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UNDERTANDING THE RELATION SHIP BETWEEN JUVENILE DELINQUENCY  
AND INFORMAL SOCIAL CONTROL THROUGH PARENTAL TRUST

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## **ABSTRACT**

This thesis investigates the relationship between informal social control as imposed through various methods by school and family organizations using information on respondents who participated in the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health Public Use Data. Although previous studies have investigated the relationship between formal and informal social control and delinquency, this study moves beyond prior research in that it investigates not only the effects of informal social control on juvenile delinquency, but also questions why delinquency and crime exists in neighborhoods that appear to have high supervision and families that enforce informal social control. By incorporating the concept of trust as an important element of informal social control, this research attempts to identify whether trust plays a significant role in discouraging delinquent behaviors. Compared to previous studies, this research showed no statistical difference in delinquency levels for youths who were exposed to high versus low levels of informal social control. Additionally, it showed that youths who trust their parents engaged in less criminal activity.

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## **Chapter 1**

### **Introduction**

According to the National Institute of Justice, in 2010, courts with juvenile jurisdiction disposed more than 1.3 million delinquency cases (Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. 2013). This number continues to grow despite the preventative care systems that are in place today (Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. 2013). In 2012 the National Institute of Justice has estimated that we spend about \$14.4 billion each year on the federal, state and local juvenile justice systems. However, the types and number of offenses being that the juvenile court oversees has changed in the last 10 years. In 2005, 28 percent of all delinquent cases handled by the juvenile court were public order offenses, including disorderly conduct, obstruction of justice, and liquor law violations (Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. 2013).

Despite efforts to increase sentences and severity of punishments, the caseload of the juvenile justice system has increased by over half a million cases in the last 20 years (Osgood 2004). This increase is not only a burden on an already over-crowded juvenile justice system, but it also supports the fact that efforts at deterring juvenile delinquency are not as effective as previously thought. Some theories that have supported policies aimed at strengthening penalties for noncompliance, such as the zero tolerance policies and more police in schools, have merely increased the number of arrests of an incident that previously would have been handled informally (Osgood 2004). This is contributing to the clogging of an already overburdened juvenile justice system. The basis for implementing stricter

enforcement and imposing harsher sanctions revolves around the basis that there lacks adequate formal and especially informal social control.

This paper will investigate the association of informal social control and juvenile delinquency, and whether the factor of trust between youths and their parents plays a significant role in young adult behavior. Specifically, it will investigate the various monitoring behaviors of parental and school supervision, and whether monitoring children's activities affects the likelihood of their engaging in criminal activities. Informal social control will be measured through youth's engagement in extracurricular activities, and will be compared to those who have little informal social control, or those spending their time working. If involved in school-related activities, such as sports, the school acts as a means of social control as well as allowing parents to know who their children are with. In contrast, if youths work, parents can have little control over their social encounters, and those encounters are likely to be with a more heterogeneous group of people. The amount of hours worked for each individual will also take them away from informal social control at home and put them in an environment where parents do not have much supervisory leeway. Lastly, the degree of trust in relationships will be measured to determine if trust plays a role as an important element of social control.

Because delinquency in the past has been measured primarily in terms of property damage, this thesis will also examine the various type of delinquency as opposed to just one. Specifically, they will include property damage, theft, and running away. The last will measure status offenses which are often overlooked, but reveal a great deal about family cohesion and the influence of parental control over youths (Haynie 2001).

The organization of this paper will be divided into four parts. The first part will analyze past research and introduce the theoretical framework for this paper. Next, the data and methods will be described, and the findings will be outlined. Lastly, the hypotheses will be reviewed, and possible implications of the results will be discussed.

## **Chapter 2**

### **Literature Review and Theoretical Background**

There are many theoretical perspectives that either support or negate the effects of informal social control over youths. In this study, I will use two main theories that address why youths of seemingly cohesive and well-protected neighborhoods still commit crime, and how environment influences the behavior of youth.

#### **Broken Window Theory**

A policy that suggests a possible method of implementing social control in communities in order to maintain orderly conduct is Hirschi's (1969) broken window theory. It was first described in 1982 by Wilson and Kelling in an effort to explain the reason people engage in criminal activities in certain neighborhoods on a basis of there being a lack of social control. It claims that signs of incivility, like broken windows in a rundown neighborhood, are signs of lack of supervision or protection, which leads to fear of crime and a reduction in community efficacy (Hirschi 1969). This then leads to a cycle of more crime resulting from such a perception, which eventually leads to generation after generations engaging in crime in rundown neighborhoods. The model connects the importance of disorder in generating more serious crime; disorder, such as petty juvenile property crimes, leads to fear and withdrawal from the community, which then



creates a breeding ground for other levels of crime to flourish due to decreased levels of informal social control (Hirschi 1969). Policies today use this theory as a basic foundation for policing and court intervention in neighborhoods that present at risk youths.

