
HOW MUCH DOES IT MATTER ? EXPLORING THE ROLE OF PARENTAL VARIABLES IN SCHOOL DEVIANCE IN ROMANIA

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Abstract

*In the present study, we explored the role of mothers and fathers in adolescents' school deviance. We were interested in the connection between parental variables manifested within the home, such as support, monitoring, punitive discipline, attitude towards deviance, time spent with children, and their impact on adolescents' deviance at school. We used self-reported data from 317 adolescents aged between 15 and 19 years ($m = 17.9$, $SD = 0.9$) from Suceava, Romania. Using independent *t*-tests, we found that girls are more parented than boys, the later are almost twice as deviant than girls, and mothers seem to invest more parenting resources in children compared with fathers. Using multiple hierarchical regressions, we found evidence that punitive discipline and attitude towards deviance are the strongest predictors of deviance. Monitoring explains deviance only with respect to girls, while time parents spent together explains deviance only with respect to boys.*

Keywords: adolescents, parental variables, school deviance

Introduction

Although many issues are still debated among researchers, they generally agree that family factors are among the most important in children's problem-behaviour development. Studies show that "ineffective, inept, or

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dysfunctional parenting” (Unnever, Cullen, & Agnew, 2007, p. 3) is a risk factor for adolescent deviant behaviours inside or outside home. In addition, parenting is culturally shaped. Super & Harkness’s (1986) developmental niche theory suggests that culture shapes the development of children’s behaviour through physical and social settings, customs of child care and child rearing, and psychologies of the caregiver. Thus, the purpose of this study is to investigate the relationship of five parental variables demonstrated in the home-parental support, monitoring, punitive discipline, attitude towards deviance, and time spent with children-to deviance at school among Romanian high-school students.

Literature has long emphasised the crucial role of the three key pillars of parenting-parental support, monitoring, and discipline-in the psycho-social development of children. For example, Sampson and Laub (1994, p. 539) reported that the ‘most important’ finding was that parent-child attachment, maternal supervision, and harsh discipline influenced delinquent behaviour net of childhood, and parental disposition variables. There are many other family and parental variables that play very important roles in children’s problem behaviour development. In his meta-analysis, Derzon (2010) found more than 20 domains of family predictor variables of crime and delinquency. Among them were two variables on which we focus in this study: time parents and children spend together, and parents’ attitude towards deviance. The Cambridge study found evidence that fathers who were not involved in boys’ leisure activities increased their risk of conviction; this variable was found to be the most important predictor of continuing to offend after the age of 21 (Farrington & Hawkins, 1991). Moreover, one of the functions of the parental system is to develop in children strong attitudes favourable to moral regulations within society. Parents’ attitudes to deviance matter because children, in their process of socialisation, identify more or less with their parents, and this identification shapes future child behaviours. Thus, as shown above, the selection of the five independent variables for the present research is based on an extensive review of literature that indicated that these are key variables for the child problem behaviour development.

Parental support

A large number of studies have been conducted that account for the link between parental support (also called parental love, warmth, nurturance,

affection, acceptance, cohesion, parent-child relationship) and child outcomes. Parental support refers to the quality of parent-child relationship and is ultimately a belief endorsed by the child (Kagan, 1978) rather than a set of specific parental behaviours. A meta-analysis of 119 longitudinal studies (Derzon, 2010) found that high parental warmth predicted the social competence of children, which includes confidence, responsibility, independence, and achievement. However, low parental warmth predicted low self-esteem, risk-taking behaviour, behavioural problems, aggression, and criminal behaviour of children, from early childhood to adolescence. Lack of parental support can have a direct or an indirect effect on deviance. Derzon suggested that, on the one hand, a low level of parental support, by itself, can slightly increase the probability of teen antisocial behaviour. On the other hand, when risk factors are present, a good parent-child relationship can diminish the negative consequences for the child. A poor parent-child relationship can also amplify the negative consequences for the child (Derzon, 2010). Rohner & Britner (2002) concluded that there is worldwide evidence concerning the association between parental rejection and behaviour problems (e.g., conduct problems, externalising behaviour, and delinquency) and substance abuse. Likewise, Fletcher, Steinberg, & Williams-Wheeler (2004) found evidence that lack of warmth was associated with drug use and delinquency.

Parental monitoring

Parental monitoring is one of the most important skills of parenting. Monitoring offers parents knowledge of their child's actions, friends, and whereabouts. Parental monitoring is an active and deliberate process that helps parents to permanently readjust their strategies, establish and reinforce rules, or reward and punish behaviour. Numerous studies have documented the association between monitoring and delinquency (Kerr & Stattin, 2000; Fletcher et al., 2004; Hair, Moore, Garrett, Ling, & Cleveland, 2008), externalising problems (Pettit, Bates, Dodge, & Meece, 1999), antisocial behaviour (Tompsett & Toro, 2010), and alcohol misuse and substance use for males (Barnes, Welte, Hoffman, & Dintcheff, 2005). As far as gender is concerned, boys are less monitored than girls (Svensson, 2003).

