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## Quantitative Criminology in The Netherlands

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This article briefly describes quantitative criminology in The Netherlands since the seventies. Dutch quantitative criminologists have been active in most fields of the discipline of criminology: research has been done on the etiology of crime and, in relation to this, the self-report methodology. A number of victimization surveys have been executed, and in relation to this, attention was given to fear of crime, victims in the judicial system, and situational approaches to crime. There has been research on policy evaluation, sentencing, and differential treatment in the criminal justice system, and alternative sanctions. Recently three major international studies have been coordinated by Dutch criminologists: an international self-report study, an international victim survey of households, and an international survey of victimization among businesses. In this article we describe the first two studies and briefly compare some of their features. Overall, it appears that Dutch quantitative criminology is embedded in the international mainstream of criminology and, in general, has been strongly related to policy concerns.

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**KEY WORDS:** quantitative methods; The Netherlands; victimization survey; self-report delinquency; policy evaluation; differential treatment; etiology of crime; fraud.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

The Netherlands is a small country.<sup>2</sup> As a consequence, criminologists, like other Dutch scientists, have always had a strong international orientation. Thus, an overview of the field is more a discussion of what Dutch criminologists did among international criminologists than a discussion of the typical Dutch character of Dutch criminology. In addition, criminology in The Netherlands, as in the United Kingdom [Farrington, 1996 (this issue)], has always had a relatively strong concern with policy implications.

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<sup>2</sup>The land area of the country is just 33,920 km<sup>2</sup> and is the habitat of roughly 15,451,000 Dutchmen and Dutchwomen.

In this article we give an overview of the developments in Dutch quantitative criminology in the last decades.<sup>1</sup> Dutch criminology has been strongly represented in the universities for more than a 100 years, but a large upsurge came in the middle of the 1960s. The number of research centers and researchers in the field grew rapidly. The developments, however, followed two distinct tracks in the country: the creation of a research department at the Ministry of Justice and the development of criminological institutes and departments at the universities.

## 2. THE RESEARCH AND DOCUMENTATION CENTER

In 1973, Wouter Buikhuisen—then professor of Criminology at the University of Groningen—was asked by the Minister of Justice to reorganize the scientific work of the Ministry. This led to the establishment of the Scientific Research and Documentation Center (RDC) at the Ministry of Justice. Buikhuisen may be considered as the founding father of the empirical and quantitative branch of Dutch criminology (Van Weringh, 1986, p. 197). He certainly illustrates the importance of policy concerns of Dutch quantitative criminology and its international orientation. It is to Buikhuisen's merit that he guaranteed an independent status to the RDC (Junger-Tas, personal communication). The publications of the RDC are its own responsibility and are not official publications from, nor do they have to be authorized by, the Minister of Justice.

In Groningen, Buikhuisen was interested in traffic offenses and in drug addiction. Both types of crime were high on the political agenda of the day. He did evaluations of traffic safety campaigns and evaluated the effectiveness of a special prison regime to prevent recidivism. He also tried to develop typologies of delinquent behavior, in order to sanction each type of delinquents appropriately (Buikhuisen, 1966, 1968, 1989; Buikhuisen and Mednick, 1988; Buikhuisen and Van Weringh, 1969).

At the Ministry of Justice, the RDC developed a research tradition which can be characterized as both quantitative and policy guided. In the theoretically based research at the RDC, two main paradigms can be discerned. First, using victim surveys, initiated by Fiselier in 1973 (1978, University of Nijmegen) and Steinmetz and Van Dijk (both RDC), the routine activity approach and the rational choice perspective were employed to understand crime (Van Dijk and Steinmetz, 1979). Second, self-report methodology was developed to study the etiology of crime. The major theoretical emphasis was on social control theory (see, e.g., Junger-Tas, 1988).

<sup>1</sup>In doing this, we rely heavily on overviews given by others (i.e., Kempe, 1957; Junger-Tas, 1983; Van Weringh, 1986; Van Swaaningen *et al.*, 1992).

