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ABSTRACT

Aggressive behavior is defined as an expression of animosity manifested in some way. Responses to aggression are most manifested in the form of physical, verbal, and relational manifestations. The existence of violent behavior in school-aged children is common throughout childhood and adolescence, particularly among boys. Student disobedience and hostility have increased in Vietnam's secondary schools, with an upsurge in instances directed explicitly at lesbian, homosexual, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) students being the most prominent example. If they do not have support or assistance, many parents and teachers find it difficult to deal with their children's rage and violence during adolescence. Because of this, professional scientists, experts, and social workers are vital in offering aid to LGBT kids who other people's actions have victimized. According to the researchers, the findings of the study will be used to raise public awareness of anti-LGBT student antagonism as well as provide critical information for social workers and policymakers who engage with LGBT students in higher education.

Keywords: Aggressive behavior, LGBT students, social workers, supporting, Vietnam

INTRODUCTION

Aggressive behavior can be thought of as the visible embodiment of aggression, defined as any act designed to cause another person harm, pain, or injury (Zirpoli, 2008). Aggression manifests itself in a variety of ways, from relatively minor acts (calling or shoving) to more severe acts (hitting, kicking, or punching) to violent acts (stabbing or killing) (Allen & Anderson, 2017). Additionally, it may involve the destruction of personal goods. Physical, verbal, and relational responses to aggressiveness are the most common. Aggression is classified in a variety of ways. It might be hostile or instrumental, reactive or proactive, spontaneous or planned, direct or indirect, active or passive, overt or covert, lawful or illegitimate (Allen & Anderson, 2017).

During childhood and adolescence, aggressive conduct is a regular occurrence. As youngsters of school age begin to engage in more social interactions and form relationships, aggressive conduct against classmates may emerge (Greydanus et al., 1992). Additionally, teasing, irritation, bullying, and fighting may be observed (Liu et al., 2013). Aggression results in a variety of internalizing and externalizing difficulties. For example, hostility, a type of reactive-inexpressive violence, is a well-documented contributor to depression (Bridewell & Chang, 1997). Crick et al. (2006) discovered that relationship violence predicted both internalizing and externalizing difficulties (withdrawal, depression/anxiety, and physical symptoms) (aggressive behavior, delinquency).

Student misconduct and aggressiveness have been rising in Vietnamese secondary schools (Pham et al., 2018). Between 2009 and 2010, according to data supplied by the Vietnam Ministry of Education and Training, around 16,000 cases of classroom misbehavior (including aggressive behavior) occurred in Vietnamese schools (Tran, 2016). Aggression in children is a way for them to exhibit and demonstrate their adulthood in various ways (Zahrt & Melzer-Lange, 2011). These behavioral issues may impair their connections with family and classmates and their academic success (Zahrt & Melzer-Lange, 2011).

Vietnam has a higher rate of hostility against lesbian, homosexual, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) students. LGBT youth in Vietnam endure significant discrimination and hardship at the family, community, and societal levels (Save the Children in Vietnam, 2015). Being LGBT is extremely stigmatized in Vietnamese culture, and there are significant gaps in social services and health understanding and access. According to a poll of 2363 LGPT people residing in 63 provinces and cities across Vietnam, three out of every four respondents reported experiencing prejudice because of their sexual orientation (Luong & Pham, 2016). Additionally, research on discrimination and violence against LGBT students (CCIHP, 2011) discovered that 45% of LGBT participants had encountered violence and a variety of forms of abuse (i.e.,

physical abuse, mental abuse, sexual abuse, financial abuse).

Without guidance or assistance, many parents and instructors struggle to manage their children's anger and violence (Pham et al., 2018). Controlling aggressiveness issues can have a detrimental effect on kids and result in their expulsion from school, social problems, behavior disorders, poor mental health and well-being, and even unlawful actions (Pham et al., 2018). As a result, professional scientists, experts, and social workers are critical in assisting LGBT students who have been the subject of aggression.

