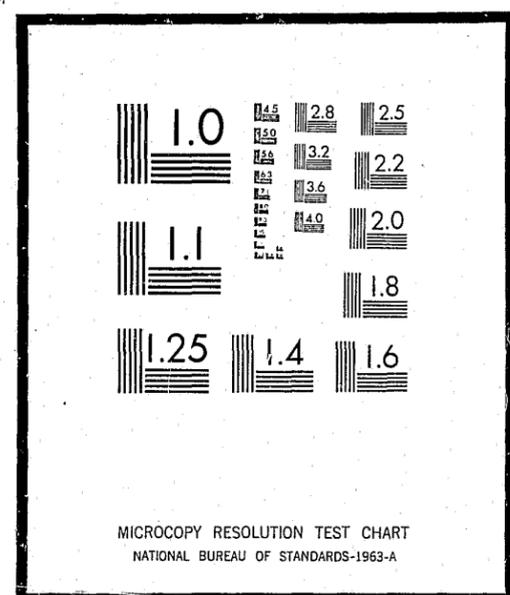


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## ARKANSAS' JUVENILE OFFENDERS: A PROFILE

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Preface

Due to a mutual concern for the problem of juvenile delinquency, the Arkansas Juvenile Reception and Classification Center and the Arkansas Rehabilitation Research and Training Center joined in a cooperative research endeavor. One product of that cooperation is represented in the profile of Arkansas juvenile offenders presented in this report.

Research indicated that Arkansas offenders have definite potential for social success. Intelligence and personality data tended toward "average" or "normal" expectations. For the most part, offenses did not involve weapons or, indeed, any other signs of serious aggression against people. The problems identified are consistent with those long associated with delinquency--poverty backgrounds and poor family relationships.

In completing the report, several areas for additional comparative research emerged. Further comparisons among Arkansas juvenile offenders by nature of offense, number of offenses, etc. need to be completed.

In the completion of the monograph, we were ably assisted by many people. Paul Zelhart of the Arkansas Rehabilitation Research and Training Center and staff members of the Arkansas Juvenile Reception and Classification Center deserve credit for their efforts in originating the study. Charles Futrell and Nancy Woodman provided valuable assistance in the preparation of the data. Gail Oakes designed and typed the final draft of the monograph.

The monograph itself is a response to the recognized need for background information on juvenile delinquency in Arkansas. Procedures for collecting and

analyzing the data were developed in a cooperative agreement (1969) between the Arkansas Juvenile Reception and Classification Center and the Arkansas Rehabilitation Research and Training Center. The purpose of the research was to develop a statistical description of juvenile offenders referred to the Classification Center.

The Classification Center was involved in the selection of tests and development of questionnaires as well as the preparation of data for computer analysis. The Research and Training Center assisted in the selection of instruments and completed the computer analysis of the data. Before discussing the profile of 847 juvenile offenders, the report presents a brief description of the Arkansas Juvenile Reception and Classification Center.

ARKANSAS' JUVENILE OFFENDERS: A PROFILE  
Background of Research

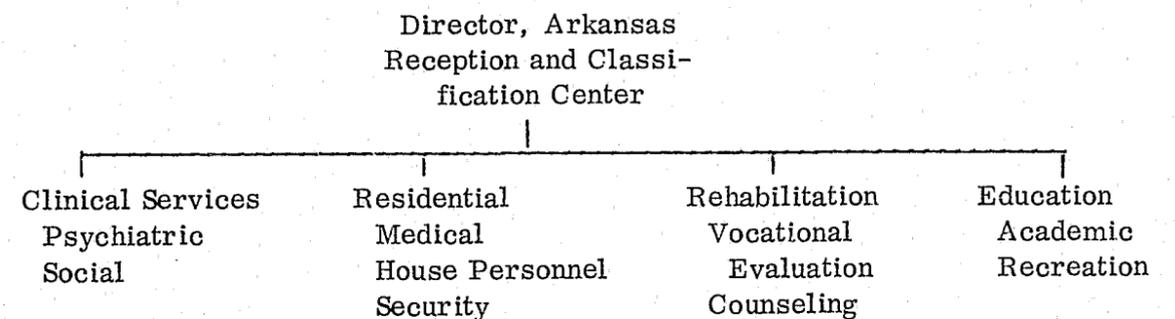
Arkansas Juvenile Reception and Classification Center

The Arkansas Juvenile Reception and Classification Center was established in 1968 by Act 20 of the Arkansas State Legislature. Primary duties of the Center involve the reception, orientation, classification, and adjustment evaluation of all juveniles committed to the Arkansas Juvenile Training School Department. Through a cooperative agreement with the Arkansas Juvenile Training School Department, the Classification Center is operated by the Arkansas Rehabilitation Services on the grounds of the Benton Unit of the Arkansas State Hospital.

Program Structure

The Center's activities involve clinical, residential, rehabilitation, and educational services for juvenile offenders. Figure 1 outlines these basic elements of the Classification Center's program.

Figure 1  
 Classification Center Program Structure



In carrying out its responsibilities, the Classification Center is directed by a rehabilitation supervisor and staffed by medical and psychiatric personnel, a

psychologist, social workers, an educational specialist, rehabilitation counselors, recreation supervisors, and house parent personnel.

The Classification Center serves youth from two sources of referrals, (a) those committed to the Center by the Commissioner of Juveniles for diagnosis, classification, and appropriate recommendations (wards of the courts), and (b) those referred by other agencies and institutions of Arkansas for diagnostic purposes.

#### Center Procedures

The Center operates with a team approach to differential diagnosis. As indicated in Figure 1, trained personnel from various disciplines assist in the orientation and evaluation of youthful offenders during their stay in the Classification Center.

In order to arrive at a complete evaluation, Center personnel become acquainted with each juvenile's problem from the following sources of clinical information:

1. Family, health, social, and educational history.
2. Full scale physical evaluation including a neurological screening of sensory-motor abilities
3. Psychological evaluation of intellectual and personal areas.
4. Speech, communication, and hearing evaluation and analysis
5. Psychiatric evaluation
6. Educational evaluation
7. Specific professional disciplines for consultation; orthopedic, neurological, and ophthalmology

Based on the clinical data, staff decisions are made regarding an appropriate placement for each young person. The assignment is based primarily on the sex of the offender and on the compatibility of institutional resources and individual needs. Each placement is made with the rehabilitation of the young person the foremost concern.

#### Juvenile Placement Alternatives

Separate male and female training school facilities exist. Pine Bluff accommodates males who are reacting to acute situational stress but who are otherwise normally adaptive. Males whose diagnosis indicates more serious anti-social tendencies are placed at Wrightsville. In Alexander, the girls' training school works with girls from both backgrounds, those showing normal adaptive potential and those showing marked anti-social tendencies.

In addition to the training schools, other placement alternatives exist; parole with return to family, parole with foster home placement, recommendation for observation in state hospital, enrollment in boy's ranch, placement in unwed mothers home, deferred recommendations for health reasons, further evaluation at the Classification Center, private youth institution, admittance to children's colony, and rehabilitation service institutions.

#### Center Enrollment

Monthly enrollment averages 56 students; enrollment may range from about 35 students per month to as high as 90 students per month.

#### Research Plan for the Classification Center Data

The cooperative arrangement between the Arkansas Rehabilitation Research and Training Center and the Arkansas Juvenile Reception and Classification Center

called for the collection and analysis of Classification Center data on juvenile offenders. Information on students enrolled in the Classification Center from 1969-1971 serves as the basis for this report of characteristics of Arkansas juvenile offenders. Data cover a wide range of areas including biographical, intelligence, personality (clinical and self-report), drug experiences, and clinical recommendations. Comments regarding the types of data collected and the procedures for data gathering are covered in the sections to follow.

