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CITY UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG

The Relationship between Self Concept, Perceived Parental Bonding and Delinquent Behaviour among Young People in Hong Kong

A Report Submitted to
Department of Applied Social Studies
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
the Master of Social Sciences in Applied Psychology

by

Cheng Po Fan, Iris

July, 2014
Abstract

Objectives: This study was designed to investigate the effect of self-concept and parenting on delinquency. In particular, this study aimed at investigating whether parenting has a mediation effect on the effect of self-concept on delinquency.

Method: Measures on self-concept, perceived parenting bonding, prevalence of delinquent behaviour and demographic information were collected through a self-reported questionnaire in a sample of Hong Kong young people (N=200).

Results: The associations between self-concept, perceived parenting style and delinquency were different in the male and the female sample groups. General Self was a significant predictor of delinquency in females but not in males. Moral Self was not a significant predictor for delinquency in both genders. Both the Paternal Authoritarian and the Maternal Authoritarian of the PBI subscales negatively predicted Total Delinquency in males, while Paternal Protectiveness and Maternal Protectiveness significantly but positively predicted Total Delinquency. For females, the Paternal Care and the Maternal Care subscales predicted Total Delinquency and a higher level of Care predicted a lower level of Total Delinquency. Hierarchical regression analysis showed that Maternal Care not only had a direct effect on Total Delinquency, but also totally mediated the effect of General Self on Total Delinquency among female.

Conclusions: This study provided empirical evidence on how perceived parenting bonding and self-concept may impact on delinquency and how the association between these variables differed in male and female. Findings suggested Maternal Care was a mediator of the relationship between General Self and Total Delinquency in the female sample group.
Acknowledgements

I would like to express my sincere thanks to my supervisor, Dr. CHENG Hon Kwong, Christopher, for his guidance and support throughout this project. Dr. Cheng’s encouragement and insights have deepened my understanding not only on this research topic, but also the skills involved for other scientific research.

I am grateful to my family members for their support and tolerance throughout this endeavor. In particular, it would not have been possible for me to pursue my interest in Psychology and finish this project without the love and patience of my husband, Vincent. Last but not the least, I would also like to thank all the survey participants who have agreed to complete the questionnaire and made valuable contribution to my research.
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Introduction

In Year 2013, the number of juveniles (aged 10-15) and young people (16-20) arrested for crime in Hong Kong were 2083 and 3314, adding up to 14.7% of the total arrest (36,609 persons) in the year. Another 1,059 individuals aged 10-17 were discharged under the Superintendents’ Discretion Scheme (Police in Figures 2013, n.d.). According to the Hong Kong Year Book (2012), arrests of youths were mostly for wounding and serious assaults, miscellaneous thefts, serious drug offences and unlawful society offences. While there has been a drop on the number of youths arrested in Hong Kong in recent years (Polices in Figures 2013, n.d.), the proportion of youth offenders was high on some of the crime categories. In the first 9 months of 2012, the percentage of youth arrested for triad-related crimes and robberies was 48% and around 40% respectively (The 4th Meeting of the 4th Term of Wan Chai District Council Hong Kong Special Administration Region, 2012). It is not uncommon to see news report with headlines similar to “Police anti-triad operations arrested 63 people, including 16 students” (Commercial Radio 2013) or “Aged 14 sells pirated products on the Internet” (Metro Daily 2014a).

Research has shown childhood conduct problems were associated to a wide range of adverse psychosocial outcomes including substance use, crime, mental health, interpersonal relationship, etc. (Fergusson, Horwood, & Ridder, 2005). Delinquent involvement in late childhood was associated with young adult crime indirectly through adolescent delinquency, and it had a persistent direct effect on crime (Mason, Hitch, Kosterman, McCarty, Herrenkohl, & Hawkins, 2010). These findings suggested that delinquent behaviour in late childhood and early adulthood is a topic that worth further studies. Early intervention may prevent serious crimes and social issues.
Literature Review

Delinquency & Self Concept

The association between self-concept and delinquency has been investigated in a wide range of studies (Church, Tomek, Bolland, Hooper, Jaggers, & Bolland 2012; Donnellan, Trzesniewski, Robins, Moffitt, & Caspi 2005; Lee & Lee 2012). Yet, strength and direction of the relationship seem to be inconclusive. In some studies, self-esteem was found to be positively correlated with delinquency, such as findings from the study of Caldwell, Beutler, Ross & Silver (2006), while some suggested a negative correlation between self-esteem and delinquency. Lee and Lee (2012) found that delinquency was negatively correlated with subsequent self-esteem among Korean adolescents. Donnellan et al. (2005) showed that, in both cross-sectional and longitudinal studies, there was a robust relation between low self-esteem and externalizing problems such as aggression and delinquency after controlling for confounding variables including IQ, socioeconomic status, parent-child and peer relationships. On the other hand, Cheng (2014) found that global self-esteem was related to some of the delinquent behaviour in a curvilinear trend, which suggested the relationship between self-esteem and delinquency can be more complex. Lo, Cheng, Wong, Rochelle, and Kwok (2011) found that delinquents initially may have relatively low self-esteem and they gradually build up their self-esteem through peer support and serving as role models for junior delinquents after the emergence of deviant behaviour. This finding is consistent with the earlier study of Mason (2001), which suggested a strong self-enhancing effect of delinquency. Van de Schoot & Wong (2012) found that the strength and direction of association between self-concept and delinquency was different for men and women, and the association also depends on the domain of self-concept. They also found evidences that the relationship between self-concept and delinquency was different among those with high level of self-concept and low level of self-concept. A way to have better understanding about the
relationship between self-esteem and delinquency is to look into specific domains of self-concept. Among different self-concepts, Hardy, Walker, Olsen, Woodbury, and Hickman (2014) found an important role of moral identity in adolescent functioning, and how moral ideal self negatively predicted externalizing symptoms. Tarry and Emler (2007) also found evidence suggesting that self-reported delinquency was predicted by moral values. Hardy et al. (2014) developed a measure of moral ideal self as a new conceptualization of moral identity and they examined how it predicts adolescent behaviours. It was found that moral ideal self negatively predicted aggression in one of the data set and also negatively predicted internalizing and externalizing symptoms in another data set. To sum up, while the relationship between self-concept and delinquency has been posited for a long time, there was disagreement about its direction and form. The relationship is also specific to different self-concept domains. The variation in effect size of the effect of self-concept on delinquency suggests the presence of moderator variables.

