

PERCEPTIONS OF CRIME AND PUNISHMENT: AN ANALYSIS OF THE EFFECT
ON JUVENILE DELINQUENCY

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Eric C. Salvador

Certificate of Approval:

Greg S. Weaver
Associate Professor
Sociology, Anthropology, Social
Work, Criminology, and Criminal
Justice

Gregory S. Kowalski, Chair
Professor
Sociology, Anthropology, Social
Work, Criminology, and Criminal
Justice

Joseph J. Molnar
Professor
Agricultural Economics and
Rural Sociology

Joe F. Pittman
Interim Dean
Graduate School

PERCEPTIONS OF CRIME AND PUNISHMENT: AN ANALYSIS OF THE EFFECT
ON JUVENILE DELINQUENCY

Eric C. Salvador

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Signature of Author

Date of Graduation

VITA

Eric Curtis Salvador, son of John Alexander Salvador and Debbie Taylor Salvador, was born September 10, 1983, in Columbus, Mississippi. He graduated from Prattville High School in 2002. He pursued his undergraduate education at Auburn University, and graduated with honors, cum laude, with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Criminology with a minor in Business Administration in May, 2006. He was also a member of Alpha Phi Sigma Honor Society, Alpha Kappa Delta Honor Society and Golden Key Honour Society. Upon completion of his undergraduate degree he entered Graduate School at Auburn University in August, 2006.

THESIS ABSTRACT

PERCEPTIONS OF CRIME AND PUNISHMENT: AN ANALYSIS OF THE EFFECT
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Eric C. Salvador

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The purpose of this study is to investigate and examine perceptions of the criminal justice system and show its effects on juvenile delinquency. As the juvenile continues to engage in deviant behavior, the risk of being caught increases, thus instilling more negative perceptions toward the criminal justice system. Therefore, as deviant behavior increases, criminal behavior and potential for arrest will increase as well. Subsequently, if criminal behavior and the possibility for arrest both increase, the likelihood of contact with the criminal justice system will be similarly affected. This study will utilize Travis Hirschi's Social Control Theory, while focusing specifically on the "Belief" component in his

theory. The sample and data for this study is taken solely from the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth 1997 Cohort.

This research provides statistical evidence that the perceptions of the criminal justice system have an effect on Juvenile delinquency. The statistical significance of the findings and implications for future research are discussed.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Delinquency in America

In 2002, the U.S. Census Bureau estimated that 72.9 million people in the United States were under the age of 18, the age group commonly referred to as Juveniles. In the United States as of 1995, a minor was legally defined as any person under the age of 18. However, not all minors are considered "juveniles" in terms of criminal responsibility. The age of criminal responsibility varies across states in the U.S. In 11 states, including Georgia, Illinois, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Michigan, Missouri, South Carolina, and Texas, a "juvenile" is legally defined as any persons under the age of 17. In three states, Connecticut, New York, and North Carolina, a "juvenile" refers to any persons under the age of 16 (Bilchik 1997). In other states a juvenile is legally defined as any persons under the age of 18. As of 2002, nearly 25 percent of the total U.S. population were considered juveniles, and that number is expected to grow to 36 percent by the year 2050 (Snyder & Sickmund 2006).

As the juvenile population increases, so does the need for research and policy adjustments to handle the influx of future juvenile delinquents. A previous study found that juvenile delinquents are more likely than non-delinquents to suffer problems in adulthood such as unemployment, alcoholism, and dependence on welfare (Smith et al. 1999), not to mention the potential reoccurrences of their criminal ways into adulthood.

Chaiken and Johnson (1998) asserted that those most likely to persist in a criminal lifestyle throughout adulthood are committing acts of delinquency at an early age. Therefore, it is very important to intervene at an early age to reduce costs imposed by future delinquent acts and lower recidivism rates into adulthood.

Juvenile delinquency is one of the most pressing social problems facing today's society, with damaging emotional, physical, and economic effects felt throughout the communities in which it occurs (Smith et al. 1999). Juvenile offenders consume a large proportion of child welfare, juvenile justice, special education, and mental health resources (Tarolla et al. 2002). According to the Federal Bureau of Investigation (2007), juveniles accounted for 17 % of all arrests in the United States, they also accounted for 15 % of all violent crimes, 30% of all property crimes and 26% of index crimes in 2002. Over the past two decades, trends in juvenile offending have shown dramatic increases in female delinquency, violent crimes, younger juvenile arrests, and juvenile homicide rates (Snyder et al. 2006). Historically, arrest statistics have been used as the main tool for assessing past juvenile delinquent activity. Unfortunately, many juvenile offenses go unreported and thus do not become a part of the national statistics (Synder 2004). Indeed, many minor offenses committed by juveniles are considered part of growing up and are handled informally as opposed to the process of arrest and adjudication by the criminal justice system (Snyder 2004).

Juvenile delinquency is a form of deviance which consists of violating the norms and values of society. These norms and values are essential for the group cohesion of society, and violation can cause several inconsistencies within a society. Deviance, in society, is defined as any departure from the societal/cultural norms and values. Norms

and values are established and enforced by the appropriate social institutions, for example, the family is one of the primary social institutions that instills and enforces the norms and values of society. The criminal justice system is considered as one of the more formal agents of social control.

In context, deviance can be anything from a divergence from the normal hairstyle (i.e. blue hair), to the type of clothing or dress that is worn by an individual (i.e. dressing gothic). There are typically two types of deviant behavior. The first type of deviant behavior is formal deviance involving a violation of some sort of penal code or law. The second type of deviant behavior is informal deviance, which is not illegal by law, but is socially unacceptable for members of society. Essentially, informal deviance is not doing what the majority of society does, or conversely, doing what the majority of society does not do.

Criminal behavior is a type of formal deviance or conduct that violates some political or moral law. Any violation of the political or moral law is seen as an act against the state and/or its citizens. The type of behavior that is usually listed as criminal, symbolizes some sort of significant loss that is encumbered by the state or citizens. It can be anything from a monetary loss to a physical loss of life. Criminal behavior by a juvenile can be anything from illegal substance abuse to an act of theft or murder. Criminologists use the term delinquency to describe acts of criminal behavior when committed by a juvenile (Hirschi 1969).

Considering the prevalence, stability, and harmful impact of juvenile offending, the development of effective treatments is of utmost importance for the juvenile and for society today (Tarolla et al. 2002). As the at-risk population for delinquency increases,

the juvenile justice system will see changes likewise. Changes in population though make up only part of the picture. Social changes caused by moving populations, changing economic conditions, and changing social climate (i.e., education, health care, etc.) will also have an impact on delinquency and the juvenile justice system (Snyder et al. 2006).

One of the essential elements of the criminal justice system is the control of outward behavior of individuals in an attempt to protect society. It maintains and enforces the values and norms of society through law enforcement, imposed law and order through the courts, and protection of the public and rehabilitation of offenders through the correctional system. The law enforcement components of the criminal justice system are responsible for preventing crime, enforcing laws and investigating the facts. These local and federal law enforcement agencies are the gatekeepers and the first step into the criminal justice system. Therefore, they are the front line when it comes to answering to and protecting the community.

Municipal and county law enforcement agencies are responsible for answering to the communities which they serve in an attempt to promote order and stability throughout their respective communities. Their responsibility to the community can rarely be disputed because police stations, uniforms, vehicles, equipment and salaries are paid for by the public (Benedict et al. 2000). Moreover, the top local law enforcement administrators must answer to the voting public. The powers and rights of county and municipal agencies are defined by the United States Constitution, but beyond that their duties are shaped by local citizenry (Benedict et. al. 2000).

For decades, researchers have been studying juvenile delinquency, in an attempt to develop an increased understanding and base of knowledge. Because studies have

proven that the early onset of delinquency can lead to further deviant behavior into adulthood, it is of utmost importance to prevent deviant behavior as soon as possible. Studies of this nature are interesting to criminologists and policy analysts alike because early contacts with the police are likely to have lasting effects on juveniles' relationships with agencies of social control and on their long-term attitudes and behavior (Keane et al. 1989). Until recently, little research has been conducted regarding a juvenile's perception of the criminal justice system and subsequent effect on juvenile delinquency. The purpose of this study is to look into the juvenile's perceptions of the criminal justice system and whether or not it has a profound effect on delinquent offending. This study outlines a complimentary framework for analyzing how an individual's own perception of the criminal justice system affects his/her beliefs and how those beliefs, in turn, affect delinquent behavior. More specifically, it tests the effects of the personal perceptions of the criminal justice system on a variety of delinquent activities, such as assault, theft, battery, or carrying a handgun, and arrests, while drawing its theoretical insights from Travis Hirschi's Social Bond Theory.

Hirschi's Bond Theory has become what most criminologists refer to as control theory. It has come to occupy a central place in criminological theory. It is the most frequently discussed and tested of all theories in criminology especially when it comes to explaining cases of juvenile delinquency (Stitt and Giacopassi, 1992). Past research utilizing the Social Bond Theory has focused primarily on the "attachment" characteristic and has shown that attachment is the most important element of social control. However, this paper will focus solely on the "belief" aspect of Hirschi's theory, which is a belief in the legitimacy of the law as an effective means of social control. It will be shown that

society's so called perceptions (lack of social control on behalf of the criminal justice system) of the criminal justice system will have an inverse effect on the participation in delinquent activities. As society's perceptions of criminal justice system become negative, the existence of delinquency may be more prevalent, as the perceptions become positive, the existence of delinquency will become less notable.

In the past, little to no research focused on a juvenile's perceptions of the criminal justice system and the confounding effect on the juvenile's engagement in delinquent activity. Hirschi did very little research on his "belief" component. This was evident in the lack of variables used in his analyses that tested the effects of his "belief" component on juvenile delinquency. Therefore, not much is known on the subject. When looking at perceptions of the criminal justice system, past research has focused primarily on the effects of race and ethnicity. Hence, little information is known of the effects of age on perceptions of the criminal justice system and delinquent offending.

