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Published in the Slovak Republic  
European Journal of Contemporary Education  
E-ISSN 2305-6746  
2020, 9(1): 102-113  
DOI: 10.13187/ejced.2020.1.102  
[www.ejournal1.com](http://www.ejournal1.com)

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## Many Social Problems in Vietnam Stem from the Communication Problems among High School Students While No School Counseling Support is Provided – the Urgent Need of Forming School Counseling Model for Vietnamese High School Students

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### Abstract

Many social problems in Vietnam stem from communication conflicts among high school students. Over the years, teachers, educators, and school counselors have been working hard to solve this problem, but it has not been effective. On the other hand, Vietnam does not yet have a general school counseling model that can solve these communication problems. By using the questionnaire, as well as conducting interviews with participants (students and teachers), we found that the communication problems of high school students are primarily based on the weakness in emotional management and overexpressing personal ego. Besides, gender, education, and family background also have some impact on communication problems and the need for communication problem counseling. This result is an essential basis for Vietnamese to build a school counseling model to effectively support the reduction of social problems where perpetrators and victims are high school students.

**Keywords:** communication problems, school counseling, school counseling model, Vietnamese high school students.

### 1. Introduction

In high school age (including both lower and upper secondary school age in Vietnam), communication problems (CP) at teenagers have always been interested by many researchers (Hoag, Burlingame, 1997; Lapan, 2001; Lefevre, 2017; Oanh, 2006; Rizzo et al., 2019). Moreover, the main activities at lower secondary school students are socializing and making friends (Son,

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2011b); this strengthens, even more, the role of communication activity throughout their personality formation and development.

Many types of research showed that students were facing many mental difficulties in communication in selecting for the values of the time, in socializing relationships (with family, friends, society) and also difficulties formed within the psychological development of age. Therefore, the need for help and orientation to solve mental problems in communication at students was very high (Binh, 2016). Also, common social problems in Vietnam today, such as school violence (Son, 2015), cyberbullying (Le et al., 2017), body shaming (Nguyen, Nguyen, 2017) and anesthesia (Nguyen, Kieu, 2017) mainly occurred in high school age. According to author Son (2018), the causes of these social phenomena stemmed from the communication conflicts that arose in students, thereby creating disagreements and violence. Besides, Cornell's study also showed that the limitations and lack of respect in communication were the leading causes of high school students (HS) who were prone to school violence and bullying problems (Cornell, 2017). In this study, the authors pointed out the need for a school counselor as a companion, giving psychological support, and guiding students to practice effective communication. However, in Vietnam, school counselors were still unfamiliar with this field and did not have appropriate assistance due to the lack of a school counseling model and the school counseling's career qualification (Hong et al., 2018).

School counseling (SC) is the process of mentally helping, supporting students, parents, or teachers for self-awareness, discovering their potentials and how their behaviors affect others (Chi, 2011; Duc, 2009), simultaneously helping them choose the ultimate solution in the developmental orientation plan when needed. SC about CP is one of the main SC tasks carried out in lower and upper secondary schools (Duc, 2014). There were many issues worth concerning about communication to Vietnamese school counselors between HS and their family, school and the society, as mentioned in research by author Son (2017): conflicts in communication leading to self-destructive behaviors of lower secondary school students; by author Huy and Thao (2016): school violence due to lack of communication knowledge; by author Thien, Hoang and Vu (2018): self-isolating behaviors because failing to communicate with others. Although the Vietnamese school counselors knew about this reality, they could not support students in thoroughly solving the problems. The current Vietnamese school counseling only stopped at the filtering and prevention level (Thi, 2017), and could not be deeply intervened due to the shortage of human resources as well as the insufficient professional capacity of the school counselors and the inconsistencies in school counseling model (Hong et al., 2018).

Therefore, the study on CP and the need for communication counseling (NCC) at HS has been processed based on practical and theoretical evidence about the main activities of their age. These findings served as evidence for the need to focus on counseling about communication problems at high school age to prevent and intervene the continuing social problems when forming school counseling models (SCM) carried out across Vietnam.

