



## Perceived Factors Affecting Deviant Behavior among Junior High School Students at Lal-lo National High School

**John Rafael Ruelos, Angelo Andres, Deniel Dave Baloran, Zoraida Ampaso, and Kyla Los Baños**

Humanities and Social Sciences  
Senior High School



### Abstract

*Deviant adolescent behavior has been a social problem in any part of the community. The primary purpose of conducting this study is to determine the perceived factors affecting deviant behavior among Junior High School students at Lal-lo National High School. This study used a descriptive research design to achieve the primary purpose. A self-made survey questionnaire was used to gather the necessary data needed. The data shows that the most observed deviant behavior among junior high school students is bullying, followed by cursing, truanting, cheating, troublemaking, stealing, self-harming, smoking, vandalizing, and alcoholism. The gathered data also reveals that the perceived factors affecting the deviant behavior among junior high school students in terms of parental, peer, and mass media had a descriptive value equivalent to influential, which means that the factors: parents, peers, and mass media influences deviant behavior among Junior High School students. It is recommended that the school should take action and impose stricter policies to stop deviant behaviors. Also, teachers must be wary of the students all the time. Parents should be aware of their actions and their negative impact on their children. Further studies could be made using other sampling methods, such as purposive sampling.*

**Keywords:** *deviant behavior, parental influence, peer influence, perceived, mass media influence*

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## Introduction

Deviant adolescent behavior has been a social problem in any part of the community. Deviant behavior is any behavior that is not considered normal or morally correct by most people, which could harm oneself or others. Any behavior that does not go with the social institutions is deviance. This behavior has many negative consequences; just one action or decision made because of deviant behavior may significantly affect someone's life.

There are so many deviant actions that happen inside the school. If this behavior is tolerated, then there will be a consequence that can lead to physical and mental health issues. Nevertheless, the increasing cases of issues in school are already evident. Deviances can be used to indicate actions that are 'undesirable' on a social and moral level. This makes it unlikely that everyone will agree on deviant behavior. Individuals and their societies have different social and moral standards.

The problem of the deviant behavior of youth is getting worse. Many factors cause this behavior. In these past few years, people have begun looking for solutions that can help in mitigating this problem. Many student fights or riots happening around the school almost daily have gained the public's attention, followed by negative reactions. No one could provide the appropriate response to the problem or the source of it because nobody has found the right answer yet. That is why they could rely on various people's opinions and perceptions of the problem (Wairimu, 2013).

One society may not view as deviant the activities or behaviors that another society deems deviant. However, some activities and behaviors are seen as improper in all communities, even though deviant conduct may vary amongst societies. Deviant behaviors in society include troublemaking, bullying, drinking/alcoholism, self-harm, stealing, and others. (Langford 2022).

This behavior has a negative impact on the students' studies. The impacts can be a failure in academic performance and achievements, dropping out of school, or isolating themselves from their classmates (Jayaram, 2017). Nevertheless, if their peers or family minimize deviant behavior by trying to find the factors causing it and start thinking of solutions, this problem will most likely be eradicated.

However, the students' deviant behavior may vary depending on the factors affecting it. For instance, students who come from a violent family and have been abused will also be violent towards his/her classmates. On the other hand, students who did not receive enough affection or come from unloving parents are usually involved in juvenile delinquency (Jayaram, 2017).

Therefore, a study is needed based on the students' thoughts or perceptions of the causes of deviant behavior. Their perceived thoughts are needed because students encounter different and unique problems. These challenges also encourage the children to the involvement in juvenile delinquency. The factors that affect their behavior are also



different. That's why conducting this study is needed for handling the students' deviant behavior. In addition, before one can come up with a solution, it is necessary to know the causes of the problem to focus on the significant factors affecting this behavior problem.

Understanding students who commit such deviant acts and knowing the cause or reason behind it will help address this problem. Although there are various theories about this problem, the students and their backgrounds differ. Therefore, the lack of information regarding this problem is still evident and must be studied. The researchers saw this problem in their school and decided to take a step to address the problem. Identifying the perceived factors affecting the students' deviant behavior is the first step, and it is needed to conduct a study. This study makes the students aware of the factors that affect their behavior. They can be aware to avoid the cause or identify a solution to stop the problem.

