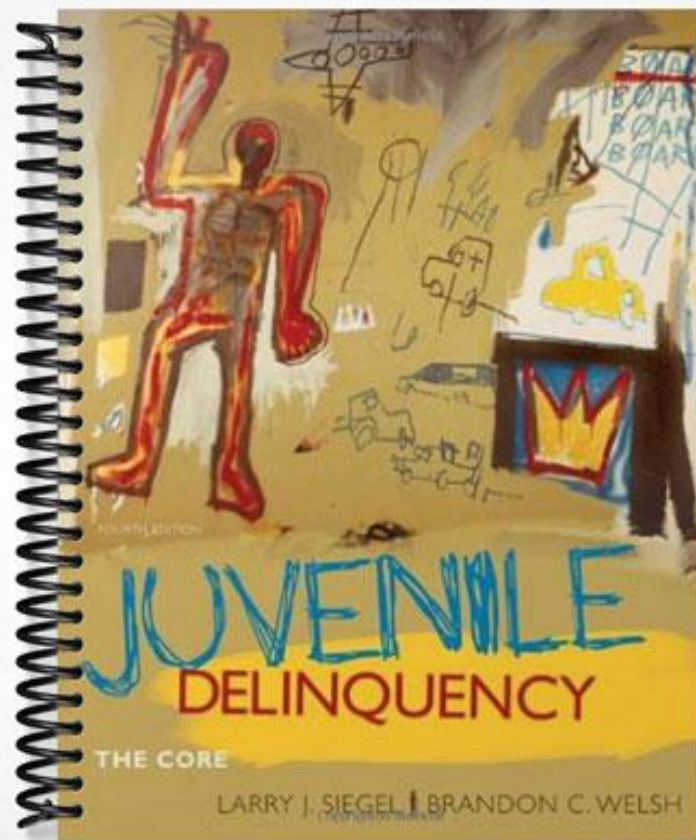


SOLUTIONS MANUAL



CHAPTER TWO

THE NATURE AND EXTENT OF DELINQUENCY

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Be familiar with the various ways to gather data on delinquency.
2. Know the problems associated with collecting data on delinquency.
3. Be able to discuss the recent trends in the delinquency rate.
4. Recognize how age and gender influence the juvenile crime rate.
5. Discuss the association between the economy and delinquency.
6. Understand the association between delinquency and social problems.
7. List and discuss the social correlates of delinquency.
8. Discuss the concept of the chronic offender.
9. Identify the causes of chronic offending.
10. Be familiar with the factors that predict teen victimization.

CHAPTER OUTLINE

- I. Measuring Delinquency with the Uniform Crime Reports
 - A. Each year the U.S. Justice Department's Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) compiles information gathered by police departments on the number of criminal acts reported by citizens and the number of persons arrested.
 1. This information is published in the annual Uniform Crime Report (UCR), the most widely used source of national crime and delinquency statistics.
 - B. UCR is compiled from 17,000 police departments
 1. Part I offenses are also known as index crimes
 - a. homicide and non-negligent manslaughter
 - b. forcible rape
 - c. robbery
 - d. aggravated assault
 - e. burglary
 - f. larceny
 - g. arson
 - h. motor vehicle theft
 2. Part II offenses
 - a. all crimes other than Part I offenses
 3. Law enforcement agencies also report how many crimes were cleared. Crimes are cleared in two ways:
 - a. when at least one person is arrested, charged, and turned over to the court for prosecution; or
 - b. by exceptional means, when some element beyond police control precludes the physical arrest of an offender.
 4. Nationwide in 2008, law enforcement cleared 45 percent of violent crimes and 17 percent of property crimes by arrest or exceptional means.

