

Juvenile Delinquency in Five High Schools in Shenyang, China:
An Empirical Analysis under an Integrated Model

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ABSTRACT

Youth crime has been increasing rapidly since the Economy Reform and Open-door Policy in 1979 and become a serious social problem in China. Researches on explanations of juvenile delinquency, however, are relatively limited, while a number of scholars in western countries have developed delicate theoretical models to explore this problem. General strain, differential association, and social bond theory are employed in the current study to test if western theories can be applied to a different social context and to empirically explain the causes of youth crime in China. An integrated model is addressed through a self-reported survey with 385 respondents. The respondents are high school students in the city of Shenyang, aged from 16 to 18. Data from the questionnaire survey suggests that these three theories could explain Chinese youth crime. Two separate Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) models are built for analyzing delinquency of males and females. Predictors related to strain and differential association theory are directly associated with youth crime, while weak social bonds have indirect impacts on juvenile delinquency. Males and females are influenced by different factors when they are involved in delinquency. The thesis concludes with a discussion of establishing a theoretical integrated model for Chinese adolescence and provides policy implications for protection programs.

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DEDICATION

To my parents who always encourage me and give me the best gift that anyone can ever give – your great love. And to my love who gives me the warmest support and understanding.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Juvenile delinquency has been the dominant theme in criminology for several decades and criminologists have contributed numerous insightful theories which focus on the causes of delinquency. Many of these theories have been established, tested, amended and retested numerous times. This procedure of theoretical development has continued for more than one century in western countries, but there have been few theories translated to non-western countries. China, in particular, has been ignored and isolated by the world of criminology for a long time (Bakken, 2005). One of the reasons for this ignorance is that, after the foundation of the People's Republic in 1949, China presented itself internationally as an almost crime free society, with a very low crime rate between 1950s and 1960s (Guo, 1999). It should be noted, however, that some activities such as ongoing fights for rebellions were not considered as "crime" by the Chinese criminal law of the time. The discipline of criminology was cancelled at Chinese universities and colleges in 1952, for criminology was considered as useless and meaningless. Moreover, official crime statistics were not reported whatsoever during the 1970s due to the 'Culture Revolution'.

Since the Reform and Open-door Policy in 1979, Chinese society has experienced profound and drastic social change, and as a result, crime and delinquency have been increasing rapidly (Du, 1995; Gang, 1992; Guo, 1999; Zhang, et al, 1997; Drissel; 2006). In company with this policy shift, the Birth Control Act was implemented in the late 1970s, which has changed the traditional family structure and created millions of single-child families. Children have accordingly become much more precious than ever before. More and more Chinese have since considered juvenile delinquency as a social issue rather than a family issue which was the dominant thought for thousands of years. More recently, while both scholars and policymakers have become concerned about juvenile delinquency as a social problem (China Daily, June 4, 2004), the research is still relatively limited and short of empirical data. Moreover, few studies have tested western theories of juvenile delinquency in the Chinese environment partly due to the difference of culture backgrounds and the unique political orientation of "socialism with Chinese characteristics". As a reaction to the increasing crime rate, the Chinese government now exercises more efforts on crime prevention and crackdown campaigns (Feng, 2001).

However, the criminological research in China is relatively preliminary and there is a “lack of standardized research method” (Zhou & Cong, 2001), considering the discipline’s relatively short history and the government’s traditional ignorance of social science studies in the country.

This study will examine several leading criminological theories in the Chinese context and try to establish an integrated model to explain juvenile delinquency in China. Before analyzing the causation of juvenile delinquency, it will be necessary to discuss the definitions of “juvenile” and “delinquency”, because these two words have various meanings based on criminal laws in different cultural backgrounds and countries.

1.1 Who is a juvenile?

Historically, for most countries in Europe and North America, there were only two stages in human life: childhood and adulthood. Children were considered as vulnerable, dependent, and helpless, and sometimes were neglected by both parents and society. In ancient Greece, politicians and philosophers did not consider children special and ignored children’s rights; the word childhood was hardly found in ancient literature (Fuller, 2009). Youthful deviants, over the age of seven, according to the British Common Law, were considered old enough to know right and wrong and to understand the consequences of their behaviour. Before the 20th century, young offenders were charged by the same judges, governed under the same rules, and sent to the same jails as adults (Hogeveen, 2005). After the Industrial Revolution in the 19th century, attitudes and understanding toward childhood were meliorated due to the numerous social changes. The term adolescence was created about one hundred years ago to describe the period between childhood and adulthood, which was typically from 13 to 19 in most countries (White, 1989). Moreover, child savers started to be concerned with the welfare of children and to protect and reform the neglected, delinquent children. An increasing number of people started to argue that young offenders should not be fully accountable for their criminal behaviour as adults. Impacted by the above factors, finally, in legal systems, the word “juvenile” was born, referring to any person under the legal age of adult, which is 18 years of age in most countries. Legislators also provided a minimum age for young offenders, which means that children under that specific age would be exempted from punishment because they lack criminal intent. Thus “juvenile” can indicate various ages

of children according to young offender acts or criminal laws in different countries. In the United States, the minimum age of criminal responsibility was set at seven; Canada extended the jurisdiction of juvenile court from twelve to eighteen years; children above the age of fourteen years could be held responsible for criminal acts in Germany (Albrecht, 2004).

China, contrary to the western countries, has a long history of separating juvenile from adult justice and punishment. According to Confucianism, ancient Chinese philosophers believed that human beings were born with kindness. Mencius, the second founder of Confucianism, believed that “all things which are the same in kind are like to one another...and the sage and we are the same in kind” (Mencius, Translated by Legge 1895), and that children were disadvantaged, vulnerable, and forgivable when they committed a crime. These philosophical thoughts and considerations were brought into Chinese laws thousands of years ago. During the Han Dynasty (206 B. C. – 220 A. D.), the first emperor set up criminal laws with the clear remission for children, senior citizens, women, and individuals with disabilities. A child under the age of eight years, who committed a crime other than murder, would not be punished. An offender who was younger than ten years old would be exempted from death penalty and corporal punishment. In the laws of Tang Dynasty (1026-1368), there were specific age lines for punishment, which were clearly more lenient for juveniles: 1) under the age of fifteen years, juveniles would be punished slightly and could be bailed out; 2) under the age of ten years, offenders would be exempted from punishment for most criminal acts and be released after paying monetary penalties for robbery or aggravated assault; 3) there was no punishment applicable for offenders younger than seven years old. These rules were generally followed by the next several dynasties. The last dynasty in China, Qing Dynasty (1616-1911), had particular provisions as well in criminal law for adjudicating young offenders. The most severe punishment for children under the age of fifteen years was exile rather than the death penalty. A juvenile under ten years old could typically pay a monetary penalty instead of receiving a whipping punishment for crimes of robbery and aggravated assault and could be exempt from punishment for other crimes. Under the age of seven, a juvenile was acquitted of any type of crime.

In the Chinese legislative history the consideration and leniency towards juvenile offenders have existed consistently for thousands of years, and these traditions have generally been inherited by the communist regime. Although contemporary juvenile delinquency laws are not separate from laws for adults in China, there are several provisions in the Criminal Law dividing criminal responsibility of juveniles into three categories:

1. A juvenile under the age of fourteen years shall not be held any criminal responsibility, but should be disciplined and educated by parents or guardians. Governmental institutions or agents should provide rehabilitation when necessary.
2. A juvenile above fourteen but younger than sixteen years old shall be merely held certain responsibility for particular types of crime, including: homicide, aggravated assault, rape, robbery, drug-dealing, arson, explosion and poisoning.
3. A juvenile above the age of sixteen years shall be completely accountable for crime. However, if he/she is under the age of eighteen years, death penalty shall not be applicable. (National People's Congress, 1997; Chinese Supreme Court, 2006).

Thus, according to the Criminal Law, a juvenile in China refers to any person aged from fourteen to eighteen years. However, despite these age limitations in Criminal Law, the term “juvenile”, in China, sometimes does not exactly refer to children from fourteen to eighteen years old, because of the multiple meanings of Chinese words. In several categories of official criminal statistics and research literature, the definition of a juvenile is extended to the mid-twenties. For example, in the statistics of the Supreme Court, there were 249,128 juvenile delinquency cases charged in 2004 (Supreme Court, 2005) that included two categories: under the age of eighteen and from eighteen to twenty-five years. Also, several studies considered juveniles as young persons under the age of twenty-five (Xu, 1999; Wang, 2007). Indeed, in China, “juvenile” is not a precise concept in both the justice system and the academic world.

In terms of translation from Chinese to English, it might not be the best choice to use the word “juvenile” to describe youth deviance in China due to the lack of a separate youth justice system, but this word might be the most appropriate one to discuss the problem of Chinese young delinquents and its causation based on leading criminological theories which were established in English. For the convenience of research and

comparison, in this study, the word juvenile is based on the definition of juvenile in western literature and the Criminal Law of China and refers to children aged from fourteen to eighteen years.

1.2 What is delinquency?

Delinquency frequently refers to the violation of law committed by a juvenile. It is another concept with multiple meanings and various definitions in different countries and societies as well. Delinquency is dependent upon social norms. Society has created numerous acceptable social norms to protect its existence and to control the behaviour of its members. Different societies have provided diverse understandings of delinquency. In addition, scholars have contributed hundreds of definitions of juvenile delinquency in literature based on their own research interests and theoretical orientations. Obviously, it is necessary to discuss an operational definition of juvenile delinquency before discussing the causation for it.

Bynum and Thompson (2007) contended that most definitions of juvenile delinquency could be generally divided into three categories by different emphasis: the legal definition, the role definition, and the societal response definition. These three categories might overlap but vary in emphasis. The legal definition focused on the behaviour which violated laws or normative expectations; the role definition emphasized the juvenile rather than the criminal behaviour whose identification consistently coincided with a delinquent; the societal response definition primarily required a third party which perceived one behaviour and then judged it as delinquency or not.

According to Bynum and Thompson, the legal definition is the oldest and the most widespread description of the norm-violating act committed by a juvenile. Due to the enormous social changes resulting from the Industrial Revolution and social development in the 19th century, the functions of family were eliminated, which led to a growing number of problematic children and ungovernable youth. After several bills and acts were passed by legislatures, juvenile court was initiated at the beginning of 20th century and since that time juvenile delinquency has legally been referred to “any act that, if committed by an adult, would be a crime” (Bynum and Thompson, 2007: 8). From the perspective of legal definition, juvenile delinquency contained another aspect, status offense. Some activities of youth were not criminal in the criminal law, but still disturbed

the peace or infringed on the broad interests of communities. The legislators also considered these kinds of behaviour as illegal, such as truancy, running away from home and consumption of alcohol beverages. Thus the status offense refers to several types of conduct which would not be considered as crimes if committed by an adult, but which are illegal and inappropriate for juveniles.

Although the legal definition concentrates on conducts judged by law, the descriptions are not explicit in some cases as some terms are vague to operate, such as “incorrigible”, “immoral” and “ungovernable” (Bynum and Thompson, 2007). This definition also neglects the causal or accidental factors of delinquency, such as the violation of curfew on the night of Halloween or a little drink at a birthday party. Scholars who favour the role definition place emphasis on the juveniles and the consistency of their misconducts. They believe that little and temporary delinquency is forgivable. The role definition of juvenile delinquency focuses on juveniles, “who sustain a pattern of delinquency over a long period of time and whose life and identity are organized around a pattern of deviant behaviour” (Bynum and Thompson, 2007: 12).

As norms are created by society and delinquency is a norm-violating behaviour, the social response to behaviour is a crucial factor to decide if it is delinquency or not. Social groups, or authoritative members, such as teachers, parents, and police officers, can provide effective responses to the behaviour and label such behaviour as “delinquency” according to social rules or norms. The social response definition concentrates on the social environment, that is the audience in particular, who perceives and decides whether the behaviour is delinquency or not (Bynum and Thompson, 2007). This definition indicates that delinquency is a result of social interaction. Labelling theory is one of the sources for it. Generally, a juvenile becomes delinquent legally and officially when labelled by judge or jury at a juvenile court. On the other hand, this definition suggests that one certain behaviour could be considered as delinquency in one society, but could be accepted in another. For example, under the age of 19, children cannot consume alcohol beverages legally in most provinces in Canada, but there is no age limitation for drinking alcohol in the Chinese law. When a fifteen year old juvenile is drinking alcohol, this behaviour will be judged by a social audience as delinquency in Canadian society, but a normal activity in China.

These definitions concentrate on different aspects and represent the three major dimensions of juvenile delinquency. Bynum and Thompson (2007:22) contribute an integrated definition of delinquency: “illegal conduct by a juvenile that reflects a persistent delinquent role and results in society regarding the offender as seriously deviant” (Bynum and Thompson, 2007: 22). Based on this approach, however, delinquent behaviour in China is quite different from that in North America.

Legally speaking, delinquency in China is not entirely referred to as any conduct which would be a crime if committed by an adult. According to the Judicial Explanation by the Chinese Supreme Court, which was implemented in January of 2006, there are several exceptions for illegal conduct for juveniles. Under the age of sixteen, a juvenile has limited criminal responsibility only for homicide, aggravated assault, rape, robbery, drug-dealing, arson, explosion, and poisoning. A juvenile from the age of sixteen to eighteen will be exempted from punishment for theft from the first three commissions with the condition of returning the stolen property. Under the age of eighteen, a juvenile will not be considered and adjudicated as a young offender when he/she robs small daily use articles or school items or small sums of money from other youth even with slight violence or threats, since in such cases, robbery is considered to have limited impact on the life and study of the victim(s). Violent robbery with little property, committed by a juvenile from sixteen to eighteen, will be adjudicated with lenient sanctions (Chinese Supreme Court, 2006). Thus most misconduct considered as delinquency in western countries will not be legally “delinquent” in China and will not be, in many cases, prosecuted in the formal justice system. However, social audiences, such as parents, teachers, and peers still judge them as delinquency informally. Moreover, it is highly possible that teachers may provide a ‘delinquent’ label to those children who rob, steal, or commit an assault.

By contrast to western countries, status offense does not legally exist in any laws related to juvenile in China. Truancy, running away from home and consumption of alcoholic beverages do not violate laws and are not considered delinquency per se, but these conducts are normally forbidden under parental discipline and school regulations. According to the social response definition, however, truancy and running away from home are still considered as delinquency by the social audience in the Chinese context,

especially parents and teachers because these conducts are believed to result in further crime.

Different societies have employed diverse norms and values, and a variety of delinquent behaviour has been created accordingly. The definitions of delinquency are also various based on different theoretical approaches. In this study, the definition of delinquency is based on a sociological perspective, incorporating the legal definition, the role definition, the social response definition and the specific concerns of the situations in China. It is a broad concept, referring to any conduct which violates laws or is considered as inappropriate for juveniles by the social audience in the Chinese context. As the research population is high school student, not young offenders in jails, this thesis excludes serious delinquency for which juvenile should hold responsibility, including homicide, aggravated assault, rape, severe robbery, drug-dealing, arson, explosion, and poisoning, and only explains minor offense, such as fight, theft, minor assault, and truancy.

1.3 The Current Study

Although the definitions of “juvenile” and “delinquency” are a little different in the justice systems in China and western countries, the study of causation of juvenile delinquency has always been attractive to numerous scholars in almost every society, who are devoted to exploring why children engage in crime and deviance. There are hundreds of explanations of delinquency: some criminologists believe that youth are more likely to commit delinquency when they are under strain or pressure, either economic or emotional (Merton, 1938; Agnew, 1992; Agnew, 2001), while some contend that criminal behaviour is learned through important intimates, such as parents and friends (Sutherland & Cressey, 1955; Akers & Jenson, 2006). Other theorists prefer to discuss why there are millions of children who act normally and routinely and then explain delinquency from the social control perspective (Hirschi, 1969; Nye, 1958; Reckless, 1955). Furthermore, several researchers have attempted to use an integrated model to explain the problem of delinquency (Elliott et al., 1979; Erickson et al., 2000). Studies focusing on Chinese juvenile delinquency are limited in both western and Chinese literature and theoretical and empirical research in the Chinese language is still premature and insufficient, although the first academic journal in criminology, *Studies of*

Juvenile Delinquency, was published 20 years ago (Zhou & Cong, 2001). The current study aims to 1) examine general strain, differential association, and social control theory in the Chinese context, 2) explore an integrated model to analyze juvenile delinquency in China, and 3) discuss the different causes of delinquency for males and females. These questions are addressed, in this study, with quantitative data which were derived from a survey of students who completed a voluntary and anonymous questionnaire in December, 2008, in five high schools in Shenyang, China. The sample contains 377 students, almost evenly divided between male and female. To accomplish the goals of the study, measures related to general strain, differential association and social control theory, and other control variables are tested by a bivariate analysis. Then the relationships among all these independent measures and variables of delinquency are compared using Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) for males and females. Finally, path analysis will show the direct and indirect relations between independent and dependent variables, and will also contribute integrated models across genders. Policy implications based on the current findings are discussed in the conclusion section and the limitation of the study will also be addressed.

1.4 Organization of the Thesis

This study tests three leading theories in a distinct cultural background, and attempt to integrate these theories together to explain juvenile delinquency in China. Therefore, it is necessary to review the literature of general strain, differential association, and social control theory, and clarify the basic definitions, assumptions, and propositions in these theories (Chapter Two). Not only are the effects of general theoretical testing mentioned, but gender-specific testing of each theory is discussed at the end of every theoretical review section. Literature in Chinese language is also discussed in that chapter. Chapter Three provides more details of integrated theoretical perspectives and explores the various method of integration. The hypotheses and general integrated framework of the current study are also presented in that chapter. The procedure of data collection and characteristics of the research sample are discussed in Chapter Four. This chapter details operational definitions of delinquency, independent variables referring to general strain, differential association, and social control theory, and control variables which might mediate the relationships among theoretical measures and delinquency. The statistical

results and analysis are provided in Chapter Five, while the last chapter consists of a final discussion, including policy implications of delinquency prevention, and the limitations of this study.

CHAPTER TWO: REIVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Different perspectives and theoretical competition are potential sources to make the field of delinquency “interesting and exciting” (Hirschi, 1979: 37). Three leading theories are selected for the current study to be examined in a different social context of China. This study utilizes general strain theory that was contributed by Robert Merton (1938) and revised by Robert Agnew (1992) with social psychological concepts, differential association theory established by Edwin Sutherland (1955), and social control theory, especially social bond perspectives developed by Travis Hirschi (1961) with a more explicable linkage with empirical research. This chapter reviews the basic assumptions and development of each perspective and the previous examinations of these theories as well. As most criminological theories have traditionally emphasized male delinquency (Chesney-Lind & Shelden, 2004; Tanner, 2001; Daly & Chesney-Lind, 1988), several scholars attempt to illustrate the effectiveness of general theories to explain delinquency for both genders (Gottfredson & Hirschi, 1990; Hoffman & Su, 1997; Smith & Paternoster, 1987). Therefore, literature focusing on gender-specific tests will also be discussed. Finally, this chapter also includes a review of numerous discussions of juvenile delinquency in Chinese language.

2.1 General Strain Theory

Strain theory has been one of the leading theories seeking to explain crime and delinquency since it was established by Merton in 1930s. Classical strain theory discussed delinquency on the cultural and structural level and argued that strain would come from the conflict between ideal goals and legitimate means. Merton (1938) also indicated that there would be five typically possible solutions when individuals faced such a conflict: conformity, innovation, retreatism, ritualism, and rebellion. When a lower-class individual perceived that he/she could not achieve the ideal goal of monetary success or status of middle-class through the legitimate methods, he/she might turn to seek for some illegal paths to complete their goals or dreams. As this approach was criticized for the inability to explain the delinquency committed by middle-class individuals and the fact that only certain individuals under strain would commit a crime, Cohen (1955) brought a new dimension to strain theory and revised this theory with a subculture perspective. According to Cohen, individuals, especially youth, had both

chronic ideal goals and immediate goals. Thus middle-class youth were involved in delinquency due to the belief of a subculture which suggested that crime or delinquency provided an alternative method when they failed to achieve some immediate goals through legitimate means with their middle-class status and some certain condition.

