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San Diego

ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS

ETHNIC MINORITIES IN THE JUVENILE JUSTICE SYSTEM

JUNE 1982

San Diego
ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS
Suite 524 Security Pacific Plaza
1200 Third Avenue
San Diego, California 92101
(714) 236-5383

This report was financed with funds from the Office of Juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention.
OJJDP GRANT AWARD NO. J2803-5

Prepared by:
Susan Pennell, Director, Criminal Justice Evaluation Unit
Christine Curtis, Criminal Justice Evaluator

Research Aides:
Donna Walko-Frankovic
Lisa Jackson

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Preface

The San Diego Regional Criminal Justice Planning Board authorized the Criminal Justice Evaluation Unit of the San Diego Association of Governments to address the issue of minority representation in the juvenile justice system.

The Executive Summary of this report presents issues, conclusions, and recommendations relevant to the questions raised by the Planning Board. An in-depth discussion of minority involvement in the system and the factors that influence decisions at different intervention points follows the summary.

The assistance and cooperation of personnel in the following agencies toward this research effort is gratefully acknowledged: all law enforcement departments, the Probation Department, the juvenile division of the District Attorney's Office, Juvenile Court, San Diego City Data Processing Corporation, Department of Social Services, defense attorneys, and administrators of juvenile service agencies.

Special assistance in statistical analysis was provided by Jeff Tayman, San Diego Association of Governments.

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Executive Summary

NARRATIVE

As a result of the priority development process in 1979, the San Diego Regional Criminal Justice Planning Board (RCJPB) determined that the high proportion of minorities (non-whites/Anglos) in the juvenile justice system was a significant issue in this region. This research was funded to address minority youth imbalance in the system. The terms overrepresentation or imbalance are defined as proportions that exceed what would be expected given the number of minority youth in the general population. This study examined explanations for the imbalance, the extent to which it exists at different decision levels, and the influence of the juvenile justice system as a potential contributing factor.

Methodological procedures included: an analysis of official statistics concerning youth involvement in serious delinquent acts (homicide, rape, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, grand theft, and auto theft); a case tracking study comparison of 614 white and minority juveniles from initial contact to final disposition; surveys of 810 law enforcement officers in the region, 235 probation officers, six juvenile court judges and referees, eight deputy district attorneys, 18 defense attorneys, and 21 administrators of juvenile service agencies; and a review of relevant research.

(Definitions of terms used in this report are presented on page 9.)

GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

Statistical analysis suggests that critical decisions in the juvenile justice process concerning serious offenders are based on legal factors such as seriousness of offense and prior delinquent history rather than ethnicity of the juvenile. Decisions regarding lesser offenses and subtle differences relative to the processing of juveniles could not be measured within the scope of this study. However, opinion surveys of practitioners suggest the possibility of differential treatment in misdemeanor cases. Perceptions of community leaders about treatment of minorities differ substantially from those of system personnel.

The initial involvement of minority youth in the justice system is associated with socioeconomic conditions, cultural differences and institutional racism, which precede further processing in the system. Juvenile justice administrators should be sensitive to these conditions and ensure that personnel do not treat juveniles differently because of their race.

ISSUE 1: TO WHAT EXTENT ARE MINORITY YOUTH OVERREPRESENTED IN THE JUVENILE JUSTICE SYSTEM?

Conclusion

Official statistics indicate that minority youth are overrepresented at all decision levels in the juvenile justice system. The proportion of minorities increases from initial contact (arrest) to final disposition (e.g., institutionalization), while the percentage of white youth declines at each succeeding level. Victimization surveys and a review of reported crime cases which identified suspects substantiate the arrest statistics and show minority youth involved in a higher proportion of serious crimes than white youth.

Factors such as racism, socioeconomic conditions, high crime rates in minority communities, and increased police coverage in these areas interact in a complex manner. The combination of these factors increases the likelihood of minority youth being arrested and their subsequent processing through the juvenile justice system.

Findings

1. Minority youth arrested represent only 7% of the total population of minority juveniles in San Diego County (1981); therefore, most minority youth were not arrested.

2. In 1981, minority youth represented 37% of all youth arrested, yet reflected 25% of the general population of youth ages 5-17. The actual extent of overrepresentation cannot be determined because in the 1980 Census Hispanics could consider themselves in the white category.

3. The percentage of minorities arrested is greater for more serious offenses. They reflected 44% of all youth contacted for felonies. When arrest data are categorized by major felony offenses, minority youth represented 42% of those arrested for property crimes (burglary, grand theft, auto theft) and 65% of the person crime arrests (homicide, rape, robbery, assault) in 1981.[1]

4. National victimization survey data (1973-77) revealed that black juveniles show a higher rate of offending than white youth. These data are limited to the perceptions of victims.

5. An analysis was conducted of 5,290 reports of serious crimes with juvenile suspects in the San Diego region. Minority youth were identified by victims as suspects in 54% of the cases. This is higher than their proportion in the arrest statistics.

[1]The issue of the system response to violent juvenile offenders is addressed in another report by the authors entitled Juvenile Violence and Gang-Related Crime (1982).

6. Examination of calls for service to the San Diego Police Department showed a statistically significant correlation between reported violent crimes and areas with a relatively high proportion of minority population. From July through December, 1981, more violent crimes were reported in these areas than in communities with a higher proportion of white population.

7. Statistics (1981) from the State Bureau of Criminal Statistics (BCS) indicate that the proportion of San Diego minority youth increases at each level of the juvenile justice process: 38% of all youth referred to probation; 42% of juveniles with petitions filed; 59% of youth remanded to adult court; and 59% of juveniles committed to the California Youth Authority.

8. Based on opinion survey data, perceptions of juvenile justice personnel differ in regard to reasons for minority youth overrepresentation in the system. Economic and social factors (cultural differences, education) were most frequently mentioned as affecting minority involvement in crime by probation staff (36%), deputy district attorneys (50%), and judges/referees (83%). Defense attorneys (44%) and juvenile service providers (50%) perceived that prejudice and discrimination most likely contribute to minority imbalance. The factor most frequently mentioned by the police (39%) was that minority youth commit more crimes.

9. Considerable research suggests that the involvement of minority youth in crime is associated with conditions that preclude their full participation in the mainstream of society. Discrimination (real or perceived) in terms of employment and education can contribute to feelings of anger and frustration, which in turn can lead to negative forms of behavior.

ISSUE 2: WHAT FACTORS INFLUENCE DECISION-MAKING AT DIFFERENT INTERVENTION LEVELS, e.g., ARREST, REFERRAL TO PROBATION, FILING OF A PETITION, INCARCERATION?

ISSUE 2A: TO WHAT EXTENT DOES THE JUVENILE JUSTICE SYSTEM CONTRIBUTE TO/INFLUENCE IMBALANCE?

Conclusion

Results obtained through multiple regression analysis indicate that offense seriousness and prior delinquent history are primary considerations in decisions concerning serious offenders in the juvenile justice system. Although minority juveniles are disproportionately reflected in the decision levels, the variation is due to the legal factors rather than the ethnicity of the juvenile in major felony cases. These findings were supported by opinion surveys of criminal justice personnel and by a review of similar research. However, survey results indicate that minority youth may be treated differently with regard to less serious offenses. This issue requires further study. A small proportion of criminal justice personnel believe that, overall, minority youth are

treated more severely by justice personnel because of prejudicial attitudes and discriminatory behavior.

Justice personnel and service providers have differing perceptions regarding treatment of minority youth by the juvenile justice system. This suggests a need for increased communication to enhance understanding between the community and system practitioners.

Findings

Case study of 614 juveniles from arrest to final disposition:

1. In the case tracking study, minority youth were more likely to be arrested for more serious offenses, affiliated with gangs, and have more extensive prior delinquent histories (e.g., wards at intake, prior true findings) than their white counterparts.

2. Of those juveniles identified as gang members (54), 98% were minority youth (53).

3. When prior arrests were examined by type of offense, 22% of the minority youth had been arrested for violent offenses compared to 6% of the white juveniles.

4. All prior arrests were categorized by seriousness level based on type and number of offenses committed. Twenty-eight percent (28%) of the arrests of minorities were in the high seriousness level in contrast to 15% of white youth in the same category.

5. The majority of both racial groups were not under the jurisdiction (wards) of the court (e.g., on probation) at the time of the arrest identified in the case study. However, 30% of the minority youth were current wards when arrested compared to 19% of the white juveniles.

6. White and minority offenders had similar problems identified by probation officers, e.g., other offenses, negative peer associations, poor school attendance, and disruptive influences in the home. There was a difference, however, in the use of weapons and/or injury to the victim with regard to offenses committed. Cases in which minority youth were involved revealed 40% that included weapons/injury compared to 29% of the cases of white youth.

7. Examination of seven intervention points (see findings 8-12) indicated that, for serious offenses, ethnicity of juveniles was not statistically related to decisions by juvenile justice personnel.

8. Based on results of multiple regression analysis, these factors explained decisions by police to place youth in Juvenile Hall: seriousness score of total prior arrests; age of juvenile; arrest charge; sex of juvenile; and gang affiliation.

9. The decision by law enforcement to refer a juvenile to probation is influenced by age of the minor and seriousness of the arrest charge.

10. Probation decisions included the decision to file a petition and recommendations to the court concerning final disposition. Results indicate that the factors of prior arrest history and placement in Juvenile Hall after arrest are related to decisions for filing a petition. Prior history and offense seriousness are the critical factors that influence the recommendation to the court as indicated by charge on petition, status at intake (ward/non-ward), and weapon use or injury to victim.

11. With regard to detention by the court prior to adjudication, the factors of parent employment, seriousness of charges on the petition, placement in Juvenile Hall by law enforcement and prior arrests/contacts were most likely to affect decisions to detain a juvenile.

12. Primary factors in the court disposition decision are also offense seriousness and prior history. These are reflected in the regression equation in terms of weapons use or injury to the victim, charges on the petition, prior offenses and wardship status.

13. A review of the literature indicated that, in most studies, ethnicity was not a factor in decisions made by the court. However, other studies have shown an association between race and court disposition. The present study differs from others reviewed in that seven decision points in the juvenile justice process were examined rather than court disposition only. The fact that similar key factors were considered at each level lends support to the contention that ethnicity is not a contributing factor in justice decisions with regard to serious offenders.

Survey of Practitioners:

14. Opinion survey responses of over 1,000 individuals in the justice system indicated that factors identified in the case study were consistent with practitioners' perceptions of which factors influence their decisions, e.g., to arrest, refer to probation, file petition, or place out-of-home. Ethnicity as a contributing factor was mentioned by 2% or less of all respondents.

15. A juvenile's attitude may play a more critical role in police decisions than could be determined in this study. Most police perceive the attitude of youth toward police as negative. Minority youth were viewed as having a fair/bad attitude by 84% of the officers compared to 52% who perceived white youth with similar attitudes.

16. The majority of criminal justice personnel (60%) believe that the imbalance of minorities in the system can lead to negative attitudes toward minorities by criminal justice personnel. But the link between attitude and occupational behavior is difficult to discern.

17. System personnel differed in their perceptions of differential (more severe) treatment toward minorities by staff in justice agencies. The police were more frequently mentioned by other personnel as treating minorities differently (29%). The variation in responses ranged from 24% of the police to 72% of the defense attorneys perceiving that police often treat minority youth differently. With the exception of juvenile service providers, less than 25% of all other agency respondents felt that probation, district attorney, and court personnel often behave differently toward minorities. Over half of the service providers perceived all justice staff as involved in differential treatment of minority youth.

18. Nineteen percent (19%) of the respondents felt that misdemeanor acts committed by minorities are taken more seriously than similar acts committed by white youth. The range of responses was from 13% (district attorneys) to 69% (service providers). Nine percent (9%) of all respondents perceived differential treatment with regard to felony offenses.

19. Twenty-eight percent (28%) of the probation officers indicated that minority youth are accorded more severe treatment than white juveniles.

20. Reasons given by probation officers for the high proportion of minorities in juvenile hall included: minorities commit more crimes (25%), racial discrimination (20%), minority involvement in violent crimes (14%), and economic factors (14%).

21. Over one-third of all survey respondents (36%) felt that a juvenile's inability to speak English can negatively affect processing through the system. Just over one-half of those surveyed (51%) said that the available bilingual staff is sufficient to meet the needs of non-English speaking youth and their families.

22. The majority (57%) of the police indicated that they seldom, or never, hear racial slurs when officers talk to minority juveniles. For probation officers, 69% had the same response. Thirty-two percent (32%) of the police and 21% of the probation respondents noted that racial slurs were sometimes heard. Frequent occurrence of racial slurs in the Police and Probation Departments was perceived by a small percentage of respondents (12% of police, 9% of probation).

ISSUE 3: WHAT STRATEGIES SHOULD BE IMPLEMENTED TO ADDRESS THE PROBLEMS IDENTIFIED?

Conclusion

The juvenile justice system cannot be totally accountable for the underlying social conditions that precede minority involvement in the system. However, juvenile justice personnel have an obligation to ensure that youth are not treated differently because of their race. Intensive cultural awareness training should take place at all levels in the juvenile justice system, e.g., administrators as well as line personnel. Policy guidelines should be developed that define appropriate

discipline measures to be carried out when personnel behave in an unacceptable manner toward minorities.

Findings

1. Surveys of police officers indicated that over one-third of the officers (36%) received academy training relative to cultural awareness. Almost one-half (47%) said their training was not helpful because classroom training was not considered adequate preparation for field work.

2. The San Diego Regional Law Enforcement Academy currently does not have cultural/ethnic awareness courses in the curriculum.

3. One-quarter of the officers (25%) believe that there is a need for their departments to develop responsive, non-discriminatory police practices.

4. With the exception of the district attorneys and the judges/referees, the majority of all personnel feel there is a need for cultural awareness training in their departments. Over 75% of the service providers indicated that all system personnel should have training.

5. Research suggests that cultural differences contribute to differential responses to legal mechanisms. Sensitivity to, and understanding of, the differences are imperative if justice personnel are to bear their responsibility for addressing minority involvement in the system.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. *Research should be conducted to explore the possibility that misdemeanor offenses committed by minority youth are treated more seriously by the juvenile justice system than similar offenses committed by white youth.*

2. *Administrators in juvenile justice agencies should ensure that all personnel are cognizant of cultural/ethnic differences. Awareness levels can be increased by training in workshops/seminars with input regarding nature and scope by minority community leaders and professionals in the educational system.*

3. *Administrators in all justice agencies (police, probation, district attorney, courts) should encourage personnel to be sensitive to the potential for differential handling of juveniles. Policy guidelines should be reviewed to ensure that they incorporate specific discipline measures to inform personnel that prejudicial statements and/or discriminatory behavior will not be accepted. In the police agencies, arrests of juveniles should be carefully screened to reduce the potential for "attitude" arrests.*

4. *Law enforcement administrators in the region should expedite the reinstitution of cultural awareness training in the regional police academy. The training should be intensive in terms of scope and nature, (e.g., more than 2-3 hours, instruction in various locations in the*

community as well as the classroom setting, role-playing techniques). This training should also be incorporated in field training.

5. *Impacting the behavior of delinquent youth and system personnel requires a coordinated effort. Steps should be taken to improve mutual understanding of the system and community roles with regard to youth. This could be accomplished by periodic meetings/workshops attended by key juvenile justice personnel and members of the community. Recent seminars sponsored by the Black Federation and the Southeast Criminal Justice Coalition represent a positive step in this direction.*

6. *The extent to which non-English speaking juveniles are handled differently due to language barriers should be further explored at each level, e.g., police, probation, courts. Personnel should be instructed to ensure that bilingual staff is available when needed and this function is performed to the satisfaction of the juvenile and his/her family.*

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Institutional Racism

Refers to "a society that has historically been structured economically, politically, and socially in a way that the minority community has encountered severe employment and educational discrimination, political domination, economic exploitation and excessive legal constraints."[2]

Adult Court Remand

A juvenile, 16 or 17 years of age, may be transferred (remanded) to adult court if the minor is deemed not amenable to treatment available to the juvenile court.

Disposition (Court)

The disposition in juvenile court is similar to sentencing in the adult court system. Disposition alternatives include commitment to California Youth Authority (a state institution), placement in local county or private school facilities, placement in a foster home, short-term placement in Juvenile Hall, or probation.