### **The standard communication problems of high school students**

Vietnamese HS includes two age groups as lower secondary school students (12-15 years old, 6<sup>th</sup> grade to 9<sup>th</sup> grade) and upper secondary school students (16-18 years old, 10<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> grade) (Son, 2011a). Communication is a vital activity of these two ages because this is the period of puberty; students become more 'adult,' more independent, do not want to be dependent on their family, and tend to be 'near to friends, faraway from parent' (Nga, 2014). Their ego and personal viewpoints are gradually strengthened and formed (Royster et al., 2015). Not only that, but their emotional life is also incredibly erratic and precarious (Erford, 2016). Therefore, it is easy for them to disagree and conflict with surrounding relationships if lacking the right orientation from family and school.

According to Drury et al. (1998), there were three main target groups in adolescents' communication: family members, friends, and non-family adults (professional or official). Adolescents often communicated very well with friends and non-family members, who neglected the family relationships. They tended to communicate more to the satisfaction of outsiders, and that reduced the quality of family relationships.

Williams and Garrett's study found that with different communication groups such as peers, young adults, and elderly adults, adolescents had reasonable adjustments in cognitive, emotional, and behavior inappropriate communication with each group (Williams, Garrett, 2012). This result

reflected that in adolescent communication, contradictions and conflicts could always occur, but if adequately adjusted and supported by the education forces, it could be solved entirely.

In Vietnam, author Son (2011b) had studied and found that Vietnamese HS often had difficulty expressing their emotions and using language/non-verbal language appropriate to the context when communicating with different people from family, school, and society. Especially in communication with peers, many social problems such as school violence and body shaming have arisen when problem-solving skills and school behavior communication have not been paid attention in the educational program, as well as the SC activities.

Taking an communication perspective, this study inherited and extended previous researches about the common communication problems of high school age into 15 problems:

- Controlling the state of emotion during communication (P1);
- Controlling verbal and non-verbal language during communication (P2);
- Calmly claiming point of view (P3);
- Cooperate with friends (P4);
- Establishing and maintaining relationships with friends (P5);
- Starting a conversation and attracting friends during communication (P6);
- Confident and comfortable during communication with others (P7);
- Making a good impression during communication (P8);
- Understanding others during communication (P9);
- Courtesy in behaviors, dressing, and speech (P10);
- Proper greeting for each social relationship (P11);
- Knowing how to communicate with siblings and younger acquaintances (P12);
- Showing care towards other family members (P13);
- Proper communication with family members (P14);
- Understanding parents' expectation (P15).
- 

### **3. Methodology**

#### **Research Hypothesis**

H<sub>01</sub>: HS in Vietnam did not have any CP (H<sub>01a</sub>). HS's communication problems were within acceptable levels and easily adjusted. Therefore, Vietnamese HS did not need to counsel about CP (H<sub>01b</sub>).

H<sub>02</sub>: There was no correlation among gender in students' CP (H<sub>02a</sub>) as well as the NCC (H<sub>02b</sub>).

H<sub>03</sub>: There was no correlation among the education level in students' CP (H<sub>03a</sub>) as well as the NCC (H<sub>03b</sub>).

H<sub>04</sub>: There was no correlation among living conditions (family background) in students' CP (H<sub>04a</sub>) as well as the NCC (H<sub>04b</sub>).

H<sub>05</sub>: There was no correlation between the CP and the NCC of HS.

#### **Study design**

To find the current situation of CP and the NCC of HS, the primary method was using questionnaires. The questionnaire met the following survey criteria:

- The questionnaire needed to have under 30 items for the situation survey, to avoid excessive length and information.

- Participants were HS from 6 grade to 12 grade (13 to 18 of age), including both genders.

- Participants had to commit participation until the end of the research to guarantee the data's consistency.

The designed questionnaire included:

Participant's information, including questions about necessary information: gender, year of birth, school, level, grade, and the people they were currently living.