#### Data Collection Procedures

Data were collected on most juvenile offenders who were processed by the Classification Center from 1969 to 1971. Through interviews, the social worker collected biographical data, social history data, drug experience data, and drug attitude information. Reports from the medical staff, doctor and nurse, provided personal health information.

To gather personality data, group administrations of the Sixteen Personal Factor Questionnaire Form E (16PF) were scheduled. Since some students stayed at the Center only a short time, they were not included in group personality testing sessions.

A staff psychologist administered the Wechsler Intelligence Scale to most of the students. In this report, IQ levels are reported for 597 students on two instruments, the Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children and the Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale.

Classification Center records provided information on other aspects of the classification process. For example, staff decisions were recorded regarding clinical recommendations for treatments and student placements.

To provide information for research, one member of the Classification Center staff translated impressions, decisions, findings, etc. from student files into responses to a series of questions provided by the Arkansas Rehabilitation Research and Training Center. These questions covered biographical, social, psychological and intellectual areas necessary for providing a basic profile of the Arkansas juvenile offender.

#### A Sample of Arkansas Juvenile Offenders

In the years 1969-1971, the Arkansas Rehabilitation Research and Training Center gathered data on 847 juvenile offenders who were processed by the Classification Center.\* For the purposes of this report, 833 juveniles were divided into eight groups based on three variables; sex, race, and offense history (nonrecidivist or recidivist). Prior research has established that sex, race, and offense variables are important for distinguishing among juvenile offenders. Table 1 presents a breakdown of the total sample.

A profile of the 833 juveniles is presented in the report. Significant group differences are discussed as they emerge in the data and summarized in the final section of the monograph.

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\*Due to a short stay at the Classification Center or other complicating factors, some juveniles were not included in various analyses. Hence, some tables are based on a total number less than 847.

TABLE 1  
Comparison Groups

Sex	Race	Recidivism	Number
Male	White	Nonrecidivist	252
Male	White	Recidivist	63
Male	Black	Nonrecidivist	207
Male	Black	Recidivist	73
Female	White	Nonrecidivist	114
Female	White	Recidivist	23
Female	Black	Nonrecidivist	91
Female	Black	Recidivist	10
			833

Data Sources

The profile of juveniles processed by the Classification Center is based on the following variables:

A. Background Information

1. Marital Status
2. Age at first admission
3. Type of offense
4. Weapon used in offense
5. Uniform prior record
6. Place of residence
7. Number of siblings

8. Father's occupation
9. Mother's occupation
10. Marital Status of parents
11. Work experience of juvenile

B. Clinical information

1. Type of friends
2. Perception of adults
3. Personal grooming habits
4. Parental discipline patterns
5. Symptomatology

C. Personality (self-report)

Sixteen Personality Factor Questionnaire

- |                       |   |
|-----------------------|---|
| Factor A              | Reserved vs. Outgoing                   |
| Factor B              | Dull vs. Bright                         |
| Factor C              | Lower vs. Higher Ego Strength           |
| Factor E              | Submissiveness vs. Dominance            |
| Factor F              | Desurgency vs. Surgency                 |
| Factor G              | Weaker vs. Stronger Ego Strength        |
| Factor H              | Shy vs. Venturesome                     |
| Factor I              | Tough-minded vs. Tender-minded          |
| Factor L              | Trusting vs. Suspicious                 |
| Factor M              | Practical vs. Imaginative               |
| Factor N              | Artlessness vs. Shrewdness              |
| Factor O              | Self-assured vs. Apprehensive           |
| Factor Q <sub>1</sub> | Conservative vs. Experimenting          |
| Factor Q <sub>2</sub> | Group Adherence vs. Self Sufficiency    |
| Factor Q <sub>3</sub> | Low vs. High Strength of Self-Sentiment |
| Factor Q <sub>4</sub> | Low vs. High Ergic Tension              |

D. Intelligence

1. Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children (WISC, Age 15 and under)
2. Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale (WAIS, Age 16 and over)

For the various sources of information, appropriate graphs, tables, etc. are presented for the total group of juvenile offenders. However, when significant differences appear among the eight groups presented, these differences are discussed

in detail. Hence, the report gives both a total view of delinquency in Arkansas and a detailed description of differences by racial, sex, or offense history distinctions. The legal definition of juvenile delinquency provides the organizational scheme for presenting Classification Center data.

#### Presentation of Results

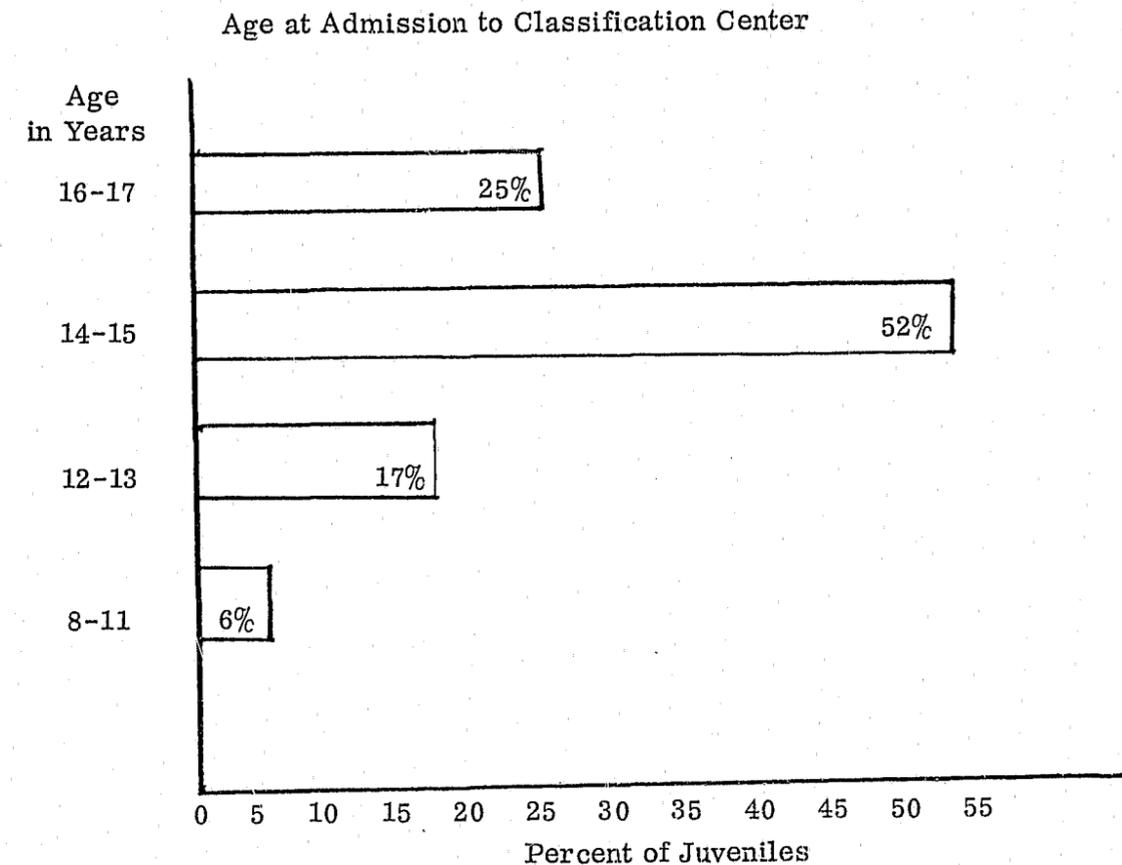
##### Definitions and Background

Most appropriately, "juvenile delinquency" is a legal term rather than a psychological or sociological term. The court may determine that someone is a juvenile offender if the young person is between the ages of eight and eighteen and involved in any one of the following offenses: (a) committing any act that if done by a person over 18 would be judged as a misdemeanor or felony, (b) deserting one's home without cause or parental consent, (c) being absent from school without cause (truancy), and (d) being disobedient to parents or lawful guardians.

