

An investigation on verbal bullying among Danang high school students

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1. INTRODUCTION

Domestic and foreign studies show that the problem of Verbal bullying (VB) is common in high school students, causing serious harms. The research focuses on studying the behavior of VB in high school students (HSS) in Danang city, and basing on the findings, to suggest intervention measures to reduce this behavior in high school students.

2. RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

The hypotheses are set as: 1) VB is popular among HSS; 2) HSS correctly identify the VB behavior, the harmful effects of VB, but do not know how to behave in accordance with the VB; 3) HSS have an attitude that is not consistent with VB; 4) There are gender differences in behavior of VB, in which more female students participate in VB than male students; 5) The main cause of VB between HSS is because they do not know how to behave appropriately with VB, cannot control their emotions; 6) It is possible to mitigate VB behaviors in HSS through peer education in the appropriate form for students.

3. DESIGN AND RESEARCH METHODS

The main identifiers of VB are: 1) aggressive or offensive words; 2) offensive to the target; 3) repeat or tend to repeat; and 4) express the desire of the speaker to gain power (harm or disturb) to the person being targeted.

VB is studied in the following aspects: 1) The extent and common form of VB behavior; and 2) Awareness, attitude and behavior of HSS with VB. Measures to mitigate VB are developed and tested in the direction of peer intervention, including: 1) Organizing club for behavior skills with VB; 2) Design and use fanpage on Facebook to share and consult behaviors for VB; and 3) Build an imagebased handbook to guide the treatment of VB.

Questionnaire, in-depth interviews, personality diagnostic test (V.S.Mukhina, 1996) and pedagogical experiment are used in the research.

Samples of 227 (valid 209) for questionnaires were randomly selected from students of Phan Chau Trinh, Nguyen Trai and Le Quy Don high schools in Da Nang city. For the in-depth interview, the sample selection includes 21 students; for the Personality diagnosis test – 30; experiment samples were 20 for club activities, 48 for designing and using fanpage, 42 for building and using the handbook.

VB mitigation measures are designed on the basis of peer intervention and real life experience, that focused on students' weaknesses – the lack of ability to control emotions and lack of appropriate skills with VB.

The research was conducted in the period of July 2018 to march 2019.

4. RESEARCH RESULTS

The prevalence of VB behaviors in HSS is shown in Figure 4.1.

The questionnaire data of bullying sentences that students once said or heard showed that over 50% of students have heard and said typical bullying sentences of HSS.

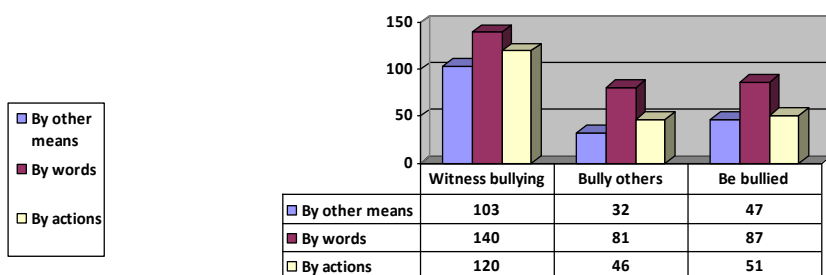


Figure 4.1. The prevalence of bullying in high school students

Survey data showed that the majority (98.5%) of HSS are aware of both the concept of VB and negative impacts of VB behavior; Almost no students are wrongly aware or unaware of the harmful effects of this type of behavior.

Survey data also showed that a majority of students (over 50%) do not know how to deal with VB both in the cases of being bullied (61.50%) and cases of witnessing bullying (54.55%). The results of the personality diagnosis and interview showed that among the 21 students interviewed, 7 students would ignore and go away when witnessed bullying. The quite typical answer for the behavior of students is: *"I am very angry and annoyed with this situation, but I think some people and even myself often will not interfere with that and choose to stand out or leave because I'm afraid of being involved or affected."* (student D.T.T.N.)

The survey results of students' attitudes towards VB, as bully, bullied and witnessed bullying showed that the majority had false reactions when placing themselves in the position of bullies (77.75%), being bullied (55.67%) and witnessing bullying (53.32%).

The survey results show that participation in VB is common in both male and female students. There are gender differences in behavior of VB (χ^2 test, with $p=0,001$ case (a-witness) $\chi^2 = 17,86 > sig.=10,83$; (b-bully) $\chi^2 = 13,44 > sig.=10,83$ and (c-bullied) $\chi^2 = 14,08 > sig.=10,83$). Female students participate more in VB than male students (mostly bullying).

Experiment conducted through activities 1, 2 and 3.

Activity 1: Join the club, extracurricular sessions, activities on the topic of dealing with VB behavior. The results of students' assessment on club model are shown in Figure 6.1. Also, 90% of students committed to continue participating in the model; 10% confused.

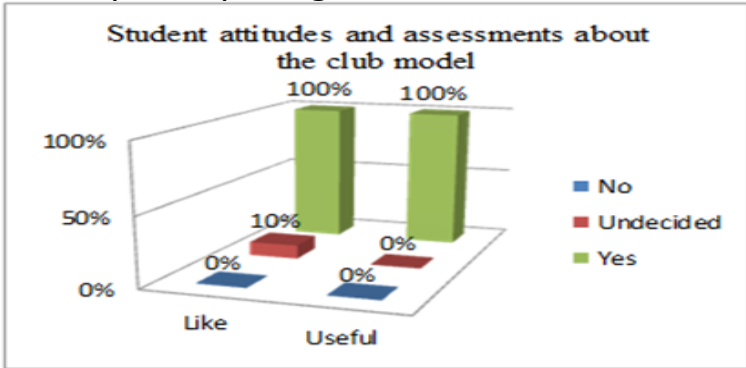


Figure 6.1. Student attitudes and assessments about the behavioral club

Activity 2: Create and use handbook to prevent bullying. Research results showed in Figure 6.3.

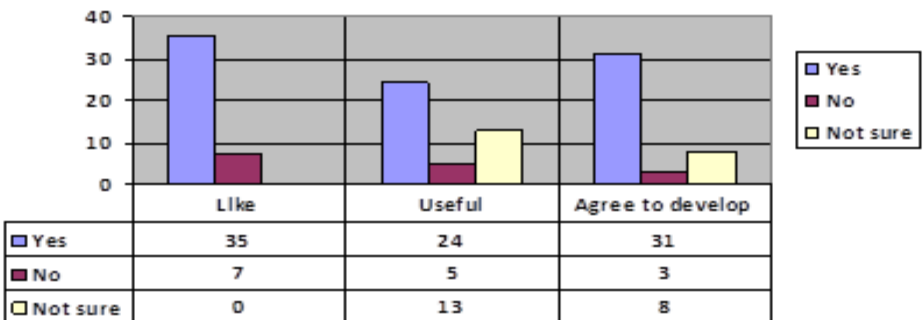


Figure 6.3. Students' assessment of the handbook

Activity 3: Establish fanpage "SYS - Share Your Story" and closed group on Facebook. Within 2 weeks: 103 likes; 48 closed group participants (9 shared articles; 45 positive comment). 83% found SYS useful; 60% want to continue maintaining SYS.

5. CONCLUSION

All 6 research hypothesis are proved right.

Peer education with the forms proposed by the research is proved the effective choice to influence bullying behavior in HSS, reducing this behavior in HSS in Danang City.