



Effects of parental monitoring on aggressive behavior among youth in the United States and South Korea: A cross-national study



Jungup Lee ^{*}, Karen A. Randolph

College of Social Work, Florida State University, Tallahassee 32306-2570, FL, USA

ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received 5 November 2014

Received in revised form 11 May 2015

Accepted 11 May 2015

Available online 16 May 2015

Keywords:

Parental monitoring

Aggressive behavior

Alcohol use

Cigarette use

Self-esteem

Cross-national

ABSTRACT

Objective: This cross-national study examined the direct and indirect effects of parental monitoring on aggressive behavior among separate samples of 10th grade youth in the US ($N = 3784$) and South Korea ($N = 3079$).

Methods: Data from two national probability studies—Monitoring the Future (MTF) for US youth and Korea Youth Panel Study (KYPS) for South Korean youth—were used. Both studies incorporated school-based, multi-stage, stratified, and randomized clustered sampling methods.

Results: Path analyses results indicated that while parental monitoring was directly and negatively related to aggressive behavior among US youth, it had no direct effect among South Korean youth. We also found significant indirect effects of parental monitoring on youth aggression through cigarette use, alcohol use, and self-esteem among both groups. Both US and South Korean youth who perceived increased monitoring from their parents reported less cigarette and alcohol use and higher self-esteem, which in turn reduced the likelihood of aggressive behavior.

Conclusions: This study serves as an example of conducting cross-national research using existing data to investigate significant issues related to youth well-being. Although there are cultural differences between US and South Korean youth, parental monitoring is still important in deterring both groups of youth from engaging in aggressive behavior.

© 2015 Elsevier Ltd. All rights reserved.

1. Introduction

Aggressive behavior has been broadly recognized as a serious social problem during adolescence. Although the absolute rates of youth crime in the US and South Korea have declined over the past decades, many adolescents engaged in aggressive behavior, such as physical fighting, verbal threats of harm to others, and using weapons (Choi & Lee, 2009; Dahlberg, 1998; Puzanchera, 2009; Rappaport & Thomas, 2004). Approximately one in three high school age youth reported that they engaged in aggressive behavior (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2012). Aggressive behavior is linked to severe problems in both adolescence and adulthood. For example, youth's aggressive behavior is associated with substance abuse, social maladjustment, and crime (Espelage, Low, Polanin, & Brown, 2013). Thus, it is important to investigate factors associated with youth's aggressive behavior.

Research has shown that family factors are related to youth's aggressive behavior. In particular, parental monitoring is one of the main family predictors to examine youth's aggressive behavior. Parental monitoring incorporates communication between parents and their children as well as supervision of their children by parents

(Li, Stanton, & Feigelman, 2000). Previous studies have suggested that parental monitoring is a significant factor in deterring youth from engaging in aggressive behavior (Van der Graaff, Branje, Wied, & Meeus, 2012). Parental monitoring helps communicate parental interest and increase feelings of safety and security among youth, which may in turn lead to reduced risk of aggressive behavior (Kliewer et al., 2006).

Studies inspired by social control theory (SCT; Hirschi, 1969) have addressed family bonding influences on the onset and development of youth's aggressive behavior. In fact, there is a plethora of theoretical and empirical studies on youth aggression and its crucial predictors from the SCT perspective (e.g., Agnew, 1985; Chapin & Coleman, 2006; Hirschi, 2004; Huebner & Betts, 2002). Findings indicate that parental monitoring is a protective predictor that reduces the likelihood of youth engaging in aggressive behavior (Marshall & Chassin, 2000; Pratt & Cullen, 2000; Stattin & Kerr, 2000; Sullivan, Kung, & Farrell, 2004). Findings also show that substance use (e.g., cigarette and alcohol use) is a risk factor, increasing the likelihood of engaging in aggressive behavior (Carpenter, 2005; Ellickson & McGuigan, 2000). Finally, high levels of self-esteem have been found to be protective in that self-esteem is negatively associated with aggression (Donnellan, Trzesniewski, Robins, Moffitt, & Caspi, 2005; Pratt & Cullen, 2000). SCT has also informed studies on aggression among South Korean youth (Kim & Kim, 2008). Korean

^{*} Corresponding author at: College of Social Work, Florida State University, 296 Champions Way, Tallahassee 32306-2570, FL, USA. Tel.: +1 850 320 0036.