Several problem areas are included in the legal definition of delinquency. The definition refers to disturbances in (a) behavior patterns, (b) personal development, and (c) social relationships, which are the three areas that serve as the major categories for organizing the results in this report.

Before reviewing Classification Center data on behavior patterns, personal development and social relationships of juvenile offenders, background information on the young people is presented. Table 2 presents information on the age of the sample of 833 juvenile offenders at the time they were admitted to the Classification Center.

TABLE 2



One-half of the sample were aged 14 to 15; over three quarters were 14 years old or older. Because of the age range of the sample, nearly all of the juveniles (99%+) were single and reported no type of employment (88%) at the time of admission to the Classification Center.

The only group difference that emerged was the age difference between recidivists, average age of 14.8 years old, and nonrecidivists, average age of 14.3 years old.

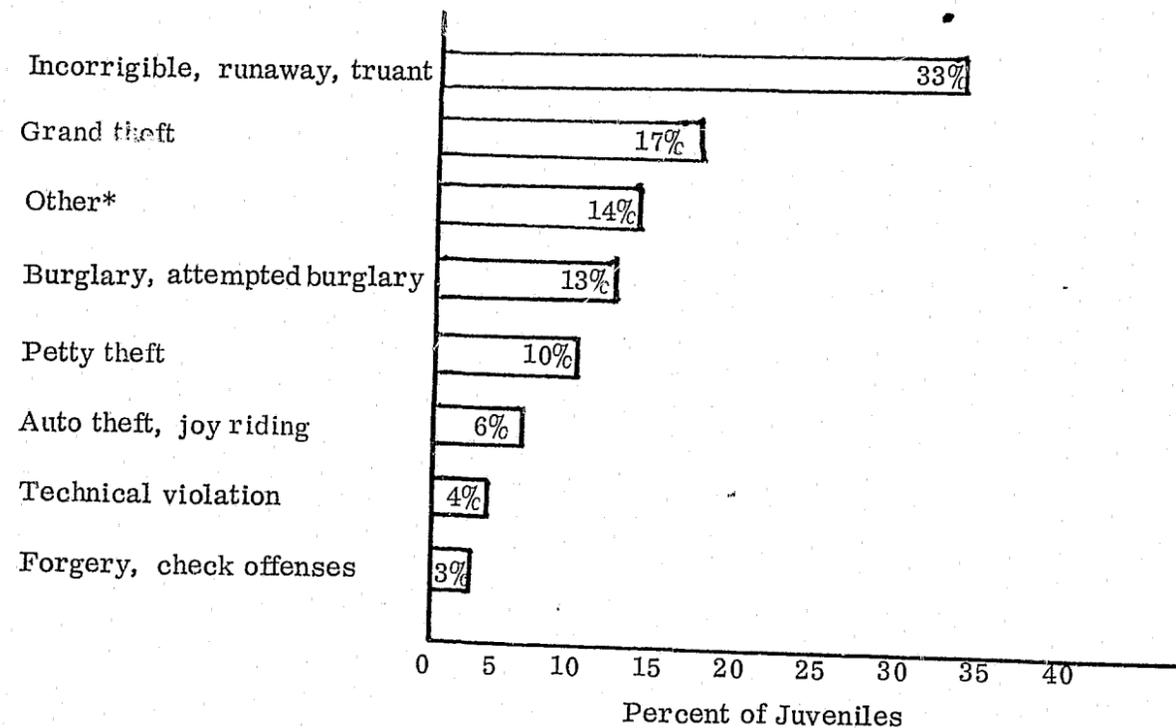
##### Behavior patterns

Disturbed behavior patterns among the young people are reflected in two types of data, (1) the prior record of the individual and (2) staff observations of behavior at the Classification Center.

The committing offenses for the total group of juvenile offenders are reported in Table 3.

TABLE 3

Committing Offense  
Total group of juvenile offenders (N=847)



For the total group, committing offenses tended toward incorrigibility, theft, and burglary. Incorrigibility (33%) included nearly twice as many offenders as the next largest category. Obviously, the number of young people committed to the training school department for incorrigibility, runaway, truancy, etc., is a matter for some concern. Since it is neither a misdemeanor nor a felony for an adult, incorrigibility

\*The "other" category in Table 2 includes a number of different offenses that involved only a few juveniles. For example, about 3% of the entire group of offenders were committed for serious aggressive crimes against people (murder, manslaughter, assault).

can only be understood as a juvenile offense. Research should be undertaken to investigate the wisdom of grouping youngsters who have been labeled incorrigible with those who have committed offenses of a misdemeanor or felony nature.

In terms of incorrigibility, one significant difference developed between males and females in the sample. As indicated in Table 3a, females were considerably more likely to be committed for incorrigible, runaway, or truancy offenses than were males.

TABLE 3a

Incorrigible versus other offenses  
Males and Females

	Incorrigible, runaway, truancy offenses	Other Offenses
Males	19%	81%
Females	66%	34%

<sup>a</sup>N=586  
<sup>b</sup>N=236

Regarding "other" offenses, nearly three fifths (58%) of the males were involved in burglary or theft related offenses as compared with 13% of the females.

Based on the offense data, it would appear that male delinquency differs from female delinquency. The evidence suggests that female delinquency tends toward home and school conflicts while male delinquency tends toward either incorrigibility

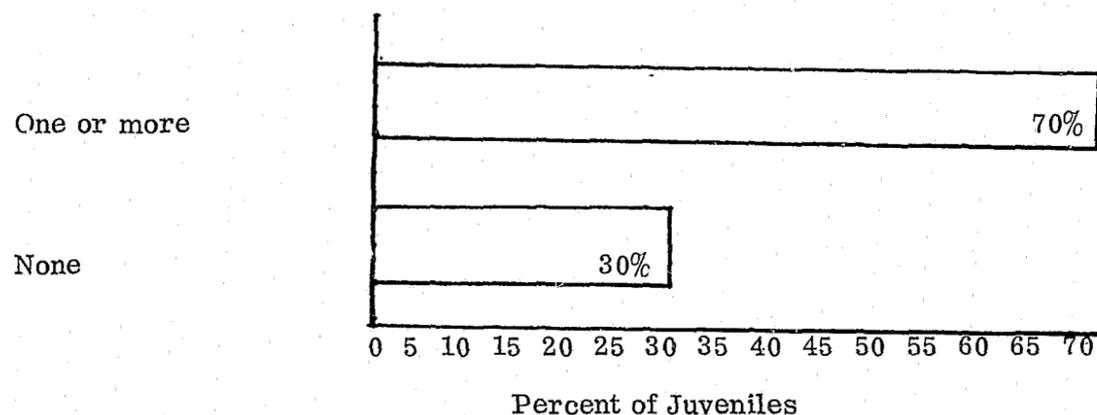
or aggression against property. Further research will be completed to determine the extent to which this apparent male-female difference in offenses is reflected in personality development and social perceptions.

Prior record data on the juveniles indicated that most of them (94%) had not used a weapon of any sort in past or present offenses. As figures in Table 4 indicate, more than two thirds of the nonrecidivists (70%) had one or more delinquent contacts.

