Coping with School Violence Behaviour of High School Students (Research on High School Students in Da Nang City)

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
Published Online: 03 December 2021 Corresponding Author: **Vo Thi Tram**	In today's society, there are still school violence behaviors that affect simultaneously seriously to the physical and mental health of students as well as their academic performances. This article will present how high school students in the city of Da Nang cope with these related problems. A study with the participation of 423 students at seven schools in Da Nang city was carried out to describe the fact how students cope with school violence behaviours. Its result shows that the main cause of school violence behavior comes from students' witnessing various types of violence. In addition, students apply positive responses through actions and emotions when faced with school violence behaviors. Based on the result obtained, the study recommends measures to partially affect the way the schools and families develop their solutions, as well as directly affect the survey subjects.

1. INTRODUCTION

School violence is a significant threat that most students in the world have to cope with. A majority of students face these conflicts at least once in their high school career, and there is little one can do to prevent them. (Daniella Hosack, Senior Staff Writer, 2019). The imbalance in the course of psycho-physiological development makes it difficult for students of this age to control their emotions and behaviors. The influences from the living environment, family, school, group of friends, etc. and the psychological characteristics are factors that make students at this stage are very likely to cause violent behaviors with other students. (Nguyen Van Tuong, 2019). According to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF, 2019): Interpersonal violence has a significant impact on the lives of millions of children around the world. Up to 50% of all children aged 2 to 17 are supposed to have been affected by a type of violence (physical, sexual or emotional abuse) in the past year (2019) - equivalent to 1 billion children. In Vietnam, the statistics from the Ministry of Education and Training (2019) show that there were nearly 1,600 school-fighting cases inside and outside schools in just one school year. According to some other statistics, there was a fight for every 5,200 students and one student expelled from school for every 11,000 students. (According to Legislative Research Institute, 2019).

There have been many studies on school violence of students, from various perspectives and towards different aspects, including scope of research on the way the students cope with school violence behaviors. This article focuses on researching a group of high school students in Da Nang City's coping with school violence behavior based on fundamental factors such as thoughts, emotions, and actions, thereby expanding the scope of the literature and research base for this research direction.

2. STUDY OVERVIEW

2.1. Causes of school violence behavior

When studying factors derived from violent students:

- According to the conclusion of Detris Honora, Anthony Rolle (2002), appearance and bad academic results may be causes making students participate in school violence cases due to envy other students.

- Furlong and Gale Morrison (2000) point out that the tendency to not accept the characteristics of different students (behavior, sexual orientation, skin color, religion, ethnicity, disability, etc.) may be also one of the factors resulting in school violence.

- Tran Thi Thuy, Bui Hai Yen, Hoang Van Tuyen (2011) suppose that the psychophysiology of adolescents or students with behavioral disorders may also result in school violence behavior.

- Le Thi Huyen Trang (2020) concludes on the close relationship between negative childhood experiences (physical abuse, community violence, etc.) and students' aggressive behavior.

From students suffering acts of violence:

- Matthew J. Mayer and Peter E. Leone (2007) summarized a number of the main causes resulting in school violence behavior related to gender issues (female students are more likely to be bullied), or students' perception (several students are afraid of being ostracized or do not know they are under violence, so they accept it as a matter of course).

- Wang Jing, Ronald J Iannotti, and Tonja R Nansel (2009) specify that famous students are often chosen by teachers as examples for classmates to follow; Students who receive attention and affection from the subject of violence; Students who overreact are often subjected to physical and verbal violence.

From factors of family:

- Nguyen Thi Mai Huong - Nguyen Thu Ha (2019) said that: (1) parents and their children have no time for each other to communicate (2) the parents' improper behaviors (3) the quarrel of siblings (4) families with particular circumstances may be the factors leading to students' school violence behavior.

- Laura (2009) uses interpersonal relationships, including three types of parent-child relationships: trust - equality, ignoring - separaten, and strictness - rigidity to explain this problem.

Factors form school's perspective:

- Nguyen Thi Mai Huong - Nguyen Thu Ha (2019) reinforced their viewpoint through several reasons such as the overload of the educational program that results in learning pressure for students, the lack of life skills education activities for students, the loose linkage between the school and the family in the management and education of students, the negative attitudes of teachers, and unclear regulations of the school, etc.

-Meanwhile, Espelage, D.L. (2018) argues that factors such as the ineffective sanctioning regulations of the school or the teachers' lack of attention and knowledge to handle school violence behaviors are also the reasons for increasingly serious school violence.