E-mail addresses: j111ac@my.fsu.edu (J. Lee), krandolph@fsu.edu (K.A. Randolph).

literature shows that parental monitoring (Han & Grogan-Kaylor, 2012; Kim & Kim, 2008; Lee, Onifade, Teasley, & Noel, 2012) and positive self-esteem (Hong & Kim, 2011; Park, Choi, & Lim, 2014) are likely to reduce aggressive behavior among South Korean youth, while substance use (Kim & Kim, 2010) is related to increased aggressive behavior.

Previous research has mainly focused on examining aggressive behavior among youth in North America, Europe, and Australia. Little work has been done on examining aggressive behavior cross-culturally, especially between youth in the US and South Korea. Thus, it is useful to explore systematic and cross-national inquiries on youth's aggressive behavior that may capture the similarities and differences in the pathways to aggressive behavior between US and South Korean youth. In order to compare youth behavior and its determinants between the US and South Korea, it is important to understand the differences in socio-cultural contexts. Evidence supports the idea that youth from different countries perceive the concept of parental monitoring somewhat differently across cultural boundaries due to their culturally-defined understanding of the parent–youth relationship (Han & Grogan-Kaylor, 2012). For example, South Korean youth have much closer relationships with their parents and spend more time together (Hong, Lee, Park, & Faller, 2011; Zhao & Akiba, 2009), relative to youth from US families. Research also shows that South Korea is a more family-oriented society, based on principles of Confucianism, with a conspicuous power inequality between parents and their children (Yang, 2009). This cultural circumstance highlights children's obedience to their parents as a dominant virtue, which influences parental role and family functioning in South Korean. As such, these different socio-cultural contexts are likely to affect youth's aggressive behavior differently across the two countries (Hong & Eamon, 2009; Hong, Lee, Lee, Lee, & Garbarino, 2014). Using datasets from two national probability studies—the Monitoring the Future (MTF) study for US youth and the Korea Youth Panel Study (KYPS) for South Korean youth, the purpose of this study was to conduct a cross-national investigation of aggressive behavior among youth. Our approach and selected predictors were informed by SCT (Hirschi, 1969). We compared the direct effects of parental monitoring on aggressive behavior among 10th grade youth in the US and South Korea. We also examined the mediating effects of youth cigarette use, alcohol use, and self-esteem on the association between parental monitoring and aggressive behavior.

1.1. Social control theory, parental monitoring, and youth's aggressive behavior

Social control theory (SCT) is utilized as the theoretical approach for supporting the association between parental monitoring and youth's aggressive behavior. Hirschi's (1969) SCT is one of the dominant theories of crime and delinquency. It is the guiding force behind much research on youth violence and occupies a prominent place in the literature (Empey, 1982; Shoemaker, 1984). This theory informs our investigation of factors related to aggressive behavior among youth. Several types of parenting behaviors are essential in supporting positive youth development (Dishion & Loeber, 1985; Kaplow, Curran, & Dodge, 2002). According to SCT, youth are less likely to engage in criminal activity when predictors such as parental monitoring, attachment, and involvement are strong (Hirschi, 1969; Hirschi & Gottfredson, 2006).

In particular, parental monitoring has been identified as a critical component in the etiology of youth problem behavior. Parental monitoring pertains to parents' knowledge regarding their child's social activities and relationships with peers (Hirschi, 1969). It also refers to parental enforcement of household rules and expectations on their children's behaviors (Dishion & McMahon, 1998). In essence, parental monitoring helps to ensure that opportunities for youth's aggressive

behavior are limited (Kung & Farrell, 2000). Research has shown that youth are more likely to engage in aggressive behavior when they experience little in the way of monitoring from their parents (Gibbs, Giever, & Martin, 1998; Hay, 2001; Loeber & Stouthamer-Loeber, 1986; Polakowski, 1994). On the other hand, parents who are more aware of their child's behaviors are likely to deter their children from committing violence or crime (Ingram, Patchin, Huebner, McCluskey, & Bynum, 2007; Patterson & Stouthamer-Loeber, 1984; Sokol-Katz, Dunham, & Zimmerman, 1997).

