

Abstract

The present study was primarily a feasibility-like research undertaking. It represents the first attempt at testing the applicability of a theory, originally developed in the West, to those corresponding social phenomena in Thailand. It is a recently formulated power-control theory of common delinquent behavior (Hagan, et al. 1985) which was extended later in 1987.

Apart from fulfilling the last requirement for the completion of a Master's degree in Sociology, another major purpose of this work was to add something new to Thailand's academic circle within which theorizing and theoretical work have not received due consideration.

The newly extended power-control theory reconceived and combined the two age-old traditions of delinquency research on class position and family relationship and delinquent behavior which have been stalled for years. It brings the class analysis of delinquency into the household, using a new model of class relations based on the relative positions of husbands and wives in the workplace. It focuses on the translation of positions of power in the workplace into power relations in the family and its effects on the gender-determined control of adolescents, their preferences for risk taking, and the patterning of gender and delinquency.

Specifically, Hagan and Gillis used the class structure of modern patriarchal families to account for a predominantly male pattern of delinquency and alternatively the class structure of modern egalitarian families to account for small gender differences in delinquent behavior. Moreover, there are in the "Causal" chain sociological and social psychological processes which involve a number of intervening variables : parental controls, attitude toward risk taking, and perceived risk of getting caught which function as the last and only direct link with delinquency, the dependent variable.

The methods and procedures of the present study were rather simple with respect to sampling and data analysis. The sample was of a purposive nature and its scope was confined to a single large government school located in suburban Bangkok. This school was selected in view

of its students' social class composition and age groups, which are quite suitable for the application of the power-control theory to our social setting. About 600 teen-age students were selected to be included in the sample.

The results of the study clearly give strong support to the theory regarding its applicability to the corresponding phenomena in Thailand as well as its explanatory power. More specifically, the findings show that almost all the hypotheses derived from the power-control theory were confirmed statistically. In the light of all theoretical statements and its causal chain, gender is related to delinquency via the already specified interviewing variables in the following sequence : gender → parental controls → attitude toward risk → perceived risk of getting caught → delinquent behavior. Marxian social class, especially, the class dynamics of the family, conditions the effect of gender on delinquency. Male adolescents exceed female counterparts in criminality only in those patriarchal families where class relations are unbalanced. In more egalitarian family class structures, the differences are diminished or minimal

It is recommended that academic circles in sociology should benefit more from refining the research procedures and data analysis to be employed in at least one more study of the same topic in the future.