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Data sources in Chinese crime and criminal justice research

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Abstract This paper reviews major criminological data collected in China over decades. Very few quantitative criminological data-sets are available to international and comparative scholars because of the sensitivity of the topic. Studies have been scattered and intertwined in other areas of study, such as law. However, several major projects have been conducted, although they may not be widely known to the international research community. The paper describes and analyzes the major projects in terms of their designs, samples, and measures. It also assesses their nature, scope, and utility that may be informative for further research on crime and justice in China.

Introduction

As the general understanding of the importance of international and comparative criminology grows over the past one and half decades [3, 18, 29], the importance of studying China has also been more and more recognized [5, 32]. Since the economic reform started in China in the late 1970s, social science in China has made great progress growing out of orthodox ideological restrictions. Among many renewed social science disciplines, criminology was established largely as a new discipline.

Along with profound social change, crime in China has increased significantly [6, 26, 30, 32]. This not only attracted the attention of Chinese scholars, but also criminologists internationally. However, a most difficult impediment for studying crime and justice in China is accessing quantitative data. For historical reasons and given the Chinese tradition in social sciences, studies of crime in China tend to be non-empirical. Some qualitative empirical studies have been conducted, but quantitative studies are rare. Criminology programs are generally located in law schools where quantitative training is very limited. Since access to quantitative data

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is the most acute issue, this paper focuses on reviewing quantitative data about Chinese crime and criminal justice.

Among international scholars who have attempted to collect crime and criminal justice data in China, many formidable difficulties are well known. These difficulties include government restrictions, financial costs, insufficient data collection training of Chinese partners, difficulties in getting approval by authorities, lack of support by local officials to make logistic arrangements in unfamiliar environments. All of these have resulted in very sparse data availability to international researchers.

Despite these difficulties, however, several major projects have been conducted in China and valuable data have been produced. But some of them are not widely known to the research community. The most influential ones are heard of, but details are not well communicated. As few have the opportunity to conduct data collection in China and many do not know what data exist, possibilities for research and collaboration have not been realized, and valuable data have not been fully utilized. At this stage of research development in the area of crime and justice in China, a review of major existing data is called for. It can bring information about the major studies into one article and brief international scholars about existing data. This paper hopes to facilitate sharing of these valuable data and new research and collaboration in the area of Chinese criminology.

This paper reviews major data and projects that have been conducted in China. Among the data reported in the literature and through personal contacts, this paper selects only those data collected with reasonable methodological rigor in sampling and data collection procedures. The paper briefly explains the backgrounds, the nature of the data, features of samples and major variables. The review is not intended to replace the full detailed explanation by the original authors in their publications, but only to give an overview of the most important information that is available. The study classifies data into three groups according to primary sources and methods of data collection: (1). official data, (2). victimization survey data, and (3). self report survey data. The review is conducted according to these groups.

Official data

Official statistics, despite many shortcomings, are still the most systematic source of data available [4]. Chinese governmental agencies publish some statistics they collected, but many official statistics are not published. The published statistics are the most accessible data source.[1] Among the published official statistics, two publications are the most important source of data for researchers. The first one is *China Law Yearbook*. The second one is *China Statistical Yearbook*. The Law Yearbook is the primary source; *China Statistical Yearbook* publishes little that is not published in the Law Yearbook. So our explanation will concentrate on the contents of Law Yearbook.

For political and historical reasons, the Chinese government published little crime statistics until 1978, when the first *China Law Yearbook* was published. Presently,

[1] As a convention, this paper uses "statistics" to refer the numerical information released by the government, while uses the term "data" to refer information collected and analyzed by researchers.

the *China Law Yearbook* is published in Chinese. It includes a section on Chinese crime and criminal justice statistics. The statistics include tables from the police, courts, and procuratorate (prosecution). Statistics are collected and compiled respectively by the statistics offices of Supreme People's Courts, Supreme People's Procuratorate, and the Ministry of Public Security. The selected information is sent to the State Statistics Bureau. The Law Yearbook publishes some of these statistics. The Law Yearbook is a comprehensive collection of major documents and events related to law that occurred in China each year. Each yearbook covers the contents related to the year before. Each volume of the Law Yearbook contains a statistical section, usually the last section of the yearbook, which includes many tables reporting statistics from various government agencies relevant to crime and justice.

The police (called in China "public security"), the court, and the procuratorate, are the three most important institutions in the Chinese criminal justice system. Chinese criminal procedural law stipulates: "The public security organs shall be responsible for investigation, detention, execution of arrests and preliminary inquiry in criminal cases. The People's Procuratorates shall be responsible for procuratorial work, authorizing approval of arrests, conducting investigation and initiating public prosecution of cases directly accepted by the procuratorial organs. The People's Courts shall be responsible for adjudication. Except as otherwise provided by law, no other organs, organizations or individuals shall have the authority to exercise such powers" ([8], article 3).

