

1986 study



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Violent Youth in Adult Court: Process and Punishment Rudman, Hartstone, Fagan and Moore (January, 1986) in their article that, " Despite the widespread transfer of violent youth from juvenile to criminal court, there is little empirical knowledge of the transfer process, rate of transfer, or of case outcomes, sentences, and placement of transferred juveniles." Their study examined these issues for 177 violent youth in four urban areas and compared the, "...court outcomes for youths transferred to criminal court with those youth retained in juvenile court". They stated that a variety of procedures, criteria, and court rules averaged 2.5 times greater for transferred youth. They continue in that when the convicted youth in criminal court is transferred their sanctions are more severe in nature and length.

The study was both experimental and qualitative. They examined both the process and outcome of youths that were charged in the juvenile justice system that were identified having violent offences and were considered to be transferred to the criminal justice system. They gathered the data as part of a research and development initiative to test the impact of an experimental treatment program for chronically violent delinquents. They wanted to investigate: " To what extent are violent youth transferred/convicted and sentenced? Is punishment in the criminal justice system harsher and longer than within the juvenile justice system? Does it occur more quickly? What are the unanticipated consequences of the transfer of certain offense types? How does the process and outcome differ by court and region? What are the legal and policy implications of such disparities? p. 79

They used a standardized protocol to gather their qualitative data on how

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the sites they studied officially identified the violent youth and transferred them to the criminal justice system. They stated that the, " Information was collected on juvenile court data on filing of a petition to transfer and hearings on the motion, criminal court data on processing, trying, placing, and sentencing convicted youth; and corrections alternatives for juvenile offenders. These data were analyzed to provide the qualitative description presented in this article." p. 80

The participants were not assigned at random. They used two strategies to collect the data that were developed and implemented. They used a standardized protocol and abstracts of court processing records in three cities: Boston, Newark, and Phoenix. Memphis was excluded from this study. The sample consisted of 138 youths considered for transfer in Boston, Newark, and Phoenix between 1981 and 1984. Memphis was excluded from the study due to their record-keeping procedures. They stated that out of the 138 youths that were considered for transfer, 71 (51. 3%) were retained by the juvenile court and 67 (48. 5%) were transferred. The youth transferred varied across the sites in Phoenix (63%), Newark (31%), and Boston (20%). They stated that their data was consistent with national data gathered by Hamparian et al. 1982. They found that over 90% of the youth of the youth that were transferred to criminal court resulted in convictions.

The author's data revealed that that the target crime was consistent across sites and courts for violent youth retained in juvenile court was 95. 5% and for violent youth transferred to criminal court 92. 2%. While Fagan et al (1984) found 34% by the same courts and 34. 7% of the youth were adjudicated for violent offenses.

The authors stated that their goal had been met for these sites. Their

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questions were answered.

Since this was an experimental and qualitative study the following do not apply for this study: Cause and effects issues in non experimental studies; test-retest reliability of the instrumentation; internal consistency reliability of the instrumentation; validity of the instrumentation; whether an instrument is valid for a particular research purpose; differences in how a variable is measured across studies; how participants were sampled; how large a difference is not just if its significant; and flaws with the studies.