Juvenile

Juvenile court law defines a juvenile as 17 years of age or younger.

Juvenile Contact

A contact is similar to an arrest for an adult. A juvenile contact report, rather than an arrest report, is completed by the law enforcement officer.

Petition

A petition is similar to filing a complaint in the adult court system. The petition lists the formal charges against the juvenile to be considered by the court.

Probation Referral

A law enforcement agency may refer a juvenile case to probation for further processing. The probation officer may handle a case informally or request that the deputy district attorney file a petition with the juvenile court.

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[2]Reasons, Charles and Jack Kykendall, Editors, Race, Crime, and Justice, Santa Monica: Goodyear, 1972.

True Finding

If a juvenile either admits involvement in an offense, or the court determines the juvenile was involved based on evidence presented, a true finding is made. This is similar to a guilty verdict in adult court.

Wardship

If the court finds that a juvenile has violated a statute(s), the juvenile can be declared a ward of the court. The court assumes guardianship of the juvenile for a specified period of time.

CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

Introduction

The issue of minority youth in the juvenile justice system was designated as a priority by the San Diego Regional Criminal Justice Planning Board in 1979. This research project was funded to address minority imbalance in the system. The terms overrepresentation and imbalance are used interchangeably and are defined as proportions that exceed what would be expected given the number of minority youth in the general population. (The term "minority" describes youth who are non-white and/or non-Anglo.) The reasons for the imbalance, the extent to which it exists at different levels of the system, and the influence of the juvenile justice system as a potential contributing factor were the areas targeted for critical examination.[3]

The following questions are addressed in this report.

1. To what extent are minority youth overrepresented in the juvenile justice system?

2. What factors influence decision-making at different intervention levels, e.g., arrest, referral to probation, filing of a petition, incarceration?

3. To what extent does the juvenile justice system contribute to/ influence imbalance?

4. What strategies should be implemented to address the problems identified?

The methodology employed to examine these issues includes:

1. Analysis of official statistics comparing white and minority juveniles' involvement in crime and the justice system.

2. A case tracking study of 614 San Diego juveniles from arrest to final disposition.

3. Surveys of 810 law enforcement officers representing all local police jurisdictions, 235 probation officers in the juvenile services division, six juvenile court judges and referees, eight deputy district attorneys, 18 defense attorneys, and 21 administrators of juvenile service agencies.

4. Review of pertinent research and literature.

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[3]The issue of the system response to violent juvenile offenders is addressed in another study by the authors entitled Juvenile Violence and Gang-Related Crime (1982).

Before presenting the research findings, it may be beneficial to review the current statutes applicable to juveniles and describe the juvenile justice process in San Diego County.

CURRENT STATUTES

Juvenile law in California is set forth in the Welfare and Institution Codes (W&I). The purpose of juvenile law, as stated in Section 202 W&I, is twofold:

1. To secure care and guidance for each minor under jurisdiction of the court; and

2. to protect the public from the consequences of criminal activity.

Delinquent acts are defined under Sections 601 and 602 W&I. Section 601 W&I refers to status offenses which are crimes when committed by minors (e.g., truancy, runaway, curfew and incorrigibility). Section 602 W&I refers to law violations by minors of state, federal or local statutes defining crimes. This report deals with specific law violations which fall under Section 602 W&I. These are felony crimes of homicide, rape, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, grand theft and motor vehicle theft.

The juvenile court has original jurisdiction over minors 17 years or under. Jurisdiction can be transferred to the adult court for juveniles 16 and older who are found to be unfit for juvenile court (i.e., not amenable to the care, treatment and training programs available through the facilities of the juvenile court - Section 707 W&I).

JUVENILE COURT PROCESS

Proceedings at the juvenile level are not criminal and judging a minor to be a ward of the court is not deemed a conviction per Section 203 W&I. As a result, juvenile court uses its own terminology for events similar to those that occur in adult criminal courts. For example, a juvenile is not found guilty of an offense, but rather a true finding is made by the court. Such terms will be referenced and explained throughout the discussion of the juvenile court process.

Law Enforcement

Initiation into the juvenile justice system for 601 and 602 W&I offenders begins with contact by law enforcement. A contact is similar to an arrest for an adult and the terms are used interchangeably in this report. The first decision made by law enforcement personnel after arrest is whether to place the minor in Juvenile Hall or release to the parents. (626 W&I) The criteria for detention by probation are stated in Section 628 W&I:

1. The minor has no parent or guardian willing to exercise proper care or control.

2. The minor is destitute with no suitable home.

3. The minor has a home which is unfit.

4. The minor or the person or property of another requires protection.

5. The minor is likely to flee the jurisdiction.

6. The minor has violated a court order.

7. The minor is physically dangerous to the public due to a physical or mental deficiency or disorder.

The law enforcement officer may refer the case to probation for further processing or the juvenile can be treated informally. In some jurisdictions, informal disposition includes referrals to law enforcement diversion programs or an outside community-based agency.

Probation

Referrals to probation are handled by an intake officer who determines if a petition will be requested from the District Attorney's office. A petition is similar to filing a complaint in the adult court system. The petition must be filed within 48 hours (two judicial days) for juveniles in custody and 21 days for "paper" referrals (non-custody cases - 653 W&I).

Other disposition alternatives include counseling by the intake officer and closing the case or informal supervision, which is a six-month period of supervision authorized by probation.

Three units within the Probation Department Juvenile Services Division are involved in the decision-making process in court cases. The investigation unit prepares an in-depth investigation of the juvenile's background and submits a social study to the court which includes recommendations regarding case disposition. The placement unit decides what institutional setting is appropriate for the minor if the court orders placement in a 24-hour school. Finally, the supervision unit actually supervises minors placed on probation. This unit also handles subsequent referrals for juvenile wards of the court who commit additional offenses during the period they are under the jurisdiction of the court.

District Attorney

The decision to file a petition is shared by the District Attorney and the Probation Department. If the probation officer decides that a juvenile should be brought before the court, the officer requests a petition from the prosecuting attorney (Section 653 W&I). If the deputy district attorney determines that the case is provable, a petition is filed. In San Diego County, felony cases are initially screened by the District Attorney's office for provability, whereas misdemeanors are first reviewed by probation before submitting them to the prosecutor. Probation's decision not to request a petition can be appealed by the victim or police agency (655 W&I). With the exception of a shared responsibility for filing a petition, the role of the deputy district attorney's office is similar to the adversary system in adult court.

Courts

At the initial hearing for any juvenile, the matter of court appointed counsel is decided. Section 634 W&I states that if a minor or his/her parents desire counsel, but cannot afford it, the court may appoint a defense attorney. If a juvenile appears without counsel, the court must appoint an attorney unless there is an intelligent waiver (by the minor) of the right to counsel.

Detention Hearing. A juvenile in custody must be brought before a judge or referee of the juvenile court to determine if the minor will be detained further. This occurs within one judicial day of the filing of a petition (632 W&I). Subsequently, the issue of detention can be reevaluated at other court appearances.

Fitness Hearing. The prosecuting attorney may move to have a 16 or 17 year old declared unfit for juvenile court based on the following criteria:

1. The degree of criminal sophistication exhibited by the minor.
2. Whether the minor can be rehabilitated prior to the expiration of the juvenile court's jurisdiction.
3. The minor's previous delinquent history.
4. Success of previous attempts by the juvenile court to rehabilitate the minor.
5. The circumstances and gravity of the offense alleged to have been committed by the minor. (707 W&I)

The juvenile is presumed fit for juvenile court and has to be proven otherwise, except when the minor has been charged with one of 16 major offenses. In the latter case, the juvenile is presumed unfit unless there are extenuating or mitigating circumstances.

Readiness Hearing. The first court appearance for most non-custody cases is the readiness hearing, unless a fitness hearing has been required. At the readiness hearing, the court determines whether a final disposition of a case can be reached without a full trial or adjudication hearing. The juvenile at this time may plead no contest or "admit" to some or all of the charges (similar to a guilty plea). This admission is considered a true finding by the court and the disposition (sentencing) either occurs at the readiness or a subsequent disposition hearing. If the case is not settled, a date is set for the adjudication hearing. The readiness hearing is not mandated by statute and, therefore, is not used in all jurisdictions.

Adjudication Hearing. The adjudication hearing is similar to a trial. The deputy district attorney presents evidence in support of the petition. The minor has most of the same constitutional and statutory rights as in an adult criminal trial (e.g., right against self-incrimination, confrontation of witnesses, etc.) except the right to a jury trial. At this hearing, the petition is either found to be true or dismissed.

Dispositional Hearing. At the dispositional hearing the judge or referee decides what alternatives are most appropriate for the juvenile based on information and recommendations supplied by the probation officer in the social study as well as recommendations of the deputy district attorney and possibly defense counsel. The court may retain jurisdiction over the minor by declaring the juvenile a ward of the court. This places the court in the role of the minor's guardian during the period of wardship. Disposition options include:

1. Commitment to California Youth Authority (CYA).
2. Placement in a County camp facility (Rancho del Rayo) or Girl's Rehabilitation Facility.
3. Placement in a 24-hour school (residential setting) or foster home.
4. Short-term placement in Juvenile Hall.
5. Return home on probation either with or without wardship. Probation may include conditions such as restitution, court costs and work projects.

CHAPTER 2
YOUTH INVOLVEMENT IN THE JUVENILE JUSTICE SYSTEM

Youth Involvement in the Juvenile Justice System

SUMMARY

Examination of juvenile arrests for all offenses reveals that the number of minority youth involved in arrest statistics is greater than their proportion in the general population (a difference of 12%). However, since the 1980 Census allowed Hispanics to consider themselves in the white category, the extent of actual imbalance in the arrest figures cannot be determined. The percentage of arrests for serious crimes in which minorities are involved is considerably higher (46%) than their proportion in the general population (25%). These arrest data are supported by victimization survey data and a sample of reported crime cases in which suspects were identified by race/ethnicity.

As juveniles are processed through the system, the proportion of minority youth increases at each decision-making level. Of all San Diego youth committed to the California Youth Authority in 1981, 59% were ethnic minorities. Factors contributing to minority imbalance may include the interactive effects of institutional racism, socioeconomic conditions, high crime rates in minority communities, and more police coverage in these areas. The combination of these factors increases the likelihood of minority youth arrested for particular types of offenses and their subsequent processing in the juvenile justice system.

DISCUSSION

It should be noted at the outset that, based on the official arrest statistics, the majority of ethnic minority youth are not involved in known criminal activity. The arrest figures presented here reflect only 7% of the total minority youth population (ages 5-17) in San Diego County.

The statistics examined in this section include arrest figures, victimization survey data, a sample of reported crime cases, and disposition information at the police, probation, and juvenile court levels. The arrest and disposition data were obtained from the Bureau of Criminal Statistics (BCS) in Sacramento.

ARREST DATA

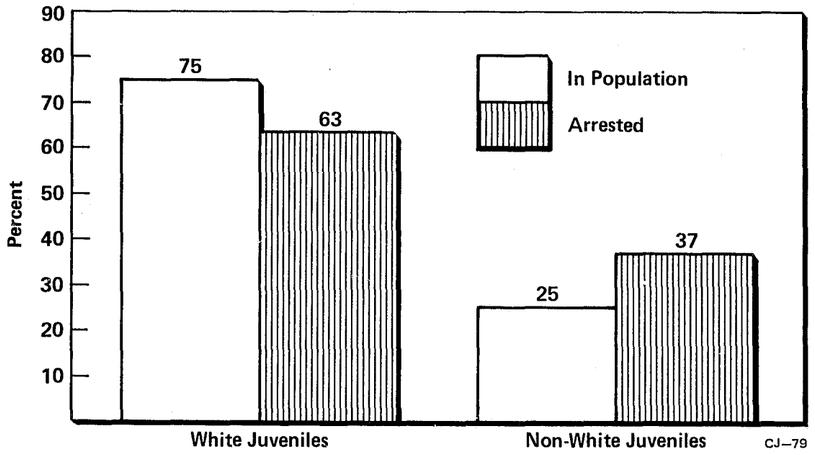
The arrest of an individual represents the first potential official involvement in the criminal justice system. Arrest statistics are used here as one indicator of criminal activity, but limitations of

these data are recognized. First, they do not accurately represent the volume and nature of all criminal acts. Also, the statistics are affected by definitions of crimes and police discretion in terms of who gets arrested for which crimes. Notwithstanding these qualifications, arrest figures are the primary official indicator available. The reliability of these figures presumably increases for certain types of crimes, e.g., serious offenses. These offenses are the focus of this report, although initial statistics will present an overview of all arrests.

Trend data (1977-1981) are presented for arrests only. Analysis of official dispositions over five years showed no significant differences in minority proportions so these data are shown only for 1981. Also, other than for the arrest figures, comparisons are between white/Anglo and non-white juveniles rather than a separate breakdown for each racial/ethnic group. The disposition information was examined by specific racial groups and again no substantial differences among racial groups were noted over the five-year period.

Figure 1 shows that minorities are overrepresented in the arrest statistics compared to their proportion in the general population; 25% of the population and 37% of those arrested. However, the 1980 Census figure of 25% minority population between ages 5-17 may be an underestimate because some Hispanics placed themselves in the white racial category. Thus, the actual extent of minority overrepresentation in arrest figures cannot be determined.

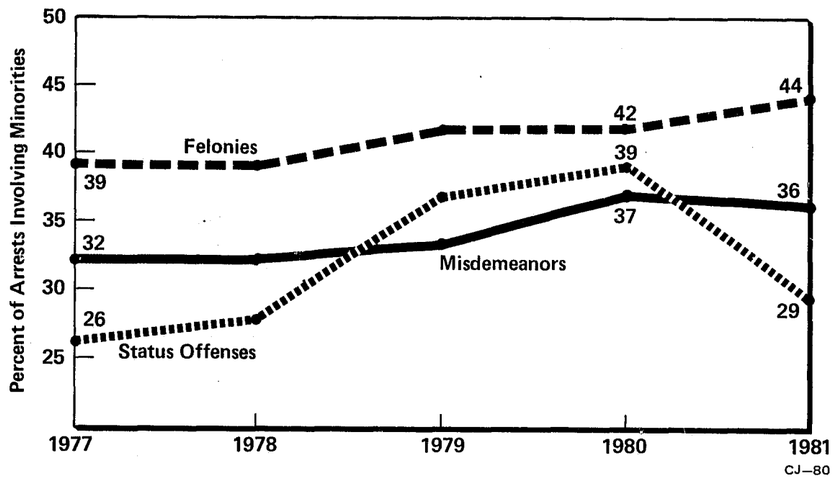
FIGURE 1
PERCENTAGE OF WHITE AND MINORITY YOUTH
IN TOTAL JUVENILE ARREST
AND POPULATION STATISTICS
SAN DIEGO COUNTY, 1981



In 1981, a total of 23,818 juveniles were arrested in San Diego County. The percentage breakdown by racial category is as follows: White 63%, Hispanic 22%, Black 12%, and other minorities 4%.

When the arrest figures are examined by types of offenses, it is apparent that the proportion of minorities arrested differs according to the crime and the percentage of arrests involving minorities increases with the seriousness of offense. Figures 2 and 3 provide a graphic display of the proportion of minority involvement in types of arrests.

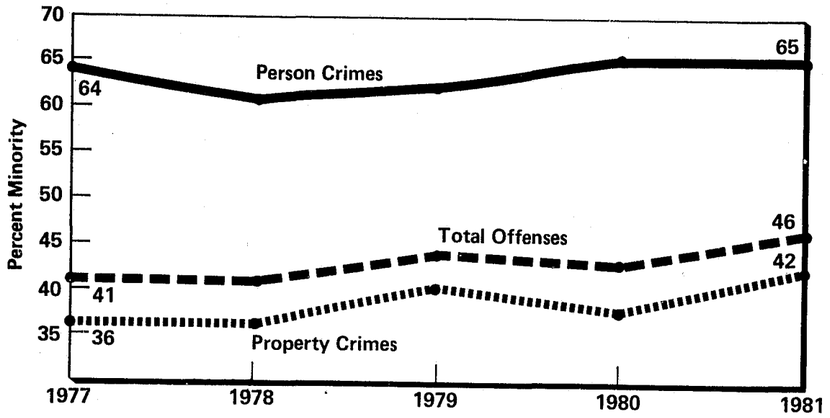
FIGURE 2
PERCENT DISTRIBUTION OF ARRESTS
OF ETHNIC MINORITY JUVENILES
BY OFFENSE
SAN DIEGO COUNTY, 1977—1981



In 1981, the proportion of minorities to all juveniles arrested for felonies was higher (44%) than their proportion for lesser offenses, e.g., misdemeanor (36%) and status offenses (29%). The proportion of arrests in which minorities were involved has increased in all three offense categories since 1977.