**Delinquency & Parenting**

Parenting variables have been considered one of the most significant predictors of delinquency. Stoltz, Londen, Dekovic, Prinzie, de Castro, and Lochman (2013) found that a positive parent-child relationship is associated with less aggression. In Stoltz et al.’s opinion, parent–child relationship can ‘buffer’ the development of more serious aggressive behavior. A meta analysis of 161 published and unpublished manuscripts conducted by Hoeve, Dubas, Eichelsheim, van der Laan, Smeenk and Gerris (2009) revealed that there was a strong link between parental monitoring, psychological control, and negative aspect of support and delinquency, and they accounted for up to 11% of the variance in delinquency. In particular, negative aspects of parental support, such as neglect, hostility and rejection, have significantly higher effect sizes than positive aspects of parenting. Hoeve et al. (2009) pinpointed that parental warmth and support would be an important effect on
delinquency but there were very few studies that focused on parenting style. Chang, Lansford, Schwartz, and Farver (2004), in their study among Hong Kong Chinese families, revealed that harsh parenting not only was positively correlated with child externalizing behaviours, it also mediated the effects of maternal depressed and marital quality on child externalizing. On the other hand, some researchers suggested that family variables such as attachment to parents were not significant predictors of deviant behaviour (Cheung, 1997). Instead, Cheung argued that media variables and peer variables are better predictors of deviant behaviours.

There are studies suggesting the effects of parenting style on delinquency are gender specific. The findings of Hoeve, Dubas, Gerris, van, d. Laan, and Smeenk (2011) supported that neglectful parenting was related to higher levels of delinquency in males and permissive parenting was linked to delinquency in females. In the three-wave longitudinal study that spanned across 10 years, Hoeve et al. (2011) found that the levels of delinquency were higher in girls if they had one or two permissive parents, while the level of boys were independent from whether they had permissive parents. Levels of delinquency were higher in boys if both their parents were neglectful when compared to if their parents were of other parenting styles. On the other hand, Uji, Sakamoto, Adachi, & Kitamura (2014) found that the beneficial impact of maternal and paternal authoritative parenting on children’s mental health did not vary with gender of the children.

**Parenting & Self Concept**

One of the most commonly adopted theories on parenting styles is the one developed by Diana Baumrind (1971). She focused the roles of parents for developing rules for their children (the demandingness dimension) and on being affectionate (the responsiveness dimension). She described four parenting styles: Authoritarian, Authoritative, Indulgent and Neglectful Parenting. Both authoritarian and authoritative parents place limits and controls
on their children, but authoritarian parenting is of a more restrictive and punitive style, while authoritative parents encourage their children to be independent and they are warm and nurturing. Baumrind is of the view that authoritative parenting is associated with social competence of children, while authoritarian parenting is associated with children’s social incompetence. For indulgent and neglectful parents, both types are uncontrolling. Indulgent parents are undemanding but accepting/responsive, while neglectful parents are not only uncontrolling, but also rejecting and unresponsive. Both indulgent and neglectful parenting styles are considered to be associated with children’s social incompetent, especially a lack of self-control (Santrock, 2013).

Across different cultures, it is generally accepted that parenting style has an effect on development of self-concept among children and adolescents. Research has shown a positive correlation between parents’ authoritativeness and child’s self-esteem as well as an inverse correlation between authoritarianism and child’s self-esteem (Wang & Ollendick, 2001). As cited by Wang and Ollendick, Baumrind found that children of neglectful parents have poorly developed levels of self-esteem because their parents are lax in discipline, and they make only weak demands for maturity upon their children. A recent research (Maziti, 2014) among a group of high school students in Manicaland supported Baumrind’s parenting theories. Results indicated that there was a positive correlation between authoritative parenting style and self-esteem, and a negative correlation between authoritarian parenting style and self esteem.

The Parental Bonding Instrument (PBI) is one of the most widely used measurements of parenting styles. It was developed by Parker, Tupling, and Brown (1979) and it is a self reported measure. Respondents reflect on his or her first 16 years of childhood and then rated their mother’s and father’s parental behaviours separately. The original version of PBI was designed to measures two variables – Care and Overprotection, two important dimensions of
parenting. Care measures the degree of warmth and affection whilst Overprotection measures parental intrusion and control. There were 25 items in the original design and they were scored on a 4-point Likert scale. The original two-factor structure of the PBI, with 12 items on Care and 13 items on Overprotection, has been widely used for parental related studies and the instrument has shown good psychometric properties (Keddie, 1992; Saler & Skolnick, 1992; Sarason, Sarason & Shearin, 1986; Zweig-Frank & Paris, 1991). In a parents-twin study, Kendler (1996) shortened the PBI into a 16-item scale and he identified three factors in the PBI: Care (7 items), Protectiveness (5 items) and Authoritarianism (4 items). The third factor Authoritarianism refers to parental practices that discouraged autonomy and independence. The four items under Authoritarianism were grouped under Overprotection in the original two-factor, 25-item model. Findings from more recent research supported the three-factor model (Chambers, Power, Loucks, & Swanson, 2000; Cox, Enns, & Clara, 2000; Gao et al., 2012; Lichtenstein et al., 2003). The PBI has been translated into different languages and the Chinese version translated by Shu, Lo, & Lung (1999) has shown good reliability and validity (Liu, Li, & Fang, 2011; Lo, Thompson, & Chen, 2012).

