Comparing Different Educational Outcome of Adolescents in China and America in the Present of Romantic Relationship

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● Abstract

The purpose of this research is to find out how students’ educational behavior from different countries is affected by having romantic relationship with others and their tendency for finding a romantic partner. To accomplish this aim, we identified a population of adolescents in both New York City and Suzhou city; carried out survey; and conducted street interview.

The theory of the research is akin to that of healthy relationship, which results in self perceived competence, but for a specific population of adolescent who struggle to maintain well performance at school while having a romantic relationship with someone else. That is, the expectation is that the educational outcome of American students tend to be more affected by romantic relationship than that of Chinese students.

The purpose of this paper is to present a design and protocol for evaluating the research method. The goal of our research aims at contrasting the effect of romantic relationship on adolescent educational behavior between two countries that have distinctive culture context.

Dating, which is an essential activity between the relationship partners, always happens before the relationship clarified. By contrast, the romantic relationship always figure the relationship between the partners clarified.

● Background and significance

35% adolescents have followed the trend to date with others. As a result, having romantic relationship has become common nowadays (Lenhart, 2015). Adolescents would like to have a close, romantic relationship with others with no restriction, which follows a theory for everyone is supposed to have a determination, a criteria to have the connection and try to contact with others, the close relationship. Subsequently, this theory has also claimed that every person has a
nature to "share" with other people, what's more, everyone who share their experience with others will live better if they are connected (Bernales, n.d.).

Moreover, actually adolescence is a sensitive period for everyone to handle, control, adapt the formation of attitudes, concerning intimate relationships and the expression of intimacy, power. It is an important and necessary age for individuals to establish healthy, nonviolent and positive relationships with their intimate partners (Wekerle, 1999). So, as expected, to find a boyfriend, a girlfriend or a lover meets this criteria well for those of perpetrator or victim of aggression unfortunately. It is necessary to add some aggressive interaction factor, as some physical aggressive behaviors, in the Romantic relationships in a significant minority of partners.

We hold this belief, that everything that takes up one individual’s time, energy and attention would affect this student’s academic performance. This effect depends on how well you can handle the balance between the social life or some activities with your studies. In some cases, dating might help one’s studies. Also, one variable during this survey is it would be so complicated for researcher to research how the partners in the romantic relationship influence each other, because there are theoretical reasons show the partners would change a lot after the romantic experience with each other.

(((((It has been well documented that adolescents tend to select their romantic partners (as well as friends) with an initial similarity, in fact, everyone prefer a intimate partner with plenty of similarity. For instance, a high achieving girl likely will have a tendency to select for a romantic partner a similarly academically oriented boy. That is, individuals tend to be more similar with their close friends over time. There would be some factors, which influence adolescents to choose their friends. Therefore, our working topic hypothesis is that if a romantic partner’s academic performance contributes to an understanding of variations in the adolescent’s own grades, this likely derives from elements of selection as well as influence (Giordano, 2008). ))))))
China and America have a different culture context which has been contributed to different social skills among Chinese and American students (Phoebe, 2017). So we try to find if there is any difference between the Chinese adolescents’ attitude and American adolescents’ attitude, about whether there would be a huge influence on their educational behavior or not if they hold the romantic relationship at the same time.

- **Design**
  To test for the effect of romantic relationship, we will carry out a two-group comparison. Because of large population in both cities, random selection is not feasible. We will construct a convenience sample. Participants in both Suzhou city and New York City fill out the questionnaire either through the internet or during our field survey. We will collect data from both groups of individuals, using questionnaires and interviews.

**Comparison group.** Since we are going to assess educational performances in different culture context, the comparison group will consist of adolescents from both New York city and Suzhou city who have experiences romantic relationship.

**Participants.** The sample included each 20 adolescents from both New York and Suzhou city. Participants ranged in age from 12 to 18 (M = , Ave = ).

**Questionnaire.** We design a questionnaire that is sent to both New York City students and Suzhou City students through the internet and the street interview. On the questionnaire:

  - In the introduction part, we first state our purpose of this research to increase our credibility so that more people will be willing to help us to fill out this form. We also set requirements for survey participants in the introduction part of questionnaire so that whoever receives can see clearly if they fit our requirement for targeting interviewees.
Since we still plan to oral interview some of our interviewees, we ask if the interviewees are willing to share further stories with us. By giving one of our group members’ email address, interviewees can choose either leave their own email addresses or send email to the address we wrote in the introduction part if they are interested in our survey.

We make this questionnaire anonymous so that interviewees do not have to worry about releasing their private information. Therefore, they tend to give more effective information.

We separate our interviewees into two parts. One is someone who have been in a formal relationship with others, the other one is someone who have date with others without official relationship. We divide them into two groups because we thought that both having a relationship and dating with others can influence the educational outcomes because both of these two relationship require adolescents to spend time on them and this will influence their study time.

We set a time limitation on our interviewees’ romantic relationship that it must happen between January and June 2017 because if they have romantic relationship one year before, they may forget their behavior in that relationship or date and the resulting educational outcomes.

Then, we ask some questions about their dating time and frequency to see how many time they spend on dating with their partners. We also ask questions like what else can you do if you do not date with your partner. From these questions, we can deduce how dating occupy study time and consequently, influence educational outcomes. More directly, we ask questions about have they ever studied with their partner because if adolescents are willing to spend time on studying even if they have romantic relationship with others, the educational outcome may not be greatly influenced.