- C. UCR uses three methods to express crime data:
 1. Number of crimes reported to police and arrests are expressed as raw figures
 2. Crime rates per 100,000 people are computed
 3. The FBI computes changes in the number and rate of crime over time
 - D. Validity of the UCR
 1. Victim surveys show that less than half of all victims report the crime to police
 2. Arrest data counts only adolescents who have been caught
 3. Victimless crimes such as drug and alcohol use are significantly undercounted
 3. Arrest decision criteria vary among police agencies
 - E. UCR arrest statistics are disaggregated (broken down) by suspect's age, so they can be used to estimate adolescent delinquency.
- II. Measuring Delinquency with Survey Research
- A. Another important method of collecting crime data is through surveys in which people are asked about their attitudes, beliefs, values, and characteristics, as well as their experiences with crime and victimization.
 1. Surveys typically involve sampling, the process of selecting for study a limited number of subjects who are representative of an entire group that has similar characteristics (or the population).
 - B. The National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS)
 1. To address the nonreporting issues, the federal government sponsors the NCVS, a comprehensive, nationwide survey of victimization in the U.S. conducted annually by the U.S. Census Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS)
 2. The survey provides information about victims, offenders, and the crimes
 3. Questions also cover the experiences of victims with the criminal justice system, self-protective measures used by victims, and possible substance abuse by offenders
 4. The greatest advantage of the NCVS is that it can estimate the total amount of annual crimes, not just those that are reported to police
 5. Validity of the NCVS
 - a. Among the potential problems of the NCVS are the following:
 - i. Over-reporting due to victims' misinterpretation of events
 - ii. Underreporting due to the embarrassment of reporting crime
 - iii. Inability to record the personal criminal activity of those interviewed
 - iv. Sampling errors
 - v. Inadequate question format that invalidates responses
 - C. Self-Report Surveys
 1. Self-report surveys are used to measure the extent of delinquency by asking adolescents about their recent and lifetime participation in criminal activity
 2. Most self-report surveys contain questions about attitudes, values, and behaviors

3. By correlating the responses, criminologists can analyze the relationship between personal factors and criminal behaviors
4. Validity of Self-Reports
 - a. Critics argue that expecting adolescents to candidly admit illegal acts is unreasonable
 - b. The “missing cases” phenomenon is also a concern
 - i. It is unlikely that the most serious chronic offenders are willing to cooperate with criminologists administering self-report tests
 - c. One way to improve the reliability of self-reports is to use them in a consistent fashion with different groups of subjects over time
 - d. One important source of longitudinal self-report data is the Monitoring the Future study that researchers at the University of Michigan Institute for Social Research (SR) have been conducting annually since 1978
 - i. This national survey involves more than 2500 high school seniors

III. Evaluating the Primary Data Sources

- A. Each source of crime data has strengths and weaknesses
- B. The UCR omits the many crimes that victims choose not to report to police, and relies on the reporting accuracy of individual police departments
- C. The NCVS includes unreported crime missed by the UCS and also contains important information on the personal characteristics of victims
- D. Self-report surveys provide useful information yet, at their core, rely on the honesty of criminal offenders and drug abusers

IV. Crime Trends in the United States

- A. In general, crime rates increased gradually following the 1930s until the 1960s, when the growth rate became much greater
- B. Since then the number of crimes has been in decline
- C. The UCR finds that about 14 million arrests are now being made each year, or about 4700 per 100,000 population
 1. Of these, more than 2 million were for serious Part I crimes and 12 million for less serious Part II crimes
 2. The number of people arrested has declined about 3 percent during the past decade
- D. Official Delinquency: Patterns and Trends
 1. In 2008, juveniles were responsible for about 16 percent of the Part I violent crimes arrests and about 26 percent of the property crime arrests
 2. An additional 1.2 million juvenile arrests were made in 2008 for Part II offenses
 3. While juvenile offenders continue to be over-represented in the crime rate, the number and rate of juvenile offenses has been in a decade-long decline
- E. Self-Reported: Patterns and Trends

1. Most self-report studies indicate that the number of children who break the law is far greater than official statistics would lead us to believe
2. In fact, when truancy, alcohol consumption, petty theft, and recreational drug use are included in self-report scales, delinquency appears to be almost universal
3. Monitoring the Future (MTF) is an annual national self-report survey conducted by researchers at the University of Michigan's Institute for Social Research, involves a sample of about three thousand youths
4. If the MTF data are accurate, the juvenile crime problem is much greater than official statistics would lead us to believe