Parental discipline

Straus and Fauchier (2007, p. 4) define *parental discipline* a ‘behavior developed by parents in response to, and intended to correct, perceived misbehavior by a child’. Although parents often use both categories, punitive discipline is less preferred than non-punitive discipline, because of the lower likelihood of internalisation (Grusec & Goodnow, 1994). Moreover, in his meta-analysis, Gershoff (2002) found evidence that corporal punishment leads to negative child outcomes. Punitive discipline disrupts parent-child bonding (Hirschi, 1969), which, in turn, leads to low identification of children with social and parental values, leading to low internal control. As a result, children are more likely to become involved in antisocial behaviour.

Parents’ attitude towards deviance

Children’s perception of parents’ attitude towards deviance predicts child involvement in deviance. Social cognitive theory indicates that there is a link between parents’ and children’s beliefs and attitudes. As a result, children with favourable beliefs and attitudes to misconduct are more likely to engage in it. For example, Solomon, Bradshaw, Wright, & Cheng (2008) found evidence that the attitudes of parents and their children were correlated with aggressive behaviour, fighting, and school suspension in children. In addition, even after youth’s attitudes were controlled, parental attitudes predicted children’s aggressive conduct. Similarly, male adolescents get more involved in aggression when their caretaker’s antisocial attitude is poor (Hoeve et al., 2007). Research also shows that a favourable attitude to alcohol precedes the initiation of alcohol use (Krosnick & Judd, 1982). Finally, although parental attitudes and behaviour concerning smoking are both related to child smoking practices, parent’s attitudes seem to have more impact in predicting youth’s smoking habits (Nolte, Smith, & O’Rourke, 1983).

Time spent with parents

Effective parenting requires both quality and quantity of time spent with children. In adolescence, children desire more independence and autonomy and orient more to their peers. Although time spent with parents decreases in adolescence, time spent together is still important in the parent-adolescent relationship. Empirical studies found that mothers spend more time with children than fathers do (Craig, 2006). Swiss girls spend more time

with their parents than boys, and free time spent by parents with their children may be important in limiting adolescents' alcohol consumption (Kuendig & Kuntsche, 2006). The amount of time that kindergarten children spend with their mother negatively correlates with conflict with adults and with externalising problems (NICHD, 2003).

The present study

The specific aims of the present study are: (1) to analyze the differences between boys and girls, and fathers and mothers regarding the five parental variables mentioned before, and (2) to identify the best parental predictor variables of school deviance with respect to boys and girls.

Method

Participants

The participants were 317 students, 131 males and 186 females. They were between 15 and 19 years old (M age = 17.9, SD = 0.9) from four leading high schools in Suceava, a city with more than 100,000 citizens, situated in the North-East of Romania. All participants were Romanian, most of them Orthodox (76%). Of the participants, 22% were only children, 38% had one sibling, 19% had two siblings, and the rest had more than two siblings. Of the sample, 60% were firstborn children. The incomes of their parents were approximately equally distributed across the four income categories, from low to high. Fathers were more commonly employed outside the home (57%) than mothers were (49%), and worked an average of 7.8 hours as compared with 6.3 hours for mothers. Adolescents reported that, on average, 68% of parents had finished a vocational - or high school. In 80% of cases, the child lived with both parents, who were married. Data were completed for all but four participants who were excluded from the sample because of missing data.

Measures

In the present research, we used questionnaires filled in by adolescents about their parents, either separately or without differentiating between the two parents. The instruments measure the perceptions that adolescents have about their family and about themselves.

School deviance. Adolescents' school deviance was assessed using School Deviance Inventory (Marici & Turliuc, 2010). The instrument was specially designed by the authors for this research. Its construction is based on the review of theoretical and empirical works about deviant behaviours in Romanian contemporary schools. From the 25 initial items, 2 were dropped after item analysis. Respondents were asked to rate the frequency of 23 behaviours in which they engaged over the last year on a 5-point Likert scale (0 = never, 1 = once, 2 = two to three times, 3 = four to six times, 4 = more than six times). Items were of the following type: 'I lied to the teachers', 'I fought at school', 'I smoked at school'. The total score for each participant was obtained by summing the scores across the 23 items. The standardised alpha coefficient for the School Deviance Inventory Scale was .84 .

Parental support. The instrument contains 7 items adapted from Wave I (National Survey of Families and Households). Respondents were asked to rate on a 4-point scale, ranging from 0 (almost never) to 3 (almost always), the frequency of the following parental practices: speaking well about their child, physical touch (e.g. hugging, tapping their child's shoulder as a sign of appreciation), praising the child in front of others, showing understanding for their child's problems, expressing love verbally, offering presents as a sign of affection, and showing loving behaviour. Adolescents completed the questionnaire twice, one time for each parent in part. The total score for each participant was given by summing the individual scores for each item. The reliability analysis revealed a .88 alpha standardised coefficient for maternal support (adolescent report) and .88 for paternal support (adolescent report). By summing maternal and paternal support scores, a total parental support score was obtained. The alpha coefficient for the scale was .93 .

