Conflict (e. g., How much do you and your parent/s argue with each other?) and Antagonism (e. g., How much do you and your parent/s get upset with or mad at each other?) were combined to form the 6-item scale of negative quality of parent-adolescent relationship. Respondents were asked to rate

how much each statement characterized the relationship with their parents using a standard 5-point Likert scale (1 = never to 5 = always). Cronbach's alpha was 0.74 and 0.77 for females and males adolescents, respectively.

Perceived Parental Support. The 9-item subscale support (e. g., I get the emotional help and support I need from my parent/s) of NRI was used to measure parental support. The scale is a standard 6-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 6 = strongly agree). The Cronbach's alpha was 0.94 and 0.95 for males and females, respectively.

Adolescent Disclosure. The Parenting Practice Questionnaire (PPQ) was used to measure adolescent disclosure. Adolescents were asked to indicate how much they tell their parents about their activities (e. g., My parent/s knew exactly where I was in the afternoon after school.). The shortened version of the scale consisted of 4 items to be answered on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = never to 5 = always). Cronbach's alpha was 0.79 and 0.82 for males and females, respectively.

Aggression and Delinquency. The Youth Self Report (YSR) was used to measure Aggression and Delinquency. The response categories for YSR were on a 3-point Likert scale (0 = not true, 1 = sometimes true, and 2 = often true). The Aggressive behavior scale contained 19 items (e. g. "I get into many fights", "I scream a lot."). Cronbach's alpha for this scale was 0.79 and 0.81 for females and males, respectively. The Delinquent behavior scale consists of 12 items (e. g., "I break rules at home, school, or elsewhere.", and "I drink alcohol without my parents' approval."). Cronbach's alpha for these scales were 0.70 for males and females respondents

Procedure

The questionnaires were administered to 410, first to second year college students from universities and colleges in Metro Manila. The respondents were informed of the purpose of the data gathering and were assured of the confidentiality of their responses. The researcher was aided by trained student-assistants for data gathering and data encoding.

Data Analysis

Frequency, weighted mean, and standard deviation were computed to describe the data gathered. Pearson's r was computed to determine the correlation of the variables being studied.

Cronbach's alphas were computed to establish the reliability of the scales used in this study.

Path Analysis was used to determine the association between parent-adolescent relationship and externalizing problem behavior. Goodness of fit test was used to determine the fit of the model and the sample.

Results

The aim of the present study was to determine whether disclosure, negative quality of the parent-adolescent relationship, and perceived parental support are associated with delinquency and aggression among Filipino adolescent boys and girls. Results of descriptive statistics, Pearson's r , path analysis and population gamma index were included in this part of the paper.

Table 1
Descriptive Statistics

	Male n = 176		Female n = 212	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Delinquency	0.45	0.25	0.44	0.25
Aggression	0.41	0.26	0.41	0.23
Negative Quality of parent-adolescent relationship	2.48	0.59	2.44	0.54
Adolescent Disclosure	3.25	1.00	3.55	0.93
Perceived Parental Support	4.34	1.13	4.60	1.08

Table 1, present the means and standard deviations of the results of the scales of the males and females adolescents. Results showed that male respondents have higher means on delinquency and negative quality of parent-adolescent relationship. While female respondents have higher means on adolescent disclosure and perceived parental support.

Table 2
Correlation Matrix of Female Respondents

	D	A	NQ	DI	S
Delinquency (D)	1.00				
Aggression (A)	.55*	1.00			
Negative Quality (NQ)	.15*	.25*	1.00		
Disclosure (DI)	-.34*	-.18*	-.03	1.00	
Parental Support (S)	-.17*	-.17*	-.25*	.38*	1.00

* $p < 0.05$

Table 2 shows the correlation coefficients of the variables for female respondents. Results indicated that high negative quality of parent-adolescent relationship is related to high adolescent delinquency and aggression. Negative

quality of relationship is significant positively correlated with delinquency ($r = 0.15$, $p < 0.05$) and aggression ($r = 0.25$, $p < 0.05$). While disclosure and parental support are significant negatively correlated with delinquency ($r = -0.34$, $p < .05$, and $r = -0.17$, $p < .05$) and aggression ($r = -0.18$, $p < .05$, and $r = -0.17$, $p < .05$) indicative of indirect relationship, meaning high adolescent disclosure and high parental support indicates low delinquency and aggression. Parental support is significantly correlated with adolescent disclosure ($r = 0.38$, $p < .05$) and significantly negative correlated with negative quality of parent-adolescent relationship.