The purpose of this study is to shed light on this subject by testing Hirschi's control theory and the "belief" component on the effects of perceptions of crime and punishment and the subsequent effect on juvenile delinquency. More specifically, it will examine the legitimacy of the criminal justice system to act as an effective agent of social control. It will test the overall manifest functions of the criminal justice system and how it adequately controls outwardly deviant behavior. It will explore the function of the criminal justice system to recognize and punish individuals who violate the law. In the past the only connection the members of the criminal justice system had with juveniles was contact with elementary school aged children via the D.A.R.E. program. The Drug Abuse Resistance Education (D.A.R.E.) program gives kids the skills they need to avoid

involvement in drugs, gangs, and violence (D.A.R.E. 2008). If perceptions of the criminal justice system are found to have a profound effect on juvenile delinquency the creation of more programs like D.A.R.E. might seem like a viable option on behalf of the criminal justice system in an attempt to increase their credibility in the eyes of the juvenile.

CHAPTER TWO

THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES

Strain Theory

In the late 1950s and 1960s several theories arose in order to explain the sharp increase in juvenile delinquency rates. Among them were the three major theories: Strain Theory, Social Learning Theory and Social Control Theory. Although Strain theory's roots can be traced back to the Durkheimian period; the major contributor to this theory was Robert Merton. According to Merton, American society places a strong cultural emphasis on success, but there is no emphasis on the socially approved means of achieving that success. He believed people were socialized towards high achievement and success and that cultural values did not restrict or guide people in earning that success. Essentially, there is a disjuncture between living the "American Dream" and earning the "American Dream".

Merton perceived American values to be more concerned with acquiring success, getting ahead, and getting the money at any cost, than with the right and proper way to do so. He believed that when success goals are over-emphasized in industrialized societies, the norms governing their achievement become weakened, producing what Durkheim conceived of as an "anomie" or a lack of social regulation (Akers & Sellers 2004). Secondly, he argued that there was an apparent discrepancy between means and ends by the class system in America. The "American Dream" permeates the idea that equal

opportunity for success is available to all, when in actuality; disadvantaged minority groups and the lower class do not have the equal access to such legitimate opportunities.

Differential Association and Social Learning Theory

The second theory that was developed around the 1960s was the Social Learning Theory. Ronald Akers originally proposed this theory in collaboration with Robert L. Burgess as a behavioristic reformulation of Edwin Sutherland's differential association theory of crime (Akers & Sellers 2004). Over time, it has become one of the most frequently tested (Stitt & Giacopassi 1992) and endorsed theories of crime and delinquency among academic criminologists (Ellis & Walsh 1999).

Edwin Sutherland was best known for formulating a general sociological theory of crime and delinquency. Sutherland proposed his Differential Association Theory as an explanation of individual criminal behavior and suggested the theory was compatible with what he deemed as "differential social organization" as the cause of differences in group or societal crime rates (Akers & Sellers 2004). The crux of Sutherland's theory hindered on the fact that criminal behavior was learned from the participation in small intimate personal groups as opposed to societal strains placed on the individual. These differential associations may vary by frequency, duration, priority and intensity. He believed the learning of criminal and anti-criminal behavior involves all of the mechanisms that are involved in any other form of learning.

Sutherland never elaborated on what those mechanisms of learning were, therefore the learning mechanisms were specified by Akers and Burgess in the reformulation of Differential Association Theory known as Social Learning Theory. The basic assumption in social learning theory is that the same learning process in a context

of the social structure, interaction, and situation, produces both conforming and delinquent behavior (Akers 1998). According to Akers (1998); “The probability that persons will engage in criminal and deviant behavior is increased and the probability of their conforming to the norm is decreased when they differentially associate with others who commit criminal behavior and espouse definitions favorable to it ...” (50).

Therefore, according to Social Learning Theory, participation in criminal behavior varies based on differential associations among groups, definitions favorable and unfavorable to the law, differential reinforcement and punishments, and imitation of subsequent behavior.

Control Theory

Social Control Theory was developed in direct opposition to Strain and Social Learning Theories, it offered a different explanation for the increasing juvenile delinquency rates. Travis Hirschi was the first main contributor to Social Bond Theory, a branch of Social Control Theory, in his book entitled *Causes of Delinquency* (1969). Hirschi’s Richmond Youth Project applied his explanatory approach to a group of juveniles over a specified period of time. He then formulated his version of control theory that brought together elements from all previous control theories and offered new ways to account for delinquent behavior. In contrast to Merton and Aker’s theory, he developed his theory in order to offer his own distinct explanation for crime and deviance among juveniles.

By means of the control theory, the individual conforms to society’s norms and values because adequate social controls prevent the individual from committing crimes. The primary objective of Social Bond theory is to specify the nature and the dynamics of

the social bond which unites the individual to the fabrics of society, and then examine the ensuing bond and the individual's involvement in deviant behavior. Like Aker's Social Learning theory, Hirschi's control theory has been frequently tested as well, but in the end it has become the most frequently discussed and tested of all criminological theories (Stitt & Giascopassi 1992). Control theories are endorsed by higher proportions of academic criminologists (Ellis & Walsh 1999) than any other type of criminological theory (Akers & Sellers 2004).

Hirschi's critique of past Social Control theories consisted of two elements; a "pure" control theory consisted of no motivations to explain crime (Hirschi 1969). When looking at the early predecessors of social control theory, he argued that concepts such as social control, internalization of norms, internal control, indirect control, personal control, and conscience were too subjective, unobservable, and hard to measure. Secondly, Hirschi asserted that self-control was most often used by earlier control theorists in a tautological way. They simply assumed that internal controls were weak when people committed criminal or delinquent behavior (Akers & Sellers 2004). He believed that attachment is a better concept than self-control, because it avoided the tautological problems and because all the concepts of internal self-control can be subsumed under the concept of attachment (Hirschi 1969).

Hirschi's theory holds that humans are naturally deviant and must be controlled in order to prevent their involvement in crime and drug use. Criminal behavior therefore, is the result of something missing, the absence of a controlling force. This controlling force in Hirschi's theory is the social bond, the link between individuals and society, which restrains people from crime because they value the bond and do not want to damage it

(Payne & Salotti 2007). Hirschi's control theory assumes that when a person's bond to society is weakened or broken, that person is much more likely to engage in crime (Hirschi 1969). Therefore, as elements of the bond have weakened, delinquency becomes possible, although not necessary (Hirschi 1969).

Hirschi's control theory attributes deviant behavior to inadequate internal constraints on controlling outward aggressions of behavior. According to Aseltine (1995);

“Control theory focuses on the extent to which variations in bonding or ‘attachment’ to conventional institutions – primarily the family and the school – are linked to deviant behavior. The problem is not what motivates individuals to behave unconventionally, but rather what serves to constrain the inherent predisposition toward deviance in pursuit of valued end...” (104).

He basically argued that similarly unattached youth drifted together into delinquent groups because of weak social bonds which failed to prevent both the association with delinquents and the act of delinquency itself. These “social bonds” were weak bonds with family and/or school, which in theory, attempted to teach morally what is right from what is wrong.

The word “bond” in Hirschi's theory indicates indirect modes of control as opposed to direct modes of control (i.e. punishing for negative behavior). The “social bond” is a connection between the individual and the conventional order, which results from attachments to, commitment to, involvement in, and belief in, basic social institutions (Gardner & Shoemaker 1989). Therefore, in accordance with social bonding theory, delinquent behavior is to be expected if juveniles are not held accountable by, or

bonded to, conventional society. Direct modes of control are less important because most of juvenile delinquent behavior occurs outside of the presence of parents. Indirect modes of control result from a bond to other individuals (i.e. family) and not wanting to jeopardize that bond by engaging in a certain behavior (i.e. not abusing drugs for fear of losing a job).

The definition of “social bond” is comprised of four elements: (1) Attachment to parents, peers, or school, (2) Commitment to conventional lines of actions, (3) Involvement in conventional activities, (4) Belief in a common value (Hirschi 1969). The stronger these elements of social bonding with parents, adults, schoolteachers, and peers, the more an individual’s behavior will be based in the realm of conformity. Thus, Hirschi’s bond theory hypothesizes that parental influences on delinquent behavior are strong and direct, irrespective of ties to delinquent peers (Aseltine 1995). He claimed that the stronger these four bonds were within an individual, the less likely that individual would become delinquent.

Attachment to Society

Attachment. The attachment bond was referred to as one’s interest in others. One’s acceptance of social norms and the development of social conscience depend on attachments to other human beings. Attachment to others is the extent to which we have close affectional ties to others, admire them, and identify with them so that we care about their expectations (Akers & Sellers 2004). Hirschi believed parents, peers and schools were very important social institutions, which with a strong attachment, would prevent a juvenile from committing delinquent acts. He believed conventional attachments were

inversely related to delinquency, in that as attachments to conventional social institutions increased, delinquency would decrease.

Hirschi emphasized the fact that attachments to parents as well as parental supervision are important in controlling delinquency and maintaining conformity. According to Hirschi (1969); “ The child attached to his parents may be less likely to get into situations in which delinquent acts are possible, simply because he spends more of his time in their presence” (88). Hirschi’s findings can be summarized as: (1) If the child does not care or think about the reaction of his parents, their control over him is seriously reduced. (2) If the child does not communicate with his parents, if he does not tell them of his activities, then he does not have to concern himself with their imagined reactions to his behavior. If, by the same token, they do not tell him how they feel about his behavior, this too frees him from an important source of potential concern (1969: 108).

Likewise, Hirschi postulated that attachment to the school is related to delinquency. He believed that a weak attachment to school and poor academic achievement also promoted delinquent behavior. Hirschi suggests it should be the case that perceived academic ability is related to delinquent behavior, not only because objective school performance is likely to be closely associated with perceived ability, but also because those who see themselves as able to do well in school will probably find school tolerable and relevant to future needs (Hirschi 1969:117). While examining the bond with school, Hirschi found that an inability to do well in school is linked with delinquency through a series of chain events. This chain of events concluded that academic incompetence, poor school performance, disliking of school and rejection of the school’s authority all lead to the commission of delinquent activities (1969: 133).

Hirschi points out that both differential association theory and control theory predict that delinquent behavior of one's own friends is strongly related to one's own delinquency (Hirschi 1969:98). He believed most delinquent acts are committed with peers and most delinquents have delinquent friends. Hirschi also noted that he found one's attachment to parents and school overshadows the bond formed with one's peers (Payne & Salotti 2007). The attachment to peers and attachment to parents are directly related to each other and that both are inversely related to delinquency. Hirschi's findings can be summed up as follows: (1) The child with little stake in conformity is susceptible to prodelinquent influences in his environment, the child with a large stake in conformity is relatively immune to these influences. (2) The greater the exposure to "criminal influences," the greater the difference in delinquent activity will occur between the high- and low-stake delinquent boys" (1969:161).

