

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This study, which attempts to examine delinquent behaviour among students, was conducted at Taylor's College: School of Hotel Management, Kuala Lumpur. Due to time constraint and also manageability of the sample, the survey was limited to only a small section of the school's student and staff population.

This is primarily a survey research, which is usually used to "describe the attitudes and behaviour of a population of people by selecting in a representative way a sample of individuals and soliciting their responses to a set of questions." (Baker, p.8)

3.2 Research Instrument

This survey research was conducted using two primary modes of doing a survey: using questionnaires and conducting interviews.

The researcher prepared a simple questionnaire consisting of three (3) parts and containing twenty-five items (Appendix 1). The aim of the questionnaire, in particular the first and second part, was to generate information regarding the respondent's background and opinion of the college. Further, the third part of the questionnaire poses questions, which was aimed at obtaining information as to whether or not the respondents had indulged in delinquent behaviour and their reasons for doing so.

A cover letter and brief instruction on how to complete each part of the questionnaire was also included. The cover letter explains to the respondents the purpose of the study, the meaning of the term delinquency (as used in the study) and requests the respondents to participate in the study by giving frank and honest answers.

The questionnaire was administered, by class, upon obtaining approval from the college administration, to the students, at the beginning of a class and the students were given a few minutes to respond and return the questionnaire. The researcher sought the assistance of some of her colleagues to administer the questionnaire to the students. The purpose of the study was explained to the students and they were assured that the particulars given would be treated as strictly confidential. The importance of giving frank and honest answers was also impressed upon the students.

In addition, the researcher also conducted interview (upon obtaining approval) with a few members of staff at the college in order to elicit information about the state of discipline at the college, causes of delinquency and their reaction to such behaviour. During the respective interview sessions, the researcher asked questions from an interview schedule (Appendix II and III) and recorded the respondent's answers in writing.

3.3 Research Sample

“A survey often begins by identifying a number of individuals considered representative of the group to be studied (what is referred to as a

sample)” (Baker,p.10). “A sample is a selected set of elements (or units) drawn from a larger whole of all the elements, the population.” (p.148).

The respondents to this study, consisted of fifty seven (57) students who were randomly chosen among students from Term Six (final term), Term Four and Term Two. These students are currently undergoing the Higher Diploma and Diploma programmes in Hotel Management at the college. Equal number of male and female students were chosen to represent the population of the students in each term.

Students from Term One were not included in this study due to the fact that they had just been enrolled at the college. Further a large number of students from Term Three and Term Five were also excluded from the study as they are currently away on Industrial Training.

Table 1 below shows the breakdown of the sample according to their gender and Table 2 shows the breakdown of the sample according to the term they are in presently.

Table 1: Distribution of Respondents according to Gender

GENDER	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE (%)
Male	29	50.9
Female	28	49.1
Tòtal	57	100.00

Table 2: Distribution of Respondents according to Term

GENDER	TERM 6	TERM 4	TERM 2
Male	10	9	10
Female	8	10	10
Total	18	19	20

Ethnically, there was not much variation in the students' background as a majority of the students at the college are Chinese. The respondents ranged in age from 18 years to 23 years.

The subjects of the interview are the Head of School, Executive – Students Services, the Industrial Training Coordinator and four lecturers who are presently teaching the sample of this research.

3.4 Analysis of the Data

The results obtained from the questionnaire were tabulated using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software and analyzed accordingly. The findings were then displayed in frequency tables and percentages. In addition, the researcher was also able to classify the type of delinquent behaviour the students frequently indulged in and determine the causes of such behaviour, from the students' viewpoint.

The responses from the interview sessions enabled the researcher to classify the causes of delinquency from an administrator's viewpoint. The outcome of these interviews also enabled the researcher to gather information on

the steps that have been taken to curb such behaviour. From this, the researcher was able to suggest further steps that may be taken by the school administration as:

- “... the school environment can have significant positive effects on children. ... school conditions can be more easily controlled and are more amenable to change than are the larger societal conditions. ...schools could be effective institutions in developing self-disciplined children.”
(Phi Delta Kappa Commission on Discipline,1982).