These and the more policy-steered studies made the RDC the largest center for criminological research in The Netherlands, with about 70 persons working there in the eighties and nineties.

### 3. THE UNIVERSITY DEPARTMENTS

Prior to the founding of the RDC, in the early sixties, almost all faculties of law in the country started their own criminological department or institute.<sup>4</sup> The university departments were relatively critical of government policy. Bianchi of Amsterdam and Hulsman of Rotterdam, for instance, led an important abolitionist group that wanted to eliminate the entire criminal justice system (see Bianchi, 1972, 1974a, b, 1980, 1986, 1987). Now their influence has declined. From these and other groups, however, a strong current of what may be labeled "critical criminology" still remains in the country.

Parallel to the theoretical battles between the RDC and the universities, there was also a methodological difference, with a stronger qualitative approach at the universities and a stronger quantitative approach at the RDC. Several of the university departments showed only limited interest in practical and quantitative research in the sixties and the seventies. An exception was Rieckert Jongman in Groningen, the successor of Buikhuisen (for an overview see Jongman, 1993a). The research of most other university departments was neither empirical nor theoretical but, rather, philosophical and political. They were interested in criminal justice policies (e.g., the labeling effect). Crime itself was much more perceived as a fact of life. The criminal justice system or questions such as "Who defines crime?" were considered fundamental. Many discussions were neither preceded nor followed by any empirical testing [either quantitative or qualitative (see Van Weringh, 1986)].

As said, criminological research in the Dutch universities was done mostly in the law departments. When the 1980s came, with their enormous budget cuts, criminology was often one of the first victims, because it was considered peripheral to the law. This had led to some decrease in criminological research but, even more, to a spread of criminology to other types of research institutes, commercial or scientific. These institutes produced much, but often incidental research. To halt this development, The Netherlands Organization for Scientific Research (NWO) and the Ministry of Justice founded The Netherlands Institute for the Study of Criminality and Law

<sup>4</sup>These institutes were headed by Dessaur in Nijmegen, Bianchi and Van Weringh in Amsterdam, Jongman in Groningen, Hulsman, Hoefnagels, and Fijnaut in Rotterdam, Nagel and Van Dijk in Leiden, and Bovenkerk in Utrecht.

Enforcement (NISCALE) in 1992. NISCALE, hosted by the University of Leiden, is meant to do empirical research in the field of crime and justice and must concentrate on more "fundamental" questions in the field, contrary to the RDC, which tends to focus on immediate policy issues.

The spread of criminological research has led to the involvement of at least 34 institutes and research centers (according to the annual overview of *Justitiële Verkenningen*, 1995). Research varies considerably from institute to institute. Classical etiological research is done mostly at the RDC, the University of Groningen, and NISCALE. Quantitative studies related to policy matters are concentrated at the RDC on subjects involving evaluation of (new) policy measures (e.g., alternative sanctions, prevention programs, educational programs in institutions, and immigration policy). At other institutes important topics of quantitative research are drug abuse, ethnic origin, immigration and crime, the selectivity of the criminal justice system, sexual violence, victim services (and victim compensation), prisons, and alternative sanctions.

#### 4. SOME HIGHLIGHTED STUDIES

##### 4.1. Etiology of Crime

In 1983 Junger-Tas and her colleagues presented the first of a series of studies which focused on youngsters and on social control theory, showing that social economic status (SES) and unemployment do not predict delinquent behavior but social control does (see Junger-Tas and Junger, 1984, 1985; Junger-Tas, 1992). These findings were replicated in research on young offenders from a wide array of minorities in the country (Junger, 1990; Junger and Polder, 1992). Other studies showed that, in addition to the social control variables, personality factors such as inhibition strongly predict criminal behavior (Nijboer, 1993; Dijksterhuis and Schotel, 1993).