Commitment to Conventional Society

Commitment. The second bond is commitments, which is the support of and an equal partaking in social activities that tie an individual to the moral and ethical code of society. Hirschi argues that aspirations to achieve conventional goals constrain delinquency. Thus, delinquent behavior not only fails to assist one in attaining conventional goals, but in fact acts as a means of precluding the attainment of conventional goals (1969:162). "Commitment refers to the extent to which individuals have built up an investment in conventionality or a 'stake in conformity' that would be jeopardized or lost by engaging in law violation or other forms of deviance" (Akers & Sellers 2004).

Investment in conventional educational and occupational endeavors builds up this commitment. He suggested that many juveniles with low educational aspirations, in effect complete their education without simultaneously being able to begin their occupational careers, when this occurs, they are bound neither to an educational nor to an occupational career. Juveniles caught in this situation tend to develop attitudes and behave in ways, appropriate only to adults; the end result is an increased rate of delinquency (Hirschi 1969:163).

Hirschi believed that commitment was inversely related to delinquency, thus, delinquency involvement decreases with increased commitment to conventional orders in society (Gardner & Shoemaker 1989). Lack of commitment to these conventional values would result in delinquent behavior. “It seems, then, that those who have a stake in school performance – an investment which delinquent behavior may jeopardize and with which delinquent behavior may be incompatible – are, as control theory postulates, less inclined to engage in delinquent activities (Hindelang 1973). The greater the commitment, the more one risks losing by not conforming to society. The cost of losing one’s investment in conformity prevents one from violating the norms of society. Commitment, therefore, refers to a more or less rational element in the decision to commit crime or to refrain from doing so (Akers & Sellers 2004).

Involvement in Conventional Activities

Involvement. The third bond is involvement, which is partaking in activities which stress the conventional interests of society. Involvement refers to one’s immersion in conventional activities, such as studying, spending time with the family, and participation in extracurricular activities. Hirschi argues that an individual’s heavy involvement in

conventional activities doesn't leave time to engage in delinquent or criminal acts (Aseltine 1995). Heavy involvement in conventional activities would prevent a juvenile from committing delinquent acts as a result of idleness. He hypothesized that higher levels of involvement are associated with higher levels of commitment, attachment, and belief, and thus are inversely related to participation in delinquent activities (Gardner & Shoemaker 1989).

One facet of involvement in conventional activities is participation in school activities such as spending time on homework. According to Hirschi:

“The school does more than prepare students for the future. It acts also as a holding operation, it attempts to engross and involve students in activities that are or may be essentially irrelevant to their occupational futures. If it succeeds, the student’s delinquency potential may be less than would be expected from his status prospects... ” (1969:191).

Hirschi reported that homework was related delinquency, for example, such investment of time and energy affects the student’s performance in school, and may thus operate on delinquency through its effects on attachment and commitment to the school (1969:192).

Involvement in school related activities inhibits concern with and involvement in “adult” activities; juveniles who smoke, drink, date, ride around in cars, find adolescence “boring” and so on. These individuals are more likely to commit delinquent acts than juveniles who do not have these attitudes and do not engage in these activities, regardless of commitment to education and involvement in school-related activities (Hirschi 1969:196). Hirschi also reported that involvements in school-related activities are not as

supportive for the prevention of delinquency as are the results for attachment to the school or involvement in academic activities (Hindelang 1973).

Belief in Society

Belief. The final bond was belief, which deals with the individual's assents to society's value system. The concept of belief in social bonding theory is defined as the endorsement of general conventional values and norms, especially the belief that laws and society's rules in general are morally correct and should be obeyed. On the other hand, this concept does not necessarily refer to beliefs about specific laws or acts, nor does it mean that people hold deviant beliefs that require them to commit crimes, but instead belief in the laws in general (Akers & Sellers 2004). Belief is measured by reference to values relative to the law and the conventional value system. This includes the extent to which a juvenile has general respect for the police and the law, believes that the law should be obeyed, does not endorse the techniques of neutralization, and endorses values such as the importance of education. Juveniles with the absent of this belief in society and the law that governs society are more likely to experience weakened bonds, as the bond to society weakens, the likelihood of committing delinquent acts increases.

Control theory postulates that delinquent behavior does not result from beliefs which require delinquency but instead that delinquency is made possible by the absence of beliefs that forbid delinquency (Hirschi 1969:198). His idea of a belief was made up of several components, the first component was belief and respect in the in the agents of social control (i.e. law enforcement). He begins by suggesting that respect for the police is another measure of attachment to conventional others, which is also closely related to respect for the law, therefore, control theory predicts that lack of respect for the police

should be related to delinquent involvement for both of these reasons (Hindelang 1973). According to Hirschi, belief requires respect for the law and belief in the institutions and people that aid in law enforcement. He argued that people who live in a common social settings share similar human values, therefore they should maintain similar beliefs regarding the legitimacy of the law (Payne & Salotti 2007). Therefore, some social settings may or may not be favorable to the belief aspect of control theory.

The second belief component addresses the individual's beliefs with respect to the violation of the law. Hirschi suggests that agreement within the violation of the law suggests a possession, by the individual, of definitions favorable to violations of the law. Control theory views such an acceptance of the violations as freeing (not constraining) the individual to violate the law when he it to his advantage to do so. According to Hirschi:

“One does not love or hate the law; the law does not react to praise or blame one's actions. But, as we have argued, there is no necessary discontinuity between attitudes toward persons and attitudes toward the law. Lack of respect for the police presumably leads to lack of respect for the law, just as contempt for the ignorant and the foolish leads to “contempt” for the laws designed to protect the ignorant and the foolish from exploitation” (Hirschi 1969:202).

Therefore, respect for the agents of social control aids in the belief of legitimacy of the law in society and is used in the prevention delinquent behavior.

The third component in Hirschi's belief aspect, focused on Sykes and Matza's five techniques of neutralization (1957). These techniques of neutralization were unrecognized extensions of defenses of crimes, in the form of justifications for deviance

that are seen as valid by the delinquent but not by the legal system, they free delinquents to violate norms which delinquents subscribe (Sykes & Matza 1957:666). The techniques were used by juvenile delinquents to deny responsibility, denial of the injury, denial the victim, condemnation of the condemners and appealing to higher loyalties, these explanations were used for reasoning behind why they engage in certain illegal behaviors.

The first technique of neutralization was denial of responsibility. Sykes and Matza proposed that if a juvenile believes his actions are due to forces outside of his control, they may believe that they are not responsible or culpable for their actions (1957:666). They believed that a belief in determinism frees one from responsibility for one's own actions. According to Sykes and Matza:

“It may also be asserted that delinquent acts are due to forces outside of the individual and beyond his control such as unloving parents, bad companions, or a slum neighborhood. In effect, the delinquent approaches a ‘billiard ball’ conception of himself in which he sees himself as helplessly propelled into new situation” (1957:667).

They asserted that the delinquent may of course develop a ‘billiard ball conception’ of themselves, without at the same time denying that they are responsible for their own actions, or without generalizing his own predicament to a justification for criminals in general. Hirschi believed that delinquent acts must come before justifying beliefs, he stated, “In many cases it is difficult to imagine how the juvenile could subscribe to the belief without having engaged in the delinquent act itself” (1969:208).

The second technique of neutralization was denial of the injury on behalf of the victim, which involves the delinquent's defining his acts such that they do not really cause anyone serious harm. According to Hirschi:

“The origins of this belief and its link to delinquent behavior can of course not be clarified by examination of the actual seriousness of delinquent acts or by determining whether they “really” hurt anyone. In fact, one implication of this relation (and of the technique of neutralization it supports) is undoubtedly misleading – that is, the boy must somehow convince himself that his acts are harmless to others before he can engage in them. In fact, apparent concern for injury is probably better seen as lack of concern for the victim, otherwise, the origin of this belief is inexplicable” (1969:208-209).

The results in the analysis showed that those most likely agree with the “denial of injury” were more likely to engage in delinquent activities, as opposed to those who did not agree with the statement.

Denial of the victim was the third technique of neutralization, which involves the argument that the victim somehow deserves to be victimized or at least contributes to his own victimization. According to Hirschi:

“At a general level, in fact, it might be said that the entire control theory of delinquency is based on the premise that those who feel that others are not ‘worthy’ of the respect implied in observance of the law are just those who make other their victims. For this reason, the failure of the item designed as a measure of ‘denial of the victim’ to predict delinquency is particularly surprising” (1957:209).

Although Hirschi found this technique to be not representative of the measurement, he felt that it was still important since the idea underlying this technique is central to social control theory. It was underlying because of the close connection between contempt for potential victims and delinquency to doubt that this belief is an important neutralizer of social control. He felt that denial of the victim was overly intellectual and that it tells nothing about the respondent's attitudes toward the victim (Hirschi 1969:210).

The fourth technique of neutralization was condemnation of the condemners. Condemning was reducing one's relative culpability by indicting "respectable" others. For Sykes and Matza's "condemnation of the condemnation" revealed a similarity between the attitudes isolated by the analysis of the social bond in which we have engaged (1957:668). In his analysis, Hirschi used the item "Policemen try to give all kids an even break" to determine whether reported delinquent involvement is related to condemnation of the condemners (1969:211). He felt this relatively mild condemnation of the police is moderately strongly related to the commission of delinquent acts.

The final technique of neutralization was appealing to higher authorities, Hirschi felt that this item could not be directly tested with the present data, but, he still felt that this technique was worth mentioning briefly. According to Sykes and Matza, if the delinquent is caught in a conflict between "the claims of friendship and the claims of law," it is important to recognize that the claims of neither are as strong for delinquents as they are for high-stake boys (Hirschi 1969:212). Sykes and Matza feel "The delinquent is unusual, perhaps, in the extent to which he is able to see the fact that he acts in behalf of the smaller social groups to which he belongs as a justification for violations of society's norms" (1957:669).

