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Violent Offending, Nonviolent Offending, and General Delinquency: Exploring the Criminogenic Risk Factors of Hong Kong Male and Female Adolescents

RESPONSE FROM AUTHORS: We have noted our responses to the reviewers below in yellow highlight. We also underlined our responses in case the highlighting does not come through in transmission process. We appreciate the feedback from the reviewers.

Reviewer(s)' Comments to Author:

Reviewer: 2

Comments to the Author

I appreciate the revisions made by the authors throughout the manuscript. The authors have addressed some of my concerns and substantially enriched literature review. However, some problems still persist and further revisions are needed, in particular when it comes to the rationale of conducting the study.

As reviewed by the authors, there are plenty of empirical studies on those risk factors of adolescent delinquency in Hong Kong. Therefore, it is not true that “little is known about what makes these Hong Kong adolescents become involved in juvenile delinquency” (line 57-69, page 2). Based on the current flow of introduction, the study added very limited value to the existing literature. Below are my suggestions for strengthening the paper,

1) Simply saying that “this study is important…the findings of this study can inform practice…” is not a valid way to present the significance of the paper. The authors are advised to think deeply about what is unknown and how the present study may help to fill the knowledge or research gaps. For example, are there any inconsistent findings in the literature? Do Hong Kong adolescents have any unique features that may lead to different findings? As gender effect was one of the focuses, the authors could pay more attention to this topic in introduction and think about whether there is any issue to be addressed regarding gender effect.

Authors’ Response:

2) Another question the authors could consider is potential interactions among the different risk factors. The authors elaborated different risk factors based on different basic theories. However, these elaborations are very basic. The authors could further think about how these theories (risk factors) are related to/different from each other. For example, some may focus on individual factors, some may focus on external factors, etc. The readers may wish to see if there are any novel findings if simultaneously examining these risk factors on different levels (the authors need to further explore whether there is previous research considering different risk factors altogether).

Authors’ Response:

Reviewer: 1

Comments to the Author

From line 36 to 49 in page two, the statistics quoted from various sources are not accurate or true as the minimum age of criminal responsibility was 7 in 1976 but not 10. In your article, you write: "In Hong Kong, the annual number of juvenile and youth crime arrests has risen steeply over the last three decades, with its peak in the late 1980s and early 1990s (Hong Kong Police Force, 2019). According to police statistics, the arrest rate for juvenile delinquency (i.e., 10-15 years of age) was 212 per 100,000 residents in 1976, and this rate has increased rapidly to its peak of 962 per 100,000 residents in 1989. Similarly, the arrest rate for youth delinquency (i.e., 16-20 years of age) has also risen since the mid-1970s (973 per 100,000 residents in 1976) to its peak in the mid-1990s (2,203 per 100,000 residents in 1994)."

Please clarify and amend. Perhaps, you may need to point out the fact that minimum age of criminal responsibility in Hong Kong has been changed in 2003. If your research assistant borrowed ideas from other local sources such as Wong (2000), please quote proper reference - as I found your description highly similar to Wong's description.

Except these statistics, I accept most of your revisions and found your revisions filled the gap of literature review.

Authors’ Response: Excellent point. We appreciate the reviewer’s critical point to the change of minimum age of criminal responsibility in Hong Kong. The descriptions are paraphrased from the authors’ past studies on Hong Kong juvenile delinquency. Nevertheless, we have cited Wong’s (2000) work in the implication section. Thank you.

Final remark to Reviewer 1 and Reviewer 2: Thank you for the reviewers’ comments. We appreciate the amount of time spent on this manuscript. We believe, following our responses to their helpful comments, our manuscript has been strengthened. As such, we hope it will be suitable for acceptance. Thank you.