Numerous studies have been conducted in recent years to examine the specific difficulties, prejudice, violence, or abuse faced by LGBT persons in Vietnam (CCIHP, 2011; iSEE, 2008, 2011; Luong & Pham, 2016; UNESCO, 2015). However, no research on social assistance for LGBT students has been undertaken in Vietnam. Thus, this research seeks to fill a void in the literature by examining hostility toward LGBT students at four secondary schools in Vietnam and the role of social workers in assisting these kids. The primary goals of this mixed-methods study are to (1) better understand LGBT students' personal experiences with violence and (2) to examine the role of social workers in assisting LGBT student victims of aggression. The study's findings are intended to increase public awareness of hostility directed at LGBT students and give helpful information for social workers and policymakers who interact with LGBT students. Pham et al. (2022) found that when the variables of the three aspects of the Sex Knowledge and Attitude Questionnaire were considered jointly, there was a significant difference between the four study groups of different academic years; sexual orientations; gender and academic year level; academic year and sexual orientation; and gender, academic year, and sexual orientation level.

In 2000, when the Law on Marriage and Family was revised to include a prohibition on same-sex cohabitation and marriage, the first mention of same-sex relationships was made (UNDP & USAID, 2014). In 2002, official media proclaimed homosexuality a "social evil" on a level with gambling, prostitution, and drug trafficking and urged homosexual couples to be arrested. Subsequent decrees in 2002, 2003, and 2006 made same-sex adoption, surrogacy, and marriages done abroad and to same-sex foreigners unlawful. Following these ordinances, police raids on LGBT-friendly venues were routine, further marginalizing the LGBT community (UNDP & USAID, 2014).

However, public knowledge and dialogue about homosexuality and the LGBT community in Vietnam exploded in 2012, when Justice Minister Ha Hung Cuong publicly condemned discrimination against homosexual individuals and broached the contentious subject of same-sex marriage. He also noticed the absence of a mechanism to address same-sex couples who cohabitated in the 2000 draft of the Law on Marriage and Family, which created complications. It was the first time a government official spoke publicly in a non-discriminatory tone regarding the LGBT community.

A few months later, the Vice-Minister of Health expressed his support for legalizing marriage between persons of the same sex, stating that homosexuals also have the right to live, eat, dress, love, beloved, and pursue happiness. In the angle of citizenship, they have the right to work, study, have medical examination and treatment, register birth, death, marriage... and have rights and perform the obligations with the State and society (UNDP & USAID, 2014).

Through Decree No. 110/2013/ND-CP, Vietnam decriminalized same-sex wedding ceremonies and granted same-sex couples the right to cohabit. It struck down elements in a prior ruling that included a fine for planning or attending a same-sex marriage ceremony. However, in 2014, the National Assembly adopted a revised Family and Marriage Law that did not include a provision forbidding or recognizing same-sex marriage. This means that while same-sex marriages will no longer be penalized, they will continue to be denied legal recognition and benefits.

METHODS

Participants

The study investigated aggression among LGBT students attending four secondary schools. It focused on all forms of aggression experienced by LGBT students.

Mixed quantitative and qualitative methods were used to achieve the research objectives. Quantitative data were collected from 128 LGBT students aged 11-14 studying in Grades 6-9 of the four secondary schools using a self-administered, paper-based questionnaire survey.

Measurement

The survey questionnaire was offered to potential participants in schools. Data cleaning and analysis were accomplished using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS). Through in-depth interviews, qualitative data were collected from 20 LGBT students and eight school administrators (including 5 LGBT students and two school administrators). The study was conducted in four critical schools in four big provincial cities in Southern Vietnam. More LGBT students are attending these schools compared with other places. The names of the provinces and schools are not disclosed to safeguard the participants' privacy and confidentiality. The study was a part of the "Social Work with LGBT People" Curriculum Development Project approved by the

University of Social Sciences and Humanities, Vietnam National University - Ho Chi Minh City. The research was conducted from December 2019 to July 2020.

Procedure

All potential participants were provided with a participant information form explaining the project details and asking these participants and their parents to express their written consent to participate in the study. Participants had the right to refuse to participate. In addition, the research team safeguarded the confidentiality of the data collected in each school by not disclosing it to others in the school. Only the research team members had access to the data. No names, schools, or other identifying information have been included in this study to reduce the possibility of participants being recognized.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Descriptive statistics

Table 1 presents descriptive information. The quantitative phase of the study enrolled a total of 128 individuals. A significant number of the participants (71.1 percent) identified as gay, with the remaining participants (28.9 percent) identifying as lesbian. Bisexual and transgender students were barred from participating in the study.

Table 1: Descriptive statistics

Variables	Frequency (%)				
	A School	B School	C School	D School	Total
Participant Demographics					
Gay	22 (64.7)	20 (64.5)	32 (71.1)	17 (94.4)	91 (71.1)
Lesbian	12 (35.3)	11 (35.5)	13 (28.9)	01 (5.6)	37 (28.9)
Bisexual	0	0	0	0	0
Transgender	0	0	0	0	0

Aggression toward LGBT students

Figure 1 demonstrates that the majority of participants had direct or indirect experiences with aggressiveness at their school, as depicted in the study.

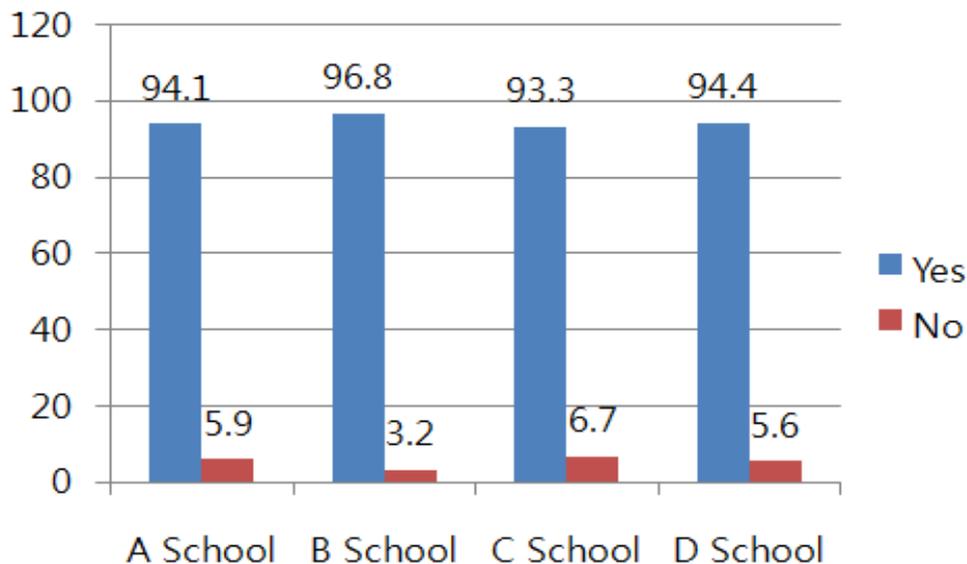


Fig.1: Self-reported experiences of aggression

Table 2 illustrates various forms of hostility. Participants indicated that their personal goods, such as books and examination papers, were frequently damaged by other students in the majority of cases (67.3 percent) (M 2.62, SD 0.58). The second most prevalent hostility encountered by participants was social exclusion (57.2 percent). Additionally, 56.9 percent of participants were criticized or reprimanded for their speech or walking style (MD 2.54, SD 0.54). (M 2.52, SD 0.59). 56.1 percent of individuals reported encounters with discrimination from their friends and teachers (M 2.47, SD 0.65). Over 55% of respondents reported frequently being called "bóng", "cái" (insulting Vietnamese terminology used to refer to lesbians), or "pê-ê" (an insulting Vietnamese term used to refer to gay males) (M 1.90, SD 0.77). Half of the participants

