

Print ISSN: 2288-4637 / Online ISSN 2288-4645  
doi:10.13106/jafeb.2019.vol6.no2.239

# A Structural Analysis on the Influence of Multi-Cultural Families in Psychological Inadequacy for Youth\*

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Received: March 26, 2019 Revised: March 28, 2019 Accepted: April 4, 2019

## Abstract

Teenagers in multicultural families are more prone to depression and problem behaviors caused by violence such as bullying in schools due to their appearance, language presentation skills, and poor learning abilities compared to teenagers in general families. This study is meaningful in that it provides basic information for prevention measures in intervening with damage caused by school violence such as depression, anxiety, suicidal impulses and emotional and social. For this purpose, a survey of 300 elementary school students from 4 to 6 grade, junior high school, and high school students was conducted. A total of 400 questionnaires were distributed and of those 385 were used for the final analysis. The results of the study are as follows. First, the psychological factors of suicidal ideation were higher in the victimized group than school violence. Second, there was a significant difference in the relationship between emotional - social isolation and school violence experience. Third, there was a significant difference in the relationship between experience of suicide ideation and depression as well as anxiety of emotional - social isolation with psychological maladjustment. In conclusion, we plan to find ways to stabilize the multicultural society by providing prevention and protection measures against school violence.

**Keywords:** Suicidal Impulse, Emotional-Social Isolation, Experience Of Violence Damage, Psychological Maladjustment, Anxiety, Problem Behavior.

**JEL Classification Code:** C31, J12, J13.

## 1. Introduction

South Korea has been transitioning past the preliminary stages of multicultural society since 2000 as the number of foreigners' staying in South Korea has risen. Additionally, the increasing number of international marriages, along with the influx of foreign workers, has contributed to the rise in these numbers. South Korea is now moving to the next phase, which is the transition and settlement phase of multicultural society, including the formation of multicultural families, migrant workers' families and immigrant communities (Jung, 2015; Kim & Chun, 2008). The number of students in elementary, middle and high schools in multicultural families more than quintupled from 9,389 in

2006 to 46,954 in 2012 and 67,806 in 2014, with the ratio of students in multicultural families rising 0.7 percent in 2012 and 1.10 percent in 2014 (Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, 2015). This increase is attributable to the rising social interest in children from multicultural families.

Many multicultural teenagers face many problems of psychological and social maladjustment, such as language barriers, differences in appearance, confusion of identity due to dual-cultural experiences, psychological pain caused by discrimination or prejudice, violence-hit experiences such as bullying, and experiences of identity confusion and alienation. In addition, more than 20 percent of teenagers in multicultural families complained of difficulties in family life, with 25.8 percent of them consisting of elementary school students, 17.0 percent middle school students and 14.8 percent high school students experiencing teasing, discriminating and bullying (Choi, 2012). Since these problems are likely to eventually escalate into extreme problems such as suicide and problematic behaviors, it is urgent to present solutions to these issues (Jung, 2015).

In this study, we looked at the influence of the experiences of school violence among teenagers in

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multicultural families on psychological nonconformity by parameterizing the experiences of school violence between suicidal impulses and emotional and social ties. Further, as a subparameter of psychological non-adaptation, the relationship between depression, anxiety and problematic behaviors between suicidal impulses and emotional social isolation is examined as a parameter by school violence victim experiences to provide basic data for the potential of differentiated support measures for psychological maladjustment according to school violence experiences. The research questions for this purpose are as follows. First, is there an impact on the experience of school violence victims on the suicidal behavior and psychological maladjustment of teenagers in multicultural families? Second, does experience of school violence have an impact on emotional and social isolation and psychological nonconformity? Third, is there an impact of school violence victim experience between suicidal impulses and emotional and social isolation due to psychological incompatibility?

## 2. Theoretical Background

### 2.1. Psychological Maladjustment of Depression and Anxiety among Adolescents in Multicultural Families

Weiss and Garbanati (2004) reported that Studies of depression and problem behavior in multi-cultural youth report that there are differences in living standards. In other words, empirical research suggests that psychological and emotional anxiety and problem behavior can occur depending on the degree to which multicultural teenagers adapt to Korean society and culture, and the problematic behaviors such as depression, adaptive stress, and flight are seen as the result of such adaptations (Lee, 2013).