### *Literature review*

This section contains related literature that is needed for the study. The information added in this section was obtained through thorough research to help the readers understand the topic more. The related literature would serve as supporting information and evidence to make this study more credible.

### **Deviant behavior**

Deviance is a behavior that does not follow the standards that adhere to the accepted social norms (Idris et al., 2017). So, classifying behavior as deviant depends on how society perceives, interprets, or labels deviant behavior. A study by Torrente and Vazsonyi (2012) also states that deviant behavior is inconsistent with socially acceptable norms, deviates from self-realization, and avoids exercising personal moral judgment and identity control.

Education is the art of bringing a person out of ignorance and into the light of understanding. This suggests that a person with an education can help change society for better growth and development (Agi, 2015). In contrast, Eremus (2015) argued that laws and regulations are not followed in our schools because of numerous instances of undesirable behaviors, academic dishonesty, bullying, truancy, and many more. Moreover, based on the study of Angel (2016), schools have turned into locations where various atrocities are committed. The teachers, parents, and school must take action and ensure that deviant behaviors are properly eradicated from schools.

There will always be deviance in any part of society, but this behavior further deteriorates morality, specifically in adolescents. According to the study of Rebellow (2015), deviant behavior is seen in any society right from the beginning. Though, it is alarming because deviance has been severely increasing, causing significant disruption in the balance of the natural world. Different factors can make this problem worse (Wairimu, 2013).



Adolescence is a distressing part of life because individuals will face many problems. Teenagers will experience many changes in their life because it is not like when playing in the mud was all they cared about. Increased demands, workloads, and pressure in school, family, and peers will cause stress (Sanchez-Sandoval and Palacios, 2012). Teenagers may commit a significant act of defiance if these factors cannot be stopped (Feist et al., 2013). According to Merrin et al. (2019), if deviant behavior is not stopped, it will result in the engagement of criminal activity in adulthood.

### **Parental influence**

It is undeniable that children are born and raised in families. Any child's first educational environment is their family. Upbringing in the family has an impact, and if it is not done correctly, there is a tendency for the child to exhibit deviant behavior. According to Chuks (2016), family dynamics and a lack of parental involvement might produce children who misbehave at school.

The most important factors that can mold teenagers' behavior are their environment and how they were raised (Zaky, 2017). According to Elov & Berdiyeva (2022), frequent family conflicts, discontent with the family and environment, school misunderstandings, and peer conflicts inspire teenagers' deviant behavior to change the circumstances (Elov & Berdiyeva, 2022). A study by Bartolome et al. (2018) further states that most adolescents who show delinquent behavior belong to a family without a firm foundation. Moreover, Individuals with weak family ties are more likely to engage in deviant actions (Lee et al., 2013).

Many studies emphasizing the significant influence of family communication and structure on teenagers' behavior and well-being on various levels have highlighted the relevance of the family system (Fosco G.M., LoBraico E.J., 2018), (Kann et al., 2016). Mutual trust, parent-child disclosure, and excellent family communication positively impact adolescent behavior. This openness makes it easier to control emotions, makes it easier to respond to stressful situations, and discourages delinquent behavior, all of which contribute to improved well-being (Liu et al., 2018).

Regarding psychological and emotional support, the mother-child bond is a socialization component. The father imparts moral obligations, standards, and values when modeling specific behaviors. Teenagers' behavior is influenced by their parents' trust and empathy, which protects the children from being deviant (Ying et al., 2015). However, the best scenario is when both parents are actively involved in their children's life. A healthy family environment and a teen's ability to grow and adjust are related to how positive their parental influence is (Jiménez-Barbero, 2014).

Adolescents who are content with their families may be less likely to engage in deviant action. Based on recent studies, individuals with a lower level of family satisfaction and who have had a troubling experience in life might be at risk of deviant behavior.



## Peer influence

Peer relationships take on a more significant role in daily life during adolescence. Given how much time is spent engaging in unstructured social interaction with peers, the peer group is frequently the setting for antisocial behavior (Hoeben, Weerman, 2016). One study by Seddig (2019) reveals that people adopt their friends' attitudes to fit into a particular social group. Conversely, individual attitudes can affect how peers are seen. As a result, people either project their attitudes onto their friends or self-stereotype themselves as belonging to a peer group. Moreover, teenagers will adopt extreme behavior to fit in with their social group, even if it puts them or others in danger (Rebellow, 2015).