In more recent research, social control and personality predicted a much wider range of problem behavior than just delinquency, such as accidents, injuries, and health problems (Junger, 1994; Junger and Weigersma, 1995; Farrington and Junger, 1995). The relations found may have theoretical implications which are not yet fully explored.

Studies by the Jungers and associates rely heavily on social control theory. But of course other theories are represented in research on the etiology of crime. Cultural deviance, for instance, has been very popular in The Netherlands, but largely with more qualitative researchers (Janssen and Swiersta, 1982; Buiks, 1983; Kaufman and Verbraeck, 1986; Sijtsma, 1989). Some quantitative studies were done as well. Bruinsma (1992) used an extension of Sutherland's theory of differential association which was proposed

by Karl-Dieter Opp (from Germany) and tested in The Netherlands. In Bruinsma's study a relatively strong relation was found between deviant behavior, on the one hand, and a variety of variables measuring deviant attitudes and relations and contact with deviant friends, on the other hand.

Strain theory has been quite popular at the Groningen school of Jongman (1993a). The Groningen school typically used a theoretical framework which combines elements of both social control and strain. Strain is conceived as being derived from one's position in the social structure, poverty, and eventually perceived strain. The Groningen studies, however, hardly supported any direct relation between levels of crime and indicators of SES (van Koppen, 1994). Therefore, the conclusion was drawn that SES might function as an opportunity structure: for instance, individuals of high SES can commit fraud relatively easily and with a high likelihood of staying out of the criminal justice system, while low-SES persons will more often commit "ordinary crime" (Jongman, 1993b; especially Drost, 1993).

#### 4.2. The Adult Criminal

Traditionally, much of criminological research in The Netherlands has been directed at young offenders. Only recently, research has been done on the more atypical criminals, mainly from a psychological perspective. Much of this research was done at Erasmus University in Rotterdam (The Erasmus Center for Sociolegal Tax Research). This centre has been doing research on the fields of tax evasion and social security fraud since 1985. Its research has been characterized by both the introduction of new theoretical ideas in the explanation of these kinds of defective behaviors and an innovative approach toward the measurement of behavior.

The theoretical approach resulted in an explanatory model for tax evasion behavior that can be used for other deviant behaviors as well. The theoretical framework of the model specifies a set of variables in the social environment which are conducive to tax evasion or constrain tax evasion and their logically analogous counterparts within the individual (Weigel *et al.*, 1987; Elffers *et al.*, 1987; Hessing *et al.*, 1988, 1992, 1993; Elffers, 1991).

One of the main features of a new methodological approach concerned the combination and comparison—on an individual level—of self-reported tax evasion behavior, behavioral outcome measures (based on official data), and a behavioral simulation measure embedded in a small business simulation on a personal computer. From these studies the authors concluded that the use of self-reported behavior in criminological studies should be discouraged (see Robben *et al.*, 1990; Webley *et al.*, 1991; Elffers *et al.*, 1992; Hessing and Elffers, 1995).

### 4.3. Victimization Studies and Situational Approaches of Crime

The first Dutch Victim Survey was conducted by Eiseler (1978) in 1973. Shortly after, the RDC started the first European National Victimization Survey. They have been conducted first annually and later biannually (Van Dijk and Steinmetz, 1979). Nowadays victim surveys are quite common, on both a national and a local scale. Many police departments participate in a large national telephone victim survey to provide crime figures for their own district. Victim studies have stimulated attention for a variety of subjects, such as lifestyle as a correlate for crime and victimization (Van Dijk and Steinmetz, 1979), fear of crime (Winkel, 1981, 1983; Junger, 1987), help to victims of crime (Steinmetz, 1990; Wenners, 1996; Winkel and Vrij, 1996), the position of victims in the criminal justice system (Van Hecke *et al.*, 1990; Van Dijk, 1986), determinants of fear of crime (Winkel, 1986, 1988, 1990; Winkel and Vrij, 1990; Vrij and Winkel, 1991), and the long-term psychological impact of being a crime victim (Winkel and Vrij, 1993; Winkel *et al.*, 1994). We return to victimization studies below.

