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Delinquency and Family Life: The Role of Ethnicity

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ABSTRACT

Family-delinquency research has not focused on ethnic differences in the relationship of family processes and delinquency. The purpose of this study is to explore the relative role family processes play in the etiology of delinquency across different ethnic/racial groups. The analysis employs two waves of self-reported data from a sample of high-risk inner-city youth. Overall, findings suggest that family variables as a group are more important in some ethnic and racial contexts than in others, but that the same family processes generally appear to be operating in similar ways, with child perception of attachment as the foremost predictor of delinquency among all ethnic/racial groups.

INTRODUCTION

The family has been characterized by Emile Durkheim (1925) as a foremost influence in the establishment of morality and social order. F. Ivan Nye more recently has concurred with this assessment, stating that "the family is considered to be the single factor most important in examining social control over adolescents" (1958: 8).

A considerable body of research has established empirically the importance of family life for child behavior (Loeber and Stouthamer-Loeber, 1986; Snyder and Patterson, 1987; Rutter and Giller, 1983). While many different family variables have been linked with delinquency, those variables which are associated with family processes have assumed central importance. However, despite numerous studies which identify family processes associated with delinquency, an important issue can be raised regarding family-delinquency research. This issue, the focus of this paper, is the scarcity of information on whether the same family-delinquency relationships hold across different ethnic/racial groups in the population (Rutter and Giller, 1983). The Loeber's comprehensive review of family-delinquency studies "unequivocally shows the scarcity of studies of family processes in black or other minority group families" (Loeber and Stouthamer-Loeber, 1986: 131).

Research on ethnic/racial differences is especially significant for the field of criminal justice because of the high rates of official delinquency among black and Hispanic adolescents (Farrington, 1987; Loury, 1987; Matsueda and Heimer, 1987; Rutter and Giller, 1983). Differential family socialization has been advanced as an explanation for such differences particularly in relation to black adolescents (Loury, 1987; Rainwater and Yancey, 1967; Wilson and Herrnstein, 1985). This is problematic in view of the scarcity of studies exploring the relationship of family processes in black families to delinquency. There is even less research relevant to the role of family processes for Hispanic delinquents.

In view of this deficiency, two issues may be raised for further exploration: firstly, the overall relationship of family processes to delinquency may vary across ethnic groups, and secondly, there may be some important differences in family processes, which in turn may be

differentially related to delinquency across ethnic groups. After reviewing the literature, we generate and test hypotheses which focus on possible differences among white, black, and Hispanic families.[1]

Family Delinquency Theory

The major theoretical approach within criminology which suggests a framework for understanding the role of the family in the etiology of delinquency is social control theory (Nye, 1958; Cernkovich and Giordano, 1987; Hirschi, 1969; Geismar and Wood, 1985; Wells and Rankin, 1987). Although there are several formulations of this theory, the central premise is that individuals are naturally inclined towards deviance. It is thus important to explain conformity, which control theory views as a result of attachments to groups and individuals, and controls which regulate certain behaviors (Krohn, 1991).

Family attachment is perceived as an important basis for conformity (Hirschi, 1969; Nye, 1958). Through attachment, parental wishes and standards become "psychologically present" within children in situations of potential delinquency. Parents also exert direct control over children, through their actions in supervising and providing consequences for behavior (Hirschi, 1983; Nye, 1958; Reiss, 1951; Wells and Rankin, 1987). Supportive, involved parenting, and a consistent and non-punitive level of parental control have generally been associated with better child behavior outcomes, and tests of family social control models incorporating both attachment and control variables have found empirical support (Cernkovich and Giordano, 1987; Gove and Crutchfield, 1982; Hirschi, 1969; Larzelere and Patterson, 1990; Johnson, 1986; Rosen, 1985; Wells and Rankin, 1987).

Life-span approaches to child development have tended to suggest that attachment and control are themselves causally related (Baltes and Brim, 1981; Rutter and Giller, 1983). Parent-

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1. Use of the term Hispanic follows American Census classification, and contains the serious imprecision that the Hispanic group comprises people from a number of Spanish-speaking cultural and national origins. Hispanics in our sample are primarily of Puerto-Rican extraction. Research suggests, however, some important commonalities among family life in families of different Hispanic origins (Vega, 1990).

child attachment provides the setting for later effective supervision and discipline (Rollins and Thomas, 1979; Patterson, 1982). Punitive parents who do not reward conformity with affection may undermine the basis of voluntary compliance by children (Briar and Piliavin, 1965). For these reasons, it appears that attachment may be causally prior to control in relationship to delinquency, and that attachment may condition the effectiveness of parent control.

