

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Introduction

A study concerning delinquency was carried out at Taylor's College: School of Hotel Management, Cheras, Kuala Lumpur. The total number respondents were 57 students who are currently pursuing either a Diploma or Higher Diploma at the college. The initial number of respondents to whom questionnaires were distributed were sixty (60). However only 57 students returned the questionnaires. The Head of School and a few other academic and non-academic staff also participated in this study.

Data and responses derived from the questionnaires and the interview sessions and the main findings of the study is reported and discussed in this chapter.

4.2 Results of the Study

Brief History of the College

This college was established in 1987 as the Hotel Catering and Institutional Management Centre (HCIMC). Its humble beginning started at a rented double storey bungalow, in Kenny Hills, with a student population of 75. In order to accommodate its growing student population, the school moved into a bigger premise at Jalan Ipoh Kecil in 1990.

In October 1991, this reputable institution was acquired by MBf Holdings Sdn. Bhd., one of Malaysia's largest conglomerates and in 1995 moved to its present premises at Taman Miharja, Cheras, Kuala Lumpur.

Currently there are 450 students at this college with 40 academic staff and 20 non-academic staff. To date, this college has produced more than 1300 graduates, many who are holding senior managerial positions in the hotel and related industries.

There are many facilities available at this college. Among the facilities available are, a library equipped with computers and internet connections, discussion rooms, 2 Front Office mock-up rooms equipped with the FIDELIO Management Systems, 2 mock-up hotel suites with attached bathrooms, a commercial restaurant, a custom designed fine dining restaurant with full sized bar, 5 practical kitchens and two computer laboratories.

Distribution of Respondents to the Questionnaire

The majority of the students at this college, which offers the French National Diploma and Higher Diploma courses in Hotel Management and Tourism Management, are of Chinese origin. Table 3 at Page 28 indicates the distribution of the respondents according to their ethnic origin.

Table 3 : Distribution of Respondents : Ethnic Origin

ETHNIC BACKGROUND	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE (%)
Malay	6	10.5
Chinese	49	86.0
Others	2	3.5
Total	57	100.00

Distribution of Respondents' Opinion about College

Table 4 : Respondents Opinion about College

Opinion About College	Agree		Disagree		No Comments		Total (%)
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	
Proud to be a student	38	66.7	1.8	1	18	31.6	100
Lessons interesting and relevant	25	43.9	3	5.3	29	50.9	100
Lecturers are helpful and friendly	38	66.7	8	14.0	11	19.3	100
Administrative staff are courteous and helpful	16	28.1	14	24.6	27	47.4	100
Facilities are satisfactory	4	7.0	38	66.7	15	26.3	100
Rules and regulations are fair and easy to follow	24	42.1	8	14.0	25	43.9	100

Table 4 at Page 28 shows the distribution of respondents according to their opinion about the college. Six statements about the college were listed and the respondents were required to indicate their opinion about the statement and to explain their opinion. Very high percentages, 66.7% (38), of them were proud to be students at this college. The reasons stated were that the college is a reputable institution which has garnered respect in the hotel industry, the courses offered has worldwide recognition and that the college has well qualified and friendly lecturers. The Richmond Youth Project's observation that general dislike of the school resulted in delinquency may not support the findings of this study as a majority of the respondents are proud to be students at the college.

Although 50.9% (29) had no comments about the lessons that were being taught, 43.9% (25) of the respondents agreed that the lessons taught were interesting and relevant to the course that they were pursuing. The subjects, they felt, was preparing them to face the challenging and demanding industry and the knowledge gained would be useful for their career. According to the 14.0% (11) who did not agree with the statement, some of the lessons that were being taught were either very difficult or very boring and irrelevant, especially Management subjects. Some even stated that they felt that too many subjects were being taught per term.

A large percentage, 66.7% (38), agreed with the statement that the lecturers were helpful and caring. They expressed their gratitude to the lecturers for their tireless effort, sincere commitment, patience, dedication and support. 14% (8) of the respondents, however, disagreed with the statement and stated that

14% (8) of the respondents, however, disagreed with the statement and stated that although a majority of the lecturers were helpful and caring, nevertheless, there were a handful who were rude, emotional, sarcastic and openly showed favouritism. 19.3% (11) had no comments about the statement.

Conversely, 47.4% (27) had no comments about the statement on the administrative staff being courteous and helpful. According to the 24.6% (14) of the respondents who disagreed with the statement, a few staff of these staff, who were constantly in direct contact with the students, were very rude and showed little or no respect to the students. These staff were also described as being not co-operative. Despite these complaints, 28.1% (16) have expressed agreement with the statement.