Since the percentage of arrests involving minorities was greatest in the felony category, these arrests were examined in more detail. Of all juveniles arrested for felonies, 79% were in the major offense categories as defined by the Bureau of Criminal Justice Statistics. These crimes include willful homicide, rape, robbery, assault, burglary, grand theft, and motor vehicle theft. In 1981, ethnic minorities represented 46% of all arrests for these crimes (Figure 3). When these crimes are categorized in terms of person and property crimes, the data show minorities representing 42% of all juveniles arrested for property crimes and 65% of the person crime arrests. Examining these arrests by type of offense (Figure 4) shows that minority juveniles are overrepresented in each category.

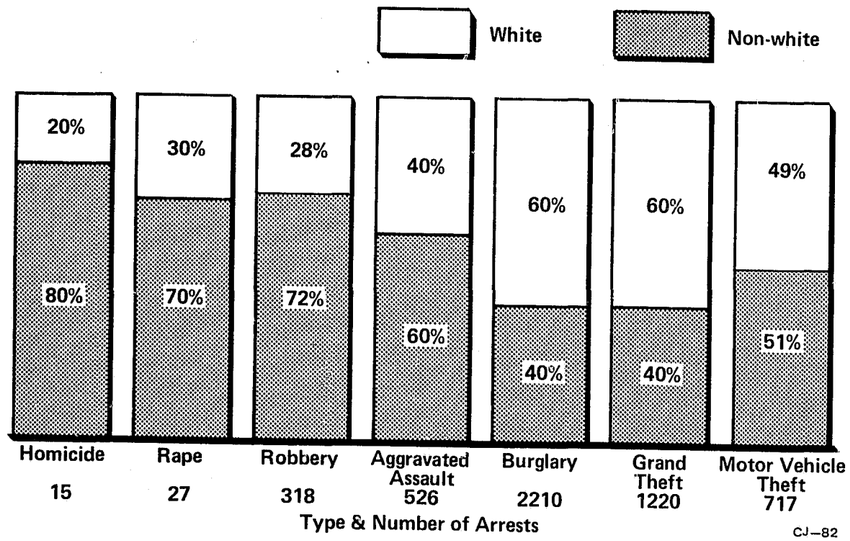
FIGURE 3
PERCENTAGE OF ARRESTS INVOLVING ETHNIC MINORITY YOUTH
FOR MAJOR FELONY OFFENSES*
SAN DIEGO COUNTY, 1977–1981



*Includes willful homicide, rape, robbery, assault, burglary, grand theft and motor vehicle theft.

CJ–81

FIGURE 4
PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF FELONY JUVENILE ARRESTS
BY OFFENSE AND ETHNICITY
SAN DIEGO COUNTY, 1981



CJ–82

In sum, when overall arrests are considered, the proportion of minority youth exceeds their proportion in the general population. When arrests for serious offenses are examined, the minority percentage increases considerably.

To supplement the results of the arrest statistics, other data sources were examined.

INVOLVEMENT IN DELINQUENT ACTIVITY

Although the issue at hand is minority representation in arrest statistics, the implication presumed by many is that minority overrepresentation is a result of the crimes committed by these juveniles. An analysis of identified suspects in reported major crimes in the City of San Diego, victimization survey data and self-report studies was undertaken to explore this assumption and supplement the official arrest statistics.

Suspects in Reported Crimes

Crime reports recorded in the County of San Diego during a one-year period (May 1981 - April 1982) were examined to determine the ethnicity of the suspects identified by victims/witnesses. Of 5,290 reports of serious offenses with juveniles as suspects, minority youth were considered suspects in 54% of the cases. This figure is 8% higher than the proportion of minorities reflected in arrest statistics for the same types of offenses (46%).

Victimization Survey Data

Victimization data are collected by the U.S. Bureau of Census for the Department of Justice as a continuing effort to determine the nature and extent of criminal victimizations experienced by citizens. The victimization survey data are not without limitations, e.g., victims' perceptions are the data source so accuracy may be affected and only offenses in which the victim sees the suspect are included. These crimes are rape, robbery, assault, and personal larceny. Despite these qualifications, the trend data available from victimization surveys add another dimension to official statistics because they include crimes not reported to police.

A special study (Hindelang and McDermott, 1977) shows results similar to local arrest statistics in that blacks show a rate of offending five times that of whites. Data were not available for Hispanics.

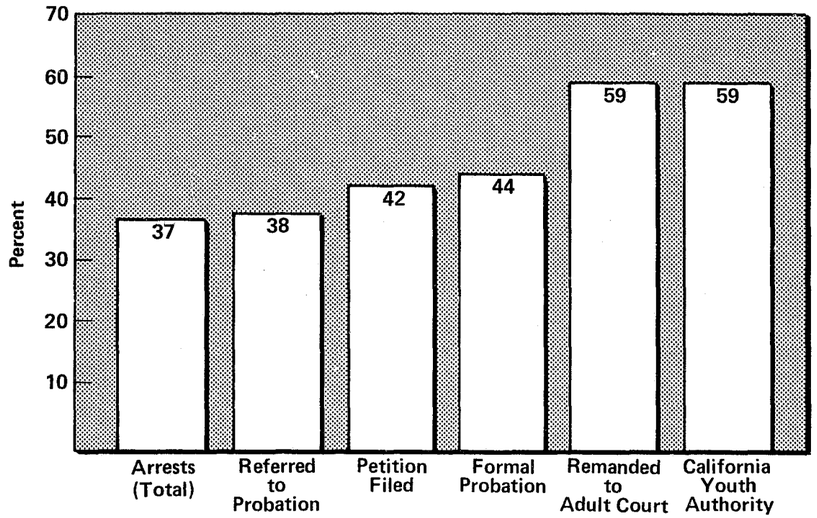
Self-Report Studies

An additional source for offender characteristics is the self-report studies in which researchers ask juveniles about their involvement in criminal activity. These data also indicate reliability problems and the results of various studies are conflicting. Some research indicates that whites and non-whites commit crimes equally, whereas other studies suggest that minorities commit a higher proportion of crimes.

DISPOSITION OF ARRESTED MINORITY JUVENILES

The following section examines the proportion of minorities involved at decision-making levels by police, probation, and the juvenile court. The question examined is: As minority youth enter the system by way of arrest, does their proportion increase at each succeeding level? Figure 5 reveals that as minority youth are processed through the system, their percentages do increase from the initial arrest proportion. Only those dispositions that reflect further processing in the system are included, e.g., probation referral, filing of a petition, etc.

FIGURE 5
PERCENT DISTRIBUTION OF MINORITY YOUTH DISPOSITIONS
SAN DIEGO COUNTY, 1981



DATA SOURCE: Bureau of Criminal Statistics, Sacramento.

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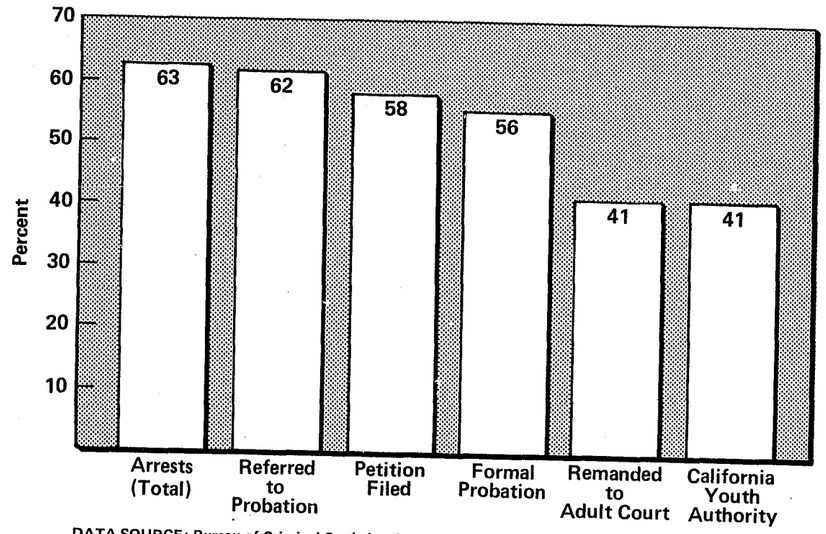
FIGURE 6
PERCENT DISTRIBUTION WHITE YOUTH DISPOSITIONS
SAN DIEGO COUNTY, 1981



DATA SOURCE: Bureau of Criminal Statistics, Sacramento.

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The proportion of minority youth involved at different levels can be examined in terms of the progress of minority or white juveniles through the system:

- As minority youth are processed through the system, their proportion continues to increase at each decision-making level. Although non-white youth represent 37% of all juveniles arrested, they reflect 59% of the juveniles remanded to adult court and 59% of those committed to the California Youth Authority. (Figure 5)

- Figure 6 shows the progressive proportion of white youth involved in the same decision-making levels. As the proportion of minority youth increases at each level, the proportion of white youth shows a decline from arrest to final disposition. White youth represent 63% of all juveniles arrested, but 41% of all juveniles remanded to adult court and committed to the California Youth Authority.

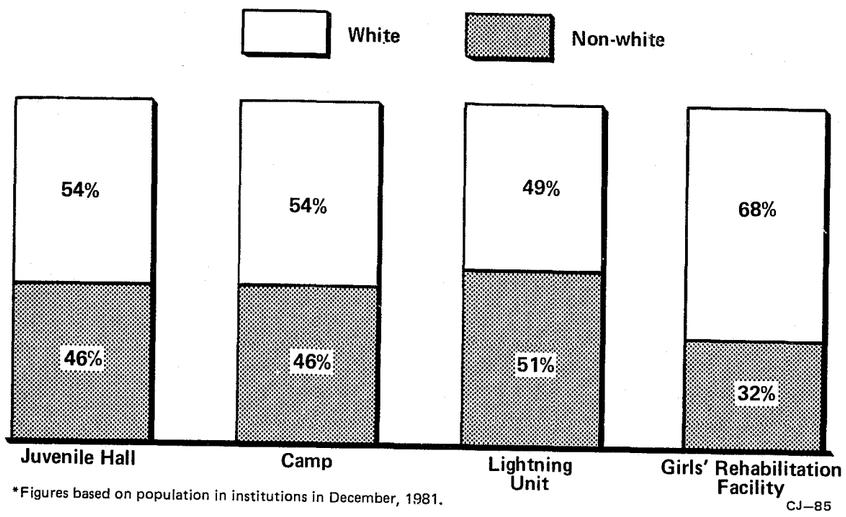
COMMITMENTS TO LOCAL INSTITUTIONS

The contention that minority youth are overrepresented in the official statistics is further supported by examining the final decision-making level, incarceration in local facilities. With the exception of the Girls' Rehabilitation Facility, the percentage of incarcerated youth that are minorities exceeds their proportion in the general population (25%) and their percentage in the arrest statistics (37%) (Figure 7). In December 1981, 51% of the juveniles in the Lightning Unit (short-term

placement in local camp) Program were minority. During the same time, non-white juveniles represented 46% of both the camp and Juvenile Hall population.

The facilities cited in Figure 7 do not include commitments to 24-hour schools (residential placement centers). This information is not available in terms of racial/ethnic background, with the exception of sample data collected by the Probation Department. These data showed that over a six-month period (July - December, 1981), 114 juveniles were committed to 24-hour institutions. The commitment rate for minorities was lower for these institutions (37%) than the state and county-run facilities.

FIGURE 7
PERCENT DISTRIBUTION INSTITUTIONAL COMMITMENTS
BY ETHNICITY
DECEMBER, 1981*



*Figures based on population in institutions in December, 1981.

CJ-85

EXPLANATIONS FOR OVERREPRESENTATION

In summary, it is evident from the official statistics that minority youth are overrepresented in the juvenile justice system. The imbalance increases at each decision-making level. It has been suggested that minority youth are more likely to be involved in the commission of crimes and this factor contributes to the imbalance. The victimization survey data and the crime case study in which a high percentage of minority youth were identified as suspects lends support to their involvement in crimes and subsequent likelihood of being arrested.

Factors which may contribute to minority youth involvement in crime were further examined through surveys of criminal justice personnel, reported crimes and calls for service data, discussions with minority

community leaders, and a review of the relevant literature. Cumulative findings resulting from these efforts indicate that the explanations for minority involvement in crime are complex and interrelated.

Perceptions of Practitioners

Personnel in the juvenile justice system and juvenile service providers were asked their opinions of why minority youth are overrepresented in the statistics. Although numerous explanations were offered by respondents, the factors shown in Table 1 represent those mentioned most frequently. Differences are apparent among respondents according to the emphasis placed on different factors. Opinions are indicative of individual values, beliefs and experience with juveniles at varying decision-making levels. Economic and social factors (cultural differences, education) were the factors mentioned most frequently by all respondents except the police. The category emphasized by police officers was that "minorities commit more crimes." Defense attorneys and social service providers were more likely than other respondents to consider racial factors (prejudice and discrimination) as associated with minority involvement in crime. When all responses are considered, 5% of the system personnel indicated that these factors have an effect.

Police were asked a related question: Are minority communities associated with high crime areas? The majority responded affirmatively (86%) and little difference was noted according to respondents' race or whether or not officers had worked in minority communities. Reasons given for high crime activity, in order of frequency, included: economics (55%), family factors (17%), gang involvement (15%), lack of education (12%), and social factors (10%).

An examination of reported crimes and "calls for service" in the City of San Diego supports the police officers' contention that minority areas are associated with incidence of violent crimes. Analysis of serious crimes reported from July through December, 1981, showed a statiscally significant correlation between reported violent crimes and areas with a high proportion of minorities in the population. In other words, more serious crimes were reported in these areas compared to communities with a higher proportion of white population. In addition, total calls for service (all incidents) were associated with minority areas. Analysis indicated that as the white population increases, the number of calls for service declines. Police coverage will generally be greater in areas in which the demand/need for police service is high. More policemen, coupled with the tendency for minority youth to congregate in groups (e.g., on the street) and thus be more visible to observation, may contribute to more minorities arrested.

Socioeconomic Conditions and Institutional Racism

Obviously, the majority of all citizens are not arrested for crimes. Explanations for the behavior of those who do become involved in criminal activity have long been the subject of debate. Causes of crime have been associated with a myriad of sociological, psychological, and cultural conditions. One of the most popular and well-documented explanations relates

criminal behavior to socioeconomic factors. That is, a high proportion of those arrested for particular crimes, e.g., street crime, are likely to be unemployed or in a lower income category than others in the population. These conditions can contribute to feelings of deprivation, frustration, and anger resulting in a potential for involvement in criminal acts.

It has been suggested that minorities in this country are victims of a double-edged sword: institutional racism and economic conditions which, in combination, affect their opportunities to fully participate in the mainstream of American society. In Blacks and Criminal Justice, Charles Reasons succinctly states this issue and clarifies the concept of institutional racism:

> "American society has historically been structured economically, politically, and socially in a way that the minority community has encountered severe employment and educational discrimination, political domination, economic exploitation and excessive legal constraints." (Reasons, 1972)

Reasons further elaborates:

> "the statistics do not demonstrate that minorities are more prone to crime but that they are more likely to be exposed to a plethora of conditions that result in being arrested, convicted, and incarcerated. Most of these conditions are inherent in the social structure."

Additional support for these opinions was expressed in a report by the California State Commission on Crime Control and Violence Prevention released in May 1982:

> "The interaction of institutional racism and economic factors contributes substantially to high crime and violence rates within some minority groups."