Drawing on the evidence above, a model which incorporates the theoretical elements of attachment and control, and which includes parent and child perceptions is constructed (Figure 1).[2] The core model suggests that both weak parent-child attachment as characterized by both the parent and the child, and poor parental control practices as characterized by both parent and child, lead to higher levels of adolescent delinquency. Attachment is also predicted to have an indirect effect on delinquency through reduced control, since it creates an atmosphere of reduced receptivity to control on the part of weakly attached adolescents, and a reduced probability of working to control children on the part of weakly attached parents.

Ethnicity and the Family-Delinquency Relationship

Much family-delinquency research has involved predominantly white subjects (Loeber and Stouthamer-Loeber, 1986). It is unclear whether the theoretical model outlined above represents the relationship of family variables to delinquency for white populations, or whether the model is more generally applicable. The power of the overall model in predicting delinquency among different ethnic/racial groups is also uncertain.

Although little delinquency research has compared the relationship of family processes and delinquency in families of different ethnicity, evidence suggests that the goals and content of socialization are generally similar for all families (Bartz and Levine, 1978; Staples and Mirande,

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2. Adolescents have generally been the focus of inquiry in family-delinquency research, and there has been a relative absence of parent information on aspects of family life (Krohn et al., 1990; Gove and Crutchfield, 1982). Recent research in criminology, as well as in other academic areas, has indicated that parent and child perceptions of family life are not highly correlated (Jessop, 1981; Krohn et al., 1990). It is therefore important for theoretical models to consider the role of both parent and child perceptions of parent-child relationships.

1980; Mindel et al., 1988). Family-delinquency research has confirmed the general role of family support and control for at least black and white adolescents (Cernkovich and Giordano, 1987; Farnworth, 1984; Johnson, 1986; Rosen, 1985). Differences in the relative importance of family factors in families of different ethnicity is, however, suggested in some research (Cernkovich and Giordano, 1987).

Review of family developmental literature suggests some relevant hypotheses. Attachment appears to be a universal feature of positive parent-child relationships (Rollins and Thomas, 1979). Although much relevant literature focuses on white adolescents, black child rearing has been described as providing strong support to children (Peters and Massey, 1983: 205; Staples, 1988). Strong family support is usual also in Hispanic families (Becerra, 1988; Sanchez-Ayendez, 1988). Lack of attachment, therefore, is likely to be a significant predictor of delinquency in white, black, and Hispanic homes. Although few empirical studies compare the effect of attachment on delinquency across ethnic groups, those that do show equivocal results. Some studies find, for example, a weaker relationship between attachment and delinquency in black homes in comparison to white homes (Cernkovich and Giordano, 1987; Langner et al., 1979), whereas others find the reverse (Rosen, 1985). Once again, Hispanic children have not been the focus of much research.

There appear to be greater differences in the importance of control processes in families of different ethnicity. Developmental literature on control processes has suggested that the use of reasoning and discussion in the context of good affective relationships is related to successful adolescent control (Rollins and Thomas, 1979). This form of control is also related, however, to parental education and social class (Gecas, 1979), and thus may be more characteristic of white parenting style, with strong direct control being less characteristic. There is evidence that in white homes, adolescents may associate very strict discipline with lack of attachment, and possibly with abusive and rigid parenting as well as delinquency (Wells and Rankin, 1987).

In contrast, the approach to discipline in black homes is said to center on values of obedience and respect, often in the context of a more chaotic urban environment, and tends to be

more direct, physical, and strict (Garbarino and Ebata, 1987; Lassiter, 1987; Peters, 1988; Pinderhughes, 1982). The research of Cernkovich and Giordano (1987) suggests that control and supervision were the strongest predictors of delinquency among the black families in their sample.

In Hispanic families, there is some evidence that child control is based more on inherent respect for parents, than on their control practices per se (Bartz and Levine, 1978; Durrett et al., 1975). Families may rely on the indirect control of family attachment, family pride, respect, and identity to enhance obedience, rather than employ specific control practices. It has been said that discipline is less strict than in white or black families (Bartz and Levine, 1978); however, expectations for obedience are strongly held.

Literature also suggests that the role of families in the behavior of their children at different ages may depend on the ethnic/racial context. In view of the relative recent arrival of many American Hispanics, especially those of Puerto Rican ancestry (Bean and Tienda, 1987), strong familial loyalty may override the more mainstream American developmental expectation that children develop independence from family and an outward orientation at an earlier age. Thus, family influences may have a stronger effect on Hispanic adolescent behavior than would be the case for black or white adolescents, where developmental expectations may be for earlier independence and increased personal responsibility (Bartz and Levine, 1978; Szapocznik et al., 1980). At the same time, intergenerational conflict resulting from migration and its attendant adjustments may result in greater family upheaval and consequent adolescent difficulty (Sluki, 1979; Vega, 1990).