F. What the Future Holds

1. Some experts predict a significant increase in teen violence if current population trends persist
2. Economist Steven Levitt believes that even though teen crime rates may eventually rise, their influence on the nation's total crime rate may be offset by the growing number of relatively crime-free senior citizens
3. Although the number of adolescents in the population may shape crime rates under current conditions, serious social and economic conditions can alter the trajectory of delinquency

V. Correlates of Delinquency

A. An important aspect of delinquency research is measurement of the personal traits and social characteristics associated with adolescent misbehavior

B. The Time and Place of Delinquency

1. Most delinquent acts occur during the warm summer months of July and August
2. There are also geographic differences in the incidence of delinquent behaviors
 - a. Large urban areas have by far the highest juvenile violence rates
 - b. Rural areas have the lowest
 - c. Typically, the western and southern states have had consistently higher delinquency rates than the Midwest and northeast

C. Gender and Delinquency

1. With a few exceptions, males are significantly more delinquent than females
2. The teenage gender ratio for serious violent crime is approximately 4 to 1 and for property crime approximately 2 to 1, male to female
3. The only exception to this pattern is arrests for being a runaway: girls are more likely than boys to be arrested as runaways
4. During the past decade, the number of arrests of male delinquents decreased about 19 percent, whereas the number of female delinquents arrested declined by 8 percent
5. MTF data show that while males commit more serious crimes, such as robbery, assault, and burglary, than females gender ratios are narrowing
6. Current trends indicate that gender differences in the crime rate may be eroding although some experts believed that female arrest trends may be explained more by changes in police activity than in criminal activity

- D. Race and Delinquency
 - 1. Racial minorities are disproportionately represented in the arrest statistics
 - 2. The official statistics show that minority youths are more likely to be arrested for serious criminal behavior
 - 3. Some experts warn that African-American youths may underreport more serious crimes
 - 4. Bias Effects
 - a. One view is that it is a result of bias by the police and courts
 - b. According to racial threat theory, as the size of the African American population increases, the perceived threat to the European American population increases
 - c. Police routinely search, question, and detain all African American males in an area if a violent criminal has been described as “looking or sounding Black”; this is called racial profiling
 - d. African-American youths are more likely to get an official record and more likely to be severely punished if they are picked up again and sent back to juvenile court
 - e. Institutional racism by police and the courts is still an element of daily life in the African American community
 - 5. Race Matters
 - a. Another point of view holds that although evidence of racial bias does exist in the justice system, there is enough correspondence between official and self-report data to conclude that racial differences in the crime rate are real
 - b. Official data indicate that African American youths are arrested for more serious crimes than European Americans
 - c. However, self-report studies show that the differences in the rates of delinquency between the races are insignificant
- E. Social Class and Delinquency
 - 1. While self-report data do in fact show that kids in all levels of society and in all social classes commit crime, recent evidence suggest that serious crime is more prevalent in socially disorganized lower-class areas, whereas less serious offenses are spread more evenly throughout the social structure
 - 2. Community-level indicators of poverty and disorder are all associated with the most serious violent crimes, including homicide and assault
- F. Age and Delinquency
 - 1. It is generally believed that age is inversely related to criminality: as people age, the likelihood that they will commit crime declines
 - 2. Why Age Matters
 - a. One view is that the relationship is constant: regardless of race, sex, social class, intelligence, or any other social variable, people commit less crime as they age - referred to as the aging-out process
 - b. The probability that a person will become a persistent career criminal is influenced by a number of personal and environmental factors

- c. Evidence exists that age of onset of a delinquent career has an important effect on length: those who demonstrate antisocial tendencies at an early age are more likely to commit more crimes for a longer period of time (i.e., the developmental view of delinquency)
- 3. Why Does Crime Decline with Age?
 - a. Delinquency experts have developed a number of reasons for the aging-out process:
 - 1. Growing older means having to face the future
 - 2. With maturity comes the ability to resist the “quick fix” to their problems
 - 3. Maturation coincides with increased levels of responsibility
 - 4. Personalities can change with age
 - 5. Young adults become more aware of the risks that accompany crime
 - 6. Changes in human biology