Social factors are mentioned by other authors such as:

- A. I. Sanz Garcíaa, E. Molano Margalloa (2014) argues that the rapid growth of technology is the cause of online violence (Ahern, NR. & Mechlin, B., 2013) and the spread of users' personal information (Wright, MF. & Li, Y., 2013).

- Nguyen Thi Mai Huong (2019) also agrees with the opinion that students who are affected by, get involved in social evils, or wallow in social networks often tend to be violent at school.

From the above studies, our research team indicates the following principal reasons for school violence behaviors:
(1) Negative impressions and feelings between students and students (2) Factors related to family circumstances (3) School-related factors such as size, location, and crime (4) Lack of life skills education activities for students (5)

Tremendous growth in technology results in more accessible online violence.

2.2 Concept of coping:

- The starting point for studies on the term of response today is the study for the term of a defense mechanism by the famous psychiatrist Sigmund Freud. Haan (1963) developed this term with 20 ego mechanisms and 10 coping mechanisms. In the aspect of Ego, coping is purposeful and involves selection, while in the aspect of defense mechanisms, it means stereotypical. The term "coping" was not referred to in summary keywords in psychological studies until 1967. (quoted by Tran Van Cong et al., 2015).

A number of outstanding authors in the world have given their views on the concept of coping. According to Lazarus and Folkman (1984), "coping is the constant effort to change perception and behavior of individuals to handle specific requirements inside each individual, and in the environment in which the individuals consider them as threats, challenges or beyond their capacity". Snyder and Dinoff (1999) have provided a definition concluded from previous viewpoints: "Coping is a response to relieve the physical, emotional, and psychological burden associated with stressful and complicated events in daily life".

- Phan Thi Mai Huong et al. (2007) argue that "…coping behavior is the way an individual expresses his interaction with circumstance corresponding to his own logic, to meaning in life, and to psychological abilities". Nguyen Thi Hue (2012) defines "the direct meaning of coping is confrontation and facing up with unusual and difficult situations and circumstances. In a broad sense, coping includes all forms of the subject's interaction with requirements of the outer and inner world by grasping, mastering, or diminishing, adopting, or avoiding requirements of problematic circumstances". Nguyen Huu Long (2015) concludes that: "Coping is handling problems or overcoming obstacles encountered in life".

Based on the concepts provided by the authors above, in this study, we define *Coping as a conscious response based on the purposes and psychophysiology of each individual, expressed through thoughts, emotions, and actions when an individual encounters an adverse or dangerous situation.*

2.3. Concept of coping behavior to school violence:

- In the study of Fox & Boulton (2005), they asked students about the frequency of what they would do when encountering school violence; thus the research team gave its conclusion about the ways that students use to cope with school violence: (1) seeking support from teachers (2) seeking support from friends (3) finding solutions (4) staying away (5) talking to others (6) expressing negative feelings (7) giving in or following the bully (8) ignoring (9) running away.

- Nguyen Van Tuong (2019) primarily focuses on research on secondary school students' coping ways and proposes 11

coping ways used by students to school violence through 6 specific groups of expressions as follows: (1) Coping by negative thinking (resignation/thinking of the problem) (2) Coping by positive thinking (self-comforting/problem-solving orientation) (3) Coping by negative emotions (expressing/repressing emotions) (4) Coping by positive emotions (emotional balance) (5) Coping by negative actions (avoidance of problems/retaliation, self-harm) (6) Coping by positive action (problem-solving/confrontation, support seeking).

Based on the studies above, our research team concludes that the student's behavior to coping with school violence usually relies on 3 essential psychological functions as thinking, emotion, and action with 6 groups of expressions, as follows:

(1) Negative thinking (resignation/thinking of the problem) (2) Positive thinking (self-comfort; problem-solving orientation) (3) Negative emotions (expressing or negative emotions) (4) Positive emotions (balance and control of emotions; avoidance of problems) (5) Negative actions (retaliation, self-harm; avoidance of problems; giving in, following the bully) (6) Positive actions (confronting, seeking help; solving the problem)

3. OBJECTS AND RESEARCH METHODS:

- Objects to be surveyed: 423 high school students from 7 schools in 6 districts and another district in Da Nang city: gender (161 male and 262 female); academic ability (weak: 3, average: 28, good: 121, very good: 271).

