# Cognitive-Experiential Self-Theory: An Analysis Of Teen Court Decision-Making By Youth Jurors And Adult Volunteers 

Colette Briana Harris

## A Dissertation by <br> COLETTE BRIANA HARRIS

Submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies of Prairie View A\&M University in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

May 2023

Major Subject: Juvenile Justice

A Dissertation
by

## COLETTE BRIANA HARRIS


#### Abstract

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May 2023
Major Subject: Juvenile Justice

ABSTRACT<br>Cognitive-Experiential Self-Theory: An Analysis of Teen Court Decision-Making by Youth Jurors and Adult Volunteers

(May 2023)

Colette Briana Harris, B.A., University of South Florida.<br>J.D., University of Florida Levin College of Law.<br>Chair of Advisory Committee: Dr. Sesha Kethineni

Few studies have explored the effects of emotional or rational stimulations concerning juror verdicts. There has yet to be a study to examine the impact of cognitive or experiential processing on teen juror decision-making in teen courts. The survey of teen court participants after the completion of teen court jury trials was used to gauge whether rational processing or experiential processing was triggered in selecting a verdict. Cognitive-Experiential Self-Theory (CEST) and juvenile decision-making theories and perspectives (The Focal Concerns Theory of Sentencing, Attribution Theory, and Formal Legal Perspective) were used to explain teen jurors' decision-making. A sample of 107 grade, middle, and high school youth, 10 to 18 years-of-age (delinquent youth and youth volunteers), and adult teen court volunteers who are primarily judges, and attorneys was analyzed in this study.

To test whether teen court youth possess more experiential than rational processing traits, and to determine whether experiential and cognitive processing traits
were more influential in the verdict/sentencing variable, analyses of variance and correlations were run. One-way ANOVA was used to measure whether the categorical variables had a measurable effect on the CEST REI variables.

This study found teen jurors were capable of making cognitive-based decisions, though there were some experiential influences on decision-making. Overall older youth seemed to be more willing to prefer complex problem-solving to prevent boredom and redundancy of the proceedings. Further comparison is required to determine whether the study's statistical significance was derived from higher cognitive processing traits in some participants compared to other participants.

Keywords: teen court, diversion, youth jurors, decision-making, juvenile justice

## DEDICATION

To all the strong women who have impacted my life and are no longer physically with me. Always in my heart:

My Auntie, Lucia Agatha "Wilma" Belboda-Richardson
My Godmother, Ollie Jean "God Mama" Ferguson
My Honorary Grandmother, Susy "Dada" Forbes
My Auntie, Leola Loretta Agatha Belboda-Hodge
My Grandmother, Caroline "Sylvina" Agatha Rowland Belboda Fieuleteau
My Aunt, Agnes "Aggie" Lee Harris-Etibeng
My Honorary Auntie, Patrice Melanie Ross Moolah
My Cousin, Vincia "Vincy" Vanessa Douglas (Belboda)

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## CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

## Background

Teen courts, also referred to as peer courts, student courts, youth courts, youth peer panels, or youth or peer jury, are youth diversion programs intended to divert juveniles, reduce formal juvenile court proceedings, and decrease future criminality as an effect of exposure to the justice system (Global Youth Justice, Inc., 2020; National Teen Courts, 1994; Schwalbe et al., 2012). The informal process of restorative justice holds youth accountable for their actions and prevents future delinquent behaviors (Butts \& Buck, 2000; Fischer, 2007; Stickle et al., 2008). Studies found that youth who are diverted through teen courts have lower rates of recidivism compared to the youth formally processed in juvenile justice courts. Teen court participants have lower rates of recidivism because these youth are willing to be corrected by members of their community and experience positive peer interactions in teen court (Harrison et al., 2001; Hissong, 1991; Minor et al., 2000; Seyfrit et al., 1987; Williamson et al., 1993).

Teen court programs act not only as diversion programs, but also as dispositional alternatives to traditional court procedures and defer the adjudication of juveniles (National Teen Courts, 1994). Juvenile diversion programs are considered communitybased programs that are supportive and effective in preventing future offenses through reductions in formal processing of youth, which decreases the odds of incarceration as an

[^0]adult. These programs directly serve juveniles and indirectly provide services to juveniles’ families (Schwalbe et al., 2012). Four known benefits of effective diversion programs are prevention of early involvement in the juvenile justice system, reduction in detention center placement, maintenance of youth involvement in their communities, and reduction in formal court processing (Schwalbe et al., 2012; Youth.gov, n.d.).

Documentation suggests that the formal teen court concept began as early as the 1930s in California (National Teen Courts, 1994). Teen court programs grew throughout the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s, with rapid growth in programs in the last few decades (National Teen Courts, 1994). In 1981, the first Texas teen court was developed in Grand Prairie, though most researchers reported the 1983 teen court in Odessa, Texas, because of its national recognition (National Teen Courts, 1994; Williamson et al., 1993). From 1983 to 1993, states such as Arizona, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Indiana, and Michigan began implementing teen court programs as part of their juvenile justice system. In 1988, Sarasota County was recorded as the first Florida teen court program (Seventeenth Judicial Circuity of Florida, 2018). Currently, there are more than 1,150 teen court programs in 48 states and the District of Columbia (Development Services Group, Inc., 2010).

Teen court programs, also known as youth justice programs, are operated by agencies ranging from juvenile probation departments and schools to private nonprofit organizations and district attorney offices. Approximately 42\% of the programs are run by juvenile justice systems, $36 \%$ by schools, and $22 \%$ by communities through private nonprofit agencies (Global Youth Justice, Inc., 2020). The American Youth Policy

Forum survey in 2005 reported that approximately 110,000 to 125,000 juveniles received teen court services in 2004 (Pearson \& Jurich, 2005).

In the U.S., approximately 129,540 youth are referred to teen court programs annually, and 116,114 of the youth referrals are accepted. Of the youth accepted into teen court programs, 111,868 have agreed to the teen court requirements, and 97,578 completed the peer-imposed sanctions (Global Youth Justice, Inc., 2020). The sanctions in teen courts include community service, apology letters to the victims, following curfew, tours of criminal justice agencies, writing an essay, and attending educational classes. However, the most common sanction involves mandatory community service, and annually about $1,925,596$ hours of required community service are completed by the youth (Global Youth Justice, Inc., 2020).

Not all teen court participants are juveniles. Some youth and adults are invited to participate in teen court, and others offer to serve as volunteers. Teen volunteers are often recruited from local schools and community organizations to serve as jurors, bailiffs, defense attorneys, prosecutors, and clerks. Adult volunteers often include current and retired judges, attorneys, professors and teachers, and individuals with a legal background. Adult volunteers provide positive interactions that support, encourage, and counsel the youth, which leads to the redirection of youth behaviors and expectations for community relationships (Bright et al., 2014; Roth \& Brooks-Gunn, 2003). According to Global Youth Justice, Inc. (2020) statistics, approximately 133,832 individuals served as volunteers in U.S. teen courts, consisting of 16,522 adults and 117,310 youth. More than
$50 \%$ of teen court sessions are closed to the general public. Closed sessions provide privacy and confidentiality of the cases and youth involvement.

Seventy-two percent of programs are active year-round, and the remaining 28\% operate during the school year. A little less than a third of the teen court programs meet once a month (Global Youth Justice, Inc., 2020). On average, teen court programs have vast differences in budgets and availability of funds. Some U.S. teen court programs use $\$ 100,000$ annually, while others operate with budgets anywhere from $\$ 1,000$ to $\$ 33,000$ (Global Youth Justice, Inc., 2020). Most teen court programs operate based on taxpayer funds allocated to the programs by elected or appointed officials and agencies. A few teen court programs operate as nonprofit organizations (Butts et al., 2002; National Teen Courts, 1994).

Some of the procedures used in the adult jury system are incorporated in teen court settings. Most teen court programs seek to inform jurors and defendants of the court procedures and their future civic duty to serve as jurors. Teen court programs generally assign jurors to court sessions, similar to the process of jury pools for adult trial hearings. The citizens in the adult jury pool are questioned regarding their personal interests in the specific case, beliefs, biases, and prejudices. If the attitude, biases, or prejudices of an individual juror is perceived to affect his/her decision, the juror will be excused from jury services by the presiding judge (Hans \& Vidmar, 1986). Voir dire is the pretrial phase in which biased jurors are removed, though exceptions exist in which the state and the accused are not allowed to question jurors.

Jurors are removed from adult juries by prosecuting and defense attorneys through a combination of challenges for cause and peremptory challenges. Challenges for cause are an unlimited number of strikes to exclude potential jurors for a specific reason. Generally, the reason is based on prejudice, bias, or previous knowledge that would impair the juror's ability to be impartial when evaluating evidence. Peremptory challenges are a limited number of strikes that allow prosecution and defense attorneys to exclude potential jurors without providing a reason or explanation, unless opposing counsel finds the challenge to be based on discrimination of sex, race, or ethnicity (Hans \& Vidmar, 1986). Teen court programs have not yet begun to use traditional voir dire to select jurors through the questioning and striking process.

Teen jurors decide the defendant's sanctions based on the recommendations of the teen prosecutor and the teen court sentencing guidelines provided by the teen court program administrator. In consideration of the current role of an American adult jury, two predominant views of a jury are accepted. One, a jury of one's peers, must be selected. A jury is meant to represent society's diverse demographics, "we the people," with room for practicality. Two, the jury's main job is to determine the facts of the case with the direction of the presiding judge, who determines the applicable law for the case and the standards to be met (Marder, 2013). While the adult jury system is a constitutional right, teen court juries serve a different purpose, for example, rehabilitation of juvenile offenders and the use of alternative processing instead of facing a criminal trial. However, the youth defendants and prosecutors are not allowed to participate in the selection of the jury of their peers, which may explain the experiential, emotion-based,
processing tendencies of youth. A cognitive psychology theory and juvenile justice decision-making theories and perspectives were used to measure the decision-making tendencies of youth and adults in Florida and Texas teen courts.

## Problem Statement and Conceptual Framework

There are four existing models of teen courts in which the court is presided by either (1) an adult judge, (2) a youth judge, (3) a youth tribunal, or (4) the peer jury (Godwin, 1998). In each model of teen court, adult volunteers and coordinators assist in many ways. The most common model of teen courts in the U.S. is the adult judge model, which allows an attorney or a judge to oversee the court sessions. In the evaluation of teen court programs, there has rarely been a distinction made between the opinions of the youth participants and the views of the adults assisting in the programs' functions.

Many teen court studies generally focus on whether programs effectively reduce delinquency and youth recidivism. The studies have used labeling, ecological, or restorative justice theories, explicitly addressing the impact of teen court programs on the decision-making abilities of teen court participants based on their school performance, gender, race, and age (Bartusch \& Matsueda, 1996; Cotter \& Evans, 2018; Forgays et al., 2004; Forgays \& DeMilio, 2005; Greene \& Weber, 2008; Rasmussen, 2004; Ray \& Downs, 1986; Smokowski et al., 2017; Smokowski et al., 2018; Stickle et al., 2008). While the studies used pretests, posttests, and interviews to measure the effectiveness of the teen court programs, they did not measure the cognitive processing tendencies of the adult volunteers or the youth participating in the programs. This study is one of the first to capture the cognitive traits on teen jurors and adult volunteers to add to the literature of
teen court and the application of the Cognitive-experiential self-theory (CEST) in jury studies.

Due to the highly active experiential processing of youth, the sanctions provided to their peers in teen court may be higher than the penalties the juvenile would have received from an adult jury or in the traditional juvenile justice system. Butts and Buck (2000) found that the sanctions provided to their peers in teen court are often higher than the penalties the juvenile would have received from an adult jury or in the traditional juvenile justice system. Arguably, teen court participation allows juveniles to have a hearing with a jury of their peers, similar to an adult criminal trial.

## Conceptual Framework

The difference between adult and adolescent decision-making is due to an underdeveloped psychosocial capacity rather than a lack of reasoning or logic in adolescents (Fleming, 2019). The immature psychosocial capacity of youth is reflected in their ability to control impulses, regulate emotions, delay gratification, and resist the pressure of peers (Fleming, 2019). This study used the Cognitive-experiential self-theory (CEST), which emphasizes that individuals have active dual processing systems-the experiential mode and the rational mode. The theory captures the heuristic process of punishment versus rewards, which adolescents use when deciding impulsively, and when adolescents choose to engage in high-risk behaviors (Fleming, 2019). The experiential mode is emotionally motivated; the rational mode is more balanced or logical (Epstein, 1985; 1994; 2003; Epstein \& Pacini, 1999). Experiential processing is more active, automatic, and effortless which produces more holistic judgments about other individuals
than rational processing. In contrast, rational processing requires more calculated effort than the experiential mode and tends to be abstract in nature and premeditated.

CEST has been used to examine the processing traits of study participants in civil and criminal court mock jury settings. Individuals develop or have been socialized to respond rationally or emotionally to specific information or circumstances. There is a general acceptance in the legal community that, in personal injury trials, the plaintiff will benefit from emotionally oriented jurors, and the defendant will benefit from rationally oriented jurors (Belli, 1982; Mauet, 1992; Sannito \& McGovern, 1993; Simon, 1980; Vinson, 1993). Attorneys may select emotional jurors or use photos, testimony, and exhibits to elicit experiential or rational processing for sentencing. The defendant's attractiveness in a civil trial was found to sway the damages found in favor of the plaintiff if the defendant was found liable (Lieberman, 2002). Previous studies found female jurors convict sex offenders at higher rates than males (Lieberman et al., 2007). The weight on an individual's preexisting beliefs about the world is engaged in clinicallybased information and outweighs the presentation of complex and statistically-loaded content (Krauss \& Sales, 2001; Lieberman et al., 2007; O’Keefe, 1990).

The use of CEST in this study enabled the researcher to measure adolescent/teen jurors' and adult volunteers’ cognitive processing tendencies in teen court decisionmaking. Several theoretical perspectives attempt to explain juvenile justice decisionmaking, including the Focal Concerns Theory of Sentencing, Attribution, Conflict, Race Threat, and Formal Legal Perspective. Juvenile decision-making theories focus on the use of legal factors and extralegal factors advocated by prosecutors and decided by judges.

Legal factors include law or related procedural factors such as the current offense and arrest record. Extralegal factors include gender, school grades, race, parental involvement, juveniles’ attitudes, and socioeconomic status. For this study, the Focal Concerns Theory of Sentencing, Attribution Theory, and Formal Legal Perspective were used to examine teen court participants' decision-making tendencies considering the evidence, legal, and extralegal, presented during teen court trials.

## Purpose and Rationale of the Study

This study aimed to understand the cognitive processing tendencies of teen court jurors, defendants, and juvenile and adult volunteers. Youth have the cognitivedevelopmental capability to make decisions. Though youth tend to make decisions without considering future consequences, the guidance of adults the youth trust, supporting materials (that is, notetaking sheets, jury instructions, and verdict forms), and a positive justice system experience can direct youth toward heightened rational processing. This study had two main objectives. First, the study tested the cognitive processing tendencies of teen court participants using CEST's rational-experiential inventory (REI) assessment for adults and adolescents. The REIs use Need for Cognition (NFC) scaled items to measure rationality; and Faith in Intuition (FI) scaled items to measure experientiality. Second (as it relates to the concepts of juvenile justice decisionmaking theories), the study measured whether peer jurors issue higher sanctions than those imposed by a justice of the peace or municipal court judge according to the adult volunteer posttest responses. Furthermore, the study measured the importance of these items in the final teen court juror verdict using legal and extralegal factors.

The study measured whether experiential or cognitive processing traits of teen court youth jurors were critical factors in deciding the verdict and whether the processing traits varied based on the offense. The study also tested the predicted interactions and determined whether cognitive or experiential processing traits were dominant in teen court youth. Predicted interactions included youth with high rational cognitive processing traits are older, have previous teen court experience, and perceived fairness in their sanctions. Also, youth with high experiential cognitive processing traits have a high response to priming—stimuli introduced to influence the unconscious associations made based on memory and brain processes to alter reactions and thought patterns and evidence-based variables (Anderson, 2020).

## Research Questions

Based on the cognitive ability of youth in decision-making and theoretical explanations of CEST and juvenile justice decision-making theories and perspectives, this study addressed seven research questions. The study used mixed methods (interviews, observations, and posttests) to answer the following questions:

1. Does the offense of the teen court defendant trigger the rational or the experiential processing traits in youth participants?
2. Does providing jurors with specifically labeled-Case Notes, Evidence Note Sheets, Victim Experience Notes—notetaking sheets encourage youth to focus on specific factors of the trial?
3. Does prior teen court experience as a juror or defendant affect the processing traits of teen court youth?
4. Are the verdicts reached in teen court harsher than the sanctions an adult legal professional would issue?
5. Do teen court youth volunteers possess higher rational processing traits than previous teen court defendants?
6. Are teen court youth more attentive to legal or extralegal factors in teen court hearings?
7. Is there a difference in youth processing traits based on the age, sex, and race of the defendant or juror?

## The Significance of the Study

This study not only expanded the cognitive processing perspectives of teen court jurors but also examined teen court procedures and the role/influence of adult volunteers in the teen court setting. Specifically, this study expanded CEST juror decision-making as applied in Lieberman (2002) and Lieberman et al. (2007) studies. These study findings do not immediately nor directly affect teen court participants. However, the results can influence teen court legislation, teen court procedures, and teen court materials (i.e., notetaking sheets, jury instructions, and verdict forms). Introducing the use of materials that may assist in directing jurors' attention to certain aspects of the trials and other items may trigger analytical processing and can decrease the gap, if any, between the teen court sanctions and those delivered in traditional juvenile courts. This study was the first of its kind in Florida and Texas. The study covered 10 teen courts and 88 grade-school, middle school, and high school youth, 10 to 18 years-of-age (delinquent youth and youth volunteers), and 15 adult teen court volunteers.

The prosocial experience of teen courts can create or recreate the perception many youths have of the justice system and individuals with law-related careers. Youth tend to be impacted by positive peers and respectable adult figures at the same rate as negative peer pressure and negative adult modeling (Loeber \& Dishon, 1987). Exposure to a positive community-based program and alternative perspectives lowers delinquency rates (Logalbo \&Callahan 2001). Furthermore, a positive and informative teen court experience with a diverse youth population can influence the development of robust teen court programs and inspire the future of law-related and legal professions, given the influence of peers and relationships built into teen court programs.

## Limitations of the Study

Unlike other evaluations of teen court programs, this study was conducted one time. Generally, the evaluation of teen court programs extends beyond a year and has several phases, allowing for a realistic image of the cases and the juveniles involved in the program. Furthermore, the study took place during a worldwide pandemic (Covid-19 or Corona Virus), rising racial tension, and the transferring of a president (political power), which affected the availability of teen court schedules and the number of teen court participants.

The targeted population greatly decreased because of the smaller numbers of teen court participants since the beginning of the pandemic and the sparse availability of cases to be heard during face-to-face teen court sessions. Given the ongoing nature of the worldwide pandemic most teen court programs have discontinued face-to-face proceedings. Some programs have closed since the beginning of the pandemic's rapid
spread in March 2020 and have decided not to resume sessions until further notice. Given the limitation of face-to-face contact during the pandemic, several programs chose to hold virtual teen court programs. Though the virtual proceedings fulfill the assignment of sanctions, the whole teen court experience of wardrobe requirements, adult volunteer interactions, and proceedings in an actual courtroom may affect the youth's decisionmaking.

## Overview of Subsequent Chapters

Chapter II provides a review of the literature and examines the background and development of CEST and empirical studies that support CEST because this study was structured around testing the theory. The chapter reviews the definition of teen court purposes and procedures with supporting teen court studies. It also discusses the cognitive development of youth decision-making, the development of REI assessments over time, and mock jury studies. The chapter includes empirical support of juvenile justice decision-making theories (Focal Concerns Theory of Sentencing, Attribution Theory, and Formal Legal Perspective). Finally, the chapter reviews the procedures of the individual teen court programs selected for this current study.

Chapter III explains the mixed-method design utilized in this research, including the research questions and hypotheses, target research sites, and sample selection. The chapter describes the scales/questionnaires and data collection procedures (both face-toface and online via Qualtrics). In addition to observations, the study interviewed adult volunteers to gauge the expectations and the flow of individual teen court sessions. The grounded theory qualitative process is detailed with the themes generated from the
interviews and observations. Detailed descriptions and rationales of the quantitative variables selected, including the dependent and independent variables, priming, and notetaking variables are also included in the chapter. The chapter also provides an explanation of the selected statistical data analyses [Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) and Pearson's Correlation Analysis] and ethical considerations.

Chapter IV provides the results of the study, including an in-depth discussion of the study's qualitative findings and quantitative findings. The analyses included descriptive and inferential findings, and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) and Pearson’s Correlation findings. The chapter ends with analysis of each research question and hypothesis. Chapter V provides interpretation of the study's findings, limitations of the study, implications for practice, and recommendations for further research.

## CHAPTER II

## LITERATURE REVIEW

A review of the definition of teen court, purposes, and procedures with supporting teen court studies is first explained in this chapter. Then, the chapter examines the background and development of CEST with empirical studies that support CEST, followed by a discussion of the cognitive development of youth decision-making. Youth decision-making articulated the complexity of decision-making and psychosocial cognitive development. The chapter then discusses the development of REI assessments over time and CEST mock jury studies. It details the strengths, weaknesses, and supporting studies for the Focal Concerns Theory of Sentencing, Attribution Theory, and Formal Legal Perspective, and the juvenile justice decision-making theories and perspectives that were tested in this study. The chapter ends with the procedures and processes of the selected teen court programs for this current study.

## The Purpose of Teen Court

In the late 1900s, juvenile courts attempted to divert juveniles away from the system after reports noted that involvement in juvenile courts led to future participation in adult criminal courts (Bynum \& Thompson, 1996). The use of diversion programs faced backlash and controversy regarding their effectiveness except for the newly emerging teen court programs (Osgood \& Weichselbaum, 1984). Rothstein (1987) noted that the Teen Court Program in Odessa, Texas, appeared to impact the rate of teen crime and teen drug abuse. This program reviewed nearly 2,000 misdemeanor cases of Class C (crimes punishable by fines up to $\$ 500$ and no jail time, such as property theft of items
worth less than $\$ 100$ ), and Class B (crimes punished by fines up to $\$ 2,000$, or jail time up to 180 days, including petty drug possession). After the first cases, there was a projected $15 \%$ decrease in teen traffic offenses and no new first time Class B or Class C misdemeanors in the targeted area (Rothstein, 1987). Following the success of the Odessa Teen Court Program, there was an expansion to include juveniles with first-time drugrelated offenses (Rothstein, 1987).

Juveniles with drug-related offenses are required to attend drug prevention and drug education workshops with their parents in addition to the general teen court restitution processes (Rothstein, 1987; Global Youth Justice, Inc., 2020). Two years after drug offenses were included in the Odessa Teen Court diversion, there were no reports of reoffending. Ninety-six percent of parents of the teens in drug programs also revealed that their children showed an improvement in behavior in school and at home, as well as a positive effect on grades (Rothstein, 1987). Also noted was that most of the juveniles who did not show improvement after teen court and the drug program had prior offenses. Teen court programs were found to be a positive use of peer pressure, which resulted in better teenage driving habits and a decrease in criminal activity and drug usage if combined with parental training. The parents received behavioral training in which parents would follow-up with the teens to maintain behaviors and practices learned in the program. Parents also maintained contact with the teen court coordinator (Rothstein, 1987).

Teen court programs are generally used for younger juveniles, ranging in age from 10 to 15, while some programs have models for youth aged 17 or 18 (Global Youth

Justice, Inc., 2020). Typically, teens who are referred to the teen court do not have a prior arrest record. Global Youth Justice, Inc.'s (2020) report for the current offense is usually less severe such as theft/shoplifting (91\%), vandalism/graffiti (76\%), alcohol use and disorderly conduct (73\%), assault (67\%), possession of marijuana (60\%), tobacco use (59\%), and curfew violations (50\%). Other offenses include school disciplinary actions (45\%), traffic violations and truancy (39\%), trespassing (38\%), criminal mischief (30\%), possession of drug paraphernalia or other drug offenses (24 to 20\%), harassment (21\%), and fraud (8\%).

The participation of juveniles in teen court is voluntary (Butts \& Buck, 2000; Global Youth Justice, Inc., 2020). Similar to juvenile court proceedings, the youth in teen courts have peers acting as the judge, prosecutor, and defense attorney. The teen court process may include general juvenile court proceedings such as intake, a preliminary review of charges, a hearing, and sentencing (Butts \& Buck, 2000). Common sentences for teen court programs include suspension of driver's licenses (9\%), mentoring (13\%), teen court observation (14\%), jail tour (22\%), peer or victim/offender mediation (23 to $28 \%$ ), victim awareness classes (29\%), drug testing (31\%), counseling, and tutoring (37\%). Other sentences include curfew (46\%), alcohol/drug assessments (57\%), restitution (61\%), jury duty and educational workshops (73\%), essays (92\%), oral/written apologies (94\%), and community service (99\%). More than $50 \%$ of teen court programs require jury duty as part of the sentence (Global Youth Justice, Inc., 2020).

Studies of teen court decision-making and deliberations have found that youth jurors tend to request the issuance of more punitive sanctions for their peers in
comparison to sanctions that would be issued by prosecutors or judges in formal courts (Butts \& Buck, 2000; Forgays et al., 2004; Harrison et al., 2001). Youth who admit to guilt or who are found guilty in the teen court receive some form of sanction. In many communities, teen court sanctions encourage juveniles to repair at least part of the damage they have caused to the community or specific victims (Butts \& Buck, 2000). Youth are often ordered to pay restitution or perform community service. Some teen courts require youth to write formal apologies to their victims, and others require youth to serve on a future teen court jury. Many courts include other innovative dispositions, such as requiring youth to attend classes to improve their decision-making skills, deter them from future theft, and grow their awareness of victims (Butts \& Buck, 2000).

Forgays et al. (2004) found that the majority of youth jurors believe their sanctions were fair; however, few could affirmatively answer whether the youth would find their sentence fair. Youth jurors may develop effective restorative justice sentences. The majority of youth volunteers are motivated by the desire to serve in the role of an adult and assist their peers (Forgays et al., 2004). When provided with adequate information and training, the youth jurors have demonstrated the ability to follow court procedures and provide sanctions that meet restorative justice guidelines. Youth jurors appear to be aware of the magnitude of the responsibility that sentencing their peers entails. Their self-reports of the juror process revealed that each case was evaluated within the context of the juvenile's previous crimes, personal motivation, attempts at restitution, and apparent remorse for the crime (Forgays et al., 2004).

To separate the failures from the successes of teen court programs, Harrison et al. (2001) conducted one of the first systematic analyses of teen courts, examining New Mexico’s Doña Ana County Teen Court Program recidivism rates and processes. The study had 478 participants, who were selected randomly and then tracked through the Juvenile Probation and Parole Office (JPPO) database. Harrison and colleagues interviewed JPPO staff members, teen court staff members, and former teen court participants. Between 1994 and 1998, the study revealed a $25 \%$ recidivism rate, which was affected by the following factors: completing the teen court program, age, gender, prior referral, the juvenile's primary parent or guardian, and the severity of the sentence by the jury (Harrison et al., 2001). All of the participants interviewed felt a high degree of confidentiality about the program. The participants also specified that the teen court program resulted in a positive adjustment in their attitudes. Assistance, rather than the punishment, allowed them to generate respect for the system (Harrison et al., 2001).

During the interviews, the youth participants were asked whether the teen court atmosphere forced their participation in the program. The former participants did not feel participation in the teen court was pressured, unfair, or coerced by teen court staff members, though one teen noted the pressure felt by the parent (Harrison et al., 2001). Also, former participants felt jury members were lenient and more understanding with defendants who cooperated with the process and were less hostile or displayed immature attitudes—playful or not understanding the need for seriousness-toward the process (Harrison et al., 2001). The study found that the lack of consequences and additional alternatives for juveniles referred back to JPPO showed a shortcoming in the programs'
efficiency in preventing recidivism (Harrison et al., 2001). Furthermore, shortcomings in Doña Ana County’s Teen Court program were noticed in the lack of funding. Even though the strain of the probation officer caseload was eased, the funding was not redirected to the teen court program. The lack of resources and funding for the diversion program limited the availability of staff members to run the teen court programs (Harrison et al., 2001).

Gender and teen court studies used labeling theories to explain the changes in self-perception experienced by juveniles processed through teen court programs. Research shows juvenile males draw their self-perception from internal factors while females determine self-perception by external factors, namely wanting to be liked, praised, and positively viewed by others (Huebner \& Betts, 2002; Mears et al., 1998; Ray \& Downs, 1986). Given the differences in male and female socialization practices, the experiences and sentencing in teen court may reinforce rather than deter previous behaviors leading to further acts of delinquency after experiencing teen court (Bartusch \& Matsueda, 1996; Heimer, 1996).

Wilson et al. (2009) found that juveniles with a positive self-concept-seeing oneself as an essential community member, an intelligent person, an excellent child, or both an exceptional friend-were less likely to engage in delinquent activities. The study also found gender differences affect the reduction of delinquent behaviors after the teen court program. Delinquency increased for males diverted through teen court; effects on females were absent (Wilson et al., 2009). Comparing males in teen court processes with males in the control group, the teen court group displayed lower self-concepts and higher
rates of delinquency (Wilson et al., 2009). The study reported that, among male participants, the informal labels had similar negative effects (i.e., delinquency) as formal labels.

## Defining Teen Court Statutes, Models, and Procedures

In Florida, the process, and procedures for youth to enter a teen court program are governed by Florida Statute § 938.19 Teen Courts and Florida Statute § 985.126 Diversion programs; Data collection; Denial of Participation or Expunged Record. In Texas, the process, and procedures for youth to enter a teen court program are governed by Texas Family Code § 54.032 Deferral of Adjudication and Dismissal of Certain Cases on Completion of Teen Court Program, and Texas Code of Criminal Procedure Art. 45.052 Dismissal of Misdemeanor Charge on Completion of Teen Court Program.

Florida Statute § 938.19 describes the methods used by counties to assess court costs for (Section (1)) delinquent acts in which adjudication is withheld or (Section (2)) the defendant pleads guilty or nolo contendere. Teen court programs by this statute are required by Section (5) to report all funds collected once a year to the board of commissioners. The statute permits the board of commissioners to authorize agencies to administer teen court services, including clerks of court, law enforcement agencies, and court administrators in Section (6).

Florida Statute § 985.126 addresses the procedures after a minor has been assigned to complete a diversion program rather than judicial adjudication. The arresting or controlling law enforcement agency must (Section (2) report the minor's participation documents to the diversion program within seven days of the minor being admitted to the
program through the Juvenile Justice Information System Prevention Web. According to Section 3(a), since the first of October 2018, these diversion programs are required to identify the youth participating in the program by (1) age, ethnicity, gender, and race; (2) offense committed; and (3) law enforcement agency of initial contact, including the county and judicial circuit where the offense was committed. Pursuant to Section 3 (b), after the first of October 2018, the law enforcement agency must report whether minors referred to the department were offered a diversion program and whether minors were eligible for diversion programs. After the first of January 2019, departments were required to publish information (Section 3) in six-month intervals. Further, Section (5) notes that when the youth offender successfully completes a diversion program, they may have their record expunged and later deny or remit the first-time misdemeanor offense and participate in a diversion program.

Texas Family Code § 54.032 provides juveniles the ability to have adjudication proceedings delayed up to 180 days. The deferment of adjudication is under these conditions: (1) the violation is a state-defined misdemeanor that is punishable by a fine, (2) the juvenile waives the fifth amendment protection against self-incrimination and admits to all allegations, (3) the juvenile requests adjudication through a teen court program, and (4) the juvenile has not participated in a teen court program within two years prior to the hearing. In addition to the conditions of Section $\S 54.032$ (a), the teen court program must (b) be court-approved, and (c) successful completion of the program dismisses the case with prejudice. Subsection (c) also states that all sanctions imposed by the teen court must be completed within 90 days of the teen court hearing for (d) the case
to be removed from the youth's record. Revisions for subsections (g) and (h) of Section § 54.032 were effective after the first of January 2020. Juveniles who request to participate in a teen court program can be required to pay a nonrefundable administrative duties fee of up to $\$ 10$. A case can be transferred to another consenting county within the court's jurisdiction. Lastly, juvenile courts within the Texas-Louisiana border region may charge a $\$ 20$ reimbursement fee.

Texas Code Article 45.052 states (a) justice of the peace and municipal courts may defer adjudication for defendants under 18 or those enrolled in high school diploma or general education development (GED) programs. Subsection (a) states that (1) the court must have jurisdiction over the offense, (2) the defendant must plead guilty or nolo contendere in open court with his/her parents or guardians present, (3) the defendant must request or be recommended for a teen program, and (4) the defendant had not participated in a teen court program in the year prior to the date of the alleged offense. The additional elements of Article 45.052 are identical to elements under Section § 54.032.

An examination of teen court legislation found that there were over 1,100 existing programs across 49 states and the District of Columbia just 10 years after the spread of teen court across the nation (Heward, 2006). At the time of the evaluation of teen court legislation, laws in Idaho and New Mexico briefly addressed appropriations for teen courts. Also, restrictions and guidelines for the programs were absent from legislation (Heward, 2006). California, Florida, Illinois, New York, Oregon, Rhode Island, and Wisconsin had statutes with limited regulation that included less than five components for regulating teen court programs and activities (Heward, 2006). Alaska, Colorado,

Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Vermont, Washington, West Virginia, and Wyoming had comprehensive legislation that included six or more components to regulate teen courts, which formally acknowledge teen courts (Heward, 2006).

Three states funded teen court via statute, while other programs collected fees of $\$ 5$ to $\$ 30$ from participants, except for a fee waiver for indigent youth. In anticipation of the school component often tied to teen courts, some states provided school credits for completion. Other states included the program in the school curriculum and partnered with schools (Heward, 2006).

Much like the variation in teen court legislation, the purpose and procedural support of teen court programs varied. Teen court programs tend to follow four models:
(1) the adult judge, (2) the youth judge, (3) the youth tribunal, and (4) the peer jury (Godwin, 1998; Global Youth Justice, Inc., 2020). More than $50 \%$ of teen court programs follow the adult judge model, and other programs follow the peer model, the youth judge model, or the youth tribunal model (National Youth Court Center, 2006). The type of model selected by teen court programs has remained relatively constant over the years. According to Global Youth Justice, Inc. (2020), approximately 41\% of teen court programs follow the adult judge model, $26 \%$ follow the youth judge model, $21 \%$ follow the peer jury model, and 12\% follow the youth tribunal model. The peer jury model functions as a grand jury, and youth do not serve as prosecuting or defense attorneys (Development Services Group, Inc., 2010). The case presenter introduces the case facts, and then the youth juror panel interrogates the defendant. The youth tribunal model
involves a presentation of the case to a youth judge or a panel of youth judges by youth attorneys. Unlike the other models, there is no youth jury in the youth tribunal model (Development Services Group, Inc., 2010). The youth judge model has youth volunteers to serve as the judge, prosecuting attorneys, defense attorneys, jurors, and the bailiff. The adult judge model is similar to the youth judge model; however, it requires an adult to volunteer for the role of the judge (Development Services Group, Inc., 2010).