A final issue in considering ethnic differences in family processes is the effect of family hardship, which disproportionately affects black and Hispanic families today (McLloyd, 1990). There is a dearth of research on the effect of hardship, or underclass status, on families of different ethnicity (McLloyd, 1990; Voydanoff, 1990). Recent research has suggested that, in general, the effect of social class on delinquency is partly mediated by its effect on families (Conger et al., 1984; Larzelere and Patterson, 1990). Theoretically, it is also reasonable to

expect that family social control may be affected by structural conditions experienced at an individual level (Thornberry, 1989). Underclass status, in particular, has been associated with challenges for parenting (Gephart and Pearson, 1988; Wilson, 1987). In the absence of other information, we would expect that underclass status would affect functioning in all families.[3]

Hypotheses

We expect ethnic/racial differences in the relationship of family variables to delinquency overall. Family influences over Hispanic adolescents are expected to be stronger, in general, than family influences in the etiology of black or white delinquency. We also hypothesize that underclass status will negatively affect parenting for all groups.

We propose that for adolescents of all ethnicities, the presence of family control and attachment is important in insulating children against delinquency. Weak parent and child attachment is expected to be related to delinquency both directly and indirectly through lower levels of perceived control.

For white adolescents, it is expected that attachment will be more important in the prediction of delinquency than direct control. For black families, it is expected that direct control will be associated with reduced levels of delinquency. For Hispanic adolescents, as with white adolescents, the indirect control deriving from attachment will be more strongly related to delinquency than direct control efforts.

In summary, we anticipate some differences in the overall relationship of family factors to delinquency when comparing different ethnic groups. We also hypothesize variations in the relative relationship of attachment and control processes to delinquency across different ethnic groups. We expect similarities in the role of attachment, and in the effect of underclass status.

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3. Family research also suggests that differential adaptations are made by ethnic families in disadvantaged circumstances. These may include, for example, the use of family support networks. Although an important topic, this cannot be pursued further in this paper. See, for example, Phinney and Rotherham, 1987.

METHODS

The data for the present analysis are drawn from a larger study designed to examine the development of delinquent behavior and drug use in a high-risk, urban sample. Adolescents and the person who has primary responsibility for their care are interviewed at six-month intervals over seven waves of data collection. The present analysis uses data from the first two waves beginning when the adolescents were in their seventh or eighth grade year.

The final sample was drawn from the population of approximately 4,000 7th and 8th graders in the urban school district of a mid-size American city. It consists of 987 students who attended public school during the 1987-88 academic year. These students represent 74% of the initial sample drawn. Non-response in the sample was due primarily to parents refusing to participate in the study. A comparison of the demographic characteristics of students who completed interviews, and those that did not, demonstrated that the final sample did not suffer from differential refusal rates (Farnworth et al., 1990).

To ensure that serious, chronic offenders are included in the study, the sample was stratified to overrepresent high-risk youth. Males are oversampled (75% versus 25%) because they are more likely than females to be seriously and chronically delinquent. In addition, students are selected proportionate to the adult arrest rates of the census tracts in which they lived at the time the sample was drawn. Thus, students from the areas of the city with the highest rates of arrest are proportionately overrepresented and students from the lowest arrest rate areas are proportionately underrepresented. However, since the true probability of a youth's selection into the sample is known, the sampling strategy provides the means to weight cases in order to produce a random sample of the city school population. Using data which represent the chances of selection from each census tract, the sample, and the analysis which follows, is weighted to represent the total public school population.

The current analysis is based on the 873 pairs of adolescents and caretakers for whom both Wave 1 and Wave 2 adolescent interviews and Wave 1 caretaker interviews were completed. There are no significant differences in ethnic composition between the initial

sample, the complete panel, and the 873 respondents on whom the current analysis is based. Sixty-six percent of the adolescent respondents are black, 18% white and 15% Hispanic. These proportions are quite close to what was expected given the population characteristics of the city schools and the decision to oversample high-risk youth.

Interviews were conducted face-to-face by trained interviewers. Adolescent interviews were completed primarily in school settings that ensured confidentiality. If the youth could not be contacted in school, he or she was interviewed at home. Parental interviews were conducted in the respondent's household by the trained staff. Hispanic parents were interviewed by bilingual interviewers using a Spanish interview schedule where necessary. Interviews with both parents and students were 45 minutes to an hour in length.

Measurement of Family Relationships

Parent and child family data are collected at Wave 1. Several questions measuring the concepts of attachment and control are included on both the adolescent and parent interview schedules. It is, therefore, possible to construct comparable scales for adolescents and their parents or guardians. In addition to creating scales that are reliable for both adolescents and parents, it is necessary to pay careful attention to the reliability and validity of measures across ethnic groups. The criteria used in final scale composition were that parallel items for parents and adolescents be included wherever possible and that the scale reliabilities be approximately equal across ethnic groups.