Emotional damage in violence such as discrimination and bullying, which are likely to be encountered by multi-cultural youths, are considered to be the representative risk factors that negatively affect depression and incur problematic behaviors (Khanlou, Koh & Mill, 2008). This affects school life, and is one of the factors that impact the outcome of psychological maladjustment, such as depression and problematic behavior of multicultural youths, resulting in psychological malfeasance (Pedersen, 2001; Virta, Sam & Westin, 2004).

There is a strong correlation between psychological maladjustment and personal characteristics. Studies have shown that a child's self-esteem, self-efficacy, family environment, parent-related factors, school and peer factors affect depression and problematic behaviors (Pedersen, Westin, 2004; Weiss & Garbanati, 2004). Additionally, it was

observed that the female students with lower levels of psychological maladjustment, depression, and anxiety were more likely to develop problem behaviors such as depression and anxiety than their male peers (Pedersen, 2001; Wong, Chang, & He, 2009). Family relationships, socioeconomic status, and income among other factors were also considered important factors in depression and problem behaviors (Shin, 2013; Lee, 2013). The relationship between the level of depression and anxiety was higher than the level of psychological maladjustment (Pedersen, 2001; Virta, Sam, & Westin, 2004; Lee, 2013).

### 2.2. School Violence Experience and Emotional-Social Isolation

The According to a study by Kim Dong-ha (2017), most of the nation's youth welfare services are school-oriented, and thus teenagers that leave school are not subject to the welfare offered by the nation. This creates welfare blind spots, so the teens are at a higher risk of being involved in various flights and crimes, and in the long term are excluded from society and labor markets due to academic suspensions, likely to fall into poverty in the long run.

Many studies have shown that teenagers who do not have positive relationships with teachers and their peers are closely linked to bullying, school violence, and school dropouts (Yeide & Koblin, 2009; Berkowitz & Benvenishty, 2012).

Due to emotional and social isolation caused by damage psychologically and emotionally to school violence by teenagers from multicultural families, the problem of students going to school could have negative effects on not only young people in multicultural families, but also on the entire society, so urgent countermeasures are needed (Lee & Burkam, 2003).

There was also shown to be a significant difference between the prevalence of school violence and the level of self-development and identity formation (Lee, 2013). Additionally, students in multicultural families that experienced school can reveal to have various problems such as school maladjustment, group bullying and poor learning. In previous studies, the experience school violence was affected by school maladjustment such as psychological grievances of heterogeneity, anger, burden, alienation, fear, inferiority, inactivity due to language problems, and difficulty in understanding rules and customs (Jang & Jeon, 2013; Choi, 2012).

In line with this, it was revealed that attitudes toward multiculturalism were important for general family students (Kim & Chun, 2013). In order to prevent discrimination and prejudice against the youth of multicultural families, society needs to address the necessity of multicultural awareness

education and emphasize the importance of open cultural attitudes to accept multicultural societies. This lack of education negatively affects the psychological characteristics of adolescents in multicultural families.

In this way, the influence of the students from general families was significant in the adaptation and identity formation of the multicultural students, and the factors affecting the multicultural perception were made to the students from general families (Lee, 2013).

### **2.3. School Violence Experiences and Suicidal Thoughts**

Flannery, Singer, and Wester (2004) reported that the damage that results from the teens' experience of school violence has been reported through domestic and international studies to cause many embedded problems such as depression, anxiety, aggression and suicide

In Korea, continuous and complex school violence has affected the victims in more ways than just mental harm such as depression, anxiety, and suicidal impulses. The victims were not emotionally stable when psychotherapy did not proceed well. In addition, the results of the present study suggest that suicide is associated with psychological maladjustments such as emotional and psychological anxiety and depression (Oh & Lee, 2006).

In particular, the lower the age, the greater the severity of suicidal impulses due to severe anxiety and depressive symptoms such as depression and suicidal ideation. There is a close relationship between post-traumatic stress disorder and conduct disorder, to name a few (Flannery, Singer, & Wester, 2004).