Table 3
Correlation Matrix for Male Respondents

	D	A	NQ	DI	S
Delinquency (D)	1.00				
Aggression (A)	.53*	1.00			
Negative Quality (NQ)	.28*	.41*	1.00		
Disclosure (DI)	- .25*	- .07	- .04	1.00	
Parental Support (S)	- .1	- .13	- .02	.45*	1.00

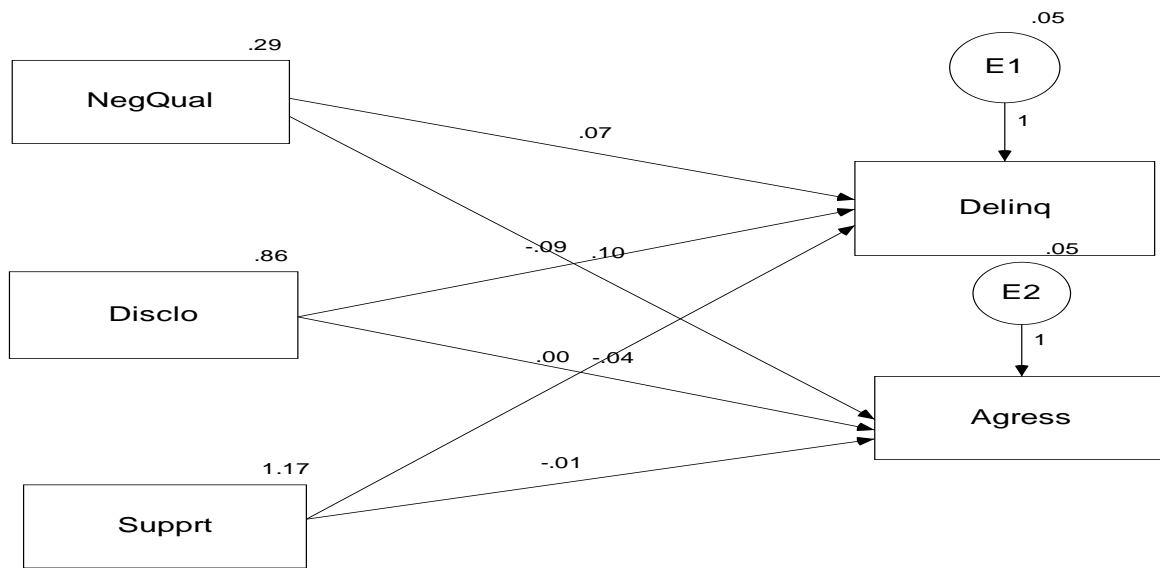
* $p < 0.05$

Table no 3 showed the results of correlation of the variables for male respondents. Similar to female respondents, results indicated that high negative quality of parent-adolescent relationship is correlated with high adolescent delinquency and aggression. Negative quality of relationship is significant positively correlated with delinquency ($r = 0.28$, $p < 0.05$) and aggression ($r = 0.415$, $p < 0.05$). However, adolescent disclosure is significantly negative correlated to delinquency but not aggression. It indicates that high adolescent disclosure is indicative of low delinquency or vice versa.

The path model for female respondents (Figure 1) indicated that higher levels of disclosure were significantly related to lower levels of delinquency ($\beta = -.09$, $p < .05$). Negative quality of parent-child relationship was related to aggression ($\beta = 0.10$, $p < .05$) but not to delinquency. Perceived parental support was not related to neither delinquency nor aggression. For goodness of fit, population gamma index (GFI) is 0.84, which indicated a good fit between the model and the sample data.

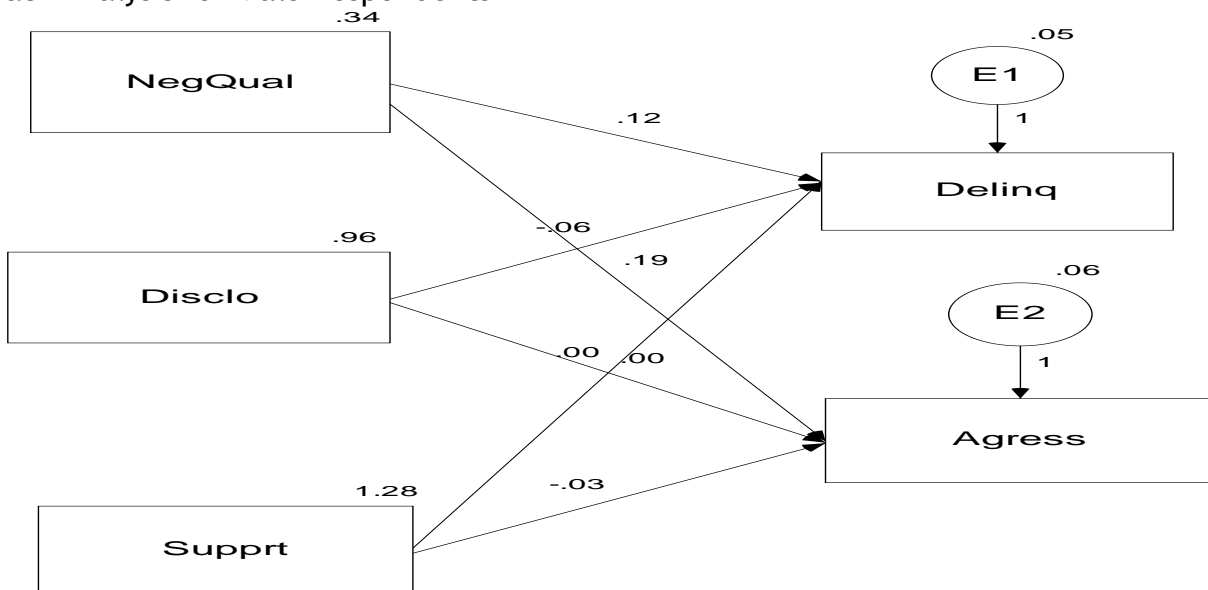
The path model for male respondents (Figure 2) indicated that higher levels of disclosure were significantly related to lower levels of delinquency. Negative quality of parent-child relationship was related to aggression ($\beta = 0.19$, $p < .05$) and delinquency ($\beta = 0.12$, $p < .05$). Perceived parental support was not related to either aggression or delinquency. For goodness of fit, population gamma index (GFI) is 0.90, which indicated a good fit between the model and the sample data.

