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The psychological stress of secondary school students in Vietnam

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Abstract

The main goal of the research is to find out the stressful factors, levels of stress and possible interrelation between different factors in order to release stress influence. The research methodology is the self-assessment questionnaire and in-depth interview using Conners Comprehensive Behavior Rating Scales (Conners CBRS). The surveying results show that students are more stressed in the areas of studying, self-improving, body image and relationship with friends. In conclusion, when psychological stress arises, students use a variety of measures: accept and seek a coping solution; control and change emotion; try to avoid stress, etc.

Keywords: Psychological Stress, Secondary School, Vietnam.

El estrés psicológico de los estudiantes de secundaria en Vietnam

Resumen

El objetivo principal de la investigación es descubrir los factores estresantes, los niveles de estrés y la posible interrelación entre diferentes factores para liberar la influencia del estrés. La metodología de investigación es el cuestionario de autoevaluación y la entrevista en profundidad utilizando las escalas de calificación de comportamiento integral de Conners (Conners CBRS). Los resultados de la encuesta muestran que los estudiantes están más estresados en las áreas de estudio, superación personal, imagen corporal y relación con amigos. En conclusión, cuando surge el estrés psicológico, los estudiantes usan una variedad de medidas: aceptar y buscar una solución de afrontamiento; controlar y cambiar la emoción; intentar evitar el estrés, etc.

Palabras clave: estrés psicológico, escuela secundaria, Vietnam.

1. INTRODUCTION

The problem of psychological stress in modern society has been a popular issue in many fields of research and become everybody's concern. Nowadays even children have to meet new social requirements and challenges. For the age group of students, many researchers identify that the main stressful factors are issues related to school, studying, self-improving, social relations and self-image through the eyes of others. Therefore, psychological stress among children of different age groups very often plays a negative role in academic performance and quality of life as a result. The influence of

stress on the pupil is manifested in the following:

- Mood swings;
- Disturbed sleep;
- Bedwetting;
- Physical discomfort, including abdominal pain and headaches;
- Inability to concentrate, which dramatically reduces academic performance;
- The child becomes withdrawn or spends much time alone, avoids contact with both peers and relatives, including parents.

In Vietnam, this issue is quite topical for secondary school students due to many factors such as Confucian values, a long period of French occupation and chain of wars. For thousands of years, teachers have been put on a very high pedestal because of Confucian values unlike in European countries. The teacher-centered approach had preoccupied while in many other non-Asian countries they serve as facilitators of the study process rather than conductors. As a result, such an attitude brings very high family expectations from students and feeling of being guilty in case of academic failure. Meantime stress does not arise at one moment because it has a tendency of accumulation. Consequently, this process starts since children start to attend school. However, due to physiological specialties of puberty, the secondary school students of grade 6 - grade 9

belong to a particularly vulnerable group. In the Vietnamese system of education, these students usually are between 11 – 15 years old. Thus, further research of this topic is required and can be of particular importance for other Asian countries with similar religious and philosophical background as well as political and geographical issues. The research carried out by the authors was aimed at investigating the main stressful factors of secondary school students in Vietnam, finding out interrelation between stress levels and grade, gender, a number of concrete reasons and academic performance. It is believed that a number of measures should be taken in order to improve the current situation in Vietnamese school education.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

In English, there are two words about stress: strain and stress. With the verb meaning, the strain is making relationship bad; with the noun meaning, it is the tension. Stress is also tension, but implies more in intensity, over excessive length; emphasizes the physical and psychological damages caused by stress. By the time, researchers gradually go towards emphasizing the level of stress. At the first, the stress term is used in physics, when stretch or compress an object. Then, stress is transferred into the biology, under the meaning of emotional stress, related to physical health and spirituality. Hans Selye is a fairly comprehensive researcher on stress. In 1956, he discovered that stress as a general non-specific reaction with any impacting effect. The individual reacts to stimulation, threats in many ways: physiology, cognition, emotion, behavior. The response (Selye called the General Adaptation

Syndrome) is systemic and goes through three stages (three levels): Normal Resistance (alert level), Body Mobility to Respond with stress agents; high resistance, the body tries to cope or adapt to stress agents; exhaustion, loss of coping ability and leading to collapse.

