

Parental Upbringing and Peer Interaction of Senior High School Learners

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Abstract

This study examined the relationship between parental upbringing and peer interaction among senior high school learners. Anchored in Bandura's Social Learning Theory (1977) and Bowlby's Attachment Theory (1988), the research explored how parental behaviors influence adolescents' social development. A descriptive correlational research design was employed, involving 121 senior high school learners from Holy Cross of Mintal in Davao City, selected through stratified sampling. Data were collected using adopted and modified questionnaires from Akhtar et al. (2022), with reliability confirmed through Cronbach's alpha values of 0.80 and above. Descriptive statistics and Pearson r correlation were used for data analysis. Findings revealed that the level of parental upbringing was high, particularly in terms of support and facilitation of independence, while the quality of parent-child relationship was rated average. Peer interaction was also found to be high, characterized by strong communication and trust and low levels of alienation. A significant positive relationship was identified between parental upbringing and peer interaction ($r = 0.263$, $p = 0.004$), indicating that supportive and autonomy-promoting parenting contributes to healthier peer relationships. The study concludes that parental upbringing plays a crucial role in shaping adolescents' social competence and emotional well-being. It recommends strengthening communication and emotional closeness within families, promoting supportive parenting practices, and encouraging collaborative efforts among students, parents, and teachers. This study aligns with Sustainable Development Goal 3 (Good Health and Well-Being) by emphasizing adolescents' mental, emotional, and social development. It contributes to socio-economic, educational, and public health sustainability by highlighting the importance of family environments in fostering socially competent and emotionally resilient individuals.

Keywords: Attachment theory, Parental upbringing, Peer interaction, Social development, Social learning theory, Senior high school learners

1. Introduction

Peer interaction plays a vital role in adolescents' social development, shaping communication, relationships, and emotional regulation. Parental upbringing significantly influences how individuals develop these interaction skills, as parenting styles, communication patterns, and emotional environments affect adolescents' ability to engage with peers. Existing literature highlights the strong link between parenting practices and social behavior, yet there remains a need to further examine this relationship among senior high school learners, where peer dynamics become more complex and emotionally significant. This study investigates the relationship between parental upbringing and peer interaction, focusing on how family influences shape adolescents' social competencies and well-being.

1.1 Parental Upbringing and Peer Interaction Among Senior High School Learners

Peer interaction involves communication and collaboration among individuals of similar age or status and is essential for social development and learning. The ability to build and maintain healthy peer relationships is strongly influenced by parental upbringing, including communication styles, discipline, and emotional support. Positive parenting fosters confidence and effective communication, while poor upbringing may hinder social expression. Globally, adolescents raised with authoritative parenting demonstrate positive social behaviors and reduced aggression, whereas authoritarian parenting is associated with increased aggression in peer interactions (Montero-Montero et al., 2020). Similarly, parental involvement in encouraging social participation enhances children's communication skills and confidence (Liu, 2025). Family environments also shape empathy and behavioral patterns, where violent parenting may lead to aggression in peer relationships (Yue He, 2023).

1.2 Parenting Influences on Communication, Trust, and Social Behavior in Peer Interaction

Literature consistently emphasizes the influence of parenting styles on adolescents' social skills and peer interactions. Authoritative parenting, characterized by balanced responsiveness and control, promotes positive social behaviors,

communication, and conflict resolution skills. In contrast, negative or neglectful parenting may result in poor social adjustment and problematic behaviors. Parental involvement further strengthens social development by fostering bonding, guidance, and structured environments that enhance adaptability and interaction skills. Studies also highlight that parental engagement in communication, learning, and decision-making contributes to learners' behavioral, emotional, and cognitive engagement in school settings, reinforcing their connection with peers and social environments.

1.3 Global, National, and Local Context of Parenting and Peer Interaction Among Learners

At the global level, research from Spain and China demonstrates that parenting styles significantly influence adolescents' social behavior, emotional regulation, and peer relationships (Montero-Montero et al., 2020; Liu, 2025; Yue He, 2023). In the Philippine context, studies in Samar and Zambales reveal a strong relationship between parenting styles and classroom social interactions among senior high school learners, with authoritative parenting linked to improved communication, problem-solving, and conflict resolution (Ramento, 2021). Additional findings indicate that parental involvement influences learners' engagement across behavioral, emotional, and cognitive domains, affecting both academic participation and peer relationships (Imperial, 2024).

1.4 Social Learning and Attachment Theories in Explaining Peer Interaction of Learners

This study is anchored in Bandura's Social Learning Theory (1977), which explains that behavior is acquired through observation and imitation. Adolescents model parental behaviors, including communication and social interaction patterns, which influence how they relate to peers. Positive parental modeling fosters empathy and cooperation, while negative or neglectful environments may lead to hostility or social withdrawal. It is further supported by Bowlby's Attachment Theory (1988), which emphasizes that early caregiver relationships shape emotional security and social development. Secure attachment promotes self-esteem and healthy peer relationships, whereas insecure attachment may hinder the ability to form and maintain social connections.

1.5 Research Gap on Parental Upbringing and Peer Interaction Among Senior High School Learners

Although extensive research exists on parenting and child development, most studies focus on early childhood or elementary levels. There is limited research examining how parental upbringing influences senior high school learners, particularly as peer relationships become more complex and emotionally significant. This study addresses this gap by exploring how parental upbringing affects adolescents' ability to build relationships, manage social interactions, and navigate emotional dynamics.

1.6 SDG 3 Alignment: Parental Upbringing, Peer Interaction, and Adolescent Well-Being

This study aligns with SDG 3 – Good Health and Well-Being, which promotes mental, emotional, and social health. By examining how parental upbringing influences peer interaction, the study contributes to understanding factors that support adolescents' psychological well-being and social development.

1.7 Multidisciplinary Sustainability of Parenting and Peer Interaction Development

This research contributes to socio-economic and public health sustainability by highlighting the role of family environments in shaping adolescents' social competence and well-being. Strengthening parental awareness and involvement can improve learners' interpersonal skills, emotional health, and school engagement. Additionally, the study supports educational sustainability by emphasizing the connection between home environment and school-based social interactions, which are essential for holistic development. By addressing these factors, the research contributes to building healthier, more socially competent individuals who can actively participate in sustainable communities.

2. Material and methods

2.1 Research Design

This study employed a descriptive correlational research design to determine the relationship between parental upbringing and peer interaction among senior high school learners in Davao City. This non-experimental approach examines the association between variables without manipulation or testing causality, focusing instead on identifying the strength and direction of relationships (Devi et al., 2023). It provides insights into patterns and relationships within the data, offering a foundational understanding of the phenomenon under study (Singh, 2023).

2.2 Locale of the Study

The study was conducted at Holy Cross of Mintal (HCM), a private Catholic educational institution located in Mintal, Davao City, Philippines. Established in 1959 and administered by the Sisters of the Presentation of Mary, the institution provides Christian education and implements the K–12 Basic Education Curriculum, offering the Academic track for senior high school students. It is recognized by the Department of Education and is affiliated with the Davao Association of Catholic Schools.

2.3 Respondents of the Study

The respondents consisted of senior high school learners from Grade 11 and Grade 12 at Holy Cross of Mintal. These learners were selected to represent different sections within the senior high school department, ensuring that both grade levels were included in examining the relationship between parental upbringing and peer interaction.

2.4 Sample and Sampling Procedure

The study utilized probability sampling, specifically stratified equal allocation, to ensure balanced representation across all sections. Eleven respondents were selected from each section, covering Grade 11 and Grade 12 levels, resulting in a total of 121 respondents. Stratified sampling involves dividing the population into subgroups and selecting random samples from each group, which enhances representation and improves accuracy and reliability (Bisht, 2024). This approach is particularly useful when populations exhibit diverse characteristics, ensuring that all subgroups are adequately represented and reducing sampling bias.

2.5 Research Instrument

The study used an adopted and modified questionnaire from two sources. The instrument for parental upbringing was based on Akhtar et al. (2022), while the instrument for peer interaction was adapted from Armsden and Greenberg (1987). Both instruments underwent reliability testing using Cronbach's alpha, yielding values of 0.80 and above, indicating acceptable reliability. Responses were measured using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree to assess the levels of parental upbringing and peer interaction.

2.6 Data Gathering Procedure

Data were collected through the administration of the adopted and modified questionnaires to the selected respondents. The process involved distributing the instruments to senior high school learners and gathering their responses to assess their perceptions of parental upbringing and peer interaction.

2.7 Data Analysis Techniques

Descriptive statistics and correlational analysis were used to interpret the data. The mean was utilized to determine the levels of parental upbringing and peer interaction, providing a summary of respondents' perceptions. Standard deviation was applied to measure the variability of responses and assess the consistency of the data. Pearson r Product-Moment Correlation was used to examine the relationship between parental upbringing and peer interaction, determining the strength and direction of the association between the variables.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 Levels of Parental Upbringing and Peer Interaction

3.1.1 Level of Parental Upbringing

The results revealed that the overall level of parental upbringing among respondents was high, with a mean of 3.63 and a standard deviation of 0.82. Among its indicators, facilitator of independence and source of support were rated high, while quality of relationship was rated average, indicating moderate emotional connection between learners and their parents. This finding suggests that most learners experience supportive and autonomy-promoting parenting, which contributes to positive developmental outcomes. Responsive caregiving and non-harsh discipline improve socioemotional skills and interaction (Jeong et al., 2021), while sensitivity in parenting enhances cognitive and emotional development (Prime et al., 2023). Positive parenting programs further strengthen behavior and emotional regulation (Li et al., 2021), and supportive parenting reduces emotional difficulties (Goagoses et al., 2023). Authoritative parenting also promotes prosocial behaviors that strengthen peer relationships, reinforcing that nurturing parenting leads to healthier developmental outcomes (Branco et al., 2021).

3.1.2 Quality of Parent-Child Relationship

The results showed that the quality of relationship between learners and their parents was rated average, with a mean of 3.16. This reflects mixed responses, indicating that learners sometimes feel understood and emotionally connected, but not consistently. This suggests that while relationships exist, emotional closeness may not always be strong enough to fully support social development. The quality of parent-adolescent relationships influences how adolescents form peer relationships, as emotional support and communication build trust and social skills (Schulz et al., 2022). Strong parental bonds reduce behavioral problems and improve emotional coping (Tang et al., 2022), indicating that stronger relationships could further enhance peer interaction.

3.1.3 Parental Facilitation of Independence

The results indicated that facilitator of independence was rated high, with a mean of 3.82, showing that learners are encouraged to make decisions and develop autonomy. This suggests that parents actively support independence, which enhances adolescents' confidence in social situations. Parental guidance in social problem-solving helps adolescents

navigate peer interactions effectively (Gregson et al., 2017). Encouraging autonomy while maintaining support increases self-reliance and reduces susceptibility to negative peer influence (Crespo-Lopez et al., 2025), highlighting the importance of balanced parenting in developing social competence.

3.1.4 Parental Support as a Source of Emotional and Social Development

The results showed that source of support obtained the highest rating, with a mean of 3.91, indicating strong parental support through advice, assistance, and protection. This demonstrates that learners perceive their parents as reliable sources of emotional and practical support. Parental warmth and responsiveness foster emotional control and empathy, which improve peer relationships (Ratliff et al., 2023). Secure parent–child bonds reduce aggression and promote healthier emotional responses (Vagos & Carvalhais, 2020), confirming that strong parental support enhances adolescents' ability to build positive social connections.

3.1.5 Level of Peer Interaction

The results revealed that the overall level of peer interaction was high, with a mean of 3.63 and a standard deviation of 0.82. Communication and trust were rated high, while alienation was rated low, indicating generally positive and supportive peer relationships. This suggests that learners experience strong peer connections characterized by openness, trust, and minimal social isolation. Supportive parenting plays a key role in shaping these outcomes by helping adolescents regulate emotions and avoid negative peer influence (Pan et al., 2017). Emotional support from parents enhances cooperation and social behavior (Cui et al., 2020), while paternal warmth promotes stable peer relationships (Daspe et al., 2018). Warm parenting styles also encourage confidence and healthy peer engagement.