Monitoring. Monitoring was assessed with an 8-item scale, (see Table 1), as reported by adolescents, using the instrument created by the authors, based on the model of Supervision/Involvement Scale of the Pittsburgh Youth Study (Loeber & Stouthammer-Loeber, 1998). Adolescents indicated frequency on a 4-point scale, ranging from 0 (almost never) to 3 (almost always). The alpha reliabilities of the monitoring scale items were .81 for maternal monitoring (adolescent report) and .81 for paternal monitoring (adolescent report). The alpha reliabilities for parental monitoring (maternal and paternal monitoring summed) was .88 .

Table 1. Monitoring items

1.	How often did you talk with your parents about your plans for the next day?
2.	Before leaving, do you often tell your parents when you are going to come back home?
3.	After school, do you let your parents know that you are going to play or go out with friends?
4.	If you didn't come back home in time, would your parents know?
5.	Do your parents know where you are when you are not at home?
6.	When you and your parents are at home, do your parents know what you are doing?
7.	Do you inform your parents about what you do at school?
8.	How often would your parents ask you about things you did that day?

Power assertive discipline. We used the Punitive Discipline Scale from The Dimensions of Discipline Inventory (Straus & Fauchier, 2007) with some alterations. We used a 5-point Likert scale (from 0 = never to 4 = very often) for the 11 items remaining after reliability analysis. The Punitive Discipline Scale consists of parental practices grouped in terms of four categories: psychological aggression, corporal punishment, deprivation of privileges, and penalty task and restorative behaviour. The alpha standardised coefficient for maternal punitive discipline was .82 and .83 for paternal punitive discipline. The Parental Punitive Discipline Scale had a .89 alpha standardised coefficient.

Parental attitude towards deviance. This measure was created by us based on the model of Communities That Care Youth Survey (2006). On a 4-point scale from 0 (almost at all) to 3 (very much), adolescents rated how disturbed their parents would be if they: stole 5 Ron (about 1.5 dollars), wrote graffiti on buildings without owners' permission, fought at school, drank alcoholic beverages, smoked, or spread immoral materials. Adolescents responded to all questions for each parent. The total parental attitude towards deviance was obtained by summing maternal and paternal scores. The reliability analysis showed the following alpha coefficients: .80 for maternal attitude towards deviance, .81 for paternal attitude, and a .90 alpha coefficient for the parental attitude towards deviance scale.

Child's time spent with parents. The measure is composed of 6 items, and requires adolescents to indicate on a 6-point scale, ranging from 0 (never or rarely) to 5 (almost every day), the frequency of time spent with parents during a year's time. The instrument is based on a Dutch model measure (Gerris, et al., 1993). The items refer to the time spent by children for

recreational activities, including helping/working with parents, talking about personal issues, completing projects/school activities together, having meals together, and watching television together. The alpha reliabilities of time spent together with both parents was .85, with mother .78, and with father .74.

Procedure

The participants were volunteers who agreed to participate in the research in return for grade attribution. After being informed about the purpose of the research, students completed the questionnaire in groups of 15 to 25 students. Filling in the forms lasted between 20 and 35 minutes. The research was completed at the end of the second term, one month before the end of the school year.

Results

Analysis Strategy

Parents' and children's gender were collapsed into either school deviance or parental variables. Firstly, we tested to see whether groups of boys differed from groups of girls concerning school deviance, and whether mothers differ from fathers regarding the frequency of the five parental practices. For this, we tested for statistically significant differences between groups using independent *t*-tests. Then, we used six linear regression analyses to test the effect of parental, maternal, and paternal variables upon school deviance, firstly for the boys and then for the girls.

Preliminary Analysis

Comparison of boys and girls

Firstly, our analysis shows (see Table 2) that mothers offer more support to girls than to boys, monitor girls more than boys, have a stronger attitude towards girls' deviance as compared with boys' deviance, and spend significantly more time with girls than with boys. There was no apparent difference between boys and girls regarding the frequency of punitive discipline by mother. *Secondly*, fathers have a stronger attitude towards school deviance by girls as compared with boys. There was no statistically significant difference between boys and girls concerning father's support, monitoring, punitive

discipline, and time spent together. *Thirdly*, parents (summed scored for mothers and fathers) offered more monitoring, and have a stronger anti-deviance attitude for girls than for boys. We did not find any statistically significant difference between boys and girls regarding parental support, parental use of punitive discipline and time spent together with both parents. As far as deviance is concerned, boys are almost twice as deviant as girls.