### 4.4. Policy Evaluation

One area in which much research is done is evaluation of experiments or specific (new) policy initiatives (e.g., Winkel, 1987, 1989a, b, 1991a, b). Polder (1992), for instance, evaluated 31 crime prevention projects. His meta-analysis of the quite diverse projects showed that prevention measures need to be quite intensive to have an effect on crime (Polder, 1992, pp. 6-7). Serious crime is much more difficult to influence than less serious problems. Increasing the probability of a sanction is effective in decreasing crime. This means that measures should attempt to increase the likelihood of getting caught and the probability of a sanction. Increasing the efforts necessary to commit a crime is effective in decreasing crime (situation crime prevention). Measures which had very little impact were providing information on crime (e.g., informing youngster about the damaging consequences of vandalism), leisure-time activities, assistance of welfare workers for high-risk youths, meeting centers for youngsters, and regulated graffiti zones.

### 4.5. The Criminal Justice System

Much Dutch quantitative criminological research has been devoted to biases in the criminal justice system against low-SES suspects, the unemployed, and ethnic minorities (see, e.g., Junger, 1988; Jongman, 1993a; Kanngieter, 1994). These kinds of biases were hardly found at the police level (Junger, 1988). The police are probably concerned mostly with the legality of their behavior. Later in the criminal justice system, for example

at the sentencing phase, more evidence was found for extralegal factors influencing decision making (Frid *et al.*, 1986). However, some of these studies have been criticized because of methodological weaknesses (Van Koppen, 1994). Globally, it may be concluded that it is hard to find hard data showing significant effects of discrimination by race or socioeconomic status in the justice system.

Some studies, however, show discrepancies in sentencing by court. A study by Berghuis (1992) showed relatively large differences in sentencing between the 19 district courts in the country. For some offenses sanction severity in the most punitive court was 2.5 times higher than in the least punitive court. For other offenses, however, such as driving under the influence, the sanction severity is very much identical across courts. This can probably be explained by the effectiveness of a system of guidelines for this specific offense.

There is little research on defense attorneys. An exception is a study by Malsch (1989). In her study on trial strategy by attorneys she found that they are generally overly optimistic regarding their chances in court. She also found dramatic differences between different types of cases and different kinds of attorneys.

Some more research has been done on police behavior, especially by Frans-Willem Winkel and his colleagues at the Free University Amsterdam. They focused on nonverbal communication in police interviews of suspects, witnesses, and victims (Winkel and Vrij, 1990; Winkel and Koppelaar, 1991). One important finding is that higher arrest rates among cultural minorities relative to their crime rate should be explained with problems in intercultural communication rather than racial bias of policemen (Winkel *et al.*, 1988; Winkel and De Winter, 1996).

#### 4.6. Alternative Sanctions

The Netherlands started with experiments of community service as an alternative to custodial sanction in 1981 (for reviews see Van der Laan, 1993; Junger-Tas, 1994a; see also Groenhuijsen and Winkel, 1994; Winkel, 1986, 1996a, b). The general objective of these sanctions was to "promote a more educational and pedagogically oriented juvenile justice system" (Van der Laan, 1993, p. 2). It was expected that alternative sanctions would lead to changes in behavior and, accordingly, to less recidivism. It has been hard to support the idea that alternative sanctions lead to less reoffending (Van der Laan, 1993; Junger-Tas, 1994a). Overall, the differences in reoffending by type of sanction are small and usually nonsignificant. In addition, recidivism studies in The Netherlands have to cope with the difficult problem of controlling statistically for confounding variables, as random experiments



have not been carried out in the justice system in The Netherlands. Research shows that alternatives sentences are rendered for different, usually less serious, types of offenses than traditional sanctions. Although officially alternatives should be given as a replacement of a custodial sentence, netwidening is certainly occurring in a large number of cases. According to Van der Laan (1993, p. 8), 31% of the alternative sanctions at the most replace a nonsuspended custodial sentence.