frequently heard derogatory remarks about LGBT individuals (M 2.46, SD 0.57). In comparison, less than half of individuals (M 2.33, SD 0.66) were compelled to alter their methods of living, speaking, wearing, or walking or received distressing signals (M 2.32, SD 0.69). The percentage of individuals who reported experiencing violence or physical abuse on a frequent basis (i.e., beating, pushing, hair pulling, garment tearing, scratching, biting, inking) was 38.9 percent (M 2.27, SD 0.65). However, nearly half (49.6 percent) reported being subjected to violence or physical abuse by other pupils occasionally.

Table 2:Self-reported forms of aggression

Forms of aggression		Frequency (%)			Mean (SD)
		Never	Sometimes	Often	
1	Name-calling (being called "bóng", "cái", "pê-đê")	6.0	38.4	55.6	1.90 (0.77)
2	Teasing on the tone of voice, ways of walking	2.5	40.7	56.9	2.54 (0.54)
3	Listening to insulting words for LGBT people	4.3	45.7	50.0	2.46 (0.57)
4	Discrimination	9.2	34.7	56.1	2.47 (0.65)
5	Being obliged to change ways of living, speech, dressing, and walking	11.3	44.3	44.5	2.33 (0.66)
6	Sending disturbing messages	13.1	41.5	45.4	2.32 (0.69)
7	Social exclusion	5.9	36.5	57.6	2.52 (0.60)
8	Scolding	4.9	38.1	56.9	2.52 (0.59)
9	Violence, physical abuse (i.e. beating, pushing, hair-pulling, cloth-tearing, scratching, biting, inking)	11.5	49.6	38.9	2.27 (0.65)
10	Harming personal property (such as examination papers, books)	5.2	27.5	67.3	2.62 (0.58)

The role of social workers in supporting LGBT student victims of aggression

In order to better understand the role of social workers in assisting LGBT students who have been victims of assault, we surveyed social professionals in B city. Figure 2 depicts the outcomes of the experiment.

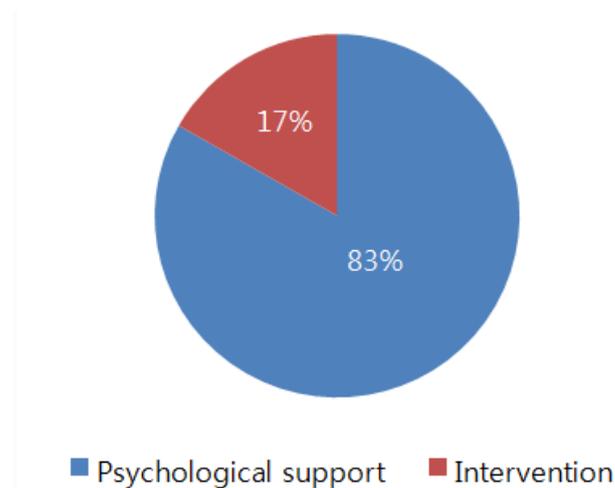


Fig.2:Types of support for LGBT student victims of aggression

As shown in Figure 2, the type of support that Vietnamese social workers use the most to support LGBT student victims of aggression was psychological support (83%), while the rest use the type of intervention (17%).

CONCLUSION

A study indicated that LGBT kids leave home because of family rejection or psychological stress caused by a lack of sympathy and support (Save the Children in Vietnam, 2012). Children lack access to social and health services, especially since hospitals and humanitarian shelters frequently discriminate against them based on their sexual orientation and gender identity. Many suffer from sadness and loneliness, leading to

drug use and self-injury (UNDP & USAID, 2014). Our data shows a climate of school harassment towards LGBT pupils. Most LGBT adolescents face bullying at school. But social workers' interventions are negligible. School social workers are vital in assessing, planning, implementing, and evaluating effective interventions. This can assist minimize classroom aggressiveness and providing preventative programs for kids.

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