Table 1: Description of the object

Content	Quantity	Rate (%)
1. Gender		
Male	161	38,1
Female	262	61,9
2. Academic ability		
Weak	3	0,7
Average	28	6,6
Good	121	28,6
Very good	271	64,1

- Research method:

+ Survey method by questionnaire: we design a questionnaire consisting of 6 parts, including awareness of school violence behavior; awareness of coping with school violence, causes, impacts, and solutions for personal information (gender/ class/ school/ academic ability/ etc.). The questionnaire consists of 58 expressions with a scale from 1 to 5 points (1 = completely disagree; 2 = mostly disagree; 3 = half agree, half disagree; 4 = mostly agree and 5 = completely agree) and is divided into 6 groups.

+ Mathematical methods of statistics: we use SPSS 22.0 software to analyze mean score; rate %; comparative correlation in groups.

4. RESULT OF THE RESEARCH SURVEY ON THE CAUSES AND WAYS OF COPING WITH SCHOOL VIOLENCE BEHAVIORS OF HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS IN DA NANG CITY:

Table 2: Main causes of the school violence behaviours

No.	Causes	Rate (%)					Mean	SD	Rank
		Completely disagree	Mostly disagree	Half agree, half disagree	Mostly agree	Completely agree			
1	Students who have witnessed all kinds of violence (family violence, school violence, etc.).	21,7	13,9	30,5	20,3	13,5	3.46	1.285	1
2	Students who are arrogant and selfish.	18,9	9	25,3	22,9	23,9	3.24	1.407	2

3	Students who love to show off to others.	18,7	11,1	27,7	23,4	19,1	3.13	1.358	3
4	Students who take side with the bully.	20,8	8,5	29,6	22	19,1	3.10	1.377	4
5	Students have conflicts or relationships with friends who are in troubles	19,9	10,6	28,6	23,9	17	3.08	1.349	5

The above survey results show the students' awareness of the main causes that may result in school violence behavior. In which, "students who have witnessed all kinds of violence (family violence, school violence, etc.) are the most chosen reason by students with the average mean = 3.46. Most students believe that having witnessed school violence behaviors will form a violence tendency in the psyche, resulting in the students' violent actions.

The two causes of school violence followed by the first one are "students who are arrogant and selfish" and "students who love to show off to others" with a average mean of 3.24 and 3.13, respectively. This is a group of students who show their negative personalities due to reasons such as in the period of adolescent psychophysiology development or behavioral disorders.

"Students who take side with the bully" is also one of the main causes that may lead to school violence, ranks 4th with a meanof 3.10. The reason may be the fact that students are afraid of being ostracized or becoming victims of school violence.

In particular, the studies indicate that "students have conflicts or relationships between friends have problems" is often one of the causes for school violence, but only ranks 5th with a meanof 3.08. This means that the origin of school violence behavior comes from the conflicts in the friendship relationship and from the reasons before those conflicts happen (for example, students' negative personalities or violent tendencies due to witnessing all kinds of violence, etc.). Therefore, awareness-raising of students or improvement of surrounding environmental factors such as family, school, and society for the possibilities that may result in school violence will be a theoretical method to reduce the level of school violence behaviors and help students or people around them take appropriate coping measures.

Table 3: Situation of coping with school violence behaviors

NO.	High school students' coping ways	Mean	SD	Rank
1	Negative thoughts	1.81	0.882	6
2	Positive thoughts	2.56	0.991	3
3	Negative emotions	2.24	1.026	4
4	Positive emotions	2.88	1.241	1
5	Negative actions	1.93	0.897	5
6	Positive actions	2.88	0.696	1

Through the survey results on the ways students cope with school violence behaviors, the table shows that when high school students are victims of school violence, the secondary school students use different ways in different frequencies to cope with that. In which the positive ways are used more often than the negative ones.

In particular, the two ways that are the most chosen by students to cope with school violence behaviors are: "positive actions" and "positive emotions" with a mean of 2.88. The 3rd-ranked factor chosen by the students is "positive thoughts" with a mean of 2.56.

Meanwhile, the high school students in Da Nang city are rarely negative coping ways to school violence. At 4th rank with a mean of 2.24, "negative emotions" is the next choice of students when facing up with school violence behaviors, followed by "negative actions" with a mean of 1.93. The students' last-ranked and least chosen position to cope with school violence behavior is "negative thoughts" with a mean of 1.81.

