

RISK BEHAVIOR AND FAMILY SATISFACTION IN ADOLESCENTS

Katarina Halkovicova

Catholic University in Ruzomberok

Abstract

The main purpose of present study was to describe the relationship between selected forms of risk behaviors in adolescents (such as alcohol/nicotine abuse, illicit drugs abuse, internet and mobile phone overuse, antisocial behavior, selfharm and suicidal behavior and eating disorders) and family satisfaction. The sample consisted of 62 high school students aged 15- 16 years. To obtain the data, we used the questionnaire detecting risk behavior and Family Satisfaction Scale. The statistically significant relationship between the level of family satisfaction and the incidence of antisocial behavior ($p < 0.05$) and between the occurrence of self-harm and suicidal behavior ($p < 0.05$) was confirmed.

Key words: risk behavior, family satisfaction, adolescent

Introduction

The term "risk behavior" replaces the previously used term socio-pathological phenomena. This term was both unsystematic, negatively tuned and put too much emphasis on a group, social norm. Risk behavior in school environment (e.g. use of addictive substances, bullying, truancy, racism, xenophobia, violence, etc.) should be monitored at primary and secondary schools. Risk behavior occurs at any age, but the greatest risk of these problem situations is currently in adolescents. This propensity for risk-taking behavior is associated with the desire to try new things, which is characteristic of this developmental period. It is very important for them to be informed about the possible risks, consequences, impacts, but also to know the effect of dangerous behavior towards themselves and the surrounding environment and what complications and pitfalls such behavior brings.

Kocourková and Koutek (2005) consider risk behavior as behavior that could endanger the health or even the life of an adolescent. It can also make it difficult or impossible for him /her to separate from his / her parents in the normal way, complicate the completion of his / her professional qualification, negatively affect his /her identification with the sexual role, impair his / her self-appraisal and self-esteem in the future. Macek (2003) divides risk behavior into two groups. In first, there is behavior that damages in some way the physical or mental health of the adolescent. In second group, there is a behavior that negatively effects and injures the others, thus it threatens the society.

Family relationships and risk behavior

Research that dealt with the family environment and family relations in the context of delinquency shows that cold family environment without parental interest in a child occurs more frequently in families with delinquent children (Snyder, Patterson, 1987). In these children, in most cases, an uncertain relationship with their parents arises over the course of their life, which makes them more prone to risk behaviors. In the families of delinquent children, there is often very cold or completely indifferent approach to child education, however, hard and aggressive nurture with drastic punishments may also have negative effect on further development of the child (Markova, 2008).

Study of Goldfarb et al. (2014) proves that parents who spend more time investing in their children, who are more attentive to the lives of their children and have overall view of their children, are reducing their children's risk behavior. An example of the attachment effect on further development of a child may be research conducted by Dallos and Smart (2010). They found that ADHD and other behavioral disorders are often associated with the disorganized relationship of the child to the mother, which is characteristic in particular of the indifference and reluctance of parents to the child. They also found that the relationship of parents is often conflictful in these families and puts the child at the center of these conflicts, leading to its confusion and disturbing the consciousness of consistency.

Zhuo Rachel Han and Ann Shaffer (2014) also dealt with the relationship between child and the mother. They found that increased mother-to-child criticism reduces the success of its

psychosocial development. At the same time, frequent criticism leads to a disruption of the child's ability to regulate his emotions. On the other hand, the greater emotional involvement of the mother and her sensitive participation in the child's development reduces symptoms of problem behavior. Another study captured and promoted the importance of father and son's relationship to issues of possible problem behavior of the child (Buist, Deković, Gerris, 2011). The relationship with his father and the emotions emerging from this relationship is influenced by the problem behavior of his son. Negative relationships and emotions trigger, if appropriate consolidate problems in the behavior of the son.

The study of Marková (2008) demonstrated the relationship between family functioning and child behavior. It supported the findings that a dysfunctional family (including as a dysfunctional family as well as an affective family) is a significant risk factor in the adolescent's problematic behavior. In troubled families, problematic behavior occurs up to three times more often than in functional families.

Richardson (2012) rates cutting, burning, picking, stinging, scratching, breaking, barking, hair breaking, or swallowing poisonous substances or objects among self-harming practices. Many studies have shown that adverse experiences in childhood may be related to the occurrence of self-defeating behavior at a later age. The relationship of parenting and the occurrence of self-harm in adolescents has also been demonstrated in research of Hilt et al. (2008), who found that self-harming individuals have worse relationship with both parents than non-self-harming adolescents. Laye-Gindhu and Schonert-Reichel (2005) found that self-harming individuals are more often coming from families where they live with only one parent.