According to the classical strain theory, strain was considered and measured merely as the conflict between aspirations and real outcomes, which limited its capacity for explanation. Agnew (1992, 2001) broadened the extent of strain and established a general strain theory. He argued that strain was not only the result of disjunction between ideal goals and legal means, but “negative relationships with others: relationships in which the individual is not treated as he or she wants to be” (1992: 48). For Agnew, strain was no longer a macro-level production of social structure or social stratification, but created on the basis of social interaction, at the social-psychological level. Three primary types of strain were distinguished. First, Agnew developed the strain model from Merton and Cohen, referring to as failure to achieve positively valued goals, which were composed by aspirations, expectations, and just/fair outcomes. Strain would occur not only due to the disjunction between aspirations or expectations and the rewards, but when individual received or perceived unjust outcomes. The second type of strain came from the removal of positively valued stimuli from individuals. When an individual perceived or suffered from the removal of positively valued stimuli, he/she might retrieve the lost stimuli or seek alternative stimuli, or revenge against those causing the loss of stimuli. These reactions were possible causes of delinquency. The third type of strain resulted from the presentation of negative stimuli. Negative stimuli would lead to delinquency because youth would try to avoid the negative stimuli, eliminate the negative stimuli, and retaliate against the negative stimuli.

Agnew’s efforts saved strain theory from attack waves produced by social control and social learning theory, and strengthened its leading status in the theoretical field. Since Agnew developed a broad concept of strain and suggested several variables for empirical testing, numerous researchers began to examine various types of strain and provide a higher level of support for the general strain theory (Agnew & White, 1992; Paternoster & Mazerolle, 1994; Aseltine et al., 2000; Hoffman & Su, 1997; Mazerolle & Maahs, 2000; Katz, 2000; Broidy & Agnew, 1997). Moreover, Agnew (2001) promoted

this theory through identifying several types of strain that were most likely to result in crime, and others that might not be associated with crime. He argued that there would be two categories of strain: objective strain and subjective strain. Objective strain was defined as those negative conditions or events which were disliked by most members of a certain social group. Most strains examined by empirical studies were falling into this category. Subjective strain concentrated on the individual level and referred to negative relationships or events disliked by particular people. Emotion, especially anger, was the significant indicator of subjective strain. Froggio and Agnew (2006) tested this argument using a sample of Italian youth and indicated that subjective strain was more strongly associated with crime and delinquency than objective strain. Furthermore, strain was more likely to result in crime when it 1) was seen as unjust, 2) was seen in high magnitude, 3) was caused by or associated with low social control, and 4) to some pressure to criminal engagement (Agnew, 2001). These identified characteristics clarified the measurements of strain and contributed a guideline for further research as well.

However, feminist criminologists have criticized male scholars for ignoring the reality and existence of female offenders and their unique experiences specifically related to their gender. They suggested that a gender-specific approach was required to explain girls' delinquency (Chesney-Lind, 1989; Tanner, 2001). On the other hand, several scholars have conducted efforts to demonstrate that general strain theory was "general" enough for female offenders, but the predictive types of strain might be different among young men and young women. Broidy and Agnew (1997) contended that general strain theory could be utilized to explore criminal behaviour for both males and females. They argued that different types of strains could lead to the higher crime rate among males and that several specific types of strain could result in female engagement in crime. Hoffman and Su (1997) examined gender differences of stress impacts with longitudinal research of 803 adolescents and they found that there were no significant differences between males and females in the relationships between stressful life events and delinquency/drug use. Piquero and Sealock (2004) found that females reported higher level of depression and anger than their male counterparts, but property offending committed by males was more significantly influenced by strain. Mazerolle (1998) compared the models of males' and females' delinquency and found no significant difference of relationships between

strain predictors and delinquency across groups, but there were some gender differences in the effects of negative life events and experience on violent delinquency. Males were more influenced by negative life events, while females were more influenced by negative relations.

2.2 Differential Association Theory

Differential association theory is one important approach of the social learning perspective that is built on the belief that criminal behaviour is socially learned. The sources of learning are various and different depending on the circumstances and the environments which the individual has experienced. An individual learns the idea and behaviour of crime during the process of socialization. Social learning theory believes that some juveniles learn a pattern of criminal attitude or behaviour through the social interactions with their parents, peers, neighbours and other social institutions. The best known and most popular social learning theory is the differential association theory developed by Sutherland and Cressey (1955). They suggested that most delinquencies were learned through the interaction with criminal elements and patterns that were acceptable, encouraging, or rewarded in the specific social group or neighbourhood which the juvenile belonged to. As a result of associating with the delinquent others, juveniles were taught two primary components of crime: 1) the attitude of crime which was desirable and 2) the techniques of violating the law. Sutherland and Cressey employed differential association to explain the different rates of juvenile delinquency among social groups and neighbourhoods and, by contrast to the social disorganization theory, they contended that juveniles had higher opportunity to learn the illegal behaviour in a lower-class area than in a middle-class neighbourhood.

Two central components were stated in the differential association theory: the content or what the individual learned, and the process or how the individual learned. The process of learning was almost the same as the activities in everyday life; but the content of learning was different from individual to individual. Sutherland and Cressey (1966: 81-82) summarized their theory with nine propositions:

1. "Criminal behaviour is learned", which challenges the biological approach of crime. It indicates that criminal behaviour is no difference from other normal activities, and can be learned commonly;

2. "Criminal behaviour is learned in interaction with other persons in a process of communication". Interaction is the crucial part of the learning process. Without communication, an individual would not become delinquent, even if he/she is staying in a criminal environment;
3. Parents and peers are the major sources for teaching criminal attitude or behaviour, because "the principal part of the learning of criminal behaviour occurs within intimate personal groups";
4. "When criminal behaviour is learned, the learning includes (a) techniques of committing the crime, which are sometimes very complicated, sometimes very simple, and (b) the specific direction of motives, drives, rationalizations and attitudes". According to Sutherland and Cressey, both behaviour and motivation can be learned. Moreover, not only can an individual learn the "professional skill" to become a criminal, but find excuse to justify their criminal behaviour.
5. "The specific direction of motives and drives is learned from definitions of the legal codes as favourable or unfavourable". The definition of law or legal system might be different in the social environment. An individual is living in a social environment surrounded with both favourable and unfavourable definitions of law, and he/she might experience the conflict between both definitions;
6. Although every person might face or experience definitions unfavourable of the legal code, an individual will commit a crime, when there is "an excess of definitions favourable to violation of law over definitions unfavourable to violation of law". This proposition is the most important and the heart of differential association theory. When the definitions favourable to violation of law outweigh the definitions unfavourable to breaking the law, a juvenile would possibly lean to delinquency;
7. "Differential associations may vary in frequency, duration, priority, and intensity". This proposition explains why the extent and degree of deviant behaviour widely vary among individuals. Crime and delinquency will be more serious and strong when an individual associates with a deviant source more frequently, consistently, or closely;

8. “The process of learning criminal behaviour by association with criminal and anticriminal patterns involves all the mechanisms that are involved in any other learning”. Antisocial behaviour is learned in the same way that law-abiding behaviour is learned; and
9. “While criminal behaviour is an expression of general needs and values, it is not explained by those general needs and values, since non-criminal behaviour is an expression of the same needs and values”. Sutherland and Cressey refute the explanation of social structural theory because they assert that both criminal and non-criminal behaviour exist in the same “structure”. Large numbers of people live in poverty, but only some of them commit crimes such as robbery or theft to solve the financial problem, while others choose to conform to laws.

Burgess and Akers (1966) supplemented the differential association theory with a social psychological perspective and revised the theory to “differential association reinforcement theory”. They stated that Sutherland and Cressey had not clarified how an individual learned criminal behaviour. Burgess and Akers viewed that the social environment and interaction were the most important factors of social learning because people learned right and wrong through social interaction. They argued that people were motivated to behave in a certain pattern from which they would be rewarded, and avoided those kinds of behaviour which would be punished.

Differential association theory has been one of the most popular explanations for crime and delinquency. Many criminologists appreciate this approach because it is based on empirical research and numerous studies have provided positive support for it (Akers & Jensen, 2006; Akers, 1998, Warr & Stanford, 1991; Neff & Waite, 2007; Hartjen & Priyadarsini, 2003; Baron, 2003; Haynie, 2002). Differential association theory is also well-known for its political implications as it suggests that crime can be alleviated by treatment programs (Williams & Mcshane, 2004). Moreover, studies show that this theory can explain both male and female delinquency, with little difference of predictive power across gender (Alarid et al., 2004; Smith & Paternoster, 1987). However, researchers suggest that delinquent peers are more important to predict males’ delinquency than females’ (Mears et al., 1998; Piquero et al., 2005). Alarid and his colleagues (2000) found that individual and others’ definitions of crime, and criminal

friends were all related to all types of males' delinquency, including property crime, drug abuse and violent crime, but only others' definitions and criminal friends had impacted on females. Furthermore, Heimer (1996) argued that delinquent friends would be a predictor of crime for both males and females, while deviant/delinquent attitude was more effective in predicting delinquency among boys than girls and this attitude was not related to female offenses.

2.3 Social Control Theory

Most criminological theories emphasize the causation of criminal behaviour, or why people violate laws, and then establish numerous hypothesis and explanations. Control theories, however, employ another perspective and turn to answer why most people obey rules and abide laws. Control theorists all share the basic assumption of human nature, which they believe is basically evil, and they have attempted to find factors controlling people's behaviour and keeping them from crime and delinquency. Socialization is one of the most important methods to build social control and prevent individual from committing crime. Through parents, teachers and other social agencies, individuals understand right and wrong, norms and values, and how to control their behaviour in an ordinary way. Crime or delinquency will occur when there are some steps wrong or missing during the socialization process.

Social control theory is not a new approach but originated from Durkheim (1895) who indicated that behaviour was controlled by social reaction and that crime or anomie was associated with controls. Reckless (1955) reformed control theory into containment theory through distinguishing control into two categories: internal and external control. Crime and delinquency resulted from the interplay between the inner and outer containments. Reckless considered the inner containment as self-control which was built at an early age, while outer containment referred to social environment. Self-control was more important than outer controls to impact on deviant behaviour.

Sykes and Matza (1957) contended that the reason for crime was because people explored the techniques of neutralization. Individuals used these techniques to excuse their crime and then would feel free to commit crime. They discussed five types of neutralization, including denial of responsibility, denial of injury, denial of the victim, condemnation of the condemners, and appeal to higher loyalties. Matza (1964)

contributed the term social bond to explain crime and delinquency. He indicated that the bond to the moral order was the tie between individual and outer social values and that neutralization was an important factor to eliminate this bond. When the bond of moral order was weakened, the individual would drift to deviance.

One of the most popular and tested theories of social control was presented by Travis Hirschi (1969) who, as most control theorists, argued that the individual was naturally evil and “free” to engage into crime and delinquency. However, he provided a unique approach to clarify social control. According to Hirschi, social bond stated an individual’s basic values and potential behaviour and was established in the childhood through the attachments to parents, peers, teachers, and other agencies which could provide routes of socialization. Hirschi characterized and discussed the four elements of social bond, which constrained an individual in the conventional society and then prevented crime and delinquency: attachment, involvement, commitment, and belief. Attachment was the most important element of social bond, which included the identification with peers or parents, concern and respect about parents or peers, attitudes towards school, and general sensitivity to the options of others. Involvement referred to the investment of time and the degree of effort in conventional or unconventional behaviour. Commitment was the investment which an individual obtained or pursued in conventional behaviour, such as education, business, and reputation in a specific field. When an individual intended to commit crime, he/she would consider “the cost of this deviant behaviour, the risk he runs of losing the investment he has made in conventional behaviour” (Hirschi, 1969: 20). Belief included the acknowledgement of social norms and rules. If an individual had respect for these norms and rules, he/she would feel a moral obligation to obey them.

Social control theory is appreciated by many criminologists due to the self-reported method that Hirschi employed successfully to test his theoretical hypotheses of the relationship between social bond and delinquency (Hirschi, 1969). On the other hand, however, self-reported method limited this approach to minor or less severe criminal behaviour. Despite this limitation, empirical examinations of this perspective support that low self-control is associated with criminal behaviour (Chapple, 2005; Brownfield & Sorenson, 1993; Chapple & Hope, 2003; Sellers, 1999; Vazsonyi et al., 2001).

Researchers have also examined some elements of social bond theory to explore whether there are differences in their impacts on delinquency across gender, reporting mixed results. Krohn and Massey (1980) and Canter (1982) found that attachments to parents and peers were more strongly related to males' delinquency than females', while Heimer and DeCoster (1999) argued that parental attachment was more effective for young women. Alarid et al. (2000) indicated that parental attachment impacted more strongly on female offenders and that attachment to peers was significantly related to male delinquents. Chapple and his colleagues (2005) also discovered that attachment to peers had a significant relationship with violent delinquency only for boys. Commitment was also shown with multiple impacts on delinquency among young men and young women. Friedmand and Rosenbaum (1988) found that lack of commitment to school was more strongly associated with delinquency for females than males. In contrast, Erickson et al. (2000) discovered that educational commitment had significant association with delinquency for both males and females. In addition, Chapple et al. (2005) reported the consistent finding of commitment. Some studies indicated that involvement in activities such as organized sports was positively associated with males' delinquency only (Begg et al., 1996; Daigle et al., 2007), but the involvement of watching television would decrease the risk of wrong doing for boys in Daigle et al.'s study (2007).

2.4 Research on Chinese Juvenile Delinquency

While criminological theories are competitively developing and growing, research related to China, especially juvenile delinquency, has almost kept silence for several decades. Only a few studies on Chinese juvenile delinquency can be found in western literature, and some of them are not adequately supported with empirical data. Bao and his colleagues (2004) first used general strain theory to explain juvenile delinquency in the Chinese context. They tested the relationship between general strain and delinquency moderating by several control variables among Chinese adolescents and examined both direct and indirect effects of negative interpersonal relations on delinquency. They suggested that the combination of strain and anger increased the risk of criminal conduct, and that negative relationships with other people in juveniles' immediate life environment, especially family and school, had significant impact on delinquent behaviour. Consistent with this research, Bao et al. (2007) examined whether social

support from family, school, and peer group would mediate the relationship between strain and delinquency. They found that males were more likely to join in delinquent peer groups to alleviate strain, whereas females preferred cross-domain support for managing interpersonal strain. Liu and Lin (2007) also employed strain theory to explore delinquency in China with a sample of around 1,700 middle-school students in Fuzhou which was the capital of Fujian province in South China. They reported that strain variables were positively associated with delinquency for males and females. Strain of status achievement, such as frustration with course grades, career, and college education, was more strongly associated with boys' delinquency; and girls were more influenced by strain linked with physical well-being. In their study, lower self-control, association with delinquent peers, deviant attitude, and father's education were also positively related to delinquency. Drissel's (2006) longitudinal birth cohort survey revealed that young offenders were typically from lower-class, and had low education and strong association with delinquent peers. He also found that delinquent youths were influenced by subterranean values which were produced by social and economic changes in China, such as pursuing "big money" and "power and influence", ignoring reputation and family. Zhang and Messner (1995) reported that weaker family attachment would result in stronger association with deviant friends that had positive relationship with delinquency and that youths from low SES family or having deviant family members were more likely to commit crime. In addition to focusing on strain, social learning and social control theory, several studies discussed explanations of juvenile delinquency in China based on labelling perspectives and analyzed the impact of peers (Zhang, 1994), self-esteem (Zhang, 2003), the relationship between official severity of punishment and interpersonal estrangement (Zhang & Messner, 1994), and the effectiveness of reintegrative shaming theory (Chen, 2002). Moreover, many scholars have devoted more effort on studying the juvenile justice system (Guo, 1999; Zhao, 2001) and the Law on Protection of Juveniles rather than the explanations of the problem (Zhang & Liu, 2006).

The research on juvenile delinquency written in Chinese language is still limited and problematic, though abundant studies have been accomplished in the past twenty years. Most studies remain philosophical, with little empirical evidence. Chinese scholars prefer using a rather broad, structural and theoretical framework to explain the problem of

delinquency. Perspectives of biological characteristics of the individual, family structure, failure of school education, and rapid changes of social structure are all presented typically in one single paper without any empirical data; and prevention of delinquency is also commonly and generally mentioned in such literature (Wang, 2007; Tan, 2008; Wu & Cui, 2008; Wu, 2004). In this sort of study, when discussing family factors, researchers usually argue that delinquency is caused by broken family, negative relationship with parents and the parental indulgence of children. In addition, lack of introduction of basic law and justice education in school and neglect by teachers are school-related predictors of delinquency. Structurally, rapid social change produces ideological contradictions that the pursuit of wealth and hedonism and the belief of individualism have now superseded the traditions of volunteerism, self-sacrifice and collectivism. Since the Law of the People's Republic of China on Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency was implemented in 1999 by the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress, most Chinese literature on juvenile delinquency has consistently added a new section discussing strategies for prevention of delinquency (Xu, 1999; He & Lian, 1999; Wei, 2007; Liu et al., 2005). This Prevention Law has launched the war against crime and a new type of social control in China, which combines both formal and informal control (Zhao, 2001). It consists of eight chapters; Chapter II specifically addresses the responsibilities of parents, school, law enforcement agencies, and other social organizations in preventing juvenile delinquency (Standing Committee of the National People's Congress, 1999). This chapter has become the general source for most studies on prevention of delinquency. Almost all of above research discusses prevention strategies ideologically and philosophically based on the Chinese Marxist theories, but none of them provides evidence supported from the real world, although there are various relative prevention programs supported by the Communist Youth of League or other social organizations in most cities.

2.5 Summary

Three leading criminological theories have been reviewed in the current chapter. General strain theory primarily broadens consideration of the sources of strain from the macro-level monetary success and achievement of middle-class status to a micro-level perspective of negative relations with others and suggests that strain is positively

associated with delinquency. It can explain both males' and females' delinquency, although types of strain might have different impacts on delinquency across gender. Differential association theory argues that crime behaviour is socially learned from intimate groups and the value favourable to law violation is the most important proposition in this theory. This approach is still gender-specific, as delinquent peers might more strongly affect male offending than females. Social control theory is an old perspective which is derived from Durkheim and social bond theory is one of the most well-known approaches of this perspective. Attachment, commitment, involvement, and belief are the four basic elements of social bond. It can explain delinquency for both genders, but diversities in the effectiveness among the elements are reported by empirical research. Studies focusing on Chinese juvenile delinquency are limited in the western literature, but they indicate the possibility of testing western theories in the Chinese social context and provide explanations of delinquency using strain, differential association, social bond, and labelling theory. Abundant literature in the Chinese language emphasizes the explanations of juvenile delinquency, but the philosophical and tautological discussions of the causation of juvenile delinquency do not show strong interest in explaining the causes of the problem with empirical evidence. Rather these studies are more interested in developing prevention programs without sufficient empirical support.