The teen court process can be summarized into four steps: referral, intake, hearing, and sanctions (see-Figure 1). Admission of guilt by youth occurred in about 93\% of youth justice cases, which allowed them to participate in teen court. The remaining seven percent of programs allow a plea of "not guilty," however, the program must then hold a hearing to determine innocence or guilt. Of the U.S. youth justice programs, 27\% automatically expunge the defendant's record for completing a teen court program; the other $63 \%$ automatically dismiss the initial charges (Global Youth Justice, Inc., 2020). The referral portion of the juvenile justice process allows the arresting law enforcement officer to detain the juvenile until the intake agent in juvenile court refers the case to a teen court program if the offense meets the teen court criteria (Bright et al., 2014).

Once the juvenile is recommended for the teen court program, the teen court coordinator must conduct an intake interview with the juvenile and his or her parents or guardians to review the facts of the case and family-based diversion requirements (Bright et al., 2014). If the family accepts and agrees after the intake, the juvenile becomes part of the assigned teen court program. If the program is declined, the case is referred back to the presiding judge or magistrate for formal proceedings. After the intake process, the
juvenile has a hearing before a youth jury that questions the defendant, discusses the case, and offers sanctions that usually involve community service and restitution for the victim (Bright et al., 2014). Finally, the sanctions ordered by the hearing must be completed by the juvenile within 120 days, and s/he must serve on a jury for other juveniles (Bright et al., 2014). If the sanctions are not completed, or the juvenile reoffends before completing the sanctions, the case is referred back to the court for formal sanctions.

## Figure 1

## Teen Court Process

## Referral

Note. Adapted from "Diversion from the juvenile justice system: Observations of a teen court program," by C. L. Bright, N. S. Hergenroeder, and D. Morris-Compton, 2014, 22, Journal of Community Practice, p. 388.

## Teen Court Empirical Findings

Bright et al. (2014) observed teen court programs in Northeastern U.S. urban areas to understand the role of community members in fulfilling the goals of the teen court. Thirteen teen court hearings were observed. During the hearings, the observers collected detailed information on the adult volunteers, the youth respondents, the jury of the respondent's peers, and the program's setting and procedures. All of the youth observed were between the ages of 11 and 17 and had four or fewer prior misdemeanor offenses (Bright et al., 2014).

During the year of data collection, the teen courts provided alternative sanctions for approximately 200 youth respondents (Bright et al., 2014). The race of the defendant was not a specific topic during the time of observation, with the exception of two cases in which jurors specifically addressed the race of the arresting officer and the race of the defendant. All of the observed youth and adult respondents appeared to be African American. The race of the observed respondents represented the city's demographics where the study took place. Unlike other studies, more female youth respondents were present, as seven out of the 13 respondents were girls (Bright et al., 2014). The observations did not display any particular pattern with regard to the respondents' gender and age.

In the Bright et al. (2014) study, retired and current judges acted as judges for the hearings; one Black male, two White females, and one White male. The seven adult volunteers aged between 20 and 39 years served as jury facilitators and were closer in age to the youth when compared to the judges. Four adult volunteers were Black, and three
adult volunteers were White. Each adult volunteer had some background or advanced degree in law-related areas (Bright et al., 2014). The teen court setting is facilitated and directed by adults; however, the program focused on the needs and the development of the youth in the program. The researcher compared teen courts to organizations targeting and serving at-risk youth in urban communities (Bright et al., 2014; McLaughlin, 2000). The adult volunteers were found to be a vital part of the success of the teen court experience for youth. The experience provided positive interactions with adults in criminal justice careers, which led to the redirection of youth behaviors and expectations for community relationships. According to Roth and Brooks-Gunn (2003), the youth program should provide structure while encouraging development and promoting skillbuilding. Bright et al. (2014) asserted that teen court programs must use due care in the selection of adult volunteers.

To examine the procedural justice theories and the support of the American legal system for effective and fair procedures to divert juveniles from the juvenile courts, Logalbo and Callahan (2001) surveyed 111 participants in the Teen Court of Sarasota County, Inc. Program. The study found that participants in teen court experienced an increase in knowledge of the legal system; had an improved attitude toward those in authority, namely judges; and boosted their attitudes toward themselves (i.e., their selfesteem). Within five months of the initial involvement with Sarasota County’s Teen Court, 17 out of the 111 participants, $12.6 \%$ of the juveniles, reoffended (Logalbo \& Callahan, 2001). Pretest and posttest questionnaires were analyzed and found that the lower recidivism rates were correlated with the overall improved attitudes toward
themselves and authority figures. The pretests and posttests were compared to nonoffending juveniles to prevent comparing the results to other alternative programs (Logalbo \& Callahan, 2001).

The study's findings supported procedural justice theories of positive relationships, attitudes toward authorities, knowledge, and attitudes toward legal procedures. The teens' increased knowledge of the legal system was correlated with favorable attitudes toward law enforcement officers, lawyers, and judges (Logalbo \& Callahan, 2001). The anticipation of increased knowledge of the legal system did not equate to positive attitudes of the teen court program (Logalbo \& Callahan, 2001). The study partially supported previous findings that older juveniles with a first offense were less likely to reoffend compared to the younger juveniles with a first offense. In their study, 10 of the 57 juveniles ( $17.5 \%$ of participants) over the age of 15 reoffended within the first five months of the program (Logalbo \& Callahan, 2001). The results were unclear whether juveniles' attitudes toward law enforcement officers improved as the reoffenders' positive attitude toward teen court declined in the posttests. The uncertainty in the correlation between the attitude changes toward law enforcement compared to attitude changes toward the program is speculated by the researchers to reduce the overall findings in the study (Logalbo \& Callahan, 2001).

In the evaluation of the procedures used to make decisions, a medium-sized city in western America surveyed its' teen court program participants. Ninety-eight teen court participants were asked about the available sentencing choices after 32 teen court trials (Greene \& Weber, 2008). The study found jurors had an imperfect recollection of the
evidence presented during the trial, and deliberations were made rather hastily, averaging about 11 minutes, ranging from four to 30 minutes (Greene \& Weber, 2008). Even with a poor memory of the evidence, greater weight was given to evidence-based materials presented during the trial than extralegal judicial factors (Greene \& Weber, 2008). Rather than beginning deliberation with a discussion of the case's facts, jurors often had a random participant ask about a suitable sentence for the defendant. The selected sentence was then supported by the facts recalled from the trial, including remorse/apologies, damage and harm caused, age, family and school difficulties, and substance use. The sentences were based on the desire to rehabilitate juveniles and restore socially acceptable conduct and behaviors (Greene \& Weber, 2008).

The studies cited above focused on the effectiveness of teen courts and whether the outcomes met the goals of the teen court programs. Teen court evaluations found variation in the perception and effectiveness of teen court programs by gender, age, and location of the court. While previous teen court studies focused on the effective reduction of future criminality in teen court youth, the current study examined the decision-making processes of the teen court youth. The following sections offer the theoretical background of decision-making in cognitive psychology and juvenile justice.

## Theoretical Background of CEST

Cognitive-experiential self-theory (CEST) emphasizes that individuals have active dual processing systems, the experiential (emotional) mode, and the rational mode. The experiential mode is emotionally motivated, while the rational mode is more balanced or logical (Epstein, 1985; 1994; 2003; Epstein \& Pacini, 1999). According to

Epstein (1994), experiential processing is more active than rational processing, automatic, effortless, and produces more holistic judgments about other individuals. Emotionally-cued processing, experiential processing, tends to be the default processor of reasoning and association. Experiential processing is assumed to be the processing of short-term or working memory (Epstein, 1994).

In contrast, rational processing requires more calculated effort than experiential processing, and it tends to be abstract in nature and requires premeditated thoughts. In addition, rational processing activates long-term memory for decision-making and considers the situation or experience beyond initial feelings (Epstein, 1994). Although individuals tend to understand the chances taken and the proportionality of consequences when making decisions, the experiential (emotional) processing system is known to take precedence in most decisions (Klaczynski et al., 1998). The use of CEST in this study measured adolescent/teen jurors' and adult volunteers' cognitive processing tendencies in teen court decision-making.

## CEST Empirical Findings

In comparison to less advanced adolescents, cognitively-advanced adolescents are capable of systematically exploring the contents of their thoughts, which may help them to recognize the value of rational processing. Rational processing is defined, in part, by dependence on context-based reasoning, principles, and logical justifications of projected decisions. Formal operational reasoning is the development of logical thoughts and deductive reasoning that begins around the age of 11 or 12 and is like rational processing (Inhelder \& Piaget, 1958). The cognitively-advanced adolescent would rely on rational
over the experiential mode of processing because formal operational reasoning has been developed. Individuals either develop or have been socialized to respond rationally or emotionally to specific information or circumstances. There is a general acceptance in the legal community that in personal injury trials, the plaintiff will benefit from emotionally oriented jurors, and the defendant will benefit from rationally oriented jurors (Belli, 1982; Mauet, 1992; Sannito \& McGovern, 1993; Simon, 1980; Vinson, 1993). The assumption is based on the premise that the greater the feeling of empathy evoked in the juror, the more sympathy he or she will feel toward the victim (the plaintiff).

In the understanding of cognitive processing, attorneys may and tend to select emotional jurors or use photos, testimony, and exhibits to elicit experiential or rational processing for sentencing (Lieberman, 2002). Emotional processing should increase jurors' capacity to envision the injury and the pain and suffering that the victim has suffered as a result of the defendant's actions (Darrow, 1936; Sannito \& McGovern, 1993). The outcome of emotional processing often results in a more substantial monetary award from the jury. Alternatively, cognitive processing should contribute to a critical analysis of the information presented (Vinson, 1993). Analysis of the information in greater depth allows the jurors to consider how the defendant's behavior foreseeably contributed to the injury but may direct more attention to the victim's behavior. If analytical processing is increased, the belief that the victim's actions contributed to the injury or that it was not sufficiently demonstrated that the defendant's behavior would have caused the injury, awards should be reduced or disregard the claims (Lieberman, 2002).

Jurors tend to be influenced by less scientific clinical expert testimony when determining the future dangerousness of defendants in death penalty sentencing. Clinical testimony is case study information from one case or event that is confirmed in multiple experiments (Krauss \& Sales, 2001; Lieberman et al., 2007; O’Keefe, 1990). The weight of an individual's preexisting beliefs about the world is engaged in clinically-based information and outweighs the presentation of complex and statistically loaded content/evidence (Krauss \& Sales, 2001; Lieberman et al., 2007; O’Keefe, 1990). The scientific actuarial expert testimony is statistically based information that is more often devalued in death penalty sentencing.

Mock jury trials were used in clinical expert testimony to compare analyticallyprocessed (rational processing) information to experientially-processed (emotional processing) information. In an assessment of whether the juror's preference for clinical expert testimony extended to civil commitment trials for sexual offenders, Lieberman et al. (2007) confirmed previous CEST mock jury studies. The study found jurors triggered to process analytical information were partial to the actuarial expert testimony. The jurors who approached the evidence rationally decided that the defendant's sentence depended on probabilistic and statistical evidence (Lieberman et al., 2007). In comparison to the rational jurors, the jurors triggered to process experiential information were partial to the clinical testimony. When the jurors relied on "gut feelings" or emotions to decide the defendant's sentence, the case study-specific information was the focus of deliberations (Lieberman et al., 2007). Evidence given the most attention by the jurors, and the verdict
or recommended sentence both depend on the jurors' activated processing mode during the trial.

In addition to the juror's preference for clinical or actuarial expert testimony, studies have found gender differences in juror findings and decisions. Gender had an interactive effect as a moderator on the "dangerousness" decision of sex offenders (Lieberman et al., 2007). The jurors were not cognitively-triggered, as Lieberman et al. predicted. Rather than show noticeable differences between the experiential and rational processing modes, females had minimal statistical variation between the two modes when reviewing the individual sex offender cases (Lieberman et al., 2007). Regardless of the manipulated situational factors, females were confident that the sex offender met the standard of dangerousness for civil commitment, which confirms other studies of the conviction of offenders in sexual child abuse (Bottoms \& Goodman, 1994; Kovera et al., 1997) and rape cases (Brekke \& Borgida, 1988; Kovera et al., 1999; Lieberman et al., 2007; Schutte \& Hosch, 1997). Female jurors convict sex offenders at higher rates than males (Lieberman et al., 2007). The gender differences in mock jurors’ decision-making were used to measure whether teen courts have a gender variance in the preference of evidence heard during the trial, and the weights placed on the evidence items by the teen court youth jurors and adult volunteers.

## Youth Decision-Making

The current study completed a detailed exploration of human brain development, which focused on the cognitive capacity to make decisions to understand the possible differences in cognitive processing tendencies of youth and adults. Adolescents undergo
cognitive developmental changes when experiences cause them to think and learn (Blackmore, 2012; Casey et al., 2008; U.S. Department of Health \& Human Services, n.d.). Though the adolescent brain undergoes rapid growth and changes, the brain develops in sections. The planning, abstract thinking, and decision-making sections of the brain tend to develop last (Blackmore, 2012). The human brain is not fully developed nor protected until an individual is in her/his mid-twenties. As the adolescent's brain changes, so do thinking abilities (Baum et al., 2017; U.S. Department of Health \& Human Services, n.d.). Strengthened neurological connections produce enhanced learning, abstract thinking, advanced reasoning, and metacognition. Abstract thinking grows behind the concept of what can be seen and touched to love, justice, and other abstract ideas (Baum et al., 2017). Advanced reasoning grows from limited scope-based decisions to future predictions and possible scenarios based on presented circumstances. Metacognition is the skill to "think about thinking," which is the reflection on preferable information processing to learn and find solutions (Satterthwaite et al., 2015; U.S. Department of Health \& Human Services, n.d.).

Research surrounding the developmental abilities of adolescents in consideration of cognitive development began with whether adolescents could make informed decisions, "informed consent" (Lewis, 1980), and understand the legal consequences for impulsive decisions (Jacobs \& Ganzel, 1993). Other studies consider an adolescent’s criminal culpability (Melton, 1983, 1989; Steinberg \& Cauffman, 1996). Since adolescents are unable to comprehend at the level of adults, they need adult guidance to survive in a technologically-advanced and sophisticated society (Baron, 1988, 1990).

Researchers previously emphasized the equality of adults and adolescent decisionmaking, neither surpassing the other in comprehension and cognitive abilities (Moshman, 1993; Weithorn \& Campbell, 1982).

The concept of decision-making is a multicomponent process beginning at the time an individual notices a difference between one's goal and one's current state (Klaczynski et al., 2001). Decision-makers identify and evaluate all potential options and select a plan, implement necessary actions, consider consequences, and store the failures and triumphs of actions to reduce the gap between the current and the future states of being (Klaczynski et al., 2001). This contemplation period is somewhat similar to the process juveniles and their families experience when deciding whether participation in a teen court program is the best alternative diversion program. Rather than a prediction of cognitive competence, decision-making is a combination of emotional competence, social-cognitive competence, values and beliefs, and motivation. Multiple competencies influence decisions, and mature decision-makers can regulate their emotions, situational or real-life factors, personality dispositions, and motivational tendencies for precision, self-fulfillment, and involvement (Klaczynski et al., 2001). For youth jurors to make mature, rational sentencing decisions, a combination of life experiences and abstract consideration of the evidence must be engaged.

In addition to cognitive factors, the subcultural and cultural environment of adolescents influences their decisions. Generally, the social-contextual forces around adolescents allow parents, teachers, and peers to impact decisions even though the decision is mediated by social cognitive, personality, and cognitive variables (Klaczynski
et al., 2001; Klaczynski et al., 1998). From early childhood through early adolescence, youth develop analytic (rational) decision-making. The development of heuristics and biases is theorized to accompany analytical, rational, and decision-making development (Jacobs et al., 1995; Jacobs \& Potenza, 1991). The regulation of emotions while making decisions, remembering previous decisions and consequences of those decisions, and adapting subsequent decisions are based on prior experiences that develop during early adulthood (Byrnes, 1998; Byrnes et al., 1999). During puberty and early adulthood, the human brain experiences developmental changes in emotion, motivation, and cognitive processing that influence decision-making and risk-taking (Balogh et al., 2013). Autonomy and peer pressure also impact decision-making and risk-taking tendencies, which create heightened vulnerability during adolescence to engage in addictive behaviors (Balogh et al., 2013).

Advances in developmental neuroscience measure the difference in age and risktaking through the interaction of cognitive and emotional factors that affect decisionmaking (Blakemore, 2012). These factors have found that an increase in age creates avoidance of risky behavior (Cauffman et al., 2010). Adolescents are characterized as impulsive decision-makers because of willful risk engagement. Neuroimaging and lesion studies once looked at the ventromedial prefrontal cortex and similar functioning structures as primary sources of decision-making (Blakemore \& Robbins, 2012). The regulated development of executive brain functions by the development of the prefrontal cortex during adolescence was studied by Sharma et al. in 2013 (see Figure 2). Recent studies found that decision-making is intertwined in response selection, representation
value, affective and social aspects, and associative learning (Blakemore \& Robbins, 2012). Findings support the dissociation between the slow development of linear impulse control and response inhibition during adolescence against the nonlinear development of the reward system in adolescents, often represented as hyper-responsivity to rewards. The decision-making in adolescents may be moderated by social factors and emotions
(Blakemore \& Robbins, 2012).

## Figure 2

## Executive Human Brain Functions



Note. Adapted from "Maturation of the adolescent brain," by Sharma et al., 2013, 22, Neuropsychiatric Disease and Treatment, 9, p. 453.

The paradoxical combination of bias and logic, dual processing, observed in adult judgment and decision-making is a result of the experiential and the analytic system maturing throughout development (Albert \& Steinberg, 2011). Adolescents are capable of making decisions and judgments using the heuristic and analytical processing system. When the adolescent's social schemas are activated, the heuristic system, which is the balance of rewards and punishment, gains a greater influence as adolescents develop (Albert \& Steinberg, 2011). Adolescents have a higher level of tolerance for uncertain and ambiguous future outcomes, which allow for the willful exploration of environments (Hartley \& Somerville, 2015). The facilitation of environmental adaptability finds the consistent decline in the exploration of behaviors represents a shift in development and the focus on behaviors that produce positive consequences as a result of the exploration (Hartley \& Somerville, 2015). Adolescents make discounts for immediate rewards with delayed outcomes, and the value of delayed rewards increases as discounts decrease through maturation into early adulthood (Hartley \& Somerville, 2015). The constraint of strategic decision-making during adolescence can be explained by the continuing development of corticocortical connectivity and the late development of the prefrontal cortex (Hartley \& Somerville, 2015).

Teen court programs create prosocial experiences for low-risk juveniles hoping to positively reinforce the decision to change behaviors and reconnect with family and community. The use of priming questions (listed in Chapter III variable selection) in the posttest of the current study tested the moderation between the verdict and the offense committed. The processing modes of the participants in the teen court experience cannot
be manipulated as they would in a mock trial setting created by the researcher through manipulated photographs and jury selection questionnaires. In an attempt to prime the participants to trigger their processing modes, questions were asked about their experiences or the knowledge of teen court misdemeanor offenses. The age of the defendants in the trial should reflect a correlation of a decrease in the severity of the misdemeanor offense as the age of the defendants increase. Risk-taking behaviors have been found to decrease with age. As the age of the youth participants increases, the development of decision-making should be reflected in rational or experiential tendencies. However, in the event that these assumptions are not in the study's findings, the absence can be explained by the variation in adolescent development speeds, emotions, and social factors.

## Adult Volunteers

The use of adult volunteers in teen court is to aid the youth jurors to make better decisions in the future considering the teen court experience. The adult judge model is more commonly used in teen courts because the decision-making parts of the brain in youth are not fully developed, and the youth require guidance and assistance in decisionmaking. The teen court experience encourages a shift in adaptability while encouraging jurors and defendants to focus on future possibilities to adapt future conduct and behaviors. Youth jurors are required to make an abstract decision on behalf of their peers to facilitate reconnection with family and community. The youth jurors provide sentences for their peers according to the recommendations of the teen court prosecutor. The processing mode activated by the teen court participants when making decisions for their
peers was measured using the Rational-Experiential Inventory Assessments. The following section includes a description of the instruments.

## Rational-Experiential Inventory Assessments

A few studies have used the Rational-Experiential Inventory-10 for adults and Rational-Experiential Inventory-A for adolescents to measure CEST in juror decisionmaking. The Rational-Experiential Inventory (REI) assessment is derived from the CEST (Epstein, 1973; Marks et al., 2008). REI is available in four versions: REI-59, REI-40, REI-10, and REI-A. The original measures are found in the REI-59 assessment. REI-59 is a 59-item assessment that uses five-point scale ratings, " 1 = completely false to 5 = completely true," for four sub-scales. The sub-scales include 19 Need for Cognition (NFC) unipolar, single process measure items; 12 Faith in Intuition (FI) unipolar items; 16 bipolar, dual-process Head over Heart ( HOH ) items with relative usage of rational vs. experiential style; and 12 bipolar Value Head over Heart (VHOH) items with the relative value of rational vs. experiential style (Epstein et al., 1995, 1996).

REI-40 and REI-10 were created from the ideals in REI-59 to assess information processing preferences in adults while using fewer variable items and removing the bipolar variable items. REI-40 is a 40 -item assessment intended to assess information processing preferences (Pacini \& Epstein, 1999). The 40 items use five-point ratings, "1 $=$ definitely not true of myself to $5=$ definitely true of myself," for four subscales of 10 items each. The rationality items are measured using Rational Ability (RA) scaled to measure the "ability to think logically and analytically," and Rational Engagement (RE) scaled to measure "reliance on and enjoyment of thinking in an analytical, logical
manner" (Pacini \& Epstein, 1999). The experiential items are measured using Experiential Ability (EA) scaled to measure "ability with respect to one's intuitive impressions and feelings," and Experiential Engagement (EE), scaled to measure "reliance on and enjoyment of feelings and intuitions in making decisions" (Pacini \& Epstein, 1999).

This study used the Rational-Experiential Inventory - Adolescents (REI-A), and Rational-Experiential Inventory - REI-10 items. REI-A is a 20 -item assessment for the processing preferences of adolescents, divided into two subscales, 10 Need for Cognition (NFC) items and 10 Faith in Intuition (FI) items (Cacioppo \& Petty, 1982). REI-10 is a 10-item assessment for information processing preferences (Norris et al., 1998). Similar to the REI-A, the REI-10 items are divided into two subscales, five unipolar Need for Cognition (NFC) items and five unipolar Faith in Intuition (FI) items. REI-10 is more like REI-A, which allows for easier comparisons between adult and adolescent processing tendencies.

## Rational-Experiential Inventory Studies

Except for thesis and dissertation studies (Buzdar, 2012; Harms, 2018;
Madjaroski, 2018; Nakamura, 2016; Turow, 2009), few recent studies have used REI-10 and REI-A to measure adult and adolescent decision-making tendencies. Using a French modified version of the Rational-Experiential Inventory for adults with 10 items (REI10), Kergoat et al. (2010) sought to comprehend clustered preferences in heterogenous sensory identified in consumer tests. The study had 200 participants who participated in two studies of 100 individuals each. Participants were given four scales to rate the
likeness of an item. The items were six car seat fabrics: two velvet, three woven and knitted, and one 3D-stitched. The REI-10 assessments found the participants’ preferences were categorized into two clusters, the velvet fabric likers, and the non-velvet likers. The non-velvet likers seemed to mostly depend on feelings during the judgment process as their experience with emotion was higher than the second group (Kergoat et al., 2010).

Similar to the analysis of participant preferences in the Kergoat et al. (2010) study, this study determined whether the adult volunteer participants in teen court have more rational or experiential processing tendencies. Furthermore, the study measured whether the differences in processing tendencies affected the extralegal and legal factors considered by the volunteer in determining a verdict in the case. The study also measured whether the adults' processing tendencies varied based on juvenile offense. To measure the individual preferences for experiential and rational cognition in adolescents, REI-A was used, which has been confirmed in the Marks et al. (2008) study.

Studies have tested the internal consistency and validity of REI-A scales. Marks et al. (2008) used a sample of 306 high school students in Australia to assess the internal consistency, factor structure, and current validity of the Rational-Experiential Inventory for adolescents (REI-A). The study found internal consistency, Cronbach's $\alpha>0.80$, and test-retest reliability, $r>0.90$. The REI-A assessment portion of the original questionnaire was re-administered randomly to 109 of the 306 participants five weeks after the original questionnaire for test-retest reliability (Marks et al., 2008). In addition to the REI-A items, the questionnaire included scaled items of deductive reasoning tasks, inductive reasoning tasks, open-minded thinking, superstitious beliefs, the big five
inventory (BFI), and the emotional expressivity scale (EES). The deductive reasoning task has eight syllogistic reasoning problems, four correct answers with logical conclusions reflecting reality, and four with correct answers not reflecting reality, all of which were developed for use with adolescents by Kokis et al. (2002). The inductive reasoning task has eight reasoning problems about ordinary daily circumstances, also developed by Kokis et al. (2002) and adapted for adolescents. Five of the problems have a conflict between individuating information and base-rate information. The other three problems required the participants to use base-rate information. The open-minded thinking scale measured the flexibility of belief structures and thinking styles with a one scale combination of the 30-item measure from the children's disposition scales (Kokis et al., 2002).

The superstitious belief scale assessed the existence and degree of superstitious belief held by the participants by an eight-item measure extracted from Kokis et al. (2002). The BFI assessed the big five personality traits using the 44-item assessment of extraversion, neuroticism, openness to experience, conscientiousness, and agreeableness (John et al., 1991; John \& Srivastava, 1999). The EES assessed the range of the individual's outward expression of emotion by Kring et al. (1994)'s 17-item questionnaire. The findings of the study confirmed the CEST theory principles, i.e., that poorer reasoning, emotional expressivity, and superstitious beliefs were correlated with higher scores of experientiality. Conscientiousness, openness to experience, superior reasoning, open-minded thinking, the lack of superstitious beliefs, and the absence of neuroticism were associated with higher rationality scores. The study confirmed REI-A is
a reliable tool for measuring individual preferences for experiential and rational cognition in adolescents (Marks et al., 2008).

## Cognitive-Experiential Self-Theory (CEST): Mock Jury Studies

Though CEST has not been used to assess teen court participant processing modes, the theory has been tested in mock jury settings with adults. Emotionally arousing jurors prior to jury deliberations were found to produce greater rewards for damages in a mock jury who were shown colored photographs of severely injured civil plaintiffs (Whalen \& Blanchard, 1982). Exposing mock jurors to an emotionally arousing videotape like close-ups of a bloody body of a young man who had been stabbed to death, and lying in the street, led participants to set a lower standard of proof for conviction (Kassin \& Garfield, 1991). Jurors in a rational mode of processing heavilyweigh actuarial expert testimony, while the jurors in the experiential processing condition were influenced by clinical expert testimony (Krauss et al., 2004).

It has also been found that mock juries are unable to ignore emotionally arousing pretrial media publicity. Though an extension of the trial was effective at reducing the effects of factual pretrial publicity that may be incriminating for a defendant, it was not effective in removing the bias against a defendant as a result of the emotionally charged pretrial publicity. It can then be concluded that emotionally oriented evidence appears to be damaging to defendants (Kramer et al., 1990). Further, it was stated that emotionally arousing evidence had a greater effect on participants' verdicts when it was ruled inadmissible than when a judge allowed it. Emotionally-arousing inadmissible evidence
was more difficult to ignore compared to non-emotional information, regardless of its admissibility (Edwards \& Bryan, 1997).

In a mock civil trial, it was found attractiveness of the defendant can sway the damages found in favor of the plaintiff if the defendant is found liable (Lieberman, 2002). However, the influence of defendant attractiveness was limited to the experientially triggered mock juror members, as attractiveness had little effect on the liability found and damages awarded by the individuals triggered to process the case, evidence, and findings rationally. Thus, appealing to the emotion of juror members has a limited effect on the individual jurors (Lieberman, 2002).

Similarly, it was found that experiential processors were more likely to convict less attractive defendants. Experiential processors were expected to report that extralegal factors would change their verdicts (Gunel \& Ceci, 2010). A novel scoring method was used to measure the degree to which emotionality exceeded rationality within an individual. The degree of processing was linearly correlated with harsher sentences and extralegal influences. An unattractive harshness effect can be found during guilt determination. The attraction leniency effect can be found during sentencing. Concerning unattractive harshness and attraction leniency effects, increased susceptibility to extralegal factors was found in experiential processors (Gunnell \& Ceci, 2010).

West et al.'s (2020) study assessed capital punishment decisions based on the interaction of the defendant's ethnicity and immigrant status with the strength of the evidence in mock jurors. Capital trials occur in two phases: (1) jurors determine the defendant's guilt or innocence, and (2) jurors issue a penalty. The current study focused
on the second phase (i.e., the penalty phase), where youth jurors are expected to balance aggravators and mitigators to determine sanctions. Aggravators are evidentiary elements defined by statute that weigh toward the justification for a defendant deserving the death penalty. Mitigators are evidentiary supports from the characteristics of the case and the defendant who advocated for the defendant deserving a life sentence (West et al., 2020). Rendering a death sentence means the jury endorsed at least one aggravator, and the inability of the mitigators to outweigh the aggravator(s). Jurors were more likely to render a death sentence when the mitigators were outnumbered by the aggravators (Miller \& Bornstein, 2006).

West et al. (2020) recruited 596 participants for the study. After excluding cases for admitting that the defendant deserves a death sentence regardless of the evidence strength or death penalty beliefs impairing their ability to serve on the jury, 497 participants served on the mock juries, and 447 completed the jury service. The study found jurors weighed aggravators instead of mitigators for undocumented Latinx citizens (West et al., 2020). The strength of evidence and experiential processing traits correlated with rendering death sentences. The study’s findings imply the defendants' ethnicity and immigration status triggered jurors to weigh aggravators over mitigators, possibly causing punitive decisions in capital cases (West et al., 2020). While previous teen court studies have evaluated the effectiveness of teen court programs and the decision-making abilities of teens generally, this current study combined the efforts of previous studies and focused on the information processing traits of teens and adult volunteers in teen court jury trials.

## Theoretical Background of Juvenile Justice Decision-Making

Criminological theories have supported the study of youth in teen court proceedings. Teen court theories, generally accepted assumptions, propose youth ideally have a more positive court experience with prosocial youth when compared to the interaction of youth with adults in authority. For example, the peer justice approach applied by teen court assumes the reversal of highly correlated association with delinquent peers and the onset of delinquent conduct (Loeber \& Dishon, 1987). Procedural justice finds the juvenile perspective of the systems' fairness can be impacted by an understanding of the criminal justice system (Logalbo \& Callahan 2001). Teen court concepts propose youth have a positive court experience with prosocial youth when compared to the interaction of youth with adults in authority (Loeber \& Dishon, 1987). This study used juvenile justice decision-making theories to examine whether jurors determined a verdict based on cognitive processing traits and extralegal factors (i.e., gender, school grades, race, parental involvement, juveniles’ attitudes, and socioeconomic factors) or legal factors (i.e., current offense and arrest record).

Several theories attempt to explain juvenile justice decision-making, including focal concerns, attribution, conflict, race threat, and formal legal perspective. This study focused on the Focal Concerns Theory of Sentencing, Attribution Theory, and Formal Legal Perspective. The Focal Concerns Theory of Sentencing is the perspective used to explain judges’ sentencing decisions as a reflection of their "assessment of the blameworthiness or culpability of the offender, their desire to protect the community by incapacitating dangerous offenders or deterring potential offenders, and their concerns
about the practical consequences, or social costs, of sentencing decisions" (Spohn \& Holleran, 2000, p. 282). Focal concerns have a focus on adult offenders and the sentencing practices of judges in relation to convicted offenders. Juvenile court judges rarely have enough information to accurately determine the offender's culpability or the level of dangerousness to the community; thus, a "perceptual shorthand" is developed (Spohn \& Holleran, 2000; Steffensmeier et al., 1998).

The perceptual shorthand is based on stereotypes and attributions linked to the characteristics of the offender, including race, gender, and age (Spohn \& Holleran, 2000; Steffensmeier et al., 1998). Offender characteristics then interact to influence the judges’ sentencing because of the images or attributes related to membership, in particular, social groups thought to be dangerous and crime-prone (Steffensmeier et al., 1998). The strengths of the focal concern theory rely on the reality that Blacks and Hispanics generally take the blame for the crime and are considered more criminal or delinquent by the system. The focal concern theory's main weakness is that it has not been tested in cases involving juveniles, as many of the empirical findings have focused on adults (Freiburger \& Jordan, 2016).

Attribution Theory focuses on the consequences of attributions through the assessment or manipulation of perceived causes and measurement of their effects on behavior, feelings, and expectancies. Attributional elements often include achievement motivation, romantic love, and aggression. Attributions are assumed to play a central role in human behavior because they can constitute the person's understanding of the causal structure of the world and, therefore, are important determinants of one's interaction with
the world (Kelley \& Michela, 1980; Rodriguez, 2013). The strength of the attribution theory is that attributes can buffer the punishment or sentences when applied to juvenile delinquency. However, the weakness of the attribution theory is that the attributes can lead to harsher adjudication conditions. Whether attribution is a strength or weakness depends upon whether the authorities find the behaviors in or out of the juvenile's control (Freiburger \& Jordan, 2016).

The Formal Legal Perspective accounts for decision-making based on purely legal factors, such as offenses and prior records based on standards set by the rule of law, precedence, and policies. The perspective has disregarded the existence of racial discrimination in juvenile justice systems. The Formal Legal Perspective does not account for the cultural and environmental influences of crime on the development of laws that affect race and gender disproportionately. The research noted that the sentencing disparity is explained as the result of differential offending because Black and Hispanic youth commit more serious crimes (Bishop, 2005; Freiburger \& Jordan, 2016; Walker et al., 2012). Few empirical studies have explored the effects of emotional or rational stimulation during a trial concerning juror verdicts. To date, there has not been a study that examines the impact of rational or emotional stimulation of teen juror decisionmaking, particularly in teen courts.

## Selected Teen Court Programs

Teen court programs in Florida and Texas were selected for this study. Florida teen court programs are governed by Florida Statute § 938.19 Teen Courts and Florida Statute § 985.126 Diversion programs; Data collection; Denial of Participation or

Expunged Record. The Florida Association of Teen Court (FATC) was developed with the following structural philosophies: accept responsibility, respect confidentiality, develop personal values, respect the justice system, develop objectivity, respect society's values, and respect justice systems (Florida Association of Teen Court, 2017). FATC highlights all county teen courts in Florida, including Alachua County, Duval County, Hillsborough County, Miami-Dade County, Orange County, Sarasota County, and Volusia County (Florida Association of Teen Court, 2017).