Understanding the basic function of these three Chinese criminal justice agencies is important in utilizing the data provided by them. Among all the data sources, perhaps official statistics are those that need most explanation since they involve a very different context and system. In the next three sub-sections, I explain the official statistics and comment on the nature of the data and meaning of the information.

Police statistics

The data that have been used most in the past by scholars are the statistics from the police. The police statistics include major crimes and social order violations. Crime statistics include national total number of incidents for homicide, assault, robbery, rape, larceny, grand larceny, burglary, motor vehicle theft, bicycle theft, fraud, currency counterfeiting, abduction, and smuggling. However, most of the data are not published for all the years. Among these crimes, the longest time series published are homicide, assault, robbery, larceny, fraud, and currency counterfeiting. These statistics are available from 1978 to present. A category of grand larceny was defined by the police for very serious larceny, valued 3,000 yuan or above in rural area and 6,000 yuan in rural areas. But the yearbook stopped reporting this category in 1999. Burglary and motor vehicle theft only started to be reported from year 2000. Bicycle theft was reported from 1988 to 1999 but not 1998. Abduction and smuggling were reported from 1991.

In China, many minor criminal behaviors are not classified as crimes. Crime is defined for behaviors that reach a certain level of seriousness. Minor anti-social behaviors are defined as public order violations and recorded by police according to Regulations on Sanctions for Public Order Management [40], which was issued by

Ministry of Public Security, as an administrative law to control public order offenses administratively. This regulation now has been revised and passed by the Peoples Congress and has become a national act in 2006. According to this act, public order violations include: (1) disrupt work and public order; (2) gang fights and creating troubles; (3) insulting women and engaging in rogue activities; (5) obstructing official normal duties; (6) violating firearms regulations; (7) violating regulations on explosives; (8) assaulting others; (9) theft; (10) swindling, looting, and extorting property; (11) plundering public and private property; (12) intentionally damaging private and public property; (13) selling counterfeited bills and certificates; (14) engaging in prostitution; (15), gambling, and (16) violation of residency. The punishments include fines, detention up to 30 days, and in the worst cases, even sending violators to re-education through labor camps for up to 3 years. The Law Yearbook reported statistics of public order violations only in some of the years; the data are not complete. The police data have been most often used so far to indicate the level of crimes and change of crimes during the past two and a half decades [32, 39], and to examine modernization theories [28]. Liu also tested an "economic motivation thesis" using the statistics [24, 26].

Procuratorate statistics

Another group of statistics in the Law Yearbook is statistics from procuratorate (Prosecutor Department). Different from the US system, procuratorate is a government agency that has an equal rank to the court. Its function is defined as "exercise legal supervision over criminal proceedings." The PRC Criminal Procedural Law stipulates that crimes that procuratorate has power to investigate and prosecute in court are as follows: "Crimes of embezzlement and bribery, crimes of dereliction of duty committed by State functionaries, and crimes involving violations of a citizens' personal rights such as illegal detention, extortion of confessions by torture, retaliation, frame-up and illegal search and crimes involving infringement of a citizen's democratic rights—committed by state functionaries by taking advantage of their functions and powers—shall be placed on file for investigation by the People's Procuratorates. If cases involving other grave crimes committed by State functionaries by taking advantage of their functions and powers need be handled directly by the People's Procuratorates, they may be placed on file for investigation by the People's Procuratorates upon decision by the People's Procuratorates at or above the provincial level" ([8], article 18).

The Law Yearbook reports statistics on cases that Procuratorate investigated. The cases are divided into two categories: corruption and bribery cases and cases of dereliction of duty. Corruption and bribery cases are further divided into corruption, bribery, embezzlement, collective embezzlement, a large amount of property of unknown origin, and others. Cases of dereliction of duty are divided into abuse of powers, and practicing favoritism and other dereliction of duty. From 1990 to present, each year the Law Yearbook reports the total number of cases under each of these categories for the previous year.

The Law Yearbook also reports the total number of cases processed by Procuratorate. These are the total number of cases accepted, filed for investigation, and closed, respectively. Accepted cases include all cases that were accepted by

procuratorial office, upon receiving the case from the police, and after a preliminary review, it was decided that the case has sufficient evidence to be accepted for further processing. The total is calculated to include only cases within the year. Filed cases refer to cases that are considered by prosecution as having sufficient evidence to investigate. Cases closed include all cases that have completed investigation.