However with regards to the facilities available at the college, a very high percentage, 66.7% (38), disagreed with the statement that the facilities available were to their satisfaction. A large number of these respondents stated that although, there were many facilities available, they felt that these facilities have to be upgraded. Many also expressed dissatisfaction about the availability of computers with Internet facilities and urged that the number of computers with Internet facilities be increased. Dissatisfaction about the number of reference books available was another reason stated for their disagreement with the statement about the facilities at the college. Another common grouse for their disagreement was that there were no recreational facilities available.

Upon enrolment at the college, each student is issued a Student Handbook. This handbook contains details that every student should know about the college,

message from the Head of School reminds the students to follow the school rules, to show respect for each other as well as to authority. At the end of the handbook, an acknowledgement slip is attached and every student is required to return a slip acknowledging receipt of the handbook and that he/she has read and understood the college rules and regulations. Thus, every student at the college knows that he/she has to abide by the rules. 42.1% (24) of the respondents agreed that the rules were fair and easy to follow. However, 14.0% (8) disagreed with the statement and stated that although there were rules and regulations at the college, nevertheless, they were not being strictly enforced. This, they attributed to the absence of a discipline master/mistress.

Failure to strictly enforce school rules could generate deviant behaviour as postulated by the strain theory – inconsistencies in society would generate deviant behaviour.

Delinquent Behaviour : Students' Perception

“Delinquency” in the context of this study is confined to behaviour such as ebullience, latent aggression, boisterousness, disruptive behaviour, aggressive reaction to criticism, truancy and “lepak” culture.

The commission of delinquent behaviour by the students at this college as indicated in the students' responses in the questionnaire is shown in Table 5 at

Page 32.

Table 5: Record of Delinquent Behaviour

Types of Delinquent Behaviour	Yes		No	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Truancy	43	75.4	14	24.6
Disrupting a class	15	26.3	42	73.7
Scribbling on walls or other college property	5	8.8	52	91.2
Using vulgar words against friends	17	29.8	40	70.2
Using vulgar words towards staff at the college	2	3.5	55	96.5
Rude	5	8.8	52	91.2
Violation of school rules	12	21.1	45	78.9

According to the table above, truancy is the most common type of delinquent behaviour committed by the students at this college: 75.4% (43) have indicated that they have skipped classes and from this, a majority of them stated that they skip classes at least one to three times a week. The most common reasons stated for skipping classes are sleeping, doing assignments, studying in the library and also attending to personal matters. A small group of respondents indicated, in the questionnaire, that they do skip one or two classes, especially in the mornings, as they had overslept.

26.3 % (15) of the respondents have been caught either playing or talking in class when lectures are in progress and the common reasons for indulging in such behaviour is either because they are bored or they were asking (sometimes explaining) the lesson to their friends. The indulgence in this type of behaviour concurs with the findings of Schafer and Polk (1967) who posited that irrelevant curriculum and inappropriate teaching methods promotes delinquency. However, a large percentage, 73.7% have not indulged in such behaviour.

A small percentage of the respondents, 8.8% , have scribbled on walls or other property at the college. Some studies have indicated that students indulge in delinquent behaviour because of weakness in the school organization, curriculum and timetable. (Schafer and Polk, 1967; Frude and Gault, 1984). 66.7% of the respondents have indicated that the facilities available are not satisfactory and further 14% have indicated that the lessons that were being taught were either difficult, boring or irrelevant. Therefore, it may be concluded that these shortcomings, within the college, have promoted delinquency among the students.

A small percentage too has used vulgar words towards the staff (3.5%) or has been rude to the staff (8.8%). William Glasser attributed misbehaviour of this nature to be caused by the shattering of a student's expectation of recognition, love and respect for their teachers.

21.8% of them have used vulgar words towards their friends. According to the respondents, they do so because it a normal thing to do.

With regards to violation of school rules, 21.1% (12) of the respondents have violated school rules. Charlton and David (1993) posited that "conscious inconsistency between staff in the ways in which they interpret and enforce school rules" would lead students to behave in unacceptable ways.

The respondents stated that they violated school rules as they felt that the rules are meant to be broken. Some of the respondents stated that they violate the rules either for the fun of it or because it is "cool" to do so.

Distribution of Delinquent Behaviour among Respondents according to Gender.

Table 6: Delinquent Behaviour and Gender

Delinquent Behaviour	MALE				FEMALE			
	Yes		No		Yes		No	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Skipped Classes	22	51.2	7	50.0	21	48.8	7	50.0
Disrupted Classes	10	66.7	19	45.2	5	33.3	23	54.8
Scribbled on walls or property	3	60.0	26	50.0	2	40.0	26	50.0
Used vulgar word on friends	14	82.4	15	37.5	3	17.6	25	62.5
Used vulgar words on staff	2	100	27	49.1	--	--	28	50.9
Violation of school rules	9	75.0	20	44.4	3	25.0	25	55.6

The responses on delinquent behaviour from the respondents’, as shown in Table 6 above, indicates that 51.2% (22) male students have skipped classes as compared to 48.8% (21) female students. 66.7% (10) male students have disrupted a class by either talking or playing as compared to only 33.3% (5) female students who have indulged in such behaviour. 60% (3) male students have scribbled words on the walls or other school property as compared to only 40% female students. No female students have used vulgar words towards any member of the staff at the college and only 25.0% (3) students have violated school rules as compared to 75% male students.