TABLE 4

Delinquent contacts-Nonrecidivists<sup>a</sup>

Number of delinquent contacts



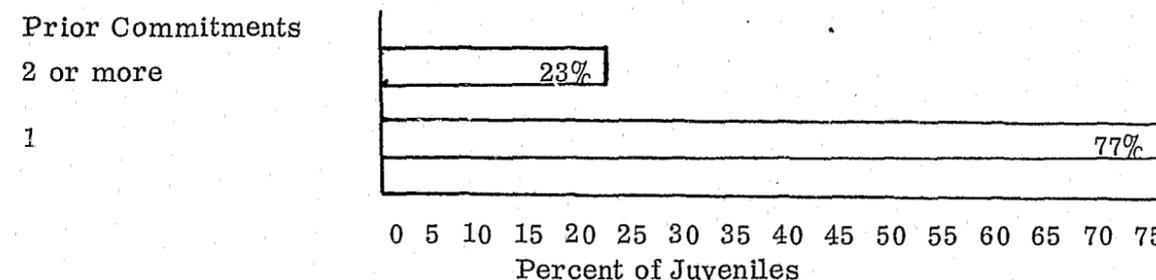
<sup>a</sup>N=664

As shown in Table 5, recidivists naturally had at least one prior commitment (77%) but almost one quarter had two or more prior commitments (23%).

Results portray the Arkansas juvenile offenders as being involved in first-time non-weapon offenses, i. e., most of the juveniles are non-recidivist and did not use a weapon in their offense. Nonrecidivists may represent a less serious

Table 5

Recidivists-Prior Commitments<sup>a</sup>



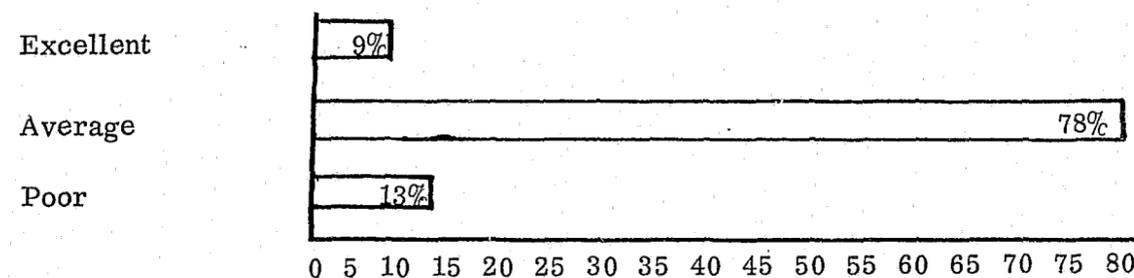
<sup>a</sup>N=169

type of offender than the recidivist, particularly the recidivist who reported two or more prior commitments. Additional research comparing the recidivist with two or more prior commitments and the nonrecidivist juvenile will be completed.

Offense history data on the young people can be supplemented with behavioral observations of Classification Center staff. For example, most of the juvenile offenders were judged to be average in their personal grooming (Table 6). No group differences between recidivist and nonrecidivists emerged.

Table 6

Personal grooming of juveniles



More systematic observations of the behavior of the young people were made. These observations were based partly on personal history data for the juvenile but mostly on observations of the young person during his stay at the Classification Center. Table 7 presents a profile of behavioral symptoms of the juveniles in four categories, disturbance of feeling, disturbance of thought, disturbance of behavior, and disturbance of function.

In general, the disturbances reported by the Classification Center staff reflect those that would be consistent with delinquency; for example, angry (49%), inferior (33%), withdrawn (32%), and aggressive (22%); and those that would be consistent with feeling uncertain about one's future status in the juvenile system; for example, apprehensive (59%), depressed (27%), and disorganized (53%).

Measures of intellectual and personality development are presented in the next section.

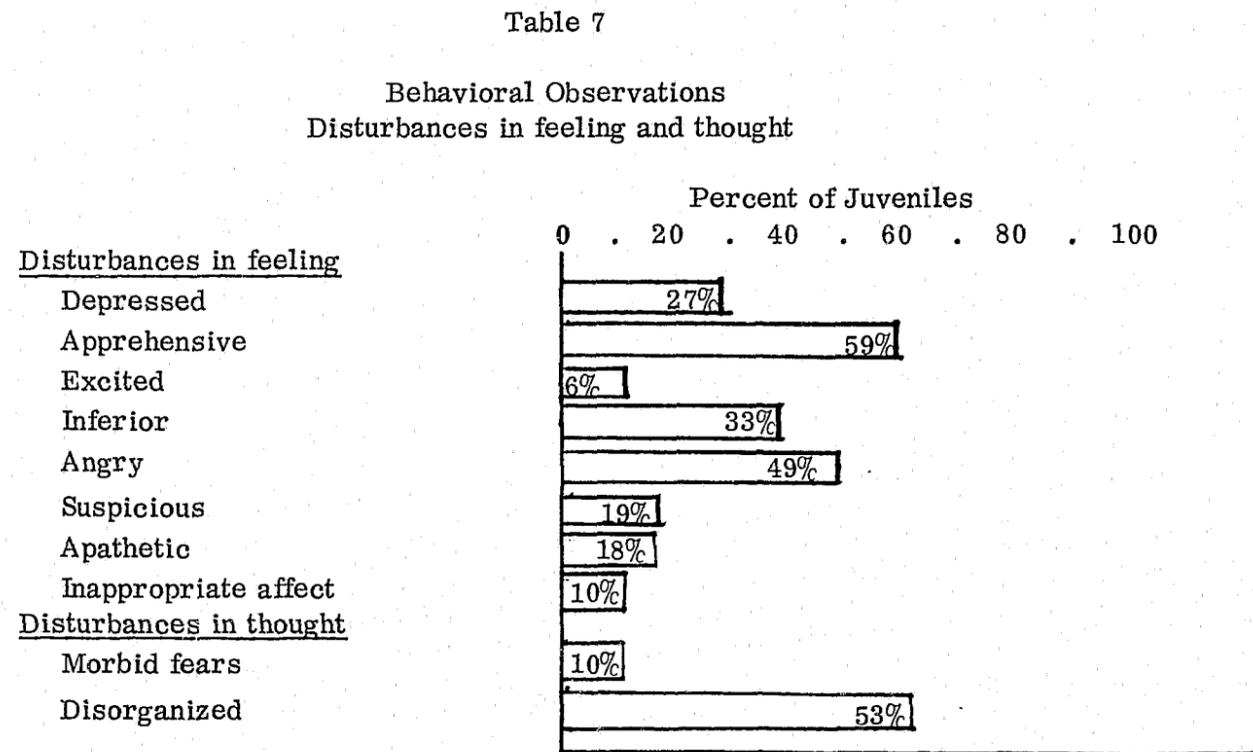
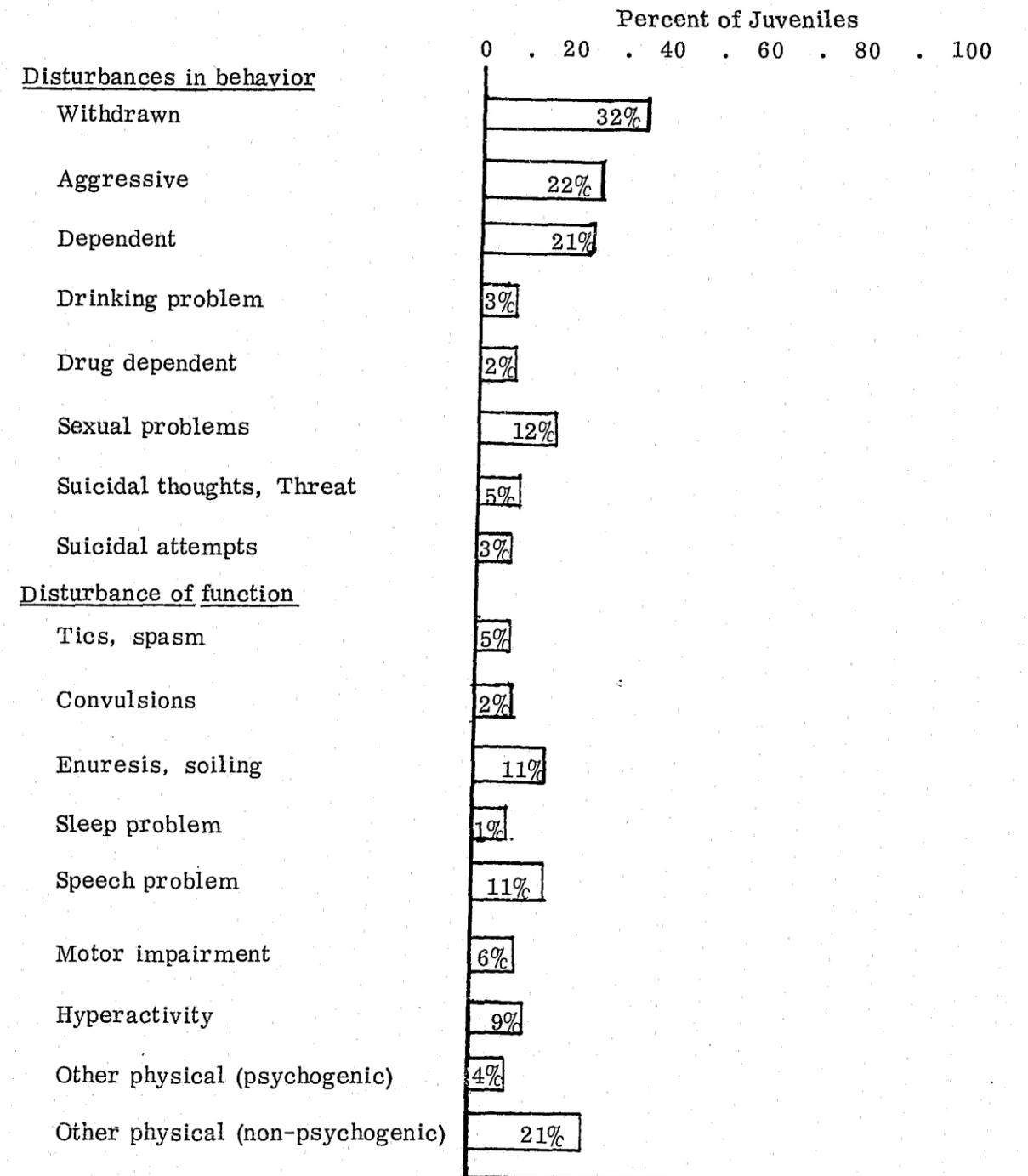