## 5. TWO INTERNATIONAL STUDIES ON CRIME

A recent Dutch contribution to international criminology is the international victim surveys. The first international victim survey (named International Crime Survey) was developed at the RDC by Jan van Dijk together with Pat Mayhew (Home Office, UK) and Martin Killias (University of Lausanne). A few years later the first international self-report delinquency study was organized at the RDC by Josine Junger-Tas and Gert-Jan Terlouw. And in 1993 an International Business Victim Survey was organized by the RDC, together with a number of foreign institutes.<sup>5</sup> The first results of these three studies have been published recently (see Van Dijk *et al.*, 1990; Van Dijk and Mayhew, 1992; Alvazzi del Fate *et al.*, 1993; Junger-Tas *et al.*, 1994). A comparison of findings of the household and business survey was presented by Van Dijk and Terlouw (1995). Here we focus on the two most comprehensive studies: the international self-report study and the household victimization survey. The major goal of both studies was to compare crime rates of different countries. Such a comparison is almost impossible if official police or court statistics are used. Due to differences in legal systems, culture, and practice, countries differ considerably in the definition of crimes and in the proportion of various types of crimes which come to the attention of the police (Lynch, 1995). For a fruitful comparison of countries, the methodologies of the surveys in all participating countries were to be identical as much as possible.

Fourteen countries participated in the first household victim survey in 1988, and 13 in the 1991 sweep (8 were in both).<sup>6</sup> In each country between 1500 and 2000 respondents were interviewed. These were all national samples. In the self-report study, however, city samples were used in some countries. In the victim survey all interviews were done by telephone; the self-report study was done face to face, but in some countries the respondents

<sup>5</sup>That is, the United Kingdom Home Office, the National Institute of Criminology (Australia), and the Universities of Sheffield, Hannover, and Lausanne.

<sup>6</sup>Years referring to the victimization period (last year).

were interviewed, while in other countries a written questionnaire was administered (for details on methodology of the studies see Van Dijk *et al.*, 1990; Van Dijk and Mayhew, 1992, 1993; Junger-Tas *et al.*, 1994).

Other differences between the studies include differences in the type of sample (cities versus national in some countries for the self-report study and the victim survey, respectively), administration (face-to-face interview versus telephone, for the self-report study and the victim survey, respectively), unit of analysis (offender versus victim for the self-report study and the victim survey, respectively), differences in the wording of the questions, and different coverage of types of crime.

The two studies discussed here provide another method for comparing crime across countries than official statistics. There are still some major methodological problems to be solved in both types of methods in order to assess what really is measured, compared to official statistics. It is, for instance, a common result of victim surveys that respondents with low-income and low-education underreport violence, while highly educated respondents overreport violence (Skogan, 1981; Junger, 1991; Wetzels *et al.*, 1994). Similarly, ethnic minorities tend to underreport their own criminal behavior (Hindelang *et al.*, 1981; Junger, 1989). Also, ethnic minorities and low-income individuals have a lower probability of being included in such victim surveys (Joutsen, 1994). It can be expected that self-report studies have the same bias. A fair prediction, based on official registration, is that crime peaks at 19 to 20 years of age (Hirschi and Gottfredson, 1983; Farrington, 1986). Self-report studies, however, typically show that violence rates are higher for younger children than for older ones. The self-report study done in Belfast, for instance, finds that 4% of the 14- to 15-year-old respondents reported violent offenses, but only 2% of the 18-19 year olds did, and only 1 percent of the 20-21 year olds (McQuoid, 1994, p. 99). Similar findings were reported for The Netherlands (Terlouw and Bruinsma, 1994, p. 125) and Germany (Boers *et al.*, 1994, p. 351). Despite these and other methodological difficulties in the two surveys, they produce some interesting results.