Hirschi received mixed reviews by academic scholars regarding his incorporation of Sykes and Matza's five techniques of neutralization into the belief component of his theory. One indicator of denial of responsibility and the indicator of denial of the victim proved unrelated to reported delinquent involvement, while the remaining purported indicators of techniques (denial of injury, condemning of the condemners and one indicator of denial of responsibility) showed consistent moderate relationships to reported delinquent behavior involvement (Hindelang 1973).

In sum, Hirschi hypothesized that conventional beliefs have a negative effect on delinquency, therefore, it was expected that high levels of conventional beliefs are associated with low levels of delinquency involvement (Gardner & Shoemaker 1989). If the individual did not have any belief in the relative agents of social control, they were more likely to engage in delinquent behavior. Just as, if the individual did not believe in the legitimacy of a law, they would be less deterred from committing delinquent activities that were in violation of the law. The beliefs that were most obviously relevant to delinquent activity were those bearing on the goodness or badness of delinquent behavior.

CHAPTER THREE

PREVIOUS RESEARCH

What Affects Perceptions of the Criminal Justice System?

Perceptions of the criminal justice system are a very important issue affecting today's society. Since most legal systems are based on this idea of deterring individuals from committing crime and forcing them to conform to society's norms and values, perceptions of the criminal justice system can have either a favorable or an adverse effect on criminal involvement. General deterrence theory holds that punishment is a necessary consequence of crime, if an individual commits a crime, they should be punished for the crime in order to prevent future violations of the law. There are generally two types of deterrence. The first type is specific deterrence, which focuses on the individuals in question. The aim of these punishments is to discourage the criminal from committing future criminal acts by instilling an understanding of the consequences. The second type of deterrence is general deterrence, which focuses on general prevention of crime by making examples of specific criminal acts. The individual actor is not the focus of the attempt at behavioral change, but rather receives punishment in public view in order to deter other individuals from deviance in the future. Although, specific deterrence might be very important, general deterrence is just as important, perceptions of the criminal justice system play an essential role in this issue.

So, why are these personal perceptions so important to the criminal justice system? A fundamental problem facing members of the criminal justice system is developing programs and statutes that effectively control or limit deviant behavior. Moreover, to effectively control behavior, the criminal justice system needs to maintain a positive perception in the face of the public, since the criminal justice system essentially answers and deals directly with the public. It is of the utmost importance to study the juvenile's perceptions of criminal justice system, because as they move towards adulthood, reducing recidivism rates should be one of the primary goals of the criminal justice system. But, according to several researchers, assessing public perceptions of the criminal justice system is not an easy task to accomplish, because attitudes toward members of the criminal justice system do not exist independently, but are rather embedded within larger sets of attitudes (Albrecht & Green 1977; Benson 1981; Chackerian 1974; Chackerian & Barrett 1973; Hagan & Albonetti 1982).

For instance, while studying perceptions of the police, Albrecht and Green (1977) found a strong correlation "between respondents' attitudes toward the police and their feelings of the degree to which justice is sometime dependent on one's wealth and power" (p. 77). They also found that negative assessments of the police are related to negative assessments of the criminal justice system as a whole and to feelings of alienation and political powerlessness (Albrecht & Green 1977). In summary, perceptions of the police and other members of the criminal justice system can be influenced by perceptions of other political institutions and general attitudes toward society, which indicates that police are not solely responsible for how the public views them.

Contact and its Effects on Perceptions of the Criminal Justice System

In fact, some research indicates that perceptions of the criminal justice system can be influenced by any number of variables. In the past, research have found that positive contact with the police increases favorable perceptions of the police (Griffiths & Winfree 1982; Scaglione & Condon 1980), while more recent research has reported conflicting findings and the former actually decreases the latter (Zamble & Annesley, 1987). While studying the relationship between global and specific attitudes toward the police, global attitudes being stereotypical in nature, and where specific attitudes were based on personal encounters with the police; Brandl, Frank, Worden, and Bynum (1994) discovered enough evidence to “infer that global attitudes toward the police influence evaluations of the police in particular contact situations (p. 129). They discovered that although specific attitudes can influence global attitudes, the effects of global on specific attitudes are far more powerful. Therefore, police behavior may have some influence on perceptions of the criminal justice system but, cultural stereotypes has a greater influence on perceptions of the police, thus, developing adequate programs and favorable relations with the public may be somewhat challenging for the criminal justice system (Brandl et al. 1994: 131).

Despite the known difficulties, however, negative perceptions of the criminal justice system need to be dealt with and effective methods of improving such perceptions need to be developed. As mentioned earlier, there is a need for research regarding perceptions of the criminal justice system and delinquent offending. This need cannot be overstated, the research is necessary for future policy implications that will prevent or discourage juveniles from engaging in delinquent activities. It is especially important for

the criminal justice system to study juveniles' attitudes, because juveniles make up a disproportionately large segment of the population are subject to police contacts and arrests (Snyder and Sickmund 1996). Referring back to Travis Hirschi's social bonding theory, Perceptions (or beliefs as he called them) were the fourth bond proposed in his theory. The concept of belief (perceptions) in social bonding theory is defined as the endorsement of general conventional values and norms, especially the belief that laws and society's rules in general are morally correct and should be obeyed. This concept goes as far as belief (perceptions) in the agents that make, interpret, and enforce the laws. For juveniles with the absence of this belief in society and the law that governs society, the bond to society will weaken for them and the likelihood of committing delinquent acts increases.

Research on perceptions of the criminal justice systems dates as far back as the mid-1960s, in which the President's Commission on Law Enforcement indicated contradictions between the thoughts and actions of the general public (McIntyre 1967). Although a large percentage of the respondents thought the police were not adequately dealing with crime, they favored policies, like "get tough on crime" involving more officers and more stringent policing tactics. It was also learned through the research, that many people do not notify the police of crimes they witness and minor crimes committed against them or their property, in sum, the president's commission found that it was impossible for the police to deal with most of the criminal activities (McIntyre 1967: 45). Since that report, there has been a plethora of research that has come forward, which focuses on public perceptions and efficacy of the criminal justice system.

Recently, many researchers have generally found that public perceptions of the police are typically favorable (Cheurprakobkit & Bartsch 1999; Davis 1990; Dobash et al. 1990; Dunham & Alpert 1988; Jefferson and Walker 1993; Priest & Carter 1999; Shaw et al. 1998; Sullivan et al. 1987). One of the more recent studies was jointly conducted by the Bureau of Justice Statistics and the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services. About 14,000 residents from 12 cities were surveyed nationwide and “80% or more of the residents in each city were satisfied with the police in their neighborhood” (Smith et al. 1999).

Additional Variables Affecting Perceptions of Criminal Justice System

As mentioned earlier, much of the research indicates that perceptions of the criminal justice system are not only affected by personal experiences, but also by other existing variables. These variables include, age, race and socioeconomic status. There has been a variety of research that has focused on age as a variable, especially juvenile’s perceptions of the criminal justice system. Cox and Falkenberg (1987) gathered data in communities across Kentucky and reported that juveniles held favorable attitudes toward the police but that contact with the police, perceived unfairness of police contact, and the use of alcohol and marijuana may produce negative attitudes toward the police. Whereas, Leiber, Nalla, and Farnworth (1998) surveyed juvenile delinquents in Iowa and found that the minority youths and youths from socioeconomically disadvantaged families had little respect for the police due, in part, to the “youths’ commitment to delinquent norms, which in turn affected their interactions with the police” (p. 170). All of these findings (Cox & Falkenberg 1987; Leiber et al. 1998) support the classic descriptions (Cohen 1955; Miller 1958) of juvenile delinquent’s negative attitudes toward authority figures.

Yet, another approach to studying perceptions of the criminal justice system has been to focus on race and/or socioeconomic status and the subsequent effect on perceptions of the criminal justice system. Many researchers have surveyed minority populations to determine how they perceived the police. African Americans are single-handedly the most studied minority group when it comes to researching perceptions of the police, and the majority of the research reports that African Americans view the police less favorably than do whites (Apple & O'Brien 1983; Benson 1981; Bordua & Tift 1971; Dean 1980; Erez 1984; Hadar & Snortum 1975; Hagan & Albonetti 1982; Howell et al. 2004; Jacob 1971; Jefferis et al. 1997; Jefferson & Walker 1993; Lasley 1994; Leiber et al. 1998; Peek et al. 1981; Smith et al. 1991; Thomas & Hyman 1997; Tuch & Weitzer 1997).

Thomas and Hyman (1997) compared the effects of a number variables, including some related to socioeconomic status like race, gender, age, family income, educational attainment, occupational prestige, victimization experience, and place of residence, and they reported that race is “the best predictor of evaluations of police performance... [and that] the majority of African Americans in this sample are highly critical of the police” (p. 77). African Americans’ attitudes toward the police were more strongly negative among residents of predominately nonwhite neighborhoods, and among those who had experienced more frequent personal contacts with the police (Apple & O'Brien 1983; Jefferson & Walker 1993; Smith et al. 1991). Jacob (1971) reported that “African Americans perceive the police as more corrupt, more unfair, more excitable, more harsh, tougher, weaker, lazier, less intelligent, less friendly, more cruel, and more on the bad than good side than white respondents” (p. 73). Dean (1980) reported that race alone does

not affect evaluations of the police, but that “the combined effect of being African American and having contact with the police lowers respondent’s evaluations” (pp. 458-459).

Beside studies of how African Americans perceive the police, few researchers have concentrated on other minority groups as well. The other racial/ethnic group studied was done by Carter (1983, 1985) who surveyed Hispanics and reported that “Hispanics rate the police relatively lower than does the entire white population (1983: p 225). Carter (1985) also reported that “Hispanics had expectations of police behavior that were not being met” (p. 499). However, additional recent research contradicts Carter’s (1983, 1985) findings. After surveying Whites, African Americans, Spanish-speaking Hispanics and English-speaking Hispanics, Cheurprakobkit and Bartsch (1999) reported that Hispanics had positive attitudes “toward police work and the police profession, especially in their willingness to cooperate with the police to prevent crime, have police participate in neighborhood activities, their welcoming of police officers to their residences, and their desire to become police officers” (p. 99).