Parent-child attachment. An eighteen item scale is used to measure the attachment of the parent to the child and of the child to the parent. The scale is composed of eleven items adapted from Hudson's Index of Parental Attitudes and the Child's Attitude Toward Mother (Father) Scale (Hudson, 1982) and seven items derived from the work of Patterson and Loeber designed to measure the perception of the extent and nature of parents' positive responses to prosocial behavior by their children. Preliminary analyses indicated that these eighteen items could best be treated as a single scale for both parents and for adolescents (Chronbach's Alpha = .81 and .87 respectively for the total sample). Hence, the scale measures child-parent warmth, liking, lack of

hostility, and sense of parental approval. Both the parent and the adolescent attachment scales contain similar items with the referents changed where necessary.

Parent-child control. The control scale consists of twelve items, derived primarily from the work of Patterson, intended to measure both supervision and consistency of discipline. The reliabilities for these scales (.63 for parents; .70 for adolescents in the total sample) are not as high as for the attachment scales, but are nonetheless acceptable.

These four scales meet the criteria stated above. Similar items are contained in the parental and adolescent versions. In addition, the scale reliabilities are remarkably similar across ethnic groups. Scale items and reliabilities can be found in the Appendix.

A measure of **underclass status** is created from various indicators of family economic status. A family is considered underclass if the principal wage earner is unemployed, lacks a high school education, and is poor and/or receiving welfare benefits.[4] Using this operationalization, 21% of our sample is classified as being underclass: this includes 24% of the black families, 25% of the Hispanic families, and 9% of the white families.

Measurement of Delinquency

Forty-four self-reported delinquency items drawn largely from the National Youth Survey (Elliott et al., 1985) are included on the adolescent interview schedule. From these a general delinquency scale is created containing 29 non-duplicative items ranging in seriousness from running away from home to threatening someone with a weapon. All responses are screened to determine firstly, if they fit the type of delinquency measured by the item, and secondly, if they were "actionable" offenses. The latter criterion is intended to screen out trivial offenses (for example, sibling squabbles) which law enforcement officials would probably ignore. If the response meets these two criteria, its prevalence is included in the summed

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4. This measure is derived from consideration of urban poverty and underclass literature which suggests that the key aspect of underclass status is separation from the economic mainstream, although residence in a poverty area has also been considered a key characteristic (Nathan and Adams, 1989; Wilson, 1987). Recent research has questioned an area effect when relevant individual variables are controlled (McGeary and Lynn, 1990).

delinquency score. A subject's score can range from 0 to 29 depending on how many of the behaviors the adolescent reported committing in the recall period. Delinquency is measured at both Wave 1 and Wave 2. At Wave 1, the recall period includes all delinquencies reported up to the initiation of the study. At Wave 2, the recall period covers the six months since the last interview. Preliminary analysis indicated that the distribution of self-reported delinquency is skewed, and thus the scale is logged in subsequent analyses.[5]

RESULTS

The analysis is conducted in two stages. First, the cross-sectional relationship between the independent variables and delinquent behavior is examined. This analysis compares the relationship of the set of family factors to delinquency across each ethnic/racial group in the sample, as well as investigates the effects of each variable on delinquency across the three groups. Second, the predicted paths among variables in the model are examined by a path analysis using two waves of data. This not only allows for an examination of whether family processes can explain the change in delinquent behavior, but also provides a comparison of how the interrelationships among these family processes vary across the three ethnic/racial groups.

Cross-Sectional Analysis

Table 1 provides the zero-order correlations among the variables in the model. Parent attachment is highly correlated with parent control and child attachment is moderately related to child control. However, parent and child measures are not highly correlated with each other. Parent and child attachment and control are moderately related to delinquency.

Table 2 provides the results of the equations regressing delinquent behavior on the measures of family process and underclass status. It is evident that the variables explain substantially more of the variance in delinquent behavior among Hispanics (.29) than they do for

5. This ever-prevalence measure of delinquency is highly related to a delinquency frequency measure also constructed during this research. However, the latter measure was not used because the distribution on the measure was more severely skewed than the ever-prevalence measure.

either blacks (.13) or whites (.11). This seems to be consistent with the notion that family life is more influential for Hispanic children because children are not expected to develop independence from the family at an early age.

As expected, the children's perception of their attachment to their parents is significantly related to delinquency for all three groups, although the effect is slightly stronger among Hispanics. The parents' perception of the parent-child relationship is related for blacks and Hispanics, but not for whites. Given the actual size of the coefficients, this seems to reflect the difference in the size of the three groups rather than the importance of the variable in explaining delinquency.