The questionnaire contains a system of questions to collect data about the current situation of CP and NCC of HS. Questions about the current situation of CP of HS included 23 items; questions about the current situation of NCC of HS included 22 items. After the pilot survey, 15 items that did not match the communication problems of Vietnamese HS were eliminated; the final questionnaire was established with 30 items with the reliability  $\alpha = .865$ . Answers for all items were designed as a 5-point Likert scale (Boone, Boone, 2012) for students to choose.

Besides, in-depth interviews were also conducted in this study to learn about the seriousness of social problems arising from communication conflicts and HS' NCC. We interviewed HS, teachers (T), school counselors (SCor), and educators (E) about HS' CP and NCC issues. These participants were also selected randomly from the above participating schools. The collected quotes were used to make more precise and prove the urgent need to form SCM in Vietnam.

**Sample selection**

Participants were selected randomly from 4 lower secondary schools and three upper secondary schools in Vietnam, with a total of 1565 students. After removing unsatisfactory responses, the total number of participants was 1200, which was distributed as shown in the below table (see Table 1):

**Table 1.** An overview of participants

	Content	N	%
Gender	Male	449	37.4
	Female	751	62.6
Education level	Lower secondary	726	60.5
	Upper secondary	474	39.5
Living condition (Currently living with)	Both father and mother	1026	85.5
	Father	35	2.9
	Mother	52	4.3
	Relatives/Others	87	7.3

**Data analysis**

Answers for questions were examined on a 5-point Likert scale and coded as following: Point 1=1, point 2=2, point 3=3, point 4=4, point 5=5. The points were determined, as shown in the below table (see Table 2):

**Table 2.** Collected data coding

Range	Data coding
1 to 1.80	Not hard at all/ Unnecessary
1.81 to 2.61	Slightly hard/Unnecessary
2.62 to 3.42	Moderate /Optional
3.43 to 4.23	Very hard/Necessary
4.24 to 5	Extremely hard/Absolutely necessary

**4. Results**

**The worth concerning the situation of Vietnamese HSC's CP**

The result in surveying the participant about the communication-related problems of Vietnamese HSC was presented in Table 3 below:

**Table 3.** The CP and the NCC of Vietnamese HS

Items	Levels										M		SD		R		
	CP <sub>1</sub>	NCC <sub>1</sub>	CP <sub>2</sub>	NCC <sub>2</sub>	CP <sub>3</sub>	NCC <sub>3</sub>	CP <sub>4</sub>	NCC <sub>4</sub>	CP <sub>5</sub>	NCC <sub>5</sub>	M <sub>CP</sub>	M <sub>NCC</sub>	SD <sub>CP</sub>	SD <sub>NCC</sub>	R <sub>CP</sub>	R <sub>NCC</sub>	
P <sub>1</sub>	N	301	218	161	208	496	252	150	294	92	228	2.64	3.09	1.201	1.378	4	2
	%	25.1	18.2	13.4	17.3	41.3	21.0	12.5	24.5	7.7	19.0						
P <sub>2</sub>	N	263	170	256	246	389	313	191	271	101	200	2.68	3.07	1.217	1.289	1	3
	%	21.9	14.2	21.3	20.5	32.4	26.1	15.9	22.6	8.4	16.7						
P <sub>3</sub>	N	274	202	225	166	446	359	143	301	112	172	2.66	3.06	1.217	1.278	3	4
	%	22.8	16.8	18.8	13.8	37.2	29.9	11.9	25.1	9.3	14.3						