Texas teen court programs are governed by Texas Family Code § 54.032 Deferral of Adjudication and Dismissal of Certain Cases on Completion of Teen Court Program, and Texas Code of Criminal Procedure Art. 45.052 Dismissal of Misdemeanor Charge on Completion of Teen Court Program. In 1990 the Teen Court Association of Texas (TCAT) was created to inspire teen court programs while providing networking and education to members throughout Texas (Teen Court Association of Texas, n.d.). The current members of TCAT extend across Texas, including Arlington, Austin, College Station, Corpus Christi, El Paso, Odessa, Plainview, and San Marcos (Teen Court Association of Texas, n.d.).

Both Florida and Texas teen courts adhere to one of the four variations of teen courts, and each court has personalized objectives, goals, and procedures. The common sentencing practices, participation eligibility, and meeting schedules can be gathered from the website of the teen court program or the municipal court of the teen court program. All teen court program administrators listed on the FATC and TCAT websites were contacted via email to solicit the participation of the program's youth and adult
volunteers in this study. The teen court programs that responded positively to the solicitation email were given detailed information about the study; subsequently procedures of the study were completed. Some programs were primarily involved in the beginning methods of the study (interviews of the teen court administrators and adult volunteers) due to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic restrictions that closed the majority of the teen court programs indefinitely. In total, 10 teen court programs participated in this study.

The Alachua County Sheriff's Office offers teen court as an alternative sentencing program for local juveniles to allow teens an opportunity for a justice system experience while learning laws. Juveniles referred to the teen court program participate in a traditional trial case process, including sentencing by a jury of their peers or a master jury (tribunal) case (Alachua County Sheriff Office, n.d.). All teen Court defendants are 18 years of age or younger. If the teen is eligible for the teen court program, then conflict resolution, legal knowledge, substance abuse, and theft courses or packets are offered in addition to local counseling referrals. The Explorer Program is available through Boy Scouts of America to cater to youth interested in a future in law enforcement (Alachua County Sheriff Office, n.d.).

Once sentenced, the defendant must follow the instructions as if a judge ordered the adjudication. Requirements to complete the program usually include community service hours and jury duty for future mock trials. If the program is completed successfully, the defendant's case is dismissed (Alachua County Sheriff Office, n.d.). For youth in middle and high school interested in learning about civic jury duty, participation
in teen court as a volunteer juror is permitted and encouraged. The Attorney Program aids youth jurors in gaining problem-solving, public speaking, and critical thinking and listening skills along with experience from local to federal attorneys to serve as a case defense attorney or prosecutor (Alachua County Sheriff Office, n.d.).

The Fourth Judicial Circuit Courts of Florida offers teen court to Duval County youth ages 12 to 18 to encourage interest in criminal justice and law-related careers. Duval's teen court's goal is to provide participants with training, education, and experience. Duval teen court has four main objectives: (1) improve juvenile justice system comprehension, (2) promote fair sanctions that fit the juvenile offenses (i.e., just desserts), (3) reduce juvenile recidivism rates, and (4) make space for teens to grow an interest in legal professions. Participants must have a high school enrollment qualification to be eligible for the program. The juvenile must plead no contest or guilty to the offense and choose teen court for adjudication of the case. Legal professionals volunteer to work with teen volunteers to prosecute and defend cases. The teen jurors hear the facts of the case and decide the punishment their peers will receive for their offenses. The municipal court judges preside over the teen court cases. Subsequent jury service terms are not required for teen defendants. Jury service serves as a possible sanction for the verdict (Fourth Judicial Circuit Courts of Florida, 2021).

The Fifth Judicial Circuit State of Florida provides the Marion County teen court program in Ocala, Florida (Fifth Judicial Circuit State of Florida, 2017). Marion County allows teens to be accountable for their behavior and have tickets dismissed. To be eligible, the juvenile must be middle to high school aged. Within 21 days of citation
reception, the juvenile must plead "no contest" or "guilty" to the offense in the Municipal Court and request teen court adjudication. For juveniles under 18 years of age, a parent or guardian must accompany them and may enter a plea; and the family member present must then serve as a trial witness. For juveniles 18 years of age and older, parents and guardians are not required to be present to enter a plea (Fifth Judicial Circuit State of Florida, 2017.).

For the teen's offense to be automatically dismissed, and to prevent a conviction on the teen's record there are a few requirements that must be met. Marion County youth must complete jury terms and the assigned sentence within 90 days for misdemeanor offenses, complete jury terms and the assigned sentence within 120 days for felony offenses, and have no valid driver's license. Any fines and court costs are also dismissed upon completion of the program, and insurance rates will not be affected by a moving violation. Multiple cases are consecutively heard during each session, including two master jury hearings (Fifth Judicial Circuit State of Florida, 2017).

Marion County's teen court program includes a discipline grid that has three classes of violations, including various levels of community service hours, and jury service terms. Misdemeanor violations require four to eight jury service terms and 40 to 75 hours of community service. The defendant must also pay restitution if applicable (Fifth Judicial Circuit State of Florida, 2017). Felony violations require 10 to 12 jury duty terms and 75 to 100 community service hours. In addition to sentencing requirements, the jury may require the attendance of anger management, counseling, or life skills classes; letters of apology to parent, guardian, or victim; or a written essay of a 500-word
minimum on a jury selected-topic. The sole sentence limitation rests on the jury's concept of rationale and justice (Fifth Judicial Circuit State of Florida, 2017). Having no valid driver's license violations are focused upon moving violations and receive misdemeanor violation sanctions of four to eight jury service terms and 40 to 75 hours of community service. This violation also requires the violator to complete a traffic law workbook in 75 to 90 days (Fifth Judicial Circuit State of Florida, 2017).

For teens to volunteer with the Marion County teen court program, guidelines must be followed, training must be completed, and eligibility must be met. Teen volunteers must at least be in middle or high school, demonstrate excellent communication skills with peers, understand confidentiality, and work well in group settings. To be a teen court attorney, a full day of training with teen court staff must be completed. Attorneys must also serve as an assistant attorney for several months, then an associate attorney for four months, and finally, a lead attorney (Fifth Judicial Circuit State of Florida, 2017). Volunteers as jurors may serve on a six-member jury or a master jury to hear cases. Volunteers must commit to serving and attending teen court and must be dependable. Removal of a volunteer from the teen court program occurs after missing two of the four required sessions without proper advanced notice. Adult volunteers can assist the program by checking jurors in and checking defendants out. Local attorneys can serve as teen court judges by making jury assignments and overseeing the courtrooms (Fifth Judicial Circuit State of Florida, 2017).

Miami-Dade County Teen Court Program has success in the rehabilitation of juveniles because it is considered more than a program that offers second chances. The
program has provided opportunities for almost 8,000 youth in the last 23 years of service to the county, and many of the past participants have now become attorneys and career professionals. Miami-Dade's Teen Court offers a voluntary alternative that allows youth to make restitution through specialized classes, jury service, and community service to avoid fines and a juvenile record (Miami-Dade County, 2022).

Miami-Dade's teen court program began holding virtual sessions at 5:00 P.M. on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Fridays after the surge of the Delta variant of the Covid-19 pandemic. Similar to the other teen court programs, Miami-Dade seeks to provide a judiciary system experience, deter future unlawful behavior, and provide the knowledge for youth to be productive citizens. The program's goals include holding the delinquents responsible for behavior while teaching them that consequences are a direct result of their actions, providing a positive judicial system experience to deter future delinquency, educating the participants on judicial and legal processes, and promoting the importance of communication through establishing positive relationships with one's community. Miami-Dade's primary goal is to empower youth through the creation of and advocation for opportunities that allow youth to grow into responsible citizens (Miami-Dade County, 2022).

The Miami-Dade teen court serves delinquent youth with their first misdemeanor offense who are under the age of 18 and individuals enrolled full-time in high school or a GED program. Eligible youth have a Class C misdemeanor, such as traffic offense, theft, disorderly conduct, tobacco/alcohol offense, or criminal mischief. The delinquents must appear before a municipal or justice court judge and choose to have their case heard in
teen court (Miami-Dade County, 2022). The case is then referred to the coordinator of the teen court to have a trial date set. Youth generally appear with their parents for teen court hearings. Trials end in sentences, and a specified time to complete the sentence is mandated. If the sentence is completed, the case will be dismissed. For youth who are unsuccessful in completing the teen court jury sentence, the case is returned to court. The court will receive the case, issue the juvenile a fine, and the offense and conviction may be on the juvenile's criminal record (Miami-Dade County, 2022).

Teens and adults can apply to volunteer for Miami-Dade County’s teen court sessions, and all volunteers participate in orientation prior to teen court sessions. Teen volunteers are often recruited from community organizations and local schools. Teen court applicants must be 13 to 17 years old. Teen volunteers can elect to serve in the position of juror, bailiff, or attorney. Youth who desire to serve as an attorney must complete training and serve on a jury at least once (Miami-Dade County, 2022). Adult volunteers can be teachers or individuals with legal or law-related backgrounds. Adult volunteers may serve as judges, assist with check-in, review cases prior to proceedings, help teens prepare cases, assign teens to proceedings roles, advise teen attorneys on effective questioning, discuss possible sentences to recommend to the jury with the teen attorneys, or monitor the jury. Parents and guardians may observe the teen court sessions, and youth are welcome to invite friends to court sessions. All participants must wear professional, conservative, respectful attire (Miami-Dade County, 2022).

Miami-Dade's program offers the following benefits to participants: encouraging collaboration between the local police department and youth; reducing recidivism in the
county to less than three percent; providing opportunities to impact local residents; relieving the congestion of the local justice system; and developing citizens who are responsible and civically-engaged (Miami-Dade County, 2022). In addition to alternative sanctions that include essays, jury duty, community service, bootcamps and jail tours, educational workshops, and Miami-Dade offers mental health services. The mental health services allow youth to address negative emotions and thoughts, learn about themselves, experience group and individual sessions and receive treatment and assessment to gain life skills (Miami-Dade County, 2022).

Ninth Judicial Circuit Court of Florida serves the teen court programs of Orange County and Osceola County for youth 17 years of age or younger who have received a citation from the cities of Orlando and Tampa. The program is voluntary for eligible juveniles seeking sanctions for class C misdemeanors and having the offense dismissed when the program is completed. To receive the dismissal of the offense, all conditions stated above must be satisfied. One of the primary goals of this teen court program is to deter future illegal practices (Ninth Judicial Circuit Court of Florida, n.d.). The program also seeks to provide a judiciary system experience and knowledge of judiciary roles in society. The juvenile must meet the following criteria to be eligible for participation in the teen court program: must be 10 to 17 years of age at the time of the violation or be enrolled at an accredited high school if older than 17. The juvenile must appear in open court before a municipal judge for the scheduled first appearance, plead no contest or guilty to the offense, and request to participate in teen court. The juvenile must agree to
attend and serve on a separate teen court hearing after sentencing (Ninth Judicial Circuit Court of Florida, n.d.).

Osceola's teen court hearings are closed to the public. During teen court hearings, the defendants testify to a jury of their peers and answer questions about themselves and their cases. After deliberation, the jury assigns the defendant hours of community service at a predetermined community service location and jury service terms that must be completed within 90 days of the sentence. During the juvenile’s participation in teen court, new offenses must not be acquired. The teen jury is comprised of previous teen court juveniles and teen volunteers. Teen jury deliberations are guided by ranges of jury terms, community service hours, and jury instructions provided by the municipal court judge. Successful completion of the teen court program within the stated time frame automatically dismisses the case(s). If the juvenile fails to complete the teen court's requirements within the stated time frame, a conviction by the municipal court and the full fine amount is due (Ninth Judicial Circuit Court of Florida, n.d.).

In College Station, Texas, juveniles between the ages of 12 to 16, and offenders between the ages of 17 and 19 while enrolled full-time as a high school student are eligible for the teen court program (City of College Station, n.d.). The age-andenrollment eligible defendants must have committed a Class C misdemeanor offense for the first time in College Station's city limits. College Station's teen court seeks to decrease the occurrence of teen offenses while requiring teens to be held accountable for actions and the consequences of choices made. Teen volunteers for the teen program and juveniles are provided educational tools for conforming to society as good citizens. The
city's teen court provides timely assistance, practical, and positive resolution to minor offenses (City of College Station, n.d.). While within the program's probationary period, defendants must avoid committing additional offenses or face the full payment of costs and the fine assigned by the judge.

College Station youth must first appear in municipal court or before the justice of the peace to request an alternative sentence. The teen must specifically request to participate in teen court. To participate, the juvenile must plead "no contest" or "guilty" to the offense, and the parent or guardian must agree to abide by the guidelines of the teen court. Sentencing in teen court includes teen court jury service, community service hours, educational courses, or counseling, and apologizing to the victim. The offense is dismissed from their records, and standard fine payments are avoided by juveniles who complete the program. Non-completers of the teen court program must pay the amounts set by the judge (City of College Station, n.d.). College Station typically hears teen court cases in the College Station Municipal Court every second and fourth Tuesday at 6:00 p.m. All volunteers and juveniles are held to the same behavioral conduct and dress code requirements. The court setting is formal, with no food items or drinks, no use of cell phones, and no profane language or hand signals. Proceedings use a master jury court style with teen clerks, bailiffs, and jurors.

College Station has a discipline grid of four offense classes that include community service hours and jury service terms. Class I offenses include minor auto violations, civil parking citations, expired vehicle registration, failure to wear a seatbelt or helmet, or failure to signal a turn. Class I offenses require one to three jury service
terms and 12 to 30 hours of community service. Class II offenses require two to four jury service terms and 22 to 40 hours of community service. Class II offenses focus on moving violations, including speeding one to 15 miles per hour over the restricted limit, failure to obey stop signs or red lights, and criminal parking violations. Class III offenses include failure to identify oneself, traffic accidents, speeding 16 to 24 miles per hour over the restricted limit, and tobacco-related offenses. For Class III offenses, juveniles must serve 32 to 50 hours of community service and serve three to five jury terms. Finally, Class IV offenses are offenses that include alcohol-related offenses, school-related offense, disorderly conduct, loitering/vandalism/theft, criminal mischief, possession of drug paraphernalia, assault, and discharging a firearm. Class IV offenses require juveniles to serve four to six jury service terms and complete 42 to 60 hours of community service (City of College Station, n.d.).

Collin County's teen court program provides an opportunity for youth volunteers and defendants to be educated about the U.S. justice system. The program has four objectives: improvement of youth's understanding of the juvenile justice system, promotion of proportional sanctions for juvenile offenses, reduction of juvenile recidivism, and stimulation of legal profession interest (Collin County, 2020). The juvenile must plead "no contest" or "guilty" to the offense and request teen court adjudication. The municipal court or the justice of the peace judge assigns the case to the teen court and the juvenile is provided with notice of the set court date. Youth are supported by justice professionals in the defense and prosecution of cases. At the end of the case, youth jurors decide the sentence based on the case heard. The presiding judges
over the teen court cases are licensed attorneys. Sentences can include participation in subsequent jury terms (Collin County, 2020).

For a teen to volunteer in Collin County's teen court program, the individual must be between 13 and 18 years old. Like the defendants, the volunteers must be enrolled full-time, working toward receiving a high school diploma or GED. Volunteers are asked to commit to the program for three months to complete training and become familiar with case preparation and presentation procedures. Volunteers must also adhere to the business casual dress code (Collin County, 2020). Collin County allows participants to serve as a juror, attorney (prosecutor or defense counsel), adult volunteer judge, bailiff, court clerk, and sign-in clerk. The jurors sit on juries of six or 12 persons and determine the sentence of the defendant based on the facts of the case. Sentencing guidelines are provided to the jurors, the decision must be unanimous, and the decision must hold the defendant accountable to the victim and the community (Collin County, 2020). The attorneys must attend training after serving on at least two juries. Attorneys can be assigned to cases in pairs of two and sometimes three if the attorney is inexperienced or uncomfortable serving alone. Attorneys must come to court with prepared cases to represent the state/public interest or the defendant's interest in respect to the law and the public interest (Collin County, 2020).

The adult volunteer judge follows the assigned Master Jury Script to maintain charge of the master jury hearing. The judge directs a thorough and focused questioning of the witness by the jurors. The judge oversees the juror deliberations to ensure the discussion is case focused. The judge also administers the defendant's after-sentencing
instructions (Collin County, 2020; Fourth Judicial Circuit Courts of Florida, 2021). As a bailiff, youth start each hearing by calling the jurors to the jury box. During the hearing, the bailiff maintains courtroom order and assists the judge upon request. After the hearing, the bailiff directs the jury to the room for deliberations and monitors the jury during the discussion (Collin County, 2020; Fourth Judicial Circuit Courts of Florida, 2021). The court clerk holds the seat next to the judge throughout the court session. This clerk documents the court docket as the cases are heard (Collin County, 2020; Fourth Judicial Circuit Courts of Florida, 2021). The sign-in clerk assists the teen court coordinator at the table before the court session begins. This clerk also helps answer questions and assign juries as the volunteers, jurors, and defendants enter the courtroom (Collin County, 2020; Fourth Judicial Circuit Courts of Florida, 2021).

Defendants are required to complete the "Defendant Information Sheet" and read the "Teen Court Policies." Once sentenced by the teen court jury, the juvenile must complete the sanctions within 90 days. The sentence may be completed earlier than this 90-day requirement (Collin County, 2020). The defendant is given a packet and instructions on the elements to complete the provided sentence. Defendants must complete community service and return to serve on at least one teen court jury. The defendant is responsible for documenting the complete hours of community service and providing proof of sentence completion by the due date (Collin County, 2020). Paperwork must be submitted to the teen court coordinator to prove the completion of the sentence. The teen court then informs the municipal court or the judge whether the juvenile completed the program. If the program is completed, the referral entity will
provide a formal dismissal of the case and mail a letter of dismissal to the defendant. If the program is not completed, other requirements and a larger fine may be issued by the entity referral, usually a law enforcement officer, a school, an agent, or the county court (Collin County, 2020). Defendants who complete the program are eligible for an expunction of the offense(s) from the juvenile criminal record. All juvenile records are restricted automatically when the juvenile turns 17, effective June 17, 2011 (Collin County, 2020).

Irving, Texas' teen court program is a 25 -year-old binding alternative sanction system offering juveniles community service and restitution opportunities, jury service, and educational classes. Irving hears cases one to two Tuesdays each month from 5:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. in the Criminal Justice Center on the second floor (City of Irving, n.d.). Irving allows teens to be held accountable for their behaviors and to have tickets dismissed as well. To be eligible, the juvenile must be between 10 and 17 years of age or be currently enrolled in high school. Within 21 days of citation reception, the juvenile must plead no contest or guilty to the offense in the Municipal Court and request teen court adjudication. The juvenile cannot have a record of attendance to a teen court program in Texas within 365 days of the current request. Juveniles must pay a $\$ 20$ registration fee. For juveniles under 17 years of age, a parent or guardian must accompany them and may enter a plea from 1:30 to 3:00 p.m. Monday through Friday, except on Tuesday. For juveniles 17 years of age and older, the presence of parents and guardians is not required for the teen to enter a plea from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday, except on Tuesday (City of Irving, n.d.).

The city of Irving also has requirements for youth using the teen court program for the dismissal of tickets. Juveniles 10 to 13 years of age are required to attend counseling sessions with a parent or guardian in the Youth and Family Counseling part of the Police Department. If the juvenile's first offense has an assault or disorderly conductfighting citation, two anger management sessions are required. Other citations given to juveniles for first-time offenses include one required group counseling session. For repeat offenders, the subsequent offender program requires four consecutive counseling sessions with a parent or guardian present on Monday evenings from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. Completion of the teen court program returns the case to the judge to be dismissed (City of Irving, n.d.).

Irving youth juveniles 14 to 17 years of age and older youth enrolled in high school have their cases heard before a master peer jury and must adhere to the verdict, which includes community service. The teen must complete jury terms and the sentence within 90 days to have the offense automatically dismissed and to prevent a conviction on the teen's record. Any fines and court costs are also dismissed upon completion of the program, and therefore, auto insurance rates will not be affected by the moving violation. Multiple cases are consecutively heard during each session, including two master jury hearings. Irving teen court has a 38 to 45 case average per month, which is roughly 1,800 cases heard each year (City of Irving, n.d.).

For teens to volunteer with the Irving teen court program, guidelines must be followed, training must be completed, and eligibility must be met. Teen volunteers must be at least 14 years old, demonstrate excellent communication skills with peers,
understand confidentiality, and work well in group settings. To be a teen court attorney, a full day of training with teen court staff must be completed in January, May, or September. The attorney must also serve as an assistant attorney for several months, then as an associate attorney for four months before a lead attorney position can be held (City of Irving, n.d.). Volunteers as jurors may serve on a six-member jury or on a master jury to hear cases of curfew and traffic violations, and abusive language. Volunteers must commit to serving for at least a four-month term and attend at least one Tuesday night of teen court per month. Volunteers must be dependable. Removal of a volunteer from the teen court program occurs after missing two of the four required sessions without proper advanced notice. Adult volunteers can assist the program by checking jurors in and checking defendants out. Local attorneys may serve as the teen court judge by making jury assignments and overseeing the courtrooms (City of Irving, n.d.).

Irving's teen court program includes a discipline grid that has four classes of violations; these include community service hours and jury service terms. Outside of the four sentencing classes, the jury may require the attendance of an anger management or life skills class, a letter of apology to the parent, guardian, or victim, or a written essay of a 500-word minimum on a jury-selected topic (City of Irving, n.d.). Class I violations include minor auto violations such as defective lights, squealing tires, and jaywalking to failing to wear a seatbelt or helmet, parking violations, and failing to signal a turn. Class I violations require one jury service term and six to 18 hours of community service. Class II violations require one jury service term and 15 to 30 hours of community service. Class II violations focus on moving violations, including driver's license violations, impeding
traffic, speeding 11 to 20 miles per hour over the restricted limit, failing to obey stop signs and traffic lights, riding in the bed of a pickup truck, and littering on public or private property. Class III violations include speeding and cell phone use in an active school zone, curfew violations, speeding 21 to 25 miles per hour over the restricted limit, and registration-display unauthorized temporary tags. For Class III violations, juveniles must serve 28 to 46 hours of community service and serve two jury terms. Lastly, the Class IV violations include an accident with damage, public urination and exposure, class disruption, reckless damage, possession of drug paraphernalia, and fleeing an officer to evade arrest. Finally, Class IV offenses require juveniles to serve two jury service terms and complete 42 to 60 hours of community service (City of Irving, n.d.).

## Summary

This chapter provided an overview of the definition and purposes of the teen court, the models of teen court, and the procedures utilized in teen court hearings with supporting teen court studies. This chapter also examined the application of the Cognitive-Experiential Self-Theory (CEST). The review of the background and development of CEST and empirical studies that support CEST preceded a discussion of the cognitive development of youth decision-making. Youth decision-making and the development of REI assessments over time were discussed in detail. The chapter reviewed CEST mock jury studies, and the discussion of juvenile justice decision-making theories and perspectives, specifically, The Focal Concerns Theory of Sentencing, Attribution Theory, and Formal Legal Perspective. The chapter ended with detailed
descriptions of the hearing procedures for the Florida and Texas teen court programs selected for this current study.

## CHAPTER III

## METHOD

The overall purpose of this study was to understand the cognitive processing tendencies of teen court jurors, which include defendants, volunteers, and adult volunteers. Mixed methods were used to examine teen court participants' cognitive processing tendencies and decision-making in Florida and Texas. These methods include interviews, observations, and a posttest survey of youth and adult volunteers in teen courts. This approach allowed for an in-depth understanding of youth and adults when considering verdicts and sentencing practices in a teen court setting. The chapter includes the research questions, hypotheses, research design, study participants, data collection procedures, analyses methods, and ethical considerations.

## Research Questions

This study sought to build on CEST jury studies by answering the following questions through observations, interviews, and posttest survey responses.

RQ1: Does the offense of the teen court defendant trigger the rational or the experiential processing traits in youth participants?

RQ2: Does providing jurors with specifically labeled—Case Notes, Evidence Note Sheets, Victim Experience Notes-notetaking sheets encourage youth to focus on specific factors of the trial?

RQ3: Does prior teen court experience as a juror or defendant affect the processing traits of teen court youth?

RQ4: Are the verdicts reached in teen court harsher than the sanctions an adult legal professional would issue?

RQ5: Do teen court youth volunteers possess higher rational processing traits than previous teen court defendants?

RQ6: Are teen court youth more attentive to legal or extralegal factors in teen court hearings?

RQ7: Is there a difference in youth processing traits based on the age, sex, and race of the defendant or juror?

## Hypotheses

In consideration of the proposed research questions, the following hypotheses were assessed:

H1: The type of offense heard in teen court is more likely to influence heightened experiential processing traits (i.e., faith in intuition items) than rational processing traits (i.e., need for cognition items).

H2: The notetaking sheets labeled "Case Notes" will prime the jurors to focus on the entire case, including the evidence and the victim-specific details of the trial.

H3: Youth participants with previous teen court experience as a defendant, juror, bailiff, or attorney will possess more rational processing traits (i.e., need for cognition items) than those with no previous teen court experience.

H4: The sanctions provided to their peers in teen court may be more severe than the sanctions the juvenile would have received from an adult jury or the traditional juvenile justice system.

H5: Teen court youth volunteers will possess more rational processing traits (i.e., need for cognition items) than teen court defendants.

H6: Participants with experiential processing traits are more likely to use extralegal factors in their sentencing decision than those with rational processing traits.

H7: The older the youth participant, the more likely they will rely on rational processing traits (i.e., need for cognition items). Male participants will have a more significant statistical variation in their sentencing decision depending on the active processing traits than their female counterparts.

If teen court youth have a natural, rational predisposition when deciding the sanctions of their peers, then the juvenile justice system should implement more teen court diversion programs and youth juries in juvenile courts. However, if the youths have a natural experiential disposition when deciding the sanctions of their peers, then the teen court programs should incorporate methods to trigger rational processing, encouraging the use of more teen court programs and youth juries. Due to youth's frequent highlyactive experiential processing, it is hypothesized that the sanctions provided to their peers in teen court may be more severe than the sanctions the juvenile would have received from an adult jury or the traditional juvenile justice system.

## Research Strategy

A mixed method design is appropriate when a single study includes gathering, analyzing, and interpreting qualitative and quantitative data (Bergman, 2008; Leech \& Onwuegbuzie, 2007). Mixed method research is an approach that offers unattainable, multifaceted, and complex information in a singular method design for behavioral and
social science and health researchers (Doyle et al., 2009; Teddlie \& Tashakkori, 2009). This study used a mixed method design that included qualitative and quantitative components (Onwuegbuzie \& Johnson, 2004). The study's psychosocial approach to decision-making and the social science aspect of teen court settings made using a mixed method design the most appropriate choice.

## Study Participants

Ten teen court programs in Florida and Texas participated in the study. Grade school, middle school, and high school-aged student participants in teen court programs from the two states were surveyed, along with teen court volunteers in the participating programs. The target population was 10 to 17-year-olds; however, some programs included juveniles between the ages of 18 to 19, and, in such cases, those individuals were included in the study. To compensate the youth participants for their time and encourage them to complete the surveys, they had the opportunity to select from books, journals, pens, and other small tokens of appreciation made available to all participants returning a survey. However, the teen court administrators opted to provide additional community service hours and teen court jury service as compensation. Adult volunteer participants (lawyers, judges, and individuals with a legal or law-related career) from the teen courts in the selected sites were also recruited for participation to compare youth decision-making to that of adults.

The margin of error and sample size calculators were used to determine the power requirements for this study. The confidence level was $95 \%$, the sample size was 107 , the population proportion was $50 \%$, and the margin of error was $9.48 \%$. There is a $95 \%$
chance that the real value is within $9.48 \%$ more or less than the measured/surveyed value. A population proportion of $50 \%$, and a population size of 10,000 to target the youth population diverted through teen courts in Florida and Texas, the sample size necessary to meet the desired statistical constraints for this study was 106 participants. Two hundred teen court participants, including 25 adult participants, were targeted to account for missing data and attrition for posttest evaluation of variable interactions. However, 107 participants responded to the survey, and 55 youth and 12 adult volunteers completed the entire survey. Participants had to be able to read and comprehend English at a minimum of a fifth-grade reading level to participate in this study.

## Data Collection Procedures

Prairie View A\&M University Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval was obtained before the study's completion. This study occurred in four phases. First, telephone or video conference interviews were conducted with teen court coordinators and adult volunteers. The coordinators and volunteers were provided consent forms and information sheets about the study. The researcher reached out to Florida and Texas Teen Court Administrators. The administrators were informed about the study's purpose and procedures, and the willing administrators and adult volunteers were asked to participate in a short interview. The administrators and adult volunteers were provided consent forms, interview questions, and information sheets about the study. In total, 10 formal interviews were held via zoom or phone, and two informal interviews were conducted via email. Second, the researcher visited a teen court session in each teen court program to become better acquainted with the teen court process, made observations, took notes, and
made necessary adjustments to the project procedures. While observing the process and experience of teen court, the researcher engaged with the adult volunteers and became familiar with the expectations and the flow of individual teen court sessions.

Third, the study took place where teen court sessions were held in person or virtually via Zoom or Microsoft Teams. Once the participants were seated or signed in, the teen court coordinator explained the study and the general procedures (attire requirements, the number of cases for the night, and the scheduled defendants on the calendar) for the teen court session. After explaining the routine teen court program procedures, willing participants were given the following materials or document files: sheets of paper for notetaking, verdict form, and teen court jury instructions. The participants then took part in the teen court experience. Fourth, after deliberations, the volunteers and the juvenile participants were asked to complete the post-survey provided via a Qualtrics Survey link, which included demographic items, CEST items, and juvenile justice decision-making items. Below are detailed descriptions of the assent and consent forms, post-survey distribution, notetaking sheets, jury instructions, and the verdict form. See Appendix Section I for assent and consent forms.

## Assent and Consent Forms

The parents and guardians of the youth participants were provided a Qualtrics link via email, Zoom chat, or Microsoft Teams chat prior to the youth completing the survey solely for parental consent. The youth participants read the provided assent form via the Qualtrics link to agree or disagree to participate in the study. The youth and adult volunteer participants who did not need parental consent due to their age completed the
adult juror consent form via a Qualtrics link before completing the survey. Participants without parental consent and others who did not assent, or consent were unable to participate in the study or complete the post-survey.

## Post-survey Distribution

For all teen court sessions, the researcher was present to collect email addresses to provide the appropriate Qualtrics links to consenting participants. The teen court volunteers and coordinators assisted in collecting email addresses from willing participants. They also sent the survey links to the teen court program's email lists. Willing participants were given the opportunity via Qualtrics link to the digital or mobile version of the survey, even when the researcher was physically present for in-person teen court sessions. For the teen court sessions in which the researcher was present in virtual teen court meetings, the participants were automatically directed to the appropriate Qualtrics link to complete the post-experience survey. See Appendix Section IV for posttests.

## Notetaking Sheets

The researcher attempted to prime the jurors’ notetaking by randomly providing consenting youth with one of three labeled notetaking sheets: Case Notes, Evidence Sheets, or Victim Experience Notes. The notetaking sheets included instructions and short descriptions of the information to be written on each labeled sheet. Participants for the control condition had neutral sheets intended to trigger neither experiential nor rational processing. The control group participants were given notetaking sheets labeled "Case Notes." The participants were expected to take notes on all the facts of the case.

Participants for the rational condition had sheets to remind them of the serious nature of their decisions, emphasizing how their findings could negatively affect their peers' life without careful consideration of the evidence and witness testimonies.

The rational group participants were given notetaking sheets labeled "Evidence Note Sheets." This title implies that the juror would be attentive to the evidence (images, testimony, and mitigating factors) to consider an appropriate verdict later. Participants for the experiential condition had a sheet to trigger a strong emotional reaction. The experiential group participants were given a notetaking sheet labeled "Victim Experience Notes." This title attempted to trigger the juror's emotion by considering the case from the victim's perspective, namely, the injury caused, and the possible sentimentality of the property lost. The three labels on the notetaking sheets were an attempt to trigger cognitive processing. All teen court participants were given verbal and written jury instructions by the judge (adult volunteer) of the trial session. See Appendix Section III for notetaking sheets.

## Jury Instructions

After the participants experienced the trial, they were presented with relevant jury instructions. The instructions explained the laws that applied to the case, including the concepts of the burden of proof, local theft and larceny definitions, recklessness, the duty of a driver, liability, and restitution. As in adult jury trials, the judge explained the law and sanctions for the alleged offense if the teen did not complete the teen court sanctions. The bailiffs or teen court adult volunteers provided these written jury instructions and verdict forms to the jury foreman for face-to-face proceedings. For online proceedings,
the jury foreman was sent the written jury instructions, sentencing guidelines, and the verdict form prior to teen court sessions. See Appendix Section III for the jury instructions example.

## Verdict (Remedies) Form

As previously noted, the jury foremen were given a form to state the restorative justice remedies possible for their peers by the acting bailiff or the teen court volunteer. The form allowed the jury to select the actions necessary for the defendants to reintegrate into their communities. The sanctions available in teen court include community service hours, restitution, an essay about the offense, a written apology to the victim, a verbal apology to the victim, educational packets, anger management or counseling, serving as a juror for future teen court sessions, and any others that the jury may deem appropriate for the offense(s). See Appendix Section III for an example of the form.

## Qualitative Methodology

Inductive qualitative coding was used to develop general themes as the data was collected in the project's first two phases. The grounded theory approach to qualitative methods allows the researcher to study unique experiences based on collecting and analyzing "real world" data (Corbin \& Strauss, 1990; Yi, 2018). The interview phase of the study was partially scripted with the 10 open-ended questions addressed to the teen court coordinators and adult teen court volunteers (see Appendix Section II for interview questions). In total, 10 teen court coordinators and adult volunteers completed the interview. The small data sampled allowed the researcher to use Microsoft word to code the qualitative data and create themes.

## Coding

The individual interview questions acted as open codes, which allowed the researcher to group the responses based on the question the participants answered. The researcher wrote detailed notes during the interviews with the teen court program coordinators and adult youth volunteers. The open codes from the interview notes were thematically analyzed into in vivo codes by noting the repeated similarities in the responses from those interviewed. A review of the thematically analyzed in vivo codes allowed the researcher to determine whether some codes could be combined into one theme.

## Themes

Given the direct approach of the questions in the interview, 11 themes were developed from the 10 interview questions. The themes are presented below.

Theme 1: Program Knowledge was developed from answers that addressed "How many teen court programs have you worked with at this time?" The depth of the program's knowledge can theoretically be connected to the involvement and effectiveness of the individuals, and the roles played in the programs to rehabilitate youth. Adult volunteers who frequent teen court programs develop rapport with the participants. New adult volunteers need guidance through the program's procedures, and youth jurors are less open with these adults.

Theme 2: Shifting Procedures and Requirements addressed "Was there a difference in the program procedures and requirements?" The number of youth jurors and volunteers present for teen court sessions, whether online or in-person, changed the
procedures and requirements needed to conduct sessions. The shift in procedures and requirements allowed programs to prioritize holding a trial to prevent further delay between the offenders' actions and the verdict/sentence. The shift can have unforeseen disruptions in the sentencing process because of the break in the weekly routine, procedures, and requirements that can be unfamiliar to youth jurors.