CHAPTER THREE: INTEGRATED THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES and FRAMEWORK

The competition among leading explanations of crime and delinquency has existed for a long time. Each approach affects plenty of supporters and has been demonstrated with positive empirical evidence. Some criminologists, however, expect a larger percentage of explained variance in delinquency, and suggest that an integrative model might provide better explanations for particular criminal behaviour (Elliott et al., 1979; Neff & Waite, 2007; Erickson et al., 2000; Colvin & Pauly, 1983; Wolfe & Shoemaker, 1999; Barlow et al., 1995), because some theoretical perspectives are interactive and highly associated with others (Agnew & White, 1992). Theoretical integration refers to the combination of two or more interrelated theories together in order to explain specific crime and delinquency more effectively and comprehensively. As mentioned in Chapter Two, some previous studies of Chinese juvenile indicate that the causes of delinquency might be multiple and complicated and hence an integrated model would be more appropriate to address this problem. This chapter will discuss in particular the integrated approaches and draw a theoretical framework for the current study.

3.1 Reasons for Theoretical Integration

Strictly speaking, almost every leading theory in criminology incorporates ideas from other perspectives to some degree. Control theory, for instance, has roots in the Chicago School (Winslow & Zhang, 2007: 109), while general strain theory is combined by strain theory and social psychological perspective of pressure and depression. Cloward and Ohlin (1960) developed their subculture theory by extending strain theory with culture conflict theory. Criminologists who favour theoretical integration are prone to consider that the weakness of each single theory can be solved by mixing assumptions and propositions from other perspectives (Elliot et al., 1979), though there are several difficulties with the attempts towards theoretical integration. The harshest criticism is that most integrated models are produced on contradictory assumptions from single theories. Each theory has different assumptions to explain delinquency and these assumptions are frequently contradictory and converse. Strain theory, for instance, assumes that an individual is more likely to commit crime when he/she perceives or feels the disjunction between actual achievement and aspiration that would be considered as a production of

social structure, especially with reference to monetary success or middle-class status achievement. In contrast, differential association theory argues that although the crime or delinquency expresses some social needs and values, which could be monetary success, it could not be explained by these needs and values because there are also numerous non-criminal patterns expressing the same needs and values. Moreover, the basic assumption of differential association is that an individual is socially blank in nature and every behaviour, including the criminal act, is learned from significant others, such as parents and close friends, while social control theory assumes that the individual is naturally evil, and strong and effective social bonds are the reason for non-criminal behaviour. However, this argument of contradictory assumptions, in practical research, is not quite vital as it seems because the underlying assumptions are seldom achieved and tested in empirical examinations. Evidence is typically unable to support exactly whether individuals are born as a blank slate, or naturally “bad”.

Another problem of theoretical integration is related to the operational choice of variables in empirical research. Even if scholars provide a delicate integrated model, it is still difficult to justify specific variables representing one particular theory. For instance, low course grades sometimes are considered as a negative situation in school and tested as one type of strain by some scholars (Cheung & Cheung, 2008; Bao et al., 2004), but in control theory this variable can also present a low educational commitment (Hirschi, 1969; Mason & Windle, 2002). In addition, “abuse by parents” is another controversial variable: control theorists will consider it a prediction of weak attachment to parents; in the view of social learning theory, juveniles will learn not only the technique of assaulting others but also the value of violence as an alternative solution to problems; abuse by parents will also indicate a negative relationship with adults, according to general strain theory. Therefore, when testing an integrated theoretical model of delinquency, more justification of some variables is required. For example, Agnew (2001: 340) indicated that strain from failure to achieve educational success belonged to those types of strain that were “unrelated or weakly related to crime” because it was less likely to be seen as unjust. Parental abuse indeed could be explained by several theories, but it also could be merely used as a psychological variable, as several studies suggested (Wareham & Dembo, 2007; Arata, 2007).

Although there are difficulties and criticism towards theoretical integration, it is still possible and reasonable to combine general strain, differential association, and social control theory together to explain juvenile delinquency. All these three theories focus on the relationship between individual and the surrounding social environment and develop from psychological perspectives. Thus, it is not surprising that they share several independent variables to examine their effectiveness, such as the relationship with parents (Thaxton, & Agnew, 2004; Laundra, et al, 2002). Agnew (1995) argued that motivation process was more effective than specific independent variables to distinguish theories. He stated that three fundamental processes distinguish several leading theories: individuals' evaluation of crime was the core motive in differential association/social learning theory; strain theory focused on negative impact in particular; and freedom was the unique intervening process derived from social control theory. Agnew also suggested, in studying the relationship of all these processes, that "certain processes may contribute to each other", and some processes may "interfere" other processes (Agnew, 1995: 390). For example, negative relations with parents may offer more freedom to ignore the parents' opinions and then youths may justify to themselves delinquent acts.

In addition, general strain, social learning and social control theories are social psychological in nature (Agnew, 1995) and the integrated model of these three theories will be more appropriate to answer a question with a single perspective: why do some children experiencing negative relations with others, or holding weak social bonds, or associated with delinquent peers, not engage in delinquency? For theoretical integration, social control theory might be the easiest one to incorporate with other theories as it is contained in almost every attempt to integrate criminological perspectives (Williams & Mcshane, 2004). Generally, it assumes that human beings need no motivation to violate laws due to their self-interested characteristic in natural, and the existence and effectiveness of social restraints are the most important mechanism to prevent crime and delinquency. Hirschi (1969) argued that when one's controversial restraint was broken or missing, an individual was more likely to conduct delinquency. In real life, however, most individuals with weak or broken bonds are not criminals, but act normally. If not every one is "equally motivated" to commit crime, there might be other factors which will be directly related to crime, such as negative effects and favourable definitions of the

violation of law (Lilly et al., 2007). Therefore, attempts at incorporation with differential association and strain perspectives may widen theoretical explanations of social control from minor delinquency to serious crime.

Negative relations with others are the central concept in the general strain theory. Failure to achieve positively valued goals, removal of positively valued stimuli, and presentation of negative stimuli are all reasons for strain which will be positively associated with delinquency (Agnew, 1992). Youths who experience negative relations with others, especially parents and teachers, might seek other resources for support and then they are more likely to associate with delinquent peers or to join in gangs as a severe result (Minaker & Hogeveen, 2009). Therefore negative stimuli, negative events, and limited opportunities are all potential factors to increase the possibility of association with delinquent peers.

Social learning theory assumes that the weight of the values is the most important one which an individual learns from significant others. In conditions in which the definitions favourable to crime or violation of law outweigh the definitions unfavourable to the violation of law, delinquent behaviour is more likely to result. Exposure to criminal environments and association with delinquent peers are the primary paths to adopt the definitions or beliefs related to the violation of laws (Sutherland & Cressey, 1955). Predictors from other theories, such as weak attachment to parents and schools, little commitment to conventional activities, and negative relations with others, might be highly associated with delinquent peers and result in the adoption of acts that violate the law. This combination among these theories can provide more comprehensive explanation of juvenile delinquency and fix the weakness of any single theory.

3.2 Methods of theoretical integration

Not every theorist is in favour of integrated theories, with some researchers asserting that “separate and unequal is better” (Hirschi, 1979: 34). Hirschi argued that integration theorists often took some terms from one single theory but ignored the deeper assumptions and claims of that theory, and that the integrated orientation was not recommended for a healthy competition among different perspectives, which were sources to keep the field of delinquency attractive. Although Hirschi (1979) believed that most attempts at integration would end in failure, he identified three existing methods to

incorporate theories: end-to-end, side-to-side, and up-and-down. These three methods are popularly applied within the integrated attempts.

The first possible path is the end-to-end model. In this model, different theories are put together in a straight sequence, which means the prior theories become one of the independent variables of the following theories. There is usually a structural level theory at the beginning, proceeding with a middle level perspective, and most frequently ending with a micro-level idea (Williams & Mcshane, 2004). Most indicators are sequenced by a logical development and the direct and indirect relationship with the delinquency as well. The effort of Colvin and Pauly (1983) is one of the examples of this orientation. They combined micro-level perspectives, including social learning, social control, strain, and labelling theories with macro-level processes from conflict and radical theories, and constructed a structural-Marxist theory to explain delinquency. Although they were unable to provide empirical data to illustrate their hypothesis, the analysis and explanation in their work were following up the sequential path of theoretical integration.

Another type of propositional integration is side-by-side or horizontal integration. Theorists divide the criminal cases by different characteristics and then assume one theory could be more applicable to explain some specific types of crime, while other theories could explain other components of crime. Social control theory, for instance, could be more appropriate to explain minor delinquency, such as petty theft, whereas severe crime could be understood better through social learning theory. Thus the combination of these two theories could provide better explanation of juvenile delinquency than could each single theory. Life-course theory (Moffitt, 1993) segregated deviants to life-course persistent offenders and adolescent-limited offenders. These two types of offenders are different in developmental processes: life-course persistent offenders are created by biological and psychological factors, while adolescent-limited offenders are sociological in nature. The major problem of this approach is to define various types of crime and to separate reasonable cases from all criminal cases, although Gibbons and Farr (2001) conducted a good effort to clarify vague definitions of crime and different types of offenders.

Integration theorists also attempted to abstract some parts of one or more theories and to incorporate these parts within a more general theory. This is the up-and-down or

deductive model of theoretical integration. This approach basically raises the level of abstraction of one theory, which is applied to extend the structure of the conceptually broader theory; or, some abstracted general assumptions of two or more theories can be incorporated in a new theory. However, the acceptance of parts or assumptions of different theories may be problematic due to the misunderstanding of the general subsumes of these theories (Hirschi, 1979). As a result, this method of integration is rarely addressed in the social sciences (Kubrin, et al, 2009).

Integrationists may not only employ different methods to incorporate theories, but design various levels of analysis. For example, micro-level theories, such as social learning, labelling, and social control theory, focus on the behaviour of individuals and are interested in why certain types of individuals is more likely to commit crime than other types, while macro-level perspectives, including strain, social disorganization, and conflict theory, attempt to explain the variation in crime rates among different groups (e.g. the poor, neighbourhoods). Thus the integrated theories can also be created by within-level or cross-level analysis. Braithwaite (1989) illustrated the possibility of the within-level model through integrating labelling, subculture, opportunity, social learning, and social control theories together to construct his new approach – reintegrative shaming theory. Cross-level integration refers to the combination of both micro- and macro-level theories. This approach emphasizes both structural and processual factors that result in crime and delinquency, and explanations are elaborated according to both larger society and individual actions as well. The work of Colvin and Pauly (1983) is one of the examples of this approach. They utilized both social structural factors, such as different types of classes, and psychological factors, such as social bond and differential association, to establish an integrated perspective of delinquency. Pearson and Weiner (1985) also attempted to combine both macro-level analytical factors and micro-level characteristics of individuals to their integration framework.

Although numerous scholars provide attempts and efforts to incorporate theories for increasing the explanation power of a single theory, the debate concerning theoretical integration has never stopped. The arguments from both opponents and proponents, however, maintain the interest and vigour on this issue and no matter what method is

employed, practical evidence has demonstrated the success of theoretical integration consistently.

3.3 Attempts at Theoretical Integration

Several scholars provided attempts at theoretical integration. One of the most famous studies is probably from Elliot and his colleagues (1979). They combined strain theory, social learning theory and social bond theory into a single explanatory model to overcome the “class bias inherent in traditional perspectives” (Elliot et al., 1979:4). They argued that inadequate socialization was a source of strain and that delinquency would most likely occur when a person was in strong stress and faced weak control. Meanwhile, strain weakened a person’s conventional bond to others and was also a source of weak social control. Furthermore, social learning and social bonds were associated. The choice of conventional or deviant group depends on the degree of social bonds the person had. Deviant behaviour likely occurred when an individual had strong bonds to deviant group and weak bonds to conventional groups. As a result, strain, inadequate socialization and deviant association weakened social bonds, which finally lead to deviance or crime involvement.

Joseph (1995) also incorporated strain, social control, and differential association perspective to explain delinquency among African Americans. In contrast to Elliott et al.’s argument that strain weakened social bonds, in his integrated framework, Joseph contended that weak parental attachment would cause a large perception of blocked or limited opportunities and increase the association with delinquent peers as well. Strain was negatively associated with school attachment, but positively related to delinquent peers. Youths who perceived blocked or limited opportunities to success were more likely to develop deviant friendship than those feeling open or unlimited opportunities about the future (1995: 479). He also assumed that all three theories would have direct relations with delinquency. However, structural strain variable was not related to delinquent peers or delinquency in the multiple regression analyses, and parental attachment was only associated with school attachment which had an indirect relationship with delinquency through delinquent company.

Erickson et al. (2000) incorporated social control and differential association perspectives to discuss how social bonds would reduce adolescent delinquency. They

argued that social bonds would be indirectly associated with delinquency by adolescents affiliating with deviant peers. Strong conventional social bonds reduced not only association with delinquent peers but also susceptibility to negative peer influence. Youths who bonded with convention had less opportunity to make friends with peers who favoured law violation and to learn the values from those deviant peers. In addition, the susceptibility to negative peer influence would be reduced when adolescents held strong attachment to their parents and obeyed the conventional guidance. Erickson et al. employed a longitudinal sample to examine their integrated model of delinquency and substance abuse and also analyzed the differences among genders. The results supported this social process model of adolescent delinquency suggesting the model could explain both male and female offending.

The study conducted by Ingram et al. (2007) also provided an incorporation of social control and differential association perspectives. Similarly, they contended that weak attachment to parents or inadequate parental monitoring would increase the association with delinquent peers. Focusing on family life that included family structure, parental attachment, and parental supervision, and deviant peers, they examined whether family life would mediate serious delinquency by delinquent peers. All the measures of family life presented both directly and indirectly influence on dependent variables through delinquent peer that was the strongest predictor of delinquency in that study. This result was consistent with several previous studies that integrated social bond and differential association and revealed that the impact of attachment to parents was indirectly associated with delinquency by inhibiting the development of delinquent friendships (Warr, 1993; Asteltin, 1995; Marcos & Johnson, 1986; Massey & Krohn, 1986).

Neff and Waite (2007) compared the impacts of general strain and delinquent peers on substance abuse among incarcerated youth. They used parental dysfunction, family disruption, different living situation, and victimization to measure general strain, and differential association referring to peer substance use, and gang involvement. They analyzed two separate multiple regression models for both male and female, but no integrated framework was established in their study. Differential association was the strongest predictor of substance abuse for both genders. Regarding the general strain

variables, the number of different living situations had an impact on male offending, whereas prior victimization was related to female drug abuse.

Besides these attempts in western societies, the studies focusing on Chinese juveniles are typically tested with different integrated perspectives. As discussed in Chapter Two, scholars would like to incorporate several explanations when analyzing delinquency in the Chinese context, though they did not build an integrated model clearly (See Bao et al., 2004; Bao et al., 2007; Liu & Lin 2007; Cheung & Cheung, 2008). Consistently, the literature in Chinese language provides integrated explanation of delinquency using family structure, peers' influence, personal pressure, and even official labelling.

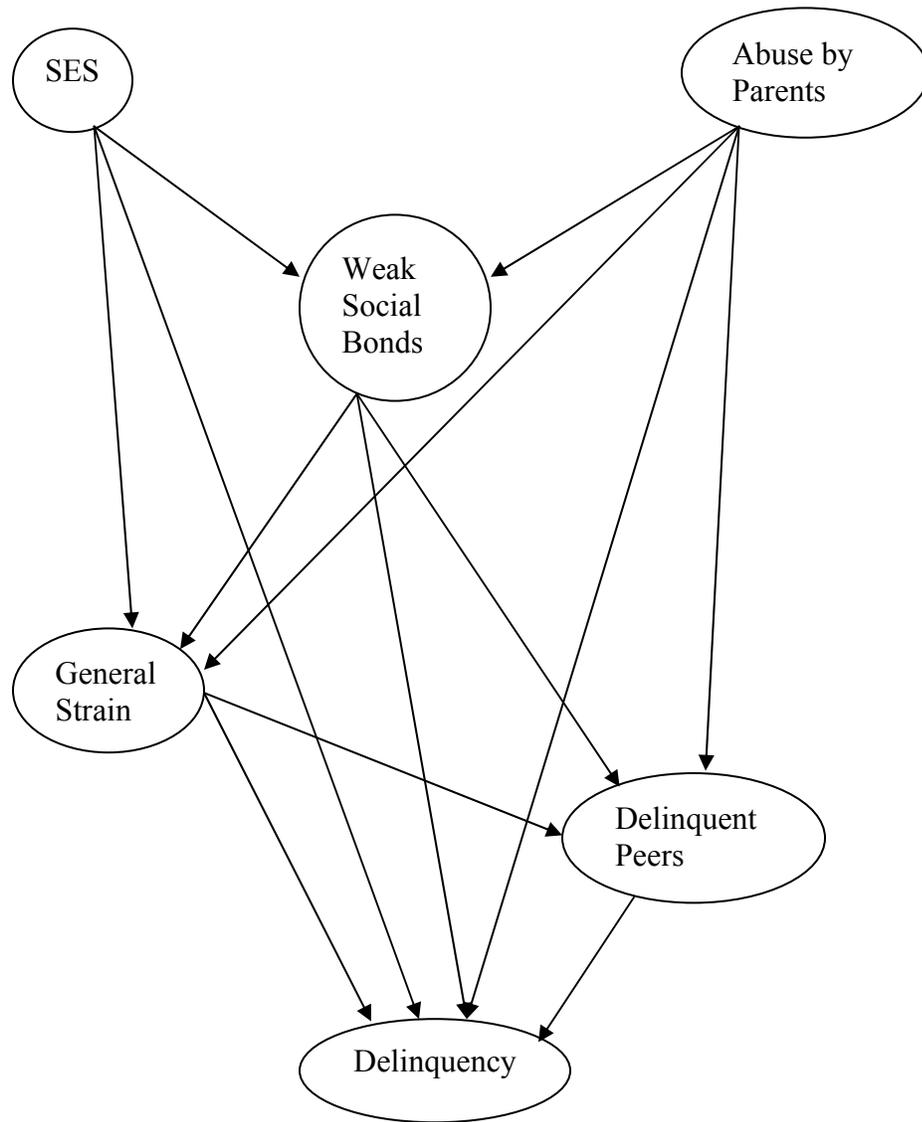
3.4 Integrated Framework for the Current Study

In the current study, an integrated perspective from general strain, differential association, and social bond theory is used to explain juvenile delinquency in China (See Figure 3.1). It is suggested that social bond would impact delinquency through the connection with general strain and differential association. Individuals with weak social bonds will not necessarily be involve in delinquency, unless he/she suffered from negative relations with others, especially parents and teachers, or associated with antisocial peers. Negative relations with others might also affect association with delinquent peers because youths experiencing unpleasant relations with others or events might seek other forms of resolution and subsequently associate with antisocial peers. Differential association would be the initial predictor of self-reported delinquency and adolescents would learn both technique and values in favour of law violation from those peers.

To operationalize the hypotheses, six variables, drawing from general strain, differential association, and social control perspectives, would be associated with delinquency. They are parental attachment, school attachment, school commitment, involvement, general strain, and delinquent peers. Socioeconomic status and being abuse by parents are considered as control variables and they would be negatively associated with social bond variables, such as parental attachment and school attachment (Ingram et al., 2007). Parental attachment and school attachment might be negatively related to negative relations with adults, and youth with strong attachments will be less likely to be associated with peers who engage in delinquency (Joseph, 1995; Erickson et al., 2000;

Warr, 1993). Furthermore, involvement in conventional activities would also reduce the association with antisocial peers. Negative relations with others might be positively associated with delinquent peers because youth in unpleasant relations or those suffering from negative events might seek support or release from antisocial peers or gang (Chesney-Lind & Shelden, 2004). Delinquent peers could be positively associated with delinquency, which is the fundamental principle in the differential association perspective and has been tested in abundant studies (Sutherland & Cressey, 1966; Akers & Jenson, 2006). Several studies provide evidence of the causal order among social bond elements (Hirschi, 1969; Massey & Krohn, 1986; Marcos et al., 1986). Although the analysis of those connections might indicate useful but more complex pathways to delinquency, in the current study, this internal causal order will not be examined, as the purpose of this thesis is to explain Chinese juvenile delinquency using an integrated perspective. In addition, two separate regression models will be employed to examine whether the integrated model is appropriate for both males and females.