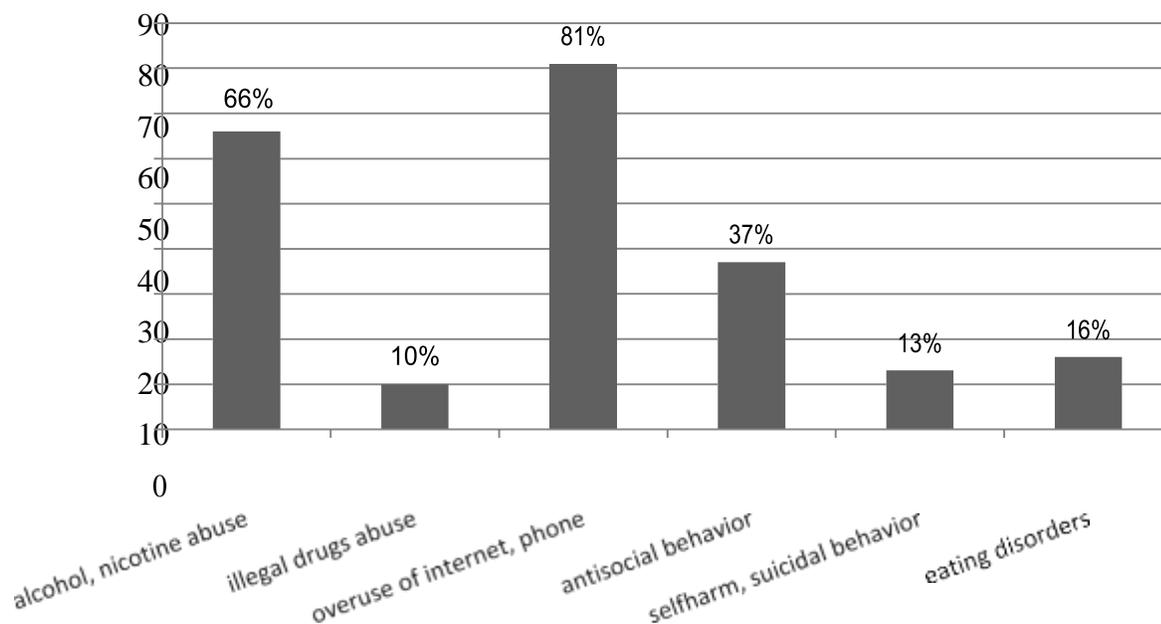
Metodology

The aim of the topic was to map the occurrence of selected forms of risk behavior among adolescents and to find a possible connection with the level of family satisfaction. The research group consisted of 62 adolescents aged 15-16 years. There were 36 girls and 26 boys. We have used a questionnaire identifying the occurrence of different forms of risk behavior and the Satisfaction Family Scale (Olson, 1989). We wanted to find out if respondents had risky behavior such as the use of addictive substances (alcohol, nicotine, illicit drugs), overuse of the Internet and mobile

phone, over-watching of television. We were also interested in the manifestations of antisocial behavior such as bullying and cyberbullying, truancy, aggressive behavior, deception. A separate category was self-harm and suicidal behavior and manifestations of eating disorders. We would like to find out whether the occurrence of risk behavior is related to family satisfaction and whether there are differences in risk behavior among respondents who are satisfied with their family and those who are not. We processed the data using descriptive and inductive statistics.

Results

Graph 1 shows the results of occurrence of risk behavior of adolescents. As we can see, the majority of respondents (81%) show signs of over-use of the Internet and the mobile phone. 66% of students show signs of increased alcohol and nicotine consumption. Various manifestations of antisocial behavior (truancy, bullying, aggressive behavior) were attributed to 37% of students. Other forms of risk behavior appeared in a smaller percentage of respondents.