Theme 3: Community-Based Sanctions was developed from responses that addressed "How are the teen court sanctions different from those in the traditional juvenile justice system?" Some interview participants could not think of a difference in the sanctions of the youth offenders. Other interview participants noticed the comparison of violation fines versus required community service and educational components. The community's involvement in offender sanctions was one of, if not the main goal for courts to use diversion programs like teen court programs.

Theme 4: Types of Teen Court Models addressed "What teen court model have you had the most experience with at this time?" There a four commonly used teen court models: (1) the adult judge, (2) the youth judge, (3) the youth tribunal, and (4) the peer jury (Godwin, 1998; Global Youth Justice, Inc., 2020), each model with advantages and disadvantages. Similar to the frequently used model for teen court programs worldwide, the adult judge is the more common model in Florida and Texas teen court programs. Alternatively, the pandemic and virtual platform for trials introduced a hybrid model that merged the adult judge and peer jury model. The hybrid of the models created an open forum for youth jurors to ask questions to clarify their understanding of the facts or solicit information that the teen attorneys did not address in the direct and cross-examinations.

Theme 5: Sanction Consistency was developed from responses that addressed "Are sanctions different in the varying teen court models?" Some participants’ lack of experience with multiple teen court models produced answers that did not address the question. The participants who experienced multiple models were able to confirm sentencing guidelines focused on the offense to create consistency in the program's sanctions. Consistency in the sanctions provides predictability for youth jurors but can create unconscious or swift decisions during deliberations.

Theme 6: Placement of Jurors addressed "How are jurors placed onto specific cases?" Similar to adult jury duty, teen courts used jury pools. It was standard practice for youth jurors to be placed on cases at random. The random placement of youth jurors on cases is convenient and can seem to reduce biases. However, random placement relaxes the standard of having a jury of one's peers, given race, sex, socioeconomic status, and other factors that cannot be accounted for in the random placement of jurors.

Theme 7: Informing Jurors was developed from responses that addressed "Do the jurors receive realistic materials? a. Juror verdict form, b. Jury instructions, c. Notepad." Education-based studies show that individuals who take notes by hand retain more information than individuals who take notes electronically. Further, taking notes improves attention span and responsiveness to materials. In the teen court setting, taking notes can be seen to invade youth confidentiality if the notes are misplaced or not collected after each session. However, it can be argued that the absence of notetaking creates groupthink as jurors that may not retain facts well, have smaller attention spans, or may go with the crowd instead of forming sanctions based on independent thoughts.

Theme 8: Police Reports vs. Digital Representations addressed "What types of evidentiary items are displayed for jurors in teen courts?" In traditional hearings, the police report is not read to jurors; instead, the offender and witnesses testify to give an account of the offense. In most teen court settings, the youth attorneys use the police report to gather the facts of the case to create questions for the offender that present the facts to the jury. The use of visual aids can help attorneys present the case. At the same time, the reading of the police report to the jurors can create predetermined sanctions before the attorneys have an opportunity to present their case.

Theme 9: Mitigating Details was developed from responses that addressed "Does the defendant submit mitigating information? a. School performance, b. Organization/extracurricular involvement, c. Church/religious affiliation, d. Economic difficulties, etc." In traditional court settings mitigating factors provide reasons for jurors to lighten the offender's sentence. When an offender can show responsibilities in addition to societal minimums of attending school and completing chores, the presumption is created that the offender is involved in the community and less likely to be a repeat offender. Depending on the factors given the most weight, the offender's sanction can be negatively or positively affected. For example, an offender's participation in sports with poor academic performance can negatively impact and heighten sanctions. In comparison, poor academic performance, and the necessity to work part-time with added in-home responsibilities like caring for younger siblings may have a positive effect and lower sanctions.

Theme 10: Sentencing Guidelines addressed "What verdicts/sentences are generally rendered in teen courts? a. By offense, b. By age, c. By gender/sex." The use of sentencing guidelines in teen courts is similar to the mandatory maximums/minimums provided to adult criminal courts by the United States Sentencing Commission. The sentencing guidelines used in adult courts are predominantly used by the judges presiding over federal offenses. While sentencing guidelines promote consistency in sanctions in an attempt to tailor and check biases, the guidelines, similar to other systematic structures, have disproportionate effects.

Theme 11: Opinions each participant was asked whether there were thoughts or opinions about the teen court that could be offered outside of the questions presented. The opportunity to provide their opinions allowed participants to expound on the impact of traits and procedures that catered to their program. The open segment also allowed participants to consider how to improve and progress their program to increase effectiveness and swiftly reach more youth offenders to maximize diversionary program efforts.

## Quantitative Methodology

## Variable Selection and Rationale

Youth have the cognitive-developmental capability to make decisions. Prior research showed that the cognitive ability to make decisions develops over time. Youth tend to make decisions without considering future consequences. The guidance of adults the youth trust, supporting materials (i.e., notetaking sheets, jury instructions, and verdict forms), and a positive justice system experience can direct youth toward heightened
rational processing. To determine whether youth processing varied from the adults in the traditional court setting, adult volunteers and youth juror responses were included in the same analyses. The study observed the responses of individual youth jurors and adult volunteers; thus, the unit of analysis for data collection was individual, and a group unit of analysis was observed to analyze the data.

Dependent variable measures. This study included one numeric continuous dependent variable: sentencing.

The verdict/sentencing variable measured the rehabilitative or punitive sanctions proposed by the participants. The youth and adult participants were asked: "What is the defendant's sentence?" The most common sentence/verdict was the number of community service hours; thus, the number of community service hours ranged from four to 60. The verdict/sentence of youth offenders resulted from the legal and extralegal factors provided, considered, and ultimately believed to be true during the trial.

Independent variable measures. The study had 91 independent variables between the two posttests. Thirty items were categorical, ordinal scaled items for adult and adolescent Needs for Cognition and Faith in Intuition items listed in detail under Rational-Experiential Inventory - Adolescents (REI-A) and Rational-Experiential Inventory - Adults (REI-10). The priming variable had three items, and the checking primes variable had six items. The participant characteristics variable had six variable items. Lastly, Juvenile Justice Decision-Making/Evidence-based variables had 46 items.

Rational-Experiential Inventory - Adolescents (REI-A). REI-A consisted of a 20item assessment created to assess information processing preferences in adolescents. The
items are divided into two subscales: 10 unipolar Need for Cognition (NFC) items and 10 unipolar Faith in Intuition (FI) items. Rational processing is measured by the modified version of the Need for Cognition (NFC) scale, which stresses an analytical, conscious approach (Cacioppo \& Petty, 1982). Experiential processing was measured by the Faith in Intuition (FI) scale, which emphasizes a holistic, preconscious, affective approach (Epstein, 1973; Norris et al., 1998). Need for Cognition and Faith in Intuition items were necessary to evaluate the presence of rational or experiential processing in youth jurors.

Need for Cognition (NFC): The 10 categorical, ordinal scaled items rated responses on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (disagree strongly) to 5 (agree strongly). The following statements measure the NFC traits in youth participants:

1. "I enjoy a challenge that makes me think hard."
2. "I am not that good at figuring out complicated problems."
3. "I believe in trusting my instincts."
4. "Reasoning things out carefully is not one of my strong points."
5. "I try to avoid situations that require thinking in depth about something."
6. "I do not trust my initial feelings about people."
7. "Using my gut feelings usually works well for me in figuring out problems in my life."
8. "I prefer complex problems to simple problems."
9. "I do not like situations in which I have to rely on my gut instincts."
10. "I am not very good at solving problems that require careful thinking."

Faith in Intuition (FI): The 10 categorical, ordinal-scaled items are rated on a 5point scale ranging from 1 (disagree strongly) to 5 (agree strongly). The following statements measure the FI traits in youth participants:

1. "When it comes to trusting people, I can usually rely on my gut feelings."
2. "I generally do not depend on my instincts to help me make decisions."
3. "I do not enjoy having to think."
4. "I do not have very strong gut instincts."
5. "I enjoy solving hard problems that require lots of thinking."
6. "I often go by my instincts when deciding on a course of action."
7. "I have no problem thinking things through carefully."
8. "I do not like to have to do a lot of thinking."
9. "I tend to use my feelings to guide my actions."
10. "I think it is foolish to make important decisions based on feelings."

Rational-Experiential Inventory - Adults (REI-10). REI-10 is a 10 -item assessment for information processing preferences (Norris et al., 1998). The items are divided into two subscales, five unipolar Need for Cognition (NFC) items and five unipolar Faith in Intuition (FI) items. Rational processing is measured by the modified version of the Need for Cognition (NFC) scale, which stresses an analytical, conscious approach (Cacioppo \& Petty, 1982). Experiential processing is measured by the Faith in Intuition (FI) scale, which emphasizes a holistic, preconscious, affective approach (Epstein, 1973; Norris et al., 1998). Need for Cognition and Faith in Intuition items were
necessary to evaluate the presence of rational or experiential processing in adult volunteers.

Need for Cognition (NFC): Five categorical, ordinal scaled items rated responses on a five-point scale ranging from 1 (completely false) to 5 (completely true). The following statements measure the NFC traits in adult participants:

1. "I do not like to have to do a lot of thinking."
2. "I try to avoid situations that require thinking in depth about something."
3. "I prefer to do something that challenges my thinking abilities rather than something that requires little thought."
4. "I prefer complex to simple problems."
5. "Thinking hard and for a long time about something gives me little satisfaction."

Faith in Intuition (FI): The five categorical, ordinal scaled items rated responses on a five-point scale ranging from 1 (completely false) to 5 (completely true). The following statements measure the FI traits in adult participants:

1. "I trust my initial feelings about people."
2. "I believe in trusting my hunches."
3. "My initial impressions of people are almost always right."
4. "When it comes to trusting people, I can usually rely on my 'gut feelings.'"
5. "I can usually feel when a person is right or wrong, even if I cannot explain how I know."

Priming. Primes have unconscious effects said to influence responses based on the stimuli applied. To measure the unconscious manipulation of the primes, the adult and youth participants were asked priming questions prior to the questions about the teen court trial proceedings. The priming variables are categorical dichotomous, and all participants were asked to respond $1=$ yes or $2=$ no to the three questions below on the questionnaire.

1. "Has someone ever taken something from you without first asking your permission?"
2. "Has anyone close to you ever had their belongings taken from them without their permission?"
3. "Have you ever taken someone else’s belongings without their permission?"

It has been predicted that the experiential group participants will respond more positively than rational group participants to the first question. Consequently, the rational group participants should respond more positively than the experiential group participants to the second question (Lieberman, 2002). Following those predictions, the control groups should display a natural emotion-based response and produce findings that teen court participants are stern in providing peer sanctions.

Notetaking sheets. The youth jurors were given labeled notetaking sheets to prime notetaking. For participants randomly given a labeled notetaking sheet, the youth were asked which note sheet was provided, and "What are some of the details you wrote on your note sheet?" The notetaking sheets were coded as a categorical nominal variable with 1 = case notes, $2=$ evidence notes, and $3=$ victim experience. The three labels on
the notetaking sheets aimed to trigger cognitive processing. The variable attempted to answer whether the notetaking primed a particular processing mode in the youth or collectively encouraged rational decision-making based on the legal and extralegal facts provided during the trial.

Checking primes. The following information processing state math problems were asked at the end of the survey to measure whether the priming questions effectively triggered rational or experiential processing in the participants: "A bat and a ball cost $\$ 1.10$ in total. The bat costs $\$ 1.00$ more than the ball. How much does that ball cost?" The correct response is five cents. "If it takes 5 machines 5 minutes to make 5 widgets, how long would it take 100 machines to make 100 widgets?" The correct response is five minutes. "In a lake, there is a patch of lily pads. Every day, the patch doubles in size. If it takes 48 days for the patch to cover the entire lake, how long would it take for the patch to cover half of the lake?" The correct response is 47 days. The responses to the three check priming questions were coded based on whether the participants answered the question correctly, as $1=$ "Correct" or $2=$ "Incorrect."

Prior studies of judgment and decision-making, including Raoelison and Neys (2019), proposed the idea that participants who follow intuition when approaching the questions above would respond with the answer that readily comes to mind, which is incorrect. Answering a question without processing the information proposed by the question is a direct representation of experiential processing. Therefore, participants who answer the questions correctly, by default, can be considered rational processors as the
answer that comes easily was not selected. The rational processors would take the time to solve the simple algebraic equation.

Key trial details. The youth participant's responses to "What are some of the details you wrote on your note sheet?" were reviewed for consistent themes in the responses. The themes in responses revealed six categories of answers regardless of the sheet the juror received. The key trial details were coded as a categorical nominal variable with 1 = remorse, 2 = victim experience, 3 = changed behavior, $4=$ lack of remorse, 5 = inconsistency, and 6 = defendant's home situation. Key trial details consider whether legal or extralegal factors unconsciously influenced the defendant's verdict.

Following the jury's decision for sanctions, the primes' effectiveness was evaluated by the processing modes using categorical, ordinal scaled items. Participants were assessed by answering three questions that used a nine-point scale ranging from 1 (not at all) to 9 (very). These scaled responses were individually recorded as verdict confidence, testimony impact, and evidence deliberation.

1. "How confident of your verdict are you?"
2. "How much of an emotional impact did the testimonies and exhibits have on you?"
3. "How much of your decision was based on critical deliberation of the evidence?"

Participant characteristic variables. Open-ended, categorial nominal, dichotomous, and ordinal scaled questions were used to compile the participants' demographic information. The variables included age, sex, race, grade level, level of education (for adult participants and coded as such based-on youth participants who have
completed high school or GED requirements), occupation (for adult participants), and participant grouping.

Age was how old the youth participant was at the time of the study. The responses to the question were numerical and recorded as the participants reported their age. Age is relative to skill processing and decision-making development. The older the youth participants were, age should reflect heightened rational processing, similar to the traits adult volunteers would present.

Sex was whether the youth juror or adult participant was male or female. The responses to the question were coded based on whether the participants answered the question correctly, as $1=$ male or $2=$ female. Sex was vital in considering the make-up of the jury and measuring whether processing traits varied by sex.

Race of the youth juror or adult participants was measured and coded as $1=$ White, 2 = Black, 3 = American Indian (Native American), $4=$ Asian (coded to include East and South Asians), 5 = Native Hawaiian, 6 = Hispanic (not a categorized race, but, ethnicity, this item was included in the absence the question whether participants identified as Hispanic or Latin), 7 = Mixed (provided for participants to note which two or more race were a part of their self-identification if the selection of one race was not appropriate), or 8 = Other. Teen court programs have high records of White participants. Historically, other races and genders were excluded from participation on juries. Here, the variable evaluates teen court records and historical assumptions.

Grade Level was measured as the level of education the youth participant achieved. Grade level measured whether the participant was in the average/appropriate
grade level at the time of the study, given his or her age. The youth participants placed a numeric value response, and the number was reported as the participant provided.

Education Level was measured as whether the adult volunteer had a $1=$ High School Diploma or GED, 2 = Some College, 3 = Bachelor's Degree, or $4=$ Graduate or Professional School Degree. In some circumstances, the youth juror also completed this question because the juror had received a High School Diploma or GED or attended community college while completing high school credits.

Occupation was the adult volunteer's current, legal, or law-based career. The items were coded based on recurring themes in the adult volunteer responses, $1=$ teen court program coordinator, 2 = attorney, 3 = judge, and 4 = other (which included responses such as homemaker and student). Occupation based on previous studies gauged the influence that adult volunteers had to impress teen court participants to join the legal field. Whether the youth participants were impressed by potential legal careers depended on information the jurors received during teen court sessions and the adult volunteers' knowledge of the court system.

Participant Grouping included the youth jurors, previous youth defendants, and adult volunteers. The adult volunteers were given the "Adult Volunteer Participant Survey." The youth participants were given the "Youth Participant Survey." Youth participants were separated into two groups, the volunteer youth jurors and the youth jurors who were previously teen court defendants. The variable was coded as a categorical nominal variable with 1 = youth juror, 2 = previous defendant, and 3 = adult volunteer. The participants were placed into coded groups to evaluate the potential
difference between the jurors and the adult volunteers, and youth jurors and previous defendants.

The following question was asked to identify whether the youth participant was a previous defendant and to collect the feelings about the sentence/verdict received: "Which of the following statements best describes how you feel about being a juror in this case?" The question has four options: "I thought the sentence I received as a defendant was appropriate, so I used this experience to give someone else a fair chance." "I thought the sentence I received as a defendant was not appropriate, but I used this experience to give someone else a fair chance." "I thought the sentence I received as a defendant was appropriate, but I used this experience to retaliate anyway." "I thought the sentence I received as a defendant was not appropriate, so I used this experience to retaliate." Greene and Weber (2008) found that most defendants are satisfied with their verdict/sentence. This assumption was proven to be correct as all the previous defendants who responded to this question selected: "I thought the sentence I received as a defendant was appropriate, so I used this experience to give someone else a fair chance." The researcher did not code this as a separate variable, as all the responses were identical. The default led to the participant grouping categories mentioned above.

Juvenile justice decision-making/evidence-based variables. The majority of these questions were sampled from Greene and Weber’s (2008) "Juror Questionnaire" to examine whether jurors determined a verdict based on extralegal factors (i.e., gender, school grades, race, parental involvement, juveniles’ attitudes, and socioeconomic factors) or the legal factor, type of offense.

The type of offense variable measured the non-violent behaviors or violations of ordinances against property and damage/injury of the victims in the defendant's case. The youth and adult participants were asked the same open-ended question, "What is the defendant's offense(s)?" The participants' responses were coded according to themes in the offense response, as the offenses were similar in each case, creating a categorical nominal variable. This process yielded a total of 11 offenses coded as follows 1 = shoplifting, 2 = assault, 3 = battery, $4=$ speeding, $5=$ drug violations (including the possession of tobacco and paraphernalia), $6=$ alcohol, $7=$ truancy, $8=$ driving without a license, 9 = burglary, 10 = curfew violation, and 11 = criminal mischief (including vandalism, loitering, and other property offenses).

The ideal verdict was a categorical dichotomous variable asked the adult participants: "Is the jury verdict ideal for the offense? Why or Why not?" The responses to the question were coded as $1=$ "Yes" or $2=$ "No." The adult volunteers did their best not to influence the sentencing decisions made during jury deliberations. The focus of adult volunteers was driven by youth jurors staying on task during deliberations and staying within the provided sentencing guidelines unless reason existed to lower or raise the sentence in the number of community hours or add educational components. Whether the adult volunteers find the sentence ideal for the offense validates the verdict/sentence.

Purpose of Sentence. The youth participants were asked the following open-ended questions: "What was the most important thing you heard during the trial that helped you in your sentencing decision?" and "What did you want to achieve by giving the defendant this sentence?" The adult participants were asked the following open-ended questions:
"What was the most important thing you heard during the trial that would help you in a sentencing decision?" and "What can be achieved by the defendant’s given sentence?" The youth and adult participants answered both proposed questions with either identical or similar responses. The responses were coded as a categorical nominal variable that captured the purpose of the sentence, with $1=$ deterrence, $2=$ punishment, and $3=$ rehabilitation. The purpose of teen court programs is to divert youth from the traditional court to prevent them from having juvenile records. Therefore, the sentence should reflect the goals of the teen court programs.

Present During Trial. These dichotomous variables were numbered one through 15. Participants were asked to respond $1=$ yes or $2=$ no as to whether the item was presented during the trial. The adult volunteers and youth juror responded to these items. The questions reveal the presence or absence of certain extralegal or mitigating factors after being presented with the legal factor of the sentence. The matrix of questions prefaced the importance of the extralegal factors when considering the facts of the cases presented in deciding sanctions.

1. "The defendant said he/she was sorry."
2. "The defendant has had school-related difficulties."
3. "The defendant already reimbursed the victim."
4. "The defendant already received punishment from school or family."
5. "The defendant has shown school-related improvements."
6. "The defendant caused the physical injury."
7. "The defendant damaged property."
8. "The defendant has used drugs or alcohol."
9. "Information about the defendant's age."
10. "Information about the defendant's gender."
11. "The defendant is involved in extracurricular activities, including sports, clubs, jobs, etc."
12. "There have been improvements in the defendant's family relations."
13. "Sentencing recommendations of the prosecutor."
14. "Sentencing recommendations of the defense attorney."
15. "The defendant had family-related difficulties."

Importance During Trial. The scaled variables numbered one through 15 asked participants to respond to the importance of the 15 items in deciding sanctions for the case on a five-point scale ranging from 1 (not important at all) to 5 (extremely important). The adult volunteers and youth juror responded to these items. This matrix of questions attempted to capture how the youth and adult participants felt about the extralegal facts presented during the trial and, ultimately, the weight potentially given to the facts in deliberations.

1. "The defendant said he/she was sorry."
2. "The defendant has had school-related difficulties."
3. "The defendant already reimbursed the victim."
4. "The defendant already received punishment from school or family."
5. "The defendant has shown school-related improvements."
6. "The defendant caused the physical injury."
7. "The defendant damaged property."
8. "The defendant has used drugs or alcohol."
9. "Information about the defendant's age."
10. "Information about the defendant's gender."
11. "The defendant is involved in extracurricular activities, including sports, clubs, jobs, etc."
12. "There have been improvements in the defendant's family relations."
13. "Sentencing recommendations of the prosecutor."
14. "Sentencing recommendations of the defense attorney."
15. "The defendant had family-related difficulties."

Sentencing Goals. In order to examine whether jurors' findings were based on legal factors (i.e., prior records and offenses), a five-point scale ranging from 1 (not important at all) to 5 (extremely important) allowed participants to select the importance of four goals in their sentencing decision.

1. "Punishing the offender to keep that person from committing other crimes in the future."
2. "Punishing the offender to provide an example to others."
3. "Making sure that an offender will compensate victims for their injuries and losses."
4. "Providing an opportunity for the offender to recognize the error of his/her ways and develop new, more appropriate behaviors."

The present during trial and importance during trial matrixes of questions were not a direct evaluation of how participants felt about the verdict, the defendant's testimony, or whether the evidence was considered during deliberations. These questions attempted to capture the jurors' perspective and provide space for participants to begin depriving after the study. Participants used a nine-point scale ranging from 1 (not at all) to 9 (very) to address these three questions:

Verdict Confidence: "How confident of your verdict are you?"
Testimony Impact: "How much of an emotional impact did the testimonies and exhibits have on you?"

Evidence Deliberation: "How much of your decision was based on the critical deliberation of the evidence?"

Participants were asked one of two questions to measure whether experience interacts with the processing traits in the teen court process. In jury duties, the youth participants were asked: "How many times have you served on a jury?" with numerical options from 1 to 5 available for responses. Volunteer Times, the adult participants were asked: "How many times have you volunteered with a teen court?" which had numerical options from 1 to 5 available for responses.

## Statistical Analyses

Descriptive statistics were run, allowing the researcher to quantify and describe the characteristics of the data set (Vetter, 2017). The descriptives were used to organize and summarize the data. Frequencies and valid percentages were used to describe the categorical variables. For continuous variables, frequency, valid percentage, mean,
standard deviation, and skewness were used to describe the variables. Descriptives, frequency, valid percentage, mean, and standard deviation. and

Cronbach's Alpha was run for the scaled variable items: Sentencing Goals, Importance During Trial, and CEST (Need For Cognition and Faith in Intuition). The following CEST variable items were reverse coded to check for reliability of the variables: REI-A NFC $2,4,5,6,9,10$; REI-A FI $2,3,4,5,8,10$; and REI-10 NFC 1,2 , 3, 5. The average of the REI-A Need For Cognition variable items were combined to measure the overall construct rather than the individual cognitive items. The average of the REI-A Faith In Intuition variable items were combined to measure the overall construct rather than the individual experiential items. The average of the REI-10 Need For Cognition variable items were combined to measure the overall construct rather than the individual cognitive items. The average of the REI-10 Faith In Intuition variable items were combined to measure the overall construct rather than the individual experiential items. Descriptives and histogram models were run to test for normality and collinearity of the REI-A and REI-10 variables.

Statistically one-way ANOVA (analysis of variance) compares the mean values of two or more variable groups to measure whether the variables are significantly different. Generally, a one-way ANOVA is performed with a minimum sample size of 30, but each group does not have to be equal in number. Sample sizes greater than or equal to 30 lessens the risk of Type II error. Normal distribution assumptions are not required for ANOA (Scariano \& Davenport, 1984; Ross \& Willson, 2017). One-way ANOVA was used to measure whether the categorical variables: type of offense, participant type, note-
sheets, sex and race had a measurable effect on Need For Cognition and Faith In Intuition variables.

Correlation analysis is the statistical technique that shows the strength of the relationship between two variables or the degree of association between the two variables (Senthilnathan, 2019). Correlations between the verdict/sentencing variable and the processing traits were run to determine whether experiential and cognitive processing traits were more influential in the verdict/sentence. To evaluate whether teen court youth tend to defer to experiential processing traits, Verdict by Processing Mode correlations were performed on the youth processing traits (REI-A NFC and REI-A FI). To evaluate whether teen court adult volunteers tend to defer to experiential processing traits, Verdict by Processing Mode correlations were performed on the adult processing traits (REI-10 NFC and REI-10 FI). The rehabilitative or punitive sanctions proposed by the participants on the jury verdicts were translated into verdict measures (community service hours).

## Ethical Considerations

The ethical considerations asserted by Bell and Bryman (2007) were followed throughout the entirety of this study. The participants did not undergo any physical, emotional, or psychological harm. Appropriate permissions (assent and consent) were obtained from participants before collecting any data. Participants were provided with privacy, and responses were kept confidential. All responses and recordings are stored on the researcher's password-protected laptop. Once the posttest surveys were collected, the participants' responses were coded to omit names and direct identifiers to ensure
anonymity. All data in the researcher's possession, survey forms, and audio or video recordings were destroyed at the end of the research project. There was no deception, exaggeration, or omission of the aims and objectives of the research. This research was conducted primarily for academic purposes.

## Summary

This chapter was an outline of the research methods that were used to answer the study's research questions. A detailed discussion of the study participants, data collection procedures, qualitative methodology, quantitative methodology, variable selection and rationale, analytical strategy, and ethical considerations were presented. The decisionmaking tendencies of grade, middle, and high school-aged youth and adult volunteers were measured using CEST and evidence-based items. The qualitative and quantitative findings are presented in the next chapter.

## CHAPTER IV

## RESULTS

The overall purpose of this study was to understand the cognitive processing tendencies of teen court jurors, including previous defendants, youth volunteers, and adult volunteers. This study used mixed methods to examine teen court participants’ cognitive processing tendencies and decision-making in Florida and Texas. The mixed methods included interviews, observations, and a posttest survey of youth and adult volunteers in teen courts. This approach allowed for an in-depth understanding of youth and adults when considering verdicts and sentencing practices in a teen court setting. The results covered the qualitative data findings, demographic and descriptive statistics, analysis of the research questions, and testing of assumptions.

## Qualitative Data Analysis

A total of 10 teen court coordinators and adult volunteers completed the initial interview. The adult interview participants ranged in age from 25 to 65, capturing a broad range of generational worldviews. The adult interview participants were not evenly distributed by sex, as three males and seven females participated in the interviews. The interviews captured a fair societal representation of race as five participants were White, three were Black, and two were Hispanic. The occupational background of the participants included judges, attorneys, legal professionals, and program managers. The majority of those interviewed were teen court coordinators/program managers with previous backgrounds in legal based careers. See Table 1 for some of the participant demographics.

Table 1
Adult Participant Demographics

| Participant ID | Sex | Race | Occupation |
| :---: | :--- | :---: | :---: |
| P1 | Male | White | Teen Court Coordinator |
| P2 | Female | Hispanic | Teen Court Coordinator |
| P3 | Male | White | Judge |
| P4 | Female | White | Teen Court Coordinator |
| P5 | Female | Black | Attorney |
| P6 | Female | White | Teen Court Coordinator |
| P7 | Female | Black | Teen Court Coordinator |
| P8 | Male | White | Judge |
| P9 | Female | Black | Attorney |
| P10 | Female | Hispanic | Teen Court Coordinator |

Following the grounded theory, the inductive qualitative analysis approach was used to create in vivo codes to develop the qualitative themes. See Table 2 for a few in vivo codes and sample quotes expressing each code. From the loosely developed in vivo codes, the researcher developed 11 themes. The 11 themes developed from the 10 interview questions were program knowledge, shifting procedures and requirements, community-based sanctions, types of teen court models, sanction consistency, placement of jurors, informing jurors, police reports v. digital representations, mitigating details, sentencing guidelines, and opinions. The following paragraphs detail the individual themes and the supporting statements that developed the themes.

Table 2

Initial Codes

| Initial code | n of <br> participants <br> contributing <br> $(\mathrm{N}=10)$ | n of <br> excerpts <br> assigned | Sample quote |
| :--- | :---: | :---: | :---: |


|  | adjudication and some form of <br> probation and community <br> service." (P8) <br> "Decades spent in youth ministry; <br> kids still make poor choices; that <br> is how we learn. However, they <br> need help to create better choices <br> while holding them responsible for <br> behaviors from which the larger <br> society would benefit. Less <br> citations equal less access to these <br> programs and other positive <br> activities. No enforcement, you <br> lose the one. Zero tolerance, you <br> sacrifice the good." (P3) |
| :--- | :--- |
| Development of <br> teen court over the <br> years | 6 |

Theme 1: Program Knowledge - was developed from answers that addressed "How many teen court programs have you worked with at this time?" All adult volunteers interviewed were either program coordinators or individuals with a legal background. Familiarity with the programs' functions was developed over the years of experience, which for most included overseeing multiple programs or providing coaching and affiliation support to programs. Even if the individual interviewed participated in one teen court program, the experience with the program extended over several years. The depth of program knowledge can theoretically be associated with the involvement and effectiveness of the individuals, and the roles played in the programs to rehabilitate youth. Participant seven stated: "I have worked with the current teen court program for three years. I started as an intern; then I moved to mental health counselor."

Further, program knowledge was perceived as how the individual became aware of the existence of teen courts. Commonly, program knowledge arose through involvement with juvenile justice departments and adjudicating delinquency matters.

Participant five stated: "I have worked with three teen court programs in three different states. I heard about teen court while I was a prosecutor and saw the cases from beginning to end." The majority of the participants knew about teen court from involvement in the traditional justice systems. Participant five was the only participant interviewed to have participated in teen court in several states. Few participants gained program knowledge by being recruited as adult volunteers through local schools. It can be assumed that the widespread knowledge of the program by adults and youth increases community involvement and participation. The adults assist the youth in finding community service opportunities. The youth invite their classmates and friends to participate in teen court.

Theme 2: Shifting Procedures and Requirements - addressed "Was there a difference in the program procedures and requirements?" Most participants believed that program procedures often shifted based on the availability of jurors and defendants. The fewer jurors present usually meant all jurors served on a master/panel jury and provided sentences for all defendants for the night. Participant six said:

Procedures and requirements depend on the availability of youth and adult volunteers. Some sessions have full trials; others have a grand jury or panel style. This teen court program commonly uses both models, but I prefer the traditional trial room for youth to have the full experience.

When there were more jurors and defendants, the jury could rotate out. The rotation of jurors limited the week's jury duty to deliberation on one case and then dismissal until the following week. This theme also captures the shift of dress and participation
requirements when the covid pandemic discontinued or moved teen court proceedings online.

The online sessions made guidance of the peer sanctioning difficult as most adult volunteers were not present to monitor breakout rooms for deliberation. Teen court programs that used the adult judge model switched to the peer jury model or a combination of the adult judge and the peer jury model during virtual proceedings. Participant seven stated:

We now have online hearings that started in 2020; we still have them virtually in 2022 rather than in-person sessions. The peer sanctioning used to be more guided to ensure the sentence was appropriate for the offense. Now the youth have more control over sentencing.

The absence of the adult volunteers in the virtual setting was common in all the programs' sessions, with the exception of one program that had their volunteers present to coach and aid the teen attorneys.

In observation of the different models, the peer jury model forced the youth jurors to pay attention to proceedings, even though these proceedings were online rather than in the courtroom. The peer jury models required youth jurors to ask the defendant at least two questions without the support of peers, like during in-person deliberations. The youth jurors and defendants virtually appeared relaxed compared to those in the courtroom setting, which unfortunately led to additional reprimands for youth with active or noisy home environments. Participant two after one of the virtual sessions stated: "The circumstances are not ideal in the online court sessions; a number of youths attend in bed
and in clothes that would not be allowed in the courtroom, but it is better than being unable to hold sessions."

Theme 3: Community-Based Sanctions - was developed from responses that addressed "How are the teen court sanctions different from those in the traditional juvenile justice system?" While some participants were unsure how to address this question, others explained two components that made the sanctions different: community service and educational factors. All programs required the defendants to complete community service to resolve the fine the traditional juvenile courts would issue. Community service hours are based on the teen court guidelines that leveled the number of hours to general offenses. Participant three said: "Everyone is required to serve community service at a comparable rate to resolve a fine. The program is $\$ 25$ to participate, in lieu of a maximized fine and other punishment." The guidelines are also used for the number of sessions the defendants were required to serve on a jury. Participant three also stated: "The time doing community service away from normal peer group provides a structured environment the youth enjoy, as the youth choose a site to serve, rather than being given an assigned site."

Educational components were required in the majority of the observed programs. For others, the course requirement was based on the offense. Participant three said: "For driving infractions and crimes that included victims, there was a prerequisite to complete the driving course or the victim awareness type of programs" prior to beginning community service hours, but certainly before completion of teen court. The educational component's materials can be stored for future use for the driving offense. Tobacco use
offenses also had an educational component for some teen court programs. Other teen court programs included drug offense defendants’ ability to go to a local family program (first offender program) that looked at the levels of offenses, choices/decision-making, peer pressure, and management to open lines of communication in the individual families that may not have been present otherwise.

The majority of the participants stated: "In the absence of the educational component, there was often the option to complete an essay that often required a written apology that is signed to notify the teen court coordinator that the apology was received." One of the programs required a life skills course that taught the youths general principles, including managing future confrontations and requiring youth to consider life beyond high school. The same program was in the transition of requiring sanctioned youth to create a vision board, a combination of words/phrases from magazine cutouts and internet printouts. Participant four said: "Vision boards allowed youth to select essential life goals and then prioritize ideas like getting a home and car, and pursuing a career and hobbies." One common aspect of sanctions, whether in teen court or the traditional juvenile justice systems, is the requirement to pay reimbursement, which was often passed from the courts to the programs.

Theme 4: Types of Teen Court Models - addressed "What teen court model have you had the most experience with at this time?" As noted in the Shifting Procedures and Requirements theme, most programs took advantage of the adult judge model; however, a few programs found the peer jury model very useful. In the minority was the youth judge model, which was used "for the teen court volunteers who were seniors in high school or
involved in dual enrollment programs," according to Participant 10. To prevent youth jurors from entering into deliberations with unanswered questions, some programs allowed "youth jurors to ask the defendant on the stand additional questions that the youth prosecutors and defense attorneys did not ask during the trial." All individuals interviewed knew from prior experience that jurors sometimes miss information or provide sentences based on assumptions when internal questions go unanswered. The open forums helped create some uniformity in sentencing, and in other instances, created space for comparison of the defendants for reasons to shorten or lengthen sanctions.