The Broken Windows policy was first introduced in the 1990s when major efforts were directed at reducing record high crime rates. Specifically, New York took a "get-tough" on crime policy through aggressive policing of lower-level crimes (Cooper 1996). The effects were notable, mainly in the reduction of violent crimes. In New York, violent crime declined by more than 56 percent (Cooper 1996). Additionally, property crimes fell by about 65 percent (Cooper 1996).

Using this logic, especially in relation to property crime, this 'get tough on crime' approach, now referred to as the broken windows approach, was heavily applied in law enforcement. Unfortunately, the diminishing rates in crimes were only studied for New York City, and were less applicable nationwide. With further studies, theorists realized that a number of factors could have contributed to this pattern, such as only minor property crime being measured, the police force in New York City having grown by 35 percent in the 1990s, the numbers of prison inmates rising 24 percent, and a decline in the number of youths (Corman and Mocan 2000). Applying the 'get tough on crime approach' did not yield the same outcome for violent crimes. Nonetheless, this approach was used as a universal method for a decade.

From this approach emerged a harsh reality for juveniles found guilty for these types of crimes. The super-predator theory, proposed during the same era of the 1990s, forecasted a growing violent juvenile class that would emerge in the following decade (Corman and Mocan 2000). Juveniles now faced mandatory minimums equal to those of adults, and were treated

equally. However, today data show no differences in the crime rates for states with mandatory life without parole sentences and those with less severe approaches.

The broken window theory identifies that even though the aesthetics and perception of community social control accomplished by placing more police officers on the streets or imposing stricter punishments might in theory seem valid, the social bonds in the community still are lacking. Regarding juvenile delinquency, harsher punishments and more police drug raids at school does not seem to be deterring their engagement in unlawful juvenile behaviors.

However, the broken window theory has been challenged in that it is limited to the amount of trust community members have in each other. An opposing view by Sampson et al. hypothesizes that social cohesion among neighbors and the combined effort to take a stance against crime are linked to reduced violence and property damage. Essentially, the collective efficacy theory hypothesizes that violence can be controlled only to a certain point, after which the willingness of the community as a whole to combat crime will make a significant difference (Wright et al 2001). Prior research identified violence and related crime to be associated primarily with low socioeconomic status and residential instability (Wright et al 2001). Although neighborhood disorganization, as shown through the Broken Window Theory, does contribute to crime, it is not limited to disadvantaged neighborhoods. Even with the aesthetic of many forms of formal social control, such as the study of police in the New York, his theory implied that crime was isolated to certain neighborhoods that showed signs of degradation.

This hypothesis was tested in 1995 in a survey of 8782 residents in different neighborhoods of Chicago, Illinois (Sampson et al 1997). In their analyses, their hypothesis was supported in that reliability of neighbors and the relationships of trust it implied within the neighborhood was negatively associated with violence (Sampson et al 1997). Trust and

reliability, therefore, were determining factors that were incorporated into further research on informal social control of how crime rates should be studied.

### **Social Bond Theory**

Social bond theory is an early attempt to rationalize the bonds that people form to values, people, and institutions. This theory rests on the premise that people are inclined to engage in disorderly conduct if they have no social bonds or attachment to the neighborhood or the people they are harming. These four types of bonds are as follows: attachment, commitment, involvement, and belief (Hirschi 1969). Attachment, refers to the level of psychological affection one has for prosocial others and institutions (Hirschi 1969). Actors in this category fall into two major institutions: parents and schools. Hirschi believed that youths would display greater social control when they formed close attachments to their parents and schools. The second type, commitment, refers to the importance of social relationships and their value to people who consider committing crime. Hirschi noted that people would be less inclined to commit a deviant act if they felt as though they were jeopardizing certain social bonds. For juveniles, this included the shame from those whose opinions they respected were they to commit a certain act. The third social bond is involvement, which refers to the time spent in prosocial activity as opposed to criminal involvement. For youth, this typically refers to extracurricular activities. The final social bond is belief, which refers to the degree a person

respects and trusts certain values that support and uphold our laws. In other words, the more important a certain value set is to a person, this less likely he or she will engage in delinquency.