What explains the contradictions between race and perceptions of the police in the case of African Americans and Hispanics? One explanation given is that of Cheurprakobkit and Bartsch, whose research was conducted more than a decade after Carter’s (1983, 1985) work and by that time Hispanics, in Texas, have become politically more powerful and they perceive the police the same manner as Whites. Frank et al. (1996)’s findings show that politically powerful minority groups view the police favorably which supports the work of previous researchers who concluded that perceptions of the police are related to general feelings of political and economic

powerlessness (Albrecht & Green 1977; Benson 1981; Chackerian 1974; Chackerian & Barrett 1973; Hagan & Albonetti 1982).

Other researchers have evaluated the effects that race, nationality, and contact with the police have in combination with juveniles' perceptions of the criminal justice system. Waddington and Braddock (1991) compared perceptions of the police held by Asian, Black, and White juveniles in Great Britain and discovered that Black youth consistently held more negative perceptions of the police than did Whites or Asians. Rusinko, Johnson and Hornung (1978) also found that African American youths held less favorable opinions of the police than did white youths, but that race is not as strong a determinant of juveniles' perceptions of the police as is contact with the police.

Recent research indicates that contact with the police may not significantly influence juveniles' perception of the police (Brandl et. al. 1994; Zamble & Annesley, 1987). Griffiths and Winfree (1982) compared American and Canadian youths' perceptions of the police and found that American youths view the police more positively than their Canadian counterparts, but the effect of nationality is not as important as contact with the police. They also concluded that for juveniles of American and Canadian nationalities, "the primary determinants of adolescent perceptions of law enforcement were the types of contacts, positive and negative, that the youths had with the police" (Griffiths & Winfree 1982: p. 138). Research by Winfree and Griffiths (1977) and Griffiths and Winfree (1982), established that attitudes toward the police are affected significantly by the positive or negative nature of police-citizen interactions, even after controlling for race, gender, socioeconomic status, and place of residence. Similarly, an additional study with a sample from the general population revealed that positive contacts

resulted in more positive attitudes toward the police (Scaglione & Condon 1980). According to other research, the positive nature of police contacts is less effective, however, in reducing negative views toward the police held by African-American youths (Rusinko et al. 1978) or by delinquent juveniles (Cox & Falkenberg 1987).

It is not easy to say which variable has the greatest impact on juveniles' perceptions of the criminal justice system. The inconsistent findings in the literature do not support the development of any one particular program that could reduce juvenile delinquency rates. Rather, the diverse nature of the findings indicates that perceptions of the criminal justice system vary among a vast array of variables. Therefore, further research is essential for the criminal justice system to develop policies and punishments that in turn will reduce juvenile delinquency rates and prevent juveniles from re-offending into adulthood.

Present Study

Given the existing literature, it is my contention that juveniles who possess negative perceptions towards the criminal justice system are more likely to engage in delinquent behavior. Thus, perceptions of the criminal justice system will have an inverse effect on participation in delinquent behavior. As mentioned in previous research, individuals that had more contact with the police were more likely to hold negative perceptions of the criminal justice system (Dean 1980). As the juvenile continues to engage in deviant behavior, the risk of being caught increases, thus instilling more negative perceptions toward the criminal justice system. Therefore, as deviant behavior increases, criminal behavior and potential for arrest will increase as well. Subsequently, if criminal behavior and the possibility for arrest both increase, the likelihood of contact

with the criminal justice system will be similarly affected. As such, the data should reveal that juveniles who possess negative perceptions towards the criminal justice system will be more likely to engage in delinquent behavior and the likelihood of contact with the criminal justice system will increase as a result. This will further the negative perceptions towards the criminal justice system in a cyclical process. Perceptions of crime, punishment and the criminal justice system are measured as their subjective probability of arrest and punishment following the commission of a delinquent act.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

Based on the review of the literature, this empirical examination will address the following research questions:

Control Factors - Research Question 1: Does an individual's race and ethnicity influence their perceptions of the criminal justice system?

Hypothesis 1: Given the existing literature, Non-white and Hispanics individuals are more likely to possess negative perceptions towards the criminal justice system.

Control Factors - Research Question 2: Does an individual's age influence their perceptions of the criminal justice system?

Hypothesis 2: As the individual ages from 12 to 16 years of age, they are more likely to possess negative perceptions towards the criminal justice system.

Control Factors - Research Question 3: Does an individual's gender influence their perceptions of the criminal justice system?

Hypothesis 3: Males are more likely than females to possess negative perceptions of the criminal justice system.

Criminal Activity Factors - Research Question 4: Does an individual's perceptions of the criminal justice system influence their participation in deviant acts such as smoking, drinking, running away from home, carrying a handheld firearm or being a member of gang?

Hypothesis 4: Individuals who possess negative perceptions of the criminal justice system are more likely to engage in deviant acts such as smoking, drinking, running away from home, carrying a handheld firearm or being a member of gang.

Criminal Activity Factors - Research Question 5: Does an individual's perception of the criminal justice system influence their behavior to steal something of value from someone else?

Hypothesis 5: Individuals who possess negative perceptions of the criminal justice system are more likely to steal something of value from someone else.

Criminal Activity Factors - Research Question 6: Does an individual's perception of the criminal justice system influence their behavior to participate in drug activities such as smoking marijuana and selling drugs?

Hypothesis 6: Individuals who possess negative perceptions of the criminal justice system are more likely to participate in drug activities such as smoking marijuana and selling drugs.

Criminal Activity Factors - Research Question 7: Does an individual's perception of the criminal justice system influence them to commit property crimes such as purposely destroying or damaging property that did not belong to them, including a car, or any other property crimes such as fencing, receiving,

possessing or selling stolen property, or cheated someone by selling them something that was worthless or worth much less than what they said it was?

Hypothesis 7: Individuals who possess negative perceptions of the criminal justice system are more likely to commit property crimes such as purposely destroying or damaging property that did not belong to them, or any other property crimes such as fencing, receiving, possessing or selling stolen property.

Criminal Activity Factors - Research Question 8: Does an individual's perception of the criminal justice system influence them to commit violent crimes such as attacking someone with the idea of seriously hurting them.

Hypothesis 8: Individuals who possess negative perceptions of the criminal justice system are more likely to commit violent crimes such as attacking someone with the intention of seriously harming them.

Arrest Experience Factors - Research Question 9: Does an individual's previous arrest influence their perceptions of the criminal justice system?

Hypothesis 9: Individuals who have been previously arrested or had some prior contact with members of the criminal justice system are more likely to possess negative perceptions of the criminal justice system.

Conventional Activity Factors - Research Question 10: Does the commitment to more conventional activities, such as attending church services and spending more time on school related work influence perceptions of the criminal justice system?

Hypothesis 10: Individuals who are highly committed to the conventionality of society through the participation in conventional activities such as attending church services and spending extra time on school related work are more likely to possess positive perceptions of the criminal justice system.

(Insert Figure 1 here)

CHAPTER FOUR

METHOD

Data

The analyses used in this study, will utilize data from the 1997 National Longitudinal Survey of Youth (NLSY97). The NLSY97 is one of six surveys, designed by the United States Department of Labor, comprising the National Longitudinal Survey (NLS) Series. First administered in 1979 to 12,686 individuals aged 14 to 21, the main purpose of the original NLSY was to assess youths as they completed high school and entered the workforce. It was created to be representative of United States residents in 1997, which were born between the years of 1980 and 1984, the NLSY97 documents the transition from school to work experienced by today's youths through seven rounds of data collection spanning the time period 1997-2003. For the purposes of this study, we will obtain our data from the initial round of interviews, which occurred in 1997.

The NLSY97 addresses eleven main topics of interest including: employment, schooling, vocational training, income and assets, family formation, family background, future expectations, attitudes, behaviors, and time use, health, political participation, and environmental characteristics. More specifically, Respondents were asked about their attitudes, behaviors, and time use. They were asked about their perception of teachers, school, peers, as well as their sexual activity, drug and alcohol use, crimes committed, and how much time they devoted to homework, classes, reading, and watching television.

Sample

The primary modes of data collection were face-to-face interviews and a self enumerated questionnaire. During the initial NLSY97 interview period, interviewers visited randomly selected households to identify all youths eligible for the NLSY97. All household residents aged 12 to 16 as of December 31, 1996, were considered eligible. The sample included those who usually resided in a household in the sample area but were away at school or college, as well as those in a hospital, correctional facility, or other type of institution. If an eligible youth lived in the household, the interviewer also asked one of the youth's parents to participate. To draw the sample of 8,984 respondents, interviewers screened 75,291 households in 147 non-overlapping primary sampling units. Two samples were drawn -- a cross-sectional sample representative of the United States population born between 1980 and 1984 and a supplemental sample of Black or Hispanic youths in that age range, this supplemental sample allows for analyses across race or ethnicity.

Individual sample weights created by the National Opinion Research Center (NORC) at the University of Chicago permit comparisons between the full NLSY97 sample, which includes both the cross-sectional sample and the supplemental sample, and the national population in the same age range. In the NLSY97 cohort, 8,984 respondents originated from 6,819 unique households. Because the sample design selected all household residents in the appropriate age range, 1,862 households included more than one NLSY97 respondent. Sibling was the most common relationship between multiple respondents living in the same household during the initial round.

Dependent Variable

Perceptions of the criminal justice system will be measured as the average of four variables.. In the first variable, Juveniles were asked in the 1997 interviews, what was their perceived chance of being arrested by members of the criminal justice had they stolen a car. The second variable asks the juvenile, “Suppose you were arrested for stealing a car, what is the percent chance that they would serve time in jail?” The third variable asks the juvenile, “Suppose you were arrested for stealing a car, what is the percent chance that they would pay a fine and be released?” And the final variable in the index, asks the juvenile, suppose they were arrested for stealing a car, what is the percent chance that you would be released by the police without any charges or dismissed at court?” The variables measure their beliefs in the legitimacy and validity of the criminal justice system to handle individuals who violate the law. This variable is an interval level measurement, and is measured by the respondents estimating the percentage that corresponds with their subjective probability of being arrested, not being charged, paid a fine, or gone to jail had they stolen a car.