Peer influence is an ambiguous concept that refers to any transformation. Peer pressure and socialization, which describe (respectively) maladaptive and adaptive change, are distinct from peer influence in this sense (Laursen, 2018). A Zhu et al. (2016) study discovered a link between deviant behavior and identification with deviant peers (e.g., fighting, alcohol use). Young children and teenagers lack distinct identities, and the values and beliefs accompany a fabricated identity. Experimental investigations have shown that peer impact is vital when teenagers are given unfamiliar activities with unknown results (van Hoorn et al., 2017).

Adolescent "problem" youth are frequently grouped together in juvenile court and public school settings as one of the most popular tactics. Scientific research has shown that "connection with deviant peers is particularly connected with increase in problem behavior," hence it is essential to exercise caution when advising or employing group-based tactics with these young people (Cunningham, 2016).

Peers could affect deviant behavior, especially if they lack knowledge about something yet influences others to do things that could result in negative consequences. These things might be fun to do yet, it might also be illegal, such as using drugs and alcoholism.

## Mass Media Influence

Children's character development is more negatively impacted by unwholesome mass media than positively (Kento, 2015). Media is the mirror of society. The media's power influences teenagers and shows tremendous differences in their behavior (Rebellow, 2015). One of the leading causes of cyber aggression, cyberbullying, and deviant behavior in the online world is online disinhibition (Cheung et al., 2020). Moreover, the media promotes morality only by flattening and being accountable for increased crime, particularly by minors. The viewers also imitate contents that affect them negatively (Iorgulescu, 2018).



### *Statement of the Problem*

This research aimed to know the perceived factors affecting deviant behavior among Junior High School Students at Lal-lo National High School. This study answered the following:

1. What is the profile of the respondents in terms of:
  - a. Age
  - b. Sex
  - c. Grade Level
2. What is the commonly observed deviant behavior of the students?
3. What are the perceived factors affecting the deviant behavior of the students in terms of:
  - a. Parental Influence
  - b. Peer Influence
  - c. Mass Media Influence

### *Theoretical Framework*

#### **Social Disorganization Theory**

Social disorganization theory, initially developed by Shaw and McKay (1942) in Chicago, proposes that concentrated poverty, high levels of residential mobility, and ethnic diversity, weaken the social networks, norms, and value systems required to exercise informal control, leading to higher crime rates.

According to this study, communities with poor social bonds and a lack of social control are likelier to experience crime. A person is more likely to commit a crime if raised in a poor neighborhood with high drug use, violence, teenage delinquency, and neglectful parenting than if raised in a wealthy neighborhood with a solid educational system and supportive family.

#### **Labeling theory**

Another theory that would support this study is the labeling theory. According to Howard S. Becker (1963), Individuals who are labeled as criminals by society may be more likely to engage in criminal activities simply due to such social labeling.

Like the students in the school, those labeled with deviant behavior will most likely be involved in deviant activities.

These theories will serve as the basis of this study to identify the factors affecting the students' deviant behavior.





### *Limitations of the Study*

This study focuses on the perceived factors affecting students' deviant behavior at Lal-lo National High School, located at Centro, Lal-lo, Cagayan. The chosen respondents are the students from Junior High School; from Grades 7, 8, 9, and 10. The respondents were 333 students from different Junior High School grade levels who answered the survey questionnaire. This research study was conducted from February 2023 until June 2023.

### **Methods**

#### *Research Design*

This quantitative research used a descriptive design to determine the perceived factors affecting deviant behavior among Junior High School Students at Lal-lo National High School. Descriptive research design aims to describe a population, situation, or phenomenon accurately and systematically. It can use various research methods to investigate one or more variables.

The research tool for this quantitative study to gather data was printed questionnaires which were distributed to the respondents. The survey questionnaire consisted of profiling, ranking scales, and Likert scales.

#### *Participants and Sampling of the Study*

The researchers used a probability sampling method. The researchers decided to use stratified random sampling for the respondents. The respondents in this study were all Junior High School Students at Lal-lo National High School. There were 44 sections in the Junior High School Department, and it has 1,983 students.

Using Slovin's formula, the calculated sample size is 333, the number of respondents in this study.