### **Hypotheses**

*H1- Youths that participate in intercollegiate sports rather than holding a part-time job are less likely to engage in delinquent activity*

*H2- Adolescents who have a solid foundation of trust with their parents are less likely to exhibit delinquent behavior compared to than those who do not have those bonds*

*H4-Adolescents who work for pay, especially those who work more than 20 hours per week, will be more likely to be involved in property crime.*

## **Chapter 3**

### **Data and Methods**

The purpose of my research is to identify the factors that cause juveniles of little informal social control to engage in criminal activity. I will focus on examining the direct and indirect behavioral controls provided by parental supervision in raising children. I rely on secondary data of Add Health from the 1992 wave of the Children of the National Longitudinal Survey of Add Health (Wright and Cullen 2001). The longitudinal study is a national representative sample of adolescents in grades 7-12 from 1994-1995. The same sample was then followed into adulthood. The sample measures a balance of both at risk and not at risk youth (Wright and Cullen 2001). At risk youth qualify as high school students from lower socio-economic backgrounds, while not-at risk youth are those from predominately middle-class families with two parents (Judith Rich Harris 1995).

Interviews from Wave III include 4882 respondents that took the subsequent survey from the first wave. Questions included basic demographic characteristics, involvement in extracurricular activities, engagement in various forms of property crimes and status offenses, property and relationships to parents and the number of hours worked per week.

### Dependent Variables

There are three dependent variables that I am interested in researching as indicators of delinquency. Rather than combine all types of delinquent behaviors, I focus on three specific subcategories of behavior: property crime, theft and running away from home.

**Table 1: Descriptive Statistics**

Variable	Description	Coding	Mean/%
Gender	Self-reported sex	0=Female 1=Male	53.8%
Race	Self-reported race	0=other 1=White	24.87%
Age	Self-reported age	18-28	21.82%
Property Damage	In the past 12 months, have you deliberately damaged property that didn't belong to you?	0=No 1=Yes	.11
Theft	In the past 12 months, have you deliberately stolen property that didn't belong to you?	0=No 1=Yes	.03%
Runaway	In the past 12 months, have you ran away from home?	0=No 1=Yes	.07%
Sports	Are you involved in any sports?	0=No 1=Yes	48.7%
Mother Closeness	How close are you to your mother?	0=Not at all 1=Very	.982
Father Closeness	How close are you to your	0=Not at all	.975

	father?	1=Very	
Hours Worked per Week	How many hours per week do you work?	0=0	17.95%
		1=1-19	43.08%
		2=20-34	33.23%
		3=35+	3.02%

Respondents' property damage was measured from self-reports made during in home interviews. Youth respondents reported whether or not they deliberately damaged property that did not belong to them in the past 12 months. Responses were coded as yes (1) or no (0). The descriptive statistics and the coding for this variable is listed in Table 1.

Respondents' criminal act of theft was measured from self-reports also made during the in home interviews. Respondents reported whether or not they had deliberately stolen property that did not belong to them in the past 12 months. Responses were coded yes (1) or no (0). The descriptive statistics and the coding is listed in Table 1.

Respondents' status offense of running away from home was measured by their responses to a question asking whether or not they deliberately ran away from home one or more times in the past 12 months. Responses were coded yes (1) or no (0). The descriptive statistics and the coding are included in Table 1.

### **Independent Variables**

The primary independent variables are respondents' involvement in an organized sports team, the number of hours worked for pay per week, and closeness to parental figures. Descriptive statistics, coding and background control variables for all these variables are listed in Table 1.

Respondents were asked if they participated in any organized sports teams, which ranged from football, soccer, tennis, basketball, or rugby to track, cheerleading, and other less strenuous activities. Respondents were required to answer yes or no if they had been part of a sports team in the past 12 months.

Respondents were also asked if they were close to their parents. I coded parental closeness into a single variable indicating both closeness to mothers (close=1) and closeness to fathers (close=1) where 1 was "very close" and 0 was "not very close." Of the respondents, about the same amount (78%) responded that they were close to both of their parents. For this reason, I defined parental closeness as "very close" to both parents.