VI. Chronic Offending: Careers in Delinquency

- A. Although most adolescents age out of crime, a relatively small number of youths begin to violate the law early in their lives and continue at a high rate well into adulthood
 - 1. These chronic offenders are responsible for a significant amount of all delinquent and criminal activity
 - 2. Chronic offenders can be distinguished from other delinquent youths, for instance, they begin their delinquent careers at a young age (under ten years), have serious and persistent brushes with the law, and may be excessively violent and destructive
 - 3. Most research shows that early, repeated delinquent activity is the best predictor of future adult criminality
- B. Delinquency in a Birth Cohort
 - 1. The concept of the chronic career offender is most closely associated with the research efforts of Marvin Wolfgang
 - 2. Wolfgang, Figlio and Sellin (1972) followed the delinquent careers of a cohort of 9,945 boys born in Philadelphia from birth until they reached age eighteen
 - 3. They found that:
 - a. about one-third of the boys (3,475) had some police contact
 - b. 54% (1,862) of the sample’s delinquent youths were repeat offenders
 - c. 627 boys labeled chronic recidivists were arrested 5 times or more
 - d. 6% of the total sample and responsible for 52% of all offenses
 - e. Two factors stood out as encouraging recidivism:
 - 1. seriousness of the original offense
 - 2. severity of the punishment
 - 4. Wolfgang and colleagues conducted a second cohort study with children born in 1958 and substantiated the finding that a relatively few chronic offenders are responsible for a significant portion of all delinquent acts
- C. Stability in Crime: From Delinquent to Criminal

1. One study that followed a 10 percent sample of the original Pennsylvania cohort to age thirty found that 70 percent of the “persistent” adult offenders had also been chronic juvenile offenders
 2. Severity of offending rather than frequency of criminal behavior had the greatest impact on later adult criminality
 3. Studies indicate that chronic juvenile offenders continue their law-violating careers as adults, a concept referred to as the continuity of crime
- D. What Causes Chronic Offending?
1. Research indicates that chronic offenders suffer from a number of personal, environmental, social, and developmental deficits
 2. Other research studies have found that involved in criminal activity, relatively low intellectual development, and parental drug involvement were key predictive factors for future chronic offending
- E. Policy Implications
1. Rather than simply asking why youths become delinquent or commit antisocial acts, theorists are charting the onset, escalation, frequency, and cessation of delinquent behavior
 2. One approach is to identify persistent offenders at the beginning of their offending careers and provide early treatment

VII. Juvenile Victimization

- A. Juveniles are also victims of crime
1. Once source of juvenile victimization data is the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS)
 - a. The NCVS is a household survey of victims of criminal behavior that measures the nature of the crime and the characteristics of victims
 - b. The annual sample size of the NCVS has been about forty thousand households, containing about seventy-five thousand individuals
- B. Victimization in the United States
1. The NCVS provides estimates of the total number of personal contact crimes and household victimizations
 2. The survey indicates that currently about 23 million criminal incidents occur each year
- C. Young Victims
1. NCVS data indicate that young people are much more likely to be the victims of crime than adults
 2. The chance of victimization declines with age
 3. Teens are more than fifteen times as likely to become victims than their grandparents
 4. Male teenagers have a significantly higher chance than females of becoming victims of violent crime
 - a. African American youth have a greater chance of becoming victims of violent crimes than European Americans youth
- C. The Victims and Their Criminals

1. In general teens tend to be victimized by their peers
2. People in almost all age groups who were victimized by groups of offenders identified their attackers as teenagers
3. The data also tell us that victimization is intraracial
4. Most teens are victimized by people with whom they are acquainted, and their victimization is more likely to occur during the day

CHAPTER SUMMARY

Official delinquency refers to youths who are arrested. Arrest data come from the FBI's Uniform Crime Report (UCR), an annual tally of crimes reported to police by citizens. The FBI gathers arrest statistics from local police departments. From these, it is possible to determine the number of youths who are arrested each year, along with their age, race, and gender. About two million youths are arrested annually. After a long increase in juvenile crime, there has been a decade decrease in the number of juveniles arrested for nonviolent and violent crimes.