Because a relatively high proportion of minorities fall in low socioeconomic categories, they are subject to inequities due to their race and their income level. The interactive effects of these conditions can foster feelings of alienation, deprivation and powerlessness. These factors in turn can contribute to negative forms of behavior that result in violence (Commission on Crime Control and Violence Prevention, 1982).

Interviews with local minority leaders reiterated the theme expressed in the literature: the interactive effects of institutional racism and lower socioeconomic conditions contribute to minority youth disproportionately arrested, convicted, and incarcerated. Several instances of inequities toward minorities were related to the authors. In the opinion of some of those interviewed, extreme scrutiny of minority youth by police, the lack of awareness of cultural differences by some police, and mutual hostility of some youth and police contribute to the increased likelihood of arrest and subsequent penetration in the juvenile justice system.

TABLE 1

OPINIONS REGARDING MINORITY OVERREPRESENTATION
IN ARREST STATISTICS, BY PERCENTAGES OF RESPONDENTS
CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM PERSONNEL SURVEY, 1982

QUESTION: Official statistics indicate that minority youth are overrepresented in the juvenile justice system compared to their numbers in the general population. Why do you think this might be?

Reasons/Factors*	Total	Police	Probation	District Attorneys	Defense Attorneys	Juvenile Court Judges/Referees	Juvenile Service Providers
Economic Factors	24%	17%	36%	50%	83%	83%	56%
Social/Cultural Factors	27%	24%	24%	63%	100%	100%	50%
Minorities Commit More Crimes	33%	39%	19%	13%	11%	Ø	Ø
Family Factors	10%	10%	11%	13%	17%	17%	11%
Racial Factors (Prejudice/Discrimination)	5%	0.6%	12%	38%	44%	Ø	50%
Total Number of Respondents	899	643	206	8	18	6	18

*Respondents could give more than one response.

CHAPTER 3
FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE SYSTEM RESPONSE TO OFFENDERS

Factors that Influence System Response to Offenders

SUMMARY

Although, proportionately, there are more minority youth at various levels in the juvenile justice system than white youth, findings suggest that legal factors such as offense seriousness and prior delinquent history account for the variation, rather than ethnicity. Statistical analysis indicates that the factor of race does not affect decisions with regard to serious offenses. Surveys of local criminal justice personnel substantiated the findings of the case study. Personnel indicated that their decisions are based on legal factors such as offense and prior history. A literature review of similar studies supported the study results.

Survey data suggest that minority juveniles involved in less serious offenses may be treated differently than white juveniles who commit similar offenses. A small percentage of juvenile justice personnel believe that minorities are more likely to be processed through the system because of racial stereotyping by decision-makers.

OFFENDER PROFILE

The following discussion explores the extent to which social factors and personal characteristics of juveniles might account for variation in the nature and severity of decision-making.

To augment official statistics available on youthful offenders, a special study was conducted which tracked white and minority juveniles from initial police contact to court disposition. (See Methodology, page 89.) The results allow a comparison of white and minority youth on a variety of factors, e.g., sociodemographic, delinquent history. This analysis provides a framework for determining those factors that influence decision-making.

The profile data presented are based on a sample of delinquents who became known to authorities. It is possible that delinquents who are not arrested differ from those represented in the arrest data. However, according to Paul Strasburg (1978), "police are more likely to arrest juveniles who are ... frequently and ... seriously delinquent according to self-report studies ... [therefore] the description provided by arrest-based data is likely to be most reliable with regard to the most [serious] offenders."

The reader should be cautioned that the juveniles discussed are, in reality, alleged offenders because guilt or innocence had not been determined at the arrest stage.

The sample consists of 323 juveniles arrested (contacted during July 1 to December 31, 1980) for violent felony offenses (homicide, rape, robbery and aggravated assault) and 291 youths arrested for felony property offenses (burglary, grand theft and motor vehicle theft).

The proportion of minority youth in the sample is higher than the arrest statistics presented in Chapter 2 for these reasons: The police departments from which the sample was selected include the largest jurisdictions and some with a minority population over 30%. To conduct statistical analyses on numerous variables, it was necessary to have a sufficient number of minorities in each category. Therefore, of 614 juveniles in the sample, 45% are white and 55% are minority youth.

Sociodemographic Characteristics

Findings indicate that juvenile offenders are predominantly male and the median age is 15 years. Minority youth were more likely to be in the 16-17 age category and thus older than white youth. Less than one-third of all the juveniles live with their natural parents. There was little difference between minority and white youth with regard to living situations. Fifty-three percent (53%) of the families of white youth have received some type of welfare assistance compared to 71% of the minority families. However, at the time of the study, the majority in both ethnic categories had at least one parent employed. Because recent data were not available on income, the usefulness of employment status is limited. Therefore, welfare status is the primary income measure used.

TABLE 2

AGE OF JUVENILE BY ETHNICITY
CASE STUDY
July - December, 1980

Age	White	Minority
13 and under	57 (21%)	51 (15%)
14-15	99 (36%)	124 (36%)
16-17	116 (43%)	165 (49%)
Total	272	340

$x^2 = 4.18$
No significant difference*

*Statistical significance is determined by using the Chi square test (x^2). If Chi square is significant at the 0.05 level, the results were not likely due to chance in a sample of the given size and degrees of freedom.

TABLE 3

SEX OF JUVENILE OF ETHNICITY
CASE STUDY
July - December, 1980

Sex	White	Minority
Male	237 (87%)	287 (85%)
Female	35 (13%)	51 (15%)
Total	272	338

$x^2 = 0.61$
No significant difference

TABLE 4

LIVING SITUATION BY ETHNICITY
CASE STUDY
July - December, 1980

Situation	White	Minority
Both Natural Parents	64 (30%)	75 (27%)
Natural and Step Parent	32 (15%)	36 (13%)
Single Natural Parent	92 (43%)	121 (44%)
Other*	28 (13%)	42 (15%)
Total	216	274

$x^2 = 1.00$
No significant difference

*Other includes relative, friend, self.

TABLE 5

WELFARE STATUS BY ETHNICITY
CASE STUDY
July - December, 1980

Status	White	Minority
Received Aid*	127 (53%)	216 (71%)
No Aid	114 (47%)	88 (29%)
Total	241	304

$x^2 = 19.42$
Significant at 0.01 level

*Includes those families that received some form of public assistance during a five-year period before and/or after the tracking offense.

TABLE 6

PARENT EMPLOYMENT* BY ETHNICITY
CASE STUDY
July - December, 1980

Employment	White	Minority
Employed	92 (97%)	88 (84%)
Not Employed	3 (3%)	17 (16%)
Total	95	105

$x^2 = 9.41$
Significant at 0.01 level

*At least one parent employed at the time of the study.

Involvement in Criminal Activity

Minority youth were arrested for a higher proportion of crimes against persons than white youth, 68% versus 32%, whereas white youth were more likely to be arrested for property crimes than minority youth (58% versus 42%). Minority youth were more likely to be affiliated with gangs and have more extensive prior involvement with the juvenile justice system. (See Tables 7 and 8)

TABLE 7

ARREST CHARGE BY ETHNICITY
CASE STUDY
July - December, 1980

Charge	White	Minority	Total
Homicide	2	4	6
Rape	5	4	9
Robbery	29	94	123
Aggravated Assault	67	118	185
TOTAL PERSON CRIMES:	103 (32%)*	220 (68%)*	323
Burglary	113	78	191
Grand Theft	29	12	41
Motor Vehicle Theft	27	30	57
TOTAL PROPERTY CRIMES:	169 (58%)*	120 (42%)*	289

$x^2 = 43.67$
Significant at 0.01 level

*Figures are percentaged across the table.

TABLE 8

GANG AFFILIATION BY ETHNICITY
CASE STUDY
July - December, 1980

Affiliation	White	Minority
Yes	1 (0.4%)	53 (15.8%)
No	271 (99.6%)	282 (84.2%)
Total	272	335

Prior History

For purposes of this study, prior history of the juvenile offenders is measured in terms of both prior arrests and true findings. Neither measure is a totally valid indicator of juveniles who have actually committed delinquent acts, but used in conjunction they provide the most accurate picture available. Due to time constraints, prior history was only recorded for a sample of the offenders in the case study.

Sixty-nine percent (69%) of the minorities had one or more arrests prior to the tracking offense, compared to 65% of the white juveniles. (See Table 9) When prior arrests were examined by type of offense (Table 10), the data show minority youth almost three times as likely to have arrests for violent offenses than whites.

To incorporate both the severity and frequency of crimes committed, a seriousness score was developed. (See Methodology, page 89) Minority youth were more likely to fall in the high seriousness category than white youth (28% compared to 15%) as shown in Table 11. The proportion of minorities involved in prior arrests may be affected by age since minority youth in the sample are slightly older than white youth and thus have had a longer opportunity to offend. When arrests one year before the tracking offense were examined, minority youth arrest figures were higher than white youth (62% had prior contacts one year before, compared to 56% of the white juveniles).

Thirty-nine percent (39%) of the non-white youth had previously had true findings (guilty) in juvenile court. For white juveniles, this figure was 30% (Table 12).

The likelihood of prior delinquent history was also examined by the 'status at intake' variable. Although the majority of juveniles in both groups were not currently under jurisdiction of the court for a prior offense, 30% of the minority youth were wards compared to 19% of the white juveniles. These data showed statistical significance (Table 13).

TABLE 9

TOTAL PRIOR ARRESTS BY ETHNICITY
CASE STUDY
July - December, 1980

Prior Arrests	White	Minority
None	38 (35%)	42 (31%)
1-2	27 (25%)	36 (27%)
3-4	22 (20%)	15 (11%)
5 or more	22 (20%)	41 (31%)
Total	109	134

$x^2 = 6.03$
Not significant at 0.05 level

TABLE 10

TYPE OF PRIOR ARREST BY ETHNICITY
CASE STUDY
July - December, 1980

Type of Prior Arrest	White	Minority
Violent	6%	22%
Other Felony	39%	25%
Misdemeanor	50%	59%
Status Offense/Probation Violation/Infractions	10%	16%
Total	109	134

TABLE 11

SERIOUS SCORE, BY PRIOR ARRESTS BY ETHNICITY
CASE STUDY
July - December, 1980

Seriousness	White	Minority
None	38 (35%)	42 (31%)
Low/Medium	55 (50%)	55 (41%)
High	16 (15%)	37 (28%)
Total	109	134

$x^2 = 6.01$
Significant at 0.05 level

TABLE 12

PRIOR TRUE FINDINGS BY ETHNICITY
CASE STUDY
July - December, 1980

Finding	White	Minority
No Prior True Finding	107 (70%)	115 (61%)
Prior True Finding	45 (30%)	75 (39%)
Total	152	190

$x^2 = 3.61$
Not significant at 0.05 level

TABLE 13

STATUS AT INTAKE BY ETHNICITY
CASE STUDY
July - December, 1980

Status	White	Minority
Ward/Parole	40 (19%)	83 (30%)
Non-ward	171 (81%)	192 (70%)
Total	211	275

$x^2 = 8.40$
Significant at 0.01 level

White juveniles were arrested for their first offense at an earlier age than minority youth. Sixty-four percent (64%) of the white juveniles were under age 13 when arrested for the first time, whereas 56% of the minority juveniles fell in this age category. Further refinement of the data showed 30% of the white offenders were first contacted at 11 years of age or younger. The percentage of minorities in this age group was 22%.

TABLE 14

AGE AT FIRST ARREST BY ETHNICITY
CASE STUDY
July - December, 1980

Age	White	Minority
11 and under	34 (30%)	30 (22%)
12-13	38 (34%)	49 (36%)
14-15	31 (28%)	45 (33%)
16-17	9 (8%)	11 (8%)
Total	112	135

TRACKING OFFENSE

More specific information was collected about the offense (arrest incident) to be tracked through the juvenile justice process. This provides insight into the events surrounding the actual crime.

Companions

Previous research has indicated that juveniles more often commit crimes with companions than do adults. Over half of the juveniles in the case study (63%) committed crimes with others. White and minority offenders differed only slightly in this respect with minorities showing 64% of offenses involving others compared to 62% of the white youth. (Table 15)

TABLE 15

NUMBER OF COMPANIONS BY ETHNICITY
CASE STUDY
July - December, 1980

Number of Companions	White	Minority
None	102 (38%)	122 (36%)
One	87 (32%)	111 (33%)
Two	44 (16%)	57 (17%)
Three or more	39 (14%)	50 (15%)
Total	272	340

Race of Victim and Suspect

The data show that both white and minority offenders are more likely to victimize white citizens. Yet only 10% of the victims of white offenders were minority compared to 45% of victims of minority offenders.

TABLE 16

RACE OF VICTIM BY SUSPECT RACE
CASE STUDY
July - December, 1980

Victim	White	Minority
White	155 (90%)	125 (55%)
Minority	18 (10%)	104 (45%)
Total	173	229

Attitude of Juvenile

Minority juveniles were more often identified as having a "fair" to "bad" attitude (65%) compared to white juveniles (55%). This difference, however, was not statistically significant. (Table 17) The measure of attitude is subjective, but the police officer's initial perception may influence the case disposition by law enforcement. This measure is limited because it was only recorded on 31% of the arrests reports.

Waiver of Rights

This issue involves the juvenile's willingness (waiver) or refusal to answer questions at the time of arrest. A refusal may be perceived negatively by the arresting officer even though it is within the legal rights of the juvenile. The case study data show that minority juveniles were less likely to waive their rights (15%) than white juveniles (10%), but the difference is not significant. The majority of all juveniles answered questions at the time of arrest. (Table 17)

TABLE 17

ATTITUDE AT ARREST BY ETHNICITY
CASE STUDY
July - December, 1980

Attitude	White	Minority
Good	33 (45%)	41 (35%)
Fair/Bad	41 (55%)	75 (65%)
Total	74	116

$x^2 = 1.63$
No significant difference at 0.05 level

TABLE 18

WAIVER OF RIGHTS BY ETHNICITY
CASE STUDY

Waiver	White	Minority
Waived Rights (answered questions)	236 (90%)	270 (85%)
Did Not Waive Rights	27 (10%)	48 (15%)
Total	263	318

$x^2 = 2.98$
No significant difference at 0.05 level

Social Study

The social study prepared by probation provides information about the types of problems encountered by offenders. Factors considered to be positive are also identified. Similar problems were noted for white and minority offenders: other offenses, poor school attendance, negative peer influence, and situational factors in the home. There was a substantial difference between the two groups in the citing of weapons and/or injury associated with the offense. Twenty-nine percent (29%) of the white offenders had these factors identified compared to 40% of the minority youth.

TABLE 19

NEGATIVE FACTORS IDENTIFIED IN
SOCIAL STUDY BY ETHNICITY
CASE STUDY
July - December, 1980

Problem	White	Minority
Other Offenses	68%	69%
Weapons/Injury	29%	40%
Peer Influence	39%	48%
Poor School Attendance	42%	45%
Home Situation	31%	23%
Beyond Control of Parents	28%	25%
Total	143	193

TABLE 20

POSITIVE FACTORS IDENTIFIED IN
SOCIAL STUDY BY ETHNICITY
CASE STUDY
July - December, 1980

Positive Factor	White	Minority
Good Family Relations	39%	36%
Good Attitude of Juvenile	34%	25%
No Priors	28%	26%
Accessory	9%	12%
Employed	15%	15%
Good School Behavior	22%	17%
Receiving Counseling	18%	8%
Total	143	193

CASE STUDY COMPARISON

Data from the case tracking study allow a comparison of white and minority juveniles at several decision-making levels. Information on the factors that influence decisions at seven points in the system were analyzed. The statistical procedure employed is step-wise multiple regression. This technique allows assessment of the effects of each variable or factor (e.g., charges, prior history or race) on a particular decision, while simultaneously controlling for the effects of the remaining variables. For example, to examine the effects of prior history on court disposition, the regression equation controls for factors such as race, arrest charge living situation, use of weapons, injury to victim, etc., that may also contribute to the decision. (See Methodology, page 89 for further discussion.)

The factors analyzed at each decision point were selected based on a review of the literature of similar studies and an analysis of the information available to each decision-maker. The study is limited to those variables recorded in official documents. In addition, the decisions are examined only for cases involving major felony offenses.