P4	N	468	313	160	175	484	330	55	261	33	121	2.19	2.75	1.091	1.323	13	12
	%	39.0	26.1	13.3	14.6	40.3	27.5	4.6	21.8	2.8	10.1						
P5	N	368	277	247	232	458	258	82	286	45	147	2.32	2.83	1.093	1.348	10	10
	%	30.7	23.1	20.6	19.3	38.2	21.5	6.8	23.8	3.8	12.3						
P6	N	251	202	327	195	347	303	211	314	64	186	2.59	3.07	1.154	1.309	5	3
	%	20.9	16.8	27.3	16.3	28.9	25.3	17.6	26.2	5.3	15.5						
P7	N	309	228	189	166	403	274	191	313	108	219	2.67	3.11	1.264	1.371	2	1
	%	25.8	19.0	15.8	13.8	33.6	22.8	15.9	26.1	9.0	18.3						
P8	N	288	231	273	198	399	269	148	332	92	170	2.57	3.01	1.197	1.334	6	6
	%	24.0	19.3	22.8	16.5	33.3	22.4	12.3	27.7	7.7	14.2						
P9	N	358	174	210	247	401	315	140	280	91	184	2.50	3.04	1.239	1.277	7	5
	%	29.8	14.5	17.5	20.6	33.4	26.3	11.7	23.3	7.6	15.3						
P10	N	410	314	200	213	432	229	109	298	49	146	2.32	2.79	1.153	1.385	10	11
	%	34.2	26.2	16.7	17.8	36.0	19.1	9.1	24.8	4.1	12.2						
P11	N	410	337	224	212	437	245	60	250	69	156	2.30	2.73	1.156	1.399	11	13
	%	34.2	28.1	18.7	17.7	36.4	20.4	5.0	20.8	5.8	13.0						
P12	N	440	299	220	225	413	330	76	235	51	111	2.23	2.70	1.138	1.288	12	14
	%	36.7	24.9	18.3	18.8	34.4	27.5	6.3	19.6	4.3	9.3						
P13	N	350	287	270	215	442	221	86	295	52	182	2.35	2.89	1.102	1.407	9	8
	%	29.2	23.9	22.5	17.9	36.8	18.4	7.2	24.6	4.3	15.2						
P14	N	403	326	219	171	433	247	106	281	39	175	2.30	2.84	1.120	1.422	11	9
	%	33.6	27.2	18.3	14.3	36.1	20.6	8.8	23.4	3.3	14.6						
P15	N	322	275	250	202	440	211	101	363	87	149	2.48	2.92	1.179	1.371	8	7
	%	26.8	22.9	20.8	16.8	36.7	17.6	8.4	30.3	7.3	12.4						
<b>M<sub>x</sub></b>											<b>2.45</b>	<b>2.93</b>	<b>0.911</b>	<b>1.125</b>			

(CP: 1 = Not hard at all; 2 = Slightly hard; 3 = Moderate; 4 = Very hard; 5 = Extremely hard; NCC: 1 = Absolutely unnecessary; 2 = Unnecessary; 3 = Optional; 4 = Necessary; 5 = Absolutely necessary; M = Mean; SD = Standard deviation; R = Rank)

$M_{X-CP} = 2.45$  – corresponding with the ‘slightly hard’ level. Out of all 15 items of CP, the top five with the highest means ranking from 1<sup>st</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> are: P2 (M = 2.68), P7 (M = 2.67), P3 (M = 2.66), P1 (M = 2.64), P6 (M = 2.59); all were at ‘moderate’ level. This could be concluded that Vietnamese HS had some communication problems (not serious, but risk able) in their life, or hypothesis  $H_{01a}$  was rejected.

$M_{X-NCC} = 2.93$ , corresponding with the ‘optional’ level, which meant it would not matter if they received school counseling about communication or not. Out of all 15 items, the top five with the highest means ranking from 1<sup>st</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> are P7 (M = 3.11), P1 (M = 3.09), P6 (M = 3.07), and P2 (M = 3.07), P3 (M = 3.06), P9 (M = 3.04). This result reflected that HS needed to be counseled about CP, but it depended on their choice. The hypothesis  $H_{01b}$  was rejected.

With  $H_{01a}$  and  $H_{01b}$  were rejected,  $H_{01}$  was rejected. This meant Vietnamese HS had CP, they could not solve the problems effectively by themselves, and they need to be counseled about this problem at school.

Viewing the percentage in Table 3, it was found that there was a large number of students who felt ‘very hard’ and ‘extremely hard’ in communication, and they needed to be counseled about this with ‘necessary’ and ‘absolutely necessary’ levels. A difference test is processed for factors of gender, education level, and family context towards CP and NCC of HS.