Figure 3.1 Integrated Framework in the Current Study



Notes: The arrows present the possible relationships among these variables and the adjustments are shown in Chapter Five according to the OLS analysis.

CHAPTER FOUR: SAMPLE AND MEASURES

4.1 Sample

Data for this study were collected from a sample among five high schools in the city of Shenyang in December, 2008. The sample was obtained from 377 high school students, and almost evenly divided among males (47%) and females (53%), aged from 16 to 20 years. The respondents were enrolled in the 10th to 12th grades in public schools.

Numerous studies have stated that China has experienced tremendous social change since the economic reform policy was implemented in 1979, and that the rapid social movement and social integration have resulted in the disruption of social control mechanisms, increasing social inequality, and conflicts of cultural belief (Deng & Cordilia, 1999). As a result, the crime rate in urban areas is relatively higher than in rural areas (Xiao, 1988). In this study, the sample was drawn from urban areas; the rural population was not included. Shenyang, about 700 kilometres north from Beijing, is the capital of Liaoning Province and a typical inland city in China. With a high reputation for heavy industry and mechanical production, Shenyang has experienced a profound social change and a rapid economic growth since 1978, and was ranked 16th among cities based on GDP predictor in 2008 (Xinhua Net, 2008).

The sample in this study was collected in ordinary schools and “low qualified” schools for the best achievement to accomplish the objects of the current study. In the Chinese education system, high schools are ranked and labelled by different names and levels based on the teaching capability and the rate of college engagement. High schools are considered and divided morally by citizen as “star/key school”, “ordinary school” and “low qualified school”. The “star/key schools”, which admit selected students with excellent scores on entrance examinations, usually provide outstanding quality of teaching and are more likely to guarantee a high rate of college engagement; the “ordinary schools”, typically, are not so difficult to get into as the “star/key schools”, but provide students with lower opportunities to enter colleges; students in the “low qualified schools” which lack resources and support from both education system and communities are rarely accepted by colleges, with lowest levels of teachers’ supervision and highest levels of delinquency. Obviously, students in “star/key schools” are more likely to be busy with studying, no whether voluntarily or forced by teachers, for the sake of pursuing

a college dream, while students in “ordinary schools” or “low qualified schools” are more likely to engage in non-academic activities, including crime and delinquency. There is one or two “low qualified school(s)” in each district in Shenyang. The five high schools in this study are located in three districts and three of them are notorious for the low rate of college entrance and the other two are “ordinary schools”. Data for the current study were collected from students in grade ten and grade eleven among these five high schools. The total number of students was 3,550 during the investigation period and the sample represented around 10% of the research population. Although this sample might not completely represent the whole youth population in China, it could show a partial picture of Chinese delinquents, and be used to test the major criminological theories established in a western culture.

4.2 Data collection

The current study was approved by the University of Saskatchewan Behavioural Research Ethics Board in December, 2008 (See Appendix II). An anonymous survey was employed to collect data and a self-reported questionnaire was designed in Chinese language to better reflect the actual meanings of the responses. This research endeavour required a waiver from parental consent as it would affect the nature of the research and these high school students would find it very difficult to share real situations if parents were aware of both the questions and/or the responses. In addition to this and according to the laws in China, individuals, 16 years of age or older, are responsible for their conduct¹. High school students were invited to participate in this study during their self-studying period. In many high schools in China, the last two classes in the afternoon, usually from 3:00 pm to 4:30 pm, are designed for self study. There were no teachers or administrators in the classrooms when students were filling out the questionnaires. The cover letter was attached to the questionnaire, outlining the purpose and objectives of the research and also explaining the participants’ rights. All questionnaires were anonymous and no identifying marks were on the questionnaire, which was put, sealed in a brown envelope, and returned by the participants, no matter whether it was completed or not. It

¹ Criminal Law of the People’s Republic of China (Adopted by the Second Session of the Fifth National People’s Congress on July 1, 1979 and amended by the Fifth Session of the Eighth National People’s Congress on March 14, 1997): Article 17. A person who has reached the age of sixteen who commits a crime shall bear criminal responsibility. <http://www.people.com.cn/item/faguiku/xingf/R1010.html>

was technically impossible to trace the specific participant through the questionnaire. Participants (high school students) were providing implied consent by completing the survey. Three classes with the same class number, Class One, Class Three, and Class Five, were selected in each school. Four hundred questionnaires were sent out to students in five different high schools, and 385 of them were returned. The number of valid and completely answered questionnaires was 377. Table 4.1 shows the sample distribution among five schools.

Table 4.1 Sample Distribution among Schools

	Total number of students in Grade Ten and Grade Eleven	Sample number	Percentage
School A	764	79	10.34%
School B	402	36	9.00%
School C	454	53	11.67%
School D	1018	145	14.24%
School E	912	64	7.02%
Total	3,550	377	10.62%

4.3 Sample Characteristics

The average age of the respondents was 17.6 years old, ranging from 16 to 20 years old, but only 3.7% of respondents were older than 18 years. The sample was almost evenly divided among males (47%) and females (53%). Most fathers of the respondents had graduated from high school or above (60%), and most mothers were reported as having high school certification or above (64%), while few fathers and mothers graduated from colleges (14% and 16%). Less than 15% of the respondents reported that their family income levels were in poverty or near poverty, although different students might have different criteria as to the meaning of poverty. Table 4.2 shows a brief description of the sample.

Table 4.2 Descriptions of Personal Information and Family Background

		Percentage (%)	
Personal information	Age	16	1.4
	N = 376	17	29.5
		18	65.4
		19	3.2
		20	.5
		Gender	Female
	N = 377	Male	47
Family background	Father's Education N = 377	College or above	14.1
		High school	45.9
		Middle school	34.2
		Primary school or lower	5.8
	Mother's Education N = 377	College or above	16.2
		High school	48.3
		Middle school	31.0
		Primary school or lower	4.5
	Family income level N = 377	Wealth	1.1
		Comfortable	18.0
		Adequate	67.1
		Difficult	11.9
		Poor	1.9

4.4 Measures

Delinquency could not be easily measured as “violent offense” or “index offense”, due to the rehabilitative approach of dealing with juvenile delinquency in China and the lenient justice system for youth. As discussed in Chapter One, only a few acts which are committed by juveniles would be considered as illegal in the Criminal Law, and would result in incarceration and sentence. As the sample in this study was high school students, not young offenders, it would be more appropriate to divide “delinquency” with violent

behaviour, academic misconduct and property delinquency. For establishing an integrated model to explain juvenile delinquency in China, separate scales related to strain, social learning, and social control theories were employed in this study. Two types of strain, which is referred to negative events and relations with others, were measured, including a ten-item of negative events scale (adapted from Agnew & White, 1992) and a two-item scale on negative relations with parents and teachers. Differential association was operationalized through questions on associated with delinquent peers and the number of delinquent friends. Seven items and scales were related to a social control perspective. According to Hirschi (1969), they presented three basic elements of control theory, including parental attachment, school attachment, school commitment, and school involvement. To classify a variable as strain or control measure, negative relation was one of the criteria of strain measures, while the lack of connection with conventional others outlined the control measures (Agnew & White, 1992). Additional to those three theories, and as some researchers indicated, being abused by parents, physically or mentally, is another important indicator related to delinquency (Sampson & Laub, 1994; Ambert, 1999; Simons, et al, 2004). Thus these two types of abusive experience served as the control variables in the current study.

4.4.1 Dependent Variables

Two indicators were constructed for the dependent variables related to delinquency. The first measure was self-reported violent behaviour, which included seven items presenting the frequency of involvement in violent activities in the most recent three years.

Respondents were asked in the recent three years how often (from none to more than twenty times) they committed violent offense, were involved in gang fights, and carried a weapon to school. There are 34.9% of respondents indicating that they were involved in violent behaviour at least once. Table 4.3 presents the questions concerning this indicator in the questionnaire. These variables were gathered and examined by the reliability and the inter-correlation. Each variable had a sufficient numbers of cases and was significantly related to others. A reliability analysis stated that standardized alpha (Cronbach's alpha) score was .792, which indicated a reliable measure. As several studies indicated that males were more likely to be involved in violence (Broidy & Agnew 1997),

this measure was significantly different between males and females, examined by two-tail t-test (sig=.000).

Table 4.3 Self-reported Violent Behaviour Scale

In the past three years, how many times have you ever:	Numbers of times:
Hit someone in purpose of hurting?	
Involved in a gang fight?	
Assaulted someone violently?	
Used physical force to get money or things from people?	
Damaged public or other's property on purpose?	
Threatened to harm teacher or student?	
Carried a weapon (knife, club) to school?	

The category of academic misconduct was partially related to the status category offense in the western world, which usually included truancy, running away from home, curfew violation, and alcohol consumption (McNamara, 2008), although there were slight differences among countries. Because youth justice has not been separated from criminal justice, status offense is not a legal term in China and youth would not typically receive punishments from adjudication, when they are absent from school, running away from home, and consuming alcohol beverages. Academic misconduct in the current study includes two variables: absence from school and cheating on examination(s). These acts are not illegal, but Chinese society normally considered those conducts as deviant, and youth consequently would not be allowed absence from school by most teachers and parents. In addition to this, cheating on examinations was another unacceptable behaviour and forbidden in school. Thus academic misconduct in this study was constructed with these two items, stating how many times the respondents have conducted these acts in the most recent three years (from none to more than twenty times). Around half of respondents (48.9%) reported at least one of these two acts and significant difference were found between males and females (sig = .001). The Cronbach's alpha of the scale was .594.

As Thornberry and Krohn (2000) indicated, the measures of violent and non-violent offense should be examined separately to achieve a better measurement. Property delinquency in this study included three variables: shoplifting, stealing for money or things less than \$50 Chinese dollars, and stealing more than \$50. Although auto theft appeared as a prevalent variable in the literature (Britt, 1994; Elliott & Ageton 1980), it was not considered as a possible predictor of property delinquency. Domestic vehicle use in China, such as cars, vans, and trucks, is less common than in North America and most families do not own any vehicle at all. There were around 180 thousand domestic vehicles reported in Shenyang, while the population size of the city was more than 7 million, not counting the nearby satellite cities. Thus the auto theft rate was relatively low and less likely to be associated with youth. Motorbike use was forbidden in Shenyang due to the high risk of accidents. Therefore motor vehicle theft was not included in the survey. Questions answered by the students were described in Table 4.4. A reliability analysis of the scale revealed the Cronbach's alpha score as .595. Similar with the other two dependent variables, this scale was also different among boys and girls, statistically significant at the .05 level in t-test analysis (sig=.021).

Table 4.4 Property Delinquency Scale

Self-reported property delinquency	Numbers of times
In the past three years, how many times have you ever:	
Stolen something from store(s)?	
Stolen money or things worth less than \$50 Chinese dollars?	
Stolen money or things worth more than \$50 Chinese dollars?	

4.4.2 Independent Variables

Strain measures

To test the new approach of strain theory, Agnew and White (1992), measured strain as negative life events, life hassles, negative relations with adults, parental fighting, neighbourhood problems, occupational strain, clothing strain, and lack of popularity with opposite sex. They argued that the negative relation was the major criterion to distinguish strain measures from others, such as social control measures. Although the negative

relation with adults, especially parents, might reduce social control, it would create pressure and lead to delinquency as a result. Numerous subsequent researchers contributed various strain measures, basically from Agnew's outline, such as negative school experience (Cheung & Cheung, 2008; Lee & Cohen, 2008), unpleasant experience (Tittle et al., 2008), family conflict (Aseltine, 2000), and parental physical punishment (Moon et al., 2008; Piquero & Selaock, 2000).

Strain variables have been measured variously since the strain theory was established, and scholars have also debated the reliability of strain measures for several decades. Although Agnew provided a broader and better concept of strain, and contributed several criteria and outlines for it, strain still varied from study to study, and one ethnic group to another. Cheung and Cheung (2008) used "educational under-achievement" to indicate strain. They asked the respondents how well their academic performance was in school and how often they were bothered by the frequent failure in school tests or examinations. However, the grade or school performance was considered as a social control variable by Agnew and White (1992), because it was not directly associated with negative relations. In a study of South Korean youth, Morash and Moon (2007) considered emotional or physical abuse/punishment by parents as strain measures. In the research by Bao and his colleagues (2004), focusing on Chinese youth, strain was measured by negative relations with others including parents, teachers, and peers, and negative emotions, such as anger, resentment, anxiety, and depression as well.

In this study, strain was measured with reference to negative life events, negative relations with adults, and parental conflict. To measure negative life events, respondents were asked if in the recent three years they had experienced several unpleasant events and were victims of several types of offense. A score of 1 indicated no victim experience and score of 2 meant the respondents had suffered from certain types of offense, or stressful events. Negative life events were gauged by a 10-item scale, partially adopted from Agnew and White (1992), with a higher score indicated higher number of incidents (See Table 4.5). Negative relations with adults was based on two questions that asked the respondents to rate how often they conflicted with their parents and were blamed by the teachers, from 1 = none to 4 = always. One question was related to parental conflict, which was "how often do your parents fight orally with each other". Respondents

provided their experience of parental conflict and ranked with 1 = none, 2 = sometimes, 3 = often, 4 = always.

Table 4.5 Negative Life Events Scale

In the recent three years, have you ever experienced the following events?	No	Yes
Assaulted by others		
Stolen		
Robbed		
Been sexual abused		
Picked up by classmate or friends		
Been seriously sick		
Close family member passed away		
Separated with friends		
Parents divorced		
Job loss among parents		

Differential association

It was not a surprise that individuals' favourable or unfavourable associations could not be determined accurately (Sutherland & Cressey, 1978). Differential association theory had been criticized for its imprecise operational definition, and difficulty to verify empirically. To develop his theory, Sutherland established a precise mathematical ratio of weighted favourable and unfavourable associating with delinquency, which could predict the criminal behaviour. He argued that after weighting the frequency, duration, priority and intensity, a ratio of favourable and unfavourable relations with law could be created. However, this ratio could not be measured precisely as Sutherland anticipated, because it would be extremely difficult to perceive behaviour patterns directly and to calculate and summarize to become a ratio (Matsueda, 1982). As a result, differential association is generally measured by the correlation between the numbers of delinquent peers and self-reported delinquency (Agnew, 1995; Akers & Cochran, 1985; Neff & Waite, 2007; Cheung & Cheung, 2008). Some scholars stated that types of delinquency in which the respondents' peers were involved could be used to measure differential association (Tittle,

et al, 1986; Matsueda, 1982). The problem, following up with this measure of perceiving behaviour of close friends, was that youth were likely to overestimate the extent of the delinquency which their friends conducted similarly to themselves. Furthermore, scholars argued that this misjudgement would lead to inaccurate associations between delinquent peers and self-reported delinquency (Wilcox and Udry, 1986). To overcome this weakness, researchers stated that a better way to assess the delinquent peers was to use actual peer reports (Erickson et al, 2000; Aseltine, 1995). Erickson and his colleagues (2000) asked their participants to list their five closest friends and located these friends in the data set. These closest friends were asked if they experienced several types of delinquency, such as running away from home, carried a weapon to school, fight at school, and so on. The measure of delinquent peers was gauged with the average of three closest friends of the respondent. However, the criticism was still severe, which asserted that none of the measures discussed above could achieve the core concept of Sutherland's theory, which is the definition of law violation. Empirically, beliefs or attitudes toward crime adopted by individuals could be not directly and precisely measured.

In the current study, no delinquent peers could be accessed due to the limited resources and time. The essential proposition in Sutherland's theory might not be achieved precisely, but these factors would not affect the reliability of this research, which was not to directly and exactly test differential association theory, but to establish an integrated model in a Chinese context, using important concepts through leading theories. Thus differential association was measured in two categories: friends' delinquency and numbers of delinquent peers. Friends' delinquency was gauged with a 9-item scale, which represented the frequency of deviant conducts which the respondents' friends committed in past three years, from 1 = never to 4 = always. Table 4.6 listed those related questions on the questionnaires. The reliability analysis of this measure obtained a Cronbach's alpha score of .814. The measure was significantly different between males and females at .05 level in t-test analysis (sig. = .019). Meanwhile, respondents were also asked to indicate how many of their friends had conducted the above behaviour and that is the variable of numbers of delinquent peers. Males and females had no statistical difference in the numbers of delinquent peers they had.

Table 4.6 Friend's Delinquency Scale

Have your friends conducted any of the following behaviour in recent three years?	Never	Sometimes	Often	Always
Assaulted other person on purpose				
Involved in a fight				
Involved in a gang fight				
Stole money or things worth less than \$50 Chinese dollars				
Threatened to harm teacher/student				
Carried a weapon to school				
Cheating in the test(s)/examination(s)				
Absent from school because of other things interested them				
Had bad relationship with their parent(s)				

Social bond measures

Hirschi (1969) contributed clear guidelines for empirical tests of social control theory. He considered attachment, commitment, involvement, and belief as the four basic elements of social bond, and he argued that individuals with strong bonds to conventional behaviour patterns were less likely to commit crime or delinquency. Attachment to parents was a central variable in social bond theory, because Hirschi explained that a child who lacked attachment to his/her parents was more likely to stay in "criminogenic influences" (Hirschi, 1969: 85). He measured parental attachment with parental supervision, intimacy of communication, and affectional identification with parents. He also stated that the psychological presence of parents was the most important consideration, when children were potentially involved in crime and delinquency. If no thoughts or considerations were given to parental reaction, he/she felt free to conduct deviant.

The test of social control theory has been prevalent since Hirshi outlined its basic criteria, and numerous studies have considered parental attachment as an important

variable and measured it with parental supervision, communication with parents, and affectional identification (Kierkus & Baer, 2002; Chapple et al., 2005; Booth, et al., 2008; Mack, et al., 2007). Closeness to parents was another meaningful measure frequently employed by researchers (Wiatrowski et al., 1981; Chapple et al., 2005; Agnew, 1985) Thaxton and Agnew (2004) employed a single variable to measure parental attachment. They asked the participants to rate their relationship with their parents through a ten-point scale, from awful to great. Thaxton and Agnew argued that this variable could indicate the possibility to calculate the effect of parental attachment on delinquency at different levels of this attachment, and parental attachment was significantly associated with delinquency at the negative range, while the effects weakened when the attachment was strong. However, several scholars have criticized single item measures as insufficient because they usually only focused on one aspect of the attachment (Hirschi, 1969; Thornberry & Krokn, 2000).

As Hirschi (1969) contended in his theory, youth who were more likely to be involved in crime and delinquency typically demonstrated lack of respect for and attachment to parents. In the current study, parental attachment was measured with two items to indicate the extent of adolescents' association with their parents: 1) "I get along with my parents" and 2) "I respect my parents". Respondents were asked to rate the level of their agreement with these two descriptions from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree. The measure was reliable with a standardized alpha score of .720. The measure of parental attachment in this study had no preference on a specific gender of parents as previous researches usually focused on variables of father's education and occupation (Hirschi, 1969; Sorenson & Brownfield, 1995; Mack et al., 2007; Cretacci, 2003). This study did not provide diversity among fathers and mothers, and respondents' attachment to both genders of parents was measured.