Flannery (2004) reported that the experience of school violence affected mental health, and that the greater the experience of school violence, the greater the risk of depression and suicide. Ozer and Weinstein (2004) also found that depressive symptoms were higher among adolescents exposed to more school violence.

Therefore, it is reported that the experiences of the victims of school violence in multicultural families are highly likely to lead to suicidal impulse due to negation of school maladjustment and relationship due to negative emotional experiences such as psychological and emotional anxiety and depression (Kim & Chung, 2013) The experience of victimization leads to depression suicidal impulses, which leads to school maladjustment, so social attention is needed.

In Korea, persistent and complex school violence has also had a greater impact on victims' mental damage, such as depression, anxiety and suicidal impulses, and the victims are not emotionally stable when psychological treatment is not progressed properly, which is highly likely to lead to a boycott of school and suicide. It also has a close

relationship with depression and suicidal impulses, and anger management issues such as post-traumatic stress disorder and disorder of conduct (Kim & Chung, 2013).

### **2.4. School Violence Experience and Psychological Maladjustment**

According to a study by Wolf and Ollendic (2006), "The experience of school violence victims is related to the problem of school non-adaptation as psychological anxiety among teenagers in multicultural families grows". There have been reports that anxiety is a risk factor for increasing violent behavior, and that about 50 percent of young children who show aggressive behavior experience problems of internalization of depression or anxiety.

Approximately 50% of adolescents with aggressive behavior experienced internalization problems of depression or anxiety. In addition, the risk of antisocial personality disorder and behavior disorder increases, and violent children's adolescents show higher anxiety than normal children's adolescents and high anxiety states in turn increase bullying behavior (Goodwin & Hamilton, 2003). Therefore, anxious children's adolescent year show aggressive behavior, and if that anxiety intensifies, they can be disturbed in their academic performances negatively and portray the behaviors of depression and suicidal impulses.

In this study, we investigated the effects of psychological maladjustment on the psychological maladjustment of adolescents in Korea (Ozer & Weinstein, 2004). Research on anxiety as a risk factor for increasing violent behavior revealed its relationship as a risk factor for violence, flight, and aggression. In addition, psychological anxiety appears to be externalized by aggressive behavior among adolescents experiencing violence in school, and most of them experience internalization problems of depression or anxiety (Wolff & Ollendic, 2006).

The level of anxiety is higher than that of normal adolescents and also in a study where a 9-year long longitudinal study of children aged 9-18 years of age was observed. It was shown that anxiety among adolescents was associated with higher behavioral deficits (Wolff & Ollendic, 2006; Goodwin & Hamilton, 2003; Pine & Cohen, 2000).

Unstable emotions due to school violence experiences are externalized by school maladjustment and psychological maladjustments, and appear as aggressive or degenerate behavior. In addition, if the anxiety is deepened, it is difficult to have confidence and self-esteem, which can interfere with academic achievement, lack self-confidence, and become a factor that interferes with healthy growth due to negative relationships in inferiority (Lambert, 2005; Rottenberg, Cross, & Gotlib, 2005).

### 3. Methodology

#### 3.1. Subject of Investigation

The period of implementation of this survey was from January to February 2019, when the research was conducted to the director and staff of the agency, focusing on multicultural family support centers and youth counseling centers in Seoul, Gyeonggi, North Chungcheong and South Gyeongsang provinces, and with the permission of the subjects, the survey was conducted on teenagers from multicultural families. The subjects were male and female students in middle and high schools, starting in elementary school.

During this survey, the staff went through a procedure to explain the significance of preparing the students questionnaire in advance, to educate the students to respond as sincerely as possible, and to retrieve the questionnaire immediately after the survey was completed.

The study was conducted on 400 boys and girls in the early fourth grade or higher of multicultural families, based on students in middle and high schools. With the exception of the missing values, 385 people were studied.

#### 3.2. Research Model

In this study, an influence relationship between suicidal impulses and the degree of emotional and social isolation is formed, through which the degree of damage to them through school violence is predicted to be affected by psychological maladjustment. The model is designed as shown in the figure. Suicide impulse status, emotional and social isolation (passive isolation, social isolation, emotional alienation, social isolation), experience of school violence damage, psychological nonconformity (depression, anxiety, flight, etc.) was analyzed.