Figure 1
Path Analysis for Female Respondents



Note. Disclosure x Delinquency ($\beta=-0.9$, $p<.05$); Negative Quality x Aggression ($\beta=0.10$, $p<.05$); Negative Quality ($\beta=0.29$, $p<.05$); Disclosure ($\beta=0.86$, $p<.05$); Support ($\beta=1.17$, $p<.05$); E1 ($\beta=0.06$, $p<.05$); E2 ($\beta=0.05$, $p<.05$). GFI=0.84.

Figure 2
Path Analysis for Male Respondents



Note. Negative Quality x Delinquency ($\beta=0.12$, $p<.05$); Disclosure x Delinquency ($\beta=-0.06$, $p<.05$); Negative Quality x Aggression ($\beta=0.19$, $p<.05$); Negative Quality ($\beta=0.34$, $p<.05$); Disclosure ($\beta=0.96$, $p<.05$); Support ($\beta=1.28$, $p<.05$); E1 ($\beta=.06$, $p<.05$); E2 ($\beta=.06$, $p<.05$). CFI = 0.90

Discussion

The aim of the present study was to determine whether disclosure, negative quality of the parent-adolescent relationship, and perceived parental support are associated with delinquency and aggression among Filipino adolescent boys and girls.

The results of the study in two different samples indicate that there is no difference between Filipino boys and girls in the way that adolescent disclosure is related to delinquency and the way negative quality of parent-adolescent relationship is related to aggression. For both samples, disclosure is more related to delinquency than aggression. Feiring (1993) found that parental awareness of children's friends is an important part of parenting. Parents knowing their children's friends can have a two-fold effect: it can preempt their children's involvement in negative social activities, and it kept parents aware of their children's social behavior (Moore, 2008). Parents who monitor their children's friendships and activities tend to raise more socially adept children (Bearman, 1999). Delinquent behavior is a behavior that typically takes place outside the home, outside the family setting. The more they disclose to their parents about their activities outside the home, the lower their levels of delinquency. The overt character of delinquent behavior seems to be specifically related to lack of disclosure in parent adolescent relationship (Eichelsheim, et. al., 2008). For Filipino boys and girls negative quality of parent-adolescent relationship is related to aggression. The extent to which Filipino adolescents quarrel or disagree with their parents is not related to the levels of delinquency but is strongly related to the levels of aggression. Rosenbaum (1999) indicated that adolescents who have strong bond with their parents are less likely to be delinquent. The negative and coercive interaction patterns in the parent-adolescent relationship seem to spill over directly into adolescent interpersonal aggression. (Eichelsheim, et. al., 2008).

Although parental support has been proven as important predictors of aggression and delinquency, it is not true for this research. It was found out that parental support was not related to aggression or delinquency for Filipino male and female adolescents. However, several studies have shown that with increasing age, perceived parental support becomes less important (Meuss et al., 2004; Scholte et al., 2001). As probably was the case with the present study were the samples mean ages were 17.31 and 17.40 for females and males, respectively.

The results of negative quality of parent-adolescent relationship and disclosure with its association with aggression and delinquency confirmed the ethnic equivalence model for this research. It proved that western based theories on parent-adolescent relationships and externalizing problem behavior are also applicable to Filipino male and female adolescents. As stated by Eichelsheim, et al (2008) it is the quality of parenting and the parent-adolescent relationships which are more important factors to investigate than ethnicity and gender.

The present study examined aggression and delinquency separately instead of examining it as one construct of externalizing problem behavior and because of it the study was able to clearly show the differences in the association with aspects of parent-adolescent relationships. The findings of the study provide support to the

ethnic equivalence model of Lambord and Felbab (2003). It also provide support to the studies of Meuss et al., (2004) and Scholte et al., (2001) that perceived parental support becomes less important as children mature or increase in age. The present study also concur with the findings of other researchers that high level of adolescent disclosure is related to low level of delinquency and high level of negative quality of parent-adolescent relationships is related to high level of aggression (Feiring, 1993; Moore, 2008; Bearman, 1999; Rosenbaum, 1999; Smith & Krohn, 1995; Eichelsheim, et. al., 2008).

It is recommended to future researchers to choose middle adolescents or early adolescents as respondents to re-investigate the association of parental support with aggression and delinquency. It is also suggested to examine delinquency and aggression separately not as one construct of externalizing problem behavior, as what this study has done.

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