The investigation results show a positive sign when students have positive choices to cope with school violence behaviors instead of negative ones. The high school students to be

surveyed in the study were tilted towards overcoming their initial negative emotions, controlling their own emotions, and prioritizing necessary and effective options of coping with school violence to prevent the seriousness and escalation of violence, and limit spontaneous actions that may endanger themselves and students who are the bullies.

Despite a low rate, there are still a number of students who choose negative options when they become victims of school violence. This means that a few students still choose ways of coping that may harm themselves. Therefore, the research team believes that models and support from family, school, and society are still necessary factors to help students understand proper and appropriate ways of coping to not cause bad effects to themselves and those around them.

Table 4. Measures to reduce the school violence behaviors of high school students in Da Nang City

Solutions for school violence behaviors	Selected	Rate	Rank
Learn about and be self-aware of the severe consequences of school violence for both the bully and the victim.	365	86,3	2
Follow books, and social networking sites related to school/ school violence to know how to prevent and cope with violence cases.	300	70,9	11
Participate in activities, workshops, classes, etc. on school/school violence to know how to prevent and cope with violence cases	317	74,9	7
Come for psychological counseling departments or facilities (at school or outside) when encountering problems or conflicts with friends at school.	334	79	5
Suggest, advise and encourage friends when witnessing a school violence case.	348	82,3	3
Share and ask for advice and help from parents, teachers, and adults when caught/entrapped in a school violence case.	318	75,2	6
Schools and families show take more care of their children and cooperate with their children when they are entangled in school violence cases.	387	91,5	1
Organize classes, clubs, workshops, and exchange activities to raise awareness about school violence.	306	72,3	9
Disseminate about prevention of school violence through flag-raising sessions, extracurricular activities, media, posters, etc.	306	72,3	9
Establish psychological counseling departments, divisions, and hotlines on school/school violence.	307	72,6	8
Increase more severe penalties and punishments for the bully.	339	80,1	4
Other solutions	12	2,4	12

According to the survey results, when asked about the desired measures from oneself, family, school, and society to raise awareness about school violence behaviors and reduce their level, most students are desired to get attention and cooperaten from their families and schools when they get involved in violent cases with a rate of up to 91.5%. Besides, students are also self-aware of the necessity to understand the severe consequences of school violence for both the bully and the victim when this solution reaches a rate of 86.3%. In

addition, students also want to get advice from their friends and this choice ranks 3rd with 82.3%.

In addition, the majority of students believe that external factors such as school and society also need to take measures to minimize the situation of school violence by increasing more severe penalties and punishments for students (80.1%), organizing classes, clubs, workshops, exchange activities to raise awareness or disseminate about prevention of school violence through flag-raising sessions, extracurricular activities, media, posters, etc. (72.3%).

Through the above survey, it can be seen that students are also very eager to change or develop themselves and always want to get support from family, school, and society. In which, they consider the timely and correct cooperaten of the family and the school as the most effective factors. On the other hand, activities, and the ways such as the organization of clubs and workshops on issues related to school violence for students to exchange, debate, and find solutions are also get actively participated and preferred by students than normal activities that students have to learn and solve on their own.

Perhaps students want to improve awareness and skills through these forms, but they have not yet approached them in an interesting or appropriate way that may make them feel motivated or interested. In short, students actually want changes from themselves and the intervention of external factors to be suitable for each group of age, psychology, preference as a motivation for them in accessing, participating, and establishing programs suitable for themselves and society.

CONCLUSION

School violence is always a hot issue that is a concern of schools, society, and students in many countries, including Vietnam. In spite of various studies on school violence behavior in the world, there are too few studies on the ways to cope with it.

The research results show that, in the aspect of awareness of the causes resulting in school violence, the most likely cause is the students' having witnessed all kinds of violence (families violence, school violence, etc.). Next, when encountering school violence behaviors, most students tend to cope with them by positive actions and positive emotions, which is a good sign, demonstrating that students know how to choose options without negative impacts on themselves. Besides, there are a few numbers of students who apply negative options to cope with school violence. Therefore, the appropriate measures are necessary to help such students realize the problem they are encountering and have the right choice.

For measures to raise awareness and reduce school violence behaviors, most students desire a change from themselves and support from the school and society. Specifically, they want the establishment of clubs, organizations, workshops, and forums in which they are free to learn about and approach issues related to coping with school violence. Besides, programs such as propaganda of school violence behaviors in various forms should be implemented and developed in a friendly, attractive, age-appropriate way to make students feel excited when participating for higher efficiency of these solutions.

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