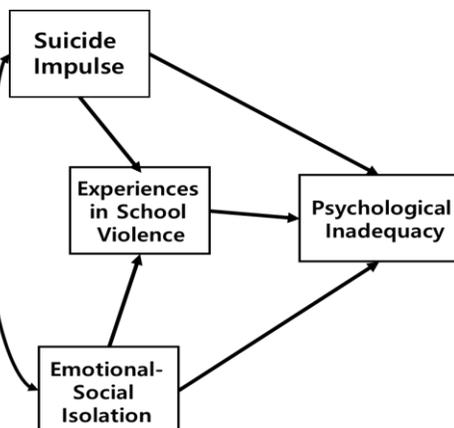


Figure 1: Research model

#### 3.3. Measuring Tool

##### 3.3.1. Suicidal Impulse

The suicidal impulse category cited questions used in the study of Korean children and adolescents' human rights record, and asked if a teenager has ever thought of dying in the past year. The possible answer choices were "never thought," "sometimes thought" and "thought." In this study, teenagers who have been discriminated against have never committed suicide because of discrimination have never committed suicide (0) or have committed suicide (1).

##### 3.3.2. Emotional-social Isolation

Emotional and social isolation measures (ESPL) are derived from existing studies (social welfare measure studies) to 15 questions, and are designed to measure isolation and alienation from social and emotional perspectives. The 15 questions consist of a form that responds to an individual's perception of the social network and his or her feelings about it. It consists of emotional-social isolation (mental isolation, social isolation, emotional alienation, and social isolation).

##### 3.3.3. School Damage Experience

The school violence experience and the damage that resulted from it measured whether the school had experienced violence from peers over the past year based on the time of the survey. The scale of school violence victimization experience was also used in the Korea Welfare Panel.

The details include, 'I've been teased or ridiculed by other kids by calling me names I don't want to hear,' 'I've had other kids deliberately mislead or ignore me,' 'I've heard bad or wrong rumors about me or those chatted about me behind my back,' 'I've been threatened or threatened with not to let me go unless I do what they told me to do,' 'other kids' 'when they' 'have me.' The rating method gives 0 points to "Not at all," 1 point to "No. 1," 2 points to "No. 2-3" and 3 points to "No. 4 and above," and the higher the score, the higher the level of school violence damage experience.

##### 3.3.4. Psychological Maladjustment

The emotional problem assessment measure of youth psychology was selected and used by the Korean version of Oh and Lee (1990). Achenbach (1991) understood that psychological and social adaptation represented problem behavior syndrome and presented nine subcategories as a symptom of problem behavior: social shrinkage, physical

symptoms, depression and anxiety, social immaturity, problems of thought, attention problems, flight, aggression, and identity problems. In this study, sub-metrics of depression and anxiety (14 questions) were selected as psychological emotional problems among the nine sub-categories and sub-metrics of flight (11 questions) as behavioral problems. The higher the total score of a three-point scale of zero (0) and sometimes so (a), the higher the total number of questions, the more difficult the adjustment is. In other words, the lower the score, the higher the level of psychological and social adaptation.

### 3.4. Data analysis

The data analysis in this study used the SPSS 22.0 and AMOS 16.0 programs. To identify the demographic characteristics of the study subjects, a technical statistical analysis was conducted, and the internal harmonization of each measure was calculated with the Kromba alpha coefficient. In addition, the path analysis was conducted to verify the validity of the path after a stepwise middle-to-back analysis to ensure that each of the variables was a significant predictor that explained the unsuitable aspects of the adolescent.

The absolute fitness level 2 is that the model has a good fit when the value is not significant. However, since 22 is sensitive to the number of samples and is likely to be rejected when the data are large, a standard car interest rate using the ratio between  $\chi^2$  and the degree of freedom is preferred.

## 4. Results

### 4.1. The Influence of Suicide Impulse and Violence Damage Experience on Psychological Inadequacy

In this study, the analysis was conducted to verify the analysis of the parametric effects.