### 5.1. Victim Surveys

In the victim survey 11 questions were asked on victimization of a crime (Van Dijk and Mayhew, 1992). The highest victimization rates are found in The Netherlands, Canada, and the United States; the lowest, in Switzerland, Northern Ireland, and Japan (see Fig. 1) (Van Dijk and Mayhew, 1992).

Both sweeps of the victim survey have been analyzed relatively extensively (see Alvazzi del Fato *et al.*, 1993). Results presented by Van Dijk and Mayhew (1993) show that opportunity offers one way to explain differences

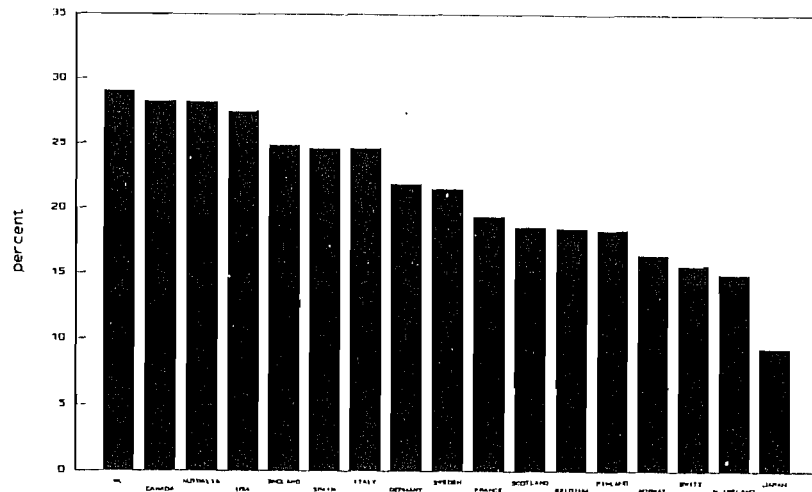


Fig. 1. Victimization level per country, average of 1988 and 1991.

in crime across countries. For instance, a relatively strong relation was found between car ownership and crime related to cars (theft of car, vandalism to car, theft from car). The correlation between car ownership and car theft is 0.54 ( $N=20$ ). Another interesting result is the negative correlation ( $-0.35$ ;  $N=20$ ) between car theft and bicycle theft. Van Dijk and Mayhew (1993) suggest that the availability of targets may account for this relation: when bicycles are available, people in need of transportation do not need to turn to car theft, a more serious, and therefore less desirable, crime. For burglary, the availability of detached and semi-detached houses provides relatively "good" opportunities for breaking in and entering. Finally, the victim survey provides information on gun ownership. Killias (1993) used this information and related it to homicide and suicide rates per country. He found a relatively strong relation between gun ownership, on the one hand, and suicide and homicide, on the other hand, at the country level.

## 5.2. Self-Report Studies

Junger-Tas (1994b) summarized the main results for the self-report study for 12 samples (5 national samples, 7 city-based samples). The highest rates of offending were found in Athens, Helsinki, and Switzerland, while Mannheim, Belfast, and England and Wales had the lowest rates (see Fig. 2).<sup>7</sup> Results for types of crime show a comparable picture (see Fig. 3).

<sup>7</sup>The English rates are not entirely comparable, as questions on theft were changed in order to restrict them to the more serious forms of thefts.

