Key Strains, Anger and Delinquency: The General Strain Theory Test on South Korean Youths From Low-Income Households

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KEY STRAINS, ANGER AND DELINQUENCY: THE GENERAL STRAIN THEORY TEST ON SOUTH KOREAN YOUTHS FROM LOW-INCOME HOUSEHOLDS

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Introduction

- General Strain Theory (GST) (Agnew, 1992): Negative relations of strains create unpleasant emotions (e.g., anger and depression), which lead strained people to commit crimes as their coping methods
- Strains are more likely to lead to crimes. When: Seen as “Unjust” → Anger. Perceived as high in magnitude, Associated with low social control, and Incentives to use crimes
- Strains are less likely to involve in crimes. When: High level of self-esteem, self-efficacy, parental attachment and etc.

Previous studies on GST and Delinquency

- Negative life events/conflicts from school, family and neighborhood and delinquency
  (Agnew & White, 1992)
- Key strains, anger (mediating effect) and delinquent behaviors (Moon et al., 2007)
  → Applicability GST in non-western countries and importance of key strains
- Applicability of GST on street youths → non-conventional youth groups (Baron, 2004)

Gaps from previous studies

Most tests within Western countries
→ Needs to examine external validity to other countries
Failure including/measuring the key strains except
for Moon et al. 2007
Mostly examined on conventional school-age population
→ Socially/Economically deprived youths are more likely to experience unpleasant feelings and use criminal methods due to lack of social supports

Current Study: Examining key strains, anger (mediating and moderating effect) and delinquency on South Korean Youths from low-income households

Research Hypotheses

- H1: Key strains, anger (mediating effect) and delinquency on South Korean Youths from low-income households
- H2: Key strains, anger, control variables, and delinquency on South Korean Youths from low-income households
- H3: Key strains, anger, control variables, and delinquency on South Korean Youths from low-income households

Data

- Korea Youth Panel Survey (KYPs)
  → By National Youth Policy Institute (NYPI)
  → National funding longitudinal survey (2003-2008):
    Changes Korean youths in career development, delinquent behaviors, socio-cultural thoughts and relationships
  → Stratified multi-stage cluster sampling: Wave-3 (3,125 participants in 2005)
- The Current Study: 239 students
  (F: 132, M: 107)
  → Below poverty line 1.136,335 Korean won (=1,000)

Measurements

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<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Min</th>
<th>Max</th>
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<td>General Delinquency</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Results

- Table 1. Descriptive Statistics

Discussion and Limitations

- Spending more time at school (approx. 12 hrs) than home
- Extremely value on education in South Korea
- Teacher’s physical/ emotional punishment based on students’ performance on exams
- H1: Negative significance in Exam-related Strains
- They may need practical job skills
- H2 & H3: NO Mediating or Moderating Effect of Anger
  Those socially/economically disadvantaged youths struggle with negative affective states daily basis (e.g., Depression, frustration, and anger)

Analytic Strategies

- OLS Regression
- Model 1: Key strains & Delinquency
  - IVs (# of combining questions/ Alpha value):
    - Family Conflicts (3, α = .63)
    - Parental Punishment (2, α = .75)
    - Teacher’s Punishment (Binary, Y/N)
    - Financial Strain (5, α = .83)
    - Exam-related Strain (5, α = .82)
  - Mediating Variable: Anger (6, α = .72)

Contact to Authors

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