Table 7a  
Behavioral Observations  
Disturbances in behavioral and function



## Personal development

Intelligence. Results of intelligence testing are presented in Table 8. The Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children (WISC) was administered to youth under the age of 16. Young people 16 and older were given the Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale (WAIS). Average performance and verbal ability scores based on the WISC and WAIS are reported.

The levels of intellectual functioning (or general ability to learn) for Arkansas juvenile offenders can be characterized as average to below average. As evidenced in Table 8, wide discrepancies between performance and verbal abilities are noticeably absent for all groups. Performance IQ and Verbal IQ consistency is particularly apparent for Black offenders. Hence, the reported IQ data does not reflect the usual trend for performance ability to exceed verbal ability among juvenile offenders and other young people from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Though no consistent differences in intellectual functioning occurred in either age, sex, or recidivist-nonrecidivist categories, results showed a consistent racial difference in measured intelligence. White offender groups had higher performance and verbal scores than Black offender groups.

Personality profile. The Sixteen Personality Factor Questionnaire (16PF) (Cattell & Eber, 1964) was administered to 534 juvenile offenders. The results shown in Table 9 provide a global profile of 534 Arkansas juvenile offenders. For each scale of the 16 PF, a mean score of 5.5 represents performance of a normal adolescent group. From results on the 16PF, a paper and pencil personality test, it can not be said that delinquents as a whole differ from adolescents in general.