Today, many researchers unify and develop further theoretical scores of Hans Selye. According to Canon (1932), stress is a negative emotional state that arises in response to events requiring effort over coping capacity or the ability of one person. Stress is also related to the satisfaction of individual needs or not (Arnold et al., 1950). However, stress is not a static emotional state, it is a process in which an individual reacts to events of the environment and psychology, perceived a threat or challenge (Gatchel & Baum, 1983). Stress does not arise from stimulation nor the individual's responses themselves, but rather the particular interaction between stimulation and individual that in the process of interaction individual feels to be threatened and over their ability to cope. Stress is directly related to individual perceptions and assessment of circumstances and existing stimulation. Situational awareness and stressful stimulation with individual potentials in physics, psychology and society are the cause of stress. If an individual is aware and trust in their ability to control potentially threatening events, it is likely possible to reduce stress (Beck et al., 1985). There are many factors causing stress. According to Gatchel & Baum (1983), Canon (1932), it is possible to combine the common factors causing stress normally into three groups: factors causing the fluctuating stress are sudden changes, fluctuation such as earthquakes, cyclones or serious accidents. Factors causing individual stress are important events in personal life (Epikhin et al., 2018).

Researchers have collected a catalogue and classified impacts of outstanding events to the individual that can create stress, from the wounds from the death of the relative or friend to stimulation related to minor legal violations or other regulation (Holmes et al., 1967; Cohen et al., 1993). The fundamental stress agents are those that cause discomforts such as delay, traffic jam, noise, etc. Although these agents have small intensity, they are often prolonged and popular in daily life (Andersen et al., 1994). The study of Chamberlain & Zika (1990) scored out that in daily life, decreasing quarrel would reduce stress and health would be improved. For the age group of students, many researchers identify that the main stress factors are issues related to school, studying, improving, social relations and image in the eyes of other people. Strategies for relieving and responding to stress are also set out by researchers. In general, there are three general strategies: focus on stress; focus on emotions and focus on avoiding stress. According to Bandura, human responses to stressful situations and the stress volume as experienced are directly related to belief in the effectiveness of their actions. Stress can be reduced by increasing human confidence in self-efficacy - their appreciation of coping skills (Bandura, 1982). In addition, social support can also help individuals cope effectively with stress.

Meantime the issue of stress is increasing among all age groups and children in particular. Many scientists offer different approaches, instruments and items to assess children's anxiety and depression Vernberg EM, Hambrick EP, Cho B, Hendrickson ML have studied positive psychology and disaster mental health offering' strategies for working with children and adolescents. Yeh, Lester has examined the effect of stress coping techniques in sports. Thus, in addition to studies of

stress in other fields such as psychological stress and disaster response strategies (Hao, 2014); Research on stress in the field of sports Huong (2017), there were many studies to clarify the problem that is causing concern for the whole society as mentioned above. In Vietnam there are many works dedicated to academic stress and coping strategies for teachers and students (Hue, 2011); academic stressful events and coping strategies for students at high school (Hang, 2013, 2014). Thi Thu Ba Pham has examined study burden among students in the high school of Vietnam. Dat Tan Nguyen, Christine Dedding, Tam Thi Pham, Pamela Wright and Joske Bunders took an attempt to conduct a cross-sectional study to find out the factors leading to depression, anxiety and suicidal ideation among Vietnamese secondary school students. However, there is a research on academic stress of students at secondary school, although this is a very vulnerable age group due to psychological stress in their activities (study) and relationships. This work contributes to supplement for above shortage.

3. METHODOLOGY

The study aimed to investigate the levels of psychological stress among students at a secondary school in studying; relationship with family members and friends, self-improvement and body image. Some fields most likely lead to stress at school age group. The surveying sample consisted of 1016 students from grade 6 to grade 9 at 6 secondary schools in Hanoi, Hai Phong and Thanh Hoa. Each local province chooses one school located in the inner city and one in the rural area. Selected schools for the survey are normal schools in the local area. The structure is as

follows (fig. 1, 2, 3): Grade 6: 25.9%, Grade 7: 25.3%, Grade 8: 24.9%, Grade 9: 23.9%; female students: 48.6%, male students: 51.4%; number of students with excellent grades: 35.3%, number of students with good grades and lower: 64.7%. Above sample, structure is in line with the real structure in the practice at the current secondary schools.