High percentages in the first three variables represent positive perceptions of the criminal justice system, while lower percentages represent negative perceptions. Higher percentages on the last variable represent negative perceptions, while lower percentages will represent positive perceptions. Therefore in order to keep a similar scale across all four variables the responses on the last variable were inversed, so that higher percentages represented positive perceptions and lower percentages represented negative perceptions. The four variables were combined via a basic summation and then divided by four to keep the original scale from zero percent to one hundred percent. The theoretical range of

responses is 0 to 100% and the actual range of responses is 0 to 100%, with 100% equating a positive perception of the criminal justice system.

The NLSY measures perceptions of the criminal justice system via these four variables. All four of the variables ask some question regarding auto theft. The NLSY gathers information on perceptions this way, because auto theft, although serious, is not as serious as murder, but more serious than underage drinking. This will help prevent vast deviations in the juvenile's responses due to the severity of crimes. The perceived chance of getting caught for murder is very high, while the perceived chance of getting caught for underage drinking will be very low. Therefore, auto theft should fall somewhere in the middle of the spectrum between murder and underage drinking when it comes to the severity of crimes. Thus, perceptions of the criminal will not be skewed because the likelihood of being caught is too high, for murder, or too low for underage drinking.

Independent Variables

Deviant Behavior. Although these behaviors are listed as deviant, in actuality some of these behaviors are criminal in nature due to the age of the respondents; these behaviors are considered status offences. Deviance is measured as a single variable that was created as an index item from the deviant behaviors. The variables that measure deviant behavior were has the juvenile ever smoked a cigarette, ever drank an alcoholic beverage, including beer, wine and liquor, ever smoked marijuana in their lifetime, ever run away for at least one night without their parent's knowledge or consent, has the juvenile ever carried a hand gun, and have they ever belonged to a gang. For the purposes of data reduction, all five variables were scaled via a basic summation. Individually, all five variables were inversely related to perceptions of the criminal justice system, so

direction was not lost in any variable after the variables were scaled. All of these variables are dichotomous, and these measures are dummy coded, with 0 (never involved in the deviant act) and 1 (ever involved in the deviant act). The deviance measure counts the number of yes answers, the theoretical range is 0 to 5 and the actual range 0 to 5, with 5 equaling yes to all five questions.

Criminal Behavior. The variables which measure the behaviors that are considered criminal are illegal by some state or federal penal code. For the purposes of data reduction, the variables that measure theft were combined. Theft is measured via an index item between two variables. The first variable asks, has the individual ever stolen anything that was less than fifty dollars and ever stolen anything that was more than fifty dollars (including a car). Additionally, for the purposes of data reduction, property crimes and vandalism were combined as well. Property crimes and vandalism were measured via an index item containing two variables, has the individual ever purposely destroyed or damaged property that did not belong to them, including a car, ever committed any other property crimes such as fencing, receiving, possessing or selling stolen property, or cheated someone by selling them something that was worthless or worth much less than what they said it was. The individual variable that measure participation in drug activities is the summation of has the juvenile ever sold illegal drugs and ever smoked marijuana. The theft, property crime, and drug participation variables were individually summed together. The variables that measure participation in violent criminal behavior include, has the juvenile ever attacked someone with the idea of seriously hurting them or have a situation end up in a serious fight or assault of some kind, All of these variables are dichotomous, and these measures are dummy coded, with 0 (never involved in the

delinquent act) and 1 (ever involved in the delinquent act) as well. The theoretical range for the theft, property crimes and drug participation is 0 to 2 and the actual range is 0 to 2, with 2 being yes to both variables in the measure. While the theoretical range for the violent crime is 0 to 1 with the actual range being 0 to 1.

Arrest Experiences. This variable will measure their experiences with the criminal justice system due to an arrest for one of their criminal behaviors. The variable that will be used to measure their arrest experiences asks the juvenile have they ever been arrested by the police or taken into custody for an illegal or delinquent offense (do not include arrests for minor traffic violations). This variable is dichotomous as well, and its measures are dummy coded, with 0 (never been arrested for engaging in delinquent or criminal activity) and 1 (have been arrested for engaging in delinquent or criminal activity). The theoretical range is 0 to 1 and the actual range is 0 to 1.

Commitment to Conventional Activities. The variables that measure the individual's commitment to conventional activities will be measured via two items. The first variable asks the individual how often they have attended worship services in the past 12 months. The theoretical range is 1 to 8 and the actual range is 1 to 8, with 1 being never and 8 being everyday. The second variable asks the individual whether they spent time on the weekdays doing homework or not. Since, both of the variables have previous lead in questions built into the survey, not being led into the questions indicates that the question does not apply to them and the data will report missing system values. The religious participation variable only applies to respondents who have claimed a religion; therefore, individuals who do not claim a religion are reported as system missing values because the question did not apply to them. The homework variable only applies to

respondents who are age 12 – 14; therefore, 15 and 16 year old were reported as missing system values because the question did not apply to them. Missing system values within the variables will be replaced by a method of “series mean” estimation, which replaces missing values with the mean for the entire series. The theoretical ranges of these variables are 0 to 1 and the actual range is 0 to 1, with 1 being yes.

Control Variables

Age. A number of demographic control variables will be included in the examination of perceptions of the criminal justice system. The first control variable will be age. It has been shown as a juvenile ages into their teenage years, participation in delinquent activity increases. Therefore, this analysis will control for the effects of age on the examination of deviant behavior, criminal behavior and arrest experiences on perceptions of the criminal justice system. Age is measured in years as, the respondent’s age before December 31, 1996. The theoretical range is 0 to 99 and the actual range is 12 to 16. Therefore, the age of the sample population ranges from 12 – 16 years of age.

Gender. Another control variable that will be included in this analysis is the biological gender of the respondent. It too has been shown that male juveniles are more likely to engage in delinquent activity than female juveniles. It also might be the case that gender of the respondent will have an effect on perceptions of the criminal justice system, as women tend to be more caring and nurturing than men. This variable is dichotomous, and its measures are dummy coded, with 0 (Male) and 1 (Female).

Race and Ethnicity. The final demographic control variables that will be included in this analysis will be the respondent’s race and ethnicity. As mentioned earlier in the academic research portion of this report, race and ethnicity have a profound effect on a

juvenile's perceptions of the criminal justice system. Therefore, race and ethnicity will be one of the controlling variables in this overall analysis. Race and ethnicity are measured on two separate variables. Race is dichotomous, and its measures are dummy coded, with 0 (White) and 1 (Non-White). Ethnicity is dichotomous as well, and its measures are dummy coded, with 0 (Non-Hispanic) and 1 (Hispanic).

Analyses

Initially, a univariate analysis will be used to analyze the descriptive statistics of each dependent, independent and control variable in the model. Subsequently, a bivariate analysis will be conducted to explain the extent of association among the dependent, independent and control variables. Finally, a multivariate analysis will be utilized in the form of an ordinary least squares regression to determine the correlation between perceptions of the criminal justice systems and the onset of juvenile delinquency. These OLS regression models use the step wise component to better evaluate and measure each of the variables used in the current study. Data manipulation will be made possible through the SPSS statistical package. This analysis will consist of six models that test the variation between the different types of juvenile delinquency and perceptions of the criminal justice system.

First, perceptions of the criminal justice system will be regressed against all of the independent and demographic control variables. Secondly, perceptions of the criminal justice system will be regressed against race. Thirdly, perceptions of the criminal justice system will be regressed against race and participation in criminal behavior against property. Fourthly, perceptions of the criminal justice system will be regressed against race, gender, and participation in criminal behavior against property. Fifthly, perceptions

of the criminal justice system will be regressed against race, gender, theft and participation in criminal behavior against property. Sixthly, perceptions of the criminal justice system will be regressed against race, gender, theft, participation in criminal behavior against property and participation in drug activity.

CHAPTER FIVE

RESULT

Univariate Analysis

The study began by analyzing descriptive statistics for the dependent variable (perceptions of the criminal justice system), the four control variables (Race, Ethnicity, Age and Gender) and the eight independent variables (Deviance, Theft, Property Crime, Violent Behavior, Drug Participation, Arrest Experiences, Religious and Scholastic Participation), these results are presented in Table 2. The results of table 2 also determined which variables to take the logarithm of to adjust for skewness.

(Insert Table 2 here)

Bivariate Analysis

Table 3 consists of a correlation matrix to explain the extent of association between the dependent and independent variables in this study. As seen in table 3 there are a number of significant correlations among the variables. A number of the variables are significantly correlated with the dependent variable. The variables, race ($r = -.115$, $p < .01$), Gender ($r = -.035$, $p < .01$), participation in drug activity ($r = -.027$, $p < .05$) and participation in property crimes ($r = -.035$, $p < .01$) are significantly related to perceptions of the criminal justice system.

As hypothesized, all of the variables that measure participation in criminal activity are inversely correlated to perceptions of the criminal justice system, with the exception of theft. Theft ($r = .021$) was positively correlated with perceptions of the criminal justice system. The inverse correlation indicates that as one variable increases the other variable goes decreases. Deviance ($r = -.018$), participation in drug activity ($r = -.027$, $p < .05$), violence ($r = -.01$), and participation in property crimes ($r = -.035$, $p < .01$).

It is also worth mentioning that prior arrest ($r = -.015$), race ($r = -.115$, $p < .01$), gender ($r = -.035$, $p < .01$), and age ($r = -.011$) are inversely correlated to perceptions of the criminal justice system. Conversely, ethnicity ($r = .001$), participation in religious ($r = .006$) and scholastic activities are positively ($r = .013$) correlated with perceptions of the criminal justice system.

Finally, although some of the variables were more intercorrelated than others, none of the variables were significantly ($r > .7$) intercorrelated with each other. Therefore, none of the variables were combined into an index to reduce multicollinearity.

(Insert Table 3 here)

Multivariate Analysis

This study utilizes six Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) regression models, utilizing the stepwise method, to determine the strength, direction, and predictive power of the relationship between the dependent variable and the independent variables. The first model tests the effects of the overall concepts within the variables, by inputting all independent and control variables together.

The remaining five models were determined by a stepwise regression, which determines which variables have the highest correlation with the dependent variable and individually puts them in the equation to create a separate model. Stepwise regression is typically done in four steps. Initially, the first predictor variable is selected, if the probability associated with the test of significance is less than or equal to .05, the predictor variable with the largest correlation with the criterion variable enters the equation first. The second variable is selected based on the highest partial correlation, if it can pass the entry requirement of .05. From this point forward, the variables already in the equation are examined for removal according to the removal criterion .10, and those not meeting the criterion are removed. Table 4 presents the results of the OLS models between perceptions of the criminal justice system and the predictor variables.