Table 2. Descriptive statistics and T test results comparing boys and girls regarding maternal, paternal, parental variables and deviance

Variables	Boys (M and SD)	Girls (M and SD)	T tests
<i>Maternal variables</i>			
Support ($N=298$)	M = 13.16 (SD = 5.26)	M = 15.02 (SD = 4.95)	$t(294) = -3.114, p < .01$
Monitoring ($N=298$)	M = 14.17 (SD = 5.12)	M = 17.68 (SD = 4.76)	$t(293) = -6.046, p < .01$
Punitive discipline ($N=295$)	M = 8.71 (SD = 5.94)	M = 8.87 (SD = 7.87)	$t(290.162) = -.201, p > .01$
Attitude towards deviance ($N=291$)	M = 13.06 (SD = 4.25)	M = 14.60 (SD = 3.19)	$t(212.096) = -3.360, p < .01$
Time spent together with mother ($N=298$)	M = 14.53 (SD = 6.00)	M = 16.75 (SD = 6.34)	$t(294) = -3.026, p < .01$
<i>Paternal variables</i>			
Support ($N=285$)	M = 12.42 (SD = 5.38)	M = 13.48 (SD = 5.36)	$t(282) = -1.649, p > .01$
Monitoring ($N=286$)	M = 12.72 (SD = 5.20)	M = 13.90 (SD = 5.86)	$t(282) = -1.755, p > .01$
Punitive discipline ($N=283$)	M = 7.95 (SD = 5.92)	M = 7.74 (SD = 7.97)	$t(280) = .237, p > .01$
Attitude towards deviance ($N=278$)	M = 12.75 (SD = 4.14)	M = 14.33 (SD = 3.48)	$t(223.498) = -3.338, p < .01$
Time spent together with father ($N=285$)	M = 14.14 (SD = 5.85)	M = 13.07 (SD = 6.12)	$t(282) = 1.489, p > .01$
<i>Parental variables</i>			
Support	M = 25.07 (SD = 10.64)	M = 27.81 (SD = 9.76)	$t(295) = -2.300, p > .01$
Monitoring	M = 26.83 (SD = 9.75)	M = 31.62 (SD = 9.42)	$t(281) = -4.155, p < .01$
Punitive discipline	M = 16.74 (SD = 11.18)	M = 16.52 (SD = 14.11)	$t(279) = .144, p > .01$

Table 2. Descriptive statistics and T test results comparing boys and girls regarding maternal, paternal, parental variables and deviance - *continued*

Variables	Boys (M and SD)	Girls (M and SD)	T tests
Attitude towards deviance	M = 25.82 (SD = 8.23)	M = 28.93 (SD = 6.31)	t(275) = -3.554, p < .01
Time spent together with parents	M = 28.72 (SD = 11.56)	M = 29.72 (SD = 10.91)	t(281) = -.740, p > .01
School deviance	M = 30.90 (SD = 23.81)	M = 16.41 (SD = 12.36)	t(315) = 7.061, p < .01

Note: Adjustment for multiple comparisons: Bonferroni

Comparison of fathers and mothers

The results showed that, compared with fathers, mothers offer more support, monitor more frequently, and spend more time with their children, independent of a child's gender (see Table 3). There was no statistically significant difference found between mothers and fathers with regard to the use of punitive discipline or attitude towards deviance as reported by adolescents. *In addition*, we found no statistically significant difference between fathers and mothers concerning support, monitoring, punitive discipline, attitude towards deviance, and time spent with boys. *Finally*, girls are more supported and monitored by mothers, and they spend more time with mothers as compared with fathers. Our analysis showed that there is no significant difference between mothers and fathers with regard to punitive discipline and attitude towards school deviance.

Table 3. Descriptive statistics and independent T test results, comparing mothers and fathers regarding parental variables

	Variables	Fathers (M and SD)	Mothers (M and SD)	T tests
Children (no gender difference)	Support	M = 13.05 (SD = 5.38)	M = 14.27 (SD = 5.14)	t(581) = -2.807, p < .01
	Monitoring	M = 13.46 (SD = 5.62)	M = 16.30 (SD = 5.21)	t(582) = -6.325, p < .01
	Punitive discipline	M = 7.82 (SD = 7.16)	M = 8.80 (SD = 7.11)	t(576) = -1.651, p > .01
	Attitude towards deviance	M = 13.68 (SD = 3.85)	M = 13.98 (SD = 3.74)	t(567) = -.943, p > .01
	Time spent together	M = 13.54 (SD = 6.03)	M = 15.90 (SD = 6.31)	t(581) = -4.625, p < .01

Table 3. Descriptive statistics and independent T test results, comparing mothers and fathers regarding parental variables - *continued*

Boys	Support (N = 119)	M = 12.42 (SD = 5.38)	M = 13.16 (SD = 5.26)	t(239) = -1.073, p > .01
	Monitoring (N=119)	M = 12.72 (SD = 5.20)	M = 14.17 (SD = 5.12)	t(239) = -2.182, p > .01
	Punitive discipline (N=118)	M = 7.95 (SD = 5.92)	M = 8.71 (SD = 5.94)	t(237) = -.992, p > .01
	Attitude towards deviance (N=117)	M = 12.75 (SD = 4.14)	M = 13.06 (SD = 4.25)	t(236) = -.562, p > .01
	Time spent together (N=118)	M = 14.14 (SD = 5.85)	M = 14.53 (SD = 6.00)	t(237) = -.502, p > .01
Girls	Support (N=165)	M = 13.48 (SD = 5.36)	M = 15.02 (SD = 4.95)	t(337) = -2.748, p < .01
	Monitoring (N=165)	M = 13.90 (SD = 5.86)	M = 17.68 (SD = 4.76)	t(336) = -6.522, p < .01
	Punitive discipline (N=164)	M = 7.74 (SD = 7.97)	M = 8.87 (SD = 7.87)	t(335) = -1.310, p > .01
	Attitude towards deviance (N=160)	M = 14.33 (SD = 3.48)	M = 14.60 (SD = 3.19)	t(326) = -.734, p > .01
	Time spent together (N=166)	M = 13.07 (SD = 6.12)	M = 16.75 (SD = 6.34)	t(339) = -5.452, p < .01