**Table 4.** ANOVA test for factors of gender, education levels and family context towards CP and NCC of HS

Sources		M		ANOVA test			
		M <sub>CP</sub>	M <sub>NCC</sub>	F <sub>CP</sub>	F <sub>NCC</sub>	p <sub>CP</sub>	p <sub>NCC</sub>
Gender	Male	2.56	2.84	21,47	1,28	.002	.064
	Female	2.38	2.97				
Education Level	Lower secondary	2.56	3.16	9,08	12,51	.001	.001
	Upper secondary	2.38	2.77				
	Both father and mother	2.45	2.90				
Family context (living with)	Father	2.20	3.57	5,61	12,70	.365	.002
	Mother	2.54	3.11				
	Relatives/Others	2.42	2.77				

For the gender factor,  $p_{CP} = .002$ , it was possible to claim a statistical difference of CP between male and female students; hypothesis  $H_{02a}$  was rejected. The intensity of facing CP was different between male and female students. Male students faced more CP than females at the same age.  $p_{NCC} = .064$ , there was no statistical difference between NCC of students with different genders. Hypothesis  $H_{02b}$  was accepted. Thus, it was only accepted that male students faced more CP than female students, and the NCC of both genders was the same.

For the education level factor,  $p_{CP} = .001$ , there was a significant difference of CP between lower and upper secondary school students, or hypothesis  $H_{03a}$  was rejected. Upper secondary school students face more CP than lower secondary school students.  $p_{NCC} = .001$  proved a significant difference between the NCC of both education levels, or hypothesis  $H_{03b}$  was rejected. Upper secondary school students have higher needs for counseling about communication problems than lower secondary school students. Therefore, we rejected the hypothesis  $H_{03}$ .

For the family context factor,  $p_{CP} = .365$ , it meant no significant difference of CP among family contexts was found. Therefore, despite living in different conditions of families, HS shared similar CP. In other words, CP of HS did not depend on their family context and the hypothesis  $H_{04a}$  was accepted.  $p_{NCC} = .002$  showed a significant difference among the NCC of students with different family context. Students with different CP coming from different family contexts would have different needs and different difficulties associated with when they were counseled. Hypothesis  $H_{04b}$  was rejected. With these results, it is found that CP was not the cause of arising NCC, but the influence from the family (mainly family CP) was the leading cause of creating the HS' NCC.

#### A Positive Correlation between CP and NCC of HS

Pearson correlation between CP and NCC of HS gave  $p < .05$  as seen in [Table 5](#):

**Table 5.** Correlation between common problems and needs for counseling about the communication of students

	CP	NCC
CP	1	.579**
NCC	.579**	1

\*\**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)*

There was a strong and positive correlation between CP and NCC. The more HS faced problems in communication, the higher their needs for counseling were. This finding was noteworthy when building communication competence for students not only in their educational environments but also in their lives. This result rejected our null hypothesis ( $H_{05}$ ).

### **Perceiving factors affected the CP and NCC of Vietnamese HS**

Collecting in-depth interview data from the participants and also from teachers, school counselors, and educators, we found some data could be supported for making clearer the factors affected the CP and NCC of Vietnamese HS.

*Students: Excessive self-expression and inadequate capacity to control emotions when communicating*

Vietnamese HS tended to show excessive ego when communicating with their peers, so it could easily lead to conflicts of life perspective, as well as the value system. Since then, conflicts have formed and negatively impacted on their social relationships. The interviews with a lower secondary student (HS1) and an upper secondary student (HS2) confirmed this information very clearly:

HS1: ‘...The idea of modern dance to celebrate the first day of my school year was unique, but when voting in front of the class, my classmates strongly opposed my idea. They think this is a bad idea. Some others suggested acting and singing solo songs. I was distraught when my idea was criticized so badly in the class, so I quarreled with the whole class. In the end, my class could not perform because we did not agree with each other ...’