Respondents were asked how many hours they worked per week. As in the descriptive statistics, respondents' answers varied from part time to full time job hours. I coded the jobs into three ranges (0=0, 1=1-19, 2=20-34, 3=35+) and then separated these categories into binary variables for part time hours worked (worked) per week, keeping 0=0, 1=1, and 2=0; and those who worked 20 hours and above (Full time), with those who did not have jobs. Out of all the respondents, 78.76% held some sort of job.

Respondents were also asked various background questions that have been included in each regression model as control variables. These variables and their coding can be found in the descriptive statistics in Table 1.



## Chapter 4

### Findings

Using linear multiple regression in SPSS to estimate linear probability models, I looked into the primary independent variables' relationships to the dependent variable of property damage. I then looked added the control variables to see if associations with social control measures were either mediated through or suppressed by the control variables. All three models include the variables of age, race, and gender as background control variables. The first model analyzes the effect of involvement in sports on the likelihood of juveniles committing property crime. The second and third model analyze the impact of parental closeness to their mother and father respectively on the outcome of property damage. Lastly, the fourth and fifth models explore the effects of hours worked per week on delinquency, separating them into categories of part-time and full time jobs relative to those who did not work for pay.

Model 1 shows that when controlling for the individual variables, as students participate in sports, there is a marginal but not significant ( $p > .05$ ) difference in the likelihood that youths will engage in property damage.

Model 2 and 3 show that when controlling for the individual variables, youths who are closer to their parents are significantly ( $p < .001$ ) less likely to engage in property crime.

In this model, those closer to their mothers are slightly less likely to engage in property crime.

Models 4 and 5 highlight the relationship between hours worked and property damage. Controlling for the individual variables, young men who worked full time were significantly less likely ( $p < .01$ ) to engage in this criminal activity. Males in this category are more likely ( $p < .05$ ) to engage in property damage, whereas whites were less likely to do so.

### **Theft**

Using linear and multiple regression in SPSS to estimate linear probability models, I looked into the primary independent variables' relationships to the dependent variable of theft. I then looked at the other control variables of each primary variable and their relationship to theft. All three models include the variables of age, race, and gender as background control variables. The first model analyzes the effect of involvement in sports on the likelihood of juveniles committing theft. The second and third models analyze the impact of parental closeness to their mother and father respectively on the outcome of theft. Lastly, the fourth and fifth models explore the effects of hours worked per week on theft, separating work activity into categories of part-time and full time jobs.

Model 1 shows that when controlling for the individual variables, students who participate in sports have a marginal but not significant ( $p > .05$ ) difference in the likelihood of engaging in the theft of others' property or possessions. However, as before, race and gender are associated with higher rates of delinquent behavior, with young men more likely to do so than young women, and white youth less likely to commit theft than nonwhites ( $p < .01$ ).

In models 2 and 3, youths who are closer to their parents are significantly ( $p < .001$ ) less likely to engage in theft, with white males showing a significantly ( $p < .05$ ) lower probabilities of engaging in theft once we control for their closeness to their parents.

In models 4 and 5, the data only showed a marginally significant likelihood for those who worked part time and full time (relative to those without paying jobs) to engage in theft. However, looking at the other variables, white have a significantly ( $p < .01$ ) lower likelihood of not engaging in theft, whereas young men are more likely to do so than young women.

### **Runaway**

Using linear multiple regression in SPSS to estimate linear probability models, I tested the primary independent variables' relationships to the dependent variable of running away from home at least once in the past year. I then looked at the other control variables of each primary variable and their relationship to theft. All three models include the variables of age, race, and gender as background control variables. The first model analyzes the effect of involvement in sports on the likelihood of running away from home. The second and third models analyze the impact of parental closeness to their mother and father respectively on the outcome of theft. Lastly, the fourth and fifth models explore the effects of hours worked per week on theft, separating them into categories of part-time and full time jobs.

Model 1 shows that when controlling for the individual demographic characteristics, as students participate in sports, there is a marginal but not significant ( $p > .05$ ) decrease in the likelihood of running away. However, young men were significantly ( $p < .01$ ) more likely to run away once we control for sports participation.

In models 2 and 3, youths who are closer to their parents are significantly less likely to run away, with the difference for those who expressed closeness to their mother slightly

stronger ( $p < .01$ ) than those who were very close to their fathers ( $p < .05$ ). In models 4 and 5, the data only showed a marginally significant difference in likelihood for those who worked part time and full time to engage in theft.