Note: Adjustment for multiple comparisons: Bonferroni

Hierarchical Multiple Regression and Correlation Analyses

Deviance frequency as a function of boys' reports of parental variables

The inter-correlations of parental variables and deviance for boys are presented in Table 4. The regression analysis (see Table 5) showed that model 3, containing, parental punitive discipline, parents' attitude towards deviance, and time spent with both parents, explain school deviance in case of boys the best. Thus, model 3 accounts for 27% of the variance of boys' school deviance ($R^2_{adj} = .27$), the global effect size of the model being large (Cohen, 1988). The model is highly significant, $F(3, 110) = 14.472, p < .001$. The best significant predictors for boys' school deviance are, in order, as follows: parental punitive discipline ($r_{sp} = .37$), and parents' attitude towards deviance ($r_{sp} = -.32$). The effect size for each of the two variables is medium (Cohen, 1988).

Table 4. Inter-correlations of key variables for boys

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Parental support	-	.58**	-.28**	.21*	.55**	-.16
2. Parental monitoring		-	-.11	.35**	.53**	-.14
3. Parental punitive discipline			-	-.05	-.13	.41**
4. Parents' attitude towards school deviance				-	.13	-.36**
5. Time spent with parents					-	-.20*
6. School deviance for boys						-

Note: * $p < .05$. ** $< .01$

Table 5. Hierarchical multiple regression analysis predicting boys' school deviance from the parental independent variables (N = 111)

Variables	B	SE B	β
Model 1			
Parental punitive discipline	.85	.18	.40**
Model 2			
Parental punitive discipline	.82	.17	.39**
Parents' attitude towards deviance	-.96	.23	-.34**
Model 3			
Parental punitive discipline	.79	.17	.38**
Parents' attitude towards deviance	-.92	.24	-.32**
Time spent with both parents	-.24	.17	-.12

Note¹: $R^2 = .16$ for Model 1; $\Delta R^2 = .11$ for Model 2 ($p < .01$); $\Delta R^2 = .01$ for Model 3 ($p > .05$)

Note²: * $p < .05$. ** $< .01$

Deviance frequency as a function of girls' reports of parental variables

The inter-correlations of parental variables and deviance for girls are presented in Table 6. The regression analysis (see Table 7) showed that model 3, containing, parental monitoring, parental punitive discipline and parents' attitude towards deviance explain school deviance in case of girls the best. Thus, model 3 accounts for 21% of the variance of girls' school deviance ($R^2_{adj} = .21$), the global effect size of the model being medium. The model is highly significant, $F(3, 154) = 14.491$, $p < .001$. The best significant predictors for girls' school deviance are, in order, as follows: parents' attitude towards deviance ($r_{sp} = -.33$), parental punitive discipline ($r_{sp} = .23$) and parental monitoring ($r_{sp} = -.18$). The effect size for each of the three variables is medium

(parents' attitude towards deviance) and small (parental punitive discipline and parental monitoring).

Table 6. Inter-correlations of key variables for girls

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Parental support		.45**	-.43**	.12	.54**	-.13
2. Parental monitoring			-.14	.19*	.50**	-.25*
3. Parental punitive discipline				.05	-.23**	.25**
4. Parents' attitude towards school deviance					.09	-.34**
5. Time spent with parents						-.09
6. School deviance for girls						

Note: * $p < .05$. ** $< .01$

Table 7. Hierarchical multiple regression analysis predicting girls' school deviance from the parental independent variables (N = 155)

Variables	B	SE B	β
Model 1			
Parental monitoring	-.36	.10	-.27**
Model 2			
Parental monitoring	-.32	.10	-.24**
Parental punitive discipline	.18	.07	.21**
Model 3			
Parental monitoring	-.24	.10	-.18*
Parental punitive discipline	.20	.06	.23**
Parents' attitude towards deviance	-.64	.14	-.33**

Note¹: $R^2 = .07$ for Model 1; $\Delta R^2 = .04$ for Model 2 ($p < .01$); $\Delta R^2 = .11$ for Model 3 ($p < .01$)

Note²: * $p < .05$. ** $< .01$

Deviance frequency as a function of boys' reports of maternal variables

The inter-correlations of parental variables and deviance for boys are presented in Table 8. The regression analysis (see Table 9) showed that model 3, containing, maternal support, maternal punitive discipline, maternal attitude towards deviance and time spent with mother, explain school deviance in case of boys the best. Thus, model 4 accounts for 29% of the variance of boys' school deviance ($R^2_{adj} = .29$), the global effect size of the model being large. The model is highly significant, $F(4, 113) = 12.644$, $p < .001$. The best

significant predictors for boys' school deviance are, in order, as follows: maternal punitive discipline ($r_{sp} = .39$), mother's attitude towards deviance ($r_{sp} = -.34$), and time spent with mother ($r_{sp} = -.19$). The effect size for each of the three variables is medium (maternal punitive discipline, and mother's attitude towards deviance), and small (time spent with mother).