Further, the cases investigated by prosecutor are reported in two different numbers: big cases and key people cases. Big cases means a corruption and bribery case involving an amount of more than 50,000 yuan, the embezzlement of public funds in the amount of more than 100,000 yuan, or collective embezzlement, a huge amount of property of unknown origin, or concealment offshore deposits in the amount of more than 500,000 yuan, as well as situation that involves large amount of money.

Key people cases refer to the crimes committed by the officials ranked at "county or section level rank" or above. A county rank is a rank for a head of county or equivalent; it is a high position in the ranking system of Chinese government staff (cadres). Procuratorate statistics are useful especially for studies addressing corruption and other white-collar crimes. Prosecution statistics have not been systematically analyzed as research data except being cited by researchers. One publication that analyzed the prosecution statistics is Liu [30].

Court statistics

The Law Yearbook also publishes tables of statistics from the courts. The tables report totals of cases filed, closed, and tried in each year nationally. The statistics are grouped into total criminal cases, total civil cases, and total administrative cases. The most relevant information is statistics about criminal cases tried by the courts of first instance. However, for the purpose of crime research, these statistics are less useful, since they are aggregated totals for seven categories of crimes. The seven categories are from the PRC Criminal Law [9]. They are crimes of endangering public security, crimes of disrupting the order of the socialist market, crimes of infringing upon civil personal rights and democratic rights, property offences, prejudice to the management of social order offence, Crimes against national defense interests, corruption and bribery, dereliction of duty and other crimes. Each category includes many different specific crimes, while the statistics in the table is a sum of all these different crimes, not disaggregated for each specific crimes of very different nature, thus they do not constitute a theoretically meaningful crime typology. The results are not readily comparable with Western crime data and understood in terms of familiar theories and typologies. The other useful information reported by the court statistics is total number of trials for juveniles for each year. However, there are only limited number of years reported.

The other important sources of official statistics are journal articles by Chinese scholars. The authors of the articles often have early access to data that will not be published by the Law Yearbook. Two Chinese journals have published articles with useful data often. One is *The Journal of PRC Public Security University*, (Gong an Da Xue Xue Bao), published by PRC Public Security University. The other is *Research in Juvenile Delinquency*, (Qing Shao Nian Fan Zui Yan Jiu), published by China Juvenile Delinquency Research Society [47]. The society has published the *Yearbook of Juvenile Delinquency Studies*.

Recently, Liu et al. [34] have gained an access to Chinese Court Data on Drug Trafficking. Their study is supported by National Institute of Justice of the United States to study drug trafficking in China. The study systematically collected Chinese court data to address the existence of a "China Route", the types of drugs most prevalent in China, and the profiles of drug traffickers. The study investigates the evidence for the opposing views on drug traffickers' patterns of association with criminal groups. The study is a collaboration of American scholars with Chinese scholars at the Center for Criminology of Peking University, China. The Chinese collaborators were able to access court sentencing files not available to general researchers. Past research on the topic of drug trafficking has all been based on qualitative data, individual reports, and media reports on high profile incidents. This is the first study that collects quantitative data to address these questions.

The researchers traveled to high courts located in several provinces to collect data from sentencing files of these Chinese high courts, which has the jurisdiction over drug trafficking cases. Seven systematic samples of sentencing files were drawn from each of the seven provinces/special administrative regions that covers the entire "China Route" of drug trafficking. Narcotics are smuggled into China from the Golden Triangle of Southeast Asia (bordering the areas of Laos, Myanmar, and Thailand) through the border between the Golden Triangle and Yunnan Province, then moved through Guangxi and Guangdong provinces to Hong Kong and Macau, which have long been known to be centers of drug collection and distribution to international markets, particularly the USA and Europe [11, 36, 49, 52]. This route is known in the literature as the "China Route". The seven areas that cover the China Route include Yunnan, Guangxi, Guangdong, Fujian, Hong Kong, Macau, and Taiwan.

Researchers examined sampled sentencing files and identified relevant information. The information was then coded into variables according to predetermined coding instructions. The total sample size is 853 cases. The unit of the analysis is court cases. Considering the variation in different contexts of the courts, the size of the sample in each provinces and region varies and the proportion of cases in the sample varies too. The weights of cases from each court is calculated and applied in constructing the total sample to represent the total population of court cases.

The sentencing files include very rich information, which includes, for example, sources where the drugs were from, the destination where the drugs were being transported, and the types of drugs involved in each court case. The data also include information on offender profiles, such as the nature of the organization, major types of criminal behavior involved, and the regular socio-demographics of the offenders involved. The preliminary data analyses find supportive evidence for the existence of "China Route", which previously was only suggested in qualitative studies. Taiwan was found to be a major destination for drug smuggling. The study also finds that heroin is the primary drug in most of the cases, despite recent literature suggesting the diversity of current drug problems in China. The study finds only two cases involving criminal organizations. The study finds that cases involving a group offenders are more likely to entail smuggling and trafficking, while non-group case are more likely to involve transporting, procession offenses. These preliminary findings illustrate the high potential utility of the data. For details of the research and findings, see [34].