Theme 5: Sanction Consistency - was developed from responses that addressed "Are sanctions different in the varying teen court models?" Some of those interviewed did not have an actual answer to this question. The other half of the participants noted, "the discipline gride does not change based on the format of the teen court model. However, other teen court programs may have higher sanctions than others, usually based on the number of defendants and jurors available." According to Participant three, sanction consistency, regardless of the teen court model used in the teen court program, was a reflection of the fact that:

Jurors ranked the defendant's actions to select hours of community service and punishment from 1 (really great, made a mistake, should not be here) to 10 (bad, lying, will not complete the program). There was a sliding scale in all program guidelines to make the hours required, which was adjusted up or down a few hours based on the defendant's need for correction.

Most programs did not allow the jurors to go above the maximum hours. However, a handful of situations permitted the jurors to go above maximums with coordinator guidance because of the disrespect to the teen court process and participants or the perceived unwillingness of the defendant to complete sanctions. A few defendants refused to answer the jurors' questions. One defendant stated, "I did not want to come here anyway. I do not care if my case is sent back to the court." Defendants were made aware of the potential range of hours based on their charge/offense during the teen court intake phase. Participant three credited the differences between the program and the traditional system to youth arguably "doing a better job of listening than adults because they lack jaded experiences and responsibilities. During the decision-making they implore great listening skills even with different backgrounds and cultural experiences." Further, youth juror volunteers are not present at any inconvenience, and purity and innocence in decision-making exist because they are less distracted by the world.

Theme 6: Placement of Jurors - addressed "How are jurors placed onto specific cases?" Commonly teen court jurors are placed randomly using a jury pool style.

However, majority of the participants stated the jury pool style "depends on the number of cases and the number of teen volunteers and return defendants available to fill the jury." For the occasions when a teen knew the defendant when their name was called from the docket, the juror was not allowed to sit on that defendant's jury. When the defendant is known by familiarity, usually attending the same school, the juror could ask to be excused once the defendant appears. One juror saw the defendant and recognized him from school. She was dismissed and sat outside the courtroom until his case was
heard. The same measure of availability and discretion used for jurors is used for the teens acting as prosecutors and defense attorneys. About half of the participants stated: "Availability and need are used to mix the volunteers, no co-defendants, or double service on co-defendant cases. We remove jurors that know of or know the defendant personally."

Though availability drives the jury pool assignments, the teen court programs seek sentencing fairness for the defendant and juror comfortability during the process. For some programs, an email was sent to volunteers weekly to allow them to commit to serving and get assigned as a foreman, juror, or clerk. The jury members can be divided for multiple sanctions to mix volunteers with diverse defendants. Some nights the teen court had one jury that heard three or more cases depending on the number of cases for that night. Other programs "required previous teen defendants to sit on future juries for 612 sessions within 90 days;" the program excluded co-defendants from sitting on each other's case and used school attendance to prescreen the jurors.

Theme 7: Informing Jurors - was developed from responses that addressed "Do the jurors receive realistic materials? a. Juror verdict form, b. Jury instructions, c. Notepad" The majority of the teen court programs sought to inform jurors by providing materials that would be useful during deliberations. However, the move to virtual proceedings reduced the paper materials provided. Generally, jurors received a sanction sheet per case, and the jurors selected a foreman to present the sanctions, though all jurors signed the sheet. Participant six said: "the juror verdict form is a minimum requirement for record-keeping and to make sure the defendant can be notified of all
requirements to complete the teen court program." Jury instructions were generally provided verbally and then on paper in some programs to carry into deliberations to make sure the sanctions matched the offense and to influence the jurors to question the reason for the sanctions rather than simply checking the boxes.

Notepads and note sheets were rarely provided. However, virtual proceedings found that some jurors used the note session or the chat to keep notes on the individual cases. In the peer jury model, Participant four noted it was common to "provide juror question prompts of about 12 questions" to give jurors a start to ask the defendant questions that are essential in deciding sanctions "with the opportunity to ask their questions as well." A few teen court programs provided the jury with the offense incident report or read the report aloud before the trial began. One program took advantage of the digital platform and provided courtroom protocol to all participants and the court docket to the attorneys.

For Participant three's program, "The foreman and clerk have a script to welcome and set up to question the defendant and orient and engage their peers." Jury members are given a "discipline guide, criteria, and prompting questions that could be asked for the night." The materials coach the participants, and the participants can write notes on the papers, but everything inside the court is confidential. The foreman looked at the ticket (court records), and everything written down remained in the court, except for volunteer training materials.

Theme 8: Police Reports vs. Digital Representations - addressed "What types of evidentiary items are displayed for jurors in teen courts?" Generally, defendants give a
verbal account of the incident (testify), and only the information solicited during the testimony is entered as evidence. On a few occasions, the parent or guardian is allowed to speak to the jury or answer jury questions before deliberations. However, most teen court programs permit youth to bring witnesses to testify on their behalf and digital or physical evidence. Participant 10 said: "Defendants may bring character reference letters from friends/family/parents, apology letters to the victim, and one parent who brought photos of an old truck."

Participant five understood that "If any evidence were available, the police would have the materials and would have noted the evidence in the reports." One program coordinator noted that moving the teen court to the virtual setting encouraged teens to bring evidence, unlike in-person sessions. The virtual setting allowed teens freedom and "creative space to bring in pictures, email paper trials from parents to teachers/the school, character witnesses (football coach/attorney), and any other materials made available to them" as Participant seven mentioned. Other programs depended on the police reports/citations for evidentiary items, which sometimes included "video surveillance, photos of the damage, and photos of stolen items that were recovered." All citations generally had a place, time, offense, the citing or arresting officer's notes, and the defendant's intake statement of what happened.

Theme 9: Mitigating Details - was developed from responses that addressed "Does the defendant submit mitigating information? a. School performance, b. Organization/extracurricular involvement, c. Church/religious affiliation, d. Economic difficulties, etc." Most participants noted the defendants' testimonies included mitigating
information, as it was the defense attorney's job to limit sanctions by making the defendant personable. Participant six said: "Guilt has already been established, so the defense attorney has to put on a good show." School performance was entered by asking the defendant about his/her average grades earned, and organizations/extracurricular involvement tends to favor athletes committed to weekly practices. Participant eight stated, in addition to the listed items, "The defense attorneys attempt to bring out remorse and peer influence." One program coordinator noted that the intake statement submitted by the defendants included grades, extracurricular involvement, and affiliations that the jury considered when making sanction decisions.

A few participants noted entrance of church/religious affiliation information was rare as "the intake briefing requests religion and politics to be left out of proceedings, but community service hours can be completed with a church/religious affiliation." Furthermore, the defendants rarely mentioned the family's economic difficulties. It is more likely for the present parent or guardian to introduce the details during initial disclosures. Participant four stated, "Peers are judgmental enough in that teens would be less likely to be forthcoming with familial difficulties." One could assume some economic pressures exist when the defendant has a part-time job in a single-parent home or as an older sibling with multiple household responsibilities. The adult judge occasionally inquired about the defendant's in-home behaviors and household responsibilities. About half of the participants stated "economic difficulties are generally presented by the defendant's parent or guardian. Generally, the youth will not volunteer
this information." Youths tend to be ashamed that their family is struggling financially and avoid inviting any additional judgment from the jury of their peers.

Theme 10: Sentencing Guidelines - addressed "What verdicts/sentences are generally rendered in teen courts? a. By offense, b. By age, c. By gender/sex." Verdicts/sentences by the defense are either reflected by class (tier) groups of the offense or a division between misdemeanor offenses or felony offenses. The more serious crimes, usually involving a victim or danger, produced higher community service hours in the sanctions. Participant 10 noted, "There were a few occasions when cases had to be sent back to the traditional court when more serious aspects are hidden in the details of the case, for example, a rape case that was hidden in a curfew case." In comparison, not all teens receive a sanction. Participant 10 stated in one case "a teen was in charged with truancy and had cancer, and the jury did not choose to sanction any community service hours."

Considering verdicts/sentences by age, Participant seven noticed "Younger defendants sometimes do not understand their actions or the courtroom jargon. Thus, remorse was difficult to determine." But their sanctions were fair to their age, even if it meant more community service or jury duty sessions to rehabilitate them. Participant six noticed "no direct differences by age that I am aware of, but I have found the jury may be more lenient on the younger defendants." Participants three and 10 noticed an age variation in the jurors rather than the defendants, as "the younger jurors tend to be more critical, especially when sanctioning traffic offenses."

Overall, participants did not notice differences in the verdicts/sentences based on the gender/sex of the defendants. Participant seven said: "Sometimes the Black females were questioned more intently in comparison to other defendants across the board. But Spanish female attorneys can be unrelenting when questioning Black males." During observations of a night's sessions, all defendants were spoken to softly and calmly, and those observing could not hear the adult judge's corrections. However, a Black female defendant during the same night's sessions was spoken to harshly and loudly reprimanded, which allowed the whole courtroom to hear the judge's correction. Participant 10 noticed "during in-person proceedings that attractive defendants tend to get more sanction leniency." The attitude of defendants was not an option; however, about half of the participants noted the teens "tend to give max sentences if the youth do not appear sincere, apologetic, or attentive during the process, more so than what was spoken." The level of remorse the defendant showed during the proceeding tends to sway the sanctions toward the lower end of requirements to complete teen court, even if the defendant was wrong.

Theme 11: Opinions - each participant was asked whether there were thoughts or opinions about the teen court that could be offered outside of the questions presented. Participant four found that the "online model gives kids some autonomy and the opportunity to participate in teen court when the face-to-face option was not possible (time conflicts, transportation issues, and even the occasional out-of-state offender)." Teen jurors in person tend to vary by sentence for the same offense because the jurors are
different. Online proceedings have a set jury for the night; thus, sentences have been uniformed for virtual sessions.

Participant three expressed that because of the peer jury, there was a greater appreciation for the whole teen court experience as the majority of the program participants reported a positive experience; however, citations/tickets have dropped dramatically in Texas in the teen court age group. Namely, schools can no longer write citations/tickets due to the state's dissolution of zero tolerance policies. "No enforcement of the law - you lose the one; zero tolerance - you sacrifice the good" (Participant Three). Fewer citations mean less access to these teen court programs and other positive activities.

Participant five noted "the need for more adult volunteers to fill in outside of the judge position in the larger teen court programs." This participant noticed that volunteer jurors were more into the sentencing/deliberations. At the same time, defendants often compared the case before them to their experience in teen court and the community service hours they received based on how the defendant performed compared to them. Sometimes, the jurors tend to just vote rather than have a discussion of the process and the facts/information heard in the courtroom. The weight of remorse as an adult viewing the proceedings allowed the participant to see remorse did not always reflect in the sentence for their behavior in the courtroom.

The qualitative analyses were not directly expected to answer the research questions but inform the researcher. However, informative sessions were found to drive the project. The transition from the study's qualitative to quantitative phase was smooth,
given the expectations managed through the interviews with teen court coordinators and adult volunteers. See Table 3 for emergent themes and the study's research questions addressed with the qualitative analyses.

Table 3
Emergent Themes and Research Questions

| Research question | Theme that addressed the question |
| :--- | :---: |
| RQ2: Does providing jurors with | Theme 7: Notepads and note sheets were |
| specifically labeled—Case Notes, Evidence | rarely provided; however, virtual |
| Note Sheets, Victim Experience Notes- | proceedings found some jurors used the note |
| notetaking sheets encourage youth to focus | session or the chat to keep notes on the |
| on specific factors of the trial? | individual cases. |

RQ4: Are the verdicts reached in teen court Theme 3: All defendants are required to harsher than the sanctions an adult legal serve community service at a comparable professional would issue? rate to resolve a fine that the traditional juvenile courts would issue. Theme 9: Most participants noted the RQ6: Are teen court youth more attentive to testimonies of the defendants included legal or extralegal factors in teen court mitigating information, as it is the defense hearings? attorney’s job to limit sanctions by making the defendant personable.

## Quantitative Data Analysis

## Demographics and Descriptive Statistics

The demographic variables of participants included type of participant, sex, race, age, grade level, education, and occupation (see Table 4). Not all participants responded to all of the questions, and only a small percentage of teen court participants given access to the survey reported responses. The sample of respondents consisted of $63.6 \%(\mathrm{n}=68)$ youth jurors, $21.5 \%(\mathrm{n}=23)$ previous youth defendants, and $15 \%(\mathrm{n}=16)$ adult volunteers, for a total sample of 107 participants. The youth jurors and adult volunteers sample comprised 33.6\% ( $\mathrm{n}=36$ ) male and $66.4 \%(\mathrm{n}=71)$ female respondents. Asians comprised the majority of participants ( $\mathrm{n}=56,52.3 \%$ ), followed by Whites ( $\mathrm{n}=23$, 21.5\%). While Hispanics made up 12.1\% ( $\mathrm{n}=13$ ), Blacks represented a slightly lower percentage ( $\mathrm{n}=12,11.2 \%$ ) than Hispanics. Only $2.8 \%(\mathrm{n}=3$ ) were mixed race. The youth jurors ranged from 13 to 18, with an average age of 15.26. The lowest grade level was seven, and the highest was 12 . The majority of adult volunteers had completed high school or GED equivalent ( $\mathrm{n}=7,33.3 \%$ ). The majority of adult were employed in a nonlegal or education-based field ( $\mathrm{n}=9,56.3 \%$ ), see Table 4.

Table 4
Descriptive Statistics: For the Prediction of Teen Court Decision-Making, Participant Grouping, Sex, Race, Age, Grade Level, Occupation, and Education ( $N=107$ )

| Demographic Variable | $n$ | Valid \% | $M$ | $S D$ | Skewness |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Participant Type |  |  |  |  |  |
| Youth Juror | 68 | 63.6 |  |  |  |
| Previous Def. | 23 | 21.5 |  |  |  |
| Adult Volunteer | 16 | 15 |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |


| Demographic Variable | $n$ | Valid \% | M | SD | Skewness |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Respondent's Sex |  |  |  |  |  |
| Male | 36 | 33.6 |  |  |  |
| Female | 71 | 66.4 |  |  |  |
| Respondent's Race |  |  |  |  |  |
| White | 23 | 21.5 |  |  |  |
| Black | 12 | 11.2 |  |  |  |
| Hispanic | 13 | 12.1 |  |  |  |
| Asian | 56 | 52.3 |  |  |  |
| Mixed | 3 | 2.8 |  |  |  |
| Age | 90 |  | 15.26 | 1.39 | . 04 |
| 13 | 10 | 11.1 |  |  |  |
| 14 | 23 | 25.6 |  |  |  |
| 15 | 11 | 12.2 |  |  |  |
| 16 | 31 | 34.4 |  |  |  |
| 17 | 10 | 11.1 |  |  |  |
| 18 | 5 | 5.6 |  |  |  |
| Grade | 85 |  | 9.95 | 1.39 | -. 22 |
| 7 | 2 | 2.4 |  |  |  |
| 8 | 14 | 16.5 |  |  |  |
| 9 | 18 | 21.2 |  |  |  |
| 10 | 14 | 16.5 |  |  |  |
| 11 | 26 | 30.6 |  |  |  |
| 12 | 11 | 12.9 |  |  |  |
| Education | 21 |  |  |  |  |
| Diploma or GED | 7 | 33.3 |  |  |  |
| Some College | 6 | 28.6 |  |  |  |
| Bachelor's | 3 | 14.3 |  |  |  |
| Graduate or Prof. | 5 | 23.8 |  |  |  |
| Occupation | 16 |  |  |  |  |
| TCP Coordinator | 5 | 31.3 |  |  |  |
| Attorney | 2 | 12.5 |  |  |  |
| Other | 9 | 56.3 |  |  |  |

Note. $N=107$ ( $n=$ number of participants, vary by adult volunteers and youth jurors given certain questions, the total number of participants accounts for some variables not reflecting $n=107$.)

In total, 67 of the 107 participants reported the verdict the defendant received (i.e., number of community service hours). Descriptive statistics for the verdict (community service hours) reveal an overall mean score of 20.03 ( $\mathrm{SD}=7.86$ ). On average, the youth juror found that the defendant should receive 20 community service hours to rehabilitate the youth offender. The skewness of the verdict was found to be 1.93 , indicating the distribution was right-skewed. The lowest number of community service hours was four, and the highest was 60 (see Table 5).

Table 5
Descriptive Statistics: For the Prediction of Teen Court Decision-Making, Ideal Jury Verdict, and Verdict ( $N=107$ )

| Dependent Variable | $n$ | Valid \% | $M$ | $S D$ | Skewness |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Verdict (Comm. Serv.) | 67 |  | 20.03 | 7.86 | 1.93 |
| 4 | 1 | 1.5 |  |  |  |
| 10 | 4 | 6.0 |  |  |  |
| 11 | 1 | 1.5 |  |  |  |
| 12 | 4 | 6.0 |  |  |  |
| 13 | 2 | 3.0 |  |  |  |
| 14 | 3 | 4.5 |  |  |  |
| 15 | 6 | 9.0 |  |  |  |
| 16 | 4 | 6.0 |  |  |  |
| 17 | 1 | 1.5 |  |  |  |
| 18 | 2 | 3.0 |  |  |  |
| 19 | 1 | 1.5 |  |  |  |
| 20 | 12 | 14.9 |  |  |  |
| 21 | 1 | 1.5 |  |  |  |
| 22 | 6 | 9.0 |  |  |  |
| 25 | 13 | 19.4 |  |  |  |
| 26 | 2 | 3.0 |  |  |  |
| 30 | 4 | 6.0 |  |  |  |
| 35 | 1 | 1.5 |  |  |  |
| 60 | 1 | 1.5 |  |  |  |

Note. $N=107$ ( $\mathrm{n}=$ number of participants, varying by adult volunteers and youth jurors).

Of the 73 types of offenses reported, the majority of the youth juror and adult volunteers heard a case that involved defendants that had a speeding violation ( $\mathrm{n}=18$, 24.7\%). Cases involving burglary were the least presented in this study ( $\mathrm{n}=2,2.7 \%$ ), see Table 6). Twenty-nine youth jurors recalled the title of the note sheet received. The case notes labeled sheet was the most frequently reported ( $n=22,75.9 \%$ ). Of the 68 youth jurors and adult volunteers' responses that noted key trial details, lack of remorse ( $\mathrm{n}=24$, 35.3\%) was the highest deciding factor, while changed behavior ( $\mathrm{n}=1,1.5 \%$ ) did not appear to be an important factor to the participants in deciding the verdict. Of the 16 adult volunteers in the study, 10 responded to whether the jurors' verdict was ideal. The ideal verdict revealed $60 \%$ of the adult volunteers thought the verdict was ideal. The youth jurors provided, and the adult volunteers assumed the purpose of the sentence/verdict was predominately to rehabilitate defendants $62.7 \%(\mathrm{n}=42)$, see Table 6 .

Table 6
Descriptive Statistics: For the Prediction of Teen Court Decision-Making, Type of Offense, Note-Sheets, and Sentencing Factors ( $N=107$ )

| Independent Variable | $n$ | $\%$ |
| ---: | :---: | :---: |
| Type of Offense |  | 73 |
|  | Assault | 15 |
| Battery | 4 | 20.5 |
| Burglary | 2 | 5.5 |
| Criminal Mischief | 3 | 2.7 |
| Curfew Violation | 9 | 4.1 |
| Drugs | 9 | 12.3 |
| No License | 4 | 12.3 |
| Shoplifting | 9 | 5.5 |
| Speeding | 18 | 12.3 |
|  |  | 24.7 |
| Note-Sheet |  |  |


| Victim Experience | 5 | 17.2 |
| ---: | :---: | :---: |
| Case Notes | 22 | 75.9 |
| Key Trial Details |  |  |
| Remorse | 68 | 23.5 |
| Victim Experience | 16 | 5.9 |
| Changed Behavior | 4 | 1.5 |
| Lack of Remorse | 1 | 35.3 |
| Inconsistency | 74 | 10.3 |
| Defendant's Home | 16 | 23.5 |
| Situation |  |  |
|  | 10 |  |
| Ydeal Jury Verdict | 6 | 60.0 |
| No | 4 | 40.0 |
| Purpose of Sentence |  |  |
| Deterrence | 21 |  |
| Punishment | 4 | 31.3 |
| Rehabilitation | 42 | 6.0 |

Note. $N=107$ ( $\mathrm{n}=$ number of participants, varying by adult volunteers and youth jurors).
Ninety-seven of the 107 respondents completed the priming variables, which consisted of three items. For prime variable one ( $\mathrm{n}=71$ ), $73.2 \%$ of the youth jurors and adult volunteers had something taken without first asking their permission. For prime variable two ( $\mathrm{n}=72$ ), $74.2 \%$ of the youth jurors and adult volunteers had someone close to them have something taken from them without first asking their permission. For prime variable three $(\mathrm{n}=59), 60.8 \%$ of the youth jurors and adult volunteers did not take something from someone without first asking their permission (see Table 7). Of the 107 participants in the study, 68 teen court jurors and adult volunteers completed the prime check variables, which consisted of three items. For prime check variable one a little less than half of the participants ( $\mathrm{n}=32,47.1 \%$ ) answered correctly. For prime check variable two, $55.9 \%(\mathrm{n}=38)$ of the youth jurors and adult volunteers responded incorrectly. For
prime check variable three, the least number of participants answered correctly ( $\mathrm{n}=38$, 39.2\%; see Table 7).

The average adult volunteer participant had volunteered for four teen court sessions ( $S D=1.51$ ). The majority of the adult participants volunteered for five or more teen court sessions ( $\mathrm{n}=5,62.5 \%$.). The skewness of the number of times adult volunteers have volunteered for teen court sessions was found to be -1.32 , indicating the distribution was left-skewed. On average, youth juror participants had completed 3.64 jury duties (SD $=1.61)$. Of the 56 youth jurors that were represented, $53.6 \%(n=30)$ completed five or more jury duties. The skewness of the average number of jury duties that youth jurors have completed was found to be -.58, indicating the distribution was relatively symmetrical to a normal distribution (see Table 7).

Table 7
Descriptive Statistics: For the Prediction of Teen Court Decision-Making, Primes, Priming Checks, and Participant Experience ( $N=107$ )

| Independent Variable | $n$ | Vaid \% | M | $S D$ | Skewness |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Primes | 97 |  |  |  |  |
| Prime 1 |  |  |  |  |  |
| Yes | 71 | 73.2 |  |  |  |
| No | 26 | 26.8 |  |  |  |
| Prime 2 |  |  |  |  |  |
| Yes | 72 | 74.2 |  |  |  |
| No | 25 | 25.8 |  |  |  |
| Prime 3 |  |  |  |  |  |
| Yes | 38 | 39.2 |  |  |  |
| No | 59 | 60.8 |  |  |  |
| Prime Checks | 68 |  |  |  |  |
| Prime Check 1 |  |  |  |  |  |
| Correct | 32 | 47.1 |  |  |  |
| Incorrect | 36 | 52.9 |  |  |  |


| Independent Variable | $n$ | Vaid \% | M | $S D$ | Skewness |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Prime Check 2 |  |  |  |  |  |
| Correct | 30 | 44.1 |  |  |  |
| Incorrect | 38 | 55.9 |  |  |  |
| Prime Check 3 |  |  |  |  |  |
| Correct | 28 | 41.2 |  |  |  |
| Incorrect | 40 | 58.8 |  |  |  |
| Volunteer Times | 8 |  | 4.00 | 1.51 | -1.32 |
| 1 | 1 | 12.5 |  |  |  |
| 3 | 2 | 25.0 |  |  |  |
| 5 | 5 | 62.5 |  |  |  |
| Jury Duties | 56 |  | 3.64 | 1.61 | -. 58 |
| 1 | 9 | 16.1 |  |  |  |
| 2 | 8 | 14.3 |  |  |  |
| 3 | 7 | 12.5 |  |  |  |
| 4 | 2 | 3.6 |  |  |  |
| 5 | 30 | 53.6 |  |  |  |
| Note. $N=107$ ( $\mathrm{n}=$ number of participants, varying by adult volunteers and youth jurors). |  |  |  |  |  |
| Sixty-six of the 107 respondents completed the sentencing goal variables, which |  |  |  |  |  |
| consisted of four items. The value for Cronbach's Alpha was $\alpha=.672$, which is |  |  |  |  |  |
| acceptable. Sentencing goal one revealed a median score of 4.00. It was positively |  |  |  |  |  |
| perceived that punishing an offender keeps that person from committing other crimes in |  |  |  |  |  |
| the future. Sentencing goal two revealed a median score of 3.00. This showed a neither |  |  |  |  |  |
| negative nor positive perception that punishing an offender provided an example to |  |  |  |  |  |
| others. A median score of 3.00 for sentencing goal three revealed an indifferent |  |  |  |  |  |
| perception of whether a sentence would ensure an offender would compensate victims |  |  |  |  |  |
| injuries and losses. Sentencing goal four showed a median score of 5.00. There was a |  |  |  |  |  |
| positive perception that sentencing provided an opportunity for the offender to recognize |  |  |  |  |  |
| the error of his/her ways | dev | w, more | opriat | iors ( | Table 8). |

The majority of the youth juror and adult volunteers were confident in the verdict/sentence. Of the 65 respondents, $32.3 \%(n=21)$ rated their verdict confidence at an 8.00. The youth juror and adult volunteer response for testimony impact showed most participants were not emotionally impacted by the testimonies and exhibits shown during the trial, with a median score of 5.00 . The average youth juror and adult volunteer found the sentence decision would be based on critical deliberation of the evidence, with a median score of 8.00. The majority of the participants ( $n=21,32.3 \%$ ) rated their deliberation of the evidence at a 9 (see Table 8).

Table 8
Descriptive Statistics: For the Prediction of Teen Court Decision-Making, Sentencing Goals ( $N=107$ )

| Independent Variable | $n$ | $\%$ | $M$ | $\alpha$ |
| ---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Sentencing Goals | 66 |  |  | .672 |
| 1 - Prevent Future Crimes |  |  | 4.00 |  |
| Not at all important | 1 | 1.5 |  |  |
| Slightly important | 6 | 9.1 |  |  |
| Moderately important | 9 | 13.6 |  |  |
| Quite important | 25 | 37.9 |  |  |
| Extremely important | 25 | 37.9 |  |  |
| 2 - Example to Others |  |  |  |  |
| Not at all important | 9 | 13.6 |  |  |
| Slightly important | 19 | 28.8 |  |  |
| Moderately important | 16 | 24.2 |  |  |
| Quite important | 13 | 19.7 |  |  |
| Extremely important | 9 | 13.6 |  |  |
| 3 - Compensate Victims |  |  |  |  |
| Not at all important | 16 | 24.2 |  |  |
| Slightly important | 9 | 13.6 |  |  |
| Moderately important | 11 | 16.7 |  |  |
| Quite important | 14 | 21.2 |  |  |
| Extremely important | 16 | 24.2 |  |  |
| 4 - Offender Opportunities |  | 1.5 |  |  |
| Slightly important | 1 | 1.5 |  |  |


| Independent Variable | $n$ | \% | M | $\alpha$ |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Moderately important | 2 | 3.0 |  |  |
| Quite important | 14 | 21.2 |  |  |
| Extremely important | 49 | 74.2 |  |  |
| Verdict Confidence | 65 |  | 8.00 |  |
| 2 | 1 | 1.5 |  |  |
| 3 | 1 | 1.5 |  |  |
| 4 | 1 | 1.5 |  |  |
| 5 | 2 | 3.1 |  |  |
| 6 | 6 | 9.2 |  |  |
| 7 | 16 | 24.6 |  |  |
| 8 | 21 | 32.3 |  |  |
| 9 | 17 | 26.2 |  |  |
| Testimony Impact | 65 |  | 5.00 |  |
| 1 | 10 | 15.4 |  |  |
| 2 | 6 | 9.2 |  |  |
| 3 | 7 | 10.8 |  |  |
| 4 | 7 | 10.8 |  |  |
| 5 | 11 | 16.9 |  |  |
| 6 | 7 | 10.8 |  |  |
| 7 | 5 | 7.7 |  |  |
| 8 | 5 | 7.7 |  |  |
| 9 | 7 | 10.8 |  |  |
| Evidence Deliberation | 65 |  | 8.00 |  |
| 1 | 2 | 3.1 |  |  |
| 2 | 1 | 1.5 |  |  |
| 3 | 1 | 1.5 |  |  |
| 5 | 4 | 6.2 |  |  |
| 6 | 7 | 10.8 |  |  |
| 7 | 12 | 18.5 |  |  |
| 8 | 17 | 26.2 |  |  |
| 9 | 21 | 32.3 |  |  |

Note. $N=107$ ( n = number of participants, varying by adult volunteers and youth jurors).
Seventy-three of the 107 respondents completed the "presented during trial," variables which consisted of 15 dichotomous variables. Of the 73 youth jurors and adult volunteers, $82.2 \%(\mathrm{n}=60)$ found the defendant said sorry during the trial. The majority
of the 73 youth jurors and adult volunteers ( $\mathrm{n}=50,68.5 \%$ ) found the defendant's schoolrelated difficulties was not presented during the trial. Of the 72 youth jurors and adult volunteers, $77.8 \%(\mathrm{n}=56)$ found whether the defendant had already reimbursed the victim was not present during the trial. Fifty (69.4\%) of the youth jurors and adult volunteers found whether the defendant had already received punishment from school or family was present during the trial. Forty-two (58.3\%) of the youth jurors and adult volunteers found whether the defendant had improved academically was not present during the trial. Of the 72 youth jurors and adult volunteers, $75 \%(\mathrm{n}=54)$ found whether the defendant had caused physical injury was not present during the trial. Of the 72 youth jurors and adult volunteers, $79.2 \%(\mathrm{n}=57)$ found whether the defendant damaged property was not present during the trial (see Table 9).

Fifty-four (75\%) of the youth jurors and adult volunteers found whether the defendant had previously used drugs or alcohol was not present during the trial. Sixtythree (87.5\%) of youth jurors and adult volunteers found information about the defendant's age was present during the trial. Of the 72 youth jurors and adult volunteers, $72.8 \%(n=52)$ found information about the defendant's gender was present during the trial. Of the 72 youth jurors and adult volunteers $63.9 \%(n=46)$ found the defendant's involvement in extracurricular activities was present during the trial. Fifty-six (77.8\%) of the youth jurors and adult volunteers found whether the defendant had improvements in family relations was not present during the trial. Fifty-eight (80.6\%) of youth jurors and adult volunteers found sentencing recommendations by the prosecutor were present during the trial. Of the 72 youth jurors and adult volunteers, $81.9 \%(\mathrm{n}=59)$ found
sentencing recommendations by the defense attorney were present during the trial. Of the 72 youth jurors and adult volunteers, $61.1 \%(\mathrm{n}=44)$ found whether the defendant had family-related difficulties was not present during the trial (see Table 9).

Table 9
Descriptive Statistics: For the Prediction of Teen Court Decision-Making, Presence During Trial ( $N=107$ )

| Independent Variable | $n$ | Valid \% |
| :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Present During Trial |  |  |
| 1 - Defendant said sorry | 73 |  |
| Yes | 60 | 82.2 |
| No | 13 | 17.8 |
| 2 - Defendant had school difficulties |  |  |
| Yes | 23 | 31.5 |
| No | 50 | 68.5 |
| 3 - Victim was reimbursed | 72 |  |
| Yes | 16 | 22.2 |
| No | 56 | 77.8 |
| 4 - Defendant punished by school or family |  |  |
| Yes | 50 | 69.4 |
| No | 22 | 30.6 |
| 5 - Defendant had school improvements |  |  |
| Yes | 30 | 41.7 |
| No | 42 | 58.3 |
| 6 - Defendant caused physical injury |  |  |
| Yes | 18 | 25.0 |
| No | 54 | 75.0 |
| 7 - Defendant damaged property |  |  |
| Yes | 15 | 20.8 |
| No | 57 | 79.2 |
| 8 - Defendant used drugs or alcohol |  |  |
| Yes | 18 | 25.0 |
| No | 54 | 75.0 |
| 9 - Defendant's age mentioned |  |  |
| Yes | 63 | 87.5 |
| No | 9 | 12.5 |
| 10 - Defendant's gender mentioned |  |  |
| Yes | 52 | 72.8 |
| No | 20 | 27.8 |


| Independent Variable | $n$ | Valid \% |
| :---: | :---: | :---: |
| 11 - Defendant had extracurricular activities |  |  |
|  | Yes 46 | 63.9 |
|  | No 26 | 36.1 |
| 12 - Family relationships improved |  |  |
|  | Yes 16 | 22.2 |
|  | No 56 | 77.8 |
| 13 - Prosecutor recommended sentencing |  |  |
|  | Yes 58 | 80.6 |
|  | No 14 | 19.4 |
| 14 - Defense recommended sentencing |  |  |
|  | Yes 59 | 81.9 |
|  | No 13 | 18.1 |
| 15 - Defendant had family difficulties |  |  |
|  | Yes 28 | 38.9 |
|  | No 44 | 61.1 |
| Note. $N=107$ ( $\mathrm{n}=$ number of participants, varying by adult volunteers and youth Sixty-six of the 107 teen court jurors and adult volunteers completed the |  |  |
|  |  |  |
| importance during the trial variables, which consisted of 15 scaled items from not at all |  |  |
| important to extremely important. Cronbach's Alpha was $\alpha=.822$. The importance of |  |  |
| whether the defendant said sorry during the trial revealed a mode score of 3.0, indicating |  |  |
| a positive perception of the importance of the defendant's apology during the trial. The |  |  |
| importance of whether the defendant had school-related difficulties during the trial |  |  |
| revealed a mode score of 1.00. Twenty-six (39.4\%) participants found the defendant' |  |  |
| school-related difficulties unimportant. Whether the defendant had reimbursed the victim |  |  |
| during the trial revealed a mode score of 1.0. The importance of whether the defendant |  |  |
| had already reimbursed the victim during the trial, $33.3 \%(\mathrm{n}=22$ ) reported not at al |  |  |
| important. The importance of whether the defendant already received punishment from |  |  |
| school or family during the trial revealed a mode scors | ode score of 3.0, | indiffere |

perception toward the defendant receiving punishment from school or family during the trial, see Table 10.

The importance of whether the defendant had shown school-related improvements during the trial revealed a mode score of 1.0. Almost $32 \%$ of the participants found the defendant's school-related improvements not at all important to the trial. The importance of whether the defendant had caused physical injury during the trial revealed a mode score of 1.0. Participants found physical injury ( $n=26,39.4 \%$ ) not at all important. The importance of whether the defendant damaged property during the trial revealed a mode score of 1.00 . Nearly $41 \%$ of the participants found whether the defendant damaged property was unimportant during the trial. The importance of whether the defendant used drugs or alcohol during the trial revealed a mode score of 1.0, indicating a negative perception. Twenty-seven respondents (40.9\%) reported it was of little importance whether the defendant used drugs or alcohol during the trial. Twenty-two (33.3\%) participants felt it was slightly important to know the defendant's age during the trial a mode score of 2.0. Forty-eight (72.7\%) participants felt it was not important to know the defendant's gender during the trial, revealing a mode score of 1.0 , see Table 10 .