Table 8. Inter-correlations of key variables for boys

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Maternal support	-	.55**	-.23*	.23*	.54**	-.19*
2. Maternal monitoring		-	.00	.32**	.47**	-.14
3. Maternal punitive discipline			-	.01	-.07	.38**
4. Mother's attitude towards school deviance				-	.12	-.34**
5. Time spent with mother					-	-.20*
6. School deviance for boys						-

Note: * $p < .05$. ** $< .01$

Table 9. Hierarchical multiple regression analysis predicting boys' school deviance from the maternal independent variables (N = 114)

Variables	B	SE B	β
Model 1			
Maternal support	-.90	.40	-.21*
Model 2			
Maternal support	-.53	.38	-.12
Maternal punitive discipline	1.38	.34	.36**
Model 3			
Maternal support	-.14	.37	-.03
Maternal punitive discipline	1.50	.32	.39**
Maternal attitude towards deviance	-1.89	.45	-.35**
Model 4			
Maternal support	.39	.43	.09
Maternal punitive discipline	1.54	.31	.40**
Maternal attitude towards deviance	-1.90	.44	-.36**
Time spent with mother	-.86	.37	-.22*

Note¹: $R^2 = .04$ for Model 1; $\Delta R^2 = .12$ for Model 2 ($p < .01$); $\Delta R^2 = .12$ for Model 3 ($p < .01$); $\Delta R^2 = .03$ for Model 4 ($p < .05$)

Note²: * $p < .05$. ** $< .01$

Deviance frequency as a function of girls' reports of maternal variables

The inter-correlations of parental variables and deviance for girls are presented in Table 10. The regression analysis (see Table 11) showed that model 3, containing, maternal monitoring, maternal punitive discipline, mother's attitude towards deviance and time spent with mother explain school deviance in case of girls the best. Thus, model 3 accounts for 18% of the variance of girls' school deviance ($R^2_{adj} = .18$), the global effect size of the model being medium. The model is highly significant, $F(3, 164) = 13.284$, $p < .001$. The best significant predictors for girls' school deviance are, in order, as follows: mother's attitude towards deviance ($r_{sp} = -.28$), maternal monitoring ($r_{sp} = -.22$), and maternal punitive discipline ($r_{sp} = .22$). The effect size for each of the three variables is small.

Table 10. Inter-correlations of key variables for girls

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Maternal support	-	.44**	-.41**	.15	.54**	-.12
2. Maternal monitoring		-	-.12	-.15*	.50**	-.28**
3. Maternal punitive discipline			-	.10	-.21**	.22**
4. Mother's attitude towards school deviance				-	.10	-.31**
5. Time spent with mother					-	-.18*
6. School deviance for girls						-

Note: * $p < .05$. ** $< .01$

Table 11. Hierarchical multiple regression analysis predicting girls' school deviance from the maternal independent variables (N = 165)

Variables	B	SE B	β
Model 1			
Maternal monitoring	-.78	.20	-.29**
Model 2			
Maternal monitoring	-.73	.20	-.27**
Parental punitive discipline	.29	.12	.19*
Model 3			

Table 11. Hierarchical multiple regression analysis predicting girls' school deviance from the maternal independent variables (N = 165) - *continued*

Maternal monitoring	-.59	.19	-.22**
Maternal punitive discipline	.34	.11	.22**
Mother's attitude towards deviance	-1.13	.28	-.29**
Model 4			
Maternal monitoring	-.59	.22	-.22**
Maternal punitive discipline	.34	.11	.22**
Maternal attitude towards deviance	-1.13	.28	-.29**
Time spent with mother	-.01	.16	-.00

Note¹: $R^2 = .09$ for Model 1; $\Delta R^2 = .03$ for Model 2 ($p < .05$); $\Delta R^2 = .08$ for Model 3 ($p < .01$); $\Delta R^2 = .00$ for Model 4 ($p > .05$)

Note²: * $p < .05$. ** $< .01$

Deviance frequency as a function of boys' reports of paternal variables

The inter-correlations of parental variables and deviance for boys are presented in Table 12. The regression analysis (see Table 13) showed that model 3, containing, paternal punitive discipline, paternal attitude towards deviance, and time spent with father explain school deviance in case of boys the best. Thus, model 3 accounts for 24% of the variance of boys' school deviance ($R^2_{adj} = .24$), the global effect size of the model being medium. The model is highly significant, $F(3, 110) = 12.847$, $p < .001$. The best significant predictors for boys' school deviance are, in order, as follows: paternal punitive discipline ($r_{sp} = .35$), and paternal attitude towards deviance ($r_{sp} = -.31$). The effect size for each of the two variables is medium.

