
Case Study

Does an Arrest Increase Delinquency?

David P. Farrington's (1977) classic study of how arrest sometimes increases delinquency, called the *deviance amplification process*, is an excellent example of an ex post facto control group design (Exhibit 6.10). Farrington tested the hypothesis that juveniles who were publicly labeled as deviant through being convicted of a delinquent act would increase their deviant behavior compared with those who were not so labeled. Using secondary data from the Cambridge Study of Delinquent Development, Farrington measured outcomes of 400 London working-class youths from age 8 to 18. Results indicated that youth who were labeled as delinquent (through conviction) subsequently committed more delinquent acts than similar youth who were not labeled in this way.
