

Intergenerational Transmission of Convictions for Different Types of Offences



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Cambridge Study in Delinquent Development



To what extent is there intergenerational transmission of offending?

This question is addressed in the Cambridge Study in Delinquent Development (CSDD)

- a longitudinal study of 411 London males (generation 2)
- their parents (generation 1)
- and their children (generation 3)

Characteristics of the CSDD Sample



- 411 South London males [generation 2]
- Attending 6 schools in a working class area
- Aged 8-9 in 1961-62, mostly born in 1953
- 357 White, British origin [87%]
- 14 Irish, 12 African-Caribbean, 12 from Cyprus, 16 other White
- 94% working class
- 6% no father, 1% no mother

Traditional British White urban lower class sample

Data Collected at Different Ages



- G2 males interviewed at ages 8, 10, 14, 16, 18, 21, 25, 32, and 48
- Whole sample interviewed at all ages except 21 and 25, when sub-samples were interviewed
- G1 parents interviewed once a year when boy aged 8-15
- Peer ratings at ages 8 and 10
- Teacher ratings at ages 8, 10, 12, and 14
- Criminal records up to 56 (searches 1964 to 2011)
- Multiple constructs and multiple data sources

Social Interview with G2 Males



- Age 18: 389 out of 410 alive [95%]
- Age 32: 378 out of 403 alive [94%]
- Age 48: 365 out of 394 alive [93%]
- Men who are hardest to interview tend to be the most antisocial
- At age 48, out of 411 men:
 - 17 had died [13 convicted]
 - 5 not traced
 - 24 refused(32 died up to age 56; 23 convicted)

Social Interview with G3 Children



- 691 G3 children with known name and date of birth
- Age at least 18 (born up to 1995, interviewed 2004-2013)
- 38 not eligible: 6 dead, 3 disabled, 20 father refused, 7 father dead, 2 child doesn't know G2 male is his father
- 653 eligible for interview
- 551 interviewed (84.4%): 291 males and 260 females
- 84.8% of males and 83.9% of females
- Median age of interview 25, most 23-27
- 39 child refused, 33 parent refused, 13 child not found, 14 elusive, 3 aggressive/problematic
- 534/624 in UK/Ireland interviewed (85.4%)
- 17/29 abroad interviewed (58.6%)

Criminal Record Searches of G3



- 691 G3 children with known name and date of birth
- Median birth year 1981, most born 1977-1985
- Searches from 1994 to 2012
- Median age last searched = 29; most between 25 and 33
- Total 656 searched: 343 males and 313 females
- Focus on G3 males searched: 95/343 convicted (28%)
- For comparison, 160 out of 409 (39%) G2 males at risk were convicted up to age 32
- In the analysis, convictions of the G3 male were compared with convictions of his G2 father up to same age
- Analyses took account of clustering of G3 children in families

Cambridge Study in Delinquent Development

Generation 1

Parents interviewed once a year when boy aged 8-15

Generation 2

411 boys interviewed 9 times up to age 48 (93%)

Generation 3

551 interviewed (84%): 291 males and 260 females

Intergenerational Transmission of Convictions



- 1. To what extent do convictions of the G2 males predict convictions of the G3 males? The intergenerational transmission of different types of offences is studied. Because the G3 males were searched at different ages, the convictions of the G2 male were only studied up to the age searched of the G3 male (median = 29).
- 2. What variables are significantly related to the convictions of G2 males and to the convictions of G3 males? These are potential mediators. (measured when the G2 male was 32)
- 3. To what extent does the predictive power of G2 convictions decrease after controlling for these potential mediators?

Prevalence of G2 and G3 convictions up to median age 30

Offence	% G2	% G3	Z
Burglary	15.7	3.5	5.42*
Theft of vehicle	16.6	3.5	5.71*
Serious theft	24.2	5.5	6.89*
Shoplifting	6.1	5.8	0.17
Minor theft	25.1	9.6	5.36*
Assault	7.3	12.0	2.08*
Offensive Weapon	4.1	4.7	0.38
Threats	3.2	7.3	2.41*
Violence	14.0	17.5	1.26
Fraud/Receiving	10.8	5.2	2.70*
Motoring	3.8	8.2	2.43*
Drugs	1.7	9.6	4.48*
Total (18)	38.5	27.7	3.01*