The importance of whether the defendant was involved in extracurricular activities during the trial revealed a mode score of 2.0. Twenty-two (33.3\%) of participants found the defendant's involvement in extracurricular activities slightly important. Twenty-two (33.3\%) participants found the defendant's improvements in family relations not at all important. A mode score of 1.0 showed a negative perception of the importance of whether the defendant had improvements in family relations during
the trial. The importance of whether the prosecutor provided sentencing recommendations during the trial revealed a mode score of 4.0. Nineteen (28.8\%) of the participants found the prosecutor provided sentencing recommendations during the trial to be quite important. The importance of whether the defense attorney provided sentencing recommendations during the trial revealed a mode score of 3.0. The majority of the participants found the defense attorney provided sentencing recommendations during the trial. Twenty-six (39.4\%) participants found whether the defendant had family-related difficulties during the trial was not at all important, a mode score of 1.0 (see Table 10).

Table 10
Descriptive Statistics: For the Prediction of Teen Court Decision-Making, Importance During Trial ( $N=107$ )

| Independent Variable | $n=66$ | Valid $\%$ | $M$ | $\alpha$ |
| ---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Importance During Trial |  |  |  | .822 |
| 1 - Defendant said sorry |  |  | 3.0 |  |
| Not at all important | 3 | 4.5 |  |  |
| Slightly important | 13 | 19.7 |  |  |
| Moderately important | 19 | 28.8 |  |  |
| Quite important | 16 | 24.2 |  |  |
| Extremely important | 15 | 22.7 | 1.0 |  |
| 2 - Defendant had school difficulties |  |  |  |  |
| Not at all important | 26 | 39.4 | 16.7 |  |
| Slightly important | 11 | 16 |  |  |
| Moderately important | 16 | 24.2 |  |  |
| Quite important | 10 | 15.2 |  |  |
| Extremely important | 3 | 4.5 | 1.0 |  |
| 3 - Victim was reimbursed |  |  |  |  |
| Not at all important | 22 | 33.3 |  |  |
| Slightly important | 8 | 12.1 |  |  |
| Moderately important | 19 | 28.8 |  |  |
| Quite important | 10 | 15.2 |  |  |
| Extremely important | 7 | 10.6 |  |  |


| Independent Variable | $n=66$ | Valid \% | M | $\alpha$ |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| 4 - Defendant punished by school or family |  |  | 3.0 |  |
| Not at all important | 11 | 16.7 |  |  |
| Slightly important | 12 | 18.2 |  |  |
| Moderately important | 19 | 28.8 |  |  |
| Quite important | 17 | 25.8 |  |  |
| Extremely important | 7 | 10.6 |  |  |
| 5 - Defendant had school improvements |  |  | 1.0 |  |
| Not at all important | 21 | 31.8 |  |  |
| Slightly important | 9 | 13.6 |  |  |
| Moderately important | 9 | 13.6 |  |  |
| Quite important | 16 | 24.2 |  |  |
| Extremely important | 11 | 16.7 |  |  |
| 6 - Defendant caused physical injury |  |  | 1.0 |  |
| Not at all important | 26 | 39.4 |  |  |
| Slightly important | 1 | 1.5 |  |  |
| Moderately important | 2 | 3.0 |  |  |
| Quite important | 12 | 18.2 |  |  |
| Extremely important | 25 | 37.9 |  |  |
| 7 - Defendant damaged property |  |  | 1.0 |  |
| Not at all important | 27 | 40.9 |  |  |
| Slightly important | 2 | 9.1 |  |  |
| Moderately important | 3 | 4.5 |  |  |
| Quite important | 13 | 16.7 |  |  |
| Extremely important | 21 | 28.8 |  |  |
| 8 - Defendant used drugs or alcohol |  |  | 1.0 |  |
| Not at all important | 27 | 40.9 |  |  |
| Slightly important | 6 | 9.1 |  |  |
| Moderately important | 3 | 4.5 |  |  |
| Quite important | 11 | 16.7 |  |  |
| Extremely important | 19 | 28.8 |  |  |
| 9 - Defendant's age mentioned |  |  | 2.0 |  |
| Not at all important | 11 | 16.7 |  |  |
| Slightly important | 22 | 33.3 |  |  |
| Moderately important | 14 | 21.2 |  |  |
| Quite important | 11 | 16.7 |  |  |
| Extremely important | 8 | 12.1 |  |  |
| 10 - Defendant's gender mentioned |  |  | 1.0 |  |
| Not at all important | 48 | 72.7 |  |  |
| Slightly important | 6 | 9.1 |  |  |
| Moderately important | 7 | 10.6 |  |  |
| Quite important | 3 | 4.5 |  |  |


| Independent Variable | $n=66$ | Valid \% | M | $\alpha$ |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Extremely important | 2 | 3.0 |  |  |
| 11 - Defendant had extracurricular activities |  |  | 2.0 |  |
| Not at all important | 15 | 22.7 |  |  |
| Slightly important | 22 | 33.3 |  |  |
| Moderately important | 16 | 24.2 |  |  |
| Quite important | 10 | 15.2 |  |  |
| Extremely important | 3 | 4.5 |  |  |
| 12 - Family relationships improved |  |  | 1.0 |  |
| Not at all important | 22 | 33.3 |  |  |
| Slightly important | 13 | 19.7 |  |  |
| Moderately important | 10 | 15.2 |  |  |
| Quite important | 15 | 22.7 |  |  |
| Extremely important | 6 | 9.1 |  |  |
| 13 - Prosecutor recommended sentencing |  |  | 4.0 |  |
| Not at all important | 6 | 9.1 |  |  |
| Slightly important | 8 | 12.1 |  |  |
| Moderately important | 16 | 24.2 |  |  |
| Quite important | 19 | 28.8 |  |  |
| Extremely important | 17 | 25.8 |  |  |
| 14 - Defense recommended sentencing |  |  | 3.0 |  |
| Not at all important | 4 | 6.1 |  |  |
| Slightly important | 8 | 12.1 |  |  |
| Moderately important | 18 | 27.3 |  |  |
| Quite important | 18 | 27.3 |  |  |
| Extremely important | 18 | 27.3 |  |  |
| 15 - Defendant had family difficulties |  |  | 1.0 |  |
| Not at all important | 26 | 39.4 |  |  |
| Slightly important | 3 | 4.5 |  |  |
| Moderately important | 16 | 24.2 |  |  |
| Quite important | 11 | 16.7 |  |  |
| Extremely important | 10 | 15.2 |  |  |

Note. $N=107$ ( $\mathrm{n}=$ number of participants, varying by adult volunteers and youth jurors).
Of the 107 respondents, 55 teen court jurors responded to the REI-A Need For Cognition (NFC) statements, which consisted of 10 scaled items. Cronbach's Alpha was $\alpha=.500$, which can be considered unacceptable. The average of Need For Cognition responses revealed an overall mean score of $3.31(\mathrm{SD}=.44)$. The average teen court juror
neither agreed nor disagreed with the need for cognition statements (see Table 11). Of the 107 respondents, 55 teen court jurors responded to the REI-A Faith in Intuition (FI) statements, comprising 10 scaled items. Cronbach's Alpha was $\alpha=.615$, which is acceptable. The average teen court juror neither agreed nor disagreed with the faith in intuition statements, which revealed by an overall mean score of 3.31 ( $\mathrm{SD}=.48$ ).

## Table 11

Descriptive Statistics: For the Prediction of Teen Court Decision-Making, REI-A ( $N=$ 107)

| Independent Variable | $n$ | $M$ | $S D$ | $\alpha$ |
| :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- |
| CEST Variables |  |  |  |  |
| Adolescents |  |  |  |  |
| Need For Cognition | 55 | 3.31 | .44 | .500 |
| Faith in Intuition | 55 | 3.31 | .48 | .615 |

Note. $N=107$ ( $\mathrm{n}=$ number of participants, varying by adult volunteers and youth jurors).
Of the 107 respondents, 12 teen court adult volunteers responded to the REI-10
Need For Cognition (NFC) statements, which consisted of five scaled items. Cronbach’s
Alpha was $\alpha=.602$, which is acceptable. The average of Need For Cognition responses revealed an overall mean score of $3.50(\mathrm{SD}=.54)$. The average teen court adult volunteer found the need for cognition statements to be neither true nor false (see Table 12). Of the 107 respondents, 12 teen court adult volunteers responded to the REI-10 Faith in Intuition (FI) statements, which consisted of five scaled items. Cronbach's Alpha was $\alpha=.832$, which is very good. The average of Faith in Intuition responses revealed an overall mean score of 3.80 (SD = .68). The average teen court adult volunteer found the need for experiential statements to be neither true nor false (see Table 12).

Table 12

Descriptive Statistics: For the Prediction of Teen Court Decision-Making, REI-10 ( $N=$ 107)

| Independent Variable | $n$ | $M$ | $S D$ | $\alpha$ |
| :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- |
| CEST Variables |  |  |  |  |
| Adults |  |  |  |  |
| Need For Cognition | 12 | 3.50 | .54 | .602 |
| Faith in Intuition | 12 | 3.80 | .68 | .832 |

Note. $N=107$ ( $\mathrm{n}=$ number of participants, varying by adult volunteers and youth jurors).

## Evaluation of Assumptions for Offense by Processing Modes

Answering research question 1: Does the offense of the teen court defendant trigger the rational or the experiential processing traits in youth participants? One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was performed to compare the effect of processing modes (Need For Cognition and Faith in Intuition) on type of offense (shoplifting, assault, battery, speeding, drug violations, alcohol, truancy, driving without a license, burglary, curfew violation, and criminal mischief) in youth jurors. The One-way ANOVA revealed no statistically significant difference between type of offense and REI-A Need For Cognition (NFC), $F(8,44)=[1.46], p=.200$. Further, analysis of variance revealed no statistically significant difference between type of offense and REI-A Faith in Intuition (FI), $F(8,44)=[.57], p=.796$ (see Table 13).

Table 13
Analysis of Variance (ANOVA): Offense by Adolescent Processing Mode - REI-A ( $N=$ 53)

| Variable |  | $M$ | $S D$ | $F$ | $p$ |
| :--- | ---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| REI-A NFC |  | -- | -- | 1.46 | .200 |
|  | Shoplifting | 3.30 | .63 | -- | -- |
|  | Assault | 3.01 | .54 | -- | -- |
|  | Battery | 3.44 | .79 | -- | -- |
|  | Speeding | 3.29 | .29 | -- | -- |


| Variable | $M$ | $S D$ | $F$ | $p$ |
| ---: | :---: | :---: | :--- | :--- |
| Drugs | 3.39 | .37 | -- | -- |
| No Driver License | 3.65 | .31 | -- | -- |
| Burglary | 3.78 | -- | -- | -- |
| Curfew Violation | 3.32 | .43 | -- | -- |
| Criminal Mischief | 3.66 | .15 | -- | -- |
| REI-A FI | -- | -- | -796 |  |
|  | Shoplifting | 3.27 | .32 | -- |
| Assault | 3.35 | .49 | -- | -- |
| Battery | 3.41 | .27 | -- | -- |
| Speeding | 3.15 | .44 | -- | -- |
| Drugs | 3.32 | .65 | -- | -- |
| No Driver License | 3.45 | .20 | -- | -- |
| Burglary | 3.80 | -- | -- | -- |
| Curfew Violation | 3.31 | .51 | -- | -- |
| Criminal Mischief | 3.64 | .40 | -- | -- |

Note. REI-A = Dependent variable. $N=55$ for REI-A variable items. $N=73$ for Offense. * $=p<.05 .{ }^{* *}=p<.01$.

## Evaluation of Assumptions for Note Sheet by Processing Modes

Answering research question 2: Does providing jurors with specifically labeled notetaking sheets—Case Notes, Evidence Note Sheets, Victim Experience Notesencourage youth to focus on specific factors of the trial? One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was performed to compare the effect of processing modes (Need For Cognition and Faith in Intuition) on note sheets (Case Notes, Evidence Notes, and Victim Experience Notes) in youth jurors. The analysis of variance revealed no statistically significant difference between juror note sheets and REI-A Need For Cognition (NFC), F $(2,12)=[1.04], p=.383$. Analysis of variance also revealed no statistically significant difference between juror note sheets and REI-A Faith in Intuition (FI), $F(2,12)=[.08]$, $p=.923$ (see Table 14).

Table 14

Analysis of Variance (ANOVA): Note Sheets by Adolescent Processing Mode - REI-A (N = 15)

| Variable | M | $S D$ | F | $p$ |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| REI-A NFC | -- | -- | 1.04 | . 383 |
| Case Notes | 3.25 | . 55 | -- | -- |
| Evidence Notes | 4.11 | -- | -- | -- |
| Victim Experience Notes | 3.25 | . 41 | -- | -- |
| REI-A FI | -- | -- | . 08 | . 923 |
| Case Notes | 3.47 | . 09 | -- | -- |
| Evidence Notes | 3.30 | -- | -- | -- |
| Victim Experience Notes | 3.44 | . 45 | -- | -- |

Note. REI-A = Dependent variable. $N=55$ for REI-A variable items. $N=29$ for Note Sheets. ${ }^{*}=p<.05 .{ }^{* *}=p<.01$.

## Evaluation of Assumptions for Participant Type by Processing Modes

Addressing research question 5: Do teen court youth volunteers possess higher rational processing traits than previous teen court defendants? One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was performed to compare the effect of processing modes (Need For Cognition and Faith in Intuition) on participant type/group (youth juror, previous defendant, and adult volunteer) in youth jurors. The analysis of variance revealed no statistically significant difference between participant type/group and REI-A Need For Cognition (NFC), $F(1,53)=[.34], p=.565$. Further, analysis of variance revealed no statistically significant difference between participant type/group and REI-A Faith in Intuition (FI), F (1, 53) $=[.05], p=.822$ (see Table 15).

## Table 15

Analysis of Variance (ANOVA): Participant Type by Adolescent Processing Mode - REIA ( $N=55$ )

| Variable |  | $M$ | $S D$ | $F$ | $p$ |
| :--- | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| REI-A NFC | Youth Juror | -- | -- | .34 | .565 |
|  | Y.33 | .40 | -- | -- |  |


| Variable | $M$ | $S D$ | $F$ | $p$ |
| ---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Previous Defendant | 3.25 | .56 | -- | -- |
| Adult Volunteer | -- | -- | -- | -- |
| REI-A FI | -- | -- | .05 | .822 |
| Youth Juror | 3.31 | .48 | -- | -- |
| Previous Defendant | 3.34 | .47 | -- | -- |
| Adult Volunteer | -- | -- | -- | -- |

Note. REI-A = Dependent variable. $N=55$ for REI-A variable items. $N=107$ for Participant Type. ${ }^{*}=p<.05 .{ }^{* *}=p<.01$.

## Evaluation of Assumptions for Sex by Processing Modes

Answering research question 7: is there a difference in youth processing traits based upon the sex of the defendant or juror? One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was performed to compare the effect of processing modes (Need For Cognition and Faith in Intuition) on sex in youth jurors. The analysis of variance revealed no statistically significant difference between sex and REI-A Need For Cognition (NFC), $F(1,53)=$ [.16], $p=.694$. Analysis of variance also revealed no statistically significant difference between sex and REI-A Faith in Intuition (FI), $F(1,53)=[.57], p=.453$ (see Table 16).

Table 16
Analysis of Variance (ANOVA): Sex by Adolescent Processing Mode - REI-A ( $N=55$ )

| Variable |  | $M$ | $S D$ | $F$ | $p$ |
| :--- | ---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| REI-A NFC |  | -- | -- | .16 | .694 |
|  | Male | 3.34 | .52 | -- | -- |
| REI-A FI | Female | 3.29 | .39 | -- | -- |
|  |  | -- | -- | .57 | .453 |
|  | Male | 3.38 | .40 | -- | -- |
|  | Female | 3.27 | .51 | -- | -- |

Note. REI-A = Dependent variable. $N=55$ for REI-A variable items. $N=107$ for Sex. * $=p<.05 .{ }^{* *}=p<.01$.

## Evaluation of Assumptions for Race by Processing Modes

Addressing research question 7: is there a difference in youth processing traits based upon the race of the defendant or juror? One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was performed to compare the effect of processing modes (Need For Cognition and Faith in Intuition) on race (White, Black, Asian, Hispanic, and Mixed) in youth jurors. The analysis of variance revealed no statistically significant difference between race and REIA Need For Cognition (NFC), $F(4,50)=[.51], p=.731$. Further, analysis of variance revealed no statistically significant difference between race and REI-A Faith in Intuition (FI), $F(4,50)=[.81], p=.526$ (see Table 17).

Table 17
Analysis of Variance (ANOVA): Identified Race by Adolescent Processing Mode - REI-A ( $N=55$ )

| Variable |  | $M$ | $S D$ | $F$ | $p$ |
| :--- | ---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| REI-A NFC |  | -- | -- | .51 | .731 |
|  | White | 3.24 | .59 | -- | -- |
|  | Black | 3.64 | .08 | -- | -- |
|  | Asian | 3.32 | .37 | -- | -- |
| REI-A FI | Hispanic | 3.24 | .66 | -- | -- |
|  | Mixed | 3.28 | .37 | -- | -- |
|  |  | -- | -- | .81 | .526 |
|  | White | 3.55 | .65 | -- | -- |
|  | Black | 3.49 | .55 | -- | -- |
|  | Asian | 3.25 | .45 | -- | -- |
|  | Hispanic | 3.33 | .39 | -- | -- |
|  | Mixed | 3.16 | .37 | -- | -- |

Note. REI-A = Dependent variable. $N=55$ for REI-A variable items. $N=107$ for Race. * $=p<.05 .{ }^{* *}=p<.01$.

## Evaluation of Assumptions for Verdict by Processing Modes

Addressing whether teen court youth rationally decide verdicts/sentencing, correlation analyses were performed to examine the relationship between the verdict (community service hours) and adolescent processing modes (Need For Cognition and Faith in Intuition) in youth jurors. A Pearson correlation coefficient was computed to assess the linear relationship between verdict (community service hours) and REI-A Need For Cognition (NFC). There was no statistically significant correlation in this assumption. Similarly, a Pearson correlation coefficient was computed to assess the linear relationship between verdict (community service hours) and REI-A Faith in Intuition (FI). The results of the correlation showed no statistically significant correlation in this assumption (see Table 18).

Table 18
Correlations: Age, Verdict/Sentencing, \& Jury Duties by Adolescent \& Adult Processing Mode - REI-A

| Variable | $n$ | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| :--- | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| 1. Age | 90 | - |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 2. Verdict/ Sentencing | 67 | .104 | - |  |  |  |  |  |
| 3. Jury Duties | 56 | .178 | -.185 | - |  |  |  |  |
| 4. REI-A NFC | 55 | $.266^{*}$ | .021 | -.024 | - |  |  |  |
| 5. REI-A FI | 55 | $.272^{*}$ | .040 | -.126 | $.339^{*}$ | - |  |  |
| 6. REI-10 NFC | 12 | -- | -.242 | -- | -- | -- | - |  |
| 7. REI-10 FI | 12 | -- | .257 | -- | -- | -- | -.040 | - |
| Note $*=p<05^{* *}=p<01$ |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

Note. $*=p<.05 . * *=p<.01$.

## Evaluation of Assumptions for Jury Duties (Experience) by Processing Modes

Answering research question 3: Does prior teen court experience as a juror or as a defendant affect the processing traits of teen court youth? A Pearson Correlation analysis was performed to examine the relationship between jury duties (number of sessions
participants served on a jury 1-5) and processing modes (Need For Cognition and Faith in Intuition) in youth jurors. There was no statistically significant correlation in the assumption between jury duties (experience) and REI-A Need For Cognition (NFC). Likewise, jury duties (i.e., experience) and REI-A Faith in Intuition (FI), lacked statistical significance in the correlation assumption-(see Table 18).

## Evaluation of Assumptions for Age by Processing Modes

Addressing research question 7: Is there a difference in youth processing traits based upon the age of the defendant or juror? A Pearson correlation coefficient was computed to assess the linear relationship between age and REI-A Need For Cognition (NFC) in youth jurors. There was a positive correlation between the two variables, r(53) $=.27, \mathrm{p}=.050$. As the age of the youth juror increases, the value of the cognitive processing trait increases. The linear relationship between age and REI-A Faith in Intuition (FI) in youth jurors revealed a positive correlation between the two variables, $r(53)=.27, p=.045$. As the age of the youth juror increases, the value of the experiential processing trait increases (see Table 18).

## Assessing Research Question 1

RQ1: Does the offense of the teen court defendant trigger the rational or the experiential processing traits in youth participants? The One-way ANOVAs between the type of offense and the Need For Cognition (i.e., rational processing mode) variable did not reveal a statistically significant difference. Similarly, the type of offense Faith in Intuition (i.e., experiential processing mode) variable did not show a statistically
significant difference. Thus, the type of offense given to jurors at the beginning of the trial did not trigger the rational or experiential processing mode in youth participants.

## Results of Hypothesis 1

H1: The type of offense heard in teen court is more likely to influence heightened experiential processing traits (i.e., faith in intuition items) than rational processing traits (i.e., need for cognition items). This hypothesis was not supported. The rational nor the experiential processing trait was found to differ based on the youth juror's knowledge of the defendant's offense. It is possible that either differences between the processing modes do not emerge in adolescence or the small sample size of the study did not reveal a difference.

## Assessing Research Question 2

RQ2: Does providing jurors with specifically labeled-Case Notes, Evidence Note Sheets, Victim Experience Notes—notetaking sheets encourage youth to focus on specific factors of the trial? The one-way ANOVAs between the notetaking sheets and youth processing traits did not reveal a statistically significant difference. However, it was noted that youth who referred back to the notetaking sheets provided were mostly those supplied with the case notes sheet. Teens who participated in virtual proceedings were likely to take notes in the chat, though some jurors were simply too distracted to be concerned with taking notes during the trial.

## Results of Hypothesis 2

H2: The notetaking sheets labeled "Case Notes" will prime the jurors to focus on the entire case, including the evidence and the victim-specific details of the trial. This
hypothesis was not statistically supported. Indirectly, this hypothesis can be supported based on the information provided above. The Case Notes sheet focused juror attention to the "facts of the case, including key evidence and witness/victim statements." Participants needed this information most frequently, and the sheet provided a neutral approach to the cases presented compared to the focus on just evidence or a victim when these elements may not be present in each trial. Prior to the pandemic, some teen court programs provided jurors with sheets of paper that they could write on while asking the defendant questions during the trial. The teen court coordinators who did use hard copies of materials found the youth to be more engaged and committed to the process.

## Assessing Research Question 3

RQ3: Does prior teen court experience as a juror or defendant affect the processing traits of teen court youth? The correlation in relation to whether the number of times jurors participated in teen court affected the processing traits were found to be absent. The absence of statistical significance does dissolve the relationship between experience and cognitive processing. However, a Likert-scaled item may be more appropriate to measure the relationship between the processing traits and juror experience accurately. Given the pandemic, the majority of the jurors were repeat participants. Thus, the number of sessions attended might not have accurately gauged cognitive experience.

## Results of Hypothesis 3

H3: Youth participants with previous teen court experience as a defendant, juror, bailiff, or attorney will possess more rational processing traits (i.e., need for cognition items) than those with no previous teen court experience. This prediction was not
statistically supported. However, based on the researcher's observations of teen court proceedings and informal interviews of jurors before, during, and after deliberations, most experienced juror volunteers tended to weigh the facts of the individual cases rather than focusing on how the defendant may have made them feel during the proceedings. Experienced jurors know that their presence serves a purpose, and they seek to fulfill their purpose.

Jurors in a peer jury setting who previously served as a prosecutor or defense attorney tended to ask all the direct and evidence-driven questions. Other jurors often allowed these jurors to lead the discussions and deliberations. Inexperienced jurors tended to ask questions about how the defendant felt or whether the defendant learned from their mistake. New teen court participants also tend to be unaware of what is expected of them. Lastly, new juror participants tried to understand the proceedings more than rationally consider the evidence and witness testimony.

## Assessing Research Question 4

RQ4: Are the verdicts reached in teen court harsher than the sanctions an adult legal professional would issue? The interviews and adult volunteer surveys addressed this question. The interviews revealed the teen court verdicts do require more of the youth. Teen court requires a commitment to the community, complete courses, write letters, and to complete other educational requirements to complete the teen court program. The youth may find the requirements to complete the teen court program harsher than paying a fine or spending a few days in juvenile detention. However, the benefit of the prosocial environment of teen courts in the future of teens, and ultimately a clean record, outweighs
the teen's commitment to work to complete the program. For offenses of assault, battery, or theft, teens can be charged with a felony, and no amount of community service hours can be harsher than the consequences citizens with a felony on their record experience.

## Results of Hypothesis 4

H4: The sanctions provided to their peers in teen court may be more severe than the sanctions the juvenile would have received from an adult jury or the traditional juvenile justice system. This hypothesis was partially supported. The adult jury would have likely found the community-based sanctions were appropriate for the offenses committed by the defendants. The adult volunteer surveys asked whether the verdict the defendant received was ideal. The majority of the adult volunteers found the defendant verdict to be appropriate based on the sentencing guidelines created for the teen court program. However, as mentioned above, teen court sentencing required more effort from the youth than paying a fine, which in the perspective of some youth is in fact more severe than paying the fine. Teen court administrators and adult volunteers found the "sweat equity" required of the teen defendants was more than fair given the teens avoided juvenile detention and a juvenile record that may have altered the future trajectories of the defendants.

## Assessing Research Question 5

RQ5: Do teen court youth volunteers possess higher rational processing traits than previous teen court defendants? The analysis of variance revealed no statistically significant difference between the variables. The one-way ANOVA between the participant type variable and both the Need For Cognition and Faith in Intuition variables
revealed no differences between the youth volunteers and the previous defendants. In serval teen court proceedings, prior defendants experienced multiple teen court sessions, either equal to or greater than the number of sessions that some youth volunteers experienced. After so many sessions, it was difficult and almost impossible for even the teen court administrators and adult volunteers to know which youths were previously a defendant in teen court.

The prosocial interaction between previous defendants and teen court youth volunteers positively affected the previous defendants. Often participation in teen court changed the future trajectories of the previous defendants. In the final testimonies of previous defendants exiting the program were testaments that teen court caused them to reconsider their future and career options. In other teen court programs, teen court defendants are not required to return and participate in teen court. Thus, all the jurors were volunteers, which limited the access for previous defendant involvement in this study. Further comparison is required to determine whether there is a statistically significant difference in heightened processing traits in some participants teen court participants compared to others.

## Results of Hypothesis 5

H5: Teen court youth volunteers will possess more rational processing traits (i.e., need for cognition items) than teen court defendants. The defendant variable was constant because all of the defendants that took the survey selected, "I thought the sentence I received as a defendant was appropriate, so I used this experience to give someone else a fair chance." This prediction was not statistically supported, given the constant
responses, and lack of difference between the variables. However, based on the researcher's observations of teen court proceedings and informal interviews of jurors before, during, and after deliberations, most juror volunteers do their best to consider being uniform with sentences and offenses, showing a rational processing of the matter. Further, the longer the teen volunteers have participated in the teen court proceeding, the more likely the volunteer considers the verdict likely to discourage the defendant from repeating the offense, "learning a lesson," and being rehabilitated. While defendants, on the other hand, tend to be very emotional in response to a new defendant's sentence depending on the proximity to their participation as a juror and their experience as a defendant. Several defendants in proceedings can be heard stating, "This is what was done to me when I was sentenced," or "I was not given a simple sentence like this after my trial, and I did not even... like this defendant."

## Assessing Research Question 6

RQ6: Are teen court youth more attentive to legal or extralegal factors in teen court hearings? Teen court youth are more attentive to the information that is repeated throughout the trial. In comparison, the items considered legal factors are much shorter than the consideration of the extralegal factors. While participants noted the presence of legal and extralegal factors, extralegal items such as whether the defendant apologized or had school-related difficulties were found to be significant in determining the verdict. Likewise, whether the victim was injured and whether the defense attorney recommended a verdict were also significant. Based on the findings, it can thus be assumed that teen court youth are equally attentive to legal and extralegal factors in teen court hearings.

## Results of Hypothesis 6

H6: Participants with experiential processing traits are more likely to use extralegal factors in their sentencing decision than those with rational processing traits. This hypothesis is partially supported because teen court programs are structured to humanize defendants and create positive peer interaction between previous defendants and youth volunteers. Most of the information presented in teen court sessions was extralegal. While the offense and details of the event are presented in teen court, jurors and attorneys also focused on the grades, extracurricular activities, and in-home responsibilities to consider the appropriate verdict for the defendant. The extralegal traits were appropriately used to mitigate the sentence the defendant may have received but for a lack of remorse and the absence of the extralegal factors. Thus, the processing trait that is dominant in youth during teen court sessions does not entirely drive the importance of certain information presented during trials. Regression analyses are required to determine whether participant type and extralegal factors are affected by youth processing traits.

## Assessing Research Question 7

RQ7: Is there a difference in youth processing traits based on the age, sex, and race of the defendant or juror? The correlation between the age of the youth jurors and processing traits revealed a significant low degree (i.e., correlation with a value below .29) positive correlation between the variables. As the age of the youth juror increases, the presence of cognitive and experiential processing traits increases. The experiential, emotion-based processing traits seemed to possess a greater degree of
significance than the rational processing traits. The age of the youth juror can determine the active processing trait.

Overall, twice as many females than males participated in the study, which is a fair reflection of the population. The one-way ANOVA between the sex variable and the need for cognition variable showed a lack of difference between the variables. Likewise, the one-way ANOVA between the sex variable and the faith in intuition variable showed a lack of difference between the variables.

The one-way analysis of variance between the identified race variable and the need for cognition variable showed a lack of difference between the variables. The oneway analysis of variance between the identified race variable and the faith in intuition variable showed a lack of difference between the variables. Due to the program's access, there was a reflection of Eastern and Southern Asians that does not image that of society's racial distribution.

## Results of Hypothesis 7

H7: The older the youth participant, the more likely they will rely on rational processing traits (i.e., need for cognition items). There were low degrees of correlational significance when measuring the relationships between age and the processing traits. In consideration of observations and discussions held with teen court youth, this hypothesis can be proven true with the space for outliers. Though the age of youth increases the likelihood of decision-making maturity and the understanding of right from wrong, the experiences of older youth can cause them to be more sympathetic and considerate of the defendant, namely in speeding cases. Alternatively, the lack of experience can cause
participants to be focused on the facts and a solution to the problem with little consideration given to gut feelings or personal beliefs. Processing traits tend to complement each other, and overall older youth seemed to be more willing to prefer complex problem-solving to prevent boredom and redundancy of the proceedings.

Male participants will have a more significant statistical variation in their sentencing decision depending on the active processing traits than their female counterparts. This hypothesis requires a higher level of statistical analysis to be proven. The one-way ANOVA revealed a lack of difference between sex and the processing variables. This hypothesis should be reconsidered in a population that encourages an equal number of participants based on sex. However, teen court proceedings overall tend to have a higher population of males as the defendants and a higher presence of females as youth volunteers.

## Summary

This chapter presented the outcomes of the qualitative and quantitative analyses of the study. Demographics and descriptive statistics included frequencies, valid percentages, means, standard deviations, reliability coefficients, and skewness. The assumption tests were listed and discussed for each analysis in dedicated sections. The chapter ended with an analysis of the research questions and hypotheses. The next chapter summarizes the study.

## CHAPTER V

## CONCLUSION

The overall purpose of this study was to understand the cognitive processing tendencies of teen court jurors, which include defendants and volunteers and adult volunteers. This study used mixed methods to examine teen court participants' cognitive processing tendencies and decision-making in Florida and Texas. The mixed methods include interviews, observations, and a posttest survey of youth and adult volunteers in teen courts. This approach allowed for an in-depth understanding of youth and adults when considering verdicts and sentencing practices in a teen court setting. This chapter includes the interpretation of the study's findings, limitations of the study, implications for practice, and recommendations for further research.

## Interpretation of Qualitative Findings

Like other diversion programs, the teen court rests on the weight of multiple factors. Engagement, knowledge, and commitment appear to address the goals and the importance of such programs being widely available to all youth populations. The development of most teen court programs continues to reduce teen crime rates that the early teen courts reported in studies like Rothstein (1987). One of the most important aspects of the teen court is the engagement of the family and the community to prevent recidivism and other offenses. The family members involved in the teen court process received apologies (most defendants were required to openly apologize to the parent or guardian present for their trial). For some youths, the testimony of their parent(s) helped the jury to actualize the remorse shown in the trial. Several adult volunteers outside of the
judge position were, in fact, the parents of previous defendants and volunteers who sought to maintain contact with the teen court and the coordinators. Unfortunately, the voluntary nature of teen court had many teen courts hit low records of participant involvement and the need to recruit teen and adult volunteers as youth volunteers were graduating and adult volunteers were relocating in search of new opportunities in the changing economy.

In comparison to other studies, youth sanctions were not found to be more punitive than traditional court proceedings on the surface, as Butts and Buck (2000), Forgays et al. (2004), and Harrison et al. (2001) have found. Instead, the punitive nature of the teen court sanctions depended on the perceived remorsefulness of the defendant during trials. Defendants who appeared to be engaged, owned up to the wrong, or seemed naïve to the offense were given lighter sentences, at times below the minimum guidelines for their offense, when compared to defendants who would not admit to their mistakes and appeared in court as if the proceedings were forced rather than voluntary (Harrison et al., 2001). Similar to Butts and Buck (2000), most teen courts require all defendants to attend a life skills-based course in addition to courses or packets designed to deter future crime and provide other opportunities and alternatives to crime.

Confirming the findings of Forgays et al. (2004), all the defendants who completed the study found their sanctions fair. However, observations and statements made by previous defendants may find this to be incorrect depending on the proximity to serving on a jury and the sentence the defendant received in their trial. Further, Forgays et al. (2004) confirmed the youth jurors' ability to follow the court's procedures and
sentencing guidelines when deciding sanctions. The youth also respected the severe nature of proceedings, though the pandemic created an informal atmosphere that required some readjustment once the youth returned to in-person proceedings.

The requirement for teen court programs to adhere to state statutes and sentencing guidelines formed the structure for the majority of the teen court programs; in this majority of the observed programs defaulted to the adult judge model with some influences of the peer jury model. Like the Logalbo and Callahan (2001) study, the youth involved in teen court overall had positive exposure to the legal field. They were encouraged to pursue careers in the legal field or simply a career outside their family's norm. The final open testimonies of previous defendants in some courts allowed the teens to take self-evaluations and consider their personal growth from their involvement in teen court and present hopes for the future.