System Overview

Table 21 presents the major decision levels as juveniles proceed through the system and the percentage of juveniles in each ethnic category. The proportion of minority youth exceeds the proportion of white juveniles

at five of the seven levels (i.e., placement in Juvenile Hall, referral to probation, filing of a petition, out-of-home placement, and probation recommendation). This is consistent with official statistics. However, white juveniles are more likely to be detained in Juvenile Hall by the court in addition to having a higher proportion of true findings.

Each of the decision points will be examined to determine if race is in fact a critical factor in decision-making or if legal factors regarding the case take precedence.

TABLE 21

PROPORTION OF JUVENILES PROCESSED
AT EACH DECISION POINT BY RACE
CASE STUDY
July - December, 1980

Decision Point	White	Minority
Placement in Hall	40%	59%
Referred to Probation	80%	83%
Petition Filed	65%	69%
Detained in Hall	80%	77%
True Finding	87%	82%
Out-of-Home Recommendation	42%	56%
Actual Out-of-Home Placement	38%	50%
Total	272	340

PLACEMENT IN JUVENILE HALL

Table 22 indicates that 40% of the white juveniles arrested for major offenses are placed in Juvenile Hall by law enforcement compared to 59% of the minorities. The remainder were either released or turned over to another agency. This relationship appears to be significant, but the multiple regression indicates that the apparent differences related to race diminish when other factors are analyzed. The variables that are significant in the regression equation include (in order of importance):

- Seriousness score of total prior arrests
- Age of juvenile
- Arrest charge
- Sex of juvenile
- Gang affiliation

Analysis shows that the seriousness score explained 13% of the variance in the decision to place a juvenile in Juvenile Hall, with the other variables contributing an additional 15% (Table 23). Ethnicity was not statistically associated with the decision to place a minor in custody. At this and other decision points, factors not analyzed contributed to decision-making, e.g., data not available.

However, these data suggest that legal factors, such as the juvenile's prior history and the arrest charge, are primary considerations. It has already been noted that minority youth were more likely to be arrested for violent offenses than their white counterparts (65% compared to 38%) and a higher proportion of minorities ranked high on the seriousness score for prior offenses. In addition, 98% of the gang members in the sample are minority youth.

Other factors related to hall placement are age and sex of the juvenile. Those detained are older and a higher proportion are males. Additional tables displaying these relationships are in Appendix B, page 95.

TABLE 22

PLACEMENT IN JUVENILE HALL BY ETHNICITY
CASE STUDY, 1980

	White	Minority
Placed in Juvenile Hall	110 (40%)	199 (59%)
Released/Other	162 (60%)	141 (41%)
Total	272	340

$x^2 = 19.78$
Significant at 0.01 level

TABLE 23

SUMMARY, MULTIPLE REGRESSION
FACTORS EXPLAINING HALL PLACEMENT DECISION

DEPENDENT VARIABLE - PLACEMENT AFTER ARREST

Independent Variable	R Square*	RSQ Change**	Beta***
Seriousness Score	0.12909	0.12909	0.27315
Age of Juvenile	0.18150	0.05241	0.20330
Arrest Charge	0.22302	0.04152	- 0.19740
Sex of Juvenile	0.25557	0.03255	- 0.17601
Gang Affiliation	0.28015	0.02458	0.17836
Suspect Race	0.28174	0.00159	0.04233

Note: Another factor entered in the equation was prior arrests, which was not statistically associated with placement.

*R square is Pearsons r^2 and indicates the cumulative proportion of the variation explained by the regression up to that step.

**RSQ Change is the additional variation explained by each variable as it is entered in the equation.

***Beta is a standardized regression coefficient which expresses the relative importance of each variable.

Referral to Probation

When probation referrals are examined by ethnicity (Table 24), the differences noted between white and minority youth are not statistically significant. The results of the multiple regression analysis support the contention that race/ethnicity is not a factor when police refer juveniles to probation for major offenses. The factors of age and the seriousness score for total arrests explained more variation related to referral decisions than other variables. Factors included in the equation that were not significant were sex of the juvenile, gang affiliation, ethnicity and arrest charge.

TABLE 24

REFERRAL TO PROBATION BY ETHNICITY
CASE STUDY
July - December, 1980

	White	Minority
Referred	217 (80%)	282 (83%)
Handled Within Department/Other	55 (20%)	58 (17%)
Total	272	340

$x^2 = 1.00$
No significant difference

TABLE 25

SUMMARY, MULTIPLE REGRESSION
FACTORS EXPLAINING REFERRAL TO PROBATION DECISION

DEPENDENT VARIABLE - REFERRAL TO PROBATION

Independent Variable	R Square	RSQ Change	Beta
Age of Youth	0.05106	0.05106	- 0.16497
Seriousness Score	0.12333	0.07228	- 0.27834
Suspect Race	0.12440	0.00106	0.03293

Note: Other factors in the equation which were not statistically associated with probation referral include sex of the juvenile, prior arrests, gang affiliation and arrest change.

In sum, at the police disposition level, the factor of race does not appear to influence decisions to place in Juvenile Hall or refer to probation.

Probation Disposition

Two decision points were examined at the probation level: (1) filing of a petition, and (2) recommendations to the court regarding final disposition. The decision to file charges is mutually considered by the probation staff and the district attorney personnel. Table 26 indicates only a slight difference between minority and white juveniles in the proportion of cases in which a petition was filed (69% vs. 65%). This difference is not statistically significant. The multiple regression (Table 27) shows that the key factors in requesting a petition are placement after arrest and total prior arrests. Therefore, factors related to the criminal history of the juvenile and the seriousness of the current offense are the most important determinants of case disposition by probation.

Juveniles already in the Hall are more likely to have a petition filed because these are the more serious offenders (e.g., violent). Data on prior history show that both minority and white juveniles with a record of one or more offenses are more often formally processed through the juvenile justice system. Race of the juvenile does not add significantly to the explanation of the outcome at this level.

TABLE 26

PROBATION DISPOSITION BY ETHNICITY
CASE STUDY
July - December, 1980

	White	Minority
Counsel & Close/ Informal/Other	75 (35%)	87 (31%)
Petition Filed	140 (65%)	190 (69%)
Total	215	277

$x^2 = 2.53$
No significant difference

TABLE 27

SUMMARY, MULTIPLE REGRESSION
FACTORS EXPLAINING PROBATION DISPOSITION

DEPENDENT VARIABLE - DECISION TO FILE PETITION

Independent Variable	R Square	RSQ Change	Beta
Placement after Arrest	0.08025	0.08025	0.22641
Total Prior Arrests	0.11281	0.03256	0.19289
Suspect Race	0.11330	0.00049	0.02260

Note: Other factors included in the equation which did not show statistical significance were status at intake, age of juvenile, gang affiliation, sex of juvenile, arrest charge, number of companions.

Recommendation to the Court

The investigation unit of the Probation Department is responsible for recommending dispositions to the court after a true finding is made. Table 28 indicates that minority youth are more likely to receive recommendations for out-of-home placement (56%) than white juveniles (42%). The multiple regression results indicate that charges on petition, status at intake, and weapon use/injury to the victim are critical factors which affect the probation recommendation. (Table 29) This is consistent with other findings that suggest minority youth are contacted for more serious charges, are more likely to be wards of the court, use weapons more often and are involved in gang activity. Other factors which influence probation recommendations are school behavior, attitude of the juvenile, whether the juvenile is beyond control of his/her parents, and age. These variables account for 44% of the variation in probation recommendations. Race does not appear to be a factor that influences decisions at this level.

TABLE 28

PROBATION PLACEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS
TO THE COURT BY ETHNICITY
CASE STUDY
July - December, 1980

Recommendation	White	Minority
California Youth Authority	3	17
Youth Correctional Center	4	2
Local Camp/GRF	31	55
24-hour School	8	9
Subtotal Out-of-Home Placements	46 (42%)	83 (56%)
Ward with Conditions	50	45
Ward with No Conditions	8	7
Non-ward Probation	2	1
Other	4	11
Subtotal	64 (58%)	64 (44%)
TOTAL	110	147

$x^2 = 5.40$
Significant at .05 level (Chi square value is based on subtotals for probation recommendation)

TABLE 29

SUMMARY, MULTIPLE REGRESSION
FACTORS EXPLAINING PROBATION RECOMMENDATION

Independent Variable	R Square	RSQ Change	Beta
Charge on Petition	0.16507	0.16507	- 0.30263
Status at Intake	0.27321	0.10814	0.25081
School Behavior	0.32248	0.04927	0.19062
Weapons/Injury	0.36227	0.03979	0.20868
Gang Affiliation	0.40038	0.03811	0.11648
Good Attitude	0.41649	0.01612	- 0.17468
Beyond Control	0.43114	0.01465	- 0.12360
Age of Juvenile	0.44195	0.01081	0.10848
Suspect Race	0.44310	0.00116	- 0.03886

Note: Other factors not statistically associated with probation recommendation in the regression equation are number of companions, welfare status, peer associations, other offenses, prior arrests, home situation, poor school attendance and living situation.

Juvenile Court

Decisions occurring at the juvenile court level include detention during court processing, findings, and final case disposition.

Detention

Juveniles placed in Juvenile Hall after arrest must have a detention hearing within one judicial day of petition filing or be released. At this hearing, the judge or referee determines if the juvenile should be detained during the court process. Table 30 shows the results of the detention hearing by ethnicity of the youth. More minority youth have detention hearings than white juveniles, because more minorities are initially placed in Juvenile Hall after arrest. However, white youth are slightly more likely to be detained at the detention hearing. This difference is not significant (80% versus 77%).

Table 31 reflects the results of the multiple regression. Factors associated with detention by the court are related to the statutory justifications for keeping a juvenile in custody. According to the court order for detention, reasons for detention are as follows (in order of frequency):

1. Danger to person or property of others
2. Likely to flee jurisdiction
3. Violation of court order
4. Protection of the minor
5. Absence of parent or guardian

The regression equation shows the seriousness of the charges on the petition and prior arrests as important factors which may be related to whether the juvenile is a danger to the person or property of others. Another factor, parents' employment, may be an indicator of stability in the home.

TABLE 30

RESULT OF DETENTION HEARING BY ETHNICITY
CASE STUDY
July - December, 1980

	White	Minority
Juvenile Hall	51 (80%)	93 (77%)
Other	13 (20%)	28 (23%)
Total	64	121

$x^2 = .19$
No significant difference

Note: Percentages do not equal 100% due to rounding.

TABLE 31

SUMMARY, MULTIPLE REGRESSION
FACTORS EXPLAINING DECISION TO DETAIN JUVENILES

DEPENDENT VARIABLE - DETENTION

Independent Variable	R Square	RSQ Change	Beta
Parent Employment	0.06409	0.06409	0.26400
Charge on Petition	0.09915	0.03506	- 0.20811
Placement after Arrest	0.11655	0.01741	0.11088
Prior Arrests	0.12767	0.01111	0.12147
Suspect Race	0.13381	0.00614	0.08069

Note: These variables were also included in the equation but were not associated with detention: age of juvenile, status at intake, sex of juvenile, gang affiliation, and living situation.

Court Disposition

There is no significant difference between white and minority youth regarding true findings. Eighty-eight percent (88%) of the white youth have true findings compared to 83% of the minority youth. The majority of cases are decided by admission on the part of the juvenile. With the exception of those cases that go to trial, the true finding decision is not a decision made solely by the court.

With regard to court disposition, data indicate that a significantly higher proportion of minority juveniles are actually placed in an institution or 24-hour school (50%) compared to non-minority youth (38%). As in other decision levels, race of the offender is not the significant factor, but seriousness of the offense and prior history are the critical variables. This is reflected in the regression equation in terms of weapons use or injury to the victim, charges on the petition, prior offenses, and wardship status. Another significant factor considered is family relationships (e.g., whether relations were positive or negative). The combined effect of these variables explains 36% of the variance in court dispositions.

It is of interest that, although both probation and the courts consider the facts of the case in decision-making, the court gives more attention to family relations whereas probation emphasizes school behavior, gang affiliation, attitude and age in addition to problems of parental control.

TABLE 32

COURT DISPOSITION BY ETHNICITY
CASE STUDY
July - December, 1980

Court Disposition	White	Minority
California Youth Authority	4	21
Camp/GRF	32	45
24-hour School	7	9
Jail/Prison	2	1
Subtotal Out-of-Home Placements	45 (38%)	76 (50%)
Ward with Conditions	52	57
Ward with No Conditions	9	10
Non-ward Probation	4	2
Other	10	8
Subtotal	75 (63%)	77 (50%)
TOTAL	120	153

$x^2 = 4.04$
Significant at .05 level

Note: The Chi square value is based on the subtotals for court disposition.

TABLE 33

SUMMARY, MULTIPLE REGRESSION
FACTORS EXPLAINING COURT DISPOSITION

DEPENDENT VARIABLE - COURT DISPOSITION

Independent Variable	R Square	RSQ Change	Beta
Weapons/Injury	0.14848	0.14840	0.22019
Family Relations	0.23178	0.08329	- 0.18065
Charge on Petition	0.29763	0.06586	- 0.27729
Other Offenses	0.32233	0.02469	0.12689
Status at Intake	0.35584	0.03351	0.20120
Suspect Race	0.35600	0.00016	0.01283

Note: Other factors included in the equation were living situation of youth, good attitude, number of companions, age of juvenile, school behavior, beyond control of parents, home situation, welfare status, gang affiliation, peer associations, poor school attendance. These factors were not statistically associated with court disposition.

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

In conjunction with the review of official statistics and the case study comparison, a literature search was conducted of research related to minority involvement in juvenile justice. Initially, a request was made to the National Criminal Justice Reference Service for relevant studies. This search led to additional references for review.

The following studies attempted to determine the effect of race on decisions made at the juvenile court level. The results of the research studies are summarized below:

- Report of the Sentencing Guidelines Project on the Relationship Between Race and Sentencing.

  Conclusion:

  "... when statistically accounting for the effect of key factors relating to the nature of the offender and offense, the data do not support the contention that minority race offenders receive more severe sentences than similar white offenders." (McCarthy, John, 1979.)

- "Race, Socioeconomic Status and Sentencing in the Juvenile Justice System."

  Conclusion:

  "When two level variables were controlled, seriousness of offense and recidivism, findings indicate that severity of disposition is related to race and socioeconomic conditions. Perhaps if other variables had been introduced ... racial and socioeconomic differences would be eliminated." (Thornberry, 1973.)

- "The Screening of Juvenile Offenders."

  Conclusion:

  "Legal variables such as seriousness of offense and prior delinquent record as well as age of the youth were positively related to severity of disposition by the court ... both with and without the use of statistical applications." (Terry, 1967.)

- "Race and Ethnicity Relative to Other Factors in Juvenile Court Dispositions."

  Conclusion:

  "Judges are more likely to accord severe dispositions to minority youth, juveniles from high delinquency areas and those from broken homes but no systematic differences are noted among those in similar social classes." (Arnold, 1971.)

- "Juvenile Dispositions - Social and Legal Factors Related to the Processing of Denver Delinquency Cases."

  Conclusion:

  "Analysis showed that ... variation in the nature and severity of treatment ... by the court can be accounted for by legal variables. Those youth who had formal petitions filed, those with prior court referrals, and those who had been placed in detention prior to adjudication were the most apt to have been accorded severe dispositions at the multivariate level of analysis." (Cohen, 1975.)

The findings cited above are not totally consistent as to which variables significantly influence severity of dispositions. Differences in results are partially due to the number and type of variables employed and the types of statistical measures used. The present study differs from those in the literature in three ways: (1) seven decision points in the juvenile justice system were examined rather than solely the disposition of the court; (2) several additional variables were introduced to explore the association between ethnicity and decisions in the process; (3) multivariate analysis was augmented by surveys of criminal justice personnel which supported the case study findings (see following section).

As noted earlier, the current study is not without limitations which could have influenced the conclusions. To reiterate, variables included reflect only those for which information was available in official documents. Factors that were not included in juvenile records may have influenced decisions. Also, it may be that discriminatory decision-making occurs with regard to lesser offenses. Since the focus of this study was serious crimes, that possibility cannot be examined here. And, finally, decision levels were analyzed in the aggregate, e.g., police, probation, court. Such aggregation may obscure differential treatment toward minorities by individual decision-makers. There may be subtle differences in the ways that youth are treated that could not be measured by the techniques used. Despite these qualifications, our findings strongly suggest that decisions related to serious offenses in juvenile justice are accorded on legal factors rather than the ethnicity of the juvenile.