Another study that collected court data is a homicide study by Zhao [16]. This study was funded by the HKSAR CERCG grant held by Rod Broadhurst and Philip Beh. The study collected all the sentencing files on cases trialed and sentenced in years 1995–2000 in three Chinese jurisdictions, Beijing, Shenzhen, and Inner Mongolia. The total case number collected is 2,932 cases. Among which, Beijing has 1,225 cases, Shenzhen has 405 cases, and Inner Mongolia has 1,302 cases.

The information from the sentencing files is coded into variables. The major variables include important offender characteristics and offense characteristics, such as age, gender, employment, weapon used, co-offenders, conflict happened, prior offense, offender–victim relations, time of the day, place where offense occurred, etc. The study found that high percentage of homicide occurred during 8:00 P.M. to 12:00 P.M. Most of the homicides are committed in a private residence. Most homicides resulted form four types of reasons: revenge, quarrel, and disputes over interests, and insults. Most homicides occurred among acquaintances. The analyses so far are largely descriptive, but there is the potential utility for more in depth explanatory analyses with the data. For detailed information and findings, see Zhao and Wang [17].[2]

Nature, scope, utility of official data

The above sections introduce in the detail the crime statistics published by the government. These descriptions provide a good basis to understand the nature, the scope, and potential utility of the data. Data features will determine the strengths and the limitations of the data. A major feature of these statistics is that they are only about national crime statistics. They are not disaggregated into provinces or any other sub-national unit of analysis. This limits the use of the data to only provide information at the national level. Variation among provinces is not reflected. The data have been used to indicate the general trend of the crime in China [32].

The other limitation is that data only contains information on crimes. They do not provide information about aspects of China that may have related to or associated with the variations in the levels of crimes. Using a conceptual paradigm typically used in social science data analyses, we would say that there is no information on "independent variable" that may explain these crime statistics. Without independent variables, the use of the data to test theoretical hypotheses is very limited. Liu [26] has attempted to use the data to test an "economic motivation thesis" [24, 26, 30]. The strategy is to derive the hypothesis from literature and derive a testable prediction about the patterns of crime based on the theoretical hypothesis. Then, the time series analysis is used to examine if the data exhibit the crime pattern features that are consistent with the "economic motivation thesis". The analyses found that economically motivated crimes increase in a faster rate than non-economically motivated crimes over the course of economic reform, providing indirect evidence that supports the economic motivation hypothesis.

Further, as in the case of any official crime statistics, there are many problems and issues with the Chinese data. A large literature has been developed in criminology to

[2] The study of Lu et al. [35] used published court cases to study criminal sentences of sexual offences against women. For a review of the study, see the seventh paper in this special issue.

deal with the problem of official statistics. The limitations of official statistics in international research have been amply documented [4, 38, 41]. These concerns apply to the Chinese statistics too. Several studies have found that similar to other countries Chinese official data have had persistent problems of underreporting especially for less serious property crimes and nonviolent crimes [12, 37, 43, 44, 53] over the years. A similar pattern has been found in the USA [44]. Studies have also reported that the under reporting on less serious crimes has improved after 1989 [43, 44]. Despite these limitations, just like official data in other countries, the data contain valuable information reflecting the patterns of crime during social transition in China.

Wuhan birth cohort studies

The first Wuhan project is the earliest major project conducted by international criminologists in collaboration with scholars in China. Marvin Wolfgang designed and led the collaborative project. The collaborative institutions include Sellin Center for Studies in Criminology and Criminal Law, Wharton School, University of Pennsylvania, China Juvenile Delinquency Research Society, International Exchange Association of the Ministry of Education, The Public Security Institute of the Ministry of Public Security, The Public Security Department of Hubei Province and the Public Security Bureau of Wuhan City.

The Chinese leadership includes Professor Guo Xiang, Prof. Zhang Liquin, Prof. Dai Yisheng, and Prof. Xu Qiancheng. Professor Xu Qiancheng was responsible for leading the data collection in Wuchang, which is one of the three areas of Wuhan city. The study began in 1990 with funds provided through 1995 from the Chiang Ching-ku Foundation, Taipei, Taiwan. Wolfgang reported findings from the project at a presentation and in the NIJ Research Preview [42].