***Table 1. Distribution of Respondents***

<b>Level</b>	<b>Total Population</b>	<b>Sample Size</b>
Grade 7	432	86
Grade 8	491	83
Grade 9	542	67
Grade 10	508	97
<b>Total</b>	<b>1983</b>	<b>333</b>



### *Instrumentation*

The researchers used a self-administered survey questionnaire. The researchers created a questionnaire with three parts to get the appropriate data. Part I contains items to gather the profile of the respondents. Part II contains a Ranking scale with 10 statement situations that must be ranked from 1 to 10. The respondents are given a scale from 1 to 10 that determines the most commonly observed deviant behavior. Part III contains a Likert scale with thirty statement situations which have five choices to choose from. The respondents were given a scale from 5 to 1 corresponding to a specific description: 5 – Strongly Disagree, 4 – Disagree, 3 – Neutral, 2 – Agree, 1 – Strongly Agree. This survey would determine the perceived factors affecting the students' deviant behavior.

### *Analysis of Data*

The researchers tallied the gathered data and information, then, with the help of a statistician, it was interpreted using the following statistical tools:

**Count and Percentage.** These statistical tools were used to determine the demographic profile of the respondents in terms of age, sex, and grade level.

**Ranking and Mean.** These statistical tools determined the students' most commonly observed deviant behavior.

**Mean.** It was used to determine the perceived factors affecting the deviant behavior of the respondents.

## **Result and Discussion**

### *Profile of the Respondents*

Table 2 contains the demographic profile of the respondents in terms of Age, Sex, and Grade Level. There are 333 respondents from junior high school, specifically from grade 7 to grade 10. The table reveals that 123 respondents, or 36.9 percent, are aged 13 and below, 135 respondents, or 40.5 percent, are aged 14 to 15, and 75 respondents, or 22.5 percent, are aged 16 and above. Based on the findings, the overall mean age of the respondents is 14.2 years old, which indicates that the ages of the respondents are balanced or in between the range of 13 years old and below and 16 years old and above. The respondent's ages and grade levels were appropriate. The table also shows that there are 129, or 38.7 percent, male respondents while 204, or 61.3 percent, female respondents, which means that it was female-dominated. There are 86 or 25.8 percent of grade 7 respondents, 83 or 24.9 percent of grade 8 respondents, 67 or 20.1 percent of grade 9 respondents, and 97 or 29.1 percent of grade 10 respondents. This means that grade 10 students comprised the majority of the respondents.



**Table 2. Demographic profile of the respondents**

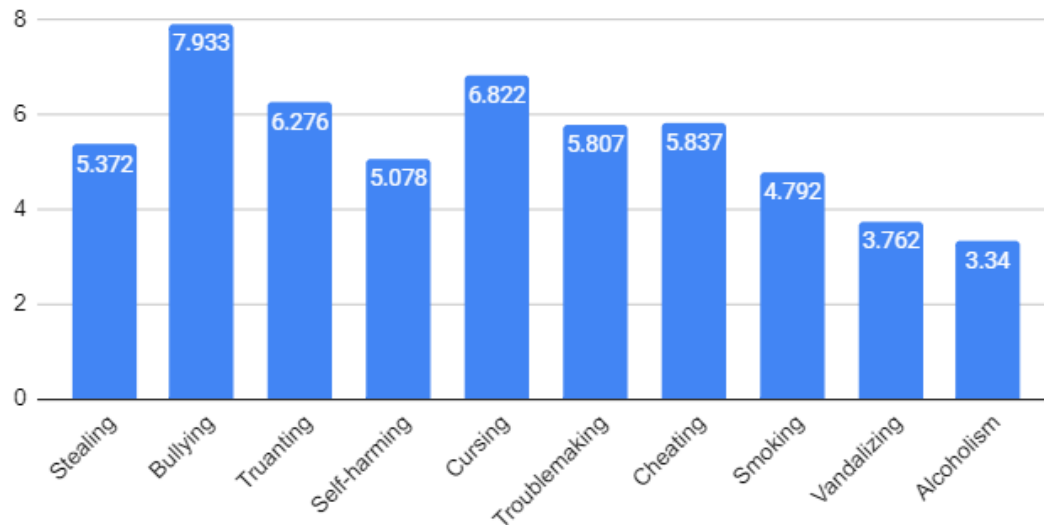
Age	Counts	Percentage
13 and below	123	36.9 %
14 to 15	135	40.5 %
16 and above	75	22.5 %
<i>Overall Mean = 14.2 years</i>		
Sex	Counts	Percentage
Male	129	38.7 %
Female	204	61.3 %
Level	Counts	Percentage
Grade 7	86	25.8 %
Grade 8	83	24.9 %
Grade 9	67	20.1 %
Grade 10	97	29.1 %

