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MORE TALKS, LESS DANGERS?

A CASE STUDY OF SELF-DISCLOSURE AND ITS IMPACTS ON PARENTS AND THAI TEENAGERS

SUBMITTED TO

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Abstract

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This research paper investigates self-disclosure between parents and teenagers in Thai culture, including its impact on family communication and/or behavior. Because relationship within the family are important for all members, researcher investigates self-disclosure in several different types of family structures as well as the effects of reduced communication between parents and teenagers in Thai culture. This study employs both qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection. The researcher concentrated on teenagers aged from 16 to 18, i.e. - high school students from Grade 10 to Grade 12, at Assumption Samutprakarn School. Data from these students was collected through questionnaires. The qualitative section of the study involved in-depth interviews of parents.

This paper investigates three areas; 1) factors influencing the formation of psychological proximity among parents and teenagers, 2) disclosure of personal life narratives between parents and teenagers, and 3) the relationship between self-disclosure and surveillance of negative behaviors.

The findings show that there are many factors influencing psychological proximity such as self-disclosure, gender, trust, or uncertainty reduction. Discussions also indicate that self-disclosure, gender, trust, uncertainty reduction, nonverbal communication (touching behavior), and culture influence the formation of psychological proximity among parents and teenagers. The results show that negative behaviors of teenagers such as talking too much to friends on mobile phones are related to reduced disclosure with their parents. The results also imply that the more they talk and disclose to each others, the closer they are. Also, that if parents do not communicate with their children from the time they are young children, it is hard to get close to them after they grow older.

In this particular study, results show that children from families consisting of both father and mother did not have a high level of intimacy with the family. Therefore, the researcher cannot conclude that most children from broken families will have less intimacy and less self-disclosure with parents.

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