With the exception of the perception among black children of how well controlled they are by their parents, none of the other variables in the model are significantly related to delinquency. The finding regarding child control being related to delinquency only for black children is consistent with the literature that suggests that discipline in black homes centers on obedience and tends to be more direct, physical and strict. Recall that Cernkovich and Giordano (1987) found that control and supervision were the strongest predictors of delinquency among the black families in their sample.

Path Analysis

The hypothesized interrelationships among the family process variables and delinquency are examined using path analytic techniques in which predictor variables are measured at time 1, while delinquency is measured at both time 1 and time 2. Thus, the longitudinal model predicts change in delinquency over the two time periods. Analyses are conducted separately for the three ethnic groups.

The results of these analyses are contained in Tables 3-5 for each ethnic group. As in the cross-sectional analysis, the model best explains the change in delinquency among Hispanic youth (52% of the variance) and does least well in accounting for black delinquency (30%). However, delinquency at time 1 is accounting for most of the explained variance. Child attachment is the only family process variable that is statistically significant, and it is significant

within each group. Clearly, while the family process variables do moderately well in accounting for the level of delinquency, they do not contribute much to the explanation in the change in delinquency.

The path analysis does reveal some differences across ethnic groups in the relationships among the predictor variables. Specifically, the measure of underclass status is inversely related to parental attachment for blacks and Hispanics but not for whites, whereas for child attachment, underclass is inversely related for whites but not for the other two ethnic groups.[6] Thus, it appears that in black and Hispanic families, the strain placed on parents by economic hardship creates a situation in which parental affection for children is weakened. The difficulty that parents perceive in managing their children in poor black and Hispanic families is also evidenced by the significant inverse relationship between underclass status and parent control. In white families, the economic strain generates weaker affectional ties from the child to the parent.[7]

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

The objective of this research is to evaluate hypotheses about the possible role of ethnic/racial differences in the family etiology of delinquency. The analysis has considered both the overall relationship of family processes to delinquency within each ethnic/racial group, and the relationships between different family processes and delinquency.

The first issue is the overall relationship of family processes to delinquency within the three population subgroups. One issue of importance is the differential relevance of family processes for adolescent behavior within different groups. This research joins a growing consensus that family functioning does play a role in the determination of who will be law abiding (Loeber, 1987). The relationship of family processes to delinquency is not extremely

6. A t-test comparing the coefficient sizes between pairs of samples was conducted to establish the significance of the comparisons reported in these analyses (Cohen, 1983).

7. It should be noted that comparison of underclass groups within ethnic sample is weakened by the extremely low numbers of white underclass subjects in this sample (N=13). Thus, the nonsignificance of underclass effects on white parental perceptions is undoubtedly affected by small sample size. However, the significance of the effect on child attachment for the white sample is especially significant in light of this.

strong within black and white ethnic groups in this sample, although the variance explained is within the range reported in other family-delinquency studies (Cernkovich and Giordano, 1987; Loeber and Stouthamer-Loeber, 1986; Snyder and Patterson, 1987). However, Hispanic family life appears to have a more pervasive effect on adolescent behavior than is suggested by the results for black and white families. This suggests the longer duration of close family cohesion in this cultural context (Becerra, 1988; Ghali, 1982; Sluki, 1979).[8]

Specific hypotheses about differences which might occur between ethnic groups in the patterning of different family processes were generally not supported. Very few differences emerge between ethnic groups when prior level of behavior is controlled. There is considerable commonality across ethnic/racial groups in the impact of the parenting processes identified here, and the perception of the child about his or her relationship with parents is the most critical variable overall.[9]

There are some indications here that underclass status negatively affects the perception of family life. Parent perceptions are most affected, but are, however, least related to delinquency. This finding is consistent with a growing body of research which suggests that one way hardship affects children's lives is through its effect on parenting (Conger et al., 1984; Larzelere and Patterson, 1990; Lempers et al., 1989; McLloyd, 1990). There is some indication that the effect of hardship on different family processes and on delinquency interacts with ethnicity. It is interesting to note that child attachment appears to be affected by underclass status only for white families. This may relate to the more common occurrence and, therefore, less stigmatizing impact of family hardship in minority families as opposed to white families, to whom economic marginality may be a source of shame and secrecy (Willie, 1985).

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8. Recent adolescent research suggests that, in general, the extent of intergenerational conflict in adolescence is not as great as has been perceived (Gecas and Seff, 1990).