### Summary

Most models showed marginal decreases for various types of delinquency through various relationships. However, two of my hypotheses were supported to some extent by this data analysis, while one showed results that differed from my expectations. Youths who expressed closer relationships to their parents were significantly less likely in all three tables to engage in delinquency. Additionally, working full time did seem to affect involvement with delinquency, but did not prove to be more detrimental than participation in sports overall. Sports showed both positive and negative correlations with delinquency. The only relationship that was consistent throughout the regression models was that of parental closeness and lower predicted rates of delinquency.

My data yielded outcomes that differed from prior research in a number of ways. Inter-scholastic athletics have been supported by school administrators partly out of the belief that participation in sports is an effective deterrent to delinquency (Walter E. Schafer 1969). In these findings, youths who participated in sports, specifically males, were somewhat more likely to engage in delinquent behaviors such as property crimes. Additionally, holding a part time job also seemed to diminish the likelihood of juveniles delinquency, despite the lack of informal social control in those areas.

Studies from the National Longitudinal Study on Adolescent Health have supported the relationship between parent-child interaction and juvenile delinquency. Compared with peers whose parents are often absent throughout the day, teens whose parents are more present tend to engage in less criminal activity (Michael D. Resnick et al 1997). Additionally, the children of parents who were more involved with closer relationships to their parents were less likely to exhibit behavioral problems and less likely to engage in risky behaviors (Michael D. Resnick et al 1997), which is consistent with my findings.

Table 2: Property Damage

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4		Model 5	
	<u>Coef</u>	<u>Std</u>	<u>Coef</u>	<u>Std</u>	<u>Coef</u>	<u>Std</u>	<u>Coef</u>	<u>Std</u>	<u>Coef</u>	<u>Std</u>
	<u>Err</u>		<u>Err</u>		<u>Err</u>		<u>Err</u>		<u>Err</u>	
Sports	-.001	.001	Mother close***	-.985 (.03)	Father close***	-.975 (.03)	Worked	-.006 (.00)	Full Time	-.008 (.02)
									*	
Gender (male=1)	.087 (.01)		Gender (male=1)	.087 (.01)	Gender (male=1)	.087 (.01)	Gender (male=1)	.045 (.29)	Gender (male=1)	1.019 (.20)
									***	
Race (white=1)	.022 (.01)		Race (white=1)	.022 (.01)	Race (white=1)	.19 (.02)	Race (white=1)	.019 (.01)	Race**	-.483 (.20)
									(white=1)	
Age	-.18 (.00)		Age	-.18 (.00)	Age	-.18 (.00)	Age	-.014 (.00)	Age	-.017 (.06)
Constant	.543 (.31)		Constant	.543 (.31)	Constant	.543 (.31)	Constant	1.234 (1.45)	Constant	.543 (1.44)
N	4882		N	4882	N	4882	N	4882	N	4882

Notes: \*p< .05;\*\*p< .01;\*\*\*p< .001.

Table 3: Predicting Theft

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4		Model 5					
	<u>Coef</u>	<u>Std</u>	<u>Coef</u>	<u>Std</u>	<u>Coef</u>	<u>Std</u>	<u>Coef</u>	<u>Std</u>	<u>Coef</u>	<u>Std</u>				
	Err		Err		Err		Err		Err					
Sports	-0.029	(.02)	Mother close***	-.523	(.17)	Father close***	-.480	(.19)	Worked	-.007	(.01)	Full Time	-.008	(.02)
Gender (male=1)	1.001	(2.1)	Gender (male=1)	-.023	(.06)	Gender (male=1)	-.045	(.09)	Gender (male=1)	.045	(.29)	Gender (male=1)	.908	(.20)
	**									**				
Race (white-1)	.022	(.04)	Race* (white-1)	-.19	(.03)	Race* (white-1)	-.201	(.22)	Race (white-1)	-.022	(.06)	Race** (white-1)	-.445	(.23)
Age	-.018	(.02)	Age	-.026	(.07)	Age	-.026	(.08)	Age*	.922	(.26)	Age	-.017	(.06)
Constant	2.567	(1.21)	Constant	.903	(.31)	Constant	1.023	(.41)	Constant	1.434	(1.45)	Constant	.743	(1.44)
N	4882		N	4882		N	4882		N	4882		N	4882	

Notes: \*p< .05;\*\*p< .01;\*\*\*p< .001.