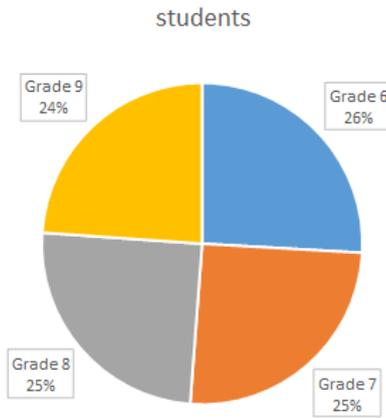


Figure 1. Number of students from different classes

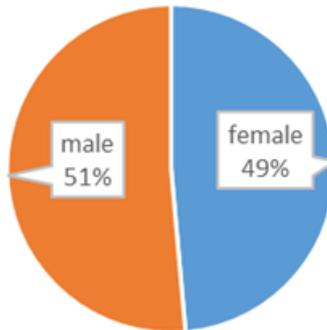


Figure 2. Number of male and female students

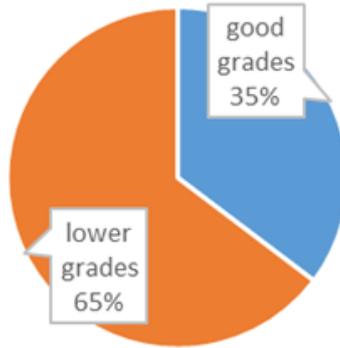


Figure 3. Number of students with good and lower grades

Main researching method is self-assessment of students' levels at secondary schools combining with an in-depth interview. Self-assessment consists of 57 items, structured into six topics. In which, there are 5 topics associated with studying, improvement, relationship with family members, with friends and body image. Each topic has 10 items. The remaining topic includes 7 items on how to release the individual when the stress occurs. The items in the self-assessment scale are based on references to the items in the General Connors of Behavior Scale (CBRS-SR), which have been partially vietnamized by the author group (Huong, 2017). Each item in the self-assessment scale is divided into 5 levels according to the corresponding score: almost does not occur in the last time (1 month ago): 0 scores; very rarely occurs: 1 score; sometimes happens: 2 scores; occur frequently: 3 scores; very often: 4 scores. The determination of stress levels is based on the average score and the corresponding average score deviation. The percentage rate of an experimental number at levels is the percentage of respondents in the options of each item. Studying, self-improvement, relationship with

family, friends and body image in the eyes of others are typical fields of students at secondary schools. This is also field of appearing psychological stress at different level. Srveying results about this issue from 1016 students from grade 6 to grade 9 at secondary schools in 3 different provinces: Hanoi, Hai Phong, Thanh Hoa are collected in table 1.

Table 1: General overview of psychological stress levels of students at secondary school

No	Field	Score		Rate %				
		Average score	Standard deviation score	0	1	2	3	4
1	Studying activities	1,77	0,78	0,6	18,9	34,7	42,1	3,7
2	Relationship with family	0,91	0,87	15,6	28,6	48,4	6,2	1,2
3	Relationship with friends	1,34	0,83	7,4	12,3	38,0	38,0	4,3
4	Body image	1,25	0,76	6,1	52,5	27,4	10,4	3,6
5	Self-improvement	1,66	0,72	1,8	26,3	40,2	30,5	1,2
6	General	1,42	0,61	0,7	44,3	45,6	8,6	0,8

In general, the psychological stress level of the sample group was not high. The evidence is that the average score on the stress is 1.42 / 4 score, rarely and sometimes in the middle period, and the average score deviation is not significant (0.61). The majority of students are very low (44.3%) and sometimes (45.6%) are stressed. Thus, in general, students at a secondary school in the survey had psychological stress at different levels, but mostly at low levels. The number of regularly and very frequently stressed students in all fields is about 9.4%. In particular, the number of frequently stressed students is only accounted for 0.8% (8/1016 surveyed students). Among of very frequently stressed 8 students, there are two students at grade 8 (1 student

suffer from pressure in studying and parents 'control, not free to play with friends and other activities, 1 student due to relationship with friends, weak studying, control by teachers and parents); 2 students at grade 7 (one is stressed because of being too fat, fear of being impaired, leading to be passive in relationships and other activities and one student due to insecure health, often worries about study, self-improvement and relationship); 1 student at grade 9 due to conflicts in friendship with friends, resulting to psychological trauma, impacting other fields; 3 students in grade 6, in which 2 students speak with a lisp and stammer that affects studying, communication and individual image; 1 student has difficult status of family, then appears unconfident signs in the activities and communication. However, all eight students are stressed at a very regular level in all fields, no student is so stressed that they could not study or have to deal with deep intervention. In particular, in the study, the average stress score is 1.77/4, the highest one in the surveyed fields. A number of frequently and very frequently stressed students in the study also holds quite a high rate of 45.8%.