In order to prove the mediated effect, the experience of suicide impulse ► violence damage is significant in step 1, and ► psychological maladjustment in phase 2 is significant, and in step 3, the suicide impulse and the experience of violence are independent variables and should be noted. The degree of suicidal behavior in the second stage should be smaller than the degree of psychological maladjustment in the third stage

**Table 1:** Examination of the Median Effect of Violence Damage Experience in the Process of Suicide Impulse to Psychological Inadequacy

Independent ► Median ► Subsequent variable	Verification of the Mediation Effect	R <sup>2</sup>	R <sup>2</sup> Increment	β
Suicide Impulse ► Experience of Violence ► Psychological Inadequacy	Stage1 (Independent ► Median)	.191		-.181**
	Stage2 (Independent ► Subsequent)	.108		.421***
	Stage3 (Independent variable)		.102	.281**
	Stage3 (Median variable)		.074	-.161*

\*p< .05, \*\*p< .01, \*\*\*p< .001

Only when those conditions are met can it be assumed that the experience of violence is mediated in the relationship between suicidal impulses (independent) and psychological maladjustments (subsidiaries). As shown in Table 1, the experience of violent damage has been found to meditate on the relationship between suicidal impulses and psychological inactivity.

Sobel verification is added to confirm this parameter effect in detail. If the path to the violence victim experience, which is a parameter of suicidal impulses, is called a, and the path to psychological ineligible, the parameter of violent damage experiences, the path a and b are significant, the resultant analysis is shown in Table 2 below.

**Table 2:** Verification of the significance of the parameter effect of the violence damage experience

Model	Measurements (Discrepancy) <sup>a</sup>	Measurements (Discrepancy) <sup>b</sup>	Value of Z
Suicide Impulse ► Experience of Violence ► Psychological Inadequacy			4.301***
Suicide Impulse ► Experience of Violence	.181(.04)		
Experience of Violence ► Psychological Inadequacy		.431(.03)	

\*p< .05, \*\*p< .01, \*\*\*p< .001

This analysis, Sobel Verification, also found that the Z value was significant at 4.301, and that the experience of violent damage mediating suicide impulses and psychological nonconformities. The Z value was also

significant in the Aroian test at the .001 level at 4.721. Thus, the mediated effect was identified.

### 4.2. The Influence of Emotional-Social Isolation and Violence Damage Experience on Psychological Inadequacy

As with suicidal impulses, the effects of emotional-social isolation on psychological maladjustment are significant ( $\beta = .271, p < .001$ ), the effects of the violence damage experience on psychological maladjustment ( $\beta = -.181, p < .01$ ), and because of the high correlation between these two variables ( $r = -.311, p < .001$ ), the model also has a high probability of parametric effects and the results analyzed to verify them are as shown in Table 3).

**Table 3:** Examination of the Median Effect of Violent Damage Experience in the Process of Emotional and Social Isolation to Psychological Inadequacy

Independent ► Median ► Subsequent variable	Verification of the Mediation Effect	R <sup>2</sup>	R <sup>2</sup> Increment	$\beta$
Emotional and social isolation ► Violence damage experience ► Psychological Inadequacy	Stage1 (Independent ► Median)	.201		-.271**
	Stage2 (Independent ► Subsequent)	.127		.271***
	Stage3 (Independent variable)		.116	.311**
	Stage3 (Median variable)		.091	-.181*

\*p < .05, \*\*p < .01, \*\*\*p < .001

As with previous analyses, the logic of Baron and Kennedy (1986) confirmed that the experience of violence was mediated in the relationship between emotional and social isolation (independent) and psychological nonconformity (substitute).

**Table 5:** Correlation Analysis of Suicide Impulse, Emotional-Social Isolation, School Violence Damage Experience and Psychological Inadequacy

Category	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Suicidal impulse	1								
Emotional isolation	.53*	1							
Social isolation	.38*	.47**	1						
Emotional alienation	.33*	.62**	.56***	1					
Social alienation	.19*	.37**	.33**	.32*	1				
Experience of school violence	.35**	.40**	.27**	.21*	.33*	1			
Depression	.17*	.30**	.40**	.37**	.31**	.44*	1		
Anxiety	.25*	.44**	.42**	.36*	.25**	.36*	.42*	1	
Delinquency	.19	.33*	.22*	.45	.14	.20	.25*	.33*	1

\*p < .05, \*\*p < .01, \*\*\*p < .001

**Table 4:** Verification of the significance of the parameter effect of the violence damage experience

Model	Value of Z
Emotional and social isolation ► Violence damage experience ► Psychological Inadequacy	6.72***

\*p < .05, \*\*p < .01, \*\*\*p < .001

As shown in Table-4 above, the Z value was 6.72 and the Z value was 7.01 for the Aroian test, showing significant parametric effects at the .001 level.