Coopersmith was considered as one of the first to study the sources of self-esteem (Mruk, 2006) and he saw four aspects of it: power, significance, virtue, and competence. The concept of self-esteem has evolved over the past decades. Mruk (2013), in his more recent articles, described self-esteem as a sense of worthiness and competence based upon how significant others regard one’s very presence as well as particular behaviors or accomplishments. The concept of “self” is different across different cultures. For people from a collective culture like Chinese, the concept self is defined in terms of in-groups and relationship, while individualists see self as an independent entity (Wang & Ollendick 2001). For collectivists, self includes achievements for the group. For individualists, however,
achievement is more about self-glory. Wang and Ollendick saw two facets of self-esteem: worthiness and competence. They recommended a generic definition of self-esteem and then evaluate how culture impacts on the self-evaluative process. Wang and Ollendick argued that culture plays a role on how individuals define self-identity, and fundamental values within each culture should be carefully examined. Yet, they also highlighted that researchers should not assume homogeneity within any culture and differences on the individual level should be recognized.

What defines good parenting is different across different culture. Children from different cultural / ethnic background may have different understandings of what parental support and control mean. The research of García and Gracia (2009) suggested that in the Spanish cultural context, the optimum style of parenting is indulgent parenting, and adolescents who perceived their parents as indulgent scored more positively on all measures of self-esteem when compared with those who characterized their parents as authoritarian or neglectful. Those who considered their parents as indulgent reported the same scores on other self-esteem measures including academic, social, family and physical when compared with those who characterized their parents as authoritative. There was no significant difference on measures of problem behaviour (school misconduct, delinquency, and drug use) between adolescents from indulgent families and those from authoritative families.

With the Confucian philosophy and a strong sense of respect for authority in parent-child relationship, an authoritarian parenting style was recognized as the norm in the Chinese traditional family system (Quoss & Zhao, 1995). In a study among Asian Chinese immigrants, Van Campen and Russell (2010) found that Chinese American parents showed love and support through instrumental support rather than verbal expressions. Parental sacrifice was central to what parental support meant to them. From the children’s perspective, Chinese American boys saw fathers as providers, authority figures, and role
models. For Chinese American girls, closeness and affection were not realistic between fathers and daughters; many felt they had to keep secrets from their fathers. The above research findings suggested that the effect of parenting was cultural specific. As such, the focus of the current study is to investigate how parenting is related to self-concept in Chinese young people in Hong Kong.

**Delinquency, Self Concept and Parenting**

Various studies have looked into the relationship among delinquency, self-concept and parenting. Stoltz, et al. (2013) found that in a sample of 206 children in Netherlands, a positive parent–child relationship was associated with less aggression, and negative parenting was related to less positive self-perception. In a study that examined the relationships between familial emotional support, self-esteem, emotional well-being, and delinquency among Mexican American adolescents, Caldwell, Silverman, Lefforge, and Silver (2004) found that maternal emotional support was negatively correlated with delinquency. In addition, regression analyses showed that familial emotional support significantly predicted delinquency and emotional well-being, with maternal emotional support accounted for most of the total variance. Yet, Caldwell et al. found that familial emotional support was not related to self-esteem, a finding inconsistent with earlier delinquency research. In the research conducted by Parker and Benson (2004) among a large sample of US adolescents, parental support was found to be associated with higher self-esteem and lower misconduct. It was revealed that compared to subjects in families with low parental support, those in families with high levels of support had higher self-esteem scores, and high parental support was significantly correlated with less substance use and lower incidence of misconduct. In addition to the facet of support, exercise of control is another key aspect of parenting. Sher-Censor, Parke, and Coltrane (2011) found that perceived psychological control, which refer to parents’ intrusion and manipulation of the child thinking, feeling, and behaviour according
to parents’ desire, was found to be associated with having more delinquent friends (a proximal risk factor for adolescents’ antisocial behavior and delinquency involvement) and parental reports of higher adolescent delinquency. Perceptions of more promotion of psychological autonomy, on the other hand, predicted higher self-worth in less acculturated adolescents among the Mexican–American sample. In a 1-year longitudinal study among 300 nine-graders, Mounts (2002) found that higher levels of monitoring by parents were associated with lower levels of drug use at Time 1, while higher levels of prohibiting were associated with higher levels of drug use but only for Time 1 and not for Time 2. From the above-mentioned studies, it is suggested that different parental practices may have different impacts to delinquency, and parenting has a potential mediation effect on the relationship between self-concept and delinquency.

In many Western cultures, authoritative parenting is widely considered as having more positive impact on child’s self-esteem development and well-being when compared to other parenting styles such as authoritarian parenting. This argument is supported by findings from a good volume of research (Chen, Dong & Zhou, 1997; Maziti, 2014; Sartaj & Aslam, 2010; Strage & Brandt, 1999). Yet, cross-cultural studies suggested that the effect of parenting on children’s well-being may not be as straightforward as the mainstream theories have suggested. Martínez, García, and Yubero (2007) have cited several studies which showed that parenting practices have different meanings and implications for children depending on the sociocultural context in which these practices occur. In particular, Martínez et al. pinpointed that authoritative parenting is not associated with optimum self-esteem in Brazil. One of the key objectives of this research is to investigate how the three subscales in PBI, Care, Authoritarianism, and Protectiveness, are related to self-concept and delinquency among young people in Hong Kong.
Formation of Hypotheses

While there are a good volume of literature on the relationship between delinquency and self-concept, and between delinquency and parenting, not many studies have investigated the relationship among all the three variables in Chinese samples. It is widely accepted that the effect of parenting and self-concept on delinquency is cultural specific; this study aims at looking into the effects of self-concept and perceived parental bonding on delinquent behaviour, and also investigating the relationship among these variables. The hypotheses of this study are:

**H₁:** Self-concept (measured by general self and moral self of the Chinese Adolescent Self-Esteem Scales) is negatively correlated with delinquent behaviour

**H₂:** Self-concept is a significant predictor of delinquent behaviour

**H₃:** A high level of perceived parental bonding is negatively correlated with delinquent behaviour

**H₄:** Perceived parental bonding is a significant predictor of delinquent behaviour

**H₅:** Perceived parental bonding mediates the effect of self-concept on delinquent behaviour
Methodology

Participants

This study targets adolescents and emerging adults in Hong Kong. Among the 200 valid questionnaires, 63 of them were collected in the campus of the City University of Hong Kong, and the others were collected from youth centres, playgrounds, food courts and fast food shops. The sample has included 114 males and 86 females. 77 (38.5%) of them are below 20 years old, 114 (57.0%) fell between 20 to 25 years old, and 8 (4.0%) were between the ages of 26 to 29. One respondent did not report his age. 173 (86.5%) of the respondents were full-time students, 20 (10.0%) of them working full time and 7 (3.5%) of them were unemployed, or were engaged in part-time work/studies.