HS2: ‘I am always confident about my communication ability, but do not understand why others do not like to associate with me? At school, I always ranked first in the class for academic achievement. In competitions, I always lead to achievement. I make friends with almost all the students from the whole school. However, I always feel like my friends are not honest with me; they only come to me when they need it. I feel hurt. Recently, I have almost no interest in any relationship. I am good alone and enough.’

*Teachers: The Impotence in traditional-educated problem-solving measures with communication conflict*

Many teachers shared that the emotional management capacity of HS today is deficient, especially lower secondary students. They could hardly control their emotions when a disagreement arose in communicating with friends. Therefore, students tended to behave aggressively and yield to each other even in school. This has led to increased school violence in Vietnam over the years.

The interview with a lower secondary school teacher (T1) helped us recognize a lot of essential data:

T1: ‘The current phenomenon of profanity and swearing among students has greatly increased. Communication problems in school are always a problem for me... I've always tried to solve it, but these situations kept happening. Most of my educational measures and advice cannot affect students' psychology. Discipline from the teacher seems to be ineffective when dealing with communication conflicts of students.’

Another teacher (upper secondary teacher, T2) also stated this moral decline in the communication of HS:

T2: ‘...90 % of the violence in my school stems from students having conflicts in communication. They do not control their emotions and often solve problems with violence. Education and disciplinary measures from the school are no longer effective in solving these problems... We need a school counselor, but it still seems not feasible in the current educational context...’

This result reflected the need for the role of a school counselor to support CP for students in their school life to prevent related social problems.

*School counselors: The Expected effort in assisting students with CP*

We continued to interview school counselors in Vietnam and received many valuable comments on HS' CP, as well as the NCC as follows:

A school counselor in a lower secondary school (SCor1) shared the experience when counseling for students with school violence and body shaming behavior that:

SCor1: ‘Conflict in communication is the cause of increased school violence in Vietnam, followed by a decline in interaction within family and school, which causes many students to lack emotional safety support... Just a small misunderstanding in communication such as using slang, or inappropriate body language, or just a small joke about the body can lead to conflict and violence. Besides, the self-esteem need for students this age is always the top priority in

communication. It is the inability to give in or accept each other's opinions that cause many students to act abnormally to attract attention from others.'

An upper secondary school counselor (SCor2) also agreed with the opinion that communication conflicts caused many social problems for students.

SCor2: 'HS often runs away from home and fall into social vices because they do not receive empathy from their families. Most of the students complained to me that they were upset when their parents could not understand their aspirations and always wanted to force them to do as they pleased. Children are more likely to find empathy from outside relationships than family and school. In particular, some students also shared with me that they would love to join disruptive groups (gangsters) to prove themselves, as well as try to attract the attention of friends and parents.'

Another school counselor (part-time specialist, SCor3) expressed the difficulty in counseling students with CP:

SCor3: 'I have no formal training in psychology or school psychology. I only advise students as an experienced person. I realize that without understanding the students' psychology, as well as the psychological mechanisms of conflict and how to resolve conflicts, it will not be possible to support them in this regard. Therefore, my students only come to the SC office when forced; almost no students come voluntarily.'

These data showed that even though the school counselor's qualification is still limited, SC in Vietnam have been developed, although they have only stopped at the situation and initially intervened, but have shown the potential if having a right orientation.

*Educators: The process of counseling on CP is necessary when operating the school counseling model in Vietnam*

From a macro perspective, Vietnamese educators brought us different perspectives on CP, social problems, as well as SC.

'It is not possible to give full responsibility to students because of the changing psychology of puberty, which leads them to behave independently and wants to assert themselves. It is the teachers and the family that are two important forces that affect the personality education for students. If families and schools educate their children's personality and skills well, social problems, as well as communication conflicts, will be greatly reduced.' (E1)

Disagreed with E1, E2 discussed his opinion:

'Students themselves must be responsible for their actions and thoughts. By adolescence, children are aware of the problem and can make decisions independently. Their overexpressing in ego, or behave (including negative behaviors) to attract the attention of others, ultimately stems from their own needs.' (E2)

E3 analyzed the situation with a neutral opinion that:

'Cannot blame those who are right and who is wrong. The problem here is to understand the inner sources of social problems that HS currently faces. If conflicts arise from communication, there must be a specific handling process. If stemming from the abnormal psychology development of students, there must be its mental support process... However, there is no SCM that specializes in CP or mental health support for students in Vietnam. Thus, the problem remains in its place.' (E3).

