

Perceptions of Law Enforcement Officers towards Juvenile Offenders

Spencer Evelyn Dr. Medha Talpade
Department of Psychology
Clark Atlanta University, Atlanta Georgia



Background

Over recent years, juvenile crime has vastly multiplied. To overcome this pivotal, a popular solution to rigidify laws relating to juvenile justice was implemented without taking into consideration the factors at risk. The study is being done in hopes of finding better solutions to improve the juvenile justice systems regarding disciplining of juvenile offenders to reduce crime recidivism rates.

Purpose

To learn how disciplinary punishments for juvenile offenders are perceived by police officers.

Research Question

Q: What are the perceptions of police officers about the disciplinary punishments for juvenile offenders?

Essence of Findings: Perceptions related to juvenile crime varied based on the logic behind the crimes committed. The participants responses revealed that the aid of other resources such as BBBS programs reduced the rate of recidivism rather than imprisonment.

Participants

The sample included 3 female officers and 2 males. 3 officers served 40 years as law enforcement while 2 served 25 years. The ages of the participants ranged from 40-60 years of age.



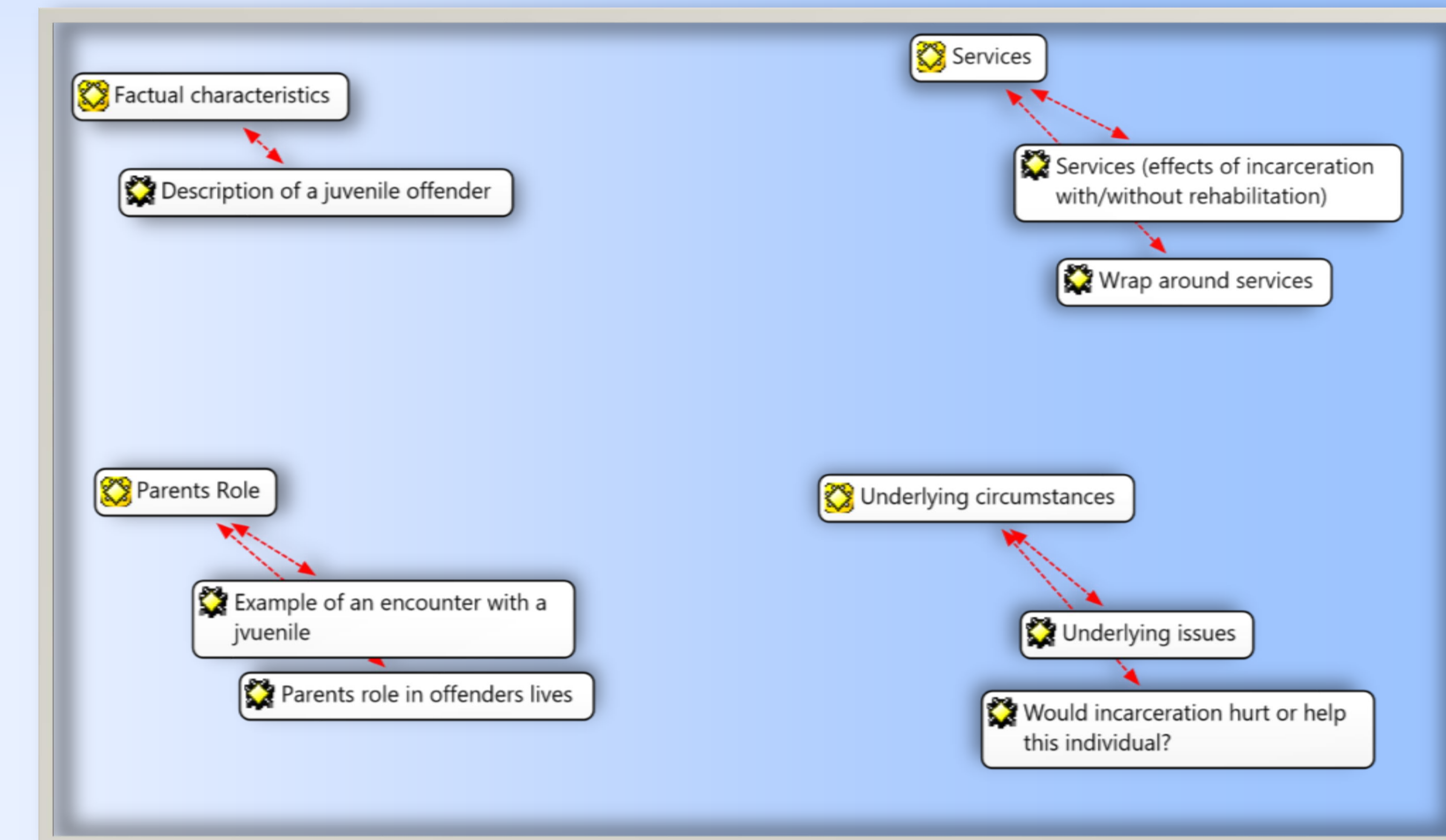
Procedure

One on one interviews were conducted in person and via telephone. The interview lasted for an hour. The session was recorded via tape recorder. During the interview participants were asked questions regarding the topic of juvenile crime.

Interview Questions

- according to your definition, what is a juvenile offender?
- in your experience, what are the most common juvenile crimes committed?
- can you describe situations in which offenders should be tried as adults?
- can you describe situations in which offenders should **not** be tried as adults?
- what are your feelings about incarceration in general?
- what are other options to incarceration?
- can you describe a specific incident you have encountered with a juvenile offender?
- if you were in a position where you had all possible resources available, what would you change regarding juvenile offenders?
- in your opinion, what can the government/society/families do to reduce juvenile offending?

Results



References

- Katsiyannis, A., & Archwamety, T. (1997). Factors related to recidivism among delinquent youths in a state correctional facility. *Journal of Child and Family Studies*, 6(1), 43-55. doi:http://dx.doi.org.ezproxy.auctr.edu:2051/10.1023/A:1025068623167
- Munford, R., & Sanders, J. (2016). Finding meaningful support: Young people's experiences of "risky" environments. *Australian Social Work*, 69(2), 229-240. <https://doi.org.ezproxy.auctr.edu:2050/10.1080/0312407X.2015.1133682>
- Rosenblatt, J. A., Rosenblatt, A., & Biggs, E. E. (2000). Criminal behavior and emotional disorder: Comparing youth served by the mental health and juvenile justice systems. *The Journal of Behavioral Health Services & Research*, 27(2), 227-37. doi:http://dx.doi.org.ezproxy.auctr.edu:2051/10.1007/BF02287315
- Spaccarelli, S., Coatsworth, J. D., & Bowden, B. S. (1995). Exposure to serious family violence among incarcerated boys: Its association with violent offending and potential mediating variables. *Violence and Victims*, 10(3), 163-82. doi:http://dx.doi.org.ezproxy.auctr.edu:2051/10.1891/0886-6708.10.3.163
- Wasserman, G. A., McReynolds, L. S., Schwalbe, C. S., Keating, J. M., & Jones, S. A. (2010). Psychiatric disorder, comorbidity, and suicidal behavior in juvenile justice youth. *Criminal Justice and Behavior*, 37,