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# Offenders and their Offences: Convicted Burglars in Adelaide

March 2015



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# What was the problem?

- One of the most common offences (volume crime)
- Low rate of burglary offences solved
  - Fewer than 9% in SA, compared to about 13- 15% in UK/US
- Costs
  - victim, police, insurance – economic impact
- Public confidence/fear of crime



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- The aim was to develop a better understanding of the way in which offender traits and offence characteristics are related for burglaries in Adelaide, and to develop distinctive offender-offence typologies.
- Purpose to highlight features that link offenders to offences and offer potential to inform the investigation of burglary cases in ways that help improve detection rates.



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# What assumptions were made?

- Assume burglary offenders have differences
- Previous research
  - Fox and Farrington (2012)
- Sample of 349 detected domestic burglary incidents that took place in 2010
- Data integrity?
  - Police system
  - Court system
  - sampling
- Assume 2010 representative sample





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# What did we learn from this - Offender Traits

- Most male (85%) and caucasian (71%)
- 68% lived in low value properties
- 55% unemployed
- 31% students
- Most not under influence of drug/alcohol at time of offence (87%)
- Varied criminal history
- 73% experience crime onset in youth (11 – 18yrs)
- Half committed over 50 offences
- Half have prior drug/alcohol offences
- Only 12% have no prior dishonesty offences
- 25% have no prior violence offence



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# What did we learn from this - Offence Characteristics

- 20% had nothing taken, 50% had over \$500 stolen
- Entry via back door (30%) most common
- 32% lived within 2 kms, but almost half (46%) travelled over 6 kms
- Offenders disturbed in 57% of cases
- 65% Victims aged over 35 and almost a third not employed
- 75% motivated by material gain
- 14% motivated by personal – dispute, revenge, anger
- 55% forced entry
- Most targeted low value homes (45%), followed by high valued homes (36%)
- 72% were in daytime and 75% during the week
- 73% left evidence at the scene
- 75% left the scene tidy



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# Analysis – some results

- The number of offenders drop off as they get older – as expected those who offend longer commit more offences.
- There is a significant correlation between prior SCT history and dishonesty offences – primary motivation was to get money.
- There is a negative correlation between prior violent offences and SCT - the more SCT offences committed, the fewer violent offences
- SCT and drug offences are positively related, but only 13% of the offenders were under the influence of drugs or alcohol when they committed their offences.



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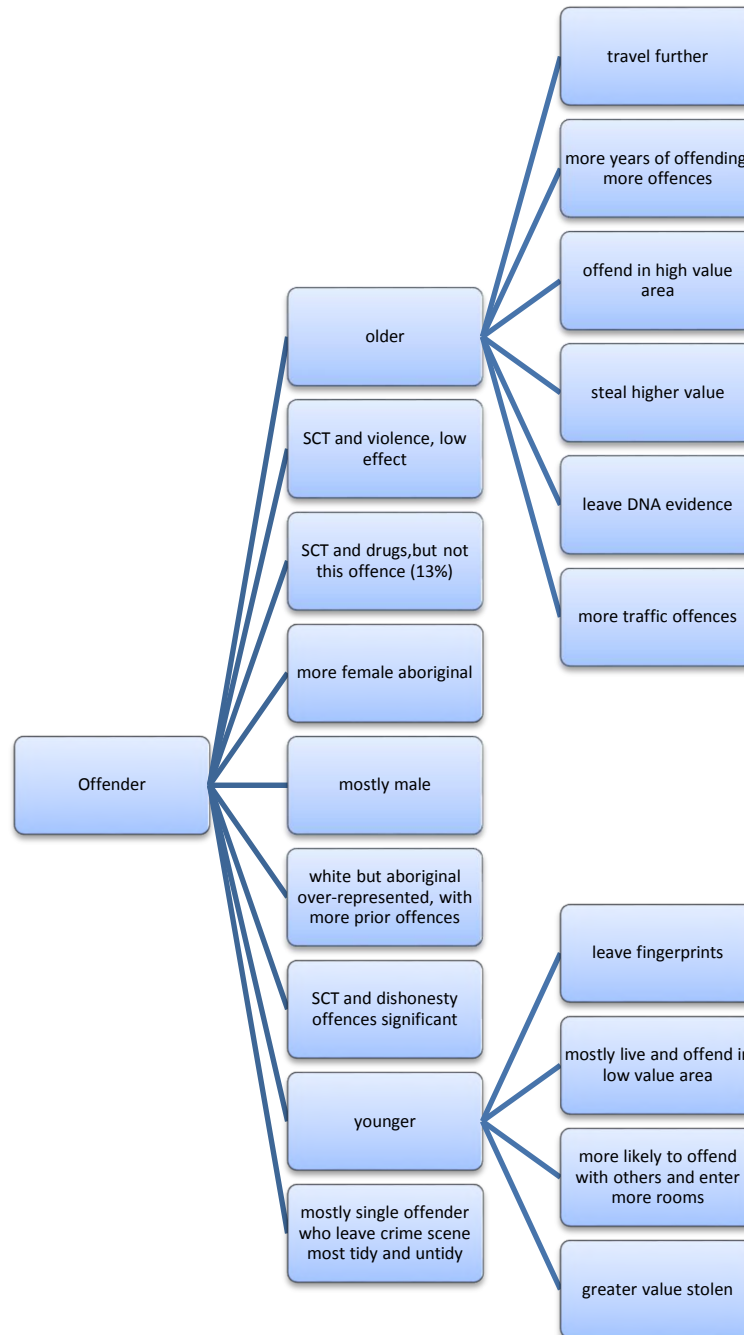