The effects of evidence were not measured as heavily as expected because though defendants are free to bring in evidence, and prosecutors and defense attorneys can present the items, the timeliness of proceedings, namely during the pandemic, limited these alternatives for most teen court programs. A few programs took the virtual setting as an opportunity to take advantage of the shared screen features to present remakes of accidents and show images of the scene. Others used additional creative options in the presentation of their cases. Regardless of the evidence presented in some cases, the unconscious biases of sentencing certain defendants harsher than others were present when some defendants were given maximums when their attitudes and presence were similar to that of defendants who received lesser sentences for the same offense.

The perceptual shorthand of Focal Concerns Theory (Spohn \& Holleran, 2000; Steffensmeier et al., 1998) appeared relatively small; however, on a few occasions, certain defendants were treated harsher than others by the judge when these defendants were perceived to be different from other defendants. The presence of the Attribution Theory, the buffering of the punishment or sentences when applied to juvenile delinquency, appeared to be displayed in the presence or absence of remorse in the defendants' testimony. The remorseful defendants who took accountability for behaviors in actions within their control received lighter sentences. The defendants who appeared to lack remorse, self-control, or accountability for their actions were given maximum sentences.

The defendants who perceived the need to fit into society and achieve but for their mistake showed greater levels of remorse than the defendants still in a perceived rebellious or jaded stage of life. Fortunately, the role of the Formal Legal Perspective was minimized by the required offense-based sentencing guidelines the teen courts developed to create uniformity in teen court sentencing. In each teen court session, the decision of the sentence came after evidence was presented, then deliberations took place. There were never deliberations directly following a statement of the offense without presenting mitigating factors.

## Interpretation of Analytical Findings

The consideration of teen court programs on a global scale found that the defendants were generally of a younger population. However, with the backlog of cases due to the pandemic, the courts observed older participants because the offense was
completed over a year before the trial in teen court. The type of offense seemed based on a regional population rather than a reflection of the global scale of offenses. In more affluent areas where teens had access to vehicles, the majority of the offenses were traffic related. In regions closer to the inner city, offenses were related to assaults and possession of vapes or drug paraphernalia.

Similar to Bright et al. (2014), most adult and youth participants were female. However, this study showed a high population of East and South Asian participants rather than African American or White participants. Confirming and contrasting the findings in Greene and Weber (2008), the teens in this study recalled whether specific evidence or mitigating details were presented during trials. The youth jurors' ability to recall the presentation of specific evidence or mitigating details were noted in the descriptives for the "present during the trial" and "importance during the trial" variable items, noting the presence of the information or evidence and the importance of the details in deciding sanctions. Like Greene and Weber (2008), the youth in this study allocated greater weight to extralegal factors when deciding on sanctions.

Unlike previous studies, this study examined the dual mode processing system in youth through the use of Cognitive-experiential self-theory (CEST) and RationalExperiential Inventory Assessments. The Pearson correlation revealed cognitive and experiential traits were triggered more often in youth by age during the teen court process. Youth seemed to be able to balance the two processing modes with and without the assistance of adult volunteers during deliberations (Blakemore \& Robbins, 2012).

## Limitations of the study

Unlike other evaluations of teen court programs, this study was conducted once. Generally, the evaluation of teen court programs extends beyond a year and has several phases, allowing for a realistic image of the cases and the juveniles involved in the program. Furthermore, the study occurred during a worldwide pandemic (Covid-19 or Corona Virus), rising racial tension, and the transferring of a president (political power), which affected the availability of teen court schedules and the number of teen court participants. The targeted population significantly decreased because of the fewer teen court participants since the beginning of the pandemic and the sparse availability of cases to be heard during face-to-face teen court sessions.

Given the ongoing nature of the worldwide pandemic, most teen court programs have discontinued face-to-face proceedings. Some programs have closed since the beginning of the pandemic's rapid spread in March 2020 and decided not to resume sessions until further notice. Given the limited face-to-face contact during the pandemic, several programs held virtual teen court programs. Though the virtual proceedings fulfill the assignment of sanctions, the whole teen court experience of wardrobe requirements, adult volunteer interactions, and proceedings in an actual courtroom may affect the youth's decision-making.

The study's small sample size presents a possibility that the model may overfit the data, eliminating or reducing the generalizability of the findings to the teen court program population. However, the inclusion of multiple states and statutory requirements of
proceedings and multiple teen court programs creates a generalizability of the findings to other states and similar teen court programs internationally.

## Implications for practice

Few studies have evaluated the effectiveness of teen court programs, and the findings regarding deterrence, the reduction of juvenile recidivism, and delinquency are inconsistent. At issue, the measures used to evaluate program effectiveness have not been considered on uniform definitions of recidivism reduction. Some forms of delinquency are not considered recidivism if the juvenile commits an offense that is different from the offense that the teen court jury sentenced. This study evaluated the decision-making abilities of youth compared to the adults who often volunteer to assist in teen court proceedings. Based on youth juror feedback, this study noted the importance of extralegal factors during teen court proceedings. Youth jurors and previous defendants can manipulate their processing modes to achieve needed outcomes in teen court proceedings. However, finding a way to engage youth to take advantage of alternative teen court settings must be done to allow more youth access to teen court programs and lessen disproportionate communities of youth with juvenile and sometimes adult records before reaching adulthood.

Mental health and youth in teen court seemed to be an unspoken concern among some judges and adult volunteers. The teen court makes counseling and other services available to teens to avoid insurance use and possibly the disclosure of the parent's work and others. However, few youths and their families take advantage of mental health counselors. There must be a practical approach to engage teens long enough to have them
take advantage of mental health services. At issue is how coordinators and volunteers note the need for mental health services and how to implement the services for those in need. There is a need for youth to gain access to both teen court services and teen court proceedings. Thus, disposition through teen court ought to be more widely available, given the opportunity for courses and proceedings virtually.

## Suggestions for Future Study

A 2017 systematic review of teen court study evaluations found that program participation criteria and referral sources varied across the studies. Most of the reported recidivism rates in the studies had definitions and measurements of recidivism that were inconsistent across studies. Differences in participation criteria and source of referral sources are assumed to suggest that some programs serve youth whom the juvenile justice system would otherwise serve. In contrast, other programs face in-school disciplinary measures (Cotter \& Evans, 2017). The researchers suggested that research on the teen court has been minimal, and additional studies using robust study designs are needed to draw conclusions about the impact of teen court. The researchers provided terminology for distinguishing between teen court programs based on participation, referral criteria, and standards for assessing recidivism (Cotter \& Evans, 2017).

Future studies should evaluate the interaction of youth jurors in the decisionmaking process to evaluate the impact peer influence and pressure has on decisionmaking. It is recommended that similarly organized teen court models be compared to gather more accurate and less approximate effectiveness of the programs in reducing targeted youth recidivism and encouraging deterrence. Teen court programs would
benefit from a study using CEST to compare the efficiency of the teen court program types. Also, a study evaluating the relative sentencing patterns of teen courts compared to the sentencing patterns of juvenile justice systems would benefit the effectiveness of teen court programs. Finally, a study that captures the impact of the defendant's remorse and attractiveness in sentencing may address an area that has not been measured.

## Summary

This chapter summarized the study. The purpose of the study was restated along with the importance and the need for the study. An interpretation of the qualitative findings was provided within the 11 themes created from the interviews of teen court coordinators and adult volunteers while considering previous study findings. A summary of the statistical significance of the study followed the qualitative findings/themes. Details of the study's limitations and an explanation for the weaknesses of the results was provided, as well as the generalizability of the study. This chapter then discussed the implications for practice, detailing the meaning and importance of the findings to the field. The chapter ended with a discussion of recommendations for further research in the topic area.

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## APPENDIX I

## Youth Assent Form

# OF STUDY: COGNITIVE-EXPERIENTIAL SELF-THEORY: AN ANALYSIS OF TEEN COURT DECISION-MAKING BY YOUTH JURORS AND ADULT VOLUNTEERS 

PROTOCOL NUMBER: 2020-122

## DEAR STUDY PARTICIPANT:

My name is Colette B. Harris. I am a fourth-year juvenile justice doctoral student in the Department of Justice Studies at Prairie View A\&M University, Texas. I am seeking your participation in a research study. You were selected as a possible participant because you are serving as a youth juror in a Florida or Texas teen court program. Please read this form carefully and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to participate.

## PURPOSE OF THIS STUDY:

The purpose of this study is to understand how teen jurors deliberate and decide on a verdict. This study will measure how youth jurors make their sentencing decisions.

## PROCEDURES:

If you agree to participate in this study, you will attend a scheduled teen court session. Then, you will deliberate with other teen jurors as a member of the jury. Once you complete these tasks, you will be asked to complete a brief survey about your decisions
and demographics (e.g., gender, age, race/ethnicity). The survey will be given either paper format or digital format and will take about 30 to 45 minutes.

## CONFIDENTIALITY:

Your responses will be confidential. Your decision to participate in this study will not affect your current or future relations with teen court. You are not required to participate in the study, and you will not be asked the reason(s) for not participating.

## BENEFITS OF TAKING PART IN THE STUDY:

Your participation will help policymakers to address the gaps in knowledge to help inform funding decisions related to teen court services.

## PAYMENT OR INCENTIVE:

You will be able to select from snacks, books, journals, and pens to reward you for the time spent taking the survey.

## CONTACT INFORMATION:

If you have questions about the study, please call me at (832)786-1404 or e-mail me at charris76@pvamu.edu. You are encouraged to contact the faculty advisor, Dr. Sesha Kethineni, Department of Justice Studies, Prairie View A\&M University, (936)261-5236, srkethineni@pvamu.edu. You can request a copy of this form for your records. If you have any questions about your rights as a participant in this research, or if you feel you have been placed at risk, you can contact Donna Pulkrabek, Director of Research Compliance, IRB Office. She can be reached at (djpulkrabek@pvamu.edu or
research@pvamu.edu) or in the Office for Research and Graduate Studies, P.O. Box 519;
MS 2800, Prairie View, Texas 77446, Phone: (936)261-1588, Fax: (936)261-3528.

Please review the statement below and place your initials next to one answer choice.

## YOUTH ASSENT STATEMENT:

I have reviewed this form and my parent or guardian has completed a consent form. I understand that I can stop participating in the study at any time. I understand that I can choose not to participate in the study. I understand that my information will not be connected to my survey answers. I am voluntarily agreeing to participate in this study.
$\qquad$ I agree to participate in the research project titled, "Cognitive-Experiential Self-Theory: An Analysis of Teen Court Decision-Making by Youth Jurors and Adult Volunteers."
$\qquad$ I DO NOT agree to participate in the participate in the research project titled, "Cognitive-Experiential Self-Theory: An Analysis of Teen Court Decision-Making by Youth Jurors and Adult Volunteers."

## Parental Consent Form

TITLE OF STUDY: COGNITIVE-EXPERIENTIAL SELF-THEORY: AN ANALYSIS OF TEEN COURT DECISION-MAKING BY YOUTH JURORS AND ADULT VOLUNTEERS

PROTOCOL NUMBER: 2020-122

## DEAR PARENT OR GUARDIAN OF THE PARTICIPANT:

My name is Colette B. Harris. I am fourth-year juvenile justice doctoral student in the Department of Justice Studies at Prairie View A\&M University, Texas. I am seeking your permission for your child to participate in a research study. Your child was selected as a possible participant because he/she is serving as a youth juror in a Florida or Texas teen court program.

Please read this form carefully and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to allow your child to participate.

## PURPOSE OF THIS STUDY:

The purpose of this study is to understand how teen jurors deliberate and decide on a verdict. This study will measure how youth jurors make their sentencing decisions.

## PROCEDURES:

If you give consent and your child agrees to participate in this study, he/she will attend a scheduled teen court session. Then, your child will deliberate with other teen jurors as a member of the jury. Once he/she completes these tasks, your child will be asked to
complete a brief survey about their decisions and demographics (e.g., gender, age, race/ethnicity). The survey will be given either paper format or digital format and will take about 30 to 45 minutes.

## CONFIDENTIALITY:

Your child's responses will be confidential. Your child's decision whether to participate in this study will not affect his/her current or future relations with teen court. Your child is not required to participate in the study and your child will not be asked the reasons for not participating.

## BENEFITS OF TAKING PART IN THE STUDY:

Your child's participation will help policymakers to address the gaps in knowledge to help inform funding decisions related to teen court services.

## PAYMENT OR INCENTIVE:

Your child will be able to select from snacks, books, journals, and pens to compensate for the time spent taking the survey.

## CONTACT INFORMATION:

If you have questions about the study, please call me at (832)786-1404 or e-mail me at charris76@pvamu.edu. You are encouraged to contact the faculty advisor, Dr. Sesha Kethineni, Department of Justice Studies, Prairie View A\&M University, (936)261-5236, srkethineni@pvamu.edu. You can request a copy of this form for your records.

If you have any questions about your rights as a participant in this research, or if you feel you have been placed at risk, you can contact Donna Pulkrabek, Director of Research Compliance, IRB Office. She can be reached at (djpulkrabek@pvamu.edu or research@pvamu.edu) or in the Office for Research and Graduate Studies, P.O. Box 519; MS 2800, Prairie View, Texas 77446, Phone: (936)261-1588, Fax: (936)261-3528.

## PARENTAL CONSENT STATEMENT:

I, $\qquad$ give permission for
my child, $\qquad$ to participate in the research project entitled, "Cognitive-Experiential Self-Theory: An Analysis of Teen Court Decision-Making by Youth Jurors and Adult Volunteers." The study has been explained to me and my questions answered to my satisfaction. I understand that my child's right to withdraw from participating or to refuse to participate will be respected and that his/her responses and identity will be kept confidential. I give this consent voluntarily.

Parent/Guardian Signature: $\qquad$
Signature Date: $\qquad$

## Adult Juror Consent Form

# OF STUDY: COGNITIVE-EXPERIENTIAL SELF-THEORY: AN ANALYSIS OF TEEN COURT DECISION-MAKING BY YOUTH JURORS AND ADULT VOLUNTEERS 

PROTOCOL NUMBER: 2020-122

## DEAR STUDY PARTICIPANT:

My name is Colette B. Harris. I am a fourth-year juvenile justice doctoral student in the Department of Justice Studies at Prairie View A\&M University, Texas. I am seeking your participation in a research study. You were selected as a possible participant because you are serving as a youth juror in a Florida or Texas teen court program. Please read this form carefully and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to participate.

## PURPOSE OF THIS STUDY:

The purpose of this study is to understand how teen jurors deliberate and decide on a verdict. This study will measure how youth jurors make their sentencing decisions.

## PROCEDURES:

If you agree to participate in this study, you will attend a scheduled teen court session. Then, you will deliberate with other teen jurors as a member of the jury. Once you complete these tasks, you will be asked to complete a brief survey about your decisions and demographics (e.g., gender, age, race/ethnicity). The survey will be given either paper format or digital format and will take about 30 to 45 minutes.

## CONFIDENTIALITY:

Your responses will be confidential. Your decision whether to participate in this study will not affect your current or future relations with teen court. You are not obligated to participate in the study, and you will not be asked the reason(s) for not participating.

## BENEFITS OF TAKING PART IN THE STUDY:

Your participation will help policymakers to address the gaps in knowledge to help inform funding decisions related to teen court services.

## PAYMENT OR INCENTIVE:

You will be able to select from snacks, books, journals, and pens to compensate for the time spent taking the survey.

## CONTACT INFORMATION:

If you have questions about the study, please call me at (832)786-1404 or e-mail me at charris76@pvamu.edu. You are encouraged to contact the faculty advisor, Dr. Sesha Kethineni, Department of Justice Studies, Prairie View A\&M University, (936)261-5236, srkethineni@pvamu.edu. You can request a copy of this form for your records. If you have any questions about your rights as a participant in this research, or if you feel you have been placed at risk, you can contact Donna Pulkrabek, Director of Research Compliance, IRB Office. She can be reached at (djpulkrabek@pvamu.edu or research@pvamu.edu) or in the Office for Research and Graduate Studies, P.O. Box 519; MS 2800, Prairie View, Texas 77446, Phone: (936)261-1588, Fax: (936)261-3528.

## PARTICIPANT'S CONSENT:

By signing below, you are stating that you have read the above information, and you are giving consent to participate in the study.

Name of the Participant:
Signature of the Participant:

# Teen Court Administrator \& Adult Volunteer Interview Consent Form 

TITLE OF STUDY: COGNITIVE-EXPERIENTIAL SELF-THEORY: AN ANALYSIS OF TEEN COURT DECISION-MAKING BY YOUTH JURORS AND ADULT VOLUNTEERS

PROTOCOL NUMBER: 2020-122

## DEAR STUDY PARTICIPANT:

My name is Colette B. Harris. I am a fourth-year juvenile justice doctoral student in the Department of Justice Studies at Prairie View A\&M University, Texas. I invite you to participate in a research study that will measure teen court juror verdicts and processing traits. You were selected as a possible participant because you are the teen court administrator or an adult volunteer in a Florida or Texas teen court program. Please read this form carefully and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to participate.

## KEY INFORMATION ABOUT THIS RESEARCH STUDY:

The following is a summary of this study to help you decide whether to be a part of this study. More detailed information is listed later on in this form.

This study aims to measure sanctions teen court jurors provided to their peers.
Specifically, whether the sanctions are greater than the sanctions the juvenile would have received from an adult in the traditional juvenile justice system. You will be asked to complete a 10-question interview via phone or video call. I expect that you will be in this interview for about 15 to 20 minutes.

## STUDY PURPOSE:

This study aims to measure whether teen court jurors and adult volunteers have more rational or emotional processing traits. Furthermore, to test whether the evidence, details about the offense, or details about the defendant impact the verdict. Finally, this study will measure whether participant processing traits vary by age, sex, race, and experience.

## PROCEDURES FOR THE STUDY:

If you agree to be in the study, you will do the following:
State your interest in participating in the study. Decide whether you prefer a phone interview or a video-based interview. If you select phone, sign this consent form, and provide the best number, day and time to reach you. If you select the video call option, provide the best day and time to reach you and I will send the video call invite to you via email.

## RISKS AND INCONVENIENCES:

The study has minimal risk, and the risks are no greater than those encountered in everyday life.

## CONFIDENTIALITY:

Your responses will be confidential. There will not be a master list with participants' personal information. The records of this study will be kept confidential. In all reports resulting from this study, I will not include any information that will make it possible to identify you as a participant.

## VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION:

Taking part in this study is voluntary. You may choose not to take part or may leave the study at any time. Leaving the study will not result in any penalty. Your decision to participate in this study will not affect your current or future relations with teen court.

## BENEFITS OF TAKING PART IN THE STUDY:

There are no direct benefits to participation in this study. Your participation will help policymakers address the gaps in knowledge to help inform funding decisions related to teen court services.

## PAYMENT OR INCENTIVE:

There is no compensation for completing the interview.

## CONTACT INFORMATION:

If you have questions about the study, please call me at (832)786-1404 or e-mail me at charris76@pvamu.edu. You are encouraged to contact the faculty advisor, Dr. Sesha Kethineni, Department of Justice Studies, Prairie View A\&M University, (936)261-5236, srkethineni@pvamu.edu. You can request a copy of this form for your records. If you have any questions about your rights as a participant in this research, or if you feel you have been placed at risk, you can contact Donna Pulkrabek, Director of Research Compliance, IRB Office. She can be reached at (djpulkrabek@pvamu.edu or research@pvamu.edu) or in the Office for Research and Graduate Studies, P.O. Box 519; MS 2800, Prairie View, Texas 77446, Phone: (936)261-1588, Fax: (936)261-3528.

## PARTICIPANT'S CONSENT:

By signing below, you are stating that you have read the above information, and you are giving consent to participate in the study.

Name of the Participant:
Signature of the Participant:

## Adult Volunteer Survey Consent Form

TITLE OF STUDY: COGNITIVE-EXPERIENTIAL SELF-THEORY: AN ANALYSIS OF TEEN COURT DECISION-MAKING BY YOUTH JURORS AND ADULT VOLUNTEERS

PROTOCOL NUMBER: 2020-122

## DEAR STUDY PARTICIPANT:

My name is Colette B. Harris. I am a fourth-year juvenile justice doctoral student in the Department of Justice Studies at Prairie View A\&M University, Texas. I invite you to participate in a research study that will measure teen court juror verdicts and processing traits. You were selected as a possible participant because you are one of the adult volunteers in a Florida or Texas teen court program. Please read this form carefully and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to participate.

## KEY INFORMATION ABOUT THIS RESEARCH STUDY:

The following is a summary of this study to help you decide whether to be a part of this study. More detailed information is listed later on in this form.

This study aims to measure sanctions teen court jurors provided to their peers.
Specifically, whether the sanctions are greater than the sanctions the juvenile would have received from an adult in the traditional juvenile justice system. You will be asked to complete a 22-question survey after a teen court session. I expect that you will be in this research study for about 30 to 45 minutes.

## STUDY PURPOSE:

This study aims to measure the processing traits of teen court jurors and adult volunteers. Furthermore, to test whether the evidence, details about the offense, or details about the defendant impact the verdict. Finally, the study will measure whether participant processing traits vary by age, sex, race, and experience.

## PROCEDURES FOR THE STUDY:

If you agree to be in the study, you will do the following:
State your interest in participating in the study. Decide whether you prefer a paper copy of the survey or a digital copy. If you select paper, sign this consent form, complete the study, and return the completed survey. If you select the digital option, pull up the link provided, and the Qualtrics version of the survey will come up, check the box stating you reviewed this form, and continue to complete the survey.

## RISKS AND INCONVENIENCES:

The study has minimal risk, and the risks are no greater than those encountered in everyday life.

## CONFIDENTIALITY:

Your responses will be confidential. There will not be a master list with participants' personal information. The records of this study will be kept private. In all reports resulting from this study, I will not include any information that will make it possible to identify you as a participant. Research records will be stored securely, and only the researcher and faculty advisor will have access to the records.

## VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION:

Taking part in this study is voluntary. You may choose not to take part or may leave the study at any time. Leaving the study will not result in any penalty. Your decision to participate in this study will not affect your current or future relations with teen court.

## BENEFITS OF TAKING PART IN THE STUDY:

There are no direct benefits to participation in this study. Your participation will help policymakers address the gaps in knowledge to help inform funding decisions related to teen court services.

## PAYMENT OR INCENTIVE:

There is no compensation for completing the survey.

## CONTACT INFORMATION:

If you have questions about the study, please call me at (832)786-1404 or e-mail me at charris76@pvamu.edu. You are encouraged to contact the faculty advisor, Dr. Sesha Kethineni, Department of Justice Studies, Prairie View A\&M University, (936)261-5236, srkethineni@pvamu.edu. You can request a copy of this form for your records. If you have any questions about your rights as a participant in this research, or if you feel you have been placed at risk, you can contact Donna Pulkrabek, Director of Research Compliance, IRB Office. She can be reached at (djpulkrabek@pvamu.edu or research@pvamu.edu) or in the Office for Research and Graduate Studies, P.O. Box 519; MS 2800, Prairie View, Texas 77446, Phone: (936)261-1588, Fax: (936)261-3528.

## PARTICIPANT'S CONSENT:

By signing below, you are stating that you have read the above information, and you are giving consent to participate in the study.

Name of the Participant:
Signature of the Participant:

## APPENDIX II

## Interview Questions

1. How many teen court programs have you worked with at this time?
2. Was there a difference in the program procedures and requirements?
3. How are the teen court sanctions different from those in the traditional juvenile justice system?
4. What teen court model have you had the most experience with at this time?
a. Adult judge
b. Youth judge
c. Youth tribunal
d. Peer jury
5. Are sanctions different in the varying teen court models?
6. How are jurors placed onto specific cases?
7. Do the jurors receive realistic materials?
a. Juror verdict form
b. Jury instructions
c. Notepad for notes
8. What types of evidentiary items are displayed for jurors in teen courts?
9. Does the defendant submit mitigating information?
a. School performance
b. Organization/extracurricular involvement
c. Church/religious affiliation
d. Economic difficulties, etc.
10. What verdicts/sentences are generally rendered in teen courts?
a. By offense
b. By age
c. By gender/sex

## APPENDIX III

## Case Notes

Please use this sheet to write down the facts of the case, including key evidence, and witness/victim statements.

## Evidence Notes Sheet

Please use this sheet to write down the evidence (image descriptions, testimony statements, and defendant character information involving school grades and extracurricular activities, community service, and family relationships) in the case.

## Victim Experience Notes

Please use this sheet to write down information about the injury caused, and any loss of the property.

## Jury Instructions

Will be based on the individual offense(s) and provided by the teen court coordinator.

## Verdict/Sentencing (Confidential Remedies) Form

We, the peer jury of the $\qquad$ Teen

Court, having heard the statement of the teen offender and having questioned the teen and heard other statements presented, find the following restorative justice remedies to be in the best interests of the teen, the parent/guardian, the victim and the community.

Juvenile Name: $\qquad$

Case\#: $\qquad$ T.C. Offense(s): $\qquad$ Court Date:

Offense(s): $\qquad$
_[___]_ hours of community service.
Location: $\qquad$

Contact Person: $\qquad$

Phone Number: $\qquad$
_[\$ $\qquad$ Restitution to: $\qquad$
_[__] Write a word essay concerning the offense entitled: $\qquad$
$\qquad$
_[__] Write a word apology to: $\qquad$
_[__]_ Verbally apologize to: $\qquad$
_[__] Counseling: $\qquad$
_[__] Serve as a Juror on $\qquad$ , at $\qquad$ p.m. at the $\qquad$ Teen Court.
_[__] You must return to provide proof of completion of service to Teen Court on
$\qquad$
_[__] Other: $\qquad$
$\qquad$
$\qquad$

## APPENDIX IV

## Youth Participant Survey

This survey is used for a dissertation project, and your name is to match the assent and consent forms, and to include you in the raffles. Your response will not be used against you, and your names will not be used beyond the two mentioned above.

## Name

$\qquad$
Please select one answer choice for questions $1 \mathbf{- 2}$, and 5. Please fill in your answer to questions 3 \& 4 .

1. What is your sex? $\quad \square$ Male $\square$ Female
2. What is your identified race? $\square$ White or European American $\quad \square$ Black or African American $\quad \square$ American Indian or Alaska Native $\square$ AsianNative Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
$\square$ Hispanic, Spanish or Latin

American $\quad \square$ Mixed/Multiracial
$\square$ Other, please specify $\qquad$
3. How old are you? $\qquad$
4. What is your current grade level in school? $\qquad$
5. If you were given a notetaking sheet, please select one of the choices below.

My sheet to take notes was labeled:
$\square$ Case Notes $\quad \square$ Evidence Note Sheet $\quad \square$ Victim Experience Notes
6. If you did not answer question 5, please go to question 7. What are some of the details you wrote on your note sheet? $\qquad$
$\qquad$

## Please check "yes" or "no" for questions 7-9.

7. Has someone ever taken something from you without first asking your permission?

Yes $\qquad$ No $\qquad$
8. Has anyone close to you ever had their belongings taken from them without their permission? Yes $\qquad$ No $\qquad$
9. Have you ever taken someone else's belongings without their permission?

Yes $\qquad$ No $\qquad$

## Please fill in your answer to questions 10-13.

10. What is the defendant's offense(s)? $\qquad$
$\qquad$
11. What is the defendant's sentence? $\qquad$
$\qquad$
12. What was the most important thing you heard during the trial that helped you in your sentencing decision? $\qquad$
$\qquad$
13. What did you want to achieve by giving the defendant this sentence? $\qquad$
$\qquad$
$\qquad$

## Please check "yes" or "no" for each item in question 14.

14. Were any of the following presented during the trial?

Yes $\qquad$ No $\qquad$ The defendant said he/she was sorry

Yes $\qquad$ No $\qquad$ The defendant has had school-related difficulties

Yes $\qquad$ No $\qquad$ The defendant already reimbursed the victim

Yes $\qquad$ No $\qquad$ The defendant already received punishment from school or family

Yes $\qquad$ No $\qquad$ The defendant has shown school-related improvements

Yes $\qquad$ No $\qquad$ The defendant caused the physical injury

Yes $\qquad$ No $\qquad$ The defendant damaged property

Yes $\qquad$ No $\qquad$ The defendant has used drugs or alcohol

Yes $\qquad$ No $\qquad$ Information about the defendant's age

Yes $\qquad$ No $\qquad$ Information about the defendant's gender

Yes $\qquad$ No $\qquad$ The defendant is involved in extracurricular activities, including sports, clubs, jobs, etc.

Yes $\qquad$ No $\qquad$ There have been improvements in the defendant's family relations

Yes ___ No ___ Sentencing recommendations of the prosecutor
Yes $\qquad$ No $\qquad$ Sentencing recommendations of the defense attorney

Yes $\qquad$ No $\qquad$ The defendant had family-related difficulties

## Please select one answer choice for question 15.

15. If you were previously a defendant, please answer the following question. If not, please go on to Question 13. Which of the following statements best describes how you feel about being a juror in this case? Put a check next to that statement. Only one checkmark, please.
$\qquad$ I thought the sentence I received as a defendant was appropriate, so I used this experience to give someone else a fair chance.
$\qquad$ I thought the sentence I received as a defendant was not appropriate, but I used this experience to give someone else a fair chance.
$\qquad$ I thought the sentence I received as a defendant was appropriate, but I used this experience to retaliate anyway.
$\qquad$ I thought the sentence I received as a defendant was not appropriate, so I used this experience to retaliate.

Please select one answer choice for each item in questions 16-18.
16. In deciding a sentence for this case, how important were each of the following things?

|  | (1) <br> Not at all <br> important | (2) <br> Slightly <br> important | (3) <br> Moderately <br> important | (4) <br> Quite <br> important | (5) <br> Extremely <br> important |
| :--- | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| The fact that the <br> defendant said he/she <br> was sorry |  |  |  |  |  |
| The fact that the <br> defendant has had <br> school-related difficulties |  |  |  |  |  |
| The fact that the <br> defendant already <br> reimbursed the victim |  |  |  |  |  |
| The fact that the <br> defendant already <br> received punishment <br> from school or family |  |  |  |  |  |


| The fact that the <br> defendant has shown <br> school-related <br> improvements |  |  |  |  |  |
| :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- |
| The fact that the <br> defendant caused the <br> physical injury |  |  |  |  |  |
| The fact that the <br> defendant damaged <br> property |  |  |  |  |  |
| The fact that the <br> defendant has used drugs <br> or alcohol |  |  |  |  |  |
| Information about the <br> defendant's age |  |  |  |  |  |
| Information about the <br> defendant's gender |  |  |  |  |  |
| The fact that the <br> defendant is involved in <br> extracurricular activities, <br> including sports, clubs, |  |  |  |  |  |
| jobs, etc. |  |  |  |  |  |

17. Various goals can be achieved in sentencing offenders. Please tell us how
important these goals were in your sentencing decision.

|  | (1) <br> Not at all <br> important | (2) <br> Slightly <br> important | (3) <br> Moderately <br> important | (4) <br> Quite <br> important | (5) <br> Extremely <br> important |
| :--- | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Punishing the offender to <br> keep that person from <br> committing other crimes in <br> the future |  |  |  |  |  |
| Punishing the offender to <br> provide an example to <br> others |  |  |  |  |  |
| Making sure that an <br> offender will compensate <br> victims for their injuries <br> and losses |  |  |  |  |  |
| Providing an opportunity <br> for the offender to <br> recognize the error of <br> his/her ways and <br> develop new, more <br> appropriate behaviors |  |  |  |  |  |

18. Select one answer for each item, on a 9-point scale ranging from 1 (not at all) to 9 (very).

|  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 |
| :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- |
| How confident of your verdict are you? |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| How much of an emotional impact did <br> the testimonies and exhibits have on <br> you? |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| How much of your decision was based <br> on the critical deliberation of the <br> evidence? |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

19. How many times have you served on a jury? (circle one) 12345

## Please select one answer choice for each item in question 20.

20. Please rate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements.

|  | (1) <br> Disagree <br> strongly | (2) <br> Disagree <br> a little | (3) <br> Neither agree <br> nor disagree | (4) <br> Agree a <br> little | (5) <br> Agree <br> strongly |
| :--- | :--- | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| I enjoy a challenge that makes <br> me think hard. |  |  |  |  |  |
| I am not that good at figuring <br> out complicated problems. |  |  |  |  |  |
| I believe in trusting my <br> instincts. |  |  |  |  |  |
| Reasoning things out carefully <br> is not one of my strong points. |  |  |  |  |  |
| I try to avoid situations that <br> require thinking in depth <br> about something. |  |  |  |  |  |
| I do not trust my initial <br> feelings about people. |  |  |  |  |  |
| Using my gut feelings usually <br> works well for me in figuring <br> out problems in my life. |  |  |  |  |  |
| I prefer complex problems to <br> simple problems. |  |  |  |  |  |
| I do not like situations in <br> which I have to rely on my <br> gut instincts. |  |  |  |  |  |
| I am not very good at solving <br> problems that require careful <br> thinking. |  |  |  |  |  |
| When it comes to trusting <br> people, I can usually rely on <br> my gut feelings. |  |  |  |  |  |


| I generally do not depend on <br> my instincts to help me make <br> decisions. |  |  |  |  |  |
| :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- |
| I do not enjoy having to think. |  |  |  |  |  |
| I do not have very strong gut <br> instincts. |  |  |  |  |  |
| I enjoy solving hard problems <br> that require lots of thinking. |  |  |  |  |  |
| I often go by my instincts <br> when deciding on a course of <br> action. |  |  |  |  |  |
| I have no problem thinking <br> things through carefully. |  |  |  |  |  |
| I do not like to have to do a <br> lot of thinking. |  |  |  |  |  |
| I tend to use my feelings to <br> guide my actions. |  |  |  |  |  |
| I think it is foolish to make <br> important decisions based on <br> feelings. |  |  |  |  |  |

## Please fill in your answer to questions 21-23.

Please answer the following questions:
21. A bat and a ball cost $\$ 1.10$ in total. The bat costs $\$ 1.00$ more than the ball. How much does that ball cost? $\qquad$
22. If it takes 5 machines 5 minutes to make 5 widgets, how long would it take 100 machines to make 100 widgets? $\qquad$
23. In a lake, there is a patch of lily pads. Every day, the patch doubles in size. If it takes 48 days for the patch to cover the entire lake, how long would it take for the patch to cover half of the lake? $\qquad$
Thank you very much for your participation.

## Adult Volunteer Participant Survey

Please select one answer choice for questions 1 - 3. Please fill in your answer to question 4.

1. What is your sex? $\quad \square$ Male $\square$ Female
2. What is your identified race? $\square$ White or European American $\quad \square$ Black or African American $\quad \square$ American Indian or Alaska Native $\quad \square$ Asian $\square$ Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander $\square$ Hispanic, Spanish or Latin American $\quad \square$ Mixed/Multiracial
$\square$ Other, please specify $\qquad$
3. What is your current education level? $\square$ High School Diploma or GED
$\square$ Some College
Bachelor's Degree
Graduate or Professional
School Degree
4. What is your current occupation? $\qquad$
Please check "yes" or "no" for questions 5-7.
5. Has someone ever taken something from you without first asking your permission? Yes $\qquad$ No $\qquad$
6. Has anyone close to you ever had their belongings taken from them without their permission? Yes $\qquad$ No $\qquad$
7. Have you ever taken someone else's belongings without their permission?

