RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN FAMILY COHESION, PARENTAL MONITORING, PEER INFLUENCE AND DELINQUENCY AMONG CHINESE ADOLESCENT

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Abstract— The present study was primarily conducted to determine the relationships between family cohesion, parental monitoring, peer influence and delinquency. A total of 300 of 16 years old Chinese adolescents who residing in Kuala Lumpur were involved in this study. Findings from this study showed there is significant correlation between family cohesion and delinquency. Parental monitoring to be negatively related to adolescent delinquency,while peer influence to be positively related to adolescent delinquency. This study also found that male adolescents tend to involve more with delinquency compared to female adolescents.Implication of the findings are also discussed in the paper.

Keywords— Family Cohesion, Parental Monitoring, Peer Influence, Delinquency.

I. INTRODUCTION

A report issued by the Malaysian Social Institute in 2010 shows that from 94% of respondents (N=2403) indicates that they have involved in risk behaviors at least once. Such behaviours include sexual activities, substance abuse, illegal racing, and throwing new born in dumpsters (Marzety, Sumari, & Mahmud, 2013). In 2011, there were 5547 juvenile cases in Malaysia in which Chinese was involved in was 352 cases. Failure to adjust with new situations may lead adolescents to be involved in negative behaviours (Zimmer-Gembeck, Hunter, &Pronk, 2007). A study revealed the risk behaviour among adolescents was truancy (34.4%) which is the major risk behaviour and followed by loitering in public places (21.5%); bullying friends (14.4%), stealing (12.9%) and smoking (12%) (Hidayah et al., 2003).

The initial stage of delinquency is in the form against of school rules such as truancy, smoking and vandalism (Abd Wahab, 2004). The degree of delinquency seriousness can range from less severe behaviours such as abuse the school rules, absentee, school truancy, smoking, and vandalism to more severe crime such as stealing, robbery, substance abuse, rape, and weapon possession (Lim, Muslihah, Sa'odah& Wu, 2013).

More over, family cohesion can act as protective factor. Family cohesion has been defined as the emotional bonding that family members have toward one another (Olson, Russell&Sprenkle, 1982). High level of family cohesion makes adolescent feel secure and comfort. Some research indicates family cohesion influences the peer-group choice and cohesiveness and reduces the likelihood of becoming involved with deviant peers (Cashwel&Vacc, 1996). Moreover,parents are inclined to invest a great deal of care andattention in their only child, resulting in forming more interactions and close ties between parents and children (Feng, Poston Jr., & Wang, 2014).Research is indicated the mother of children with conduct negative behaviour were found to report that their families were less cohesive and result in higher conflict (Slee, 1996). Groups of delinquents adolescents perceive their families to be considerably less cohesive, less expressive, and to have lower levels of independence among members than do members of control groups (Nadine, 2001).

Parental behaviour such as monitoring has been shown high correlation with a delinquent behaviour (Matherne& Thomas, 2001). Adolescents who are poorly monitored by their parent may have more opportunities to engage in antisocial behaviour (Anderson & Bushman, 2002).The influence of deviant peers has been identified the most direct risk factor for adolescent delinquentbehaviour (Werner &Silbereisen, 2003). Association with deviant or delinquent peers is consistently one of the strongest predictors of an adolescent's own delinquency (Esbensen, Peterson, Taylor, & Freng, 2009). During adolescence, individuals begin depending less on their families and more on their peer groups for approval and social validation (Fuligni, Eccles, Barber, & Clements, 2001). Therefore, peer behaviour will direct influence adolescent behaviour. According to Keijsers, if an adolescent is spends much time with delinquent peers, it will increase the probability to engage in delinquent activities (Keijserset et al., 2012). Based on the literature review, the purpose of the present study are to determine the relationship betweenfamily cohesion, parental monitoring, and peer influence withdelinquent behaviour among Chinese adolescent. In addition this study also want to find out whether there is a significant differences on delinquent behaviour between male and female of Chinese adolescents.

II. METHODS

2.1. Participantsand Procedure

The participants in this study were Chinese adolescents aged16 who residing inKuala Lumpur.A

total of 165 Chinese adolescents were involved in this study. The participants in this syudy were selected using Multi-Stage Cluster sampling technique. Prior data collection, approval was obtained fromMinistry of Education Malaysia and Department of Education in Kuala Lumpur. Two schools in Seputeh, Kuala Lumpur were involved in this study.The self-administeredquestionnaire was distributed to all students in the selected classes after giving a briefing.