Among youth in the US, parental monitoring is a strong protective factor against aggressive behavior (Chilcoat & Anthony, 1996; Crouter, MacDermid, McHale, & Perry-Jenkins, 1990; Dishion & McMahon, 1998; Kung & Farrell, 2000; Marshall & Chassin, 2000; Stattin & Kerr, 2000; Sullivan et al., 2004; Weintraub & Gold, 1991). Loeber and Stouthamer-Loeber's (1986) meta-analysis found that parental monitoring strongly decreases the risk of being involved in conduct problems and delinquency. Similarly, Korean studies show that youth with more parental monitoring are less likely to be engaged in aggressive behavior (Han, Hong, & Moon, 2013; Kim & Kim, 2008; Kim & Lee, 2010; Lee et al., 2012; Shin, Hong, Yoon, & Espelage, 2014). In this sense, SCT provides a useful foundation for exploring the influences of parental monitoring on youth's aggressive behavior.

1.2. Mediating effects of substance use and self-esteem

Risk factors such as substance use and low self-esteem increase the likelihood of engaging in aggressive behavior among youth in the US (Hawkins, Laub, & Lauritsen, 1998; Paternoster & Brame, 1998; Valois, McKeown, Garrison, & Vincent, 1995). For instance, use of cigarettes (e.g., Ellickson & McGuigan, 2000) and alcohol, including binge drinking (e.g., Carpenter, 2005; Dawkins, 1997; Valois et al., 1995) are positively related to engaging in aggressive behavior. In fact, even when controlling for other critical factors related to offending (e.g., criminal history), substance use remains a powerful predictor of aggressive behavior (Valois et al., 1995). Similar to US youth, substance use is positively associated with deviant behavior among South Korean youth. Both cigarette and alcohol use are related to increased aggression (Kim & Kim, 2010; Lee, Onifade, Ryu, Rasul, & Maynard, 2014). Kim and Lee (2010) found that South Korean youth who smoke cigarettes and drink alcohol are more prone to engage in school violence, relative to youth who do not use these substances.

Substance use also mediates the relationship between critical predictors and aggressive behavior among youth (Bijttebier, Vertommen, & Florentie, 2003; Bijur, Golding, Haslum, & Kurzom, 1988; Zhang, Wiecek, & Welte, 1997). A study by Swartz and Lurigio (2007), which examined the mediating role of substance use using the National Survey on Drug Use and Health, 2001–2002, found that substance use fully mediated the association between negative functioning and criminal involvement. Battin-Pearson et al. (2000) found that substance use was an essential mediating effect on early high school students' deviant behavior.

Youths' self-esteem is a pivotal characteristic that can affect their aggressive behavior (McCarthy & Hoge, 1984; Pflieger & Vazsonyi, 2006). High self-esteem is related to fewer incidences of aggression (Donnellan et al., 2005; Fergusson & Horwood, 2002; Spratt & Doob, 2000). Positive parenting techniques, such as engagement and monitoring, can lead to the development of youths' self-esteem (Dekovic & Meeus, 1997). Given these relationships, the impact of parenting behaviors on youth's negative behaviors, such as aggression, is likely to be mediated by youths' self-esteem. Pflieger and Vazsonyi (2006) found that the lack of parental support leads to lower self-esteem, which in turn influences an increased risk of engaging in aggressive behavior for US youth. Similarly, studies in South Korea show the mediating effect of youth self-esteem on youth deviant behavior (Hong & Kim, 2011; Lee & Lee, 2011). These

Download English Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/en/article/345954>

Download Persian Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/article/345954>

[Daneshyari.com](https://daneshyari.com)