Instruments

The questionnaire, designed in Chinese, consisted of four sections including the 1) self-concept, 2) perceived parenting bonding, 3) daily behaviour checklist, and 4) demographic variables including age, gender, occupation, domestic income, etc..

Self-concept. In this study, two subscales of the Chinese Adolescent Self-Esteem Scales (CASES) (Cheng & Watkins, 2000) were used to measure self-concept. CASES is a self-esteem scale with empirical data that support its application in different age and gender groups across both Western and non-Western culture. The global self-concept was measured by the General Self (GS) subscale whilst the moral self-esteem was measured by the Moral Self (MO) subscale. Each of these subscales consists of 8 items and the scales adopted a 5-point Likert Scale from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). The CASES has been adopted in studies with Hong Kong and Chinese samples and the scale has demonstrated good psychometric properties (Cheng & Watkins, 2000, Lo et al., 2011, Wan 2012).
Cronbach’s alpha coefficients of GS and MO in this study were .890 and .792 respectively, suggesting a high internal consistency.

**Perceived parental bonding.** The Chinese version of the Parental Bonding Instrument (PBI) has been used in this study to investigate the relationship between self-concept, perceived parental bonding and delinquent behaviour. When compared with the 25-item version, the 16-item version from Kendler’s (1996) model has displayed better fit to the data for both maternal and paternal parenting scales in the study of Lo et al. (2012). The 16-item version also helps maintain the questionnaire in this study to an optimal length. Respondents were asked to give separate sets of responses to the perceived maternal and paternal parenting styles. The PBI adopted a 4-point scale from 0 (very unlike), 1 (unlike), 2 (like) to 3 (very like). Factor analysis in this study supported the Kendler’s (1996) 3-factor model on PBI, with the same sets of items loaded on respective factors (Table 1). The three subscales on the maternal and paternal parenting scales have shown good internal consistency with Cronbach’s alpha ranging from .742 to .883.
Table 1: *Factor Analysis on the Parental Bonding Instrument (PBI)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Factor 1</th>
<th>Factor 2</th>
<th>Factor 3</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. (1) Spoke to me with a warm and friendly voice</td>
<td>.640</td>
<td>-.420</td>
<td>.042</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. (2) Seemed emotionally cold to me*</td>
<td>.799</td>
<td>.067</td>
<td>-.244</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. (3) Appeared to understand my problems and worries</td>
<td>.650</td>
<td>-.374</td>
<td>.230</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. (7) Enjoyed talking things over with me</td>
<td>.693</td>
<td>-.380</td>
<td>.089</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. (8) Frequently smiled at me</td>
<td>.636</td>
<td>-.478</td>
<td>.145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. (11) Could make me feel better when I was upset</td>
<td>.688</td>
<td>-.294</td>
<td>.173</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. (12) Did not talk with me very much*</td>
<td>.711</td>
<td>.019</td>
<td>-.065</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. (4) Liked me to make my own decision*</td>
<td>-.276</td>
<td>.744</td>
<td>.178</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. (10) Let me decide things for myself*</td>
<td>-.141</td>
<td>.833</td>
<td>.099</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. (14) Gave me as much freedom as I wanted*</td>
<td>-.170</td>
<td>.780</td>
<td>.196</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. (16) Let me dress in any way I please*</td>
<td>-.121</td>
<td>.633</td>
<td>.178</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. (5) Did not want me to grow up</td>
<td>-.009</td>
<td>.132</td>
<td>.727</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. (6) Tried to control everything I did</td>
<td>-.285</td>
<td>.451</td>
<td>.500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. (9) Tended to baby me</td>
<td>.085</td>
<td>-.019</td>
<td>.746</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. (13) Tried to make me dependent on him</td>
<td>-.022</td>
<td>.101</td>
<td>.713</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. (15) Was protective of me</td>
<td>.163</td>
<td>.229</td>
<td>.666</td>
</tr>
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* Reverse scaled items. Numbers in parentheses indicate item numbers in the questionnaire. Factor 1 = Care, Factor 2 = Authoritarianism, Factor 3 = Protectiveness.

**Daily behaviour checklist.** A behaviour checklist consisting of 33 items was developed with reference to several studies on delinquency (Cheung & Cheung, 2008; Le, Monfared, & Stockdale, 2005; Lo et al. 2011; Wan 2012). The items include 21 items on delinquent behaviours (Appendix 1) and 12 positive or neutral items (e.g. volunteering, browsing social media website). The delinquent behaviour have included a number of categories: property offences (3 items), violent offences (2 items), sexual offences (2 items), verbal aggression (4 items), general misconduct (7 items), as well as gangster behaviour, drug abuse, and gambling (1 item each). To assess frequency of delinquent behaviour, a 5-
A point scale from 1 (never) to 5 (always) was adopted. A total delinquency score (TD) was computed by adding the scores of the 21 delinquent items. The internal consistency of the delinquent items was high (Cronbach’s alpha = .848).