2.2. Data Analysis

A descriptive analysis was conducted to provide a clearer picture of the data distribution. Next
the magnitude and strength of the relationsip of study variables were quantitavely measured using Pearson product-moment correlations. The independent sample t-test were computed to examine thedelinquent behaviour between male and female of Chinese adolescents.Finally,the multiple regression using hierarchical procedure analyis was conducted to determine the best set predictors of delinquent behaviour of Chinese adolescents while controlling selected socio-demographic characteristics.

2.3. Measurements

2.3.1.Adolescent and Family Characteristics

Information of the adolescents and family characteristics were obtained by asking the participants to report on their gender, number of siblings, parents' age,parents' educational level, parents' occupation and family monthly income.

2.3.2.Family Cohesion

Family cohesion was measured using Family Cohesion Scale (Tolan, 1999). A total of 6 questions were asked in Family Cohesion Scale on a four-point Likert scale ranging from 1, " not true" 2, "hardly true or sometimes" 3, "true a lot of the time" 4, "always true or almost always".Some example of item in this scale is 'Family members feel very close to each other'. The reliability of the scale in the study was 0.78.

2.3.3.Parental Monitoring

Parental Monitoring Scale (Kerr & Stattin, 2000) was used to assess the level of parental monitoring. This measurement was contains three subscales which were child disclosure, parental solicitation and parental control. The total question of these scales was comprised of 15 questions (eg. "How often do your parents talk with your friends when they come over to your house?"). The Parental Monitoring Scale was rated on five Likert scale ranging from 1, "Never", 2, "Rarely", 3, "Sometimes", 4, "Often", 5, "Very often". Parental solicitation was related to measures ofparents asking children what they have been doing. Furthermore, child disclosure was referring to children spontaneously telling parents what they have been doing. Finally, parental control was referring to rules and limit setting. In this study, the reliability of the scale was 0.78indicating moderate respectable measures.

2.3.4Peer Influence

Friend Delinquent Behaviour-Peer Deviancy Scale (Loeber, 1998) was used to access peer influence variable. Peer Deviancy Scale was consisted of 9 items and asked respondent of how many of their friends have done these behaviour in the past 3 months (eg. "Skipped school without an excuse?"). Respondents have to answer the question on five Likert scale ranging from 1, "None of them", 2, "Very few of them", 3, "Some of them", 4, "Most of them and5, "All of them". Reliability of the Peer Deviancy Scale was 0.85(Loeber, 1998), indicating high respectable measures. In this study, the reliability of the scale was 0.75.

III. RESULTS

3.1. Adolescent and Family Characteristics

Mostly of the participants (n=165) were girls (55%) while boy was occupied 45% (n=135). As for number of sibling, most of the participants (62.3%) came from small size families that are 0-2 siblings with a mean 2.14 and the maximum number of sibling was 6 siblings.

While, most of participants' father age (49.7%) was at the range between 50-61 years old. In term of mother's age, mostly mother (66.3%) was came from the category of 44-52 years old. As for parents' occupation, father's occupation was classified into 2 categories which were professional and non-professional. Mostly respondent' father occupations were came from sales worker, machinery worker and driver occupation with 55%, whereas professional such as lawyer, engineering, doctor, managerwas occupied 45%. According to Analysis of Labour Force in Malaysia 2011, service and sales workers category leads other categories in terms of employment that is 2.50 million persons (20.3%) in 2011, followed by plant and machine-operators and assemblers' category by 1.55 million persons (12.7%) (Department of Statistic, 2012). Meanwhile, half of the mothers (51.3%) were housewives and the rest were employed in diverse occupations.

Most of respondents' parents seemed to be completed basic education level which is at least pursued SPM level with 76.7% for father and 78% for mother. In terms of family monthly income, a majority (78.6%) of the participants' families had obtain income at least RM 2001 and above. Mostly of them (27%) was in the range RM 4501- RM7000. According to Economic Planning Unit, the mean monthly gross household income by Chinese was RM 6366 (Economic Planning Unit, n.d).