Table 12. Inter-correlations of key variables for boys

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Paternal support	-	.54**	-.29**	.21*	.54**	-.17
2. Paternal monitoring		-	-.18*	.33**	.54**	-.12
3. Paternal punitive discipline			-	-.07	-.15	.39**
4. Father's attitude towards school deviance				-	.13	-.36**
5. Time spent with father					-	-.18*
6. School deviance for boys						-

Note: * $p < .05$. ** $< .01$

Table 13. Hierarchical multiple regression analysis predicting boys' school deviance from paternal independent variables (N = 111)

Variables	B	SE B	β
Model 1			
Paternal punitive discipline	1.53	.35	.39**
Model 2			
Paternal punitive discipline	1.46	.33	.37**
Paternal attitude towards deviance	-1.86	.47	-.33**
Model 3			
Paternal punitive discipline	1.40	.33	.35**
Paternal attitude towards deviance	-1.79	.48	-.31**
Time spent with father	-.41	.34	-.10

Note¹: $R^2 = .15$ for Model 1; $\Delta R^2 = .11$ for Model 2 ($p < .01$); $\Delta R^2 = .01$ for Model 3 ($p > .05$)

Note²: * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$

Deviance frequency as a function of girls' reports of paternal variables

The inter-correlations of parental variables and deviance for girls are presented in Table 14. The regression analysis (see Table 15) showed that model 3, containing, paternal monitoring, paternal punitive discipline, and paternal attitude towards deviance explain school deviance in case of girls the best. Thus, model 3 accounts for 20% of the variance of girls' school deviance ($R^2_{adj} = .20$), the global effect size of the model being medium. The model is highly significant, $F(3, 154) = 13.603$, $p < .001$. The best significant predictors for girls' school deviance are, in order, as follows: paternal attitude towards deviance ($r_{sp} = -.33$), and paternal punitive discipline ($r_{sp} = .25$). Although insignificant, paternal monitoring has a p value of .056, ($r_{sp} = -.14$). The effect size for the two significant variables is medium (paternal attitude towards deviance) and small (paternal punitive discipline).

Table 14. Inter-correlations of key variables for girls

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Paternal support	-	.46**	-.46**	.14	.48**	-.10
2. Paternal monitoring		-	-.10	.16*	.54**	-.19*
3. Paternal punitive discipline			-	.01	-.16*	.27**
4. Father's attitude towards school deviance				-	.09	-.31**

Table 14. Inter-correlations of key variables for girls - *continued*

5. Time spent with father					-	-.01
6. School deviance for girls						-

Note: * $p < .05$. ** $< .01$

Table 15. Hierarchical multiple regression analysis predicting girls' school deviance from the paternal independent variables (N = 155)

Variables		B	SE B	B
Model 1				
Paternal monitoring		-.47	.17	-.22**
Model 2				
Paternal monitoring		-.42	.17	-.20*
Paternal punitive discipline		.36	.12	.24**
Model 3				
Paternal monitoring		-.30	.16	-.14
Paternal punitive discipline		.37	.11	.25**
Father's attitude towards deviance		-1.22	.27	-.33**

Note¹: $R^2 = .05$ for Model 1; $\Delta R^2 = .06$ for Model 2 ($p < .01$); $\Delta R^2 = .11$ for Model 3 ($p < .01$)

Note²: * $p < .05$. ** $< .01$

Discussion

The purpose of the present research was to explore the impact of five parental variables – parental support, monitoring, punitive discipline, parental attitude towards deviance, and time children spend with parents – on deviance at school among Romanian adolescents. The study asked two main research questions: (1) how is gender related to the key variables in our study, and (2) how can school deviance be predicted from the parental variables in this study?

Independent Samples T tests show that, in all cases where we found significant differences for parental, maternal or paternal variables, girls scored higher than boys did. However, we did not find any difference between boys and girls concerning punitive discipline in the case of mothers, fathers, or parents. Furthermore, in all cases where we found significant differences between fathers and mothers, mothers scored higher as compared with fathers. The use of discipline and attitude against deviance variables did not appear to

differ between mothers and fathers in case of boys, girls or children (summed scores).

These results are in accordance with previous findings. Richmond-Abbott (1992) indicates, for example, that girls receive more parental attention than boys do. Parents listen to girls and support them more often, especially when they need help or when they speak in a soft voice. Boys are encouraged in their process of self-affirmation in adolescence and their non-conformism is better tolerated. Furthermore, power control theory (Hagan & Kay, 1990) suggest that in patriarchal households, mothers are more often delegated the job of controlling their children than fathers, and that girls are controlled more than boys. Parents are under increased societal pressure to inhibit girls' aggression, deviance and control their sexuality as compared with boys. Boys experience less parental monitoring, and this increases their engaging in risk-taking behaviour and deviance. Social norms dictate that boys must detach from their mother as they mature, while girls can stay close and continue to identify with their mother. This partially explains the earlier maturation of girls and their earlier interiorising of parental norms (Turliuc, 2004). At the same time, there is evidence that more careful supervision of girls has to do with the debut of their fertility and control of their sexuality. Although the 'virginity myth' is not so strong in Romania compared with in the past, parental double standards for boys and girls remain prevalent (Turliuc, 2004). As far as punitive discipline is concerned, Fauchier & Straus (2007) found no difference between fathers and mothers regarding the use of punitive discipline for either girls or boys.