**Procedures**

30 questionnaires have been collected from an undergraduate Psychology class from the City University of Hong Kong. Another 33 students of the university were invited to complete the questionnaires in canteens, the library and breakout areas. With the support of the Breakthrough Youth Village, 32 volunteers completed the questionnaires in a survey administration session. 105 questionnaires were collected from playgrounds, basketball courts, food courts, café and fast food shops. Respondents were asked to read the instruction page and they are requested to tick a checkbox to indicate their consent to participate in the study. The respondents responded to the questions in anonymous. The vast majority of the respondents filled in the pencil-and-paper version of the questionnaire, whilst 19 (9.5%) questionnaires were collected online.
Results

Descriptive Statistics

The most commonly reported delinquent behaviour was verbal argument with parents and speaking foul language. 41.0% of respondents reported that they sometimes argue with parents, and 11.5% and 4.0% reported they often and always argue with parents. 26.5% of respondents said they sometimes speak foul language, whilst 12.5% and 15.5% said they often and always speak foul language. Illegal downloading or buying pirated products is the third most commonly reported delinquency. 43.2% of respondents reported they sometimes, often, or always download or buy pirated products. Watching or reading pornography materials ranked the fourth with 26.6% of respondents reported that they sometimes, often or always read/watch materials of pornographic nature.

Significant gender differences were found on General Self (GS) and Total Delinquency (TD) (Table 2). Males reported a higher degree of GS ($p = .050$) and females reported a lower level of delinquent behaviour ($p < .01$), and the size of gender effect on delinquency was very high. (Cohen’s $d = .802$) Pearson’s correlation analysis of the entire sample ($N = 200$) (Table 3) found that TD was negatively correlated with Moral Self (MO) ($r = -.157, p < .05$), while GS was not significantly correlated with TD. MO and GS are significantly and positively correlated with both the Paternal Care (PC) and Maternal Care (MC) subscales, while they are significantly but negatively correlated with the Paternal Authoritarianism (PA) and Maternal Authoritarianism (MA) subscales. The Paternal Protectiveness (PP) and Maternal Protectiveness (MP) subscales did not have significant correlation with GS or MO. For correlations within the PBI subscales, the three subscales were significantly and positively correlated with the corresponding subscales in the parental / maternal subscales. For instance, the correlation between the PC and MC was .614 ($p < .01$), suggesting quite a strong correlation. Within the parental subscales, PC was negatively
correlated with PA (p < .01) but not significantly correlated with PP. PA was positively correlated with PP (p < .01). The pattern of correlation within the three maternal subscales was the same as those within the three paternal subscales.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics of Self-concept, parental bonding and delinquent behaviour across male and female respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dependent Variables</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>t-test</th>
<th>Effect Size (Cohen’s d)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M (SD)</td>
<td>M (SD)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Self</td>
<td>28.79 (6.31)</td>
<td>27.07 (5.74)</td>
<td>1.98*</td>
<td>.285</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moral Self</td>
<td>30.41 (4.75)</td>
<td>31.00 (3.44)</td>
<td>-1.00 ns</td>
<td>-.142</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paternal Care</td>
<td>11.33 (4.73)</td>
<td>11.39 (4.87)</td>
<td>-.082 ns</td>
<td>-.012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paternal Authoritarianism</td>
<td>3.61 (2.79)</td>
<td>3.37 (2.46)</td>
<td>.606 ns</td>
<td>-.091</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paternal Protectiveness</td>
<td>4.59 (3.14)</td>
<td>4.85 (2.57)</td>
<td>-.645 ns</td>
<td>-.091</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maternal Care</td>
<td>13.75 (4.29)</td>
<td>13.72 (4.24)</td>
<td>.055 ns</td>
<td>.007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maternal Authoritarianism</td>
<td>3.53 (2.79)</td>
<td>3.91 (2.46)</td>
<td>-1.01 ns</td>
<td>-.144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maternal Protectiveness</td>
<td>5.69 (3.55)</td>
<td>5.69 (2.56)</td>
<td>-.01 ns</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Delinquency</td>
<td>36.76 (10.22)</td>
<td>29.79 (6.84)</td>
<td>5.649**</td>
<td>.802</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* p < .05, ** p < .01, ns = non-significant
Table 3
Correlation between self-concepts, parental bonding and delinquent behaviour in the overall sample (N = 200)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>GS</th>
<th>MO</th>
<th>PC</th>
<th>PA</th>
<th>PP</th>
<th>MC</th>
<th>MA</th>
<th>MP</th>
<th>TD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General Self (GS)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.512**</td>
<td>.369**</td>
<td>-.225**</td>
<td>.026</td>
<td>.361**</td>
<td>-.224**</td>
<td>-.025</td>
<td>.008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moral Self (MO)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.315**</td>
<td>-.193**</td>
<td>.031</td>
<td>.204**</td>
<td>-.170*</td>
<td>-.040</td>
<td>-.157*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paternal Care (PC)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-.390**</td>
<td>.043</td>
<td>.614**</td>
<td>-.348**</td>
<td>-.087</td>
<td>-.134</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paternal Authoritarianism (PA)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.360**</td>
<td>-.357**</td>
<td>.676**</td>
<td>.179*</td>
<td>.038</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paternal Protectiveness (PP)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-.067</td>
<td>.253**</td>
<td>.612**</td>
<td>.132</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maternal Care (MC)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-.506**</td>
<td>-.040</td>
<td>-.108</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maternal Authoritarianism (MA)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.383**</td>
<td>-.036</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maternal Protectiveness (MP)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-.072</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Delinquency (TD)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* p < .05, ** p < .01
In view of the significant gender differences on some of the variables, separate correlation analyses were run for the males and females sample. Both the male sample group ($n = 114$) and female sample group ($n = 84$) demonstrated the same pattern of correlations within the PBI subscales and between the paternal and maternal subscales as in the overall sample (Table 4 and Table 5). Nevertheless, the correlations between TD and other variables were different across the male and the female samples. In the overall sample, TD was significantly related to MO but not other variables. Among male respondents, however, TD was related to neither GS nor MO but it was positively correlated with the PP ($r = .223, p = .022$). Polynomial contrast tests were run (by categorizing respondents’ GS scores into three groups with cutoffs at every one-third of the total score) to test if GS may have any non-linear relationship with TD in the male sample. There was no significant difference of delinquent behaviour across the groups with high, medium or low level of GS scores ($F_{(2, 105)} = 1.766, p = .176, \eta^2 = .033$). In the female sample, TD was significantly related to GS ($r = -.272, p = .013$), PC ($r = -.350, p < .01$), PA ($r = .316, p < .01$), MC ($r = -.382, p < .01$), and MA ($r = .299, p < .01$). For MO, none of the respondents fell in the low MO category (i.e. with total MO score less than 14). For both the male sample group and the female sample group, there was no significant difference on the TD scores of the medium level of MO group and the high level of MO group.
Table 4: Correlation between self-concepts, parental bonding and delinquent behaviour in the male sample group (n = 114)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>GS</th>
<th>MO</th>
<th>PC</th>
<th>PA</th>
<th>PP</th>
<th>MC</th>
<th>MA</th>
<th>MP</th>
<th>TD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General Self (GS)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.556*</td>
<td>.317*</td>
<td>-.284*</td>
<td>.010</td>
<td>.337*</td>
<td>-.304*</td>
<td>-.093</td>
<td>.058</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moral Self (MO)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.326*</td>
<td>-.177</td>
<td>.002</td>
<td>.210*</td>
<td>-.176</td>
<td>-.029</td>
<td>-.174</td>
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<tr>
<td>Paternal Care (PC)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-.443*</td>
<td>.009</td>
<td>.703**</td>
<td>-.435*</td>
<td>-.094</td>
<td>-.040</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paternal Authoritarianism (PA)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.391**</td>
<td>-.447**</td>
<td>.742**</td>
<td>.202*</td>
<td>-.125</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paternal Protectiveness (PP)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-.048</td>
<td>.250**</td>
<td>.646**</td>
<td>.223*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maternal Care (MC)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-.559**</td>
<td></td>
<td>.056</td>
<td></td>
<td>.022</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maternal Authoritarianism (MA)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.385**</td>
<td></td>
<td>-.149</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maternal Protectiveness (MP)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.129</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Delinquency (TD)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Table 5: Correlation between self-concepts, parental bonding and delinquent behaviour in the female sample group (n = 84)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>GS</th>
<th>MO</th>
<th>PC</th>
<th>PA</th>
<th>PP</th>
<th>MC</th>
<th>MA</th>
<th>MP</th>
<th>TD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General Self (GS)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.485**</td>
<td>.460**</td>
<td>-.158</td>
<td>.075</td>
<td>.404**</td>
<td>-.066</td>
<td>.109</td>
<td>-.272*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moral Self (MO)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.310**</td>
<td>-.224*</td>
<td>.092</td>
<td>.198</td>
<td>-.176</td>
<td>-.067</td>
<td>-.067</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paternal Care (PC)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-.320**</td>
<td>.099</td>
<td>.497**</td>
<td>-.221*</td>
<td>-.079</td>
<td>-.350**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paternal Authoritarianism (PA)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.319**</td>
<td>-.237*</td>
<td>.586**</td>
<td>.142</td>
<td>.316**</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Paternal Protectiveness (PP)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-.100</td>
<td>.253*</td>
<td>.539**</td>
<td>.004</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maternal Care (MC)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-.431**</td>
<td></td>
<td>-.012</td>
<td></td>
<td>-.382**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maternal Authoritarianism (MA)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.387**</td>
<td></td>
<td>.299**</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maternal Protectiveness (MP)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-.044</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Delinquency (TD)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Regression Analysis

