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An empirical examination of the group hazard hypothesis: The role of formal and informal detection in group offending

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ABSTRACT

We propose there may be a risk of both formal (police) and informal (parents and teachers) detection for group crimes, and that this risk may be conditional on the age composition of the accomplices. Using a crossnational data set on self-reported delinquency, we investigate patterns of detection across 11 crime types. Our findings confirm the presence of a formal group hazard and reveal that informal detection is both more and less likely than solo crime depending on the offense type. This study expands our conception of the group hazard hypothesis and calls attention to the possible consequences of differential detection of delinquency.