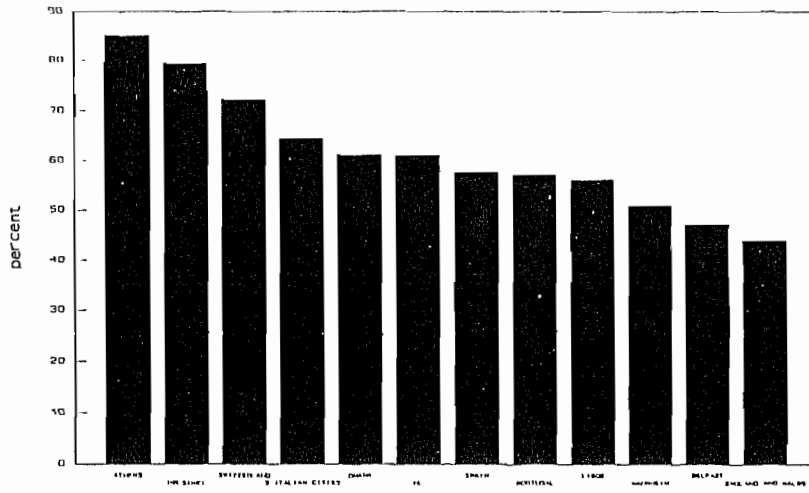


Fig. 2. Self-report delinquency per country, last year, all crimes.

Most countries have about the same level of property and violent offenses. Athens, Spain, and three Italian cities, however, tend to report higher levels of violence than of property offenses. Drug offenses show less variation. Low levels of drug offense (13% or less) are reported in Athens, Helsinki,

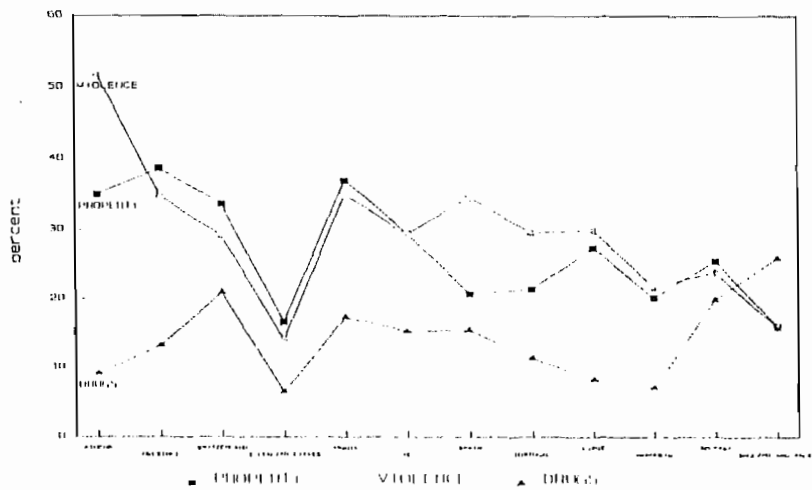


Fig. 3. Self-report delinquency per country, last year, for property crimes, violence, and drug offenses.

and three Italian cities, Portugal, Liege, and Mannheim. Average levels of drug offenses (15-20%) are found in Omaha, The Netherlands, and Spain. More than 20% is found in Switzerland (20.9%) and in England and Wales (25.9%).

The results have not been fully analyzed yet. A few comparisons of countries have been reported by Junger-Tas (1994b). We briefly discuss some of her main conclusions. She concluded that reported levels of crime for each type in each state were roughly comparable, since the rank orders of frequency of the most reported offenses are the same everywhere. An exception is drug use, which is reported less often in the southern European countries and cities. However, a strong similarity could also be interpreted as a lack of sensitivity of the method or, at least, a sensitivity which is insufficient to register validly differences between countries. Perhaps the method is better suited for etiological research than for descriptive purposes (see also Hindelang *et al.*, 1981). For all countries the following relations seem to hold.