Table 6 and the analysis above indicates that the involvement of male students in delinquent behaviour is higher than female students.

Responses from the Interview Sessions

The Head of School, Executive--Student Affairs, Industrial Training Coordinator (who is also a member of the teaching staff) and four members of the teaching staff were interviewed informally with regards to their perception on the behaviour of the students, their reaction to delinquency, their opinion on the causes of delinquency and suggestions to overcome the problem.

Excluding the Head of School who has been with the college for nine (9) years, the other respondents have been with the college for between one (1) to two (2) years and are happy to be part of this reputable institution.

Hotel management courses in Malaysia are a direct outcome of the government's push for tourism to develop as an industry. Before 1985, tourism was merely an activity. To heed the government's call, hotel management school were established in this country and it attracted two groups of students – firstly, those who were genuinely interested in pursuing their studies in this subject area and secondly, students who were academically weak. Traditionally, this college has attracted students from the second category as they usually had the minimum entry requirement of 5 passes in the Sijil Persekolahan Malaysia (SPM) examination.

Generally all the respondents felt that the behaviour of the students at this college was acceptable – they described the students as being very courteous,

respectful and committed to their studies. The respondents also stated that, generally, there was no serious disciplinary problem and this was reflected by the number of students who have, historically, been suspended or expelled from the college, only a handful. However, there are a few students who are rude, disobedient and disrespectful.

Challenging Indiscipline Situation.

Not all the teaching staff interviewed encountered a challenging classroom situation concerning indiscipline among the students. However, following are three situations:

Situation 1

At the beginning of the term, the students were reminded to be punctual for all lectures. On a particular day, some students were as usual late. They were queried on the reason for their delay and one student answered in a tone that implied to the lecturer that it was none of her business.

Situation 2

A student got into an argument with the lecturer about the ingredients for a certain recipe. The reason for such portioning was explained to the student but she refused to accept the allotted portioning. The student was reprimanded for such behaviour and the student's reaction was, from that day, that particular student did not speak to the lecturer.

Situation 3

A rather new lecturer who was entrusted to teach a senior batch at the college encountered this situation. The students knew that the lecturer had no prior teaching experience and therefore decided to test her “knowledge”. This they did by always querying her just to test her. The lecturer was pressurized and was always nervous whenever she had to teach the class.

Staff's reaction to delinquent behaviour

All the teaching staff interviewed were very particular about order and discipline in the classroom. They always insisted on students being punctual for all lectures and were firm in dealing with latecomers.

There was not much disparity in the approaches adopted in dealing with delinquent behaviour among the students. Their first reaction, usually, was a polite comment. If the behaviour persists then, the student would either be counseled or be given a stern warning. In almost every situation encountered, a warning would suffice to deter the students. Exceptionally, when stern warning was ineffective, the student would be told to leave the classroom and sometimes would be sent to the Heads of Department for further counseling.

None of the teaching staff interviewed had encountered an aggressive or boisterous student in their classes.

Students attitude about the college

According to the Head of School, the students at the college can be classified into two types: students who were very serious about their studies and liked the school and secondly, a smaller segment of the entire student population who are playful and expect an easy life. For the second group of students when the easy life that they expect is not forthcoming, they react by being biased towards the college.

Students attitude about the facilities at the college

The Head of School felt that the facilities that are currently available at the college were comprehensive and adequate and added that, if possible, it could have been better. He elaborated that the nature of vocational training was such that it required a huge capital for the facilities to be upgraded. Students described as playful and who expect an easy life at the college would certainly complain about the facilities being inadequate.

Students attitude about the staff

The Head of School described the students' attitude towards the staff of the school as being good. This was attributed to the nature of the programme and training that the students were currently undergoing. The students were trained to be hospitable and this was reflected in the students' behaviour: friendly, courteous, respectful and helpful.

Staffs' attitude towards their work

The Head of School described the academic staffs' attitude towards their work as being very good. This was reflected in the students' performance in the examinations and also in their output – classes were being conducted as scheduled, the lecturers were constantly and diligently preparing for the classes and were continuously assessing their students. The staffs' commitment towards their work (a very positive attitude) was also reflected in the teaching performance appraisal that was conducted at the college.

Staffs' attitude towards the students

The Head of School described the staffs' attitude towards their students as being very good. However, certain staffs, he felt, were less impatient with students who were academically weak.

