



The University of Macau

Protestant Influence on Cognition and Criminal Behavior of Young Adults

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Statement

I, Mak tin Chi, hereby state that this thesis is my own and original work, apart from the sections where origins are clearly stated. All the materials in this thesis have never been used (partially or wholly) in fulfilling the requirements for any degree or qualification in this or other universities prior to this submission.

Student's Signature:

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Abstract

While previous studies used quantitative methods to demonstrate the effect of religion being statistically significant, this study developed a theoretical explanation for a system of the effect of religion. This paper considers that religion deters criminal behavior through a mediating variable—religious cognition of sin and supernatural punishment. This study interviewed sixteen young adults between 18 and 19 years old; half of them are Protestant believers. The result indicated that believers are less likely to commit a crime through the cognition of sin. In addition, believers will not become iconoclastic and rebellious because they will not experience stress even if they fail to achieve monetary success; they consider it temporary and impermanent. Nevertheless, the behavior of believers is similar to that of skeptics even though their normative standard is different. The current research found that religion can only deter believers from smoking; believers also indulge in alcohol use, plagiarism, viewing of pornography, use of foul language, lying, coming home later than midnight, taking something without permission, and driving too fast.