Linear regression analysis suggested that TD was predicted by gender ($\beta = -.364, p < .01$) but not age or household income. To investigate if self-concept and perceived parental bonding may predict delinquent behaviour, linear regression analysis was conducted. As described above, the correlation among the variables have different patterns in the male and female samples. Therefore, separate regression analyses were conducted for the two genders. Among females, GS was a significant predictor of TD, with higher GS predicts a lower level of delinquency ($\beta = -.272, p = .013$). For the male sample group, neither the GS nor the MO was a significant predictor. For PBI, the authoritarianism and the protectiveness subscales (both paternal and maternal) were significant predictors of total delinquency in the male sample group. Among the female respondents, the Paternal Care subscale and the Maternal Care subscale were found to be a significant predictor of Total Delinquency (Table 6 and Table 7).

Table 6: Regression Analysis of the predicting effect of Paternal PBI on Total Delinquency

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paternal PBI</th>
<th>Care (PC)</th>
<th>Authoritarianism (PA)</th>
<th>Protectiveness (PP)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>-.210</td>
<td>-.366**</td>
<td>.365**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>-.276*</td>
<td>.221</td>
<td>-.050</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

DV: Total Delinquency, * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$
Table 7: Regression Analysis of the predicting effect of Maternal PBI on Total Delinquency

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Maternal PBI</th>
<th>Care (MC)</th>
<th>Authoritarianism (MA)</th>
<th>Protectiveness (MP)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>-.147</td>
<td>-.326*</td>
<td>.250*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>-.289*</td>
<td>.221</td>
<td>-.136</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

DV: Total Delinquency, * p < .05, ** p < .01

Mediation Analysis

In the female sample group, mediation analysis was conducted for variables that have three significant predicting paths among Total Delinquency (dependent variable), General Self (independent variable) and parental bonding subscales (proposed mediator). Two models satisfied the requirement of having three significant predicting paths. In the first model, GS was the independent variable, the Maternal Care (MC) subscale was the proposed mediator and Total Delinquency (TD) was the dependent variable (Figure 1). Hierarchical regression analysis for the female sample group showed that MC was a complete mediator of the effect of GS on TD. After including MC in the hierarchical regression, GS was no longer a significant predictor of total delinquency. In addition, MC had a strong direct effect on total delinquency (β = -.536, p < .01). A higher level of MC predicted a lower level of TD, and the effect of GS on delinquent behaviour was exercised through the mediator MC (Model 1 in Table 8). In model 2, the effect on Paternal Care (PC) on Total Delinquency (TD) became insignificant when GS was included in the model (Figure 2; Model 2 in Table 8). Since PC was a significant predictor of TD in the linear regression, more hierarchical regressions were run to see if there is any potential mediator for the effect of PC on TD. It was found that the effect of PC
was fully mediated by GS (Figure 3; Model 3 in Table 8). The effect of PC on TD was exercised through GS.