- For most offenses boys report higher levels of crime than girls. For example, gender ratios for most property offenses vary between 1.5:1 and 2:1. For violence against persons the gender ratio goes up to 4:1. The gender ratio for drug use is about 1.5:1. For some offenses the gender ratio is close to 1:1, namely, for fare evasion, shoplifting, and problem behaviors such as truancy, running away from home, and alcohol use (these problem behaviors are not included in the overall delinquency rates).
- High levels of delinquency are associated with low levels of parental supervision and a weak bond to school, while low delinquency levels are associated with high levels of parental supervision and a strong bond to school.
- Socioeconomic status is unrelated to delinquency involvement, as most self-report studies usually show. Educational level is not associated with delinquency as a whole but is related to violence. Relatively high levels of violence are associated with low educational levels.
- Finally, the level of crime among ethnic minorities seems a little awkward. In the international self-report study, delinquency among ethnic minorities is at the same level as for the "white/autochthonous" population. However, it is known that in most participating countries officially registered crime among ethnic minorities is relatively high. This discrepancy has been described previously in some detail by Junger (1989). This puzzle has not been resolved by the present international self-report study.

### 5.3. Comparability of the Findings

The results of the surveys presented above show that the rank order of the crime rate of countries is not the same in the victim survey and in the self-report study. In additional analyses by the present authors we first compared the overall crime rates of both studies for the 10 countries/cities which are included in both studies. The correlation between the *last year* rates of both studies (namely, the overall rate of victimization last year and all "last year" offenses according to the self-report survey) is approximately zero ( $r=0.05$ ). Similar analyses per type of crime also, on average, do not show many positive (and statistically significant) correlations between the findings of both studies (tables can be obtained from the first author). However, as mentioned previously, both surveys are so different in many respects that it is not very surprising that these differences occur.

## 6. DISCUSSION

In this article we have presented a brief overview of recent quantitative criminology in The Netherlands. Dutch quantitative criminology has a longer history. From Hendrik Bonger at the beginning of this century (1954, 1967; see also Van Wieringh, 1986) onward, Dutch criminology has had a strong involvement in social and political questions. Many criminologists used to combine work in the universities with professional work in the field. This ever-existing link between scientific work and practical questions has become institutionalized, first with the foundation of the Research and Documentation Center at the Ministry of Justice and more recently with the foundation of The Netherlands Institute for the Study of Criminality and Law Enforcement (NISCALE) at Leiden.

Maybe because of the strong link between science and practice, Dutch criminology has always had a strong international orientation. Thus, the topics of research and research methodology in The Netherlands show the same wide variety as criminology in the rest of the world. Research has been done on subjects such as the etiology of crime, victimology, including victimization in itself, fear of crime, and situational approaches of crime, policy evaluations, criminal justice issues, such as differential treatment, and alternative sanctions. Finally, Dutch researchers acted as main coordinators of two recent international projects: the International Crime Survey and the International Self-Report Study.

Although the Dutch research tradition closely followed international developments, systematic comparative research is quite recent. Therefore, more of this article was devoted to a description of the international surveys, which were coordinated by Dutch researchers. These international comparative surveys indeed produce results which could not have been obtained with

other methods, for instance, using official statistics. The international crime surveys had the objective of finding new answers to Crime (with a capital C) in the World (with a capital W). In that objective the surveys were, indeed, very ambitious. To reach their goal both surveys still have some improvements to make (see, e.g., Klein, 1994). However, there may be some limitations in both methods which are hard to overcome (Block, 1993; Lynch, 1993).

We started this article by noting that The Netherlands is indeed not a very large country. That also holds for the criminological community. So everybody knows everybody, and in such a situation, personal characteristics of individual criminologists may have a remarkable influence on the directions research is taking. Bongers, for instance, may have been one of the founding fathers of Dutch criminology, but his influence has not been very large in the decades after him. One might suspect that he would have had a stronger influence that lasted longer if he would have put more effort into forming a school of thought around him, rather than spending so much time on his political work. Or maybe his influence would have been stronger if he had been easier to get along with. Similarly, Laub and Sampson (1991, p. 1427) noted that one of the elements that explains the lack of influence of the Gluecks' was that they "suffered from social awkwardness," whereas Sutherland was seen as "humble and gentle."

The very size of the Dutch criminological community encourages humbleness and gentleness in our research, but we may hope that the Dutch marriage of research and a strong social and political involvement never dies away.

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