Table 4: Predicting Runaway

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4		Model 5					
	<u>Coef</u>	<u>Std</u>	<u>Coef</u>	<u>Std</u>	<u>Coef</u>	<u>Std</u>	<u>Coef</u>	<u>Std</u>	<u>Coef</u>	<u>Std</u>				
	<u>Err</u>		<u>Err</u>		<u>Err</u>		<u>Err</u>		<u>Err</u>					
Sports	-.008	(.01)	Mother close**	-.190	(.11)	Father close*	-.090	(.15)	Worked*	-.007	(.01)	Full Time	.018	(.02)
Gender (male=1)	.085	(2.1)	Gender (male=1)	.088	(.04)	Gender (male=1)	-.045	(.09)	Gender (male=1)	.022	(.10)	Gender (male=1)	.025	(.20)
**														
Race* (white-1)	.020	(.04)	Race (white-1)	.019	(.03)	Race (white-1)	-.201	(.22)	Race (white-1)	-.022	(.06)	Race (white-1)	-.022	(.23)
Age	-.20	(.02)	Age	-.020	(.01)	Age	-.019	(.01)	Age*	-.017	(.08)	Age	-.018	(.06)
Constant	.523	(1.21)	Constant	.552	(.31)	Constant	.553	(.41)	Constant	.877	(1.45)	Constant	.867	(1.44)
N	4882		N	4882		N	4882		N	4882		N	4882	

Notes: \*p< .05;\*\*p< .01;\*\*\*p< .001.



## Chapter 5

### Discussion, Limitations, Conclusion

This research aims to serve as guidance for future crime prevention policy. As of today, juvenile delinquency is not being dealt with effectively as described in the introduction, and one of the main reasons lies in the lack of knowledge surrounding factors that play into delinquency. While some of my hypotheses are not supported by my analyses, this demonstrates that more research is needed in these areas. One of the statistically significant relationships was upheld throughout: parental closeness with their children was associated with lower rates of delinquency. Studies from the National Longitudinal Study on Adolescent Health have supported the relationship between the absence of parent-child interaction and higher risks of juvenile delinquency. Compared with peers whose parents are often absent throughout the day, teens whose parents are present throughout the day tend to engage in less criminal activity (Michael D. Resnick et al 1997). Additionally, parents who were more involved with children and reported having a closer relationship with their children are less likely to be confronted with behavioral problems, and their children are less likely to engage in risk behaviors (Michael D. Resnick et al 1997).

However, there still remains a question as to whether involvements in sports really does deter crime, and these results support the need to look into what types of crime are committed by those involved in sports. More research will shed light on the behavioral trends and influence of social peer groups. Likewise, more research needed on youths who hold jobs, either part time or full time to see how and why working might influence the likelihood of committing delinquent behaviors.

This study went beyond previous research on looking at structured behavior of involvement with structured activities by looking at the informal social control that was present in each. Additionally, it factored in trust and the notion of whether or not parents trust and know with whom their children spend time.

A number of reasons can explain the lack of evidence supporting rejection of the null hypotheses in this research. First of all, because these data were based on the time trade-off that sports participation and holding a job imply, differences in the circumstances or the structure of each activity are not addressed, making it difficult to properly gauge how these activities may contribute to or protect against delinquency. For example, not all jobs expose youths to random people that their parents do not know, and while the environments for some jobs may be uncontrolled, other jobs may offer a relatively protected environment. According to the social control theory, the absence of strong relationships to delinquency could be due to the lack of structure and controls included in the models. For example, my indicator of sports participation cannot distinguish between intramural versus intermural teams, which creates a lot of unaddressed variation that potentially relates to unstructured environments that do not adhere to the same standards as formal sports teams.

Other limitations include that the data provide little detail to adequately identify the specific features that may be linked to sources of delinquency. As mentioned above, sports participation and hours worked per week do not adequately represent all the different categories that fall under each. Whereas some areas of sports may increase some types of risky behavior, others may deter respondents from engaging in activities like theft or running away. Additionally, it is hard to measure how much trust is established between youths and their parents, for my hypothesis only asked whether or not they were close to their parents.

This does not mean that they see their parents every day, that their parents are involved sufficiently in their lives, or that they are in a dual versus single parent household.

In conclusion, further research on delinquency is needed. Due to the non-significant findings for some of my hypotheses, it is difficult to make a recommendation at this point. However, it is clear that factors such as trust and informal social control do have an effect on delinquency. Further research may investigate the levels of structure within various job positions and sports teams, and how various features of these activities might be related to delinquency. The notion of trust and parental influence also needs to be investigated further to measure the amount of involvement of parents in their children's lives.

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