It should be noted that the survey period is in February to March of years 2016-2017, at the time between the second semesters of the school year. This time is considered relaxing period, the study is not under the high and direct pressure to the student as compared to the end of the first semester, or at the end of the study year, during the intense review and examinations. However, 42.1% of students surveyed at frequently appeared stress levels. The above results may also consider that the study is the field, which is highly consisting of stress for students. After studying, self-improvement has the second

highest average stress score (1.66 scores), the rate of regularly and very regularly stressed students is 31.7%. Thus, studying and self-improvement are two fields that can easily lead to stress to students at a secondary school in the above-mentioned provinces of Vietnam. The following two fields are related to friendships and body image in the eyes of others. The less psychological stress field of students at secondary school is the relationship with family members. This surveying result is consistent with the practice and psychological characteristics of students at secondary school. These are the main fields of activity, holding much in their minds and energies. The results are also consistent with those researches of Babra et al. (2004).

3.1. Psychological stress by comparative parameters

In order to have a clearer picture of the psychological stress of students at secondary school, the surveying results were analyzed according to the grade, gender, academic performance and self-improvement of students.

3.1.1. Psychological stress according to the grade of students

Education at secondary school from grade 6 to grade 9 corresponds to teenage age group. The question is whether there is a difference in the psychological stress of students at different times during this age group?

Table 2. Psychological stress of students at secondary school according to grade

No	Fields having stress	Average stress score of grades			
		Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8	Grade 9
1	Study	1,73	1,70	1,71	1,95
2	Body image	1,34	1,18	1,20	1,45
3	Relationship with family	0,96	1,02	1,06	0,95
4	Relationship with friends	1,48	1,14	1,29	1,31
5	Self - improvement	1,75	1,45	1,58	1,85
Total		1,46	1,38	1,37	1,42

There are similarities in the four groups of grade, and in general for the whole total sample in all fields of activities and social relations. There is stress at different levels. Studying, self-improvement and relations with friends are more stressful than other fields. Relations with family members are less stressful. Among grades, there is the difference in stress level. Students at grade 6 and grade 9 have higher stress scores than students at grade 7 and 8. In which, grade 9 has the highest score. If to rank the stress score by increasing of levels we will have grade 7 → grade 8 → grade 9 → grade 6. For students at grade 6, the study, improvement and relationship with friends are fields having high stress. The cause may be that this is the first grade, therefore, the study self-improvement and relationships with friends are new fields which are different much from the studying environment in elementary school. Students are confused, not yet adapted. So, it leads to stress. For students at grade 9, this is the last grade; studying and ethics improvement are the most important tasks, holding most of the time and energy. So, these are the two fields where students are most stressed. Besides, keeping their self-image in the eyes of friends and

teachers is also a priority field, so there is also a lot of stress. This reflects correct state of mind of students at the last grade in secondary school and psychological characteristics of children after puberty age. Body image and psychological qualities in other people's eyes are of great interest to their point of view. They care much about it and improve it frequently. For students in grades 7 and 8, the main task is to study and improve, then this is the more stressful field to students than in other fields, but compared to grade 6 and grade 9, the stress pressure is lower.

3.1.2. Psychological stress according to gender

In the study results conducted by Do Thi Le Hang, female students at the high school had higher stress scores than male students, especially in the field of study and relationship with friends (Hang, 2013). The question is whether it is true for students at secondary school.

No	Stressful fields	Stress score of female students		Stress score of male students		p<0.05
		Average score	Standard deviation score	Average score	Standard deviation score	
1	Study	1,81	0,81	1,74	0,72	
2	Body image	1,34	0,81	1,19	0,73	0.041
3	Relationship with family	0,96	0,60	0,87	0,55	
4	Relationship with friends	1,47	0,83	1,23	0,81	0.027
5	Self - improvement	1,83	0,69	1,52	0,75	0.006
Total		1,53	0,60	1,32	0,58	0.042

Table 3. Psychological stress of students at secondary school according to gender

The mean scores of psychological stress among female students at the secondary school were significantly higher than that of male students ($p < 0.05$). The mean score difference of female students is similar to that of male students. It indicates that girls are more stressed than male students. The results of the average stress score for female students and male students in the classes (Table 3) reinforce this score of view.