SURVEY OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE PERSONNEL

The purpose of the surveys was twofold: (1) to determine which factors affect decisions as viewed by the decision-makers, and (2) to examine their perceptions of how minorities are treated by the juvenile justice system. Although the case study analysis indicated that race was not a significant factor in decisions, the survey responses augment the case study by examining the consistency between how cases are processed and the perception of that process by system practitioners. Each component of the system will be discussed separately.

Police

Since law enforcement represents the first link in the criminal justice system, police actions to a large extent determine who will enter the

system. The remaining components then react to those individuals referred to them. For this reason, the police survey was more extensive than the others.

When asked which factors were most critical when considering whether to arrest a juvenile and place him/her in Juvenile Hall, three factors were identified by more than half of the officers: seriousness of offense, prior criminal history, and attitude of juvenile. (See Table 34) The race of the juvenile was mentioned by only 1% of the respondents with regard to arrest and Hall placement decisions. The factors of offense seriousness and prior history are consistent with the findings of the case study.

The issue of attitude was explored through other questions and associated with other variables. When asked how often the attitude of the youth is a factor in arrests, nearly one-third of the officers indicated that it was often/very often a factor. This response was slightly higher for minority youth (33% compared to 31% of arrests for white youths).

Police officers were asked their view of youth attitudes toward the police. Figure 8 displays the responses applied to attitudes of white and non-white juveniles as perceived by police.

Overall, more than half of the police surveyed perceive attitudes of youth toward police as negative, particularly the attitudes of non-white juveniles (84% vs. 52%). Minority officers were less likely to perceive white youth as having positive attitudes toward police than white officers (37% compared to 50%).

FIGURE 8
POLICE PERCEPTION OF YOUTH ATTITUDE TOWARD POLICE
BY ETHNICITY
POLICE SURVEY, 1982
N = 700

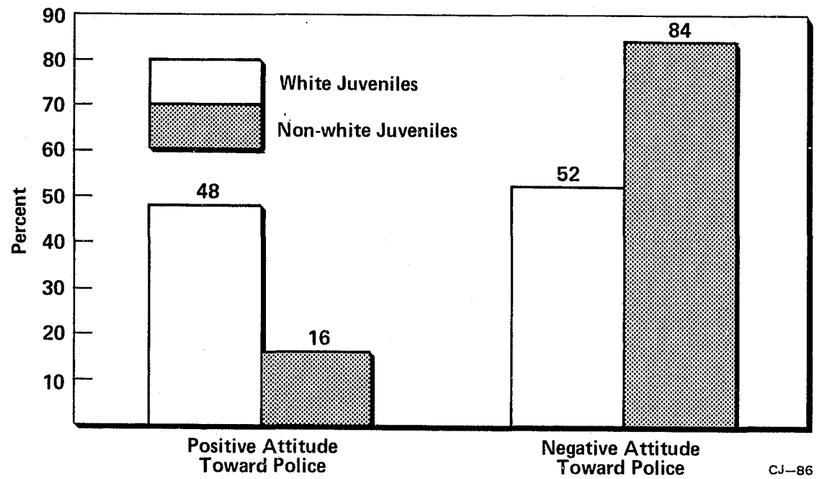


TABLE 34

FACTORS AFFECTING POLICE DECISIONS
POLICE SURVEY, 1982

Decisions	Attitude of Youth	Type of Offense	Severity of Offense	Prior Criminal Record	Crime Potential	Race of Youth	Age of Youth	Gang Affiliation	Location of Contact	Availability of Parents
Conduct Field Interrogation (Total = 799)	53%	N/A	N/A	N/A	97%	6%	19%	89%	79%	N/A
Arrest Juvenile (Total = 805)	64%	N/A	97%	73%	N/A	1%	29%	N/A	N/A	N/A
Place in Juvenile Hall (Total = 808)	55%	91%	89%	61%	N/A	1%	20%	N/A	N/A	84%

Officers who felt their training prepared them to work in minority communities were more likely to perceive minority youth as having positive attitudes than officers who felt their training was not beneficial.

The case study revealed no significant difference between perception of white and minority youth attitudes as reflected on arrest reports. However, the data were only available on 31% of the cases. The survey results suggest that the factors of a juvenile's attitude may influence police actions and subsequent decisions, particularly in regard to minority youth.

Probation Decisions

In the survey, probation officers indicated that the factors of type of offense, severity, and prior history were key considerations for decisions made at different levels. Only 2% chose race as having an effect with regard to most decision levels.

District Attorney

The deputy district attorney must determine if the case is provable based on the facts of the case. Eight deputy district attorneys were surveyed and these factors were identified as influencing the decision to prosecute (respondents could give more than one response):

- Case is provable beyond reasonable doubt (4)
- Prior criminal history (3)
- Seriousness of offense (3)
- Admissibility of evidence (1)
- Gang-related crime (1)
- Relationship of suspect to victim (1)

The factors are consistent with the case study findings and the role of the deputy district attorneys with regard to juvenile law.

Court Decisions

Two decisions by the court were examined: (1) decision to detain a juvenile prior to further processing, and (2) final disposition of youth after a true finding. Factors identified by judges/referees were similar to other component personnel. Responses are as follows (six judges/referees were interviewed):

Decision to Detain

- Seriousness of offense, e.g., weapons, injury (5)
- Family support/attitude (3)
- Deterrent effect (3)
- Violation of probation (3)
- Protection of public (2)
- Increase potential for court appearance (1)

TABLE 35

FACTORS INFLUENCING DECISIONS AT PROBATION LEVEL
PROBATION SURVEY, 1982

Decision Levels	Type of Offense	Severity of Offense	Prior Criminal Record	Parent Attitude	Juvenile Attitude	Race	Age	Injury	Prop. Loss	Living Situation	Mental Health Status
Intake											
Informal Supervision (Total = 96)	84%	71%	83%	45%	62%	2%	38%	28%	13%	13%	14%
Counsel and Close (Total = 110)	86%	75%	85%	45%	66%	Ø	26%	28%	13%	12%	8%
Petition Requested (Total = 111)	81%	90%	89%	17%	31%	2%	19%	64%	42%	7%	16%
Investigation											
Recommendations for Court Disposition (Total = 115)	60%	92%	88%	11%	40%	Ø	23%	71%	20%	10%	45%
Placements (Out-of-Home)											
Foster Home (Total = 109)	59%	37%	59%	51%	65%	2%	46%	6%	1%	56%	55%
24-Hour School (Total = 107)	58%	46%	65%	35%	53%	2%	40%	6%	2%	27%	75%
Camp/Girls Rehabilitation Facility (Total = 108)	75%	92%	85%	13%	43%	Ø	32%	26%	13%	9%	39%
California Youth Authority (Total = 109)	77%	93%	92%	10%	26%	0.9%	40%	52%	17%	7%	35%

Factors Affecting Final Disposition

- o Seriousness of offense (4)
- o Prior criminal history (3)
- o Deliberateness of act (3)
- o Available alternatives (2)
- o Protection of public (2)
- o Age of youth (1)
- o Attitude of youth (1)
- o Family situation (1)
- o Nature of peer associations (1)

In sum, the survey responses by all component personnel parallel the findings of the case study with the factors of offense seriousness and prior history taking precedence by decision-makers. The factor of race was mentioned in few instances by a small percentage of respondents (2%).

PERCEPTIONS OF SYSTEM PERSONNEL REGARDING MINORITY JUVENILES

Additional survey questions addressed the practitioners' perceptions of the system's treatment of minorities. Responses will be presented systemwide with elaboration of individual component responses when pertinent.

The majority of those surveyed believe that the high proportion of minority youth in the juvenile justice system can lead to negative attitudes of personnel toward minorities as shown in Table 36.

These differences were noted based on responses to other questions.

Police

Officers who work in minority areas are more likely to perceive development of negative attitudes as are minority police officers. Those who indicated that their training prepared them for working in minority communities were less likely to think that personnel develop negative attitudes. Also, officers who indicated that their agency should develop non-discriminatory, responsive police practices were more likely to feel that negative attitudes are developed. (See page 80)

Additional questions were asked the police. Highlights of the survey responses follow:

- o The majority of police officers (83%) indicated that they have worked in areas where minority citizens live. Over half (64%) noted that they feel comfortable in these communities. A small proportion of officers (15%) explained that they are not comfortable because they perceive a negative attitude by the community as well as danger to police officers. As might be expected, a higher proportion of minority officers felt comfortable in non-white communities than their white counterparts (93% versus 78%). Seventy percent (70%) of all the officers said they were more concerned with their own safety when working in minority communities. This response was also influenced

TABLE 36

NEGATIVE ATTITUDES TOWARD MINORITY YOUTH
SURVEY DATA, 1982

QUESTION: Do you think the overrepresentation of minorities in the juvenile justice system can lead to negative attitudes of personnel toward minority youth?

	Total	Police	Probation	District Attorneys	Defense Attorneys	Judges/ Referees	Juvenile Service Providers
Percentage of "YES" responses	60%	60%	56%	63%	88%	83%	94%
Total responses	937	701	190	8	16	6	16

by the race of the respondent as non-whites expressed less concern (61% of minority officers compared to 75% of white officers). Also, officers with less experience (less than six years) were more likely to be concerned about their safety (73% compared to 66% with over six years).

These perceptions are consistent with reported crime data and calls for service which indicate a higher proportion of violent crimes reported in areas with a greater proportion of minorities than areas that have predominantly white populations (see page 29).

- The majority of officers surveyed (64%) felt that officers working in minority areas are under more stress than officers working in other areas. Reasons given were similar to the responses involving concern for safety, e.g., perceived negative attitude by community, potential for violence.

- In general, most officers agreed that the personnel in their departments get along well with citizens in minority areas (66%). A small proportion (5%) indicated that officers get along poorly. Officers in jurisdictions that have a higher concentration of minority population were less likely to indicate positive relations than those working in areas with a lower proportion of minorities (61% versus 73%).

Probation

Probation officers who perceive that minorities are treated differently and more severely (page 71) were more likely to believe that personnel develop negative attitudes than respondents who did not perceive differential handling of minorities. Overall, reasons explaining development of negative attitudes were related to prejudicial feelings based on stereotyping of minority youth.

PERCEPTIONS OF DIFFERENTIAL TREATMENT

When responses were aggregated, 29% of all personnel indicated that police often treat minority youth differently. Twenty percent (20%) had the same response about probation staff. Perceptions of differential treatment by judges and district attorneys were noted by 19% and 16% respectively, of all respondents. Perceptions of differential treatment differed by component agency. (See Table 37)

Police

Law enforcement personnel were most likely to be viewed as treating minorities differently. Responses ranged from zero (district attorneys to 72% (defense attorneys). Nearly one-quarter of the police (24%) indicated that the police often treat minorities differently than white youth.

TABLE 37

DIFFERENTIAL TREATMENT OF MINORITY JUVENILES BY SYSTEM PERSONNEL
SURVEY DATA, 1982

QUESTION: In general, how often do you think the following agency staff treat minority juveniles differently because of their race, e.g., more likely to arrest, file petition, incarcerate, etc.?

	% of Survey Respondents Indicating Very Often/Often						
Agencies	Total 806	Police Total = 557	Probation Total = 196	District Attorneys Total = 8	Defense Attorneys Total = 18	Juvenile Court Judges/Referees Total = 6	Juvenile Service Providers Total = 21
Police Treatment	29%	24%	38%	Ø	72%	40%	69%
Probation Treatment	20%	21%	17%	Ø	22%	Ø	50%
District Attorney Treatment	16%	13%	20%	Ø	11%	Ø	56%
Courts Treatment	19%	16%	24%	Ø	17%	Ø	56%

Probation

Half of the service providers (50%) felt that probation officers treat juveniles differently because of their race. Other agency responses about probation ranged from zero (district attorneys and judges) to 22% (defense attorneys).

District Attorney

Responses concerning the deputy district attorneys' treatment of minorities ranged from zero (district attorneys and judges) to 56% (service providers) perceiving differential treatment.

Courts

With the exception of the service providers, less than 25% of the component personnel perceived judges/referees as treating minorities differently. Over half of the service providers (56%) felt that differential treatment exists in the juvenile court.

The responses by police and probation officers were influenced by the race of the respondents in that minority respondents were twice as likely to perceive differential treatment than white respondents.

The higher proportion of responses indicating the police frequently handle juveniles differently may be influenced by the variety of options (discretion) available to police, that their actions are more visible, and they are more likely to have regular face-to-face contact with juveniles.

NATURE OF DIFFERENTIAL TREATMENT

In an effort to determine the nature of differential treatment toward youth, several questions were asked concerning respondents' perceptions of how minority youth are handled. Some questions were asked to all justice personnel while others were asked to specific component staff based on their decision-making roles.

As Table 38 indicates, 19% of the surveyed juvenile justice personnel have observed that misdemeanor acts committed by minority youth are taken more seriously than similar offenses committed by white juveniles. Juvenile service providers were most likely to perceive this situation (69%) followed by half of the judges/referees (50%), defense attorneys (47%), police (18%), probation (17%), and district attorneys (13%).

This question was also asked in reference to felony offenses. (See Table 39.) For police, the percentage of "yes" responses was 6%, implying that serious offenses are less likely to be handled differently due to race. Yet 15% of the probation officers indicated that minorities involved in felony acts are treated more seriously than white youth involved in similar offenses. Twenty-eight percent (28%) of the defense attorneys perceived this situation as well. All deputy district attorneys believed felony acts were treated the same regardless of the juvenile's race. Overall, the percentage was 9%, compared to 19% for misdemeanors.

END

TABLE 38

PERCEPTION OF DIFFERENTIAL TREATMENT
OF MISDEMEANOR ACTS
SURVEY DATA, 1982

QUESTION: Have you observed that misdemeanor acts committed by minority youth are taken more seriously by system personnel than similar acts committed by white youth? (The police survey read "misdemeanors more likely to be enforced.")

	Total	Police	Probation	District Attorneys	Defense Attorneys	Judges/ Referees	Juvenile Service Providers
Percentage of "YES" responses	19%	18%	17%	13%	47%	50%	69%
Total responses	1,035	762	226	8	17	6	16

TABLE 39

PERCEPTION OF DIFFERENTIAL TREATMENT
OF FELONY ACTS
SURVEY DATA, 1982

QUESTION: Have you observed that felony acts committed by minority youth are taken more seriously by system personnel than similar acts committed by white youth? (The police survey read "felonies more likely to be enforced.")

	Total	Police	Probation	District Attorneys	Defense Attorneys	Judges/ Referees	Juvenile Service Providers
Percentage of "YES" responses	9%	6%	15%	Ø	28%	17%	56%
Total responses	1,042	769	226	7	18	6	16

This issue is important particularly since the focal point of this study is differential treatment of minorities with regard to serious crimes. It may be that the handling of misdemeanor or lesser offenses is different depending on the race of the offender. The present study cannot validate this assumption.

Probation officers were asked additional questions concerning treatment of minority youth by probation officers. In sum, these findings are relevant:

- o When asked if minorities were more or less likely to be handled informally by the probation office, 24% indicated they were less likely to be processed informally.

- o Twenty-eight percent (28%) also noted that minority youth are treated more severely than white youth going through the system. Substantial differences were observed when responses were examined by the race of the respondent. Proportionately, non-white probation officers were more likely to perceive more severe treatment than white respondents (56% versus 19%). Similarly, 56% of the non-white probation officers felt that minority youth were less likely to be informally handled compared to 14% of white respondents in the same category.