Staffs' attitude towards their colleagues and the college administration

There was a very harmonious relationship among the staff from various departments at the college.

The staffs were also very cooperative, understanding and positive towards the school administration and the various policies and programmes organised at the school.

Head of School's reaction to disciplinary problems at the school.

Every disciplinary problem encountered is viewed very seriously as it was felt that every case must be nipped in the bud. The Head of School would personally attend to any disciplinary problem that is brought to his attention. He would talk to the student concerned and ensure that the message, that the school views such problems very seriously, is clearly passed to the student.

Whenever a serious misconduct is brought to his attention, the Head of School would initiate a Disciplinary Committee to hear the matter and recommend appropriate actions to be meted out.

Any serious misconduct by a student and the action meted out is recorded in the student's personal file and parents or guardians of the student will be notified.

Staff perception about causes of disciplinary problems

The respondents generally felt that one of the main causes of delinquency among students at this college was the age of the respondents and their carefree lifestyle. Coupled with this is the influence of friends and the environment around the school. Many of the students at this college are staying away from their families and are living either at the Student Accommodation or are renting rooms with their friends. In such an environment where there is no surveillance of any sort by any one from the school, they could mix with wrong company and be influenced to indulge in unbecoming behaviour.

A student's upbringing in which he or she experienced lack of parental love and care was also cited as a cause for delinquency among students at this college.

Further, as a large number of students at this college are academically weak, their poor achievement in the term tests would further dishearten them and dampen their spirit and enthusiasm towards their studies and this would then lead to them be absent.

Another reason that has been cited as being a probable cause for delinquency among the students at this college is the mismatch between the student's expectation, the reality of the course they are pursuing and also the industry, which they experience during their Industrial Training. In short, a student's disillusionment causes the student to indulge in delinquent behaviour.

Suggestions to overcome delinquency

Since student disillusionment is regarded as one of the probable cause for delinquency among students at this college, it was suggested, by the staff interviewed, that there should be greater involvement by the Student Council members, especially during orientation for new students. It was felt that the myriad experiences shared by these students would help new students gain a better understanding on the nature of the course and also the realities of the industry.

Establishing a good team of counsellors and a good administrative support department for the students are the other measures suggested to overcome this problem.

Besides this, it was also further suggested that the students should see the school, to be strict in terms of discipline. Lecturers have been urged to be more vigilant in detecting such behaviour and nipping this problem in the bud. This is because a lax and flippant attitude, where there is no rigid enforcement of rules and regulations, would result in more students plunging into delinquent behaviour. It was stressed that the school in its zeal to be strict in enforcing discipline should along the way adjust its rules to be in tandem with current trends and should also be aware of the fact that the current generations expects respect and therefore treat them with such respect.

From the results obtained from the questionnaires distributed to the students and the interview sessions with the staff of the college, the following are the answers to the research questions that this study sought to answer.

- (1) Truancy, a problem that has existed with the inception of schooling, is the most common form of delinquent act committed by the students at this college. The respondents cited that they truanted either because they had overslept or because they had to complete their assignments. Boring lessons also precipitated students to truant.

The study also identified that quite a number of students have disrupted a class usually by talking when a lecturer was explaining. Once again boring

lessons precipitated students to indulge in such behaviour. Lack of interest in a particular subject also led students to indulge in such behaviour.

A small percentage of students at this college also violated school rules, as there was no proper enforcement of rules and regulations. Senior students felt that rules were not being strictly enforced among junior students and therefore they too did not have to follow the rules.

Students also admitted that they have been rude to a few members of the administrative staff of the school as those staff too have been rude to them and did not treat them with due respect.

- (2) The frequency of the above delinquent behaviour occurring is very little. Most of the respondents who truanted usually did so between one to three times a week. With regards to the other forms of delinquent behaviour, a very small fraction of the respondents had indulged in such behaviour.
- (3) The type of the students who come to the school to pursue the courses offered has been cited as one of the main causes of delinquency. Conversely the age of the students and the current generation trend has also been pointed out as being the cause of delinquency. Coupled with this is lack parental love and care.
- (4) Whenever a delinquent case is reported to the school authorities, their first course of action is to counsel the student concerned and to impose upon the student concerned the importance of developing good behaviour. Further, the school authorities have been constantly upgarding the facilities available so as to provide the best for their students.

Various activities have also been organised in order to prepare students for examinations and also to face the realities of the challenging industry.

The timetable has been planned in such a way to ensure that the students do not have a very tight schedule and are given off on certain days.

In service training too has been provided to the teaching staff to provide them with the proper techniques of conducting lessons and also tackling problem encountered in their classrooms.

The results of the study indicates that although delinquency is not a major problem at this institution and is merely a blot on a clean paper, nevertheless, a small number of such behaviour does exist.