Table 4. Psychological stress of female and male students from grade 6 to grade 9

Class	Stress score of female students		Stress score of male students	
	Average score	Difference	Average score	Difference
Grade 6	1,62	0,63	1,36	0,64
Grade 7	1,47	0,65	1,23	0,60
Grade 8	1,49	0,56	1,24	0,50
Grade 9	1,52	0,58	1,31	0,58

In all 4 groups (grades 6, 7, 8, 9) as surveyed, the average stress scores for female students were higher than for male students. Thus, data in tables 3 and 4 show that, in the study, self-improvement and social relations, female students at the secondary school are more stressed than male students. In the further analysis, in all fields of the survey, the female student's average psychological stress scores are higher than the average score for male students. There were three fields in which the average stress score of females students (statistically significant) is higher compared to the average scores of male students: self-improvement (1.83 scores versus 1.52 scores), relations with friends (1.47 scores versus

1.23 scores) and body image (1.34 vs 1.19), especially in the field of improving personal qualities. The remaining two fields: studying and family relations, the average stress score of female students is higher than the male students, but the difference was not statistically significant that means negligible. This shows the gender characteristics of students at secondary school. At this age group, in all activities, female students are more sensitive, more stressed, more anxious about work and themselves than male students, especially those fields related to psycho-social development such as taking care of the body image in the eyes of others or individual's training and improvement of the psychological-social qualities. On the other hand, female students are influenced by gender culture in family education in Vietnam. Since very little, female children were taken care, improved by parents about attitudes and behaviors on gender. The constant and frequent reminding by parents about such feminine behaviors may be the fundamental factors of stress for them.

Female student L.M.N, at grade 9 (record of interview No 32) – female students are usually stressed in the view of body image and personnel improvement, shared: My mother usually reminds me to take food because she is afraid that I do not have enough good health to study. This makes me worry about my body although the study at the final grade is very stressful. Meanwhile, P.K.L. one female student at grade 8 (record of interview No 21) confided that: I am always concerned and worried about personality and style, behavior with everyone, especially to adults, because I am always reminded that I am an insipid person. The state of mind of N and L is relatively popular among female students at secondary schools during the surveying time.

3.1.3. Psychological stress according to studying results of students at secondary school

The results show that studying is the most stressful field to students at the secondary school as surveyed. Whether students with good academic performance results have a higher stress state than students with normal academic performance results?

Table 5: Psychological stress of students at secondary school according to studying results

NO	Stressful fields	Stress score of normal student		Stress score of good student		p<0.05
		Average score	Difference	Average score	Difference	
1	Study	1,88	0,51	1,71	0,74	0,047
2	Body image	1,01	0,70	1,31	0,75	0,009
3	Relationship with family	0,92	0,50	1,06	0,66	
4	Relationship with friends	1,62	1,01	1,30	0,83	0,017
5	Self-improvement	1,61	0,68	1,73	0,76	
	Total	1,43	0,49	1,44	0,59	

If take the performance results of the first semester of the school year 2016-2017 as a classification criterion, possibly the surveyed student is a group of good students (average grade in the subjects and activities in the program is $\geq 8,0$ scores / 10, in which Math, Vietnamese, English not less than 6.5 scores / 10) and group of the normal students. The surveying results show that the average stress score between the two groups are the same, but in each of fields, the differences are clear and

significant, especially in studying, in the view of the body image and in the relationship with friends. In the field of study, the average stress score of normal student group is higher (statistically significant, with $p < 0.05$) than the good student group, but the average score difference is smaller. That proves that for many normal students, studying is more stressful than for good students. Concurrently, in the group of good students, many of students are not under high pressure, but many of them are also stressed in the study and evenly stressed at high levels.