Model 1 tests the effects of all the independent and dependent variables on perceptions of the criminal justice system. In the first model, Race (B = -4.906, $p < .01$), Ethnicity (B = 1.131), Gender (B = -1.693, $p < .01$), Theft (B = 3.010, $p < .01$), Property Crimes (B = -3.097, $p < .01$) were all significantly associated with perceptions of the criminal justice system. The percent chance of Race, Gender, Theft and Property Crimes affecting perceptions of the criminal justice system is equal to or less than 99.99 percent. Race (B = -4.906), Gender (B = -1.693), Deviance (B = -.281), Drugs (B = -1.472), Property Crimes (B = -3.097), Prior Arrests (B = -.354) and Scholastic Participation (B = -.034) were all inversely related to perceptions of the criminal justice system. Ethnicity (B = 1.131), Age (B = .009), Theft (B = 3.010), Violence (B = .554) and Religious Participation (B = .135) were all positively associated with perceptions of the criminal

justice system. All the independent and control variables explain ($R^2 = .019$) 1.9% of the variation within the dependent variable.

Model 2 tests the effects of Race on perceptions of the criminal justice system. Race was significant and showed that non-white individuals ($B = - 4.663$, $p < .01$) were more likely to possess negative perceptions of the criminal justice system. The percent chance of Race affecting perceptions of the criminal justice system is equal to or less than 99.99 percent. Overall, Race does explain ($R^2 = .013$) some of the variation in perceptions of the criminal justice system.

Model 3 tests the effects of the respondent's race and participation in criminal behavior against property on perceptions of the criminal justice system. Non-white individuals ($B = - 4.717$, $p < .01$) were more likely to possess negative perceptions of the criminal justice system. Whereas, individuals who have commit crimes against property ($B = -2.031$, $p < .01$) were more likely to possess negative perceptions of the criminal justice system. Males ($B = -1.420$, $p < .01$) are more likely to posses negative perceptions of the criminal justice system. The percent chance of Race and participation in criminal behavior against property affecting perceptions of the criminal justice system is equal to or less than 99.99 percent. The respondent's race and participation in criminal behavior against property on perceptions of the criminal justice system ($R^2 = .015$) explains a larger portion of the variation in perceptions of the criminal justice system.

Model 4 tests the effects of the respondent's race, gender and participation in criminal behavior against property on perceptions of the criminal justice system. Non-white individuals ($B = - 4.705$, $p < .01$) were more likely to possess negative perceptions of the criminal justice system. Males ($B = -1.784$, $p < .01$) are more likely to possess

negative perceptions of the criminal justice system. Whereas, individuals who have commit crimes against property ($B = -2.588, p < .01$) were more likely to possess negative perceptions of the criminal justice system. The respondent's race, gender and participation in criminal behavior against property on perceptions of the criminal justice system ($R^2 = .017$) explains a larger portion of the variation in perceptions of the criminal justice system.

Model 5 tests the effects of the respondent's race, gender, commission of theft and participation in criminal behavior against property on perceptions of the criminal justice system. Non-white individuals ($B = -4.682, p < .01$) were more likely to possess negative perceptions of the criminal justice system. Males ($B = -1.763, p < .01$) are more likely to possess negative perceptions of the criminal justice system. Individuals who commit theft ($B = 2.311, p < .01$) are more likely to possess favorably perceptions of the criminal justice system. Whereas, individuals who have commit crimes against property ($B = -3.633, p < .01$) were more likely to possess negative perceptions of the criminal justice system. The correlation between the respondent's race, gender, commission of theft and participation in criminal behavior against property and perceptions of the criminal justice system reportedly explains ($R^2 = .018$) a larger portion of the variance in the dependent variable.

Model 6 tests the effects of the respondent's race, gender, commission of theft, participation in drug activity and participation in criminal behavior against property on perceptions of the criminal justice system. Of all the variables in the initial model, the variables in *Model 6* were the only variables that had a significant impact on the

dependent variable. Non-white individuals ($B = -4.699, p < .01$) were more likely to possess negative perceptions of the criminal justice system. Males ($B = -1.723, p < .01$) are more likely to possess negative perceptions of the criminal justice system. Individuals who commit theft ($B = 2.839, p < .01$) are more likely to possess favorably perceptions of the criminal justice system. Individuals who participate in drug activity ($B = -1.917, p < .01$) are more likely to possess negative perceptions of the criminal justice system. Whereas, individuals who have commit crimes against property ($B = -3.208, p < .01$) were more likely to possess negative perceptions of the criminal justice system. The correlation between the respondent's race, gender, commission of theft, participation in drug activity and participation in criminal behavior against property and perceptions of the criminal justice system reportedly explains ($R^2 = .019$) all of the variance in the total model.

(Insert Table 4 here)

CHAPTER SIX

DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS, LIMITATIONS, AND CONCLUSION

Discussion

The results of the linear regression models indicated a weak association between some of the variables measuring juvenile delinquency and perceptions of the criminal justice system. Control variables aside, the three main independent variables that had a profound effect on the dependent variable were theft, drugs and property crime. The final analysis negated the expected value for theft on perceptions of the criminal justice system. The actual findings showed that those who had positive perceptions of the criminal justice system committed more acts of theft than those who had negative perceptions of the criminal justice system. It could also be hypothesized that those who committed more acts of theft had more run-ins with the criminal justice system which, in turn, caused them to maintain better perceptions of the criminal justice system. This example was shown in the data such that prior arrest increases perceptions of the criminal justice system.

It was also hypothesized that individuals who held negative perceptions of the criminal justice system were more likely to commit property crimes, such as vandalism. The results support this hypothesis. The correlation between the property crime and perceptions of the criminal justice system could be due to the low clearance rates associated with property crimes. If the individual engages in this type of destructive

behavior and is never caught, they will develop a higher perceived probability of not being caught and punished. In turn, this will affect their overall perceptions of crime, punishment, and the criminal justice system. This process will continue in a cyclical nature until the individual is apprehended and charged for his/her delinquent behavior. Then the individual will begin to develop the adequate perceptions needed for conformity in today's society. The criminal justice system will then be able to act effectively as an agent of social control.

In addition, it was hypothesized that individuals who participate in drug activity were more likely to possess negative perceptions of the criminal justice system. The results proved this hypothesis as well. Individuals who participate in drug activity were more likely to possess negative perceptions of the criminal justice system, than individuals who did not participate in this type of activity. Lack of significance could be due to the diminutive amount of Hispanic respondent in the overall sample.

While the results did support some of the researcher's hypotheses, particularly that engagement in delinquent activity and perceptions of the criminal justice system were related, a majority of the predictor variables were not significant enough to draw any conclusions about the behaviors on a national level. As mentioned earlier, assessing public perceptions of the criminal justice system is not an easy task to accomplish because attitudes toward members of the criminal justice system do not exist independently, but are rather embedded within larger sets of attitudes (Albrecht & Green 1977; Benson 1981; Chackerian 1974; Chackerian & Barrett 1973; Hagan & Albonetti 1982). As the data shows, race was the number one predictor of perceptions of the

criminal justice system. Together, they accounted for 1.3% of the total 1.9% of the variation in perceptions of the criminal justice system.

As discussed earlier, African Americans view the police less favorably than do whites (Apple & O'Brien 1983; Benson 1981; Bordua & Tifft 1971; Dean 1980; Erez 1984; Hadar & Snortum 1975; Hagan & Albonetti 1982; Howell et al. 2004; Jacob 1971; Jefferis et al. 1997; Jefferson & Walker 1993; Lasley 1994; Leiber et al. 1998; Peek et al. 1981; Smith et al. 1991; Thomas & Hyman 1997; Tuch & Weitzer 1997). Jacob (1971) reported that "African Americans perceive the police as more corrupt, more unfair, more excitable, more harsh, tougher, weaker, lazier, less intelligent, less friendly, more cruel, and more on the bad than good side than white respondents" (p. 73). And according to Dean (1980), race alone does not affect evaluations of the police, but that "the combined effect of being African American and having contact with the police lowers respondents evaluations" (pp. 458-459).

Although the results were not statistically significant, the data shows that as the individual moves into his/her prime offending age and has already begun to engage in delinquent behavior, he/she will develop negative perceptions towards the criminal justice system. Cox and Falkenberg (1987) reported that juveniles held favorable attitudes toward the police but that contact with the police, perceived unfairness of police contact, and the use of alcohol and marijuana may produce negative attitudes toward the police. Subsequently, Leiber, Nalla, and Farnworth (1998) found that the minority youths and youths from socioeconomically disadvantaged families had little respect for the police due, in part, to the "youths' commitment to delinquent norms, which in turn affected their interactions with the police" (p. 170). All of these findings (Cox & Falkenberg 1987;

Leiber et al. 1998) support the classic descriptions (Cohen 1955; Miller 1958) of juvenile delinquent's negative attitudes toward authority figures.

Implications

Several notable implications in this study that need to be addressed before moving into the limitations section. First, the concept of Belief is based on a theory or notion that is nearly 40 years old. Some people may argue that this theory is out of date and does not apply to the contemporary adolescent. While others may argue that the theory has evolved over the last couple of decades and can be applied to contemporary society. Secondly, the data itself is over 10 years old and ideas about the criminal justice system may have altered over the past decade. Can this theory and data readily be applied to the contemporary adolescent in today's society?

As mentioned earlier, Hirschi's control theory is still widely discussed (Stitt & Giascopassi 1992) and is endorsed by more academic criminologists than any other theory to date (Ellis & Walsh 1999). Adolescents today experience society differently than their counterparts that lived in 1960s era. With the onset of the internet and other entertainment venues, it is true that adolescents today, are exposed to more things that may or may not be favorable to violation of the law than their 1960s counterparts. Therefore, can theories that were created years ago still be applied today, even in the face of society's evolution?

Over the years we have seen theories evolve to encompass the contemporary adolescent. We have witnessed an increase in the conceptual integration of Strain, Social Learning and Social Control Theory in an attempt to explain juvenile delinquency. These theories have developed to incorporate the new strains, mechanisms of social learning,

and the agents of social control that have progressed or have been created in the 21st century. Consequently, the modifications of past theories make them applicable in today's society. As for the data, little change has occurred historically to affect perceptions of the criminal justice system today, as opposed to 10 years ago. Therefore, the data is still valid for the contemporary adolescent.