**Common Deviant Behavior**

Figure 1 shows the commonly observed deviant behavior of the students. The students ranked the deviant behaviors, with 10 as the most commonly observed and 1 as the least commonly observed. This indicates that the deviant behavior with the highest average weighted mean is the most commonly observed, and the deviant behavior with the lowest average weighted mean is the least commonly observed by the respondents. Ranked as the most commonly observed deviant behavior is bullying, with an average weighted mean of 7.933.

The second is cursing, with an average weighted mean of 6.822. The third is truanting, with an average mean of 6.276. The fourth is cheating, with an average mean of 5.837. The fifth is troublemaking, with an average mean of 5.807. The sixth is stealing, with an average mean of 5.372. The seventh is self-harming, with an average mean of 5.078. The eighth is smoking, with an average mean of 4.792. The ninth is vandalizing, with an average mean of 3.762. The tenth is alcoholism, with an average mean of 3.34.

These results show that the most commonly observed deviant behavior is bullying, which occurs most at school. According to the study by Cornell and Limber (2015), the current legal and policy approaches of the Department of Education regarding harassment and discrimination do not provide adequate protection for all bullied students and therefore said that bullying still widely occurs at schools.

*Figure 1. Observed deviant behavior of the students*

## Perceived Factors Affecting Deviant Behavior of Students Along Parental, Peer, and Mass Media

### *Parental Influence*

Table 3 shows the parental factor affecting the students' deviant behavior. It shows the results of the first factor, which is parental influence. There are 10 statements under the first indicator, with a total average weighted mean of 3.703. The statement "I experienced or saw my siblings being physically beaten by my parents." has the highest weighted mean of 4.14. While the statement "I am pressured by my parent's high expectations of my grade." has the lowest weighted mean of 3.02.

This result means that the students' deviant behavior influences the parents of the students. Similar to the results, the study of Roman and Donga (2022) stated that parents play a role in a person's deviant behavior.

*Table 3. Parental factors affect the deviant behavior of students.*

Statements	Mean	Descriptive Interpretation
1. I cannot get the things that I need for school because of my parents' lack of income.	3.35	Moderate influential
2. I always see my parents fighting and cursing each other.	4.02	Influential
3. I am pressured by my parent's high expectations of my grade.	3.02	Moderate influential



4. I often make mistakes when my parents shout at me.	3.09	Moderate influential
5. I experienced or saw my siblings being physically beaten by my parents.	4.14	Influential
6. I do not get much attention and affection from my parents, so I just do what I want.	3.71	Influential
7. I have been surrounded by a family with a hobby of drinking alcohol and smoking cigarettes.	4.04	Influential
8. I obey my parent's orders even though I know that it is not right.	3.89	Influential
9. I get a cruel punishment when I accidentally make a mistake instead of being guided in the right way.	3.82	Influential
10. I can do anything I want because my parents do not monitor me.	3.95	Influential

**Overall Weighted Mean and Descriptive Interpretation 3.703 Influential**

*Descriptive Value:*

4.20-5.00 >> *Very influential*

1.80-2.59 >> *Uninfluential*

3.40-4.19 >> *Influential*

1.00-1.79 >> *Very uninfluential*

2.60-3.39 >> *Moderate influential*

### **Peer Influence**

Table 4 shows the results of the second factor, the peer factor affecting the students' deviant behavior. The statement "Friends influenced me on using vape or smoking cigarettes." has the highest weighted mean of 4.38. While the statement "I will do anything just to fit in with my peer group." has the lowest weighted mean of 3.44. The 10 statements under the third indicator have a total weighted mean of 3.983, indicating that peer factors influence students.

This result means that peers, such as friends and classmates, influence students' deviant behaviors. Cunningham (2016) stated that students spend time with peers involved in deviant behaviors. Because of this, students tend to pick up the deviant behavior of their peers.

