

Research Summary

"The Role of Family in the Prevention of Drug Abuse"

by

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The present investigation was designed to examine six important aspects of resistance to drug abuse : drug knowledge, information concerning causes of drug abuse, information regarding effects of drug abuse, attitudes towards drug abuse, peer influence, and proximity to drug use.

The major areas investigated by this study are : 1) to determine if there is significant relationship between child-rearing practices and the six aspects of resistance to drug abuse; 2) to determine if family relationships are significantly related to the aspects of resistance to drug abuse; 3) to determine if the child's closeness to parents is associated with the aspects of resistance to drug abuse; and 4) to determine if parents' as well as child's variables are significantly related to the aspects of resistance to drug abuse.

The subjects for this study consisted of 357 male and 310 female grade 7 (aged 11-13 years) and grade 9 (aged 14-16 years) students who were randomly selected from seven co-ed public schools in Bangkok in the academic year 1985. The research instruments were rating-scale typed questionnaires on respondents' personal data including information concerning proximity to drug use, child-rearing practices including child's attitude towards parental control on mass media consumption, data regarding drug abuse

comprising drug knowledge, information concerning causes of drug abuse, information regarding effects of drug abuse, attitudes towards drug abuse, and peer influence. Analysis of the data consisted of various statistical methods and the SPSS^X computer programs.

The main research findings are as follows :

1) Three familial environments namely reasoning-oriented practice, love-oriented practice, and child's attitude towards parental control on mass media consumption are found to be significantly associated with three aspects of resistance to drug abuse in drug knowledge, peer influence and proximity to drug use. The results reveal that students who report that their parents are more reasoning-oriented and more love-oriented towards them and that they have more positive attitude towards parental control on mass media consumption are more likely to have higher resistance to drug abuse than their counterparts whose parents are less reasoning-oriented and less love-oriented towards them and the students have negative attitude towards parental control on mass media consumption.

2) Three aspects of resistance to drug abuse namely proximity to drug abuse, information concerning causes of drug abuse, and peer influence are found to be positively related to two types of child-rearing practices namely love-orientation, reasoning-orientation, and child's attitude towards parental control on mass media consumption. The results reveal that the students who report that their parents are more love-oriented and more reasoning-oriented towards them and that they have more positive attitude towards parental control on mass media consumption are more likely to possess higher resistance to drug abuse than their counterparts.

3) There are close relationships between child-rearing practices, one child's variable, attitude towards parental control on mass media

consumption and three aspects of resistance to drug abuse to be found in four groups of students : a) In the group of students with father's low level of education, the results reveal that the students whose parents are more love-oriented towards them have three higher aspects of resistance to drug abuse than their counterparts. Moreover, the students who report that their parents are more reasoning-oriented to them have higher resistance to drug abuse in peer influence and proximity to drug abuse. There are no significant relationships between the two mentioned types of child-rearing practices and those aspects of resistance to drug abuse found in the group of students with father's high level of education. b) In the group of students from small (1-2 children) as well as large (more than 4 children) families, it appears that love-orientation and reasoning one are found to be much more closely associated with information concerning causes of drug abuse than they are in the group of students from medium-sized family (3-4 children). In addition, it is evident that students' attitude towards parental control on mass media consumption is significantly associated with information concerning causes of drug abuse and peer influence as found in the group of students from small and large families much more than those from medium-sized family. c) In the group of students residing with their own parents, love-oriented practice is found to be closely associated with three aspects of resistance to drug abuse namely information concerning causes of drug abuse, peer influence, and proximity to drug abuse. Such relationship is not found in the group of students living with others. Moreover, it is evident that the students living with parents who report that their parents are more reasoning-oriented towards them have more resistance to peer influence. Such relationship is not apparent in the group of students living with others.

Based on the results of this study, the following recommendations can be made :

- 1) Data from this study suggest that more attention needs to be given to drug abuse prevention and education. Prevention programs must include children in elementary schools. Drug abuse education should provide accurate and credible information concerning the destructive effects of drug use available for parents, teachers, students and others concerned;
- 2) Drug abuse education should be integrated into the public and private school programs, with emphasis on the hazards of drug use, including cigarettes and alcohol;
- 3) A connection group of parents and students should be established in order that they can have brain-storming in dealing with drug problems;
- 4) Parents' child-rearing practices should be improved. Thus they should frequently apply more reasoning-oriented and more love-oriented practices to their children;
- 5) Students' positive attitudes towards parental control on mass media consumption should be developed in order to promote the quality of Thai youth which is very important to cope with drug abuse problem. It is suggested that parents give their children constructive advices in exposing to useful mass media; thus children are satisfied with the advices since they can sense love and good intention based on reasoning through such advices. Consequently, children will be prompt to accept and follow their direction;
- 6) Four specific groups of students namely those with father's low level of education, those from small and large families, and those residing with parents should be given special types of childrearing and training in reasoning and love-orientation and positive attitude towards parental control on mass media consumption in order to increase resistance to drug abuse in connection with drug knowledge, peer influence and proximity to drug use.