Dissatisfaction with the UCR prompted criminologists to develop other means of measuring delinquent behavior. Self-reports are surveys in which subjects are asked to describe their misbehavior. Although self-reports indicate that many more crimes are committed than are known to the police, they also show that the delinquency rate is rather stable.

The factors that are believed to shape and control teen delinquency rates include gang activity, drug abuse, and teen gun ownership, abortion rates, economy, punishment, and social conditions. Delinquents are disproportionately male, although female delinquency rates are rising faster than those for males. Minority youth are overrepresented in the delinquency rate, especially for violent crime. Experts are split on the cause of racial differences. Some believe they are a function of system bias, others see them as representing actual differences in the delinquency rate.

Disagreement also exists over the relationship between class position and delinquency. Some hold that adolescent crime is a lower-class phenomenon, whereas others see it throughout the social structure. Problems in methodology have obscured the true class-crime relationship. However, official statistics indicate that lower-class youths are responsible for the most serious criminal acts. There is general agreement that delinquency rates decline with age. Some experts believe this phenomenon is universal, whereas others believe a small group of offenders persist in crime at a high rate. The age-crime relationship has spurred research on the nature of delinquency over the life course.

Delinquency data show the existence of a chronic persistent offender who begins his or her offending career early in life and persists as an adult. Wolfgang and his colleagues identified chronic offenders in a series of cohort studies conducted in Philadelphia. Ongoing research has identified the characteristics of persistent offenders as they mature, and both personality and social factors help us predict long-term offending patterns. The National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) is an annual national survey of the victims of crime that is conducted by agencies of the federal government. Teenagers are much more likely to become victims of crime than are people in other age groups.

KEY TERMS

Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI): Arm of the U.S. Department of Justice that investigates violations of federal law, gathers crime statistics, runs a comprehensive crime laboratory, and helps train local law enforcement officers.

Uniform Crime Report (UCR): Compiled by the FBI, the UCR is the most widely used source of national crime and delinquency statistics.

Part I offenses (also known as index crimes): Offenses including homicide and nonnegligent manslaughter, forcible rape, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, larceny, arson, and motor vehicle theft; recorded by local law enforcement officers, these crimes are tallied quarterly and sent to the FBI for inclusion in the UCR.

Part II offenses: All crimes other than Part I offenses; recorded by local law enforcement officers, arrests for these crimes are tallied quarterly and sent to the FBI for inclusion in the UCR.

Cleared cases: Crimes are cleared in one of two ways: (1) when at least one person is arrested, charged, or turned over to the court for prosecution; and (2) by exceptional means, when some element beyond police control precludes the physical arrest of an offender.

Disaggregated: Analyzing the relationship between two or more independent variables (such as murder convictions and death sentence) while controlling for the influence of a dependent variable (such as race).

Self-reports: Questionnaire or survey technique that asks subjects to reveal their own participation in delinquent or criminal acts.

Dark figures of crime: Incidents of crime and delinquency that go undetected by police.

Aging-out process (also known as desistance or spontaneous remission): The tendency for youths to reduce the frequency of their offending behavior as they age; aging out is thought to occur among all groups of offenders.

Age of onset: Age at which youths begin their delinquent careers; early onset is believed to be linked with chronic offending patterns.

Chronic juvenile offenders: Youths who have been arrested four or more times during their minority and perpetuate a striking majority of serious criminal acts; this small group, known as the “chronic 6 percent,” is believed to engage in a significant portion of all delinquent behavior; these youths do not age out of crime but continue their criminal behavior into adulthood.

Continuity of crime: The idea that chronic juvenile offenders are likely to continue violating the law as adults.

Victimization: The number of people who are victims of criminal acts; young teens are fifteen times more likely than older adults (age sixty-five and over) to be victims of crimes.