For adolescents who have official relationship with others, we ask further questions like when they are studying, have they ever been interrupted by their partners’ messages or calls. If adolescents cannot focus on their homework after school, the educational outcomes will also be influenced.
• Result

Preliminary Analysis

Prior to testing each hypothesis, variables were analyzed for comparing (1) relationships between dating time and grade in New York and Suzhou; (2) dating frequency and changes of grade.
The relationship between average dating time per week and difference of educational outcome before and after having romantic relationship in America

The relationship between average dating time per week and difference of educational outcome before and after having romantic relationship in China
From the questionnaire, we do have some amazing results of the preliminary. We have forty participants in total, twenty from China and twenty from America. First of all, the things we done is to compare the differences of the adolescents’ grade before the time they had a romantic relationship and now. The fact in America is just what we expected in some ways.

Two more people join the team of failing from the exam, and also two people’s grade drop out of 81-90%. Generally, their grade just decreases in some ways, we considered dating may be some negative impacts on American adolescents. However, it is absolutely different in China.

From the graph above, we can see that adolescents’ grade from 0-80% all declined obviously while the number of the adolescents’ grade in the range of 81-100% increased dramatically, so
we considered it has positive impact on Chinese students. To found out the reason, we do the deeper analysis to the data. What is more, the things turned out to be more interesting.

From the data of America, it turned out that most students who have a date in America, their grade all decreased about 10%, the average percentage they have dropped is about 35%, and the average growth is about 10%. However, what’s in China is totally different. Most of the Chinese students’ score rises although they still have date once a week. The average of their increasing is about 80%, while the decreasing of the score is 45%. To find out more interesting information, we also calculated the average times they have dated in these two different cities. 1.7 times per week in China and 2.35 times per week in America. We suppose there do have a close relevant between the frequency of dating and the educational outcome, it is likely to be the more you dated, the less you get on your test paper. Moreover, not only according to the papers we have found, but also the data we’ve just got from the questionnaire we designed, it is interesting that the students in China give the responses quicker and also more than the American students, but they have less chance for dating. As a result, we suppose Chinese students may be more conservative than the American students, but being an adolescent, Chinese students may have more thinking about being independent.

To be more specify, we analyzed the data of relationship between “whether you have studied with your partner” and the differences of their grade. The result is also surprised. Most of the Chinese adolescents who have the romantic relationship are more likely to study with their partners when they are dating.

There are more American adolescents who have the romantic relationship are more likely to study with their partners than Chinese adolescents. For those who choose to study with their partners, half of them have the same grade as before. The others’ grades would decrease.

American adolescents are more likely to study during the dating time. However, their educational outcome is always lower than before.
The data we surveyed shows that the educational results do not strongly impacted by studying during the date.

**Improvement** we would make based on the preliminary survey:

1. Range vs number. The data we collected regarding to the dating time were all ranges, so it limited our analysis. We could not make scatter plot or standard deviation to further explore the relationship between any other variable with dating time. We will consider to ask participants to provide specific number in the future research.

2. Logic skip and better survey format. Almost all of our participants fill out both dating and relationship, but we only expect adolescents to fill out one section of it. Either he/she has been in a formal relationship with others, or he/she has date with others without official relationship. Based on our data, we assume the participants are either who have dated before they defined their relationship or just did not understand our questions at all.

3. Change Yes/No question to quantitative question
   e.g. Q: have you using your dating time for study?
   A: Yes/No
   We could change to what percentage of dating time do you spend on study?
   If we could change all yes/no questions, we would have more data to analyze.

**Discussion and conclusion**

This study examined the influences of education on adolescents’ romantic relationship. Chinese adolescents reported initial improvements in their knowledge at school at presence of romantic relationship in contrast to American students whose performances at school are worse since they are into a relationship.

We do acknowledge some improvement in the future research. First, It is undeniable that our research has some defects on its population range. Because we use combination of convenience sampling and snowball sampling. All the interviewees from Suzhou city and New York from our
own social network. Therefore, the population we focus on might be not covered randomly because of limitations. Therefore, actually, we will get a comprehensive and objective theory from the future research.

This study offers preliminary evidences to consider our research as an additional approach to improve the educational outcome based upon an ideology of healthy relationship. It also suggests the future exploration of adolescents’ relationship with other group of people (e.g., peer, parents). These types of exploration help inform research of best attempt focused on empowering adolescents and promoting positive impacts on each individual.

Subsequently, there are still a plenty of variables we can include in the future research. For example, different gender will cause different feelings when we talk about romantic relationship. So we expect from the same couple, boy or girl might give us different answer to our questionnaires. What’s more, race might be another variable we can survey. Because, there might be some differences between a white man and a black man in term of understanding relationship. So race can be another uncontrolled variable during this research. One more variable we should try to determine is about what the romantic relationship is. We could not define relationship to everyone else because each individual have their own definition of relationship. For example, there would be more behaviors, which could show people they are in such a relationship now like kiss or hug; however, the subject might not take it as a relationship from their perspective. The last variable is the dependent variable—educational outcome.

Chinese adolescents benefit from romantic relationship but American students do not. For instance, some high school students would like to find a boyfriend or girlfriend whose grades is much higher than his or hers. So whenever they chat about their academic performance or some educational behavior, one who has a temporary lag in grades may improve his or her grade, which is advantageous for one’s studies in this situation. So we are supposed to scope the expansion of the research to add some new factors to explain the “educational behavior” better.
• References