In the field of body image, good student groups have higher average stress scores than a normal student group. In fact, physical health seems to be a psychological problem for many good students in the group. Many of these student group do not have a physical problem, but the impacts of anxiety, excessive and prolonged care from family also creates stress for them. The third field is quite significantly difference between normal student group and good student group. The normal student group had higher average stress scores and average score deviations higher than those of good student group. This shows that the normal student group is more stressed, are dispersed than good students. The observing results from meetings with students about the topic what has troubled you recently in some of the surveyed classrooms show that there is a clear gap. While many normal students share their concern about relationships, dealing with friends while good students rarely share this problem. They feel that their friends are natural, comfortable and cheerful. For these students, it seems that good studying outcomes are a psychological assurance, helps them to be less anxious, stressed in making friends. This phenomenon is quite clear in the first and the last grade.

4. RESULTS

The survey results show that studying, self-improvement and relationships with friends are three fields of greater stress to students at a secondary school in Vietnam. The problem is that in those fields, which factors often lead to stress to students.

4.1. Factors of student's psychological stress in the study

Table 6: Stress signs in the study of students at secondary school

No	Signs	Score		Rate % at levels				
		Average score	Standard deviation score	0	1	2	3	4
1	Feel shy to talk about study	1,87	1,30	20,7	39,6	15,9	9,8	14,0
2	Feel stressed and tired when think of study	1,86	1,16	28,7	41,5	10,4	14,6	4,9
3	Often starts if anyone talks about study	1,54	1,36	43,3	19,5	15,9	12,2	9,1
4	Have little time to think of other business besides study	1,49	1,11	32,3	33,5	22,0	7,3	4,9
5	Usually dreams about lessons in the class	1,16	1,21	62,8	17,7	7,9	4,3	7,3
6	Studying contents are difficult with high volume	2,30	1,37	15,9	26,2	19,5	18,9	19,5
7	Study is very stressful because of not yet realizing values of the study	2,07	1,46	39,0	25,0	11,0	9,8	15,2
8	Off school is considered as release	2,10	1,39	20,7	34,8	17,7	7,9	18,9
9	Always concerned because studying results are not likely expected	2,69	1,44	11,6	21,3	19,5	1,6	36,0
10	Study is as programmed machine, not too stressful	1,54	1,43	45,1	20,7	12,8	7,9	13,4

There are two main scores about the factors of stress signs in the student's study as surveyed: Firstly, it is easy to see that signs of

stress in the study of students at the secondary school are plentiful. However, the external pressures of studying have a relatively high average stress score; the number of students under the frequent or very frequent state is also quite high. In particular, the pressure from academic achievements has the highest average stress score and many students stay at very frequent level (2.69 score/ 4); next is the feeling of difficult studying content (2.30 score), the studying is very stressful because of not yet realizing the values and attractiveness of the studying (2.07 score), when to be allowed to be absent from school, it is considered release (2.10 score). On the other hand, the factors of internal stress signs in the studying and from students have a much lower average stress score. There is less time to think of other things than studying (1.49 / 4 score); dream about the lessons in the classroom (1.16 score); studying as a natural habit, not too stressful (1.54 score). The above results show that, in general, the pressure leading to the stress of students as investigated in the studying primarily come from the outside of the studying, from expectations for academic achievements and from academic considerations as a responsibility, obligation to implement.

Secondly, the average stress score deviation of all the factors of stress sign is all high (at least 1.1 scores), reflecting a clear division among the surveyed students. Specifically, the pressure from academic achievements is 36.0% at frequent and very frequent stress, but also up to 32.9% almost or very little stress from this pressure. The pressure from the experiences of difficult studying content is 38.4% at frequent and very frequent stress levels, while 42.1% at almost or

rarely stress. This shows that the field of study is a source which easily causes psychological stress for students, but not to all. Many students do not consider this is a stressful field to them.

4.2. Factors of psychological stress sign in self-improvement of students

The improvement of personality is the second most stressful field after studying field. However, for personal improvement, students not only have awareness, attitudes and behaviors, but also know how to evaluate the external impacting factors on the process of their improvement. Which of the above factors is the source causing stress to surveyed students?