School was another important mechanism to deter and prevent crime and delinquency. Hirschi argued that youth with weak bonds to school were more likely to commit crime and delinquency. He used attitudes toward school, concern for teacher's opinions, school-generated emotional tension, and scope of school's authority to measure the extent to which children associated with schools. Relationship with teachers was also considered as an important variable to measure school attachment (Hirschi, 1969;

Chapple et al., 2005; Thaxson & Agnew, 2004). Based on the previous research, school attachment was measured with attitude towards school and the closeness with teachers in this study. Respondents were asked to identify their feelings toward school, from 1 = strongly dislike to 4 = strongly like. They rated their agreement with the statement “I get along with most teachers of mine” at five different levels from 1= strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree to indicate their relationship with teachers.

Commitment was labelled from the rational component of fear of the consequences (Hirschi, 1969). The more an individual committed a conventional life, the less likely he/she committed crime and delinquency. Educational and occupational careers were the most common examples of this element in social control theory. For youth, commitment was usually measured with educational achievement, especially grade or test score (Hirschi, 1969; Wiatrowski et al., 1981; Costello & Vowell, 1999; Mason & Windle, 2002). It was gauged with self-reported general course grades in this study. A single item was employed to measure it: “How do you rank your general course grade?” Respondents were asked to rate their general academic performance as excellent, good, fair, pass and poor.

Involvement followed that assumption: if a person was busy with doing conventional activities, he/she would be less likely to commit crime and delinquency due to the lack of time. Hirschi (1969) stated that involvement in conventional activities was obviously relevant to delinquency. When children joined in numbers of sports, public services, church activities, or were busy with their homework, they had less opportunity to commit delinquent behaviour. Scholars usually measured involvement with sports attendance, church attendance, and time devoted to homework (Chapple et al., 2005; Hirschi, 1969; Wiatrowski et al., 1981; Booth et al., 2008), and they assumed that the more time children contributed to those types of conventional activities, the less possibility they became delinquents. Generally, for most students in China, the biggest and most important goal of high school education was to get a higher score on the National College Entrance Examination (NCEE), or *Gaokao*, and to be accepted by a college or university. To assist students in completing this dream, high school often utilized a tight teaching and training schedule, only emphasizing those subjects contained in the NCEE, while other subjects, such as music, sports, and painting, were typically

missing in high school calendars. Accordingly, high school students usually had little chance to become involved in sports and artistic activities. Church attendance was not an appropriate variable to measure the conventional involvement either, because Catholicism or Protestantism has not been prevalent in Shenyang yet and there is only one church in the whole city. According to these particular situations, in the current study involvement was measured with a single item, “Generally, I spend little time on my studying”. Respondents rated their agreement at five levels from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree.

4.4.3 Control Variables

Criminologists have been devoted to study various types of relationships between socioeconomic status (SES) and delinquency. Most leading theories were likely to assume that SES had a strong effect on delinquency (Merton, 1938; Cohen, 1955; Cloun & Ohlin, 1960), supported by empirical studies (Nye, 1958; Kramer, 2000), while numerous recent research argued that the demonstration of a relationship between SES and delinquency suffered by various types of methodological problems and evidence was not sufficiently provided (Ellitt & Ageton, 1980; Tittle & Meier, 2000; Agnew et al., 2008). Education, occupational prestige, and family income were the most frequent variables to predict SES (Hirschi, 1969; Agnew et al., 2008; Heimer & De Coster, 1999). In this study, SES was an additional measure to predict delinquency. It was measured with parents’ education level and family income level. Both father’s and mother’s highest education levels were employed by respondents identifying from “graduated at master or above” to “not graduated from primary school”. The variables were recoded into three categories as 1 = more than high school, 2= high school graduated, 3 = less than high school. Respondents were asked to estimate their family income at five different levels from wealth to poor, and values of “wealth” and “comfortable” were recoded to 1 = high; category 2 = medium was constructed by “adequate”; “difficult” and “poor” were combined to 3 = low (See Table 4.7).

Table 4.7 SES Measures

What is your father's highest educational achievement?

- Master or above Undergraduate High school Middle school
 Primary school Under primary school

Recoded as 1 = More than high school ("Master or above" and "Undergraduate"); 2 = High school graduated ("High school"); 3 = Less than high school ("Middle school", "Primary school", and "Under primary school")

What is your mother's highest educational achievement?

- Master or above Undergraduate High school Middle school
 Primary school Under primary school

Recoded as 1 = More than high school ("Master or above" and "Undergraduate"); 2 = High school graduated ("High school"); 3 = Less than high school ("Middle school", "Primary school", and "Under primary school")

You consider your family income level as:

- Wealth Comfortable Adequate Difficult Poor

Recoded as 1 = high ("Wealth" and "Comfortable"); 2 = medium ("Adequate"); 3 = low ("Difficult" and "Poor")

Parental abuse was another control variable in the current study because numerous studies indicated that experience of being abused in childhood, both physically and mentally, were significantly associated with almost all types of delinquency, especially violent behaviour (Lansford et al., 2007; Salzinger et al., 2007; Wareham & Dembo, 2007; Rebellon & Van Gundy, 2005; Baron, S. W. 2004; Brown, 1984). However, it was difficult to tell which criminological theories this measure belonged to. When Agnew (1992) distinguished strain theory from social control and differential association theories, he utilized parental abuse as an example to present how other theories might view the relationships between negative relations and delinquency. He explained that, for control theorists, parental abuse would be considered to reduce the attachment to parents and that in the eyes of theorists who favoured a differential association perspective, being abused by parents would teach the pattern of violent behaviour to adolescences. Only strain

theory would consider parental abuse as a negative relation, and directly link it to delinquency. This argument was reasonable and clearly pointed out the differences among these three theories, but it created confusion about the attribute of parental abuse. Baron (2004) referred parental abuse to general strain theory and found that emotional abuse was indirectly related to total crime through high level of self-esteem. Rebellon and Gundy (2005) explored whether parental abuse could be a predictor of control theories, either self-control or social bond. They not only confirmed that parental abuse experience highly related to delinquency, but found that neither self-control nor social bond theory could explain or mediate the relationship between parental abuse and delinquency. Bandura (1978) accounted for parental abuse as a measure of social learning theory, while other scholars tested this variable as a physiological factor, rather than a sociological predictor (Wareham & Dembo, 2007; Arata, 2007). Therefore, it was operationally difficult to sort this variable into one particular theory. In the current study, parental abuse was considered as a control variable, and measured by two items: being physically abused and mentally abused by parents. The participants were asked to describe how frequently they were physically/mentally abused by their parents, with 1 = never, 2 = sometimes, 3 = often, and 4 = always.

4.5 Summary

Quantitative methods were used in the current study, and survey data were collected in Shenyang through anonymous questionnaires. The sample was constructed with 377 respondents and almost evenly divided among male and female respondents. Delinquency was measured with three categories: violent behaviour, academic misconduct, and property delinquency. Eleven independent variables were considered in this study. They were negative life event, negative relation with adult, parental conflict, friends' delinquency, quantity of delinquent peers, parental attachment, school attachment which was composed two sub variables, commitment, involvement, socioeconomic status with three separate variables, and parental abuse. These measures were employed to examine general strain, differential association, and social bond theories, and to explore an integrated model to explain juvenile delinquency in Chinese context. Parental attachment and school attachment were assumed to associate with negative relations with others and friends' delinquency. Individual with weak attachment

with parents and school tended to have higher levels of strain and stronger association with delinquent peers than those who had strong parental and school attachment. Negative events and relations with adults were proposed to be positively associated with delinquent peers because individuals under pressure or losing positive stimuli were more likely to lean towards other means to get through and achieve the goals. Delinquent peer was an alternative pathway to delinquency when children immersed in negative relations with parents or teachers. According to differential association theory, association with delinquent peers would be positively related to delinquency, due to the technique and value unfavourable to law provided by this association. SES and parental abuse were considered as control variables; the effects of SES on delinquency might be mixed, and abused children might report higher engagement in delinquency. Therefore, the method and measures would be theoretically reasonable to explore an integrated model for the explanation of delinquency in China.

CHAPTER FIVE: RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

5.1 Bivariate analysis

Although correlations cannot predict causation, they are still necessary to discuss how one variable is associated with another. Bivariate analysis can provide a measure of the validity of data, and reduce the unrelated variables for the multiple regression analysis as well. Correlations also indicate primary examinations of the proposed hypothesis because if two variables are not significantly related, no further analysis will be necessary. For example, if parental attachment was not related to violent behaviour with a significant correlation, it would not be considered as an independent variable in the multiple regression analysis and the hypothesis that weak parental attachment could result in delinquency would also fail.

Data were analyzed separately with males and females because, as discussed in Chapter Four, significant differences were noted among boys and girls on most variables (sig. $<.01$). Pearson correlations between dependent variables and independent variables were presented in Table 5.1 and Table 5.2. For boys (see Table 5.1), negative relations, including negative life events, negative with parents, and teachers, were significantly related with all delinquent behaviour at .01 level. Parental conflict was positively associated with violent behaviour ($r = .160$) and academic misconduct ($r = .162$) at .05 level, while no significant relationship with property delinquency. Consistent with theoretical expectations, association with delinquent peers and the numbers of those peers presented strong relationships with violent behaviour and academic misconduct, and were positively related to property delinquency as well. Parental attachment was negatively associated with academic misconduct ($r = -.205$) and property delinquency ($r = -.177$), while there was no statistically significant relationship with violent behaviour. Attitude toward school were significantly related to violent behaviour ($r = -.249$), academic misconduct ($r = -.339$), and property delinquency ($r = -.253$), while the closeness with teachers had no statistical relationships with delinquency. Self-reported course grade, which was considered as a commitment measure in social control theory, was only related to academic misconduct at .05 level. Time devoted to study was consistent with the hypothesis, and significantly associated with all types of delinquency. Among the measures referring to abuse by parents, only one relationship was demonstrated by

Pearson correlation, which was physical abuse and violent behaviour ($r = .193$) at .05 level. In addition, all SES variables were reported as having no significant relationships with delinquency.

Table 5.1 Correlations Between Self-reported Delinquency and Independent Variables for Male

Independent variables	Dependent variables		
	Violent behaviour	Academic misconduct	Property delinquency
Negative life events	.386**	.430**	.230**
Negative relations with adults			
Conflict with parents	.201**	.266**	.224**
Blamed by teacher(s)	.266**	.218**	.192*
Parental fight	.160*	.162*	.046
Friends' delinquency	.529**	.472**	.246**
Numbers of delinquent peers	.592**	.437**	.260**
Parental attachment	-.080	-.205**	-.177*
School attachment			
Attitude to school	-.249**	-.339**	-.253**
Get along with most teachers	-.042	-.091	-.041
Commitment			
Self-reported course grades	.059	.176*	-.066
Involvement			
Spend little time in studying	.211**	.344**	.162*
Abuse by parents			
Physical	.193*	.009	.055
Mental	.125	.132	.020
SES			
Father's education	.027	.062	.101
Mother's education	-.013	-.046	.070
Self-estimate family income	-.040	-.120	-.020

N = 177

*significant at .05 or less

**significant at .01 or less

The bivariate analysis related to girls was quite different from boys. For girls (See Table 5.2), negative life events were statistically associated with violent behaviour ($r = .316$), academic misconduct ($r = .230$), and property behaviour ($r = .157$) as well. Negative relation with parents, however, was only significant when related with violent behaviour ($r = .152$) and academic misconduct ($r = .152$). Negative relation with teachers was positively related to deviant behaviour ($r = .298$), but it had no significant relations with the other two types of delinquency. In the measures related to differential association theory, the variable of association with delinquent peers was significantly related with all types of delinquency, while numbers of delinquent peers, predicted no statistical relationships with delinquency. Parental attachment, contrasted with boys, was significant associated with violent behaviour ($r = -.195$) and academic misconduct ($r = -.274$). In addition, attitude to school, measured from 1 = strongly dislike to 4 = strongly like, was also negatively related to these two types of delinquency. Closeness with teachers was only significantly related to academic misconduct ($r = .182$) at .05 level, and self-reported course grade also had positive relationship with academic misconduct ($r = .171$). Involvement in conventional activities, especially study, was significantly related to violent behaviour ($r = .212$) and school-based misconduct ($r = .271$) at .01 level as well. For girls, being abused by parents, either physically or mentally, was negatively related to both violent and deviant behaviour. As with boys, SES measures were not significantly associated with any of the types of delinquency among girls.

According to the bivariate analysis among dependent and independent variables, most relationships were consistent with theoretical expectations and statistically demonstrated, except SES variables. The prevalent theoretical hypothesis that low class brought individuals into delinquency was not supported in the current study. Numerous studies argued that the relationship between SES and delinquency was complicated; some researchers doubted the nature of this relationship and stated that SES did not consistently predict delinquency (Hirschi, 1969; Vazsonvi & Klanisek, 2008; Tittle & Meier, 1991). Paschall and his partners (1998) found that only lower SES affected the differences in violent behaviour among racial groups and no significant differences caused by finer SES existed in these groups. Kierkus and Baer (2003) found that SES was only related with truancy in their research on Ontario school children. Agnew and his

colleagues (2008) distinguished SES and economic problem. They argued that economic problems, not SES, were directly associated with delinquency and that SES had direct association with economic problems, from which SES was indirectly and potentially related to delinquency. Although other research on Chinese youth (Bao et al., 2004) predicted that youth from poor families were more likely to commit crime and delinquency, in this study, SES was not significantly related to all types of delinquency. It might not mean that children from all levels of classes had equal possibilities to be involved in delinquency, or that SES was not an effective predictor of delinquency. It could only suggest that the relationship between SES and delinquency could not be explained clearly in the current study. One possible reason was that the sample size of this study was relatively small and a large percent of respondents reported their family income as “adequate” (67.1%), which might cause the vague relationship between SES and delinquency.

Table 5.2 Correlations between Self-reported Delinquency and Independent Variables for Female

Independent variables	Dependent variables		
	Violent behaviour	Academic misconduct	Property delinquency
Negative life events	.316**	.210**	.157*
Negative relations with adults			
Conflict with parents	.152*	.152*	.052
Blamed by teacher(s)	.089	.298**	.033
Parental fight	.091	.047	.072
Friends' delinquency	.464**	.412**	.173*
Numbers of delinquent peers	.046	.029	.012
Parental attachment	-.195**	-.274*	-.054
School attachment			
Attitude to school	-.242**	-.177*	-.096
Get along with most teachers	-.044	-.182*	-.105
Commitment			
Self-reported course grades	.092	.171*	.111
Involvement			
Spend little time in studying	.212**	.271**	.106
Abuse by parents			
Physical	.170*	.177*	.121
Mental	.184*	.152*	.030
SES			
Father's education	.076	.032	-.022
Mother's education	.035	-.135	-.085
Self-estimate family income	.063	-.137	.008

N = 198

*significant at .05 or less

**significant at .01 or less

Table 5.3 and Table 5.4 show the relationships among independent variables on both male and female models. With slight differences between males and females, parental attachment and school attachment were significantly related to negative relations with adults and delinquent peers. Negative relations with others were also consistent with theoretical expectations and associated with delinquent peers. For girls, weak social bonds with parents and schools had only effects on the association with delinquent peers, but no statistically significant relations with the quantities of those peers. Negative relations with adults did not consistently predict numbers of delinquent peers either. SES measures were not significantly related to any other independent variables in the males' model, while for girls, "father's education" was negatively associated with parental attachment, and positively associated with time devoted to studying, which suggested that a girl whose father held a lower educational certificate might be less likely to attach to her parents, and spend less time in studying than those with fathers with higher education levels. Except this variable, SES measures were not significantly associated with other independent variables in the girls' model.

Table 5.3 Pearson Correlations among Independent Variables (Male)

	Negative life events	Conflict with parents	Blamed by teacher(s)	Parental fight	Friends' delinquency	Numbers of delinquent peers	Parental attachment	Attitude to school	Get along with most teachers	Self-reported course grades	Spend little time studying	Physical abused
Negative life events	1											
Negative relations												
Conflict with parents	.271***	1										
Blamed by teacher(s)	.109	.290***	1									
Parental fight	.244***	.393***	.142	1								
Friends' delinquency	.332***	.301***	.174**	.123	1							
Numbers of delinquent peers	.241***	.257***	.278***	.108	.666***	1						
Parental attachment	-.267***	-.337***	-.043	-.288***	-.281***	-.146*	1					
School attachment								1				
Attitude to school	-.163**	-.343***	-.284*	-.103	-.346***	-.270***	.223**	.235***	1			
Get along with most teachers	-.127*	-.073	-.158**	-.012	-.179**	-.117	.252***	-.235***	-.235***	1		
Commitment											1	
Self-reported course grades	.062	.144	.112	.020	-.144*	-.130*	-.045	.230***	-.181**	.355***	.355***	1
Involvement												
Spend little time studying	.124*	.127	.142*	.123	.304***	.318***	-.101	.443***	-.134*	.355***	.355***	.355***
Abuse by parents												
Physical	.218***	.096	-.004	.112	.271***	.231***	-.236***	.044	.020	.017	.073	.073
Mental	.205***	.316***	.028	.383***	.238***	.117	-.402***	.169**	-.006	.099	.013	.363***

N = 178

*significant at .1 level or less

**significant at .05 level or less

***significant at .01 level or less

Note: All SES variables were not significant relations with other independent variables, so they were not displayed in the form.

Table 5.4 Pearson Correlations among Independent Variables (Female)

	Negative life events	Conflict with parents	Blamed by teacher(s)	Parental fight	Friends' delinquency	Numbers of delinquent peers	Parental attachment	Attitude to school	Get along with teachers	Self-reported course grades	Spend little time studying	Physical abused	Mental abused
Negative life events	1												
Negative relations													
Conflict with parents	.248***	1											
Blamed by teacher(s)	.255***	.298***	1										
Parental fight	.202***	.460***	.202***	1									
Friends' delinquency	.282***	.323***	.190***	.227**	1								
Numbers of delinquent peers	.138**	.032	.035	.094	.117	1							
Parental attachment	-.078	-.314***	-.168**	-.391***	-.225***	-.055	1						
School attachment													
Attitude to school	-.087	-.360***	-.287***	-.214***	-.250***	-.093	.314**	1					
Get along with most teachers	-.011	-.158***	-.151**	-.183***	-.210**	-.005	-.237***	-.327***	1				
Commitment													
Self-reported course grades	-.009	.094**	.208***	.030	-.125*	-.038	-.260***	.347***	-.323**	1			
Involvement													
Spend little time studying	.155**	.334***	.294***	.097	.338***	.072	-.309***	.503***	-.314**	.410***	1		
Abuse by parents													
Physical	.323***	.198***	.129*	.262***	.155**	-.026	-.283***	.173**	-.081	.170**	.167***	1	
Mental	.285***	.402***	.111	.424***	.225***	-.039	-.439***	.263***	-.093	.121*	.272***	.438***	1
SES													
Father's education	-.026	-.017	.051	-.090	-.041	.064	-.147**	.100	.006	.050	.161**	.005	.016

N = 199

*significant at .1 level or less

**significant at .05 level or less

***significant at .01 level or less

5.2 OLS Regression and Path Analysis

The results of path analysis are presented in Table 5.5, Table 5.6, Figure 5.1 and Figure 5.2. Males and females are reported separately because the direct and indirect predictors are different in these two models. Only those variables which provided significant Pearson correlations with endogenous variables were selected as independent variables in each single OLS regression analysis. Table 5.5 showed all coefficient correlations for the males' model. The model could explain approximately 46% of variance in violent behaviour, 41% variance in academic misconduct, and 14% in property delinquency. Four independent variables were significant in the violent behaviour model; three variables statistically predicted academic misconduct; only the variable of "negative life events" significantly affected property delinquency. Females' model was presented in Table 5.6. This integrated model could explain approximately 28% variance in female violence, 27% variance in academic misconduct, and only 4% for property delinquency. "Negative life events" and "friends' delinquency" were two direct predictors of female violence; academic misconduct was impacted by "blamed by teacher(s)", "friends' delinquency", and "parental attachment"; and "friends' delinquency" was a single significant predictor of property delinquency. The current study appears to provide little explanation of property delinquency. One of the possible reasons for this weakness might be lack of sufficient cases of property delinquency. The total sample number was 377 and only 8% of participant reported they had committed property delinquency. When separated by gender, the valid cases declined rapidly. Therefore, the hypothesis of integrated model might be inadequate for property delinquency.