The multidimensional evaluation of educators has helped us realize that the need to develop a SCM to support students' mental health, as well as to handle the HS' CP, NCC, and social problems, is urgent.

## 5. Discussion

The collected data showed that Vietnamese HS were facing CP and holding needs for counseling about CP. These were the critical problems that need to be solved to help HS communicate effectively to enhance their academic efficiency and also reduce the social problems stemmed.

**Vietnamese HS were facing many CP, but the current SC activities were not practical, and this caused many social problems to stem from**

Research on SC by Kirkbride (2018) showed that teenagers (13 to 18 of age) often faced CP when standing in front of a crowd (needed to be more confident), when communication with others who give them sexual affections (needed to be more impressive and attractive), when expressing their opinion or point of view to parents, teachers or friends (needed to know what and how to say),



when dealing with conflicts caused by themselves (needed to solve misunderstandings and disagreements and to control their emotions). The ranks of CP between Kirkbride's and the findings were not very different. However, according to Kirkbride, at Britain schools, students always came to counseling offices when they needed help; they were not shy or reserved, but they understood the missions and functions of school counselors were to help them feel safe and comfortable to share about their problems. This was opposite from the NCC of Vietnamese HS, which was optional. The most reasonable explanation for this difference was that SC in Vietnam had yet to prove specific efficiency to gain trust from students, or the counselors had yet clarified the missions of school counseling offices for students. This practical problem called for school counselors to propose more effective methods and planned to upgrade SC activities, as well as for managers and trainers to prepare for counselors with more professional skills and opportunities to help them get their jobs done productively.

Despite the aforementioned assessed mean, the result showed that a large number of students held the needs for NCC at necessary and absolutely necessary levels. This number was noteworthy to school counselors to figure out the block for students from coming to counseling offices despite their needs. Is it because of the quality or the skills of the counselors, or is it because of the ineffective SCM? Besides, students who needed and came to the counseling office were reliable resources to spread the word about the missions and the efficiency of SC for others. Therefore, school counselors needed to be careful in their work and keep upgrading their skills to prove the quality and efficiency of SC activities.

In-depth interview quotes also showed similarities in this situation. For students, they clearly showed us the CP we are concerned about (excessive self-expression, and lack of moderation in managing emotions). With teachers and counselors, they all knew their inability in the current context. They were aware that the source of social problems in the school today was partly due to the communication conflicts, but they could not support students to solve these problems thoroughly. Notably, school violence was widespread in Vietnam then. According to Son's research, school violence in Vietnamese lower secondary schools in recent years was showing signs of increase, and the level of occurrence was getting worse. More than 80 % of victims of school violence fall into a state of psychological trauma and obsessive disorder, which severely affected their lives (Son, 2015). To educators, they recognized that HS faced a lot of CP, and this might be the main reason for the increase in social problems in Vietnam. However, it was not possible to assume all responsibilities for students; it must be questioned for the education of parents and schools.

#### **Considerate factors when forming a SCM which have processes to counsel CP for Vietnamese HS**

It was found that HS especially needed counseling about confidence, comfortability during communication, or about controlling verbal and non-verbal language. Moreover, the development of different SCM in the world allowed online counseling to be employed, and there had been reliable and positive outcomes. Students came to school counselors more actively, and school counseling had been carried out more effectively. This online SCM was designed, especially for shy and timid students (Glasheen et al., 2016). It is noticed that international SCM has stated their concern about students' communication. If students were confident and needed direct counseling, they can come to counseling offices, but if they were shy and timid, they could use online counseling to receive support from counselors about their problems, including CP.