3.2.Correlates of Delinquency

The correlation matrix for all the variables included in this study is shown in Table 1. The findings revealed that family income ($r=-.23$, $p<.01$), and father's education ($r=-.14$, $p<.05$), were significantly related to delinquency.

3.4. Predictors of Chinese Adolescents' Deliquency

Todetermine the factors that best predict the adolescent delinquency behavior, two step of hierarchical multiple regression were conducted. In theStep 1, the family background variables were included, while the family cohesion, parental monitoring and peer influence was added in the Step 2. In this way, the variance shown by both groups of variables could be compared. The results are summarize in Table 3. Step 1 for adolescent delinquency (which accounted for 4%) was statistically significant $F(6,293) = 3.79, p<.05$.

Table 1: Correlation Matrix of Study Variables

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1. No. Of sibling	1												
2.Father's Age	.10	1											
3.Mother's Age	.06	.70**	1										
4.Family Income	-.14*	-.04	-.01	1									
5.Father's Education	-.18*	.01	-.01	.64**	1								
6.Mother's Education	-.08	.01	.04	.66**	.66**	1							
7.Family Cohesion	.03	.09	.03	.16**	.14*	.12*	1						
8. Parental Monitoring	-.12*	.01	.04	.14*	.11*	.03	.34**	1					
9.Child Disclosure	-.08	-.08	-.02	.07	.05	.00	.21**	.67**	1				
10.Parental Solicitation	-.12*	.03	.01	.07	.08	-.00	.29**	.72**	.44**	1			
11.Parental Control	-.06	-.00	.04	.10	.10	.09	.24**	.70**	.32**	.36**	1		
12.Peer Influence	-.02	-.03	-.10	-.00	.03	.04	-.09	-.19**	-.03	-.04	-.22**	1	
13.Delinquency	.04	-.07	-.02	-.23***	-.14*	-.08	-.16**	-.26***	-.05	-.05	-.14*	.44***	1

Note. * p<0.05, **p<0.01, *** p<0.005

The negative coefficient between family income and delinquency shows high income family will lead to respondents are less likely to engage in delinquent behaviour and vice versa.Furthermore, the direction of respondent's father's education level and delinquency were moved in opposite direction which means respondent will les involved in delinquent behaviour if their father was attainedhigh level of education.

3.3. Differences in Delinquency among Adolescents according to Gender

Table 2 shows the *t*-test results of gender differences with respect of delinquency. The aim for this study is to determine the significant difference of delinquency between male and female adolescents (mean male=11.12; mean female=10.60, t (298) =1.99, *p*=.04).This showed that male adolescents involve with delinquency behaviour higher than female adolescents.

Table 2 :Differences in Delinquency among Adolescents according to Gender

Delinquency	Mean	t(df)	Sig.
Gender		1.99(298)	.05*
Male	11.12		
Female	10.60		

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

Meanwhile, in Step 2 the variance shown in terms of the adolescent delinquency behavior increase (which is 21.6%) when the peer influence was added and five out of nine predictor variables were statistically significant, with peer influence recording a higher Beta value ($\beta = .42$, $p < .001$) then follow by family

Table 3: Multiple Regression Analysis for Delinquency

Variables	Hierarchical regression models					
	Step 1			Step 2		
	B	SE B	B	B	SE B	B
Number of siblings	.02	.14	.01	.02	.12	.01
Father's Age	-.08	.05	-.13	-.10	.04	-.17*
Mother's Age	.05	.05	.07	.10	.05	.14*
Father's Education Level	-.04	.15	-.02	-.03	.13	-.02
Mother's Education Level	-.27	.17	.13	-.15	.15	-.07
Family Income	-.87	.23	-.31***	-.70	.21	-.28***
Family Cohesion				-.03	.05	-.03
Parental Monitoring				-.05	.02	-.14*
Peer Influence				.35	.04	.42***

Note. Statistical significance: *p < .05; **p < .01; ***p < .001

Step 1: $F_{6, 293} = 3.79$, $p<.05$, $R^2= .07$, R^2 change=.07
Step 2: $F_{9, 290} = 13.04$, $p=.000$, $R^2=.29$, R^2 change=.22
Income ($\beta = -.28$, $p < .001$), father's age ($\beta = -.17$, $p < .05$), parental monitoring ($\beta =-.14$, $p < .05$), and mother's age ($\beta =-.14$, $p < .05$).