5.2.1 Model of Violent Behaviour

In the boys' model, the strongest indicator of violent behaviour was the numbers of delinquent peers with standardized coefficient correlations of .413 at .001 level. The association with delinquent peers was also a significant predictor of violent behaviour. Youth with antisocial friends who committed crime and delinquency were more likely to behave violently. Additionally, the more delinquent peers a boy had, the higher the possibility he would be involved in violent behaviour. In this model, differential association was the strongest predictor of violent behaviour, which was consistent with previous research (Agnew, 1992; Elliott et al., 1979; Warr & Stanford, 1991; Thornberry

et al., 1994; Warr, 1993; Wolfe & Shoemaker, 1999). In these studies, researchers indicated association with delinquent peers directly resulted in delinquency, especially examined in an integrated model with social control theory. For females, the numbers of delinquent peers were not significantly associated with violent behaviour, but “friends’ delinquency” was the strongest indicator of violent behaviour, which suggested that girls associated with antisocial peers who conducted more delinquency, were more likely to be involved with violent delinquency. Therefore, this result in the current study supports Sutherland’s differential association theory, and suggests delinquency could be learned from intimate persons, particularly from peers.

The second strongest and most direct predictor of violent behaviour was negative life events. Negative relations with teachers were also a significant indicator in boys’ model as well, while it ranked as the first strongest predictor of academic misconduct for girls. Individual suffered from negative events in his/her life was more likely to seek resolution into delinquency and to behave violently, and the strain from unpleasant relationships with teachers would result in violent behaviour as well. Previous researchers have suggested similar results, that strain from negative events in relations was positively associated with delinquency (Agnew & White, 1992; Bao et al., 2004; Baron, 2004; Piquero & Sealock, 2004). Moon and his colleagues stated that teachers’ punishment, which could be a resource of noxious relations with teachers, was positively related to delinquency in Korean youth. Cheung and Cheung (2008) also argued that negative life events significantly predicted delinquency. The result indicated gender differences of strain effects on violent delinquency. Mazerolle (1998) examined different sources of strain and their effects on male and female delinquency and indicated that “negative relations” was an effective indicator of delinquency for girls, while negative life events was positively associated with male delinquency. However, in the current study, negative life events had no significant differences in impacts on violent behaviour between males and females and “noxious relations” was a positive predictor of violent behaviour for boys, but did not significantly affect female violent delinquency. Although strain variables were presented with slight differences among boys and girls, consistent with the hypothesis, they were still served as the second strongest predictor of violent behaviour in both male and female models.

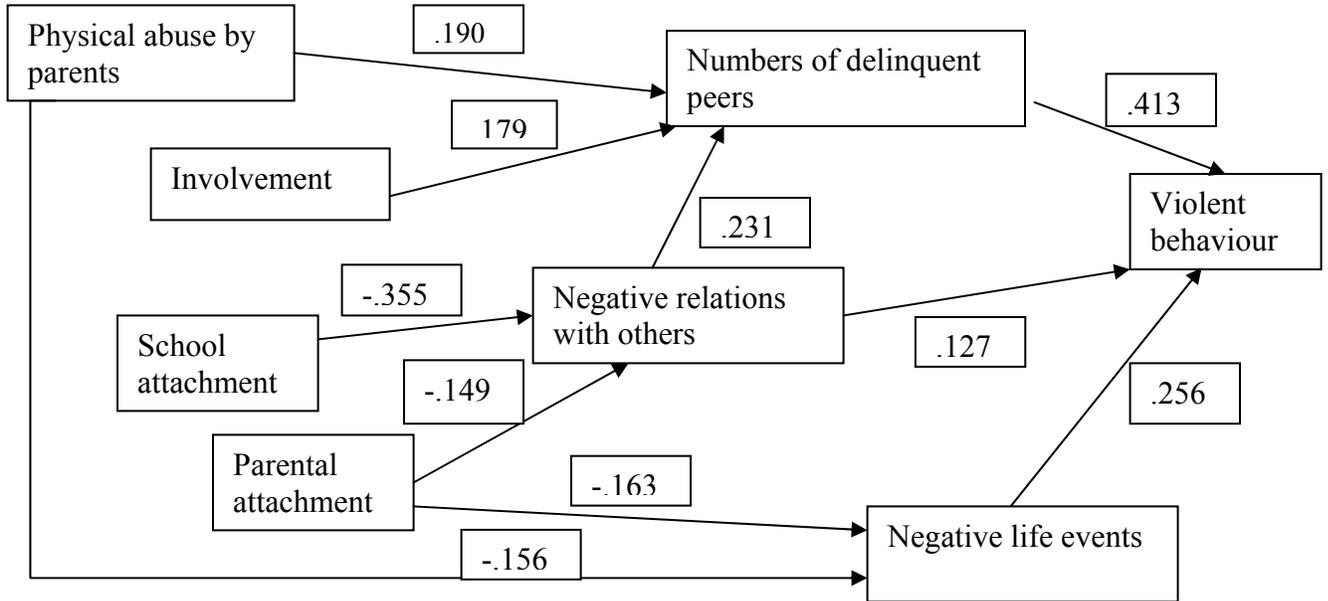
For girls, attachment to school, especially the attitude to school, was ranked third as a negative indicator ($B = -.140$) of violent behaviour, which suggested that girls with strong attachment to school were less likely to be involved in violent delinquency. The more a girl disliked going to school, the more possibility she would behave violently. Several previous researchers have reported a similar finding in the relationship between school attachment and self-reported delinquency (Banyard et al., 2006; Le et al., 2005). Although school attachment was only significant related to female violent delinquency, the finding provided some support of Hirschi's social bond theory, and indicated that among all four elements of social bond only school attachment directly affected violent behaviour.

All the measures discussed above were direct predictors of violent behaviour in male or female models. For testing the hypothesis of theoretical integration, the results of endogenous variables were also reported in Table 5.5 and Table 5.6. In the model of boys, youths who suffered from noxious relations with adults were more likely to associate with antisocial peers. This was the strongest predictor ($B = .231$) of differential association with delinquent peers. Being physically abused by parents was ranked as a second indicator ($B = .190$) of the association with antisocial peers. Involvement in conventional activities, which was measured with time devoted to studying in the current study, was also significant related to the numbers of delinquent peers as well ($B = .170$). For boys, consistent with theoretical expectation, parental attachment ($B = -.149$) and school attachment ($B = -.355$) were both significant predictors of noxious relations with adults, which illustrated that boys with weak social bonds were more likely to consider the relationship with adults as negative. Agnew and his colleagues (2002) argued that an individual high in negative emotionality and low in constraint was more likely to commit delinquency, and the current results were consistent with this statement. Therefore, in the boys' model, social bonds, including parental attachment, school attachment, and involvement, had indirect effects on violent behaviour through differential association and negative relations with others (See Figure 5.1). "Negative relations with adults" were not only directly associated with violent behaviour, but indirectly affected it through association with delinquent peers. The construction of an integrated model of explanation shows that, differential association was the strongest predictor of violent behaviour and

strain had both direct and indirect impact on violence; social bonds had no direct influence but indirect impact on delinquency through general strain and differential association.

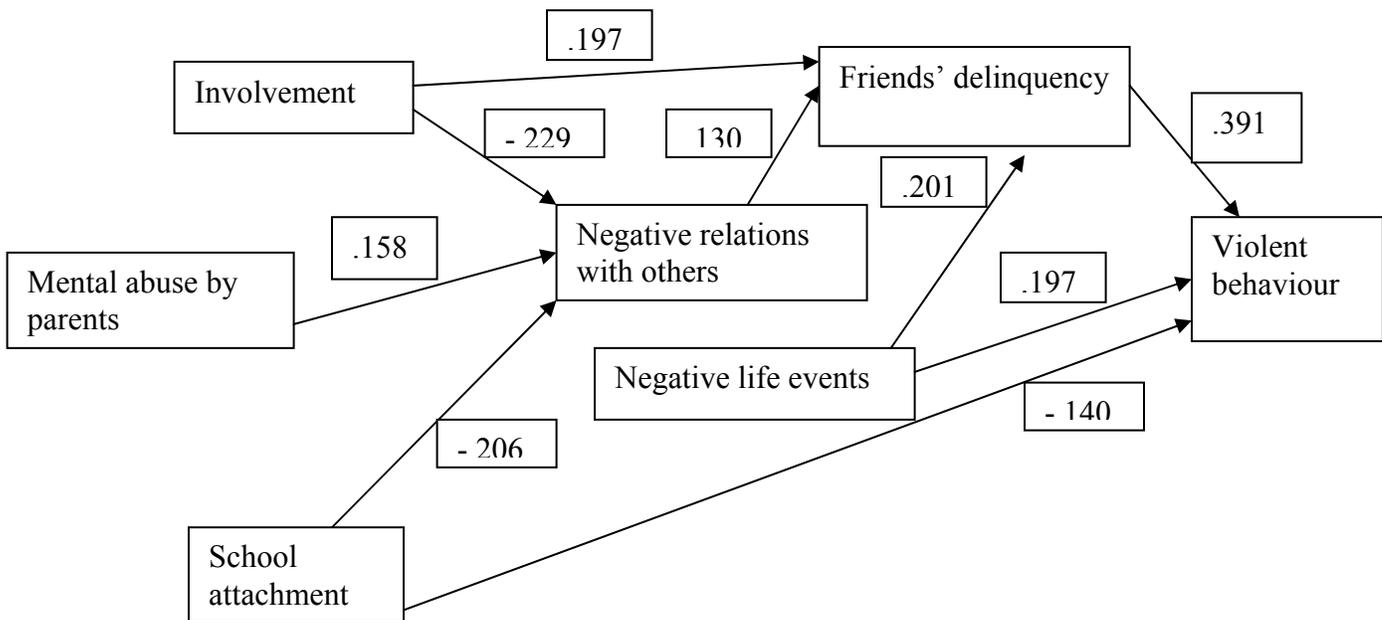
The results from path analysis for the girls' model showed that the integrated model of violent behaviour was quite different from that for boys. First, friends' delinquency, negative life events, and school attachment were direct predictors of violent behaviour. Although the measure of differential association was still the strongest indicator, the number of delinquent peers was more important than the number of those friends. Second, noxious relations with adults were only indirectly associated with violent behaviour through differential association, and negative life events provided direct and indirect effects on violence. "Negative life events" were also the strongest predictor of friends' delinquency ($B = .201$), which suggested that girls suffered from unpleasant events were more likely to seek antisocial peers to resolve the problems. Third, only school attachment, not parental attachment, had statistical effects on negative relations with adults. In contrast with boys, involvement in studying had negative effects on strain, especially noxious relations with adults, which indicated that girls who highly involved in conventional activities were less likely to suffer from unpleasant relationships with parents and teacher, and it was also directly related to violent behaviour. Finally, although victimization through abuse by parents indirectly affected violent behaviour somehow, types of influential victimization were different between boys and girls. For boys, physical abuse would result in association with delinquent peers, while for girls, mental abuse was more significant than physical forces. Girls who were mentally abused by parents were more likely to report negative relations with adults, and subsequently associated with delinquent peers, and involved in violent delinquency. In sum, girls with weak social bonds had a higher possibility to suffer from negative relations with adults and be associated with delinquent peers. Involvement in conventional activities was negatively related to violent delinquency. Strain was consistent with the hypothesis and associated with both delinquent peers and violent behaviour. Differential association was still the strongest predictor of violent behaviour for girls, while the extent, not quantities of delinquent peers directly affected violence.

Figure 5.1 Path Analyses for Males' Model: Abused by Parents Physically, Social Bond, Strain, Differential Association, and Violent Behaviour



All coefficients at .10 level or less. Non-significant correlations were not displayed.

Figure 5.2 Path Analyses for Females' Model: Abused by Parents Physically, Social Bond, Strain, Differential Association, and Violent Behaviour



All coefficients at .10 level or less. Non-significant correlations were not displayed.

Table 5.5 Path Analyses on Delinquency, Numbers of Delinquent Peer, and Strain (Male)

Independent Variables	Violent behaviour		Academic misconduct		Property delinquency	
	Beta	Sig.	Beta	Sig.	Beta	Sig.
Negative life events	.256***	.000	.316***	.000	.173**	.036
Negative relations with adults						
Conflict with parents	-.112	.108	.017	.816	.086	.307
Blamed by teachers	.127**	.047	.045	.500	.001	.986
Parents fight	.060	.363	.019	.789	---	---
Friends' delinquency	.164*	.065	.087	.341	.009	.932
Numbers of delinquent peers	.413***	.000	.206**	.017	.161	.118
Parental attachment	---	---	-.014	.842	-.048	.556
School attachment						
Attitude to school	-.027	.708	-.058	.431	-.129	.147
Commitment						
Self-reported course grades	---	---	.018	.784	---	---
Involvement						
Spend little time in studying	-.028	.681	.174**	.023	-.039	.645
Abuse by parents						
Physical	-.022	.730	---	---	---	---
	R ² = .460		R ² = .413		R ² = .143	

Numbers of delinquent friends

	Beta	Sig.
Negative life events	.101	.185
Negative relations with adults	.231***	.000
Parental attachment	.008	.916
School attachment		
Attitude to school	-.099	.234
Commitment		
Self-reported course grades	.016	.831

Involvement		
Spend little time in studying	.179**	.018
Abuse by parents		
Physical	.190**	.011
	$R^2 = .237$	

Negative relations with adults

	Beta	Sig.
Parental attachment	-.149**	.049
School attachment		
Attitude to school	-.355***	.000
Get along with teachers	-.013	.858
Commitment		
Self-reported course grade	.082	.274
Involvement		
Spend little time studying	-.039	.631
Abused by parents		
Physically	.041	.574
	$R^2 = .185$	

Negative life events

	Beta	Sig.
Parental attachment	-.163*	.051
School attachment		
Attitude to school	.085	.320
Get along with teachers	-.062	.416
Involvement		
Spend little time studying	.052	.527
Abuse by parents		
Physical	.156**	.050
Mental	.069	.413
	$R^2 = .120$	

N = 177

*sig. at .10 level or less

**sig. at .05 level or less

***sig. at .01 level or less

Table 5.6 Path Analyses on Delinquency, Delinquent Peers, and Strain (Female)

Independent Variables	Violent behaviour		Academic misconduct		Property delinquency	
	Beta	Sig.	Beta	Sig.	Beta	Sig.
Negative life events	.197***	.005	.045	.536	.121	.101
Negative relations with adults						
Conflict with parents	-.106	.149	-.105	.171	---	---
Blamed by teachers	---	---	.205***	.004	---	---
Friends' delinquency	.391***	.000	.331***	.000	.139	.060*
Parental attachment	-.081	.268	-.173**	.022	---	---
School attachment						
Attitude to school	-.140*	.062	-.054	.492	---	---
Get along with teachers	---	---	-.045	.524	---	---
Commitment						
Self-reported course grades	---	---	.030	.679	---	---
Involvement						
Spend little time studying	-.023	.758	.061	.449	---	---
Abuse by parents						
Physical	.022	.763	.056	.373	---	---
Mental	.011	.886	-.026	.744	---	---
	R ² = .277		R ² = .269		R ² = .043	

Friends' delinquency

	Beta	Sig.
Negative life events	.201***	.006
Negative relations with adults	.130*	.096
Parental attachment	-.074	.338

School attachment		
Attitude to school	-.036	.657
Get along with teachers	-.108	.134
Commitment		
Self-reported course grades	-.049	.518
Involvement		
Spend little time studying	.197**	.017
Abuse by parents		
Physical	-.011	.884
Mental	.027	.740
		R ² = .212

Negative relations with adults

	Beta	Sig.
Parental attachment	-.092	.209
School attachment		
Attitude to school	-.229***	.003
Get along with teachers	-.026	.708
Commitment		
Self-reported course grade	-.040	.577
Involvement		
Spend little time in studying	.206***	.008
Abuse by parents		
Physical	.041	.556
Mental	.158**	.039
		R ² = .259

N = 198

*sig. at .10 level or less

**sig. at .05 level or less

***sig. at .01 level or less

5.2.2 Model of Academic Misconduct

The results of OLS regression analysis on independent variables and academic misconduct are also represented in Table 5.5 and Table 5.6. The model for boys could explain approximately 41% variance of academic misconduct; for girls, the explanation was around 27% of variance. Three significant independent variables, including negative life events, numbers of delinquent friends, and involvement in studying, were reported as predictors in boys' model, and another three independent variables statistically affected academic misconduct for girls, which were negative relations with adults, friends' delinquency, and parental attachment.

For boys, the strongest predictor of academic misconduct was negative life events ($B = .316$), which suggested that the more unpleasant events a boy experienced, the more possibility he would be involved in deviance, including truancy and cheating in exams. The result was consistent with previous studies, which indicated this positive relationship between strain variables and delinquency (Agnew & White, 1992; Agnew, 2002; Bao et al., 2004; Cheung & Cheung, 2008; Daigneault et al., 2006; Pérez et al., 2008). Aseltine and his colleagues (2000) stated, in their research on Boston youth, that "stressful life events" was significantly and positively associated with delinquency because it was significantly related to aggression and anger. According to the measurement of negative life events, this variable could be considered as victimization. Agnew (2001) argued that the criminal victimization could be an important indicator of delinquency. Hay and Evans (2006) examined this hypothesis and stated that victimization of violent delinquency was a strong predictor of delinquency even after controlling for previous delinquent behaviour. Therefore, the variable of stressful life events was reasonably associated with academic misconduct in the current study. However, this variable was only effective for boys, but not significant in girls' model. For girls, strain variables also played a vital role in predicting academic misconduct, but the effective variable was negative relations with adults ($B = .205$). This result was consistent with Mazerolle's research (1998) that presented noxious relations with others as more important than negative life events for girls. In the current study, the variable of negative relations with adults, especially with teachers, served as a second strongest predictor of female academic misconduct. Girls

who suffered from unpleasant relationships with teachers were more likely to be involved in truancy and cheating in tests or examinations.

Associations with delinquent peers were another strong predictor of school-based misconduct in both males' and females' models, while orientations of this measure are related. For boys, the numbers of delinquent peers are a second strongest indicator of academic misconduct ($B = .206$), which indicated that the more friends who involved in delinquency a boy had, the more possibility the boy would be truant or cheating in examinations. Previous research provided similar results for the relationships between delinquent peers and delinquency (Piquero et al., 2005; Maume et al., 2005; Pardini, 2005; Wong, 1999) and results in the current study are consistent with those studies.

Association with delinquent peers ($B = .331$) was also an important predictor of female academic misconduct, and was ranked as the strongest predictor for girls. Girls who associated strongly with delinquent peers were more likely to behave deviantly at school. This result not only supported the explanation of Sutherland's differential association theory for girls, but also indicated that differential association had the strongest impact on female academic misconduct. Piquero and his colleagues (2005) also reported the relationship between association with delinquent peers and deviance among girls and argued that association with delinquent peers was more influential for boys than girls. However, in the present study, differential association was the strongest predictor of female delinquency, and a better indicator among girls than boys.