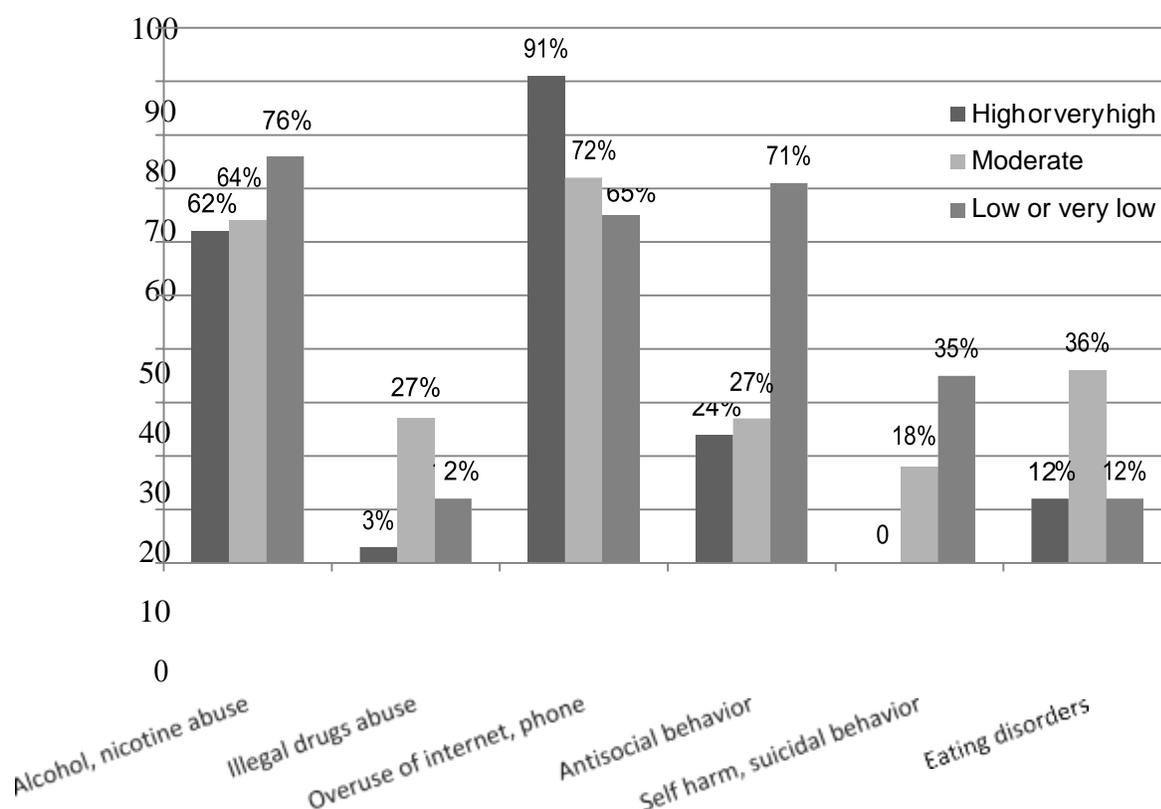
Graph 1 The occurrence of risk behavior

In our research, we also found the level of family satisfaction. Based on the results, we divided the research group into three groups. Students with high to very high level of family satisfaction,

moderate level, and students with low to very low level of family satisfaction. Table 1 and Graph 2 show the differences in the occurrence of risk behavior among these groups of respondents.

Table 1 The occurrence of risk behavior among groups of respondents

	Family satisfaction					
	High or very high		Moderate		Low or very low	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Alcohol, nicotine abuse	21	62	7	64	13	76
Illicit drugs abuse	1	3	3	27	2	12
Overuse of internet, mobile phone	31	91	8	72	11	65
Antisocial behavior	8	24	3	27	12	71
Selfharm, suicidal behavior	0	0	2	18	6	35
Eating disorders	4	12	4	36	2	12



Graph 2 The occurrence of risk behavior among groups of respondents

In research, we also investigated the possible link between the occurrence of various forms of risk behavior and the level of family satisfaction. The values of the Pearson coefficient are given in Table 2. Research results show that there is a relationship between the occurrence of antisocial behavior and the level of family satisfaction. We also confirmed the statistically significant relationship between self-harm, suicidal behavior and the level of family satisfaction.

Table 2 Pearson correlation values

		Family satisfaction
Alcohol, nicotine abuse	Pearson Correlation	-,056
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,666
	N	62
Illicit drugs abuse	Pearson Correlation	-,143
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,269
	N	62
Overuse of internet, phone	Pearson Correlation	,034
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,793
	N	62
Antisocial behavior	Pearson Correlation	-,574**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000
	N	62
Selfharm, suicidal behavior	Pearson Correlation	-,295*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,020
	N	62
Eating disorders	Pearson Correlation	-,061
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,637
	N	62

** . Correlation is significant at the 0,01 level

* . Correlation is significant at the 0,05 level

Conclusion

The aim of this paper was to describe research findings on adolescent risk behaviors and the relationship between family satisfaction and risk behaviors. According to research results, some form of risk behavior is found in most respondents. Most often, we may encounter overuse of internet and mobile phones among students. This form of risk behavior occurs in 81% of respondents and is not related to the level of family satisfaction. This phenomenon seems to be related to today's modern times when information and communication technologies are our everyday part. Care must be taken to avoid becoming addicted from normal use. Among our respondents there were also those who drink alcohol or smoke cigarettes. It is alarming that the incidence of this phenomenon is so high (66%), even though our laws prohibit the sale of alcohol and tobacco products to persons under 18 years of age. In this form of risk behaviors, it is necessary to focus on better prevention in schools, in families, but also in the whole society. Another finding is that up to 37% of students show

antisocial behavior (truancy, deception, bullying, cyberbullying, or aggressive behavior). In this area of risk behavior, we have also confirmed relationship with family satisfaction. We can say that the lower the level of family satisfaction, the higher the rate of antisocial behavior. A statistically significant relationship has also been confirmed between family satisfaction and self-harm/suicidal behavior. Based on the findings, we can say that the family environment is related to some forms of risk behaviors. In further research, it might also be beneficial to identify possible links between risk behavior and the various characteristics of adolescent relationship with mother or father, and between risk behavior and different family characteristics. The prevention of these socio-pathological phenomena could be more effective.

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