Table 6: Factors of stress sign in the personality improvement of students at secondary school

No	Factors of sign	Score		Rate % at levels				
		Average score	Standard deviation score	0	1	2	3	4
1	Reduce truth because of shortage of adult's model in the life	1,82	1,23	40,2	31,1	12,2	9,8	6,7
2	Always concerned and seek ideal person	1,15	1,24	56,1	22,6	9,8	3,0	8,5
3	Very worry about indifferent, selfish attitude and current school violence	2,45	1,57	23,2	15,9	16,5	12,2	32,3
4	Very concerned about school	2,31	1,60	26,2	17,7	15,9	9,1	31,1

	sexual abuse and protective skills							
5	Stress in the fight against negative effects from movies, video games	1,91	1,41	35,4	26,8	13,4	10,4	14,0
6	Be anxious and concerned about your personality, intellect, and energy	2,28	1,40	19,5	20,1	23,8	16,5	20,1
7	Feel concerned and worry about later career	1,78	1,50	31,7	19,5	17,1	12,8	18,9
8	Feel sad and suffering when adults remind carelessness and insipid	1,55	1,36	42,1	22,6	12,8	13,4	9,1
9	Often dream about unemployment, homeless, poverty and hungry	0,60	0,73	80,5	14,0	1,8	2,4	1,2
10	Stress about impolite behavior of some teachers to students	1,25	1,23	50,0	26,2	9,8	6,7	7,3

Recent popular negative phenomena in the society and in schools such as violence, heedless, emotionless or sexual assault have been the problems in Vietnam's social life in recent years (Communist Party Vietnam, 2016) and these are factors that affect the students at secondary school. The evidence is that the average stress scores of these factors are quite high (2.45 score/ 4, 2.31 score) and more than 40% of the students as surveyed are frequent and very frequent anxious about the harmful effects of these negative factors. In addition, factors such as reduced confidence due to the lack of exemplary behavior of some adults in the life, stress in the fight against negative effects from film and video games are also external factors causing psychological stress for students. In

addition to the external negative factors causing stress to students, there are also internal factors causing stress to children: anxiety and worry about personality, intellect and energy (2.28 scores); anxiety, stress in thinking about the future career (1.78 scores); sad, miserable by being reminded by adults about awkwardness and insipid (1.55 scores/4). Factors impacting the future, improvement of a living ideal such as building ideal model or career orientation in the future, are also stressful factors to students as surveyed. But these factors are not outstanding ones for students at this age group.

4.3. Factors of psychological stress sign in the relationship with friends of students at secondary school

Appearing and developing relationships with friends is a new development trend in the psychology of students at secondary school. Students at this age group particularly attach importance to friendships with their own rules. Therefore, this is also a field which easily causes psychological stress to them.

Table 7: Factors of psychological sign in the relationship with friends of students at secondary school

No	Contents	Score		Rate %				
		Average score	Standard deviation score	0	1	2	3	4
1	Stressful and tired when think of friend's attitude to themselves	0,87	0,96	66,5	18,3	10,4	1,8	3,0
2	Stressful because your relationship is not favorable	1,10	1,18	59,8	15,9	14,0	4,9	5,5
3	Feel tired and stressful about the	1,09	1,15	56,7	24,4	8,5	4,3	6,1

	way that friends treat							
4	Always afraid of making friends be wound and unsatisfied	2,17	1,44	20,7	27,4	17,1	13,4	21,3
5	Frequently dream about friends	1,18	1,10	56,7	21,3	14,0	3,0	4,9
6	Always think that friends do not understand and not yet expect	1,65	1,43	40,9	20,1	15,9	9,8	13,4
7	Always afraid that friends are not confident and not share with	1,86	1,49	37,2	16,5	14,6	16,5	15,2
8	Usually think much of relationship with friends	1,45	1,33	45,1	22,6	14,0	9,1	9,1
9	Feel sad because for friends rather than friends for myself	1,27	1,41	52,4	19,5	8,5	7,3	12,2
10	Feel sad because thinking of fewer friends than other people	0,78	0,84	69,5	18,3	7,9	3,7	0,6

The field of friendship with friends of students at secondary school students has less psychological stress in studying and improving personality. Stressful pressure in relationship with friends of surveyed students can be divided into three groups: The most stressful pressure is from the feeling about attitude and behavior towards friends, such as the fear of making friends hurt, dissatisfy (2.17 scores/4; 34.75% frequent and very frequent stress); fear that friends do not trust and do not share with themselves (1.86 scores, 31.7% in the state of frequent and very frequent worried) or always think that friends do not understand and not respect themselves (1.65 scores). The requirements of attitudes and behaviors with friends of

surveyed students are also stressful for students at secondary school, but not largely and not heavily. Expressions like feeling tired, stressed about how friends treat or feeling sad because for friends rather than friends for themselves or feel stressed, tired when thinking about friend's attitude towards themselves, with low average stress score.