IV. DISCUSSION

The goal of this study was to examine the relationship between family cohesion, parental monitoring, peer influence and the contribution of these variables to the delinquency among Chinese adolescents in Kuala Lumpur. The present study was found that there were significant relationships between family cohesion,

parenting monitoring, peer influence and adolescent delinquency. Theoretically, family environment will influence adolescents' peer characteristics like positive family environment such as high level of family cohesion was related to fewer peers that drank alcohol (Higgins, McCann, McLaughlin, McCartan&Perra, 2013).

Findings from this study provided evidence that family cohesion play a significant role on the adolescent delinquency. Past study generally defined indicator of family functioning as level of family cohesion, communication, support and involvement (Dillion, Pantin, Robbins &Szapocznik, 2008). Therefore, there is low risky for adolescent involve in delinquent behaviour if adolescent has strong family cohesion. This is because adolescent perceived their family was available and support when adolescent is needed their family encouragement.The past study also found thatstrong family cohesion might protect adolescents from involving delinquentbehavior (Nadine, 2001).

Risk for developing delinquent behaviour is often tied to parenting factors. The findings also showed parental monitoring was significant correlated with adolescent's delinquency. Inadequate parent monitoring will caused to development of adolescent conduct problem especially the development of adolescent is dynamic. This finding was consistent with a study in which they were found the parental monitoring related to delinquency (Anderson & Bushman, 2002). Besides that, another study also gives the evidence in which high level of parental monitoring was significantly associated with lower frequency of alcohol use (Trucco, Colder & Wieczorek, 2011).

Finding also show that peer influence is the most significant predictor to adolescent delinquency based on the finding. This result was consistent with the previous studies, a study was found that deviant peers is consistently one of the strongest predictors of an adolescent own delinquency (Esbensen, Peterson, Taylor &Freng, 2009). Usually, adolescent tend to select friends with similar attitudes and personality trait. Acceptance enables a teenager to join a particular peer group and identify with the behaviours and attitudes of that group. Therefore, adolescents are often willing to conform to their peers' behaviours in order to be accepted. In addition this study found thatmale students were higher involved in delinquent activities than female student. The findings of the study support the results of previous study in which female delinquency is significantly lower than male delinquency (Hartjen & Priyadarsini, 2003).

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATION

The present study conclude that family cohesion, parenting monitoring and peer influence influence Chinese adolescent delinquency behavior in Kuala Lumpur. Meanwhile, male adolescents were found to engaged with delinquency behavior more compared to female adolescents.

This research has implications for parents, schools, and policy makers. One clear implication of the study for parents is that parent's monitoring was significant correlated with delinquency. Parent was suggested to provide appropriate parental monitoring such as allow their children to provide an opinion in family decision-making, which can create a sense of cohesiveness between family members. This would help to increase parents' awareness that their involvement is crucial in reducing adolescent delinquency. Besides that, parents should give focus on parent-child relationship. Nowadays, many families are dual family income due to high cost living. Consequently, this is causes parent has less time interaction with their children. If parent gives less consideration, support and care toward their children, it will cause children has high probability engaging in delinquent behaviour. Therefore, it is suggested parent should adjust their working schedule in order to have time to interact with their children.

This present study able to provides some information to policy maker. From the study, it was found many Chinese adolescents were experienced in alcohol consumption. Adolescent are curious to certain substance such as cigarettes and alcohol. They want to explore and do things their own way. Teenager feels a strong curiosity when they cannot drink alcohol and they are still insists to try this substance even it's against with parents rule especially these substances available at everywhere such as grocery, restaurant and other place. This is make adolescent easier to purchase this substance. Therefore, all the parties such as government and school are plays an important role in adolescent development. Government of every state should make a high priority in addressing delinquency rates in schools in order adolescent negative conduct problem was under control and keep them away from the influence of gang involvement in the schools. Besides that, school policies should be reviewed frequently in order to update with the current situation in order to provide adequate solutions in addressing present student's situations. In this way, delinquency rates should be lowered progressively and as a result a positive school performance will be increased by the students, which return a school has a better status. All the parties include parents, educator, and policy maker should cooperate with each other in order to educate our new generation as they are the next generation to manage our country. As a result, country able to produces a healthier, high quality and competitive adolescent.

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