JUVENILE OFFENDING AGAINST PROPERTY, NARCOTICS AND VIOLENT CRIMES IN BANGKOK AND PERIPHERAL AREA: A STUDY OF SELF-CONTROL THEORETICAL IMPLICATIONS

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This study of the Crimes Against Property, Narcotics, and People (violent crimes) in Bangkok and its Vicinity was a case study of the application of self-control theory to analyze the roles of this theory in order to explain the crimes. Quantitative research has been employed by applying a questionnaire as a tool for data collection. Sampling was purposive to select juveniles charged with crimes against property, narcotics and people (violent crimes) detained in the five youth training centers. They were the male youth training centers in Ban Karuna, Ban Muddita, Ban Ubekkha, Ban Sirindhon and Ban Kanjanabhishek. The sample were 626 juveniles who were literate, free from mental disorder, and willing to cooperate in responding to the questions. This study increased the questions from 24 questions to 34 questions related to factors of self-control, which were the predictors alongside the original questions in the study conducted by Grasmick et al., (1993) and by Chankhanit K. Suriyamani et al., (2010). The nature of the additional questions was improved to match the Thai youth contexts and habits.

Results showed that the majority of the sample were living in Bangkok and were 13-16 years old when offending. They enjoyed junior secondary education and were unemployed before offending. It was also found that when using the self-control model to predict crimes against property, narcotics and people, compared with each other, showed that enhanced risk influenced all three crimes. Risk was the key followed by impulsiveness and the thought process, whereas self-centeredness influenced just only one case and emotion influenced only crimes against the person. Factors like physical activity, favoring simple work, emotion, impulsiveness, and emotional control did not influence the three types of crimes. In addition, when controlled by age, education, delinquency records and living at home with their family; for age group it was found that the self-control model could predict the crimes against property: those among juveniles younger than 15 years were at a high level but were unlikely among those older than 16; for educational status the self-control model could predict the crimes against property among juveniles earning below K.6 at a much high level but were unlikely to predict these crimes among those earning higher than K.7. From delinquency records the self-control model could predict the use of narcotics among juveniles with delinquency records at an unlikely high level but are more likely to predict the use of narcotics among those without delinquency records. In regards to living with their families, the self-control model could do little to predict the use of narcotics among juveniles residing with their families but could predict the use of narcotics at more than double among those who are not residing with their families. It showed that juveniles who were not living with their families had a tendency to commit crimes involving narcotics more than those residing with their families.

Recommendations from the study 1) For academics, there should be additional research undertaken related to social and environmental factors influencing each type of delinquency incorporated together with juvenile control mechanisms and research related to families affecting these delinquencies. 2) In practice, the preventive approach to delinquencies should have been set by government policy to strengthen families and there should be a raising of awareness among parents to sacrifice time to care for and supervise their children. 3) In solutions, there should be programs organized to correct juveniles in the crimes against property, narcotics and people and pilot programs for experimentation and evaluation before the active application. 4) In policy, there should be support and the organization of courses for developing the thinking process, solving problems and giving life skills in educational institutions; employing a psychologist at every level in each school; decisive measures to prevent and to suppress narcotic drugs; reinforcing the environment to secure life and property; training psychologists to become officers of the Department of Juvenile Observation and Protection working in the training centers and observational institutions nationwide and neo-innovation to set the criteria for juvenile rehabilitation.

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