Percent of G3 convicted versus G2 convicted or not

Offence	% G2NC	% G2C	OR
Burglary	2.1	11.1	5.90*
Theft of vehicle	2.8	7.0	2.62
Serious theft	3.5	12.0	3.82*
Shoplifting	5.6	9.5	1.78
Minor theft	7.0	17.4	2.81*
Assault	11.0	24.0	2.55
Offensive Weapon	3.6	28.6	10.57*
Threats	6.6	27.3	5.28*
Violence	12.9	45.8	5.72*
Fraud/Receiving	4.9	8.1	1.71
Motoring	7.3	30.8	5.67*
Drugs	8.9	50.0	10.23*
Total (18)	18.0	43.2	3.46*

Possible Mediators Between G2 and G3 Convictions

Mediator	G2OR	G3OR
<u>Parental</u>		
Young father	2.89*	1.55
Young mother	4.48*	1.84*
Separated from father	2.06*	1.93*
Divorced	2.37*	1.00
Depressed father	1.86*	0.72

Possible Mediators Between G2 and G3 Convictions

Mediator	G2OR	G3OR
<u>Family</u>		
Physical punishment	2.49*	1.90*
Poor supervision	1.89*	3.57*
<u>Socioeconomic</u>		
Low take-home pay	1.86*	2.57*
Large family size	2.13*	2.08*
Low social class	1.04	2.19*
High unemployment	4.16*	3.01*
<u>Housing</u>		
Poor housing	2.01*	2.21*
Renting	2.30*	3.47*
In London	1.93*	2.17*

Possible Mediators Between G2 and G3 Convictions

Mediator	G2OR	G3OR
<u>Individual</u>		
High impulsiveness	2.14*	1.18
Anti-establishment attitude	3.27*	2.46*
Aggressive attitude	1.83*	1.33
Alcoholic (CAGE)	2.31*	1.50
<u>Behaviour</u>		
Heavy drinking	2.63*	1.74
Binge drinking	3.80*	1.59

Mediation Analysis



- What mediators reduce the strength of the relationship between G2 and G3 convictions?
- No mediators: OR = 3.46*
- Renting: OR = 2.94*
- Add poor supervision: OR = 2.66*
- Add anti-establishment attitude: OR = 2.50*
- Add physical punishment: OR = 2.40*
- Add separated from father: OR = 2.36*
- These mediators could be targets for intervention

Targets for Intervention



- Socio-economic deprivation: low income, poor housing (renting)
- Poor child-rearing: poor supervision, physical punishment
- Disrupted families: separation from father
- Anti-establishment attitude
- Target criminal families to reduce intergenerational transmission
- Focus on childhood risk factors in these families to identify children who are especially at risk

Possible Intervention Programmes



- Parent training (to improve child-rearing and parental supervision)
- Cognitive-behavioural skills training (to reduce antisocial attitudes and increase self-control)
- Vocational training (to reduce unemployment and socioeconomic deprivation)
- Other programmes designed to reduce offending (e.g. drug programmes) would be highly desirable (see Farrington & Welsh, 2007, for reviews of effective programmes).

Conclusions



- 1. The intergenerational transmission of convictions was significant and strong. It was strongest for carrying an offensive weapon, burglary, motoring offences, and threatening behaviour.
- 2. The degree of transmission was reduced considerably after controlling for important mediators, especially the family renting rather than owning their home (when the G2 male was age 32), poor parental supervision by the G2 male, anti-establishment attitudes (of the G2 male at age 32), physical punishment by the G2 male, and separation of the G3 son from his G2 father.

Conclusions (continued)



- 3. The identified mediators suggest risk factors that could be targeted to reduce the intergenerational transmission of offending: socio-economic deprivation, poor child-rearing, disrupted families, and anti-establishment attitudes.
- 4. What results would be obtained for the intergenerational transmission of self-reported offending? The results will be presented tomorrow.
- 5. What results would be obtained for the intergenerational transmission of other types of antisocial behaviour, e.g. binge drinking, gambling, sexual promiscuity?
- 6. What results would be obtained for G2 and G3 females?

For More Information



- See published article:
- Farrington, D. P., Ttofi, M. M. and Crago, R. V. (2017) Intergenerational transmission of convictions for different types of offences. *Victims and Offenders*, 12, 1-20.
- Contact dpf1@cam.ac.uk