Gender, education level, and family context were the essential factors when forming a counseling process for students with CP.

Female teenagers often shared with their mothers, sisters or female teachers about menstruation problems, as well as asking for help and knowledge from their mothers, female school counselors about sexual activities and birth control methods, while male teenagers tended to learn by themselves or from their friends and they rarely shared or asked for help when they needed (Jaccard, Dittus, 2012). The research by Clark and Clark (2016) about communication ability at teenagers (13 to 16 of age) showed that male teenagers tended to be more introverted, with rarer communication and sharing with friends or relatives about their problems than female teenagers, as female teenagers often gathered to share their problems in order to find someone to understand or just to listen. Therefore, compared to previous researches, Vietnamese HS shared similarities about their CP at the same age in the gender perspective.

Different educational levels led to different CP and NCC. Our result was matched the previous findings by Vietnamese researchers. Tu et al. (2016) found that lower secondary school students liked sharing their opinions, talking about their problems with their friends, and sometimes parents and teachers; therefore, their needs for counseling about communication were always neutral. Nevertheless, upper secondary school students were under more pressure (from studying, career orientation, change of studying environment), so they became more reserved and tended to solve their problems on their own to prove themselves and their characteristics. However, solving all their problems on their own was impossible. Because of their lack of experience and understanding to ask for help and support others, and their arrogance and ego, they were shy from asking for help from others, especially from school counselors despite their needs. Due to this internal conflict, their needs for counseling were always too high or too low, leading to the delta, but they tend to be “shy despite needing for counseling” (Son, 2011a).

Comparing to research by Park, Chira, Miller, and Nugent (2015) about the influence of family context on American teenagers’ mental health, we found some differences. Their results showed that students living with both father and mother faced fewer mental problems (cognitive, emotional, behavioral disorders) than those living with only father or mother. Peterson and Zill’s (1986) research about the influence of divorce on behavioral problems at children showed that children would become isolated and avoidant towards communication and counseling support or intervention. Kalmijn’s research on children’s mentality in a divorced family, happy family and family with stepmother/stepfather, showed that in happy families, children expressed their needs for sharing and socializing and were more confident in seeking for help than those living in divorced families and families with stepmother/stepfather; they would become socially isolated and tended to display violent and anti-social behaviors and refuse any support (Kalmijn, 2015). Our result was consistent with many around the world about the relationship between children and their families.

Besides, improving teachers’ pedagogical communication skills, positive disciplinary methods, enhancing teaching and practice of soft skills for students, as well as enhancing the implementation of educational-oriented activities for personality education is a necessary condition to minimize social problems stemming from HS’ CP.

### **Limitations**

The limit of this study was stopped at the factual research. The questionnaire results, as well as the interview data, only reflected the status of CP and NCC of Vietnamese HS. It had been not gone into researching essential factors to form a counseling process for CP in the SCM.

Besides, it was only presented the differences in testing between gender, education level, and family context to HS’ CP and NCC. It had not been yet gone into the analysis of the factors, as well as pointed out the differences in CP and NCC from different family backgrounds.

Given these limitations, it was expected the following studies to refer to and continue to develop this idea.

### **6. Conclusion**

HS was facing CP and hold the need for counseling about those problems. There was a positive correlation between CP and NCC of Vietnamese HS. The more problems they faced, the high their needs for counseling were. However, SC in different cities and provinces in Vietnam had not yet been consistently carried out, SCM that had just been developed mostly in Hanoi City and Ho Chi Minh City (Vietnam) still hold many limitations, including absence for suitable counseling models and properly trained counselors with professional skills.

The findings served as a piece of evidence to update the literature and the emergency for a counseling model suitable for an education facility, for example, a workshop, a training to enhance the professionalism of school counselors to plan for filtering, prevention, help, and intervention for CP at lower and upper secondary school students. Moreover, SC activities needed to be strengthened at schools to help students organize proper communication, to enhance their efficiency in studying and reducing the social problems stem from.

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