In addition, anxiety about friendship, companionship as well as stress factors to students at a secondary school as surveyed often think much about the relationship with friends or stress by unfavorable friendship. The middle stress score deviation in the relationship with friends of students at the secondary school as surveyed is relatively large. This shows that, similarly to the field of studying and training, the stress in the relationship with friends has high dispersion between students. A significant amount of stress is frequent or very frequent, but not many students experience such stress. Dispersing among students about stress in studying, training and relationships with friends show unstable psychological characteristics, there are changes in different directions in the teenage group. This needs a great concern from family, school and society.

4.4. Measures to release psychological stress of students at secondary school

The last issue in this study is that when psychological stress arises, which measures are chosen by students at secondary school to release?

Table 8. Regular measures used by students to release stress in studying, training and relationship with the society

No	Measure	Performance score		Rate % of students perform at levels				
		Average score	Standard deviation score	0	1	2	3	4
1	Accept and find out solution for situation	1,25	1,42	41.7	20.3	13.6	60.1	18.3
2	Train active skills to cope with all types of stress	0,78	1.26	67.7	10.4	9.1	5.5	7.3
3	Walk to release	2,36	1,33	16.5	23.8	11.6	13.4	34.8
4	Watch television, read book, sing karaoke, play games	1,42	1,47	48.2	11.6	11.6	9.1	19.5
5	Seat lonely and quietly	1,31	1,41	51.2	18.9	11.6	5.5	12.8
6	Play sport	1,25	1.49	48.8	12.8	15.9	7.9	14.6
7	Share with friends	1,54	1,07	15.2	39.0	28.7	11.0	6.1

Remarks: Level 0: Almost does not use in recent time (one month ago): 0 score; level 1: rarely use: 1 score; level 2: sometimes use: 2 scores; level 3: frequently use: 3 scores; level 4: very frequently use: 4 scores. Strategies for coping with stress were described by the researchers such as focusing on stress; focusing on emotions and stress avoidance which are used by students at the secondary school at different levels. Some measures to avoid stress are used by more students. For example: walk for release (2.36 scores/4, 48.2% frequently and very frequently used); watch TV, read books, sing karaoke, play games etc. (1.42 scores, 28.6% frequently and very frequently used). Measures to control and release emotions are also

used, but not popular as much as stress avoidance: Talk and share with friends (1.54 scores, 17.1% frequently and very frequently); seat alone, calm and think (1.31 scores, 18.3% frequently and very frequently used). Active measures to control situations and positively adapt to stressful situations are also used by students, but at low level: play sport to improve capacity of coping, adapting with stress and accepting and finding out solution, especially studying and practicing skills of identifying, responding to, and adapting with psychological stress occurring in the life. This sets out problems in the education of skills to coping and adapting with stress for students to school, the family, and the society.

5. CONCLUSIONS

Psychological stress is a form of human response to changeable stimulation; negative emotional state appearing in response to events that require efforts over the coping capacity or ability of one person. If psychological stress reaches over the threshold, the individual suffers from a collapse, resulting in a series of psychological and physical sequences, evenly death. For secondary school students in Vietnam, the individual's studying, training and body image as well as the relationship with family, friends, teachers and other social relations are the potential fields that lead to psychological stress to students. The surveying results of students at secondary school show that students are stressed in the fields of studying, training, body image and social relationships. In which, studying, training, relationships with friends

and maintenance of body image in the eye of others are fields which contain much stress, especially studying and training. However, the stress level is not high. In other words, most students at the secondary school as surveyed occasionally appear stress. A number of frequently and very frequently stressed students in all fields is not much.

The analysis of the surveying results shows that female students have a higher stress level than male students in most fields in school. Between good students and normal students, there is a difference in the level of stress in some fields of the study, recognition of self-image and peer relationships. Students in the first grade (grade 6) and the last grade (grade 9) often have more stress than middle grades. When psychological stress arises, students use a variety of measures: accept and seek a coping solution; control and change emotion; try to avoid stress, etc. Of these, situational and passive measures are used much, while measures to cope actively with stress, accept to cope with stress and find solutions are less commonly used. This raises the issue of the education of coping skills with stress for students in schools, family and society.

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