- o The implication of more severe, less informal handling of minorities may be related to responses concerning referral and detention in Juvenile Hall. Forty-eight percent (48%) of the probation officers indicated that more minority youth are brought to Juvenile Hall than white youth. In terms of detention, 43% felt that more non-white youth than white youth are detained in the hall. When asked why this situation occurs, these reasons were given, as shown in the following tables:

TABLE 40

JUVENILE HALL PLACEMENT OF MINORITY YOUTH
PROBATION SURVEY, 1982

QUESTION: Why are more minorities placed in Juvenile Hall?
(Total = 77)

Reasons	Percentage of Respondents
Commit more crimes	25%
Racial discrimination	20%
Involved in violent crimes	14%
Economic factors	14%
Less cooperative	10%

TABLE 41

DETENTION OF MINORITY YOUTH
PROBATION SURVEY, 1982

QUESTION: Why are more minorities detained in Juvenile Hall?
(Total = 63)

Reasons	Percentage of Respondents
Commit more crimes	21%
Racial discrimination	19%
Involved in violent crimes	19%
More likely to be processed	14%

IMPACT OF NON-ENGLISH SPEAKING JUVENILES

All personnel (except police) were asked if processing of juveniles is influenced by the juvenile's inability to speak English. The results of the survey questions are presented in Table 42.

Overall, more than one-third of system respondents believe that negative results may occur if juveniles do not have sufficient command of the English language. The implication is that the potential for unfair or differential treatment exists due to language barriers. Half of the defense attorneys and judges and district attorneys held this view.

Although interpreters are available at every stage in the juvenile system, almost half of the system personnel (49%) feel that the staffing level in the system is not adequate to meet the needs of non-English speaking juveniles and their families. Defense attorneys were most likely to hold this view (62%).

TABLE 42

EFFECT OF ENGLISH-SPEAKING ABILITY
ON PROCESSING OF JUVENILE CASES
SURVEY DATA, 1982

QUESTION: Although bilingual resources are available, do you think a juvenile's inability to speak English has a negative effect on case processing?

	Total	Probation	District Attorneys	Defense Attorneys	Judges/ Referees
Yes	36%	35%	50%	50%	50%
No	64%	65%	50%	50%	50%
Total	229	119	4	16	6

QUESTION: Do you think the staffing level in the juvenile justice system is adequate to meet the needs of non-English speaking juveniles?

	Total	Probation	District Attorneys	Defense Attorneys	Judges/ Referees
Yes	51%	53%	50%	37%	50%
No	49%	47%	50%	62%	50%
Total	234	204	6	16	6

USE OF RACIAL SLURS

Police and probation officers were asked how frequently they heard personnel in their agencies use racial slurs or make negative comments when talking to minority youth. Table 43 illustrates such occurrences are perceived relatively infrequently but more often noted by police (12% compared to 9%).

TABLE 43

NEGATIVE COMMENTS TOWARD MINORITY YOUTH
POLICE AND PROBATION OFFICERS
SURVEY DATA, 1982

QUESTION: When talking to minorities, how often have you heard personnel in your agency use racial slurs or make negative comments?

Frequency	Police	Probation
Very Often/Often	12%	9%
Sometimes	32%	21%
Seldom	42%	37%
Never	15%	32%
Total	772	225

Again, responses were influenced by the race of the respondent. For example, non-white police officers were twice as likely to indicate the "often" response (21%) than white officers (10%). Police officers who feel their department should develop responsive practices with regard to minorities were more likely to have observed racial slurs often (21% versus 9%) than those who do not feel police practices need revision.

Racial slurs are perceived by a small proportion of respondents, but they do occur. However, this is not sufficient to assume that the use of such language is associated with discriminatory practices in formal processing of cases. The evaluators observed police-juvenile interaction by riding with patrol officers in five departments. Observing during 16 shifts (2 p.m. to 10 p.m.) in these police departments did not allow for a comprehensive examination of police practices and therefore observations cannot be considered representative.

In a few instances, racial slurs in the form of derogatory names were used by officers, but not in talking to minorities. Conclusions could not be made regarding differential treatment toward minority and white youth.

In conclusion, the majority of personnel in the juvenile justice system believe that the proportion of minorities in the system can contribute

to negative attitudes toward minority youth. However, the link between attitudes and occupational behavior is not clearcut. Differential treatment of minorities may be occurring with regard to lesser offenses according to survey responses. Most system personnel believe that youth are treated similarly when the offenses are the same, although considerable differences were noted by race of the respondents and between system personnel and service providers.

The case study findings and the survey data support the contention that decisions in the system are primarily based on legalistic factors rather than ethnicity of youth. But the survey data also reveal the existence of racial bias and possible discrimination toward minority youth.

CHAPTER 4
CHANGE STRATEGIES

Change Strategies

SUMMARY

The juvenile justice system is not totally responsible for the underlying social conditions that precede minority youth involvement in criminal activity. However, as a major institution, the system should assume an obligation to ensure that youth are not treated differently because of their race. Cultural/ethnic differences exist and should be recognized and understood. Findings suggest that training of criminal justice professionals is needed to ensure sensitivity to conditions faced by minority groups that may affect subsequent processing by the system. Cultural awareness training should take place at all levels, e.g., from administrators to line personnel. Minority community leaders should provide input regarding the nature and scope of the training. Commitment by criminal justice administrators should be reflected by policy guidelines that define discipline measures in situations in which personnel behave differently toward youth because of their race. Additionally, system personnel and community service providers need to recognize that their efforts can be more effective if they understand their respective roles with regard to juvenile offenders.

DISCUSSION

The previous findings suggest that decisions in the juvenile justice system are based on legal factors rather than the ethnicity of the juvenile. However, differential treatment may exist with regard to lesser offenses. In addition, in Chapter 2 it was pointed out that minority youth involvement in crime is a complex issue emanating from interactive features of institutional racism and socioeconomic factors. Survey data implied that a small proportion of criminal justice personnel feel that the system accords differential treatment based on race. Findings of the State Commission on Crime Control and Violence Prevention indicate that various forms of racism exist in all institutions, e.g., educational, political, economic, as well as criminal justice. As the former Secretary of the California Health and Welfare Agency succinctly stated: "It is these conditions which precede minority disproportionate contact with the criminal justice system." (Obledo, 1981) The Commission recommends the elimination of racism in all institutions. Certainly that is an outcome toward which to strive. However, ways to impact underlying social conditions are beyond the scope of this report. It is recognized that the juvenile justice system is one institution of many and others must share responsibility for ameliorating the effects of discrimination.

Improvements toward this end include training of criminal justice personnel.

CULTURAL AWARENESS TRAINING

Police

Police officers were asked if their academy training prepared them for working in minority communities. Over one-third (36%) indicated that it had. Over one-half (56%) responded that it did not, either because cultural awareness was not covered or that classroom training is not adequate preparation for field work. (See Table 44)

Responsive Police Practices

The need for the development of responsive, non-discriminatory police practices in minority communities was also addressed. Twenty-five percent (25%) of those surveyed indicated a need for responsive police practices. Other responses indicated that an agency already was responsive or that such practices were not required. (See Table 45) Differences were noted when the responses were associated with other questions.

More non-white officers (43% vs. 22%) see a need for responsive police practices as do officers who work in areas with more than 30% minority population (30% vs. 16%). Also, those who believe police develop negative attitudes toward minorities are likely to cite a need for department changes (71% vs. 48%).

Half of those surveyed (50%) believe that minority officers working in minority areas contribute to positive relations between the police and the minority community. Non-white officers were more likely to respond this way than white officers (60% vs. 52%).

TABLE 44

NEED FOR CULTURAL AWARENESS TRAINING
POLICE SURVEY, 1982

QUESTION: Did your academy training prepare you for work in minority communities?

Response	Percentage of Respondents
Yes	36%
No	47%
Had no training	9%
Don't know	7%
Total respondents:	791

TABLE 45

NEED FOR RESPONSIVE POLICE PRACTICES
SURVEY DATA, 1982

QUESTION: Do you think there is a need for this department to develop responsive, non-discriminatory police practices in minority communities?

Response	Percentage of Respondents
Yes	25%
No	75%
Total respondents:	770

Academy Training

It should be noted that the San Diego Regional Law Enforcement Academy does not currently offer training courses related to cultural awareness/differences. Since the academy became regional (September, 1980), this kind of instruction has not been part of the curriculum. Although individual police agencies may provide in-service training, this is not sufficient.

Probation

The majority of probation officers (68%) indicated they have received cultural awareness training related to probation tasks. But 86% of those surveyed said there is a continued need for this type of training in the Probation Department.

District Attorneys

Only one deputy district attorney noted that training had been received. No staff in this agency felt that there is a need for this in the District Attorney's Office. However, two respondents felt that police and probation officers would benefit from cultural awareness training.

Defense Attorneys

Less than one-quarter of defense attorneys have had cultural awareness courses (24%), but 71% believe that defense attorneys should be involved in such training. The majority of those attorneys surveyed feel that personnel in other agencies should also receive training regarding cultural awareness as indicated by the percentage citing a need:

Police	94%
Probation	71%
District Attorneys	53%
Judges	71%

Juvenile Court

With regard to their own training, six judges/referees indicated that they have had no formal training in cultural awareness. However, one-half (3) felt their experience has made them aware of ethnic differences. Responses were evenly divided regarding whether or not other component personnel needed cultural awareness training.

Community Service Providers

Administrators of juvenile service agencies were most likely to feel that all personnel in the juvenile justice system should have training related to cultural awareness/differences. Eighty percent (15 of 17) expressed this feeling with regard to police, probation, district attorneys and judges. Ninety-four percent (16 of 17) believed that defense attorneys need such training.

CHANGE STRATEGIES

It is evident that basic cultural differences exist between racial minority groups and the dominant majority group population. There are fundamental differences among various minority groups as well. These distinctions contribute to different responses to the same laws and legal mechanisms. Sensitivity to cultural differences is imperative if juvenile justice personnel are to bear their responsibility for addressing minority involvement in the system. The majority of justice personnel are white and in general do not share the cultural experiences of minority communities. There is a "distance" in physical, emotional, political, and cultural terms between the personnel and the people they serve. (Fortson, 1981) One of the ways that the distance gap can be bridged is through training of criminal justice personnel.

It is suggested that all criminal justice agencies review their needs concerning cultural awareness training and take appropriate steps to ensure that administrators as well as line personnel are provided with such training. Information can be offered through workshops and/or seminars. Local minority community leaders and organizations should provide input to the nature of the training.

The nature of the training should go beyond the "public relations" emphasis and incorporate information concerning both past and present discriminatory practices in American social and economic life. Administrators in justice agencies should show a commitment to cultural awareness by implementing policy guidelines that include discipline measures for unacceptable behavior toward minorities.

Juvenile justice personnel should develop regular working relationships with personnel in schools, the Department of Social Services, the Public Health Department, and community organizations and agencies that serve youth. Also, efforts should be directed toward periodic community meetings attended by system personnel, service providers and community members. All of these individuals are involved in the behavior and lives of young people and change strategies are least effective when done in isolation.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

METHODOLOGY

CASE TRACKING STUDY

To compare the response of the juvenile justice system to white and minority youthful violent offenders, 614 juveniles were tracked from initial arrest/contact to final case disposition. Offenses tracked included willful homicide, rape, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, grand theft, and motor vehicle theft. Study results allow:

1. The development of a profile of the juvenile offender.

2. A review of juvenile justice system processing of offenders.

3. An analysis of critical decision points of the system applied to white and minority offenders.

A sample was selected of juvenile arrests/contacts occurring from July 1 to December 31, 1980 in five law enforcement jurisdictions. Additionally, the time frame was recent enough to reflect current practices of juvenile justice component agencies.

Sample Selection

The five law enforcement jurisdictions (El Cajon, National City, Oceanside, San Diego City, and San Diego County Sheriff) were selected using the following criteria:

1. Geographic location (representative of all areas of the region).

2. Sufficient minority population living in these jurisdictions.

3. Volume of juvenile contacts for the offense categories being examined.

4. Seriousness of juvenile offenses (i.e., a significant proportion of the total juvenile arrests in the county for crimes less frequently committed, such as homicide and rape, occurred in these jurisdictions).

5. Rate of referral to probation (high enough to provide a sufficient number of cases reaching juvenile court disposition).

These five agencies represent 81% of all juvenile contacts for the seven major offenses studied and 80% of the probation referrals during 1980.

A probability sample of juvenile arrests/contacts was selected from the arrest and citation register at each law enforcement agency. To obtain a comparable number of violent and property offenses, all crimes against persons were included and 25% of the property offenders were chosen.

The following is a breakdown of study cases from each agency:

Jurisdiction	Number	Percent
El Cajon	32	5%
National City	52	8%
Oceanside	31	5%
San Diego	342	56%
Sheriff	157	26%
Total	614	

If a juvenile was charged with more than one offense at the time of arrest, the most serious crime was coded based on the Uniform Crime Report (UCR) hierarchy of offenses. If an individual had more than one arrest during the study period, a single arrest was randomly selected as the tracking offense.

Data Collection

Data were collected from the following sources:

1. Arrest and citation register (demographic and arrest information).
2. Probation files (socioeconomic variables, factors related to the tracking offense and other probation referrals).
3. District Attorney records (case disposition for remands to adult court).
4. Juvenile Hall Index (juvenile arrests).
5. Law enforcement records (prior and subsequent juvenile arrests not in probation records).
6. Department of Social Services (welfare status of family).
7. Population (1980 Census).

The form used for collecting data is presented on page 93. Data elements include:

1. Age.
2. Sex.
3. Race.
4. Socioeconomic status.
5. Living situation.
6. Disposition by law enforcement, probation and courts.
7. Prior and subsequent arrests, probation referrals, petitions, true findings and commitments.
8. Attitude of juvenile.
9. Pre-adjudication detention and reason for detention.
10. Charges at arrest, on petition and at disposition.
11. Social factors identified by probation.
12. Intervention strategies.
13. Gang affiliation.
14. Case processing time.
15. Number of companions.
16. Remands to adult court.

Seriousness Index. A seriousness scale was devised to measure the severity of delinquent behavior in terms of the type of offenses committed and the frequency of occurrence. A score is calculated based on the following four-point scale and multiplied by the number of arrests or true findings.

Felony Crimes Against Persons	4
Other Felonies	3
Misdemeanors	2
Status Offenses/Infractions	1
Probation Violations	1

MULTIPLE REGRESSION

Lawrence Cohen (1975) describes step-wise multiple regression as follows:

> "In step-wise multiple regression each variable is entered separately into the equation, whereas in a traditional multiple regression solution, all variables are entered simultaneously. The resulting equation takes the following form:
>
> $$Y = a + b_1X_1 + b_2X_2 + \ldots\ldots\ldots + b_kX_k + e$$
>
> Where: Y represents the dependent variable
> a is a constant
> $b_1 \ldots_k$ are least square regression coefficients
> $X_1 \ldots_k$ represent various predictor variables such as age, sex, and race.
> e is the residual error term representing unknown variation.
>
> With step-wise multiple regression each variable is entered on the basis of its ability to account for the greatest amount of variation in the criterion. Hence, this procedure enters variables into the equation on the basis of their ability to increase the explanatory (predictive) power of the equation. The R^2 which results from these two types of regression analyses have similar interpretations."

To use nominal or attribute data for characteristics of offenders and dispositions, it was necessary to create dichotomous dummy variables to be entered into the equation. For example, law enforcement disposition was coded into two categories: referral to probation (1) and other (0).

0=Unknown
Blank=Not Applicable

CASE TRACKING FORM

I.D. NUMBER 1—— 1 5

JUVENILE NAME & ALIAS _____ DOB: _____

ARREST REPORT NO. _____ PROBATION FILE NO. _____

1. LAW ENFORCEMENT

A. AGENCY — 6
1 = SDPD 4 = Oceanside
2 = SDSO 5 = El Cajon
3 = National City

B. RACE OF SUSPECT — 7
1 = White 5 = Chinese
2 = Mexican-American 6 = Japanese
3 = Black 7 = Filipino
4 = Indian 8 = Other

C. AGE (As of arrest date) — — 9

D. SEX — 10
1 = Male 2 = Female

E. DATE OF ARREST 11— — — — — — 16

F. ARREST CHARGE (highest level charge) — 17
1 = homicide 5 = burglary
2 = rape 6 = grand theft
3 = robbery 7 = MV theft
4 = agg. assault

G. PLACEMENT AFTER ARREST — 18
1 = JH (Date _____)
2 = released
3 = other _____

H. L.E. DISPOSITION (verify) — 19
1 = turned over to another LE agency
2 = Juv. Court/Probation referral
3 = Handled by Dept.
4 = Originally diverted then referred to Probation
5 = Other _____

I. NO. OF COMPANIONS — — 21

J. COOPERATION — 22
1 = Answered questions re: incident
2 = Refused to answer questions
0 = Unknown

K. ATTITUDE — 23
1 = Good (remorse, concern)
2 = Fair
3 = Bad (unconcerned)
0 = Unknown
Specify: _____

L. RACE OF VICTIM (See 1B) — 24

M. L.E. DISPO DATE 25— — — — — — 30

N. ARREST IN RESPONSE TO CRIME REPORT — 31
1 = Yes 2 = No

NOTE: For cases not referred to Probation, get mother's name & DOB from arrest report at agency — list on separate sheet.