In addition, the social bond measures also had significant impacts on academic misconduct. Two kinds of measures related to social bond were reported as a third strongest predictor, while different variables were presented among boys and girls. In boys' model, involvement in conventional activities ($B = -.174$), especially studying in the current research, had significant influence on academic misconduct. Males with more involvement in studying were less likely to skip school or dishonour in examinations, which was consistent with prior research (Booth et al., 2008; Hirschi, 1969; Payne, 2008; Kaufmann et al., 2007) Daigle and his colleagues (2007) indicated that involvement was a stronger predictor of delinquency for boys, while attachment was more effective for girls. The current study supported this argument. Parental attachment ($B = -.173$) was a third significant predictor of female academic misconduct. Girls with weak attachment to

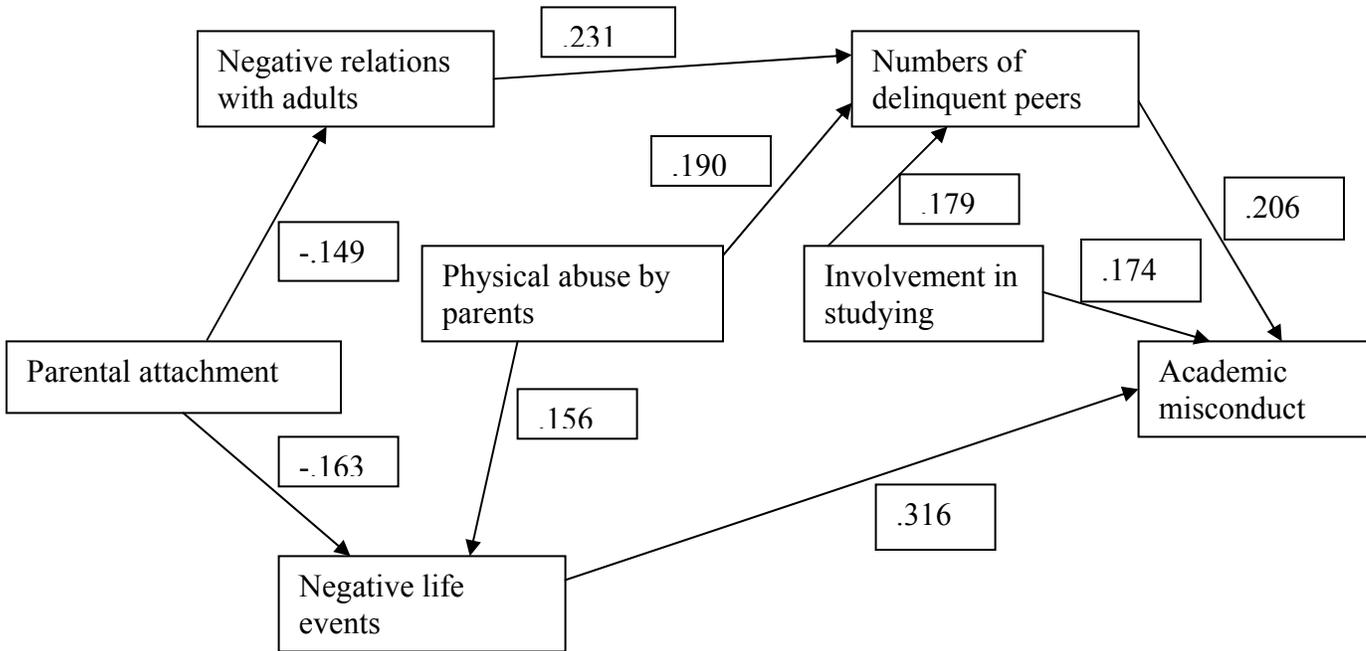
their parents were more likely to engage in wrongful conduct in school. Other researchers also found similar relationships between attachment and delinquency (Hirschi, 1969; Kierkus & Baer, 2002; Sokol-Katz, 1997). Alarid and his colleagues (2000) found that parental attachment was a better predictor of school-based delinquency for girls, and the current study provided support for this statement.

All these measures discussed above were directly associated with academic misconduct, while according to path analysis, there were still several indirect predictors and they were different between boys and girls. For boys (See Figure 5.3), parental attachment had indirect effects on academic misconduct through negative events, which indicated that boys with weak bonds to parents were more likely to be involved in school-based deviance. Previous studies indicated that association with a delinquent peer group was initially affected by increased family processes, especially family conflict (Pardini et al., 2005). Being physically abused by parents was another indirect predictor of boys' misconduct, via both negative life events and differential association. Boys who suffered from parental abuse would report high level of deviance. Similar with the model of violent behaviour, involvement in studying was another significant indicator of differential association. The general integrated model of academic misconduct was quite different from the model for violent behaviour. Only "negative life events" had direct impact and was the strongest predictor, while differential association was still directly associated with deviant activity, similar with the model for violence. One of the social bond measures directly affected school-based deviance and other elements of social bonds had influences on both strain and differential association, and were indirectly predictor of male academic misconduct.

In the girls' model (See Figure 5.4), contrary to boys, "negative life events" was indirectly associated with deviant behavior through friends' delinquency. Girls who suffered from unpleasant experience were more likely to associate with delinquent peers, and then be involved in academic misconduct. Therefore, negative life event was not a definite factor of misconduct in school for girls, and the relationship between these two variables was affected and connected by differential association. Social bond measures were also indirect predictors of female deviant behavior, except parental attachment. Involvement in studying indirectly affected academic misconduct through both noxious

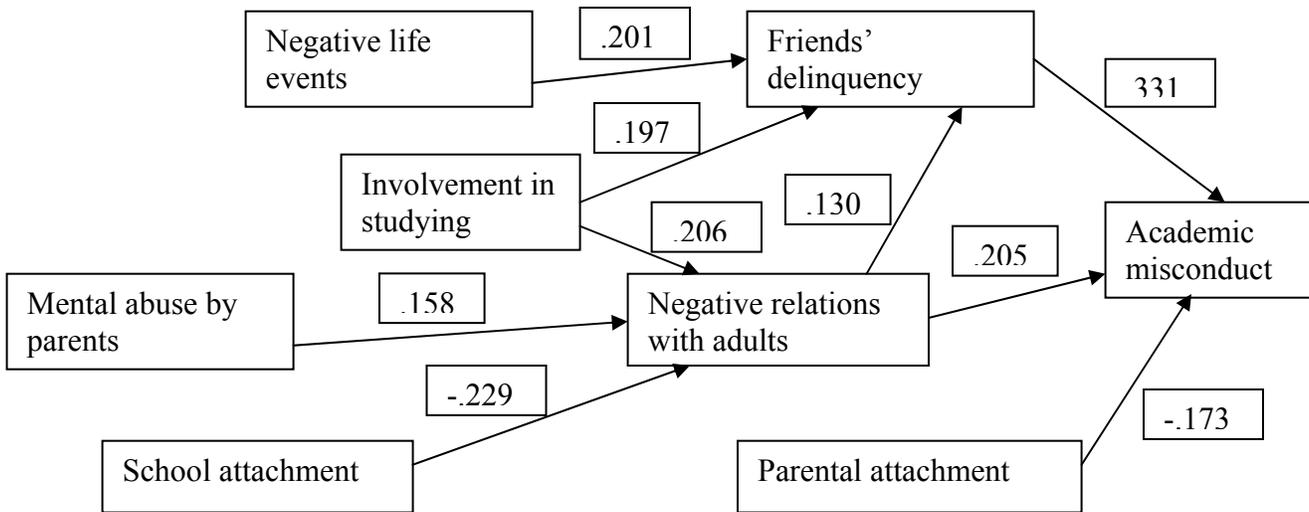
relations with adults and friends' delinquency, which suggested that girls with low involvement in conventional activities were more likely to report negative relationships with parents and teachers, and have friends who conducted more delinquency. Another indirect predictor related to social bond measures was school attachment, particularly attitude to school. Girls who reported a positive attitude to school – saying they like to go to school – were less likely to report relationships with parents and teachers as unpleasant. This attitude was indirectly associated with female misconduct in school as well. Being abused by parents was ranked as a third predictor of negative relations with adults and, contrary to boys' model, mental abuse was a better indicator for girls. Girls who reported being mentally abused by parents were more likely to report negative relations with adults and then to be involved in truancy or academic dishonesty, specifically school deviance, in the current research. Therefore, the integrated model for girls was partially consistent with theoretical expectations, and provided the possibility of incorporation among general strain, social learning, and social bond theories. Social bond theory was both directly and indirectly associated with female deviance, while strain and differential association directly affected academic misconduct. Measures of social bond had negative effects on general strain and association with antisocial peers, which finally influenced delinquency. Mental abuse by parents was also an indirect predictor of female school-based deviance through the influence on noxious relations with adults.

Figure 5.3 Path Analyses for Boys among General Strain, Differential Association, Social Bonds and Abused by Parents



All coefficients at .10 level or less. Non-significant correlations were not displayed.

Figure 5.4 Path Analyses for Girls among General Strain, Differential Association, Social Bonds and Abused by Parents



All coefficients at .10 level or less. Non-significant correlations were not displayed.

CHAPTER SIX: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

6.1 Discussion

Although the theoretical competition for explanations of juvenile delinquency has continued for several decades, and the examination of each theory has been organized and developed quite well, few studies focus on youth in other cultural backgrounds, particularly in the Chinese context. Moreover, scholars have argued the merits of theoretical integration and the method of incorporation, but so far limited research has been conducted in mainland China. This study has examined several leading theories, including general strain, differential association, and social learning theories, of juvenile delinquency with the goal to contribute to an integrated model to explain the problems of delinquency in China. As expected, all these three theories had significant influence on understanding delinquency among boys and girls. The integrated model showed slight differences between males and females.

Differential association was consistent with previous studies and the strongest predictor of violent behaviour for both boys and girls (Elliott et al., 1979; Warr & Stanford, 1991; Thornberry et al., 1994; Warr, 1993; Wolfe & Shoemaker, 1999). This variable was also the strongest predictor of academic misconducts for boys, while it was ranked as the second strongest predictor for girls. However, different aspects of differential association affected delinquency between males and females. The quantity of delinquent peers was a better indicator of male delinquency, while the extent of delinquency which girls' friends conducted was more significantly associated with delinquency. General strain measures were also directly related to delinquency, while the effects of strain measures varied among genders. Both negative life events and negative relations with adults were significantly associated with violent behaviour for boys, while only negative life events directly affected female violence. The unexpected finding was that, for girls, negative relations had a positive influence on violence through the connection with differential association. To predict academic misconduct, "negative life events" was more effective for males than female, and the variable of negative relations was a better indicator for female misconduct in school, which was consistent with the previous research (Mazerolle, 1998). Among the elements of social bond theory, attachment and involvement had significant impact on general strain and differential

association. Involvement in conventional activities was generally associated with differential association and this effect was no different among genders, but only girls who spent more time on studying were less likely to experience negative relations with adults. Attachment variables varied between males and females. For boys, both parental attachment and school attachment had negative effects on strain, which indicated that strong attachment would reduce the experience of negative events and relations, while for girls, only school attachment affected general strain, and subsequently had negative effect on violence. In addition, social bonds had direct impact on academic misconduct, although the effective variables were different between boys and girls. Previous studies also provide similar results regarding the relations between social bond and deviance (Banyard et al., 2006; Le et al., 2005; Hirschi, 1969). The finding showed that males with high involvement in conventional activities were less likely to be involved in school based deviance, and that parental attachment was more effective to predict female deviance in school than that for males. In the current study, different types of experience of abuse were found to be indirectly associated with self-reported delinquency among genders. Physical abuse was a better predictor of both violent and academic misconduct for boys, while being mentally abused by parents was significantly associated with general strain and differential association, and indirectly affected female delinquency.

Another purpose of this investigation was to formulate an integrated model to explain juvenile delinquency in China and the results consistently constructed different integrated models of violent behaviour and academic misconduct (See Figure 6.1 and Figure 6.2). As expected, generally, social bonds had negative impacts on general strain and differential association for both boys and girls; general strain was positively associated with differential association, and represented a stronger predictor of association with delinquent peers than social bond; and differential association was the strongest indicator of self-reported delinquency. Moreover, the models in the current study also presented a comparable variance of explanation of self-reported delinquency.

Figure 6.1 Effective Predictors and Integrated Model of Violent Behaviour

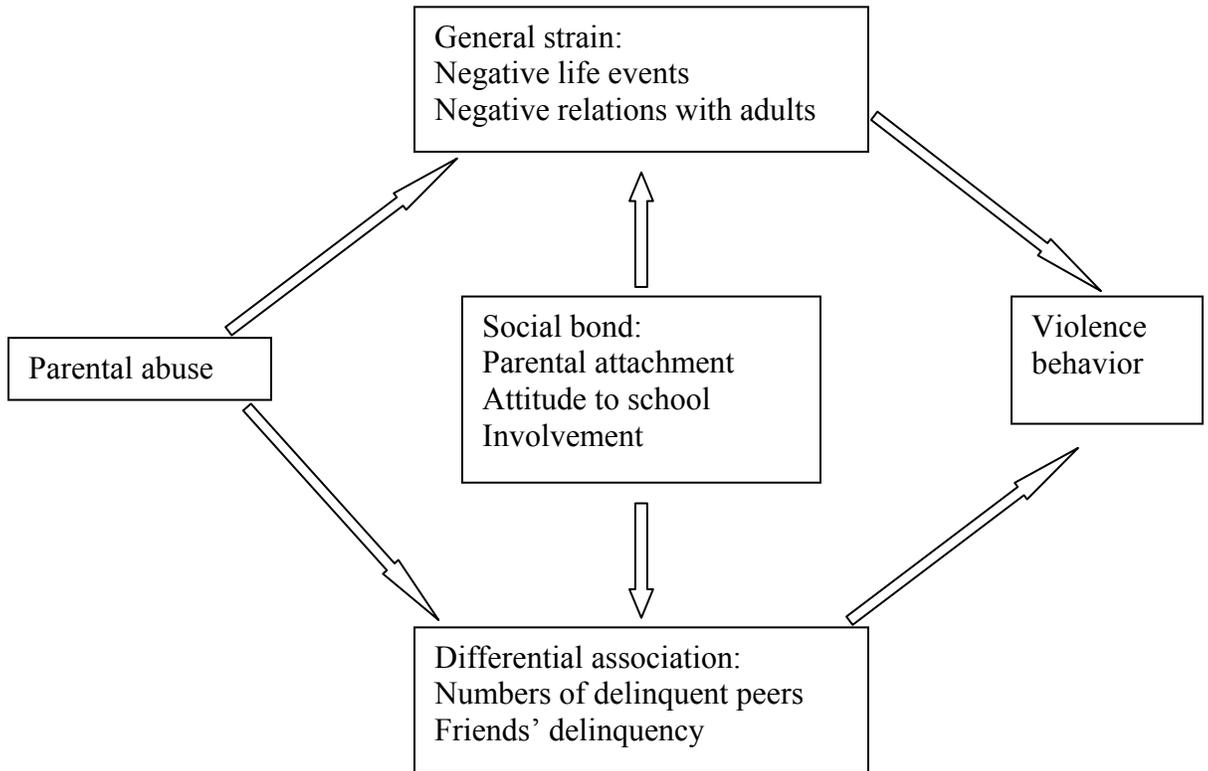
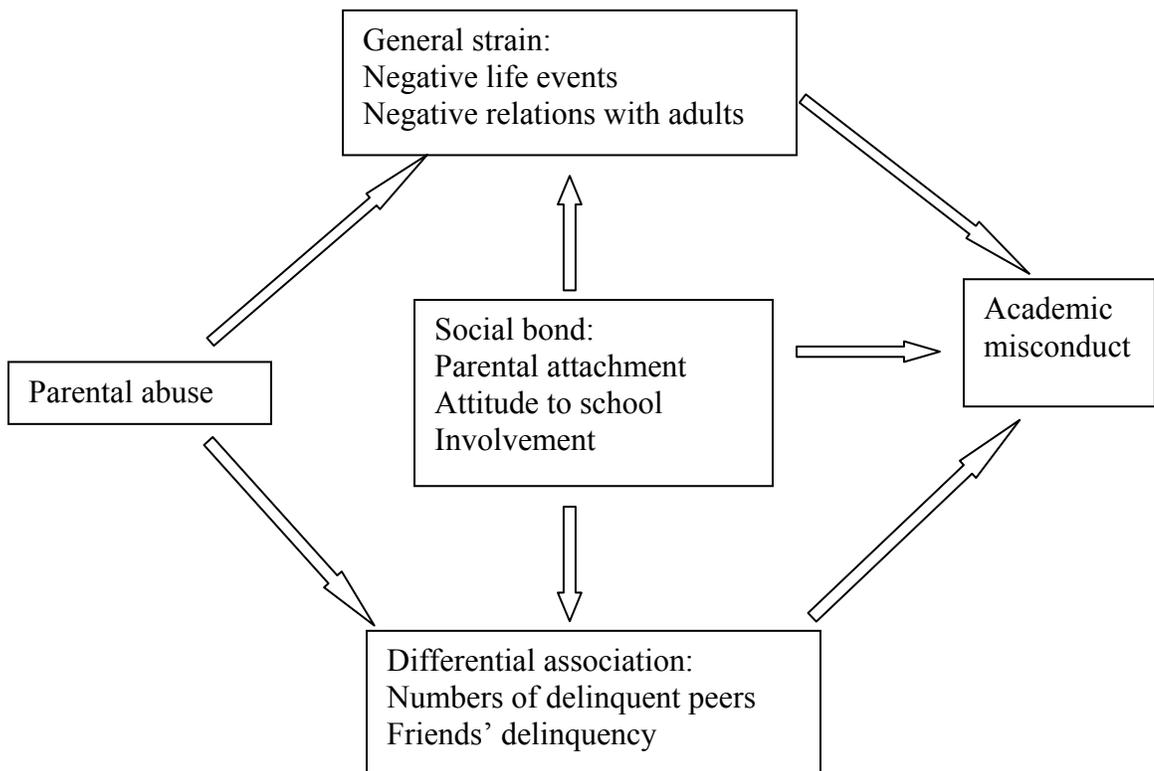


Figure 6.2 Effective Predictors and Integrated Model of Academic Misconduct



6.2 Policy Implications

Chinese society has provided more effort generally to prevent juvenile delinquency than punish due to the rehabilitative justice tradition. Most people believe that prevention and rehabilitation are more important and more useful than simple punishment or incarceration. Although there is no specific law for juvenile delinquency, the Prevention Law of Juvenile Delinquency has existed for ten years. This law, however, is too general to practice. As discussed in Chapter Two, the prevention responsibilities of family and school are theoretically outlined in the Prevention Law, but few practical programs are really created. After discussing the causation of juvenile delinquency and examining the impact of family, school, and peers on self-reported delinquency, several implications are raised for developing some practical projects for the prevention.