Limitations

The present study has several limits that need to be addressed when discussing the findings. First, the data used for this study is secondary data. Like to any study that utilizes secondary data, the problem persists as to whether or not the variables accurately measure what the researcher intended to measuring. Although the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth 1997 Cohort gathered information on participation in delinquent activity and perceptions of the criminal justice system, the original intent of the survey was to gather information at multiple points in time on the labor market activities and other significant life events of several groups of men and women (Bureau of Labor Statistics 2008). Therefore, the dataset may or may not have produced an accurate measure of participation in delinquent activity and perceptions of the criminal justice system as would a primary dataset created by the researcher. In sum, the NLSY was the only dataset to measure participation in delinquent activity among juveniles in combination with their perceptions of the criminal justice system to date.

Secondly, the NLSY measured perceptions of the criminal justice system via four variables. The first variable asked what was their perceived chance of being arrested by members of the criminal justice had they stolen a car. The second variable asks the juvenile, "Suppose you were arrested for stealing a car, what is the percent chance that

they would serve time in jail?” The third variable asks the juvenile, “Suppose you were arrested for stealing a car, what is the percent chance that they would pay a fine and be released?” And the final variable in the index, asks the juvenile, suppose that they were arrested for stealing a car, what is the percent chance that you would be released by the police without any charges or dismissed at court?” All four of these variables focus on one crime in particular, auto theft. When looking at previous research on auto theft, there are typically two types of people who commit auto theft. The first is the career offender and the second is a “joy rider” looking for a thrill, adventure, or results out of sheer boredom (McCaghy et. al. 1977).

Unfortunately, the NLSY does not have the capabilities to measure psychological differences among the individuals in the study. Therefore, it is impossible to measure how the individual actually reads and cognitively develops their response to these questions. In sum, by measuring perceptions of the criminal justice system as a perceived probability of being caught and punished for committing one type of crime, interpreting the results for the analysis could be somewhat problematic in nature. Due to the individual’s age (12 to 16), one may not fully understand the overall dynamics nor the ramifications of committing such a crime. Thus, their responses to these questions might be somewhat skewed and the likelihood of the dataset containing outliers will increase as a result.

Conclusion

The present study attempts to elaborate further upon the connection between perceptions of the criminal justice system and the subsequent effect on juvenile delinquency. Although the study did not find a significantly large correlation between the

predictor variables and the dependent variables, it does yield some results showing a correlation between perceptions of the criminal justice system and some of the independent variables. This study reiterated much of the previous academic research that race was the number one predictors of perceptions of the criminal justice system. Males typically held negative perceptions of the criminal justice system, whereas females possessed more favorable perceptions. However, males were more likely to engage in delinquent activities than females. It has been shown that juveniles typically possess more negative perceptions of the criminal justice system and as the likelihood of arrest increases, perceptions will begin to decrease as well.

The results are in line with the stated theoretical insight as well. Hirschi argued that conventional beliefs have a negative effect on delinquency. Therefore, it was expected that high levels of conventional beliefs were associated with low levels of delinquency involvement (Gardner & Shoemaker 1989). If the individual did not believe in the relative agents of social control, they were more likely to engage in delinquent behavior. Similarly, if the individual did not believe in the legitimacy of a law, they would be less deterred from committing delinquent activities that were in violation of the law. Therefore, if they believed in the law and the agents that help enforce the law, they would be “controlled” from engaging in delinquent activity.

It was shown that there is an inverse relationship between beliefs, in the legitimacy of the law and the agents of social control, and engagement in delinquent activity. Consequently, as the individual’s perceptions of the criminal justice system increased, the likelihood that they would refrain or be “controlled” from delinquent activity was increased as well.

Thus, perceptions do respond to changes in an individual's own criminal and arrest history. Individuals who engage in crime but are not arrested alter their perceived probability of arrest downward, while those who are arrested alter their probability upwards. The perceived probability of arrest is then linked to subsequent criminal behavior. Cross-sectionally, individuals with a lower perceived probability of arrest are significantly more likely to engage in crime during subsequent periods of low probability. For example, following an arrest, individuals typically commit fewer crimes. These results may be coupled with the ideas of deterrence theory, which states that one's perceived probability of arrest is linked to their participation in delinquent activity.

Future research on the subject should consider, albeit difficult, using primary data to adequately test and control for the appropriate variables. This research should be geared towards all dimensions of the criminal justice system (i.e. legislative, executive and judicial branches of the government) and individually measured by means of a perception measurement. The research should test the full range of criminal activities as well as test the individual's knowledge of crime and the laws that govern society. It should take into account variables that measure socioeconomic status such as family income, parent's job prestige and persistence of higher education in the parent's background. The research might also take into account the criminal history of the individual's parents.

In conclusion, perceptions of the criminal justice system do have an effect on delinquent behavior. Whether or not that effect is substantial or trivial, it should still be taken into consideration. Members of the criminal justice system should develop programs that allow for their outreach and development into the community. They should

“try and go the extra mile” with juveniles in order to create and maintain a positive image in the juvenile’s eyes. They might also considering developing programs that educate individuals, such as the D.A.R.E. program, on the types of crimes, laws and the ramifications for violating the law. In the end, juveniles will not be juveniles forever. In an attempt to effectively control outward aggressions of behavior into adulthood, members of the criminal justice system should “nip it in the bud”.

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APPENDIX

Table 1.
Variables, descriptions, metrics and compilations of the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth 1997 Cohort.

<i>Variable Name</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Metrics</i>
Perceptions	Perceptions of the CJ system	Standerdized scale (lower scores represent negative perceptions of the CJ system and higher scores represent positive perceptions) represented by a percentage value of being caught and the prevalence of various charges
Race	Race of the respondent	0 = White, 1 = Non-White
Ethnicity	Ethnicity of the respondent	0 = Non-Hispanic, 1 = Hispanic
Gender	Gender of the respondent	0 = Male, 1 = Female
69 Age	Age of the respondent	Age in years
Deviance	R has participated in deviant activity	0 = No, 1 = Yes
Theft	R has ever stolen anything	0 = No, 2 = Yes to both
Drugs	R had anything to do with drugs	0 = No, 2 = Yes to both
Violence	R has ever attacked someone to harm them	0 = No, 1 = Yes
Property Crimes	R has participated in property in crimes	0 = No, 2 = Yes to both
Arrest Experience	R has ever been arrested or take into custody	0 = No, 1 = Yes
Religious Participation	How often R attended worship service	0 = Never, 8 = Everyday
Scholastic Participation	R did homework on the weekdays	0 = No, 1 = Yes

Table 2.
Descriptive Statistics of the Variables in the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth 1997 Cohort.

<i>Variable Name</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Min.</i>	<i>Max.</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std. Deviation</i>
Perceptions	8498	0	100	55.98	20.027
Race	8904	0	1	0.41	0.492
Ethnicity	8960	0	1	0.21	0.409
Gender	8984	0	1	0.49	0.499
Age	8984	12	16	13.99	1.397
70 Deviance	8931	0	5	1.08	1.173
Theft	8953	0	2	0.40	0.604
Drugs	8937	0	2	0.27	0.561
Violence	8953	0	1	0.18	0.386
Property Crimes	8948	0	2	0.36	0.592
Arrest Experience	8957	0	1	0.08	0.273
Religious Participation	8984	1	8	4.17	1.927
Scholastic Participation	8984	0	1	0.89	0.245

Table 3.
Bivariate Correlations for the Variables in the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth 1997 Cohort.

<i>Variables</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1. Perceptions	1												
2. Race	-.115**	1											
3. Log of Ethnicity	.001	.147**	1										
4. Gender	-.035**	.009	-.002	1									
5. Age	-.011	.023*	-.007	.009	1								
6. Deviance	-.018	-.073**	-.014	-.081**	.303**	1							
7. Log of Theft	.021	-.030**	-.014	-.110**	.123**	.468**	1						
8. Log of Drugs	-.027*	-.032**	-.004	-.055**	.271**	.618**	.415**	1					
9. Log of Violence	-.010	.063**	-.031**	-.140**	.072**	.362**	.292**	.320**	1				
10. Log of Property Crimes	-.035**	-.035**	-.039**	-.225**	.056**	.425**	.453**	.379**	.380**	1			
11. Log of Arrest Experience	-.015	.029**	.014	-.100**	.125**	.335**	.294**	.310**	.247**	.268**	1		
12. Religious Participation	.005	.115**	.019	.002	-.004	-.127**	-.061**	-.099**	-.058**	-.067**	-.070**	1	
13. Log of Scholastic Participation	.010	-.056**	-.040**	.030**	-.024*	-.097**	-.073**	-.091**	-.086**	-.074**	-.084**	.008	1

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Table 4.**Linear Regression Models of Perceptions of the Criminal Justice System on Selected Variables, NLSY 1997**

<i>Variables</i>	<i>Models</i>					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Race	-4.906** (.454)	-4.663** (.442)	-4.717** (.442)	-4.705** (.442)	-4.682** (.442)	-4.699 (.442)
Log of Ethnicity	1.131 (.785)					
Gender	-1.693** (.448)			-1.784** (.446)	-1.763** (.446)	-1.723** (.446)
Age	.009 (.166)					
Deviance	-.281 (.261)					
Log of Theft	3.010** (.703)				2.311** (.651)	2.839** (.680)
Log of Drugs	-1.472 (.846)					-1.917** (.725)
Log of Violence	.554 (.916)					
Log of Property Crimes	-3.097** (.726)		-2.031** (.594)	-2.588** (.609)	-3.633** (.676)	-3.208** (.695)
Log of Arrest Experience	-.354 (1.294)					
Religious Participation	.135 (.114)					
Log of Scholastic Participation	-.034 (.895)					
R ²	.019	.013	.015	.017	.018	.019
F-ratio	13.684**	111.141**	61.481**	46.399**	38.000**	31.821**

Note: Standard errors in parentheses. Unstandardized parameter estimates presented.

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Figure 1 – Conceptual Diagram on the Effects of the Predictor Variables on the Dependent Variables.