*Table 4. Peer factor affecting deviant behavior of students.*

<b>Statements</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Descriptive Interpretation</b>
1. I will do anything just to fit in with my peer group.	3.44	Influential
2. I got involved in a fight because of my friends.	4	Influential
3. I imitate what my friends do just to be acknowledged.	3.78	Influential



4. I depend on my decision based on my peer's opinions.	3.52	Influential
5. I was involved in drinking alcohol with my peer group.	4.31	Very influential
6. I do not care about the consequences of what I'm doing when I'm with my peer group.	4.14	Influential
7. I often get scolded by my parents because I go home late because of my friends.	3.77	Influential
8. I was influenced by friends on using vape or smoking cigarettes.	4.38	Very influential
9. I play games with my friends until midnight, so I tend to forget to do my schoolworks.	4.14	Influential
10. I was introduced to watching pornography because of my peer group.	4.35	Very influential
<b>Overall Weighted Mean and Descriptive Interpretation</b>		<b>3.983 Influential</b>
<i>Descriptive Value:</i>		
4.20-5.00 >> Very influential	1.80-2.59 >> Uninfluential	
3.40-4.19 >> Influential	1.00-1.79 >> Very uninfluential	
2.60-3.39 >> Moderate influential		

### Mass Media Influence

Table 5 shows the average weighted mean of mass media factors affecting the students' deviant behavior. The statement "I was introduced to watching pornography because of what I saw on the internet." has the highest weighted mean of 4.24. While the statement "I learned how to trash-talk someone because of the internet." has the lowest weighted mean of 3.49. The 10 statements under the fourth indicator have a total weighted mean of 4.02, indicating that the mass media factor also influences the students. This means that the mass media influence the students' deviant behaviors.

It was also revealed that mass media garnered the highest weighted mean among the three perceived factors. Similar to the study of Lorgulescu (2018), it showed that mass media is responsible for doubling the deviant actions rate in the last 15 years, especially among minors.

**Table 5. Mass media factor affecting deviant behavior of students.**

Statements	Mean	Descriptive Interpretation
1. I see violent acts on the internet, then I feel the urge to become violent.	4.14	Influential
2. I saw some foolishness on the internet, therefore I also do it because it is funny.	4.03	Influential
3. I believe everything I see in the media.	4.01	Influential



4. I play silly pranks on my friends just like what I saw on the internet.	3.86	Influential
5. I think violence is normal because that is what I usually see in the media.	4.21	Very influential
6. I learned how to trash-talk someone because of the internet.	3.49	Influential
7. I was introduced to watching pornography because of what I saw on the internet.	4.24	Very influential
8. I tend to do new trends that I see on the internet without knowing their consequences.	4.1	Influential
9. I was envious of seeing trendy things on the internet, so when I saw them in real life, I felt the urge to take them.	3.98	Influential
10. I experienced being a victim of cyberbullying, that's why I also started to bully someone to make them feel what I've felt.	4.15	Influential

<b>Overall Weighted Mean and Descriptive Interpretation</b>	<b>4.02</b>	<b>Influential</b>
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*Descriptive Value:*4.20-5.00 >> *Very influential*3.40-4.19 >> *Influential*2.60-3.39 >> *Moderate influential*1.80-2.59 >> *Uninfluential*1.00-1.79 >> *Very uninfluential***Conclusions and Recommendations**

The following conclusions were drawn from the initial findings:

1. Bullying was shown to be the most commonly observed deviant behavior among Junior High School Students. The next is cursing, followed by truancy, cheating, troublemaking, stealing, self-harming, smoking, vandalism, and alcoholism.
2. The perceived factors affecting the deviant behavior among Junior High School Students regarding parental, peer, and mass media had a descriptive equivalent of influence. This means that parents, peers, and the mass media influence deviant behavior among Junior High School Students.

Based on the finding and conclusions drawn from this study, the following recommendations are offered:

1. The school should stop commonly observed deviant behaviors such as bullying. The school should impose stricter policies to protect the students and lessen deviant behaviors.
2. The teachers, especially class advisers, should observe their students more and be more aware of what is happening to them. This way, the deviant behavior among students will be lessened or diminished.



3. Parents should know that their actions affect their children negatively; therefore, parents should be more aware of their actions.
4. Further studies could be made using other sampling methods, such as purposive sampling. The chosen respondents must be the students with bad records at the school guidance.
5. Future researchers could conduct a qualitative study on the same or similar topic.

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