Using *inferential statistical analysis*, we found that punitive discipline is the best predictor for boys' school deviance, followed by attitude towards deviance in case of mothers, fathers or parents. The effect size of both predictors is medium. Time boys spend with mother seems to be the only small effect size predictor of school deviance. For girls, we found a medium effect size for attitude towards deviance, which is the best predictor, followed by punitive discipline (small effect size). Both predictors are significant in case of mothers, fathers or parents. The weakest predictor for girls' school deviance is parental and maternal monitoring (small effect size).

Two variables explain school deviance for both boys and girls. Punitive discipline and a higher tolerance regarding children's deviance in the case of mothers, fathers, or parents predicted school deviance. As stated in the

theoretical section, a frequent explanation is that punitive discipline creates conflict and emotional cut-off in the parent-adolescent relationship, and this predisposes adolescents to problem behaviour. Unfortunately, high parental tolerance regarding children's deviance is often the result of the lack of clear norms and set limits within the family regarding desirable behaviour.

The most surprising results concern differences regarding one variable that explains school deviance in the case of girls but not in the case of boys. Parental and maternal monitoring, significantly explains girls' school deviance. For paternal monitoring in the case of girls, the level of significance was .056 ($p > .05$). We did not find any evidence that support is a significant predictor of school deviance in case of girls. Moreover, our results do not support the hypothesis that support and monitoring are significant predictors of problem behaviors at school among boys. However some studies found similar evidence. Hoeve et al.'s (2007) longitudinal study brought evidence that parental supervision and attachment were not related to delinquency in young male adults. Contrary to our results, in the present study, Goldstein & Heaven (2000) showed that girls' bonding with parents was strongly related to delinquency. However, any explanation must consider that we found evidence that girls receive overall significantly more support and monitoring, and the mother, who seems to be the main caregiver, spends significantly more time with girls than boys. This could partially explain why maternal monitoring is a significant predictor of school deviance for girls and not for boys.

Moreover, we found evidence that time spent with mother significantly predicts school deviance for boys but not for girls. Time girls spend with both parents, mothers, or fathers did not explain their school deviance. Previous research has found that parents' low involvement in children's activities predicted delinquency (Lewis, Newson, & Newson, 1982), and boys whose fathers never participated in their leisure activities were twice as likely to be convicted than boys whose fathers partook in their son's leisure activities. (West & Farrington, 1973). However, we did not find any significant evidence that time spent with father predicts school deviance in case of boys. In addition, the absence of structured and orderly activities available to adolescent boys within the family strongly predicted delinquency in young male adults (Hoeve et al., 2007). Although these studies provide us with valuable information they are limited because they did not include female participants in addition to males, for comparison. One of the studies which took into account male as well

as female samples (Tygart, 1990) reported that the most important predictor of delinquency was the weekly time boys spent with their parents.

Conclusions

To sum up, the reason for conducting this research was to assess the relationship between five parental variables and school deviance of adolescents. We found evidence that both parents play an important role in preventing school deviance in their children. Although the father-son, father-daughter, mother-son, and mother-daughter relationships have common features, we found that there are also important differences: monitoring explains school deviance in the case of girls but not for boys; and time boys spend with mothers explains their school deviance but not in the case of girls. These two issues require further investigation and explanation.

The present research is not without limitations. Firstly, our study is based on a relatively small sample size. Secondly, although initially there was an attempt to obtain representativity for the sample for the whole student population in Suceava, the data was finally obtained more on accessibility criteria, so prudence is required in order to generalize our results. These limitations would require further comparison with similar studies done within Romanian culture.

Future research should also investigate the role of other parental variables or demographics in relation to school deviance in the Romanian context. In addition, while our study concentrated on practices that parents use within the family, future studies could compare parental practices with those used in the school context. It is likely, for example, that parental monitoring of school issues has a different effect on school deviance as compared with monitoring at home. What is more, the present study brings to discussion, one more time, the question of gender differences between mothers and fathers, boys and girls concerning parental rearing practices and children's outcomes. The clarification and understanding of the particularities of fathering and mothering, as related to their boys and/or girls, has crucial implications for psycho-educational programs and for the optimisation of parental practices, aimed at minimising the risk of teen deviance in Romanian schools. Assessing variations in parental practices and explaining their foundations would promote

understanding of the most effective ways to prevent school deviance in Romanian culture.

Acknowledgements

This work was supported by the European Social Fund in Romania, under the responsibility of the Managing Authority for the Sectoral Operational Programme for Human Resources Development 2007-2013 [Grant POSDRU/CPP 107/DMI 1.5/S/78342] awarded to Marius Marici.

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Received April 25, 2011

Revision received May 8, 2011

Accepted May 17, 2011