### 4.3. An Analysis of the Path Model of Suicide Impulse, Emotional-Social Isolation, Experiences in School Violence, and Psychological Inadequacy

Personal inclinations that cause social disconnection can act as risk factors or sensitivity factors that increase psychological maladjustment. This study assumes these personal tendencies as suicidal impulses and emotional-social isolation.

Suicide impulses and emotional-social isolation were found to affect psychological maladjustment, respectively, by means of violence victim experiences. The analysis demonstrated that the overall hypothesis was consistent with the research model.

### 4.4. Correlation Analysis of Suicide Impulse, Emotional-Social Isolation, School Violence Damage Experience and Psychological Inadequacy

In order to construct the relationship model of the light-mother model, correlations of factors such as suicidal impulses, emotional-social isolation (passive isolation, social isolation, emotional alienation, social alienation), school violence damage experience, and psychological maladjustment (UI, anxiety, flight) are presented in Table 5.

Analysis shows that there is a significant static correlation among all sub-variables of suicidal impulses, emotional-social isolation (passive isolation, emotional isolation, social alienation), school violence damage experiences, and psychological inactivity (depression, anxiety, flight).

Therefore, it can be seen that suicidal impulses, emotional-social isolation, are judged by the people of the state as negative perceptions. The higher the tendency to commit suicide, emotional and social isolation, the higher and more psychological maladjustment appears. In particular, depression and anxiety were found to increase significantly.

## 5. Conclusion

The study aims to draw up basic data to come up with differentiated support measures to cope with psychological nonconformities caused by experiences of school violence victims by checking the relationship of the impact of school violence victimization on psychological maladjustment. The summary from the main results from this study and the implications of these findings are as follows:

First, the psychological factors of suicidal thoughts were high in the victimized group after analyzing the impact of school violence experience on suicidal thoughts. Psychological maladjustment, such as suicidal impulses from multicultural youths who have experienced school violence, can be seen as a serious problem in terms of the fact that school violence can lead to academic and fraternity issues. These in turn, can lead to an end to academic and social disruptions (Ozer & Weinstein, 2004) as well as lower quality of life and higher possibility of involvement in school violence or other flights.

Second, a significant difference was found when we looked at the relationship of school violence experiences to emotional-social isolation. Students with experiences of school violence showed significant social contraction, anxiety and depression, which is consistent with the results of a study by Shin (2005). In other words, school violence victim experiences can cause negative emotions of emotional-social isolation and relatively high probability of experiencing psychological nonconformity because of their lack of strategic or wishful thinking skills. Thus, to lower their factors of psychological maladjustment, they should provide programs to ease emotions or train them to think positively.

Third, a significant difference was found in the relationship between suicide, emotional and social isolation, depression and anxiety of psychological maladjustment. As such, the experience of school violence has been shown to have an impact on suicidal thoughts caused by the negative emotions of depression and anxiety, and such negative

emotions have caused social isolation, affecting school adaptation with negative relationships between teachers and classmates. This is consistent with the study by Jang and Jeon (2013), who have experienced school violence victims, and because they have similar characteristics, these characteristics need to be considered when providing education or counseling services on how to cope with psychological nonconformities against them.

This study is meaningful in that the experience of school violence victims provided basic data on the management of their psychological nonconformity response methods by looking at the relationship of psychological nonconformity. Nevertheless, this study has the following limitations and needs to continue to be validated through subsequent studies. First, the study was conducted on teenagers from multicultural families, so attention needs to be paid to generalizing them as whole teenagers. Second, the study limited the method of coping with psychological non-adaptation to the experience of school violence, so it is necessary to look at the causes of psychological non-adoption among various variables through homes, schools and peer relationships among multicultural children in a follow-up study

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