The research team selected the city of Wuhan to conduct the data collection in 1990. Wuhan is the capital city of Hubei province and is one of the most important industrial cities in central China along the Yangtze River. It is an urban, industrial city with three distinct districts: Wuhan, Hankou, and Wuchang. Wuchang is the most populous, major commercial and residential area of Wuhan. It was selected as the site primarily because the personal contacts of the Chinese Team with the authorities assured access to the data.

The 1989 census was the most recent census of the time. The census indicated that Wuhan's population was 6,532,563 in 1,736,160 households. The researchers decided to restrict the data collection to the Wuchong District with 722,599 individuals in 204,254 households within twelve neighborhoods [15]. The researchers identified 5,341 persons who were born in 1973 and lived in the district from the age of 13 until the data collection period in 1990. This age cohort was selected to be the sample. Within this group there were 2,700 males and 2,641 females.

The data collection stared in June, 1991. Researchers identified 81 persons (1.5%) with violation or criminal records from the birth cohort. Among them, 76 were male (2.8% of the male cohort) and five were female (0.2% of the female cohort). This group was named as group A for research purposes. From the 5,341 in the cohort, a control sample of 81 was matched by gender. This matched sample became

identified as group B and the combined sample has 162 cases. Further, interviews were conducted for these identified 162 individuals in 1991.

To interview the selected subjects, interviewers had traveled in Wuhan and seven other provinces, but the collected survey data were never analyzed because the team was dismissed due to lack of funding. These data were handed to China Statistical Bureau, which produced some tabulations and summaries, and provided the tabulation and summaries to Wolfgang, whose presentation to NIJ [42] was based on these results. The originally coded data were never returned to the research team. The Wuhan team only maintained the original hand-written instruments. The major findings are that there is only a 2% delinquency rate, and there was no chronic offender group found in Wuhan, China. No further analyses were conducted for these data.

The second cohort study was initiated in a conference in 1996 in Dalian, China. The leadership of the China Society for Research in Juvenile Delinquency expressed to Professor Paul Friday their interests in continuing the cohort study and further analysis of the Wuhan Cohort. Professor Friday lead the new cohort study, which used the same criteria to collect data on the Chinese cohort—all persons in the Wuchang District who were born in 1973 and who had resided in Wuchang District from age 13 until the data collection period in 2000. By this point the original cohort had grown older. The district also increased in size and complexity between 1990 and 2000 so that in 2000 there were 15 neighborhoods (and census/police headquarters) compared with 12 in the first cohort study.

As a continuation of Wolfgang's study, researchers located all the original files. The checking for the consistency with the original file was successful. The data matched on the most critical of indicators. The total sample size is 162 with 81 identified as offenders and 81 as the matched group. They also match exactly the data presented in terms of the sample's completed education. Parents' educational levels are nearly the same. The numerical difference between the Statistical Bureau data and the new data collection results is that the Bureau reported 13 offenders with fathers with a college degree but the newly recollected data have 14. Generally, while the exact numbers are slightly different, researchers have located and coded the original interviews that were submitted to the statistical bureau from whom the descriptive statistics were received. The reproduction of the original cohort group was successful.

A major advantage of the cohort study was the identification of offenders. It is well known that only serious offenses were reported to the police and come to the attention of criminal justices system. This is a major source of limitation of official data. This is true in China too. However, a typical Chinese police practice is to station the police officer in the community. Each street office administration, which is in charge of many neighborhoods, has a local police station. Officers in the station work with neighborhood committees. As their job requires, these police officers, while they only report serious criminal offense when dealing with them legally, also keep records of those less serious violations which have not yet reached the level of seriousness to be accepted as criminal behavior by the law. These minor offenses are handled according to law of administrative sanctions, primarily, the Rule on Sanctions for Public Order Management [10, 40].

Since most offenses are less serious, not classified as crimes and reported officially, the records of minor offenses kept by the local police reflect more accurately the level of offenses. Based on these police records, the 81 offenders were identified from the 1973

cohort. The researchers then developed survey instruments for the 81 known offenders and for 81 matched sample by gender and school district to collect data on many important variables. The offender group data contains measures of criminal behavior, burglaries, thefts, and violations such as fights and injuries, and hooliganism (altercations). The offender data also measured official punishment received, previous arrests if any, age at first offense, and age at first arrest. Data for both group included attitudinal variables such as loyalty to friends, school variables, family factors, social control factors, interests and activities, occupational goals, peer influence and peer relations. The cohort data contains a wide range of variables. For details, please see the Friday et al. [13], Taylor et al. [19] and Guo et al. [15].

Nature, scope, and findings of the Wuhan birth cohort studies

The most important feature of the Wuhan study's data is its cohort design. The nature of the data enables a strong control over possible influence of age differences among different individuals; they all share a common starting point. The scope of the variables covers many important aspects in terms of family, school, and peer influences that are recognized as important in the Chinese settings.