9. It remains possible that differences in family processes may have an effect earlier in the family life cycle.

In terms of theoretical implications, this family model receives modest support as an explanatory model of delinquency causation. It is less powerful in explaining change in the level of delinquency over time. Aside from prior delinquency, child attachment is consistently the most important variable in explaining both the level of delinquency and the change in delinquency over time. These findings support the core relevance of family social control variables in explaining the family's role in delinquency causation. The "psychological presence" of a parent implied in the child's sense of attachment to a parent is a central factor in the family etiology of delinquency. Direct control variables appear to add little to the explanation of delinquency provided by the model. Since this finding stands in some contrast to results from other studies which have utilized more comprehensive measurement strategies for direct control variables (Larzelere and Patterson, 1990), we do not conclude that direct parental control is irrelevant for adolescent behavior. Differences in measurement techniques may account for this discrepancy.

Although family factors are not strong contributors to delinquency in general, the results do suggest that affective climate is a significant underlying issue for some adolescent delinquents. Thus, research needs to address interventions which particularly affect adolescent perceptions of family ties. Family intervention with delinquents would appear to be particularly indicated where adolescents express a perception of and concern about family alienation. Increased attention to the particular issues and concerns of Hispanic adolescents and their families appears warranted from these findings.

In conclusion, there are indications of both similarity and difference in the role of family processes for adolescents of different ethnicity. To the extent that family variables explain different amounts of delinquency in different ethnic contexts, social control processes would appear to be embedded in more extensive social mechanisms. Although Hirschi has rejected the idea that control varies along social structural or cultural lines, others have criticized this stance as unrealistic and unnecessary (Kornhauser, 1978; Thornberry, 1989). This paper thus illustrates the utility of incorporating structural variables into further theoretical development and research.

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Table 1. Correlations of Family Process Variables with each other and with Delinquency for the Total Sample and for Each Ethnic Group.

	Parent Attachment	Child Attachment	Parent Control	Child Control	Underclass Status
Delinquency:					
Wave 1	**-.23***	**-.27***	**-.14***	**-.27***	**.03**
	-.21*	-.28*	-.17*	-.13	.10
	-.20*	-.22*	-.12*	-.31*	.10
	-.41*	-.46*	-.19*	-.25*	-.02
Wave 2	**-.19***	**-.30***	**-.15***	**-.23***	**.09***
	-.12	-.37*	-.02	-.16*	.08
	-.19*	-.27*	-.16*	-.23*	.09*
	-.40*	-.47*	-.25*	-.25*	.06
Parent Attachment	....	**.22***	**.57***	**.12***	**-.09***
		.14	.59*	-.07	-.01
		.22*	.55*	.17*	-.10*
		.34*	.52*	.19	-.15
Child Attachment		....	**.13***	**.42***	**-.02**
			.06	.47*	-.25*
			.11*	.39*	-.02
			.26*	.51*	.10
Parent Control			....	**.11***	**-.15***
				-.02	-.04
				.14*	-.15*
				.10	-.25*
Child Control				....	**-.09***
					-.19*
					-.10*
					.04
Underclass Status					....

Legend:	
1st number	**total sample**
2nd number	white sample
3rd number	black sample
4th number	Hispanic sample

* p <.05 (two-tailed test)

Table 2. Regression of Wave 1 Self-Reported General Delinquency on Family Variables for each Ethnic Group (standardized regression coefficients in parentheses).

	White Subsample	Black Subsample	Hispanic Subsample
Independent Variables			
Parent Attachment	-.134 (-.138)	-.012* (-.141)	-.040* (-.335)
Child Attachment	-.023* (-.232)	-.007* (-.095)	-.035* (-.363)
Parent Control	-.015 (-.075)	-.000 (.004)	.014 (.079)
Child Control	-.003 (-.028)	-.029* (-.248)	.000 (.007)
Underclass Status	.054 (.028)	-.018 (-.013)	-.028 (-.018)
R^2	.112	.125	.293

* p sign > .01

Table 3. Unstandardized and Standardized Coefficients for OLS Regression of Adolescent's Delinquent Behavior on Family Processes for **White** Adolescents (standardized regression coefficients in parentheses) [N=150]

	Dependent Variables				
	General Delinquency	Child Control	Parent Control	Child Attachment	Parent Attachment
Independent Variables					
Wave 1 Delinquency	.70* (.59)	-.22 (-.02)	-.22 (-.04)	-2.61* (-.25)	-2.22* (-.22)
Underclass Status	-.04 (-.02)	-1.30 (-.07)	-.23 (-.02)	-4.50* (-.23)	.14 (.01)
Parent Attachment	-.00 (-.04)	-.15 (-.17)	.29* (.58)		
Child Attachment	-.02* (-.17)	.43 (.47)			
Parent Control	.03 (.12)	.09 (.05)			
Child Control	-.00 (-.00)				
R^2	.43	.25	.36	.13	.05

* $p < .05$ (one-tailed test)

Table 4. Unstandardized and Standardized Coefficients for OLS Regression of Adolescent's Delinquent Behavior on Family Processes for **Black** Adolescents (standardized regression coefficients in parentheses) [N=581]