TABLE 8

Average Wechsler Intelligence Scores Performance (P) and Verbal (V) ability

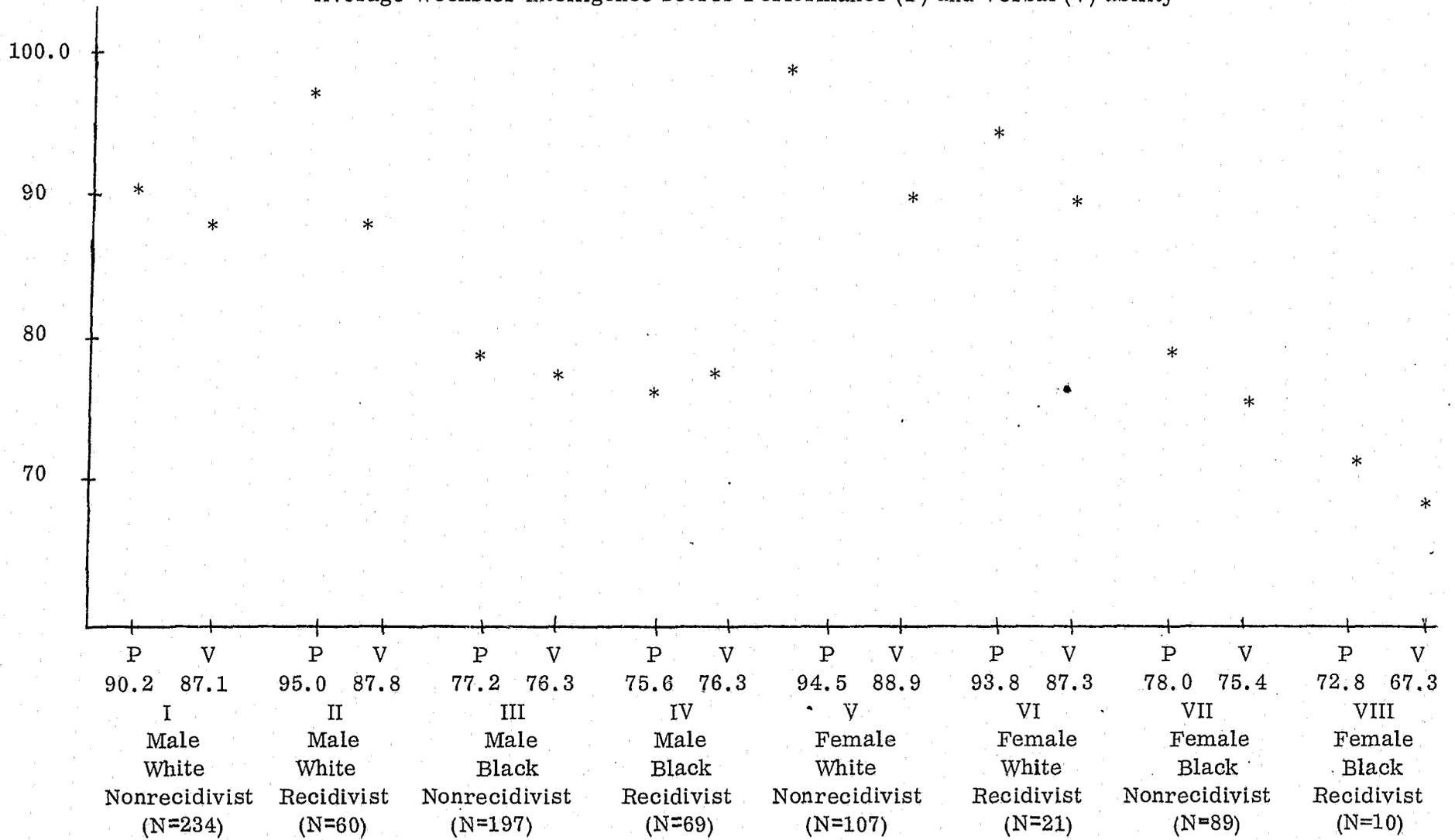
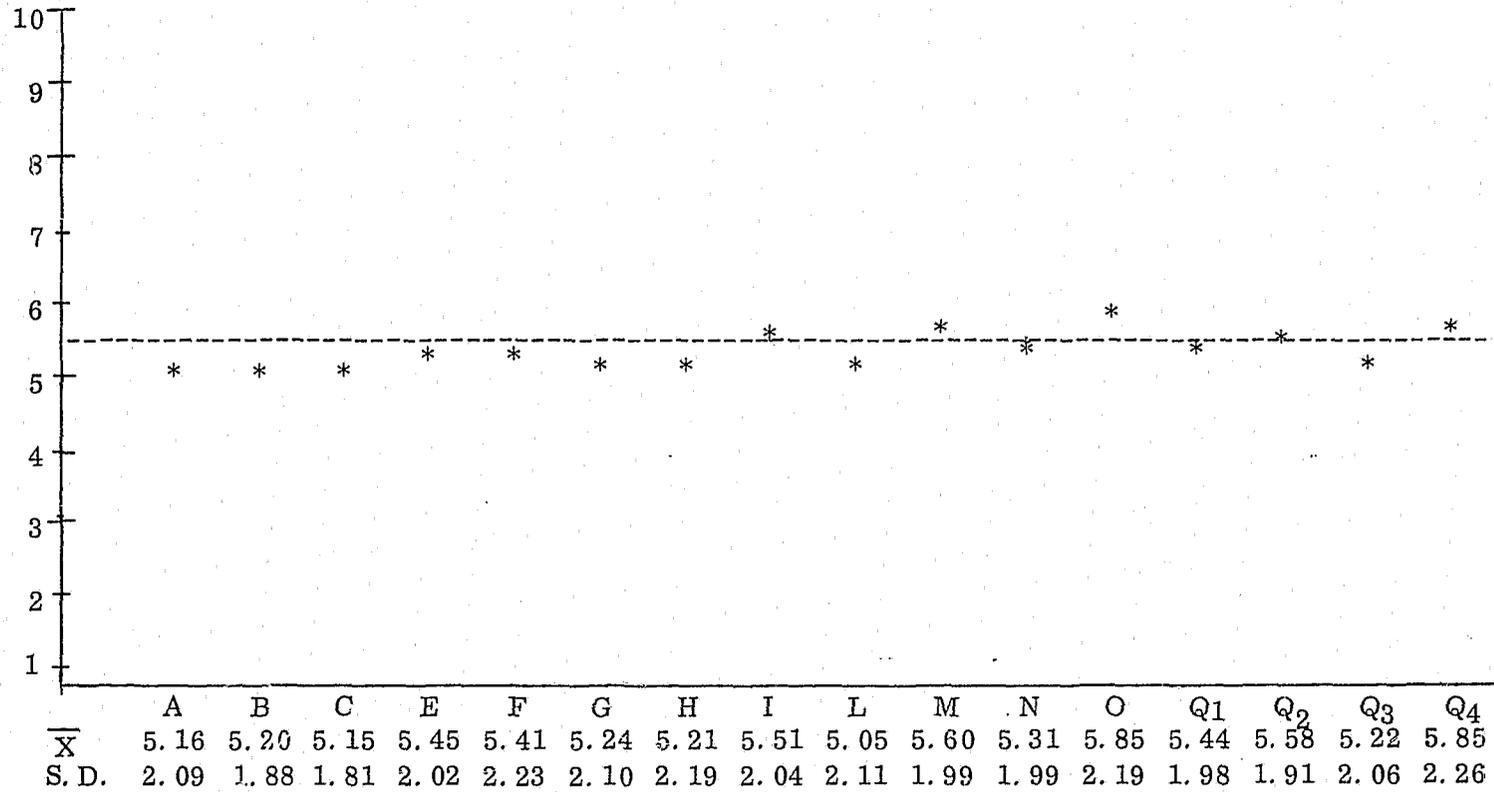


Table 9

Total Sample Profile of 534 Juvenile Offenders  
Based on Sixteen Personality Factor Questionnaire



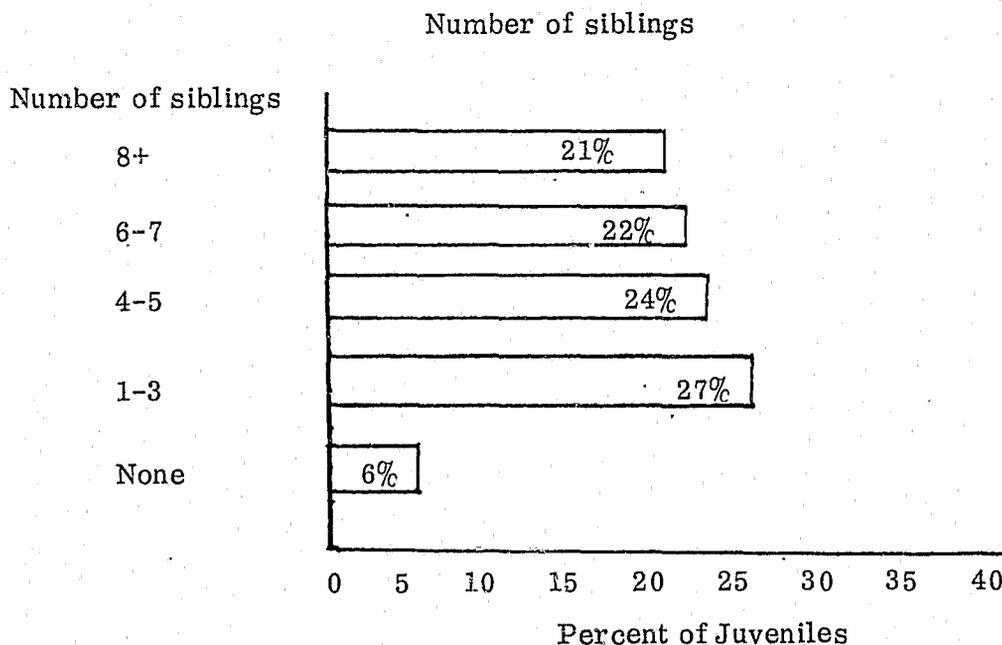
The 16PF profile of Arkansas juvenile offenders is comparable to normative information reported for a national sample of approximately 1700 juvenile delinquents (Cattell, Eber, & Tatsuoka, 1970). Though the Arkansas and national delinquent profiles are similar, Arkansas delinquents were more apprehensive and tense than juvenile offenders in the national sample.

### Social relationships

Aspects of the delinquent family situation as described in the research (Roessler, 1972) tend to include the following: large families, low socio-economic status, broken homes, and inconsistent discipline (smothering or abusive).

One indication of possible strain in the homes of juvenile offenders in Arkansas is reflected in family size as shown in Table 10.