The study has yielded important findings. The most important finding is that both data collected in 1991–1992 and in 2000 find exceptionally low rates of offending in China. Of the 5,341 in the original cohort, only 81 persons (1.5%) of the population have an official record of delinquent /criminal behaviors. The rate found 10 years later in 2000 cohort 2 with a different population, (which must include most of the original population), is the same as was found 10 years earlier. This reaffirms the accuracy of the findings. The analyses of cohort 2 data revealed that approximately 86% of these offenders had only a single offence, and none of the offenders had more than four offences—no one fitted a conventional criterion of five or more offenses for chronic offenders. Only 1.5% of the age cohort was found to have ever been involved in any type of recorded contacts for offending behavior up to age 18.

The study examined differences between offenders and non-offenders in terms a range of variables, and reached two major conclusions. One, the differences are significant in terms of peer influences, family background and influence, and the role of school performance, expectations, and goals. Offenders are more likely to have negative peer influences, poorer family backgrounds and relationships, and to have completed lower levers of education and had lower levels of educational expectations. Two, the differences are significant in social integration and involvement in social and cultural activities related to culture and history. Offenders have greater commitment to values in individual wealth, power, influence and personal enjoyment. Non-offenders are more likely to express traditional social values, morals, and to have personal expectations reflecting greater social integration, achievement, and cultural awareness. These findings are consistent with the general finding found in the western literature on the etiology of crime and delinquency. Details of analyses and findings can be found in Friday et al. [13, 14] and Taylor et al. [19]. As illustrated in these findings, the data are useful in analyses of juvenile delinquency and testing of Western theories.[3]

[3] Please also see the second paper in this special issue for more review of these studies.

Victimization survey data

Victimization survey data is a major form of data in the research on crime and criminal justice [38]. This is the case in China too. The two most influential victimization studies are the Beijing 1994 survey, which was conducted by Institute of Crime Prevention and Criminal Reform, the ministry of Justice of China. It was the first victimization survey in China and was part of the International Crime Victim Survey. The other influential survey was the Tianjin survey. The Tianjin survey was supported by a grant from the National Science Foundation and conducted by Messner, Zhang, and Liu, in collaboration with scholars at the Tianjin Social Science Academy. The survey was conducted in Tianjin in 2004. The fifth paper in this special issue provides a detailed description of these two major surveys and discusses their major findings. The present paper focuses on two other important surveys that are less well known by international scholars. The first one is the National Public Security Survey, and the other one is the Crime against Businesses Survey (ICBS) in four Chinese cities.

National public security survey

The National Public Security Survey is the largest survey related to the issue of crime conducted in China. It is organized and conducted by the Chinese government Statistics Bureau. The survey has been conducted seven times annually since 2001. It is conducted in November of every year. The purpose of the survey is to collect public opinion on the issue of public security, concentrating on the perceptions of public security.

The surveys use a multi-level cluster sampling design to draw a nationally representative sample of the general population. Details of the sample varied over the years, but the general procedures were consistent. For example, in 2007, 101,029 household were selected as the sample. At the first stage, 1,836 counties were drawn from 31 provincial level areas, then, 3,115 town or street office were selected from selected provincial level areas. Then, 4,649 neighborhoods or villages were selected from the selected town or street offices. Then, 101,029 household were selected. Lastly, one person age 16 or above from each household was randomly selected as the respondent. The sample size slightly varies over the years[4].

The primary purpose of the survey is public opinion; only nine questions were asked in each survey. The questions were grouped into three sets of questions. The first set asks respondents about their perception of public safety and problems that influence their public safety perception. The first question asks respondents to assess how safe they think the current public environment is. Below I use results for 2007 survey to illustrate the data. In the 2007 survey, 20.8% answered very safe, 42.8% answered safe, 29.7% answered basically safe, and 1.5% answered not safe. The second question asks respondents to choose the social problems that influence the

[4] In 2001, the sample size was 101,058; in 2002, the sample size was 101,988; in 2003, the sample size was 106,557; in 2004, the sample size was 102,309; in 2005, the sample size was 104,107; and in 2006, the sample size was 102,448.

respondent most: 24.8% selected crimes, 27.6% selected public disorder, 38.2% selected traffic accidents, and 9.4% selected fire accidents.

The second set of questions is about social order. The first question asks respondents to evaluate social order at their local places. The answers are very good (24.7%), fine (41.7%), average (29.7%), bad (3.1%), very bad (0.8%). The second question asks how respondents about the change in the social order over last year: 24% answered there is a significant improvement, and 48% answered "improved". Other questions also asked social order for different places, such as school area, railroad stations, etc.