**Figure 1.** Moderation analysis on the relationship between General Self (Independent Variable), Maternal Care (Proposed Mediator) and Total Delinquency (Dependent Variable) in the Female Sample.

**Figure 2.** Moderation analysis on the relationship between General Self (Independent Variable), Paternal Care (Proposed Mediator) and Total Delinquency (Dependent Variable) in the Female Sample.

**Figure 3.** Moderation analysis on the relationship between Paternal Care (Independent Variable), General Self (Proposed Mediator) and Total Delinquency (Dependent Variable) in the Female Sample.
Table 8. Mediation Analysis on Total Delinquency, General Self and the PBI Care Subscale in the female sample group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model 1</th>
<th>Std β</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>R²</th>
<th>Change of R²</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Step 1</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Self (IV)</td>
<td>-.272*</td>
<td>.127</td>
<td>.074</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Step 2</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Self (IV)</td>
<td>-.138</td>
<td>.132</td>
<td>.169</td>
<td>.095**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maternal Care (MV)</td>
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<td>.177</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Model 2**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step 1</th>
<th>Std β</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>R²</th>
<th>Change of R²</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General Self (IV)</td>
<td>-.354**</td>
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<td>.125</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Step 2**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Std β</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>R²</th>
<th>Change of R²</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>Paternal Care (MV)</td>
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**Model 3**

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Step 1</th>
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<th>SE</th>
<th>R²</th>
<th>Change of R²</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Paternal Care (IV)</td>
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<td>.142</td>
<td>.114</td>
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</table>

**Step 2**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Std β</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>R²</th>
<th>Change of R²</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Paternal Care (IV)</td>
<td>-.223</td>
<td>.156</td>
<td>.164</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Self (MV)</td>
<td>-.252*</td>
<td>.133</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

DV: Total Delinquency, * p < .05, ** p < .01
Discussion and Conclusions

Discussion

The first hypothesis is partially supported. In the overall sample, Moral Self (MO) was negatively correlated with Total Delinquency (TD). In the male sample, neither the General Self (GS) nor MO was significantly correlated with TD. In the female sample, GS was negatively correlated with TD. This finding suggested there is gender difference in the relationship between self-concept and delinquency. Hypothesis 2 was supported in the female sample with GS as a significant predictor of TD. MO was not a significant predictor of TD in the overall sample, nor in the male / female subgroups. This is not consistent with findings an earlier study which suggested MO was a significant predictor of delinquency among Hong Kong young people (Wan 2012). Hypothesis 3 was only partially supported. In the female sample, Paternal Care (PC) and Maternal Care (MC) were negatively correlated with TD, but the Paternal Authoritarianism (PA) and Maternal Authoritarianism (MA) were positively correlated with TD. The Paternal Protectiveness (PP) and Maternal Protectiveness (MP) subscales were not significantly correlated with TD among females. For the male sample, only PP was positively correlated with TD. There were no other significant correlations between other PBI subscales and TD among males. Findings from this study supported Hypothesis 4. Among male respondents, TD was negatively predicted by PA and positively predicted by PP. In a separate regression investigating the effect of maternal parenting on delinquency among males, MA was found to be a negative predictor and MP was a positive predictor. For female respondents, only the two Care subscales predict TD, with a higher level of care predicted a lower level of TD. In short, among the 3 PBI subscales,
Authoritarianism and Protectiveness were significant predictors of TD among males, while Care was the only significant predictor for females. This finding suggested that the links between parenting style and delinquency were different among males and females. Such findings are similar to the findings of Hoeve et al (2011) which suggested delinquency in boys was related to neglectful parents while delinquency in girls were more linked with permissive parents. Rothbaum and Weisz (1994), in their meta analysis on nonclinical samples, found that externalizing was more strongly linked to parental caregiving for boys than for girls. With empirical evidence suggesting sons and daughters were affected differently by parenting styles and that maternal and paternal parenting are having different effect on delinquency, a dyadic (e.g. father-son, mother-daughter) and triadic (e.g. father-mother-daughter) perspective of parent-child relationships and how they related to delinquency would provide further information on how proper intervention measures can be designed.

The last hypothesis that parental bonding mediates the relationship between self-concept and total delinquency was partially supported. Among the female sample group, MC totally mediated the relationship between GS and TD. On the other hand, GS was a complete mediator of the relationship between PC and TD among females. No mediation analysis had been conducted for the male sample group since GS and MO were not significant predictors of TD. This research has provided empirical evidence on the mediating role of parental bonding on the effect of self-concept on delinquency among young people in Hong Kong. Findings from this research added to the existing findings which explain the variation in the effect size of the relationship between self-concept and delinquency due to the presence of moderator variables, such as parental bonding.
Parental bonding is found to be a significant predictor of delinquency, with Authoritarianism and Protectiveness being significant predictors in male and Care the significant predictor for delinquency in females. In this study, a higher level of perceived paternal authoritarianism predicts a lower level of delinquency in the male sample. This finding is inconsistent with some earlier research which suggested more authoritarian parenting style predict more externalizing problems (Akhter, Hanif, Tariq and Atta, 2011; Chen, et al., 1997). On the other hand, some other studies have showed similar findings with this study and suggested authoritarian parenting does not necessarily be associated with negative outcomes. Findings of Gunnoe, Hetherington and Reiss (2006) revealed that the impact of authoritarian parent was differential among Conservative Protestant families and families in the control groups. Gunnoe et al. found that authoritarian parenting directly predicted greater externalizing and internalizing for adolescents in control families but not for adolescents in Conservative Protestant families. The mainstream thinking that authoritarian parenting is associated with negative outcome does not always stay true. Research findings from Quoss and Zhao (1995) revealed that while children may be dissatisfied with their family rules, they were generally satisfied with the parent-child relationship that they perceived to be authoritarian. Therefore, how children interpret and perceive authoritarian parenting style, rather than authoritarian parenting practices per se, may have more impact on parent-child relationship and children’s well-being. While respondents in this study may perceive their mothers and/or fathers were high on authoritarianism, they may not interpret such a parenting style negatively. A high level of authoritarianism does not necessarily be associated with delinquency or other negative outcomes. As stated by Van Campen and Russell (2010), “parenting that leads to optimal development for adolescents can differ by
culture in important ways” (p. 4). This is echoed by the findings of García and Gracia (2009) that indulgent parenting was found to be the optimum parenting style in the Spanish cultural context, while Martínez et al. (2007) argued authoritative parenting is not associated with optimum self-esteem in Brazil.

