Reference No. 40

Summarising: Dodson & Hunter, (2006), *Selected crime and justice issues for Indigenous families*
Responsibility for the preparation of this research summary rests with the authors of the MCEETYA report *Education, Training and Indigenous Futures: CAEPR Policy Research 1990–2007* and not the original author(s) of the summarised material.

Title of Research:
Selected crime and justice issues for Indigenous families

Research Publication:
Family Matters No. 75 Australian Institute of Family Studies 2006

Name of Researcher(s):
M. Dodson and B.H. Hunter

Time period:
2002

Geographic location:
Analyses are presented at the national level only.

Methodology:
This study is based on a statistical analysis of the 1994 and 2002 National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey undertaken by the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

Aims:
This study aims to identify those socio-economic factors that are associated with Indigenous people being involved with the justice system.

Selected findings and insights:
The study provides an overview of Indigenous involvement with the justice system. Overall, 16.4% of the Indigenous population 15 years or over had been arrested in the 5 years previous to the 2002 NATSISS:

- arrest and incarceration rates were equally high in both remote and non-remote areas; and
- about half of adult males had been charged at some point in their life, about 30 percentage points higher than that for females.

The study charts the rate of completion of Year 12 by the age at which a person was first charged:

- Indigenous people who had never been charged with an offence were three times more likely to have completed Year 12 than those who were first charged prior to their 18th birthday.
- The effect also applied to those substantial numbers of children as young as eight years who had been arrested and charged - they had an even less probability of reaching Year 12.

Both findings apply to males and female young people and clearly point to the extent to which involvement with the justice system at an early age limits the person’s chances of completing Year 12 - which in turn affects the person’s overall life chances. This includes gaining post-school qualifications, participating in mainstream employment and income generation.
Educational implications:

The study emphasises the importance of longitudinal research examining the family environment during critical developmental phases of children's lives.

From an educational perspective, this study also emphasises the need for educational authorities to continue to work closely with the justice system to provide opportunities for students to continue with their education and to develop support and mentoring mechanisms whereby students are able to more effectively return to schooling or their TAFE studies. [juvenile justice] [pathways]

Relevance:

Domain 5: Pathways to training, employment and higher education

Participation, retention and achievement in post-compulsory schooling, training and higher education

Related papers:
