Violent crime – How to improve criminal investigation of assault

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Expectations

Reality

GOOD WORK

WHAT? GOOD WORK?
Consequences of reduced capability

- Victims do not receive redress
- Perpetrators are not prosecuted
- Decreasing deterring effect
- The deficiencies are likely to affect less serious crimes
- The trust of the judiciary is eroded
Assault in reality – the legal context

- Requires intent – the suspect must have an intention to hurt
- Self-defense
- Pain is subjective – estimated objectively

Not every reported crime is a crime.
The Clearance Rate

10 %
Prerequisites for prosecution and judgment

- A victim able and willing to participate
- An identified suspect
- Prove crime – Witness
What does the police statistics say?

- A victim able and willing to participate
- An identified suspect
- Prove crime – Witness

1/3

42%
Good investigative work considerations

• investigative opportunities

• crime scene conditions

  • document investigative activities (log)

  • quality of activities = good investigation

• time from report registered to report handled over to prosecutor
The Doctoral Research Project
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Aim

• identify factors that may affect variations in clearance rate

• develop a method to measure the quality of the investigation process in general
Research questions

1. Are there any indications that the quality of criminal investigations has deteriorated over time?
2. Have the conditions changed over time and if so, how?
3. Is it possible to identify reasons why cases with the prerequisites for being solved are still not solved and thus not lead to prosecution?
4. If the external conditions for investigating crimes have changed over time, is it possible to develop routines and methods to change the criminal investigation activities in a positive direction?
Method and sampling

- Strategic Randomized Sampling of police reported assault and assault against Officer*
- Stockholm
- One weekday (Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday) and one Saturday
- Only cases with adults
- No cases with aggravated crimes included

* 0355, 0356, 0357, 0358, 0365, 0366, 0367, 0368, 1703, 1704, 9317, 9318, 9319, 9320, 9321, 9322, 9323, 9324, 9349, 9350, 9351, 9352
Choice of independent variables

- RAND-study by Chaiken, Greenwood and Petesilia

- BRÅ-reports by Anna Eksten and Stina Holmberg
  (BRÅ 2007:12, BRÅ 2009:1, BRÅ 2014:17)

- Knowledge about criminal investigations in general
  (Keel, T.G., Jarvis, J.P., Muirhead, Y.E., 2009; Alderden, A. & Lavery, A., 2007;
  Pucket, J.L. & Lundman, R.J., 2003; Litwin, K.J., 2004; Bring, T. & Diesen, C., 2009;
  Eck, J., 1983).

- Police practice and experience
The independent variables

- nature of the incident
- way of reporting the crime
- what information is included in the police report
- what investigative activity has been done at an early stage
- how are the activities documented
- are there witnesses or other supporting evidence
- information about hearings
- facts about the victim’s attitude: participating in the investigation process, shows up when called for hearing, answers the phone etc.
- facts about suspect: is the suspect identified, shows up when called for hearing, admits guilty
- facts about witnesses
- criminal record
Measure methods and tools for characteristic & quality

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- Suspect known?  
- Victim known?  
- PPC?  
- Witnesses?  
- WPC?  
- Identifiable?  
- VPC?  
- Cooperates?  
- Relation to involved

- Witness seen the crime?  
- Surveillance camera?  
- Photos of injuries  
- Interrogation recorded?  
- Notes about observations and activities done
Dependent variables

• Number of investigations sent to prosecutor in relation to cases with prerequisites to be solved.
• Processing time for
  - cases **solved and reported** to prosecutor,
  - cases **solved but closed** since the crime was not a crime
  - cases **not solved** because lack of evidence.
• Quality of cases closed for reasons “lack of evidence” or “case not possible to solve”
Summary

1. Reasonable expectations

2. A definition of good work

3. Quality peer review
Thank you!