	Dependent Variables				
	General Delinquency	Child Control	Parent Control	Child Attachment	Parent Attachment
Independent Variables					
Wave 1 Delinquency	.58* (.47)	-1.90* (-.22)	-.01 (-.00)	-2.86* (-.22)	-2.02* (-.20)
Underclass Status	.10 (.06)	-.94* (-.08)	-.83* (-.09)	-.31 (-.02)	-1.36* (-.10)
Parent Attachment	-.00 (-.02)	.01 (.02)	.36* (.57)		
Child Attachment	-.01* (-.15)	.22* (.33)			
Parent Control	-.01 (-.06)	.07 (.05)			
Child Control	-.00 (-.01)				
R^2	.30	.21	.35	.05	.05

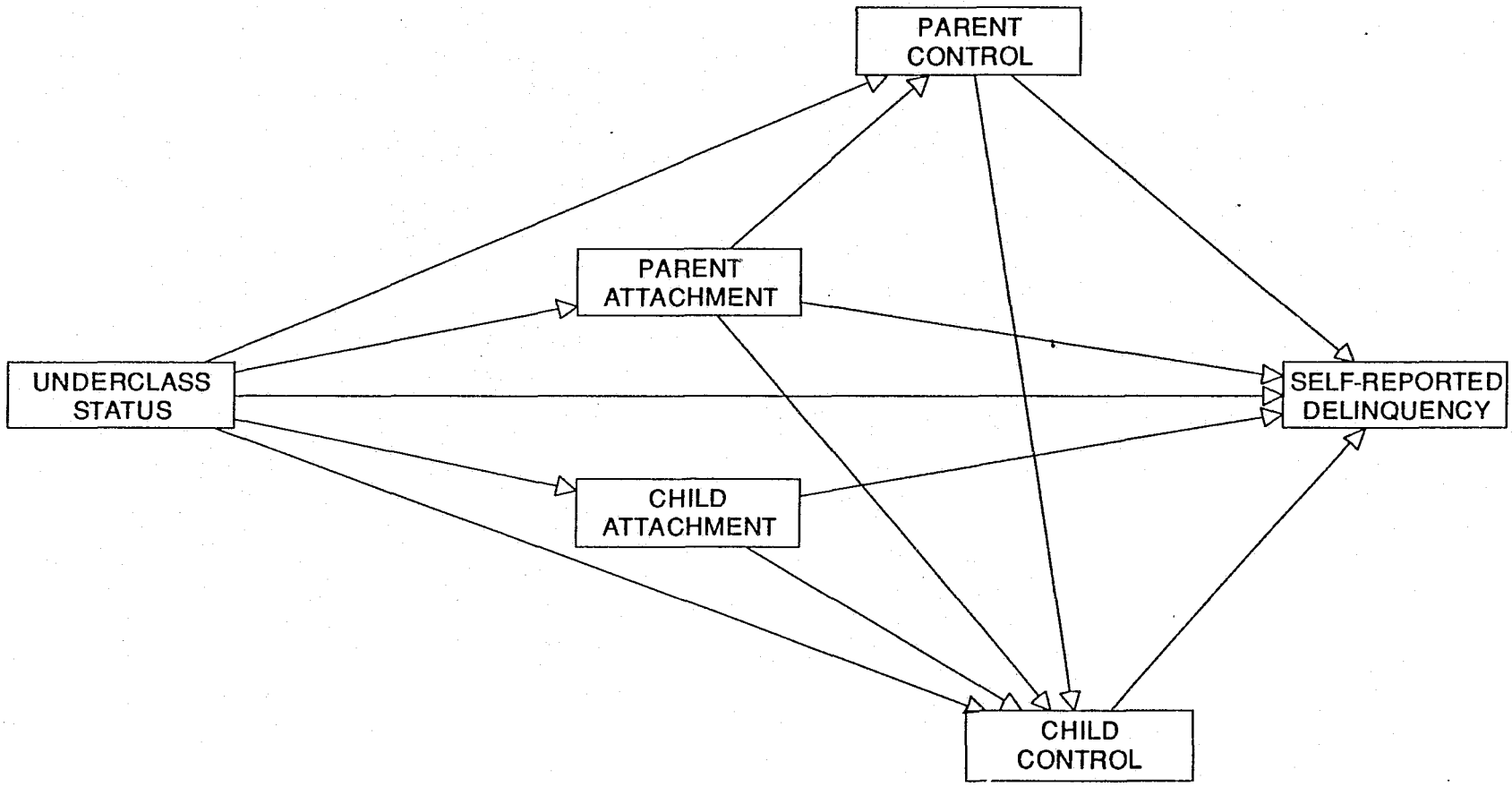
* $p < .05$ (one-tailed test)

Table 5. Unstandardized and Standardized Coefficients for OLS Regression of Adolescent's Delinquent Behavior on Family Processes for **Hispanic** Adolescents (standardized regression coefficients in parentheses) [N=135]

	Dependent Variables				
	General Delinquency	Child Control	Parent Control	Child Attachment	Parent Attachment
Independent Variables					
Wave 1 Delinquency	.58* (.57)	-.05 (-.01)	.09 (.02)	-4.69* (-.46)	-2.10* (-.16)
Underclass Status	.12 (.08)	-.16 (-.01)	-1.5* (-.17)	1.44 (.09)	-3.50* (-.42)
Parent Attachment	-.01 (-.06)	.04 (.05)	.34* (.49)		
Child Attachment	-.02* (-.17)	.38* (.51)			
Parent Control	-.01 (-.04)	-.08 (-.06)			
Child Control	-.00 (-.03)				
R^2	.52	.26	.30	.22	.20

* $p < .05$ (one-tailed test)

Figure 1. Initial Model of Family Delinquency Relationships.



APPENDIX

PARENT-CHILD ATTACHMENT

standardized alpha reliability (total sample) = .81
White subsample = .84
Black subsample = .83
Hispanic subsample = .76

How often would you say that ...

You get along well with your child?

You feel that you can really trust your child?

Your child does not understand you?

Your child is too demanding?

You really enjoy your child?

Your child interferes with your activities?

You think your child is terrific?

You feel very angry toward your child?

You feel violent toward your child?

You feel proud of your child?

You wish your child was more like others you know?

How close do you feel to your child?

When (SUBJECT) has done something that you like or approve of, how often do you ...

Say something nice about it (praise him/her or give him/her approval)?

Talk with (SUBJECT) about it?

Give (SUBJECT) something like a hug, kiss or pat on the back?

Give (him/her) some reward for it, like a present, money or food?

Give (SUBJECT) a special privilege like staying up late or a special activity?

Go someplace or do something with (him/her) as a reward?

CHILD-PARENT ATTACHMENT

standardized alpha reliability (total sample) = .82
White subsample = .78
Black subsample = .85
Hispanic subsample = .84

How often would you say that ...

You get along well with your (PARENT)?

You feel that you can really trust your (PARENT)?

Your (PARENT) does not understand you?

Your (PARENT) is too demanding?

You really enjoy your (PARENT)?

Your (PARENT) interferes with your activities?

You think your (PARENT) is terrific?

You feel very angry toward your (PARENT)?

You feel violent toward your (PARENT)?

You feel proud of your (PARENT)?

You wish your (PARENT) was more like others you know?

How close do you feel to your (PARENT)?

When you have done something that your (PARENT(s)) like(s) or approve(s) of, how often (does she/does he/do they) ...

Say something nice about it, praise you or give you approval?

Talk with you about it?

Give you something like a hug, kiss or pat on the back?

Give you some reward for it, like a present, money or food?

Give you a special privilege like staying up late or a special activity?

Go someplace or do something with you as a reward?

CHILD CONTROL SCALE

standardized alpha reliability (total sample) = .70
White subsample = .72
Black subsample = .68
Hispanic subsample = .73

How important is it to _____ to know where you are?

How important is it to _____ to know who your friends are?

Do/Does _____ supervise week night curfew?

How often would _____ know who you are with when you are away from home?

Do/Does _____ supervise weekend curfew?

In the course of a day, how often does _____ know where you are?

How often (does/do) your (PARENT) follow through with a punishment after you're told to stop doing something but you don't stop?

How often do you get away with things?

When you are punished, how often does the punishment work?

Once _____ decides a punishment, how often can you get out of it?

When you do something wrong, how often (does/do) _____ ignore it?

When you do something that your (PARENT) like(s) or approve(s) of, how often (does she/does he/do they) ignore it or not say anything about it?

PARENT CONTROL SCALE

standardized alpha reliability (total sample) = .63
White subsample = .56
Black subsample = .65
Hispanic subsample = .67

How important is it to you ...

To know who your child's friends are?

To know what (SUBJECT) is doing when (he/she) is not at home?

To know where your child is?

In the course of a day, how often would you know where (SUBJECT) is?

How often would you know who (SUBJECT) is with when (he/she) is away from home?

How often do you supervise (SUBJECT)'s week night curfew?

How often do you follow through with a punishment after (SUBJECT) is warned to stop doing something but doesn't stop?

How often do you let (SUBJECT) get away with things?

When (SUBJECT) is punished, how often does punishment work?

Once a punishment has been decided, how often can (SUBJECT) get out of it?

When (SUBJECT) does something that (he/she) shouldn't do, how often do you ignore it?

When (SUBJECT) has done something that you like or approve of, how often do you ignore it or not say anything about it?