Yes $\qquad$ No $\qquad$
Please fill in your answer to questions 8-12.
8. What is the defendant's offense(s)? $\qquad$
9. What is the defendant's sentence? $\qquad$
$\qquad$
10. What was the most important thing you heard during the trial that would help you in a sentencing decision? $\qquad$
$\qquad$
11. What can be achieved by the defendant's given sentence? $\qquad$
$\qquad$
$\qquad$
12. Is the jury verdict ideal for the offense? Why or Why not? $\qquad$
$\qquad$
$\qquad$

## Please check "yes" or "no" for each item in question 13.

13. Were any of the following presented during the trial? Yes ___ No ___ The defendant said he/she was sorry Yes ___ No ___ The defendant has had school-related difficulties Yes ___ No ___ The defendant already reimbursed the victim Yes $\qquad$ No $\qquad$ The defendant already received punishment from school or family

Yes $\qquad$ No $\qquad$ The defendant has shown school-related improvements

Yes $\qquad$ No $\qquad$ The defendant caused the physical injury

Yes $\qquad$ No $\qquad$ The defendant damaged property

Yes $\qquad$ No $\qquad$ The defendant has used drugs or alcohol

Yes $\qquad$ No $\qquad$ Information about the defendant's age

Yes $\qquad$ No $\qquad$ Information about the defendant's gender

Yes $\qquad$ No $\qquad$ The defendant is involved in extracurricular activities, including sports, clubs, jobs, etc.

Yes $\qquad$ No $\qquad$ There have been improvements in the defendant's family relations

Yes $\qquad$ No $\qquad$ Sentencing recommendations of the prosecutor

Yes $\qquad$ No $\qquad$ Sentencing recommendations of the defense attorney Yes $\qquad$ No $\qquad$ The defendant had family-related difficulties

Please select one answer choice for each item in question 14.
14. How important would each of the following things be in deciding the sentence?

|  | (1) <br> Not at all <br> important | (2) <br> Slightly <br> important | (3) <br> Moderately <br> important | (4) <br> Quite <br> important | (5) <br> Extremely <br> important |
| :--- | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| The fact that the <br> defendant said he/she <br> was sorry |  |  |  |  |  |
| The fact that the <br> defendant has had <br> school-related <br> difficulties |  |  |  |  |  |
| The fact that the <br> defendant already <br> reimbursed the victim |  |  |  |  |  |


| The fact that the <br> defendant already <br> received punishment <br> from school or family |  |  |  |  |  |
| :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- |
| The fact that the <br> defendant has shown <br> school-related <br> improvements |  |  |  |  |  |
| The fact that the <br> defendant caused the <br> physical injury |  |  |  |  |  |
| The fact that the <br> defendant damaged <br> property |  |  |  |  |  |
| The fact that the <br> defendant has used <br> drugs or alcohol |  |  |  |  |  |
| Information about the <br> defendant's age |  |  |  |  |  |
| Information about the <br> defendant's gender |  |  |  |  |  |
| The fact that the <br> defendant is involved in <br> extracurricular <br> activities, including <br> sports, clubs, jobs, etc. |  |  |  |  |  |
| The fact that there have <br> been improvements in <br> the defendant's family <br> relations |  |  |  |  |  |
| Sentencing <br> recommendations of the <br> prosecutor |  |  |  |  |  |
| Sentencing <br> recommendations of the <br> defense attorney |  |  |  |  |  |

The fact that the defendant had familyrelated difficulties
15. Various goals can be achieved in sentencing offenders. Please tell me how important these goals would be in your sentencing decision, select one answer choice for each item.

|  | (1) <br> Not at all <br> important | (2) <br> Slightly <br> important | (3) <br> Moderately <br> important | (4) <br> Quite <br> important | (5) <br> Extremely <br> important |
| :--- | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Punishing the offender to <br> keep that person from <br> committing other crimes in <br> the future |  |  |  |  |  |
| Punishing the offender to <br> provide an example to <br> others |  |  |  |  |  |
| Making sure that an <br> offender will compensate <br> victims for their injuries <br> and losses |  |  |  |  |  |
| Providing an opportunity <br> for the offender to <br> recognize the error of <br> his/her ways and <br> develop new, more <br> appropriate behaviors |  |  |  |  |  |

16. Select one answer for each item, on a 9-point scale ranging from 1 (not at all) to 9 (very).

|  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 |
| :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- |

How confident are you in the verdict?
How much of an emotional impact did the testimonies and exhibits have on you?
How much of your decision would be based on the critical deliberation of the evidence?
17. How many times have you volunteered with teen court? (circle one) 12345

## Please select one answer choice for each item in question 18.

18. Please rate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements.

|  | (1) <br> Completely <br> false | (2) <br> False | (3) <br> Neither false <br> nor true | (4) <br> True | (5) <br> Completely <br> true |
| :--- | :--- | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| I do not like to have to do <br> a lot of thinking. |  |  |  |  |  |
| I try to avoid situations <br> that require thinking in <br> depth about something. |  |  |  |  |  |
| I prefer to do something <br> that challenges my <br> thinking abilities rather <br> than something that <br> requires little thought. |  |  |  |  |  |
| I prefer complex to <br> simple problems. |  |  |  |  |  |
| Thinking hard and for a <br> long time about <br> something gives me little <br> satisfaction. |  |  |  |  |  |


| I trust my initial feelings <br> about people. |  |  |  |  |  |
| :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- |
| I believe in trusting my <br> hunches. |  |  |  |  |  |
| My initial impressions of <br> people are almost always <br> right. |  |  |  |  |  |
| When it comes to trusting <br> people, I can usually rely <br> on my "gut feelings." |  |  |  |  |  |
| I can usually feel when a <br> person is right or wrong, <br> even if I cannot explain <br> how I know. |  |  |  |  |  |

## Please fill in your answer to questions 19-21.

Please answer the following questions:
19. A bat and a ball cost $\$ 1.10$ in total. The bat costs $\$ 1.00$ more than the ball. How much does that ball cost? $\qquad$
20. If it takes 5 machines 5 minutes to make 5 widgets, how long would it take 100 machines to make 100 widgets? $\qquad$
21. In a lake, there is a patch of lily pads. Every day, the patch doubles in size. If it takes 48 days for the patch to cover the entire lake, how long would it take for the patch to cover half of the lake? $\qquad$

Thank you very much for your participation.

## Figures

## Figure 1

Teen court process


## Referral

Note. Adapted from "Diversion from the juvenile justice system: Observations of a teen court program," by C. L. Bright, N. S. Hergenroeder, and D. Morris-Compton, 2014, 22, Journal of Community Practice, p. 388.

## Figure 2

## Executive human brain functions



Note. Adapted from "Maturation of the adolescent brain," by Sharma et al., 2013, 22, Neuropsychiatric Disease and Treatment, 9, p. 453.

Tables
Table 1
Adult Participant Demographics

| Participant ID | Sex | Race | Occupation |
| :---: | :--- | :---: | :---: |
| P1 | Male | White | Teen Court Coordinator |
| P2 | Female | Hispanic | Teen Court Coordinator |
| P3 | Male | White | Judge |
| P4 | Female | White | Teen Court Coordinator |
| P5 | Female | Black | Attorney |
| P6 | Female | White | Teen Court Coordinator |
| P7 | Female | Black | Teen Court Coordinator |
| P8 | Male | White | Judge |
| P9 | Female | Black | Attorney |
| P10 | Female | Hispanic | Teen Court Coordinator |

Table 2
Initial Codes

| Initial code | n of <br> participants <br> contributing <br> $(\mathrm{N}=10)$ | n of <br> excerpts <br> assigned | Sample quote |
| :--- | :---: | :---: | :--- |
|  |  |  | "Sometimes, defendants may bring <br> character reference letters from <br> friends/family/parents or apology |
| Mitigating <br> materials as <br> evidence | 7 | 12 | letters to the victim; one parent <br> brought photos of an old truck. It's <br> an affluent area; individuals are |
|  |  |  | well informed and tend to arrive to <br> court prepared for anything that |
| may come." (P10) |  |  |  |


|  | solely punishment and would not <br> lead to jail, usually, a withhold of <br> adjudication and some form of <br> probation and community <br> service." (P8) <br> "Decades spent in youth ministry; <br> kids still make poor choices; that <br> is how we learn. However, they <br> need help to create better choices <br> while holding them responsible for <br> behaviors from which the larger |
| :--- | :--- |
| society would benefit. Less |  |
| citations equal less access to these |  |
| pevelopment of |  |
| teen court over the and other positive |  |
| aears |  |$\quad 6 \quad 10$| activities. No enforcement, you |
| :--- |
| lose the one. Zero tolerance, you |
| sacrifice the good." (P3) |

## Table 3

Emergent Themes and Research Questions

| Research question | Theme that addressed the question |
| :--- | :--- |
| RQ2: Does providing jurors with | Theme 7: Notepads and note sheets were |
| specifically labeled—Case Notes, Evidence | rarely provided; however, virtual |
| Note Sheets, Victim Experience Notes- | proceedings found some jurors used the note |
| notetaking sheets encourage youth to focus | session or the chat to keep notes on the |
| on specific factors of the trial? | individual cases. |

RQ4: Are the verdicts reached in teen court Theme 3: All defendants are required to harsher than the sanctions an adult legal serve community service at a comparable professional would issue? rate to resolve a fine that the traditional juvenile courts would issue.

Theme 9: Most participants noted the RQ6: Are teen court youth more attentive to testimonies of the defendants included
legal or extralegal factors in teen court hearings? mitigating information, as it is the defense attorney's job to limit sanctions by making the defendant personable.

Table 4
Descriptive Statistics: For the Prediction of Teen Court Decision-Making, Participant Grouping, Sex, Race, Age, Grade Level, Occupation, and Education ( $N=107$ )

| Demographic Variable | $n$ | Valid \% | M | SD | Skewness |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Participant Type |  |  |  |  |  |
| Youth Juror | 68 | 63.6 |  |  |  |
| Previous Def. | 23 | 21.5 |  |  |  |
| Adult Volunteer | 16 | 15 |  |  |  |
| Respondent's Sex |  |  |  |  |  |
| Male | 36 | 33.6 |  |  |  |
| Female | 71 | 66.4 |  |  |  |
| Respondent's Race |  |  |  |  |  |
| White | 23 | 21.5 |  |  |  |
| Black | 12 | 11.2 |  |  |  |
| Hispanic | 13 | 12.1 |  |  |  |
| Asian | 56 | 52.3 |  |  |  |
| Mixed | 3 | 2.8 |  |  |  |
| Age | 90 |  | 15.26 | 1.39 | . 04 |
| 13 | 10 | 11.1 |  |  |  |
| 14 | 23 | 25.6 |  |  |  |
| 15 | 11 | 12.2 |  |  |  |
| 16 | 31 | 34.4 |  |  |  |
| 17 | 10 | 11.1 |  |  |  |
| 18 | 5 | 5.6 |  |  |  |
| Grade | 85 |  | 9.95 | 1.39 | -. 22 |
| 7 | 2 | 2.4 |  |  |  |
| 8 | 14 | 16.5 |  |  |  |
| 9 | 18 | 21.2 |  |  |  |
| 10 | 14 | 16.5 |  |  |  |
| 11 | 26 | 30.6 |  |  |  |
| 12 | 11 | 12.9 |  |  |  |
| Education | 21 |  |  |  |  |
| Diploma or GED | 7 | 33.3 |  |  |  |
| Some College | 6 | 28.6 |  |  |  |
| Bachelor's | 3 | 14.3 |  |  |  |
| Graduate or Prof. | 5 | 23.8 |  |  |  |


| Demographic Variable | $n$ | Valid \% | $M$ | $S D$ | Skewness |
| ---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Occupation | 16 |  |  |  |  |
| TCP Coordinator | 5 | 31.3 |  |  |  |
| Attorney | 2 | 12.5 |  |  |  |
| Other | 9 | 56.3 |  |  |  |

Note. $N=107$ ( $n=$ number of participants, vary by adult volunteers and youth jurors given certain questions, the total number of participants accounts for some variables not reflecting $n=107$.)

Table 5
Descriptive Statistics: For the Prediction of Teen Court Decision-Making, Ideal Jury Verdict, and Verdict ( $N=107$ )

| Dependent Variable | $n$ | Valid $\%$ | $M$ | $S D$ | Skewness |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Verdict (Comm. Serv.) | 67 |  | 20.03 | 7.86 | 1.93 |
| 4 | 1 | 1.5 |  |  |  |
| 10 | 4 | 6.0 |  |  |  |
| 11 | 1 | 1.5 |  |  |  |
| 12 | 4 | 6.0 |  |  |  |
| 13 | 2 | 3.0 |  |  |  |
| 14 | 3 | 4.5 |  |  |  |
| 15 | 6 | 9.0 |  |  |  |
| 16 | 4 | 6.0 |  |  |  |
| 17 | 1 | 1.5 |  |  |  |
| 18 | 2 | 3.0 |  |  |  |
| 19 | 1 | 1.5 |  |  |  |
| 20 | 12 | 14.9 |  |  |  |
| 21 | 1 | 1.5 |  |  |  |
| 22 | 6 | 9.0 |  |  |  |
| 25 | 13 | 19.4 |  |  |  |
| 26 | 2 | 3.0 |  |  |  |
| 30 | 4 | 6.0 |  |  |  |
| 35 | 1 | 1.5 |  |  |  |
| 60 | 1 | 1.5 |  |  |  |

Note. $N=107$ ( $\mathrm{n}=$ number of participants, varying by adult volunteers and youth jurors).

Table 6
Descriptive Statistics: For the Prediction of Teen Court Decision-Making, Type of Offense, Note-Sheets, and Sentencing Factors ( $N=107$ )

| Independent Variable | $n$ | \% |
| :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Type of Offense | 73 |  |
| Assault | 15 | 20.5 |
| Battery | 4 | 5.5 |
| Burglary | 2 | 2.7 |
| Criminal Mischief | 3 | 4.1 |
| Curfew Violation | 9 | 12.3 |
| Drugs | 9 | 12.3 |
| No License | 4 | 5.5 |
| Shoplifting | 9 | 12.3 |
| Speeding | 18 | 24.7 |
| Note-Sheet | 29 |  |
| Evidence | 2 | 6.9 |
| Victim Experience | 5 | 17.2 |
| Case Notes | 22 | 75.9 |
| Key Trial Details | 68 |  |
| Remorse | 16 | 23.5 |
| Victim Experience | 4 | 5.9 |
| Changed Behavior | 1 | 1.5 |
| Lack of Remorse | 24 | 35.3 |
| Inconsistency | 7 | 10.3 |
| Defendant's Home | 16 | 23.5 |
| Situation |  |  |
| Ideal Jury Verdict | 10 |  |
| Yes | 6 | 60.0 |
| No | 4 | 40.0 |
| Purpose of Sentence | 67 |  |
| Deterrence | 21 | 31.3 |
| Punishment | 4 | 6.0 |
| Rehabilitation | 42 | 62.7 |

Note. $N=107$ ( $\mathrm{n}=$ number of participants, varying by adult volunteers and youth jurors).

Table 7
Descriptive Statistics: For the Prediction of Teen Court Decision-Making, Primes, Priming Checks, and Participant Experience ( $N=107$ )

| Independent Variable | $n$ | Vaid \% | M | SD | Skewness |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Primes | 97 |  |  |  |  |
| Prime 1 |  |  |  |  |  |
| Yes | 71 | 73.2 |  |  |  |
| No | 26 | 26.8 |  |  |  |
| Prime 2 |  |  |  |  |  |
| Yes | 72 | 74.2 |  |  |  |
| No | 25 | 25.8 |  |  |  |
| Prime 3 |  |  |  |  |  |
| Yes | 38 | 39.2 |  |  |  |
| No | 59 | 60.8 |  |  |  |
| Prime Checks | 68 |  |  |  |  |
| Prime Check 1 |  |  |  |  |  |
| Correct | 32 | 47.1 |  |  |  |
| Incorrect | 36 | 52.9 |  |  |  |
| Prime Check 2 |  |  |  |  |  |
| Correct | 30 | 44.1 |  |  |  |
| Incorrect | 38 | 55.9 |  |  |  |
| Prime Check 3 |  |  |  |  |  |
| Correct | 28 | 41.2 |  |  |  |
| Incorrect | 40 | 58.8 |  |  |  |
| $\underline{\text { Volunteer Times }}$ | 8 |  | 4.00 | 1.51 | -1.32 |
| 1 | 1 | 12.5 |  |  |  |
| 3 | 2 | 25.0 |  |  |  |
| 5 | 5 | 62.5 |  |  |  |
| Jury Duties | 56 |  | 3.64 | 1.61 | -. 58 |
| 1 | 9 | 16.1 |  |  |  |
| 2 | 8 | 14.3 |  |  |  |
| 3 | 7 | 12.5 |  |  |  |
| 4 | 2 | 3.6 |  |  |  |
| 5 | 30 | 53.6 |  |  |  |

Note. $N=107$ ( $\mathrm{n}=$ number of participants, varying by adult volunteers and youth jurors).

Table 8
Descriptive Statistics: For the Prediction of Teen Court Decision-Making, Sentencing Goals ( $N=107$ )

| Independent Variable | $n$ | \% | M | $\alpha$ |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Sentencing Goals | 66 |  |  | . 672 |
| 1 - Prevent Future Crimes |  |  | 4.00 |  |
| Not at all important | 1 | 1.5 |  |  |
| Slightly important | 6 | 9.1 |  |  |
| Moderately important | 9 | 13.6 |  |  |
| Quite important | 25 | 37.9 |  |  |
| Extremely important | 25 | 37.9 |  |  |
| 2 - Example to Others |  |  | 3.00 |  |
| Not at all important | 9 | 13.6 |  |  |
| Slightly important | 19 | 28.8 |  |  |
| Moderately important | 16 | 24.2 |  |  |
| Quite important | 13 | 19.7 |  |  |
| Extremely important | 9 | 13.6 |  |  |
| 3 - Compensate Victims |  |  | 3.00 |  |
| Not at all important | 16 | 24.2 |  |  |
| Slightly important | 9 | 13.6 |  |  |
| Moderately important | 11 | 16.7 |  |  |
| Quite important | 14 | 21.2 |  |  |
| Extremely important | 16 | 24.2 |  |  |
| 4 - Offender Opportunities |  |  | 5.00 |  |
| Slightly important | 1 | 1.5 |  |  |
| Moderately important | 2 | 3.0 |  |  |
| Quite important | 14 | 21.2 |  |  |
| Extremely important | 49 | 74.2 |  |  |
| Verdict Confidence | 65 |  | 8.00 |  |
| 2 | 1 | 1.5 |  |  |
| 3 | 1 | 1.5 |  |  |
| 4 | 1 | 1.5 |  |  |
| 5 | 2 | 3.1 |  |  |
| 6 | 6 | 9.2 |  |  |
| 7 | 16 | 24.6 |  |  |
| 8 | 21 | 32.3 |  |  |
| 9 | 17 | 26.2 |  |  |
| Testimony Impact | 65 |  | 5.00 |  |
| 1 | 10 | 15.4 |  |  |


| Independent Variable | $n$ | \% | M | $\alpha$ |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| 2 | 6 | 9.2 |  |  |
| 3 | 7 | 10.8 |  |  |
| 4 | 7 | 10.8 |  |  |
| 5 | 11 | 16.9 |  |  |
| 6 | 7 | 10.8 |  |  |
| 7 | 5 | 7.7 |  |  |
| 8 | 5 | 7.7 |  |  |
| 9 | 7 | 10.8 |  |  |
| Evidence Deliberation | 65 |  | 8.00 |  |
| 1 | 2 | 3.1 |  |  |
| 2 | 1 | 1.5 |  |  |
| 3 | 1 | 1.5 |  |  |
| 5 | 4 | 6.2 |  |  |
| 6 | 7 | 10.8 |  |  |
| 7 | 12 | 18.5 |  |  |
| 8 | 17 | 26.2 |  |  |
| 9 | 21 | 32.3 |  |  |

Note. $N=107$ ( $\mathrm{n}=$ number of participants, varying by adult volunteers and youth jurors).

Table 9
Descriptive Statistics: For the Prediction of Teen Court Decision-Making, Presence During Trial ( $N=107$ )

| Independent Variable | $n$ | Valid \% |
| :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Present During Trial |  |  |
| 1 - Defendant said sorry | 73 |  |
| Yes | 60 | 82.2 |
| No | 13 | 17.8 |
| 2 - Defendant had school difficulties |  |  |
| Yes | 23 | 31.5 |
| No | 50 | 68.5 |
| 3 - Victim was reimbursed | 72 |  |
| Yes | 16 | 22.2 |
| No | 56 | 77.8 |
| 4 - Defendant punished by school or family |  |  |
| Yes | 50 | 69.4 |
| No | 22 | 30.6 |
| 5 - Defendant had school improvements |  |  |
| Yes | 30 | 41.7 |
| No | 42 | 58.3 |
| 6 - Defendant caused physical injury |  |  |
| Yes | 18 | 25.0 |
| No | 54 | 75.0 |
| 7 - Defendant damaged property |  |  |
| Yes | 15 | 20.8 |
| No | 57 | 79.2 |
| 8 - Defendant used drugs or alcohol |  |  |
| Yes | 18 | 25.0 |
| No | 54 | 75.0 |
| 9 - Defendant's age mentioned |  |  |
| Yes | 63 | 87.5 |
| No | 9 | 12.5 |
| 10 - Defendant's gender mentioned |  |  |
| Yes | 52 | 72.8 |
| No | 20 | 27.8 |
| 11 - Defendant had extracurricular activities |  |  |
| Yes | 46 | 63.9 |
| No | 26 | 36.1 |
| 12 - Family relationships improved |  |  |
| Yes | 16 | 22.2 |
| No | 56 | 77.8 |


| Independent Variable |  | $n$ | Valid $\%$ |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| 13 - Prosecutor recommended sentencing |  |  |  |
|  | Yes | 58 | 80.6 |
|  | No | 14 | 19.4 |
| 14 - Defense recommended sentencing |  |  |  |
|  | Yes | 59 | 81.9 |
| 15 - Defendant had family difficulties | No | 13 | 18.1 |
|  |  | Yes | 28 |
|  |  |  |  |
|  | No | 44 | 38.9 |
| Note. $N=107$ (n = number of participants, varying by adult volunteers and youth jurors). |  |  |  |

Table 10
Descriptive Statistics: For the Prediction of Teen Court Decision-Making, Importance During Trial ( $N=107$ )

| Independent Variable | $n=66$ | Valid \% | M | $\alpha$ |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Importance During Trial |  |  |  | . 822 |
| 1 - Defendant said sorry |  |  | 3.0 |  |
| Not at all important | 3 | 4.5 |  |  |
| Slightly important | 13 | 19.7 |  |  |
| Moderately important | 19 | 28.8 |  |  |
| Quite important | 16 | 24.2 |  |  |
| Extremely important | 15 | 22.7 |  |  |
| 2 - Defendant had school difficulties |  |  | 1.0 |  |
| Not at all important | 26 | 39.4 |  |  |
| Slightly important | 11 | 16.7 |  |  |
| Moderately important | 16 | 24.2 |  |  |
| Quite important | 10 | 15.2 |  |  |
| Extremely important | 3 | 4.5 |  |  |
| 3 - Victim was reimbursed |  |  | 1.0 |  |
| Not at all important | 22 | 33.3 |  |  |
| Slightly important | 8 | 12.1 |  |  |
| Moderately important | 19 | 28.8 |  |  |
| Quite important | 10 | 15.2 |  |  |
| Extremely important | 7 | 10.6 |  |  |
| 4 - Defendant punished by school or family |  |  | 3.0 |  |
| Not at all important | 11 | 16.7 |  |  |
| Slightly important | 12 | 18.2 |  |  |
| Moderately important | 19 | 28.8 |  |  |
| Quite important | 17 | 25.8 |  |  |
| Extremely important | 7 | 10.6 |  |  |
| 5 - Defendant had school improvements |  |  | 1.0 |  |
| Not at all important | 21 | 31.8 |  |  |
| Slightly important | 9 | 13.6 |  |  |
| Moderately important | 9 | 13.6 |  |  |
| Quite important | 16 | 24.2 |  |  |
| Extremely important | 11 | 16.7 |  |  |
| 6 - Defendant caused physical injury |  |  | 1.0 |  |
| Not at all important | 26 | 39.4 |  |  |
| Slightly important | 1 | 1.5 |  |  |
| Moderately important | 2 | 3.0 |  |  |
| Quite important | 12 | 18.2 |  |  |


| Independent Variable | $n=66$ | Valid \% | M | $\alpha$ |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Extremely important | 25 | 37.9 |  |  |
| 7 - Defendant damaged property |  |  | 1.0 |  |
| Not at all important | 27 | 40.9 |  |  |
| Slightly important | 2 | 9.1 |  |  |
| Moderately important | 3 | 4.5 |  |  |
| Quite important | 13 | 16.7 |  |  |
| Extremely important | 21 | 28.8 |  |  |
| 8 - Defendant used drugs or alcohol |  |  | 1.0 |  |
| Not at all important | 27 | 40.9 |  |  |
| Slightly important | 6 | 9.1 |  |  |
| Moderately important | 3 | 4.5 |  |  |
| Quite important | 11 | 16.7 |  |  |
| Extremely important | 19 | 28.8 |  |  |
| 9 - Defendant's age mentioned |  |  | 2.0 |  |
| Not at all important | 11 | 16.7 |  |  |
| Slightly important | 22 | 33.3 |  |  |
| Moderately important | 14 | 21.2 |  |  |
| Quite important | 11 | 16.7 |  |  |
| Extremely important | 8 | 12.1 |  |  |
| 10 - Defendant's gender mentioned |  |  | 1.0 |  |
| Not at all important | 48 | 72.7 |  |  |
| Slightly important | 6 | 9.1 |  |  |
| Moderately important | 7 | 10.6 |  |  |
| Quite important | 3 | 4.5 |  |  |
| Extremely important | 2 | 3.0 |  |  |
| 11 - Defendant had extracurricular activities |  |  | 2.0 |  |
| Not at all important | 15 | 22.7 |  |  |
| Slightly important | 22 | 33.3 |  |  |
| Moderately important | 16 | 24.2 |  |  |
| Quite important | 10 | 15.2 |  |  |
| Extremely important | 3 | 4.5 |  |  |
| 12 - Family relationships improved |  |  | 1.0 |  |
| Not at all important | 22 | 33.3 |  |  |
| Slightly important | 13 | 19.7 |  |  |
| Moderately important | 10 | 15.2 |  |  |
| Quite important | 15 | 22.7 |  |  |
| Extremely important | 6 | 9.1 |  |  |
| 13 - Prosecutor recommended sentencing |  |  | 4.0 |  |
| Not at all important | 6 | 9.1 |  |  |
| Slightly important | 8 | 12.1 |  |  |
| Moderately important | 16 | 24.2 |  |  |


| Independent Variable | $n=66$ | Valid $\%$ | $M$ | $\alpha$ |
| ---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Quite important | 19 | 28.8 |  |  |
| Extremely important | 17 | 25.8 |  |  |
| 14 - Defense recommended sentencing |  |  | 3.0 |  |
| Not at all important | 4 | 6.1 |  |  |
| Slightly important | 8 | 12.1 |  |  |
| Moderately important | 18 | 27.3 |  |  |
| Quite important | 18 | 27.3 |  |  |
| Extremely important | 18 | 27.3 | 1.0 |  |
| 15 - Defendant had family difficulties |  |  |  |  |
| Not at all important | 26 | 39.4 | 4.5 |  |
| Slightly important | 3 | 24.2 |  |  |
| Moderately important | 16 | 16.7 |  |  |
| Quite important | 11 | 16.2 | 15.2 |  |
| Extremely important | 10 | 10 |  |  |

Note. $N=107$ ( n = number of participants, varying by adult volunteers and youth jurors).

Table 11
Descriptive Statistics: For the Prediction of Teen Court Decision-Making, REI-A ( $N=$ 107)

| Independent Variable | $n$ | $M$ | $S D$ | $\alpha$ |
| :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- |
| CEST Variables |  |  |  |  |
| Adolescents |  |  |  |  |
| Need For Cognition | 55 | 3.31 | .44 | .500 |
| Faith in Intuition | 55 | 3.31 | .48 | .615 |

Note. $N=107$ ( n = number of participants, varying by adult volunteers and youth jurors).

Table 12
Descriptive Statistics: For the Prediction of Teen Court Decision-Making, REI-10 ( $\mathrm{N}=$ 107)

| Independent Variable | $n$ | $M$ | $S D$ | $\alpha$ |
| :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- |
| CEST Variables |  |  |  |  |
| Adults |  |  |  |  |
| Need For Cognition | 12 | 3.50 | .54 | .602 |
| Faith in Intuition | 12 | 3.80 | .68 | .832 |

Note. $N=107$ ( n = number of participants, varying by adult volunteers and youth jurors).

Table 13
Analysis of Variance (ANOVA): Offense by Adolescent Processing Mode - REI-A ( $N=$ 53)

| Variable | M | $S D$ | F | $p$ |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| REI-A NFC | -- | -- | 1.46 | . 200 |
| Shoplifting | 3.30 | . 63 | -- | -- |
| Assault | 3.01 | . 54 | -- | -- |
| Battery | 3.44 | . 79 | -- | -- |
| Speeding | 3.29 | . 29 | -- | -- |
| Drugs | 3.39 | . 37 | -- | -- |
| No Driver License | 3.65 | . 31 | -- | -- |
| Burglary | 3.78 | -- | -- | -- |
| Curfew Violation | 3.32 | . 43 | -- | -- |
| Criminal Mischief | 3.66 | . 15 | -- | -- |
| REI-A FI | -- | -- | . 57 | . 796 |
| Shoplifting | 3.27 | . 32 | -- | -- |
| Assault | 3.35 | . 49 | -- | -- |
| Battery | 3.41 | . 27 | -- | -- |
| Speeding | 3.15 | . 44 | -- | -- |
| Drugs | 3.32 | . 65 | -- | -- |
| No Driver License | 3.45 | . 20 | -- | -- |
| Burglary | 3.80 | -- | -- | -- |
| Curfew Violation | 3.31 | . 51 | -- | -- |
| Criminal Mischief | 3.64 | . 40 | -- | -- |

Note. REI-A = Dependent variable. $N=55$ for REI-A variable items. $N=73$ for Offense. * $=p<.05 .{ }^{* *}=p<.01$.

Table 14
Analysis of Variance (ANOVA): Note Sheets by Adolescent Processing Mode - REI-A (N = 15)

| Variable | M | SD | $F$ | $p$ |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| REI-A NFC | -- | -- | 1.04 | . 383 |
| Case Notes | 3.25 | . 55 | -- | -- |
| Evidence Notes | 4.11 | -- | -- | -- |
| Victim Experience Notes | 3.25 | . 41 | -- | -- |
| REI-A FI | -- | -- | . 08 | . 923 |
| Case Notes | 3.47 | . 09 | -- | -- |
| Evidence Notes | 3.30 | -- | -- | -- |
| Victim Experience Notes | 3.44 | . 45 | -- | -- |

Note. REI-A = Dependent variable. $N=55$ for REI-A variable items. $N=29$ for Note Sheets. $*=p<.05 .{ }^{* *}=p<.01$.

Table 15
Analysis of Variance (ANOVA): Participant Type by Adolescent Processing Mode - REIA ( $N=55$ )

| Variable | M | $S D$ | F | $p$ |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| REI-A NFC | -- | -- | . 34 | . 565 |
| Youth Juror | 3.33 | . 40 | -- | -- |
| Previous Defendant | 3.25 | . 56 | -- | -- |
| Adult Volunteer | -- | -- | -- | -- |
| REI-A FI | -- | -- | . 05 | . 822 |
| Youth Juror | 3.31 | . 48 | -- | -- |
| Previous Defendant | 3.34 | . 47 | -- | -- |
| Adult Volunteer | -- | -- | -- | -- |

Note. REI-A = Dependent variable. $N=55$ for REI-A variable items. $N=107$ for Participant Type. ${ }^{*}=p<.05 .{ }^{* *}=p<.01$.

Table 16
Analysis of Variance (ANOVA): Sex by Adolescent Processing Mode - REI-A ( $N=55$ )

| Variable |  | $M$ | $S D$ | $F$ | $p$ |
| :--- | ---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| REI-A NFC |  | -- | -- | .16 | .694 |
|  | Male | 3.34 | .52 | -- | -- |
| REI-A FI | Female | 3.29 | .39 | -- | -- |
|  |  | -- | -- | .57 | .453 |
|  | Male | 3.38 | .40 | -- | -- |

Note. REI-A = Dependent variable. $N=55$ for REI-A variable items. $N=107$ for Sex.

* $=p<.05 .{ }^{* *}=p<.01$.

Table 17
Analysis of Variance (ANOVA): Identified Race by Adolescent Processing Mode - REI-A ( $N=55$ )

| Variable |  | $M$ | $S D$ | $F$ | $p$ |
| :--- | ---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| REI-A NFC |  | -- | -- | .51 | .731 |
|  | White | 3.24 | .59 | -- | -- |
|  | Black | 3.64 | .08 | -- | -- |
|  | Asian | 3.32 | .37 | -- | -- |
| REI-A FI | Hispanic | 3.24 | .66 | -- | -- |
|  | Mixed | 3.28 | .37 | -- | -- |
|  |  | -- | -- | .81 | .526 |
|  | White | 3.55 | .65 | -- | -- |
|  | Black | 3.49 | .55 | -- | -- |
|  | Asian | 3.25 | .45 | -- | -- |
|  | Hispanic | 3.33 | .39 | -- | -- |
|  | Mixed | 3.16 | .37 | -- | -- |

Note. REI-A = Dependent variable. $N=55$ for REI-A variable items. $N=107$ for Race. * $=p<.05 .{ }^{* *}=p<.01$.

Table 18
Correlations: Age, Verdict/Sentencing, \& Jury Duties by Adolescent \& Adult Processing Mode - REI-A

| Variable | $n$ | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| :--- | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| 8. Age | 90 | - |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 9. Verdict/ Sentencing | 67 | .104 | - |  |  |  |  |  |
| 10. Jury Duties | 56 | .178 | -.185 | - |  |  |  |  |
| 11. REI-A NFC | 55 | $.266^{*}$ | .021 | -.024 | - |  |  |  |
| 12. REI-A FI | 55 | $.272^{*}$ | .040 | -.126 | .339 | - |  |  |
| 13. REI-10 NFC | 12 | -- | -.242 | -- | -- | -- | - |  |
| 14. REI-10 FI | 12 | -- | .257 | -- | -- | -- | -.040 | - |

Note. ${ }^{*}=p<.05 . * *=p<.01$.

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- J.D. University of Florida Levin College of Law, Gainesville, FL (2014-2016).
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[^0]:    This dissertation follows the style of the American Psychological Association, $7^{\text {th }}$ Ed.

