



Parental monitoring and helicopter parenting relevant to vocational student's procrastination and self-regulated learning



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ABSTRACT

The term “helicopter parenting” has appeared in our society and this study explores how helicopter parenting affects students' learning behaviors, such as self-regulated learning and procrastination. In order to realize the predictability of helicopter parenting to learning behavior, 624 questionnaires were delivered to vocational high school students in Taiwan. The results indicated that parental monitoring behavior can positively predict perceived helicopter parenting and procrastination mediated by perceived helicopter parenting. In addition, procrastination can negatively predict students' self-monitoring, goal setting and pursuing goals relevant to self-regulated learning. The results implied that to develop students' self-regulated learning, the level of helicopter parenting should be reduced.

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1. Introduction

The term helicopter parent, (i.e. parenting that involves hovering parents who are potentially over-involved in the lives of their child), has appeared in recent popular culture (Padilla-Walker & Nelson, 2012). Padilla-Walker and Nelson suggested that helicopter parenting refers to parental regulation and structuring of the child's behavioral world including daily activities, homework and manners that are intrusive and manipulative of children's thoughts, feelings and attachment to the parents. Helicopter parenting captures parenting behavior that provides the child with high warmth and support, high control and low autonomy. Helicopter parents hover and micromanage their child's life by being overly protective and unwilling to let go (Van Eck Peluchette, Kovanic, & Partridge, 2013). Previous studies indicated that helicopter parents can engage in this style of parenting when their children are emerging adults (e.g., Gabriel, 2010; Marano, 2010). However, a part of parent's responsibility is to support their child to complete learning tasks independently (Wood, Bruner, & Ross, 1976), to plan and set goals, monitor performance, change learning strategies (Pino-Pasternak & Whitebread, 2010), self-regulate to seek challenging tasks as opportunities for learning (Winne & Hadwin, 2008; Zimmerman & Schunk, 2007). In acknowledging this, we believe that advancements in this area can be made by exploring the correlates between parenting and how it affects children's self-regulated learning in more detail.

Dishion and McMahon (1998) defined parental monitoring as “parenting behaviors involving attention to and track of the child's whereabouts, activities and adaptations” (p. 61). Parental monitoring is also a hypothetical construct used when explaining parenting behaviors, knowledge, or attitudes that influence the child's use of free time (Hayes, Hudson, & Matthews, 2004). Many parents train their children to learn self-control through monitoring (Jun & Choi, 2013), and consider that it is the most direct and efficient way to ensure that children will have the ability to self-control and internalization in the future (Waldfoegel, 2006). Kolovelonis, Goudas, Hassandra, and Dermatzaki (2012) suggested that self-control improved students' self-regulated learning performance. However, Frey, Ruchkin, Martin, and Schwab-Stone (2009) found that parental monitoring is positively relative to children's motivation, but excessive monitoring and caring can cause helicopter parenting (Hart, Newell, & Olsen, 2003). Studies in the past have tended to focus on the development of children's self-regulated behaviors and motivational dispositions and have not explored the pathways between parental monitoring, perceived helicopter parenting, procrastination and self-regulated learning. Thus, this study attempted to explore those variables.

Adulthood has become an ambiguous milestone for both parents and children. During the period, termed *emerging adulthood*, children may benefit from parental involvement (Arnett, 2000; Furstenberg, 2010). A prolonged transition to adulthood is consistent with a need for parental support, and providing support to grown children in need may accrue detriments by sapping time, materials, and emotional resources (Fingerman et al., 2012). Students in Taiwan's vocational high schools are at the stage of emerging adulthood. These students generally have higher vocational self-concept but lower academic self-concept

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compared to general high school students, because society has a general inclination to look down on vocational high schools (Chiu, 1990). That is, vocational school students tend to have less academic achievement and may not have the appropriate learning strategies if they do not have enough support from the parents (Chen, 2015). This leads to a hypothesis that students who receive intense support from parents would report different learning attitudes. However, it is not clear whether such parental support may be excessive for students, in particular vocational high school students, in relation to their learning behaviors. When parents become overinvolved, especially when parental influence is unwanted or perceived as controlling, there can be negative effects on the psychological (Luyckx, Soenens, Vansteenkiste, Goossens, & Berzonsky, 2007) and behavioral control (Goldstein, Davis-Kean, & Eccles, 2005) causing students to procrastinate in their self-regulated learning. Thus, the present study attempts to (1) develop a conceptual framework to identify the role of parenting behavior bonds to vocational high school students' procrastination reflected to their self-regulated learning behavior and (2) determine the validity of the pathway by testing the predictability between the constructs of this study.

2. Literature review

School campuses, faculty and administrators have started to deal with helicopter parents (Hershatter & Epstein, 2010; Jafar, 2012). Fingerman et al. (2012) stated that helicopter parents are parents who provide overly intense support in regards to their child's learning. In this sense, the relevant literature regarding student's learning behavior in interactions with parents and how it extends to affect procrastination and self-regulated learning is explored.