2. PROBATION

A. DATE CASE REC'D 32— — — — — — 37

B. FACE SHEET INFO — THIS OFFENSE
(List mother's name & DOB on separate sheet.)

1. Living Situation — — 39
01 = mother
02 = father
03 = mother & father
04 = mother & stepfather
05 = father & stepmother
06 = guardian
07 = other relative
08 = friend
09 = self
10 = other _____

2. Parents Occupation
Father _____ — 40
Mother _____ — 41
1 = employed
2 = unemployed

C. PROBATION DISPO
Date 42— — — — — — 47
Result — 48
1 = counsel & close
2 = informal supervision
3 = informal/then petition filed
4 = petition filed
5 = petition rejected-counsel & close
6 = petition rejected-informal
7 = Other _____

D. REASON FOR REJECTION OF PETITION — 49
1 = insufficient evidence
2 = victim refuses to prosecute
3 = other

E. STATUS AT INTAKE — 50
1 = ward
2 = alleged (non) ward
3 = parolee
4 = other _____

F. HIGHEST CHARGE ON PETITION — — 52
1-7 (see 1F)
8 = other felony
9 = misdemeanor
11 = infraction
10 = status offense
12 = other _____

3. COURT PROCESS

A. DETENTION HEARING
Date 53— — — — — — 58
Result — 59
1 = Juv. Hall 5 = home supervision
2 = Hillcrest 6 = released-case dismissed
3 = jail 7 = FTA—BW
4 = own home 8 = other _____

REASON FOR DETENTION (from court order)
1 = likely to flee — 60
2 = danger to others — 61
3 = violation of court order — 62
4 = no parent or guardian — 63
5 = protection of minor — 64

B. DEFENSE ATTORNEY — 65
1 = appointed 2 = retained

C. FITNESS HEARING
Date 66— — — — — — 71
Result — 72
1 = adult court 2 = juvenile court
3 = other _____

ID NUMBER 1— — — — 2 5

D. FINDING — 6
1 = admit/uncontested/guilty plea
2 = contested-true finding /guilty finding
3 = admit & transfer
4 = contested-true finding court & transfer
5 = dismissed
6 = transfer
7 = FTA—BW
8 = other _____

DATE OF FINDING HEARING 7— — — — — — 12

1 = detention — 13
2 = readiness
3 = trial
4 = fitness hearing (707)
5 = other _____

CHARGES (IF TRUE FINDING) (See 2F) — — 15

E. DISPOSITION (FROM COURT ORDER) — — 17
1 = CYA
2 = YCC
3 = Juv. Hall 10 = home-ward w/o conditions
4 = camp 11 = non-ward probation
5 = Lightning Unit 12 = no supervision w/conditions
6 = 24 hour school 13 = FTA—BW
7 = Vision Quest 14 = Other _____
8 = foster home
9 = home-ward w/conditions (e.g., work project, restitution, costs, counseling)

DATE OF DISPOSTION HEARING 18— — — — — — 23

1 = detention 3 = trial — 24
2 = readiness 4 = dispositional hearing
5 = other _____

TIME ORDERED (MAXIMUM DAYS)
INSTITUTION 25— — — 27
PROBATION 28— — — 30
999 = indefinite

F. PROBATION RECOMMENDED — — 32
(See Codes Section E)

G. TOTAL DAYS DETAILED PRIOR TO DISPO
- Juvenile Hall 33___ ___
- Foster Home 35___ ___
- Home Supervision 37___ ___
- Other_____ ___39

4. SOCIAL STUDY

A. PROBLEMS IDENTIFIED
- Drugs ___40
- Alcohol ___41
- Lack of guidance/supervision ___42
- Poor living quarters ___43
- Recent situational factors at home (e.g., divorce) ___44
- Disharmony in family ___45
- Beyond control of parents ___46
- Psych. evaluation requested ___47
- Medical factors affecting behavior ___48
- School attendance ___49
- Grades ___50
- School behavior ___51
- Bad attitude ___52
- Other offenses ___53
- Peer associations ___54
- Other_____ ___55

B. POSITIVE FACTORS
- Good attitude ___56
- Grades ___57
- Good family relations ___58
- No school behavior problems ___59
- No priors ___60
- Accessory to crime ___61
- Employed ___62
- Attendance ___63
- Appropriate parental guidance ___64
- Receiving counseling ___65
- Good health ___66
- Other _____ ___67

C. PRIORS IN SOCIAL STUDY
- Felony ___ ___69
- Misdemeanor ___ ___71
- Status ___ ___73
- Infraction ___ ___75
- Traffic ___ ___77
- Probation Violation ___ ___79

5. SUPERVISION CLASSIFICATION

1 = minimum 3 = maximum ___80
2 = medium 4 = intensive

ID NUMBER 1___ ___ ___ 3 5

6. FORMAL REFERRAL TO AGENCY

(1 year) ___6
1 = yes 2 = no
Agency_____

TYPE OF SERVICES ___7
1 = none (didn't appear)
2 = counseling
3 = alcohol programs
4 = employment/training program
5 = other_____

7. CASES WITHOUT PETITIONS

A. ATTITUDE Subject ___8
1 = good Parent ___9
2 = bad
3 = neutral

B. PARENTAL PLANS
- 1 = handle at home ___10
- 2 = counseling ___11
- 3 = change in placement ___12

C. REASON FOR INFORMAL DISPO
- Good attitude ___13
- Not timely ___14
- Restitution paid ___15
- Moving ___16
- Low maturity level ___17
- DA discretion ___18
- Lack of signif. record ___19
- Lack of serious charge ___20
- Can't locate minor ___21
- Counseling ___22
- Parent handling ___23
- Other_____ ___24

8. GANG AFFILIATION NOTED ___25

1 = yes 2 = no

9. ALL PRIOR OFFENSES

	Arrest: Same Agn.	Arrest: Other Agn.	Prob Ref	Pet Rej	Pet Filed	True Finding	CYA	Camp
F								___33
M								___41
S								___49
I								___57
Same								___65
Prob								___73
Viol								

ID NUMBER 1___ ___ ___ 4 5

10. PRIOR OFFENSES (1 yr.)

	Arrest	Prob Ref	Pet Rej	Pet Filed	True Finding	CYA	Camp
F							___12
M							___19
S							___26
I							___33
Same							___40
Prob							___47
Viol							

11. SUBSEQUENT OFFENSES (1 yr.)

	Arrest	Prob Ref	Pet Ref	Pet Filed	True Finding
F					___52
M					___57
S					___62
I					___67
Same					___72
Prob					___77
Viol					

12. WELFARE

1 = General Relief, AFDC 3 = other ___78
2 = food stamps 4 = no

ARREST DATE	CHARGE	AGENCY	PROB. REF.	PET. REJ.	PET. FILED	FINDING	CYA	CAMP

Appendix B

ADDITIONAL TABLES

TABLE 46
PLACEMENT IN JUVENILE HALL BY OFFENSE AND ETHNICITY CASE STUDY, JULY – DECEMBER 1980

	WHITE		MINORITY	
	Violent	Property	Violent	Property
Placed in Hall	54 (53%)	56 (34%)	149 (68%)	50 (42%)
Released	48	110	70	69
Total	102	166	219	119
	$X^2 = 9.63$ Significant at .01 level		$X^2 = 21.56$ Significant at .01 level	

TABLE 47
PLACEMENT IN JUVENILE HALL BY PRIOR ARRESTS AND ETHNICITY, CASE STUDY, JULY – DECEMBER 1980

	WHITE		MINORITY	
	Prior Arrests	No Priors	Prior Arrests	No Priors
Juvenile Hall	31 (44%)	8 (21%)	53 (58%)	9 (21%)
Released	39	30	39	33
Total	70	38	92	42
	$X^2 = 5.76$ Significant at .05 level		$X^2 = 15.18$ Significant at .01 level	

TABLE 48
PLACEMENT AFTER ARREST BY SERIOUSNESS SCORE OF TOTAL PRIOR ARRESTS AND ETHNICITY CASE STUDY, JULY – DECEMBER, 1980

	NONE		LOW/MEDIUM		HIGH	
Placement	White	Minority	White	Minority	White	Minority
Juvenile Hall	8 (21%)	9 (21%)	18 (33%)	28 (51%)	13 (87%)	25 (68%)
Released	30	33	37	27	2	12
Total	38	42	55	55	15	37
	$X^2 = .17$ No Significant difference		$X^2 = 3.74$ Significant at .05 level		$X^2 = 1.98$ No Significant Difference	

TABLE 49
LAW ENFORCEMENT DISPOSITION, BY OFFENSE AND ETHNICITY, CASE STUDY, JULY – DECEMBER 1980

	WHITE		MINORITY	
	Violent Offense	Property Offense	Violent Offense	Property Offense
Handled in Department	15	38	31	26
Referred to Probation	86 (85%)	130 (77%)	189 (86%)	93 (78%)
Total	101	168	220	119
	$X^2 = 2.41$ No significant difference		$X^2 = 3.32$ No significant difference	

TABLE 50
LAW ENFORCEMENT DISPOSITION BY PRIOR ARRESTS AND ETHNICITY CASE STUDY, JULY – DECEMBER 1980

	WHITE		MINORITY	
	No Priors	1 or More Priors	No Priors	1 or More Priors
Handled in Department	13	9	15	11
Referred to Probation	25 (66%)	61 (87%)	27 (64%)	80 (88%)
Total	38	70	42	91
	$X^2 = 6.92$ Signficiant at .01 level		$X^2 = 10.20$ Significant at .01 level	

TABLE 51
PROBATION DISPOSITION BY ARREST CHARGE AND ETHNICITY, CASE STUDY, JULY – DECEMBER, 1980

	WHITE		MINORITY	
	Violent	Property	Violent	Property
Counsel & Close/ Informal	30	44	54	33
Petition Filed	55 (65%)	85 (66%)	130 (71%)	60 (65%)
Total	85	129	184	93
	$X^2 = .03$ No Significant Difference		$X^2 = 1.08$ No Significant Difference	

TABLE 52
PROBATION DISPOSITION BY PRIOR ARRESTS * AND ETHNICITY, CASE STUDY, JULY – DECEMBER, 1980

	WHITE		MINORITY		TOTAL	
	No Priors	1 or More Priors	No Priors	1 or More Priors	No Priors	1 or More Priors
Counsel & Close/ Informal	17	19	17	23	34	42
Petition Filed	8 (32%)	41 (68%)	8 (32%)	57 (71%)	16 (32%)	98 (70%)
Total	25	60	25	80	50	140
	$X^2 = 9.54$ Significant at .01 level		$X^2 = 12.44$ Significant at .01 level		$X^2 = 22.17$ Significant at .01 level	

*Prior arrest information is based on a sample of cases.

TABLE 53
PROBATION DISPOSITION BY PLACEMENT AFTER ARREST AND ETHNICITY, CASE STUDY, JULY – DECEMBER, 1980

	WHITE		MINORITY		TOTAL	
	Juvenile Hall	Other	Juvenile Hall	Other	Juvenile Hall	Other
Counsel & Close/ Informal	22	52	51	36	73	88
Petition Filed	85 (79%)	55 (51%)	138 (73%)	52 (59%)	223 (75%)	107 (55%)
Total	107	107	189	88	296	195
	$X^2 = 18.59$ Significant at .01 level		$X^2 = 5.40$ Significant at .05 level		$X^2 = 22.34$ Significant at .01 level	

TABLE 54
CHARGE ON PETITION, BY ETHNICITY
CASE STUDY, JULY – DECEMBER 1980

	WHITE	MINORITY
Homicide	3	3
Rape	1	2
Robbery	13 (9%)	60 (31%)
Aggravated Assault	25 (17%)	43 (23%)
Burglary	52	36
Grand Theft	8	3
Motor Vehicle Theft	15	12
Total Person Crimes	**42 (29%)**	**108 (57%)**
Total Property Crimes	**75 (52%)**	**51 (27%)**
Other Felonies	4	2
Misdemeanor	22 (15%)	30 (16%)
Total	**143**	**191**

TABLE 55
PROBATION RECOMMENDATION, BY ARREST CHARGE AND ETHNICITY, CASE STUDY, JULY – DECEMBER 1980

	WHITE		MINORITY	
	Violent Offense	Property Offense	Violent Offense	Property Offense
Out-of-Home Placement	19 (48%)	26 (38%)	62 (61%)	21 (46%)
Other	21	43	39	25
Total	40	69	101	46
	$X^2 = 1.01$ No Significant Difference		$X^2 = 3.18$ No Significant Difference	

TABLE 56
PROBATION RECOMMENDATION BY STATUS AT INTAKE AND ETHNICITY, CASE STUDY, JULY – DECEMBER 1980

	WHITE		MINORITY	
	Ward	Non Ward	Ward	Non Ward
Institution	22 (92%	23 (27%)	44 (81%)	39 (43%)
No Institution	2	61	10	51
Total	24	84	54	90
	$X^2 = 31.74$ Significant at .01 level		$X^2 = 20.12$ Significant at .01 level	

TABLE 57
REDUCTION IN CHARGES FOR COURT CASES BY ETHNICITY, CASE STUDY, JULY – DECEMBER, 1980

	Initial Charge		Petition Charge		Disposition Charge	
	White	Minority	White	Minority	White	Minority
Homicide	2	4	3	3	2	2
Rape	5	4	1	2	1	1
Robbery	29	94	13	60	5	18
Aggravated Assault	67	118	25	43	4	17
Other Felony	169	120	78	53	34	42
Misdemeanor	0	0	22	30	80	77
Dismissed/Other	0	0	1	0	17	34
Total	272	340	143	191	143	191

TABLE 58
COURT DISPOSITION, BY OFFENSE SERIOUSNESS* AND ETHNICITY, CASE STUDY JULY – DECEMBER 1980

	WHITE Weapons/Injury	MINORITY Weapons/Injury
Out-of-Home Placement	17 (57%)	41 (64%)
Other	13	23
Total	30	64

$X^2 = .47$
No Significant Difference

*Offenses involving injury and/or weapons.

TABLE 59
COURT DISPOSITION BY CHARGE AT FINDING, AND ETHNICITY, CASE STUDY, JULY – DECEMBER, 1980

	WHITE			MINORITY		
	Violent	Other Felony	Misdemeanor	Violent	Other Felony	Misdemeanor
Institution	11 (100%)	20 (61%)	14 (20%)	31 (89%)	27 (69%)	17 (23%)
No Institution	0	13	55	4	12	56
Total	11	33	69	35	39	73

TABLE 60
INSTITUTION TIME ORDERED, BY ETHNICITY, CASE STUDY, JULY – DECEMBER, 1980

Institution Time	WHITE	MINORITY
3 months or less	14 (30%)	15 (19%)
3-6 months	15	28
6 months to 1 yr.	3	5
Indefinite	14 (30%)	29 (38%)
Total	46	77

$X^2 = 2.01$
No Significant Difference

TABLE 61
PROBATION TIME ORDERED BY CHARGE AT FINDING, AND ETHNICITY, JULY–DECEMBER, 1980

	WHITE			MINORITY		
	Violent	Other Felony	Misdemeanor	Violent	Other Felony	Misdemeanor
None	4 (33%)	4 (12%)	12 (15%)	18 (45%)	5 (12%)	8 (10%)
1 Year	0	2	57	1	8	54
2 or More Years	8 (67%)	28 (82%)	11 (14%)	21 (53%)	29 (69%)	17 (22%)
Total	12	34	80	40	42	79

END