Table 10

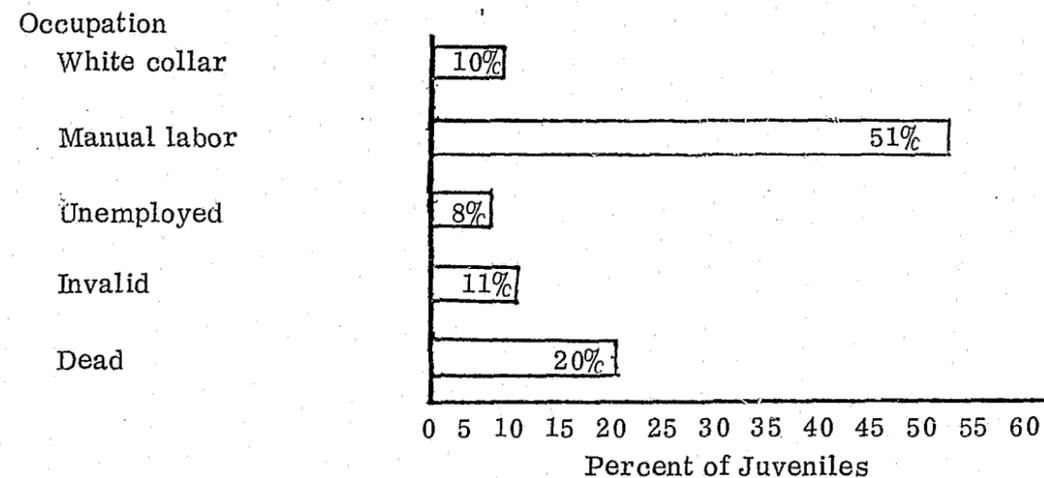


Two thirds of the subjects reported having four or more brothers and sisters.

Background data on the economic level of the family tended to underscore the family strain evidenced in the size of the families. In 39% of the homes, the father was either unable to work, not working, or dead. More than one half (51%) of the fathers (See Table 11) worked as manual laborers.

Table 11

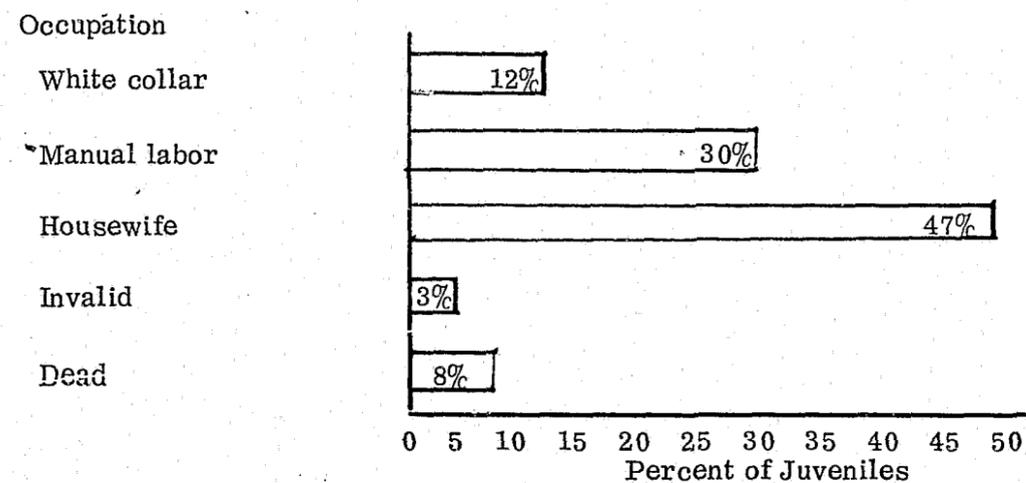
Father's Occupation



Fewer mothers than fathers were working but primarily because of the housewife role (Table 12).

Table 12

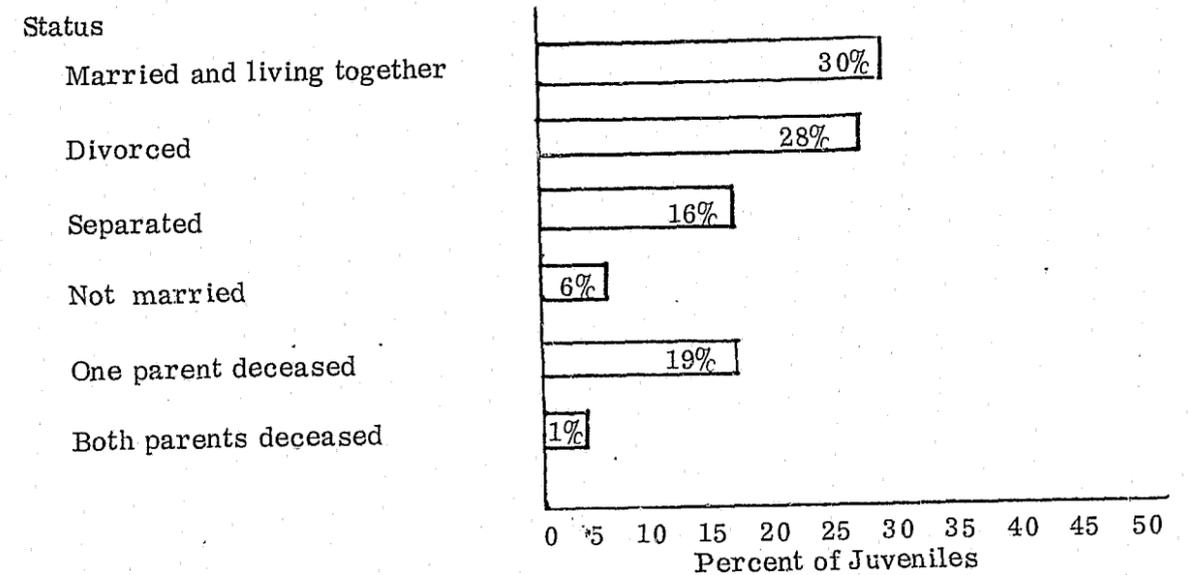
Mother's Occupation



The instability of the family unit, as reflected in the fact that 39% of the juveniles did not have fathers who were employed, is further evidenced in the data on marital status of the parents. Table 13 presents figures on the number of broken homes reported by Arkansas juvenile offenders.

Table 13

Marital status of (natural) parents



Slightly less than one third (30%) of the families were intact units in the sense that the parents were married and living together. Slightly more than two-thirds (70%) of the families represented some deviation from the intact, married family pattern.

The only group difference of note regarding marital status of parents occurred in the divorced and separated family patterns for Black and White juveniles. As shown in Table 13a divorce tended to be more prevalent among White families. Separation was more prevalent among Black families.

Table 13a

Divorced-Separated  
White and Black Juveniles

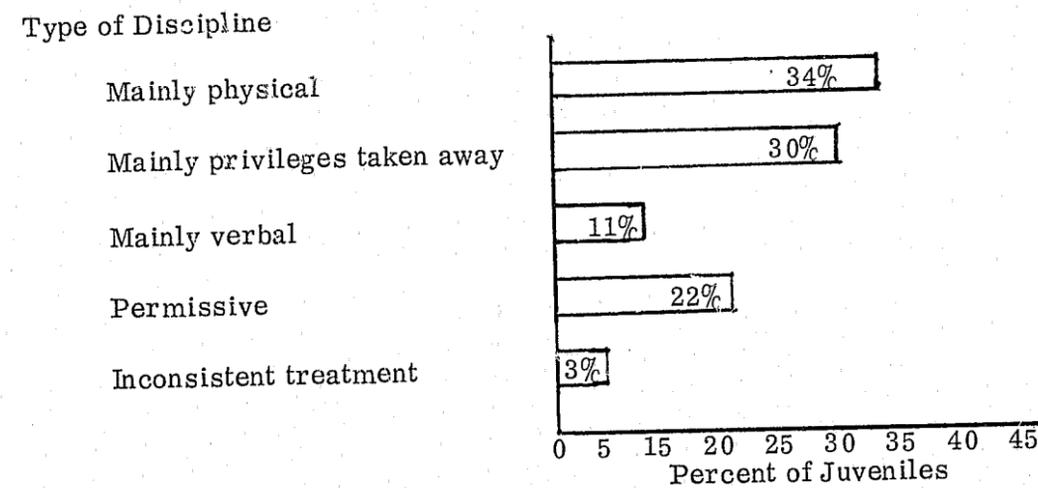
	White	Black
Divorced	39%	13%
Separated	7%	25%

Though homes of juveniles delinquents were predominantly broken, the vast majority (91%) did report that they were living with some family member at the time of their commitment to the Classification Center.