2.1. Parental monitoring

Parental monitoring is the knowledge parents have in relation to where their child is, who they are with, and what they are doing when the child is not with them (Patterson & Stouthamer-Loeber, 1984). One of the main challenges associated with parenting an adolescent is monitoring and preventing them from taking part in risky activities (Crouter & Head, 2002). However, the decline in children's independence is commonly attributed to heightened parental concerns about safety (Carver, Timperio, & Crawford, 2008) and evidence suggests that the influence of perceptions, social norms and the social environment are somewhat intertwined. For example, social norms about what constitutes good parenting have evolved to emphasize the constant supervision of children (Furedi, 2008; Lorenc et al., 2012). Parental monitoring related to adolescents has been investigated in several studies in the U.S. (Stattin, Kerr, & Tilton-Weaver, 2010). In that study, it was found that parents tend to react to adolescents' problem behaviors by worrying about their performance outcomes and monitoring them less.

2.2. Perceived helicopter parenting

It is assumed that with parental support, children have better developmental outcomes (Roye & Balk, 1996). For example, children's freedom to move about and play in their local neighborhoods brings with it a raft of developmental, health and social benefits (Badland & Oliver, 2012). Moreover, parents who provide flexible protection bolster the child's confidence to deal with challenges (Lanz & Tagliabue, 2014). On the other hand, helicopter parenting is related to intrusiveness, pressure, or domination intended to control the child's behavior (Grolnick & Pomerantz, 2009). Several studies on parental control have focused on children's perceptions of parental control correlated to school achievement (e.g., Chao & Aque, 2009; Dwaity & Achoui, 2010); but seldom have studies taken learning behavior as the foci, thus this study can provide a better understanding

of parental behavior and children's learning behavior. The combination of different parental behaviors was seen as the best predictor of youth development (Pan, Gauvain, & Schwartz, 2013). As such, consideration of parents' behavioral control is essential when investigating parenting factors that may influence adolescents' learning behavior.

2.3. Procrastination

Procrastination is a mental status of being frustrated, being fearful or being tired of specific tasks (Ferrari, Keane, Wolfe, & Beck, 1998; Ferrari, Parker, & Ware, 1992). Procrastination might have an adverse effect on homework completion and academic performance (Grunschel, Patrzek, & Fries, 2012). Related research has shown that the more self-efficient students are in their learning, the less they procrastinate (Wäschle, Allgaier, Lachner, Fink, & Nückles, 2014). Wäschle et al. (2014) found students with high procrastination assessed their goal achievement as being low, and as a result of low goal achievement, they reinforced procrastination. Further, students with low perceived self-efficacy are vulnerable to a vicious circle of procrastination. Research on parenting has identified a highly consistent set of parental behaviors that positively impact on children's academic performance. The construct of authoritative parenting (Baumrind, 1966, 1967) has been extremely influential when exploring parental behaviors associated with children's academic achievement (Kohl, Lengue, & McMahon, 2000; Mattanah, Pratt, Cowan, & Cowan, 2005). Soysa and Weiss (2014) examined academic procrastination and maladaptive perfectionism in relation to parenting styles and test anxiety. They found that academic procrastination and maladaptive perfectionism concurrently mediated the inverse relationship between perceived authoritative parenting and test anxieties. Thus, how parental behaviors, in particular, helicopter parenting, affects vocational students' procrastination in relation to self-regulated learning is explored in this study.

2.4. Self-regulated learning

Self-regulated learning is defined as "an active, constructive process whereby learners set goals for their learning and then attempt to monitor, regulate, and control their cognition, motivation, and behavior, guided and constrained by their goals and the contextual features of the environment" (Pintrich, 2000, p. 453). Typical self-regulated learners achieve learning goals by managing time, effort, and the physical learning environment to optimize performance. According to Zimmerman (2000), self-regulated learning encompasses three consecutive phases: a forethought phase, a performance phase and a self-reflection phase. Self-reflection forces students to actively consider whether they have achieved their learning goals or whether adaptations of learning activities are necessary. In line with this, self-regulated learners usually perform better than those who are less self-regulated (Zimmerman & Martinez-Pons, 1988). Overall, self-regulated learning is an important factor in successful learning when children are socialized with their parents' intervention.

3. Research hypothesis and model

3.1. Parental monitoring relevant to perceived helicopter parenting

Many cross-sectional studies have identified a variety of factors that are associated with child behavioral problems; such as parental involvement concerning harsh and permissive discipline (e.g., Arnold, Zeljo, Doctoroff, & Ortiz, 2008; Tichovolsky, Arnold, & Baker, 2013). Extant literature primarily examines predictors of parental (usually maternal) overprotective behavior and the consequences for children's socialization and mental health (Hastings et al., 2008; Thomasgard & Metz, 1997). In this regard, helicopter parenting may give rise to students

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