In the current study and consistent with much previous research, differential association has the strongest influence on delinquency, so it will be meaningful to reduce association with deviant peers and decrease the influence of antisocial peers. Several programs are based on this approach in North America and some of them could be examples for Chinese practice. Generally, there are two sub-approaches within these kinds of projects: one is to set up positive models for youths and the other is to reduce the influence of delinquent peers. *Big Brothers/Big Sisters* is one of the best-known programs to build up connections with pro-social individuals who can provide youths with positive values of law abidance and discourage involvement in delinquency. Volunteers who could be from various fields, including teachers, college students, police officers, athletes, businessowners, doctors, and so forth, will accompany one younger person, usually teenager, face to face for certain hours in a week to discuss the issues in the child's life, and provide support of his/her personal, social, academic, and other conventional activities. This mentoring project is quite successful and there are more than 140 agencies serving over 26,000 youths in Canada now. *Big Brothers/Big Sisters* is trying to reduce the connection with delinquent peers, while other projects attempt to decrease the influence of delinquent peers. Provo experiment emphasizes the social group which is also considered as a source of delinquency. It believes that, because peers pressure is one of the motivations for delinquency, the young offenders are invited to a community center to join in rehabilitative programs. In this small social context, youths are separated

from antisocial peers but in a conventional group pressure which could result in conformity values toward social norms. Empey and Rabow (1961) evaluated this project as successful based on the youth's attitudes and value changes, and their reintegration into the community due to the group encouragement and support. The above projects could be considered as successful in North America and could be employed to prevent Chinese juvenile delinquency. Instead of telling the importance of avoiding antisocial peers in words, some real program might be more operational and helpful.

In addition to controlling the influence of delinquent peers, the current study also provides evidence of the importance of parents in the prevention programs. Family is the primary but vital place for children to get socialized. As it is shown in the present investigation that weak parental attachment is associated with general strain and differential association and then has an indirectly impact on delinquency, family and parents should not be ignored when discussing the prevention strategies. It is unfair to only blame children for their delinquency; parents also hold responsibility for problematic youth because unpleasant family environment, parental rejection, and family violence are all sources of juvenile delinquency (Hamner & Turner, 1985; Simons et al., 2004; Nofziger and Hurtz, 2005). For prevention programs, scholars suggest that parental supervision, discipline at home, and family environment all have positive effects on preventing juvenile delinquency (Brandt, 2006; Bynum & Thompson, 2007), and there are numerous projects based on this consideration in North America. McCarthy and Hutz (2006) suggest several effective advices for parents to prevent their children from risk and delinquency. It could be arguable that parents need to 1) communicate with children openly and encourage them to talk about their life and interest; 2) set up clear and consistent rules and discipline at home; 3) provide effective supervision; 4) find peaceful resolutions to conflict; 5) keep children away from violence in home, media and community; and 6) be aware of children's friends and places where they usually hang out. These suggestions might be appropriate for China's parents too because it establishes effective supervision, positive parent-child relationships, and family support, which could strengthen parental bonds and eliminate strain created by family. In additional, setting up some programs focusing on successful parenting in schools or communities could be also useful because a large number of Chinese parents lack of effective skills to raise and

educate their children. When parents have enough preparation for supporting a child, both emotionally and technically, the prevention programs of juvenile delinquency would be more meaningful and successful in practice. Another implication related to family, based on the current study, is that parental discipline and punishment should be appropriate and adequate. The old words “spare the rod, spoil the child” might not be as effective as it worked in the “good old days”. Family education is indeed important, but it should be acceptable to children. Some parents have no intention to abuse their children, but just use an unappreciated way to educate them. When they consider discipline or punishment as abuse, they were more likely to associate with antisocial peers seeking support and release.

Moreover, as involvement in conventional activities was another predictor of delinquency, both school and family should provide more meaningful and interesting activities which would attract youths. Although in the current study, only one type of conventional activities was examined, it would be reasonable to assume that the involvement reduced delinquency because it could limit the time for those unconventional activities. The new innovation of “education for all-around development”, which claims to focus on abilities of creation and practice, and students’ own characters and personal development rather than test scores, has continued for nine years in China since the “*the green book of Chinese education*” was published in 2000. The evaluation, however, is not quite as successful as expected. Most schools indeed develop new “characteristic” programs focusing on printing, dancing, or musical instruments, but these programs are limited in time, and some of them are just once a month. Many schools only provide these programs in curriculum schedules but never start them authentically. Based on the current study, “characteristic” programs are not only appropriate for the new innovation of education, but also effective for decreasing delinquency because they will increase students’ involvements of conventional activities. Besides these art related programs, it will be another useful approach to add some work training programs in high schools. Not every student will succeed in the National College Entrance Examination (NCEE) and getting into college, and those students who almost have no possibility to pass the NCEE are likely to drop off or seek alternatives to gain attention from teachers,

such as deviant conduct. Thus, basic job training could be an effective way to keep students in school and limit their time to engage in delinquency.

The policy implications based on the current findings are related to three major aspects: peers, family, and school. Reducing the possibility of associating with delinquent peers and the influence of those peers might be the primary effort for prevention projects, because the present study reveals that delinquent peers are the strongest predictor of delinquency. Several projects based on differential association theory could be learned from western countries by Chinese communities. Family and parents are also important in prevention strategies, so longitude programs are necessary to improve parenting skills, conflict management, and family environment. Meanwhile, schools have their responsibility to develop some meaningful programs related to conventional activities and basic job training to prevent juvenile delinquency.

6.3 Limitations

This study examines three leading criminological theories in the Chinese context and demonstrates the effectiveness of these theories in a non-western country. It suggests that family, peers and school have significant impact on juvenile delinquency, especially minor offenses. However, there might be theoretical limitations because the theories tested in the current study are all micro-level perspectives. As China has experienced profound social changes, some structural and institutional factors, such as social inequality and anomie, might also affect delinquency among adolescents. Furthermore, changes of social value and youth subculture shift might also be associated with delinquency. The belief, “to be rich is glorious”, might create more problematic youths or provide them an excuse for acting deviant. Thus, for pursuing a more sufficient explanation of juvenile delinquency in China, these considerations are arguable to include in the theoretical framework for the further study.

To obtain more cases of delinquency, the data in this study were only collected among “ordinary school” and “low qualified school”. Although it was reasonable for the research, the data excluded high reputation schools, or “star” schools, and could not examine truancy and cheating in examinations in those schools, which might not be lower than the current data. Moreover, the data also excluded some youth in high socioeconomic status families because those youth were usually sent to the “star” schools

by their parents who could offer a large sum of donation for the improvements of schools. The current data represented few cases with high SES and indicated no significant differences in delinquency by SES. However, when more cases are included, the relationships between SES and self-reported delinquency might be different from the present research.

In addition, the association with delinquent peers might be insufficient. Zhang and Messner (2000) found in their research that delinquent peers based on parent reports were significantly associated with delinquency, while self-reported delinquent peers was not related to delinquency. Although the finding in the current study was not consistent with their argument, it might be problematic of the self-reported association with delinquent peers. Scholars suggest that youth might overestimate peers' behaviour, and consider them as more deviant. Therefore, other auxiliary research might be necessary, such as survey among parents and those peers labelled as "delinquent".

Finally, the quantitative method might be not sufficient for analyzing juvenile delinquency. Agnew and White (1992) found that there were interactions among independent variables, and the current study reported consistent findings. Measures of general strain and differential association interacted with each other, which resulted in an alternative explanation that individuals with antisocial peers were more likely to report negative relations with adults, and suffered from negative life events. Some researchers indicated that victims and offenders were often one and the same. Therefore, further investigation would be necessary and to resolve this problem, qualitative research might be helpful. The order of general strain and differential association might be explored better through more extensive interviews.

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Appendix I

Juvenile Delinquency in China: An Empirical Analysis using an Integrated Model

Invitation to Participate in a Research Project

This research project will test the use of an integrated theoretical model and help to better understand juvenile delinquency and school violence in China. Once the data has been collected and analyzed, it will be incorporated into a Master's Thesis being undertaken at the University of Saskatchewan. In addition to this, the data may be presented at appropriate conferences and/or published in a peer-reviewed journal.

You are being invited to participate in this research study. Your participation in this study is voluntary which is why I am talking with you during your self-study time in this theatre and/or classroom. There is no guarantee that you will personally benefit from your involvement. Because the survey and the funny story do not have any identifying markings on them, you may not withdraw from the research project once you have submitted the completed survey because the research team will be unable to identify which survey was completed by you. The decision not to participate in this research study will in no way affect the education you receive.

If you agree to participate in this research study, you will be invited to answer the questions on the survey attached. It will take you about 10-15 minutes to complete. You may answer only those questions that you are comfortable with. The information that you provide will be confidential. Your name will not appear anywhere on the survey so please do not put your name or any identifying markings on the survey. Under no circumstances will personal information about you be shared with any of the teachers or organizations. All of the information collected will be securely stored in the Department of Sociology,

University of Saskatchewan by Dr. Hongming Cheng for a minimum of five years. When the data are no longer required, it will be appropriately destroyed.

This research project has been approved on ethical grounds by the University of Saskatchewan Behavioural Research Ethics Board on (**December, 2008**). Any questions regarding your rights as a participant may be addressed to that committee through the Ethics Office via curtis.chapman@usask.ca.

Once you have read this Cover Letter, understand it and freely agree to participate, you may go on to complete the survey and/or read the funny story. All information is anonymous and confidential – please do not put your name or identifying markings on the survey or the funny story. Whether you choose to complete the survey or not, in about 20 minutes time, I will ask that the surveys and funny stories be placed in the envelope that you will have received with the survey and the funny story, and returned to me prior to your leaving the theatre and/or class room. Completing and returning the survey means that you give the researcher permission to use the information collected for the purpose described in the first paragraph.

If you are interested in learning more about this study, please contact Wei Wang or Dr. Hongming Cheng at 1111 – 9 Campus Drive, University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, SK, S7N 5A5, Canada and more details can be provided.

No: _____
Date: _____

A Survey of Chinese juvenile delinquency 青少年边缘行为调查

Instruction:

1. Please circle or mark “√” on the answer(s) for each question. 每题只选一项，请在相应的选项前的□上划“√”
2. If you believe that “other” is the best answer for some questions, please write down your explanation on the “_____”. 如果选择“其他_____”项，请将您的答案填写在横线上。
- 1、Your gender is 你的性别：
① Male 男 ② Female 女
- 2、Your age is 你的年龄: _____
- 3、What is your father’s current occupation? 你爸爸的职业是：
① Employee/Staff in company or firm 企业/公司员工
② Doctor/Nurse 医务人员
③ Self-employed 个体经营者
④ Lawyer 律师
⑤ Teacher/Faculty 教师
⑥ Business/Company Manager 企业/公司管理者
⑦ Citizen Servants 公务员
⑧ Farmer 农民
⑨ Other 其他_____
- 4、What is your mother’s current occupation? 你妈妈的职业是：
① Employee/Staff in company or firm 企业/公司员工
② Doctor/Nurse 医务人员
③ Self-employed 个体经营者
④ Lawyer 律师
⑤ Teacher/Faculty 教师
⑥ Business/Company Manager 企业/公司管理者
⑦ Citizen Servant 公务员
⑧ Farmer 农民
⑨ 其他_____
- 5、What is your father’s highest education level? 你爸爸的学历是：
① Master or above 研究生或以上
② Bachelor 本科毕业
③ Senior high school/Secondary specialized school 高中/中专毕业
④ Junior high school 初中毕业
⑤ Elementary school 小学毕业
⑥ Lower than elementary school 小学以下

6、What is your mother's highest education level? 你妈妈的学历是:

- ① Master or above 研究生或以上
- ② Bachelor 本科毕业
- ③ Senior high school/Secondary specialized school 高中/中专毕业
- ④ Junior high school 初中毕业
- ⑤ Elementary school 小学毕业
- ⑥ Lower than elementary school 小学以下

7、How do you rank your family income level? 你认为你家庭的收入水平处于:

- ① Wealth 富裕
- ② Comfortable 中产
- ③ Adequate 一般
- ④ Difficult 低收入
- ⑤ Poor 贫困

8、Who is the closest person to you in your opinion? 你觉得自己和以下谁感情最好最亲近?

- ① Patrilineal grandparents 爷爷奶奶
- ② Matrilineal grandparents 外公外婆
- ③ Parents 爸爸妈妈
- ④ Teacher 老师
- ⑤ Friends 朋友
- ⑦ Other 其他_____

9、Which person do you think influence on your acts mostly? 生活中, 你认为以下谁对你的行为影响最大?

- ① Patrilineal grandparents 爷爷奶奶
- ② Matrilineal grandparents 外公外婆
- ③ Father 爸爸
- ④ Mother 妈妈
- ⑤ Teacher 老师
- ⑥ Friends 朋友
- ⑦ Other 其他_____

10、Have you ever been **physically** abused by your parents? 在你成长过程中, 你认为你的**身体**遭到过父母的伤害吗?

- ① Never 没有
- ② Sometimes 有时有
- ③ Often 经常有
- ④ Always 总是这样

11、Have you ever been **mentally** abused by your parents? 在你成长过程中, 你认为你的**精神**遭到过父母的伤害吗?

- ① Never 没有
- ② Sometimes 有时有
- ③ Often 经常有
- ④ Always 总是这样

12、How do you like school? 你喜欢上学么?

- ① Strongly like 非常喜欢
- ② Like 喜欢
- ③ Dislike 不喜欢
- ④ Strongly dislike 非常不喜欢

13、How do you rank your general course grade? 你觉得自己的成绩如何?

- ① Excellent 优秀 ② Good 良好 ③ Fair 一般 ④ Pass 及格
 ⑤ Poor 不及格

14、Have you ever experienced the following events in the recent three years?最近三年内，你有没有过以下的经历？请在所有符合的空格内打“√”，可多选

- Assaulted by others 被他人攻击过
 Was theft 被偷过
 Close family member passed away 有亲人过世
 Separated with friends 与好朋友分离
 Been seriously sick 得过大病
 Picked up by classmate or friend 被同学捉弄
 Parents divorced 父母离异
 Job loss among parents 父亲/母亲失去工作
 Been sexually abused 受到过性侵犯
 Was robbed 被其他人抢过

15、Please put a “√” in the grid which presents your feeling best.

请在符合自己意见的空格里打“√”

	Strongly disagree 非常不同意	Disagree 不同意	Undecided 一般	Agree 同意	Strongly agree 非常同意
I have a bad relationship with my parents. 我和父母相处的不好					
My classmates do not like me. 我的同学们不喜欢我					
My parents consider my opinion. 我父母尊重我的意见					
My parents put out too many rules. 家长对我有太多规定					

16、Have you ever experienced the following events?

你是否经历过以下的行为或感受？请在符合的空格里打“√”

	Never 从来没有	Sometimes 有时有	Often 经常有	Always 总是这样
Arguing with parents 和父母吵架				
Conflict with parents 与父母意见冲突				
Ignored by teachers 老师不重视我				
Blamed by teachers 被老师批评				
Parents fight 父母之间有争吵				

17、 Please put a “√” in the grid which presents your feeling best.
请在符合自己意见的空格里打“√”

	Strongly disagree 非常不同意	Disagree 不同意	Undecided 一般	Agree 同意	Strongly agree 非常同意
Friendship is an important part in my life. 朋友是我生活中重要的一部分					
It is important for me to spend time with my friends. 和朋友在一起对我来说十分重要					
I always change my friends. 我的朋友们总是不固定					
It is easy for me to make friends. 我很容易和别人交上朋友					
I get along with my parents. 我和父母相处得很好					
Family is an important part in my life. 家庭是我生活中重要的部分					
I respect for my parents. 我尊重我的父母					
I spend little time on studying. 我花在学习上的时间很少					
It is boring to go to school. 上学很无聊					
I satisfy with my performance in school. 我对自己在学校的表现很满意					
I get along with my teachers. 我和老师相处的很好					
Engaging into college is the only way to win a good future. 只有上大学才会有好前途					
Sometimes I don't have any other choice but to break the law. 有时因为没有其他选择, 我只能做些违法的事情					
No matter how petty the crime is, it is wrong to break the laws. 不管罪行有多轻, 也不应该破坏法律					

18、Have your friends conducted any of the following behavior in recent three years?
最近三年内，你交的朋友中有没有人有过以下行为？请在适合的空格里打“√”

	Never 从来没有	Sometimes 有时有	Often 经常有	Always 总是这样
Assaulted other person on purpose 暴力攻击他人				
Involved in a fight 打架				
Involved in a gang fight 参与集体斗殴				
Stole money or things worth less than \$50 Chinese dollars 拿过别人 50 块钱以下的东西				
Stole money or things worth more than \$50 Chinese dollars 拿过别人 50 块钱以上的东西				
Threatened to harm teacher/student 威胁伤害同学或老师				
Carried a weapon to school 带刀或者棍棒上学				
Cheating in the test(s)/examination(s)考试中作弊				
Absent from school because of other things interested them 逃课				
Had bad relationship with their parent(s)和父母关系不好				

19、How many friends who conduct the above behavior do you have?

你有几个朋友有过以上的行为？ _____

20、What's your friends' opinion about the following sentences?

你觉得你的好朋友对以下说法的意见是什么？请在适合的空格里打“√”

	Strongly disagree 非常不同意	Disagree 不同意	Undecided 一般	Agree 同意	Strongly agree 非常同意
Law is meaningless. 法律没什么意义					
Teachers are often unfair to students. 老师对待学生并不公平					
It is not a big deal to break the law. 违法是没什么大不了的事					
It is a waist of time in school. 上学是件浪费时间的事					
Laws are fair for everyone. 法律对每个人来说都是公平的					

21、 In the past three years, how many times have you ever:
最近三年内，你有过以下的行为么？请在适合的空格里打“√”

	Never 从来没有	Once 一次	2-4 Times 2-4 次	5-10 Times 5-10 次	10-20 Times 10-20 次	More than 20 times 20 次以上
Fought physically with others 打架						
Used physical force to get money or things from people 强迫别人给自己东西						
Assaulted someone violently 攻 击别人						
Involved in a gang fight 参与集体斗殴						
Stolen something from store(s) 从商店里偷东西						
Damaged public or other's property on purpose 有意损坏他人/公共物品						
Stolen money or things worth less than \$50 Chinese dollars 拿过别人 50 块钱以下的东西						
Stolen money or things worth more than \$50 Chinese dollars 拿过别人 50 块钱以上的东西						
Threatened to harm teacher or student 威胁伤害同学或老师						
Carried a weapon (knife, club) to school 带刀或棍棒上学						
Been absent from school 因为有更想做的事而不去上学						
Had sexually behavior 有过性行为						
Run away from home 离家出走						
Cheated in examination(s) 考试中作弊						

Certificate of Approval

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR

Hongming Cheng

DEPARTMENT

Sociology

BEH#

08-147

INSTITUTION(S) WHERE RESEARCH WILL BE CONDUCTED

University of Saskatchewan
Saskatoon SK

STUDENT RESEARCHERS

Wei Wang

SPONSOR

UNFUNDED

TITLE

The Causation of Chinese Juvenile Delinquency: An Empirical Analysis Under an Integrated Model

ORIGINAL REVIEW DATE
02-Oct-2008

APPROVAL ON
05-Dec-2008

APPROVAL OF:
Ethics Application
Consent Protocol

EXPIRY DATE
04-Dec-2009

Full Board Meeting

Date of Full Board Meeting: 02-Oct-2008

Delegated Review

CERTIFICATION

The University of Saskatchewan Behavioural Research Ethics Board has reviewed the above-named research project. The proposal was found to be acceptable on ethical grounds. The principal investigator has the responsibility for any other administrative or regulatory approvals that may pertain to this research project, and for ensuring that the authorized research is carried out according to the conditions outlined in the original protocol submitted for ethics review. This Certificate of Approval is valid for the above time period provided there is no change in experimental protocol or consent process or documents.

Any significant changes to your proposed method, or your consent and recruitment procedures should be reported to the Chair for Research Ethics Board consideration in advance of its implementation.

ONGOING REVIEW REQUIREMENTS

In order to receive annual renewal, a status report must be submitted to the REB Chair for Board consideration within one month of the current expiry date each year the study remains open, and upon study completion. Please refer to the following website for further instructions: http://www.usask.ca/research/ethics_review/



John Rigby, Chair
University of Saskatchewan
Behavioural Research Ethics Board

Please send all correspondence to:

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