The third set of questions asks about social problems of greatest concern among 13 different types of social problems: 13.2% answered public security problems is their main concern. The findings are published by National Statistical Bureau each year [7]. The survey results generally indicate that crime and public order problems are not the most acute problems in Chinese urban life. Most people feel secure about the social environment. These data can be used to trace the change of the public feeling about the social order.

International Crime Against Businesses Survey (ICBS) in four Chinese cities

Another survey on victimization is the International Crime against Businesses Survey (ICBS). The original ICBS questionnaire was developed by the United Nations Office on Drugs (UNODC) from a World Bank draft in year 2000 to address bribery/corruption, fraud, extortion and several forms of crime which impact business and industry in China. This survey was piloted in Hong Kong in 2004 (n=614) and subsequently modified and reduced for telephone interview format. The project was funded by a HK CERCG grant and is directed by Professor Roderic Broadhurst [Broadhurst et al., *International Crime against Businesses Survey in People's Republic of China and Hong Kong Special Administrative Region* (*ICBS China*), unfinished manuscript] and is the first ICBS survey conducted in China.

The survey was conducted to cover businesses in four Chinese cities: Shanghai, Shenzhen, Xi'an, and Hong Kong (HK). The survey was first conducted in mid-2005 to survey victimization among HK businesses for the year 2004. The same questionnaire was then modified and used in mid-2006 to survey victimization that took place among the business sector in 2005 in Shanghai, Shenzhen and Xi'an. The four surveyed cities were chosen for their different administrative status and geostrategic backgrounds.

Computer-aided telephone interview (CATI) is the main survey method used in ICBS China. All CATI were done in HK by long distance calls to businesses in Shanghai, Shenzhen and Xi'an or local calls to businesses in HK. The Social Science Research Centre (SSRC) at the University of HK was responsible for making all CATI calls. All interviewers employed by SSRC speak fluent Cantonese, Mandarin and English. Call-back checks were done to ensure survey quality.

Samples for businesses in Chinese cities Shanghai, Shenzhen and Xi'an are randomly drawn from the largest China business registry, the China Telecom Yellow Pages published by China Telecom. Up to five phone calls were made randomly. Upon successful contact the initial respondents were asked to refer the phone call to the managers of the company or persons who understand the operation of the

company. Residential or other non-business premises contacts were ignored. If respondents refused to participate another new random phone call to other businesses was made. Approximately 18,275 phone calls to businesses were made for ICBS China. Altogether 5,117 business respondents completed the ICBS China survey, which includes 1,110 businesses in Shanghai, 1,112 businesses in Shenzhen, 1,078 businesses in Xi'an and 1,817 businesses in HK. The overall successful response rate is 28% whereas the partial success rate is 12%. The response rates varied significantly across the cities with completed questionnaires as few as 18% in HK and 41% in mainland cities.

The scope of the ICBS China questionnaire covers traditional crimes such as robbery, theft by customer/employee, theft of/from cars, assault, burglary, and vandalism committed in the business premises where the respondents' work. The extent of intellectual property (IP) infringement is also explored. In addition, the ICBS China asks respondents about fraud committed by an employee or outsiders as well as extortion and corruption/bribery incidents encountered by the businesses. Additional questions on cybercrime were added to the original ICBS to investigate the prevalence of information crime such as internet fraud, attack on computers and systems by virus /spyware/Trojan/ hacker/mal-ware and related protection measures, threats of physical assault made online, and unsolicited information related to obscenity. Follow-up questions on the total value lost to crime incidents, reporting behavior, satisfaction towards the police or other authority's response are asked if a respondent is victimized. The survey also asks general questions about the salience of crime and corruption problems.

As of the time of this review, the researchers are still analyzing the survey data, and drafting reports. The preliminary analyses find that among four cities, Hong Kong businesses seem to have a higher prevalence of victimization by traditional crime, outsider fraud and extortion, intimidation than all three surveyed Mainland cities. Shenzhen businesses reported the highest prevalence of employee fraud among the four cities. The problem of corruption and bribery is more serious in Shenzhen and Xi'an than in Shanghai and Hong Kong. Up to this point the analyses are still in process. Detailed information about the survey and the findings has yet to be published.

Self-report survey data

The most important self report survey in China was the Tianjin prison survey, conducted by Center for Criminology at Tianjin Academy of Social Sciences, in collaboration with Tianjin Government Committee for Comprehensive Management of Social Order, and Tianjin Bureau of Prison Management, with the support of Tianjin Department of Public Security (the police).