As Chao (1994) argued, scoring high on measures of authoritarian could not have the same meaning for Chinese as for European-Americans. He stated that for Chinese, scoring high on the authoritarian parenting style may indicate something more akin to the concepts of “guan”, which accord parents with an authority that stresses a set standard of conduct. Van Campen and Russell (2010) also highlighted that although authoritative parenting can benefit other ethnic groups, it is not necessarily more beneficial than authoritarian parenting. They pinpointed that first-generation Chinese youth from authoritarian homes do just as well in school as those from authoritative homes. As such, it is not too surprising that higher paternal authoritarianism predicts lower total delinquency in the Chinese sample of the current study.

Conclusion

This study has provided evidence on the mediation effect of parenting on the relationship between self-concept and delinquency. Maternal Care has showed direct effect on delinquency and also is a complete mediator of the relationship between General Self and Total Delinquency in the female sample. On the other hand, it is interesting to find General Self as a complete moderator of the relationship between Paternal Care and Total Delinquency. The three PBI subscales, Care, Protectiveness and Authoritarianism, are found to be significant predictors of delinquency but their effects can be in different directions, and their effect are different across genders. This study also provided evidences that the relationship
between parenting style and delinquency are different in males and in females.

**Limitation and Future Studies**

This study has a number of limitations. The study adopted a cross-sectional approach. The directionality of the relationship between delinquency and self-esteem is inclusive. While General Self was found to be a significant predictor of Total Delinquency in this study, previous research has shown that delinquency was correlated with subsequent self-esteem (Lee & Lee, 2012), which suggested that the relationship between self-esteem and delinquency can be bidirectional. A longitudinal approach will provide more information on the relationship between self-concept, parenting and delinquency and how they may interact with one another. The gender difference on how parenting affects delinquency would worth further studies. Among male respondents, higher authoritarianism predicted lower delinquency, and higher protectiveness predicted higher delinquency. In the female sample groups, the relationship was different – Care was the only significant predictor and a higher level of Care predicted lower delinquency. More in-depth research on how the three PBI subscales are related to delinquency may shed light on how parenting can be used as an effective protective factor on youth delinquency. This study did not focus on how maternal and paternal parenting styles interact. While there are benefits of separately examined the parenting styles or behaviors of fathers and mothers (Hoeve et al, 2011), it will be beneficial for future studies to investigate the combined effect of maternal and paternal parenting styles and how different combinations may have affected delinquency. For example, in a study among incarcerated young offenders, Chambers, Power, Loucks, & Swanson (2001)
revealed that young offenders who perceived poor parenting from both parents had the highest levels of psychological distress.

In addition, this study has only included two measurements of self-concept, viz general self and moral self. Earlier research has shown that different domains of self-concept may be differently related to delinquent behavior (van de Schoot & Wong, 2012). Further studies may consider including more domains of self-concept to see how they relate to delinquency. In this study, a self-reported approach has been adopted for measuring delinquent behaviour and parental bonding. The measurements would have been more objective if peer- and/or parent-report measurement can be included. In addition, there are cultural differences in parental practices and expectation on parents. Findings from this study on young people in Hong Kong may not be directly applicable in other cultural contexts and/or ethnic groups. More cross-cultural studies on the relationship between parenting, self-concept and delinquency would help understand the roles of culture in the relationship.

Finally, it may worth noting that 81.4% of respondents in this study reported they “often” and “always” play smartphone applications, and 63% “often” and “always” browse social media websites. As reported by government authorities and non-government organizations, usage of smartphone applications can be related to delinquency and/or online crimes such as selling of bogus goods and underage online gambling (Lo, 2014; Metro Hong Kong 2014b). In the first half of 2014, Hong Kong Customs and Excise Department arrested 45 people aged 21 or younger for suspicion of selling counterfeit goods, and most of the arrests involved online sales, often using social media platforms (Lo, 2014). Although data from this study did not suggest browsing of social media website and usage of mobile phone
applications were predictors of delinquency, cyber crime among young people would worth more attention. With the evidence from this study that parenting is a significant predictor and thus a potential protective factor of youth delinquency, proper interventions should be formulated to help prevent and tackle youth delinquency.
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Appendix 1: List of Delinquent Behaviour

1. 言語上衝撞父母
2. 粗言穢語 / 粗口
3. 賭博 (包括到賭場丶麻雀館等賭博場所，及網上/電話投注)
4. 吸煙
5. 購買或下載翻版物品
6. 言語上衝撞老師 / 上司
7. 用說話欺凌別人
8. 於家 / 酒吧 / 餐廳以外的地方飲酒 (例如公園)
9. 偷竊
10. 濫藥 / 吸食毒品（例如非法使用精神科藥物）
11. 以實際行動欺凌別人
12. 在未得父母同意下夜歸 / 不回家
13. 破壞公用設施 / 他人之財物
14. 插隊 （打尖）
15. 看色情物品（包括刊物 / 電影 / DVD / 網頁等）
16. 假裝生病不返學 / 不返工
17. 進行婚前性行為
18. 與有黑社會背景的朋友來往
19. 在公眾地方塗鴉 / 塗畫牆壁
20. 打架
21. 參與有賭博成份的遊戲