3.1.6 Communication in Peer Interaction

The results showed that communication among peers was high, with a mean of 4.16, indicating open and supportive exchanges between learners and their friends. This finding implies that learners are comfortable expressing themselves and engaging in meaningful discussions with peers. Open communication at home enhances adolescents' empathy, cooperation, and conflict resolution skills (Ng-Knight et al., 2021). Respectful communication also promotes trust and confidence in relationships (Deković et al., 2020), emphasizing its importance in fostering strong peer connections.

3.1.7 Trust in Peer Relationships

The results indicated that trust among peers was high, with a mean of 4.13, showing that learners rely on and feel secure with their friends. This suggests that trust plays a central role in maintaining stable and supportive peer relationships. Trust fosters emotional security, openness, and cooperation, reducing conflict and promoting prosocial behavior (Laible et al., 2020). It also supports emotional regulation and confidence in social interactions (Sugimura et al., 2020), reinforcing its importance in adolescent development.

3.1.8 Alienation in Peer Interaction

The results showed that alienation was low, with a mean of 2.25, indicating that learners generally do not feel isolated or excluded from their peer groups. This finding suggests that learners experience a sense of belonging and acceptance among peers. A strong sense of belonging reduces feelings of isolation (Suan et al., 2020), while supportive friendships decrease alienation (Olalan et al., 2025). These findings highlight the importance of peer connectedness in promoting social well-being.

3.2 Relationship Between Parental Upbringing and Peer Interaction

The results revealed a significant positive relationship between parental upbringing and peer interaction, with an r -value of 0.263 and a p -value of 0.004. All indicators of parental upbringing showed positive correlations with peer interaction, indicating that better parenting practices are associated with stronger peer relationships. This finding confirms that parental upbringing directly influences adolescents' social interactions. Parental involvement enhances peer relationships and academic engagement (Zhao, 2024), while emotional warmth improves peer acceptance and social adjustment (Ekimova et al., 2022). Parents also act as social coaches by guiding emotional expression and conflict resolution (Ladd, 2019). Positive parenting styles further strengthen peer interaction through social maturity (Purwati et al., 2022) and improve peer attachment while reducing negative behaviors (Llorca et al., 2017). These studies collectively support the conclusion that supportive and involved parenting fosters healthier peer relationships among adolescents.

4. Conclusion & Recommendations

The study found that the overall level of parental upbringing among senior high school learners was high, particularly in terms of parental support and facilitation of independence, indicating that learners receive sufficient guidance and encouragement for personal growth, although the quality of parent–child relationship was only average, suggesting a need for improved emotional closeness and communication. Similarly, the level of peer interaction was high, characterized by strong communication and trust, while low levels of alienation indicate that learners generally feel accepted and connected

within their peer groups. Furthermore, a significant positive relationship was established between parental upbringing and peer interaction, demonstrating that nurturing, supportive, and autonomy-promoting parenting contributes to the development of healthy peer relationships and overall social development among learners.

Based on the findings, students are encouraged to actively engage in positive interactions with both parents and peers to strengthen relationships and social well-being; parents should foster open communication, emotional closeness, consistent support, and independence to promote trust and confidence in their children; teachers should create collaborative and empathetic classroom environments while maintaining strong partnerships with parents to reinforce learners' social development; and future researchers should expand the study by including broader populations and utilizing longitudinal approaches to gain deeper insights into the relationship between parental upbringing and peer interaction.

The study is limited to the selected senior high school learners within a specific institution, which may restrict the generalizability of the findings to other populations or contexts, and it focuses only on the variables of parental upbringing and peer interaction without exploring other possible influencing factors.

Compliance with ethical standards

This study was conducted within an educational institution involving senior high school learners as respondents. Data were collected through the administration of questionnaires to gather information on parental upbringing and peer interaction. The research followed the procedures and guidelines of the institution where it was conducted.

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