The survey consisted of a series surveys, conducted every 3 years since 1990. The years that the surveys were carried out were 1990, 1993, 1996, 1999, and 2002. The subjects of the survey were all the entering prisoners of the year when the survey was conducted. These five surveys were directed by Professor Zhou Lu, who was the Director of the Center for Criminology and Director of Institute of Law at the Tianjin Academy. The total sample size of all five surveys was 20,105 prisoners, among which there were 9,828 juvenile offenders, which constitutes 48.88% of the total.

For each survey, the center for criminology research recruited survey staff such as college students and trained them. The team went to the prison to meet selected prisoners. The team explained to the prisoners the academic nature of the survey and answered questions to avoid misunderstandings and to alleviate worries. The team member explained the contents of the questionnaire, the methods of filling out the questionnaire, and the possible mistakes and errors. Then the prisoners completed their questionnaires independently. For very small number of illiterate prisoners who had difficulty filling out the questionnaire (about 9%), the research team members offered further explanations and assisted them in filling out the questionnaires.

Nature, scope, and utility of the Tianjin prison data

Self-report data have unique strengths for criminological research. They contain information not only about the crime and delinquency, but also on characteristics of offenders and offenses, and background factors typically suggested by various criminological theories. These surveys thus provide useful data to test and develop criminological theories. One issue that appears to weaken the utility of self-report data is that most self-report surveys have been conducted on juveniles and on minor delinquency or deviant behavior, with very few exceptions, due to concerns about willingness to report serious infractions. This practice significantly reduces the usefulness of self-report data in its potential for testing and developing criminological theory, since theories are mainly about more serious crimes. Theories are generally concerned with serious crimes, which is what the public and government are concerned with most.

The Tianjin prison survey data are very useful in overcoming this major weakness of most self-report data that are based on student or other youthful populations. The data were collected from prisoners about their serious criminal behavior along with other background information. The contents of the survey varied somewhat but all five surveys covered the basic socio-demographic characteristics, personal economic situation, employment and unemployment, migrating places, family and school experiences, values and attitudes, criminal offenses and their punishments, the offense behavior, offender time, place, co-offense, victims, recidivism and offense history. A good number of publications have been produced using data collected from these surveys [23, 25, 27, 31, 33, 45, 46, 48, 50, 51]. The second, sixth, and eighth papers in this special issue provide reviews of these relevant studies.

There are several other small-scale self-report surveys in China such as Bao's survey of juvenile strain and delinquency [2], the survey of Li et al. [22] on Chinese adolescent drinking, the survey of Li et al. [21] on adolescent smoking behaviors, and Lu's survey on Chinese students' attitudes toward death penalty [20]. For example, Bao sampled Chinese public school students [2] to study the applicability of Agnew's General Strain Theory of Crime and Delinquency [1]. The sample consisted of three sub-samples of students in public schools: 201 from a southern urban school in Guangzhou City, 237 from a northern urban school in Shijiazhuang City, and 177 from two northern rural schools in Shijiazhuang District. The total sample size was 615. The schools and classes were randomly selected by the administrative offices in the city/district and schools.

Discussion

The difficulties in accessing quantitative data on crime and justice in China are well known. However, the limited data that have already been collected have not yet been well communicated to the international criminological community. An understanding of the nature of these data, their background, and data collection process is also important in the appropriate use of these data.

This paper has aimed to put together the basic information of major data sets to make them known to the international scholarly community. Given the space limitation, this study only selected major projects that have been influential in terms of having produced significant academic publications or well been reported in other public venues. There have been some other surveys conducted by Chinese and individual scholars but not reported in this paper. The ones worth mentioning include yearly city public security surveys by Guangzhou Department of Public Security, and public security surveys by Shenzhen Department of Public Security, for multiple years. Another survey series was conducted by a public polling company, Zero Point Survey Company. Also, Professor Wang Dawei at PRC Public Security University also has conducted fear of crime surveys in Guangzhou. Available information on the design, the sampling, procedure, and variables from these surveys is too limited to permit a meaningful description.

In the review of each data set, the availability of information varies. In order to give the readers some basis for judging the quality of the data and to help determine the need to further pursue the data, I have described in detail the design and the procedure of the study when this information is available. When information is not available, the descriptions are limited. This is often the situation when the data collection was conducted by Chinese scholars. I nevertheless hope that the information provided in this review is helpful to make a preliminary judgment of the data by international scholars.

I have not reviewed to any significant extent the range of variables and methods of measurements. Space limits discussion of the validity and reliability of the research reported, which need to be a task for future research. I mention briefly the range of variables when information is available so the reader would have a general idea about the relevance of the data to his or her research interests. The paper then serves the reader by referring them to publications from the data. Readers are encouraged to find more detailed information in the publications and to further examine the data and investigate the possible use of the data. I hope this short summary will help serve international scholars in their efforts to find suitable data for their research in crime and criminal justice in China.

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