Data are also available regarding the way the child felt he was treated in the family and his or her perception of adults. Physical, privilege deprivation, verbal, and permissive disciplinary patterns are reported (Table 14).

Table 14

Disciplinary measures of parents



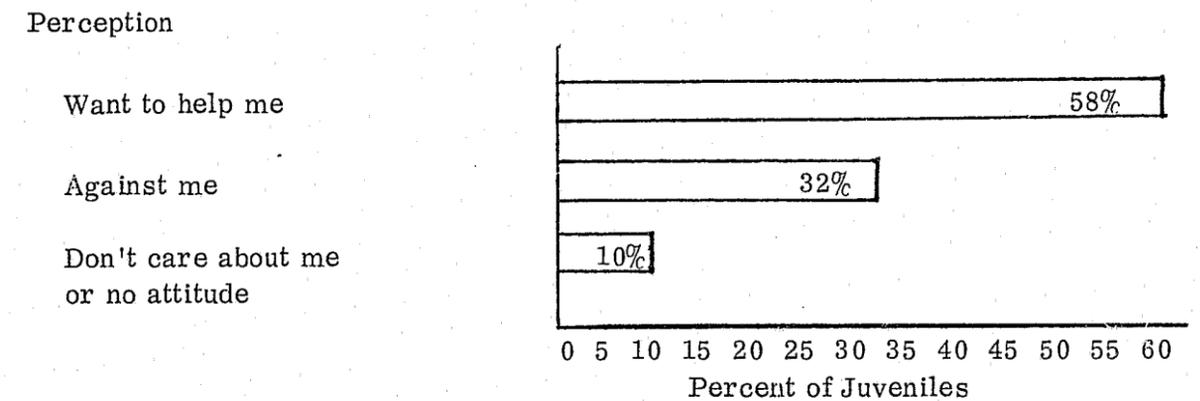
Data on discipline do not include whether the youth felt they were treated fairly by their parents or whether there were differences between mother and father. Three disciplinary patterns were reported; mainly physical, mainly

privileges taken away, and permissive. It would be interesting to determine whether these disciplinary approaches correspond with other patterns in the data such as behavior or offense data.

Similarly, discipline patterns (parent-child relations) in the home could affect the way the young person perceives all adults. Table 15 presents information on perceptions of adults.

Table 15

Perception of adults



More than half (58%) of the juveniles have retained a positive attitude toward adults, an attitude that should indicate a certain receptiveness on their part to adult help. Possibly indicative of resistance to assistance from adults, one third (32%) reported that they feel adults are against them.

Two interesting group distinctions emerged on perception of adults. A larger percentage of recidivists (39%) than nonrecidivists (28%) reported that adults are against them. This recidivist-nonrecidivist difference supports the assumption that the "adults are against me" feeling is related to a more serious delinquent profile.

Also, females (40%) were more likely than males (26%) to feel that "adults are against me." The male-female differences may stem, in part, from the fact that more females were involved in incorrigibility, runaway and other offenses related to parent-child conflict. The greater direct parent-child conflict may be related to poorer perceptions of adults on the part of females.

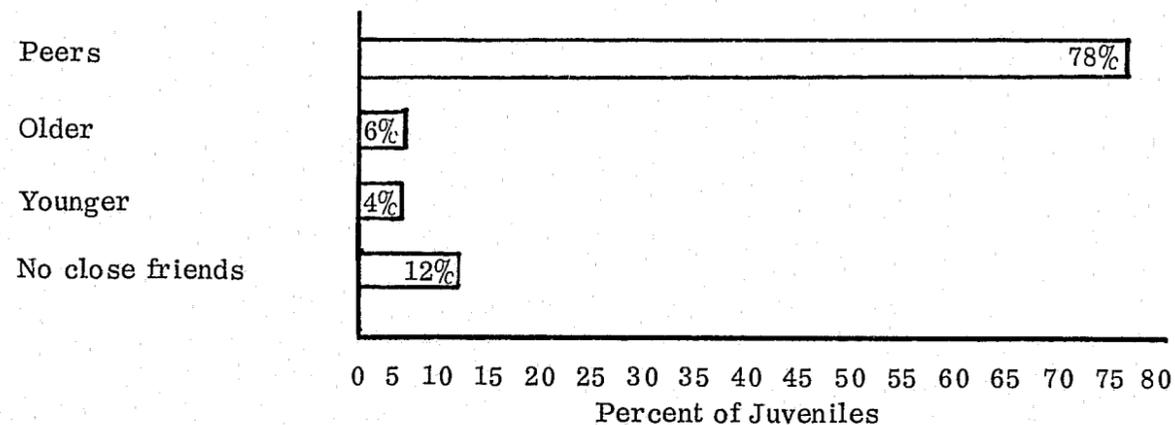
For the juveniles in this sample, data indicated an unstable family background and a tendency on the part of some to see adults negatively. Hence, these young people may be deprived of necessary adult support and be forced to turn to peers for support.

Research suggests that reliance on peers of one's own age is increasingly a feature of our culture. But, one would be concerned for those young people who have no friends in their own age group and, hence, are isolated or involved only with older friends. Data on friendship patterns of juveniles in the Classification Center sample are presented in Table 16.

Table 16

Close friends

Type of friends



Summary

Important findings regarding Arkansas juvenile offenders are summarized in the following four sections: background information, behavior patterns, personal development, and social relationships. Unless noted, each finding pertains to the total group of youth in the sample.

Background information

1. Age-14 to 17 years old
2. Single
3. Unemployed
4. Recidivists somewhat older (6 months) than nonrecidivists

Behavior patterns

1. Committing offenses-incorrigible, theft or burglary related
2. Females more likely to be committed for incorrigibility than males
3. Offenses did not involve a weapon
4. Most recidivists were second offenders only
5. Personal grooming-average
6. Characterized as angry, aggressive, disorganized, etc.

Personal development

1. Average to below average in intelligence
2. Absence of traditional difference between performance and verbal abilities
3. No age, sex, or recidivist-nonrecidivist differences in intelligence
4. White offender groups had higher Performance and Verbal IQ scores than Black offender groups

5. Group personality profile of delinquents similar to the profile of adolescents in general
6. Arkansas delinquents showed more apprehension and tension than a national sample of juvenile offenders

Social relationships

1. From large families, 4 or more siblings
2. From homes of poor economic means
3. More than two-thirds of the homes broken
4. Divorce more prevalent among White families; separation, among Black families
5. Living with some family member at time of commitment
6. More than half reported a positive attitude toward adults, but one third felt that adults are against them
7. More recidivists than nonrecidivists felt that adults were against them
8. Females more than males felt that adults were against them
9. Characterized their close friends as peers, i. e., of their own age group

Two striking features of the profile of Arkansas juvenile offenders emerged.

Not surprisingly, due to their youth, the young people in the sample did not appear to be hardened criminals or individuals without potential for social success.

Intelligence and personality data tended toward normal expectations. Offenses did not involve weapons or, indeed, any other signs of serious aggression against people.

The problems uncovered are consistent with those that have long been associated with delinquency. Poverty backgrounds and poor family relationships

seem to have combined to prevent these young people from receiving the support and training necessary for success in society.

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