- The younger the offender, the more they co-offended with others. Older offenders committed offences alone.
- Forensic evidence – those leaving forensic evidence were older. Older offenders more often left DNA and younger offenders left fingerprints
- Younger people leave the scene untidy, and fewer offenders results in a tidier crime scene
- Women offenders are significantly older, and over twice as many women were Aboriginal offenders.

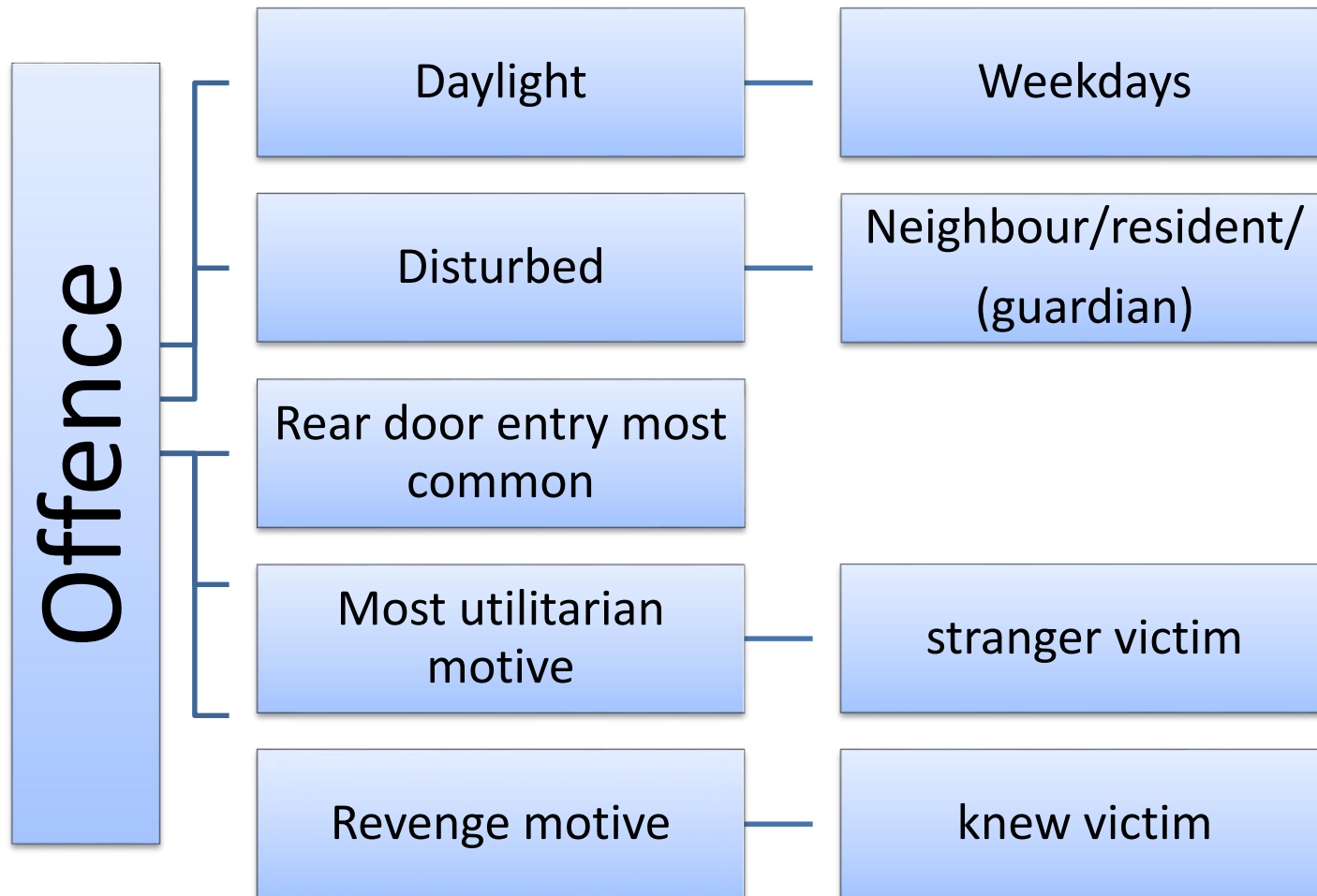




Diagram showing significant variable relationships for offender.



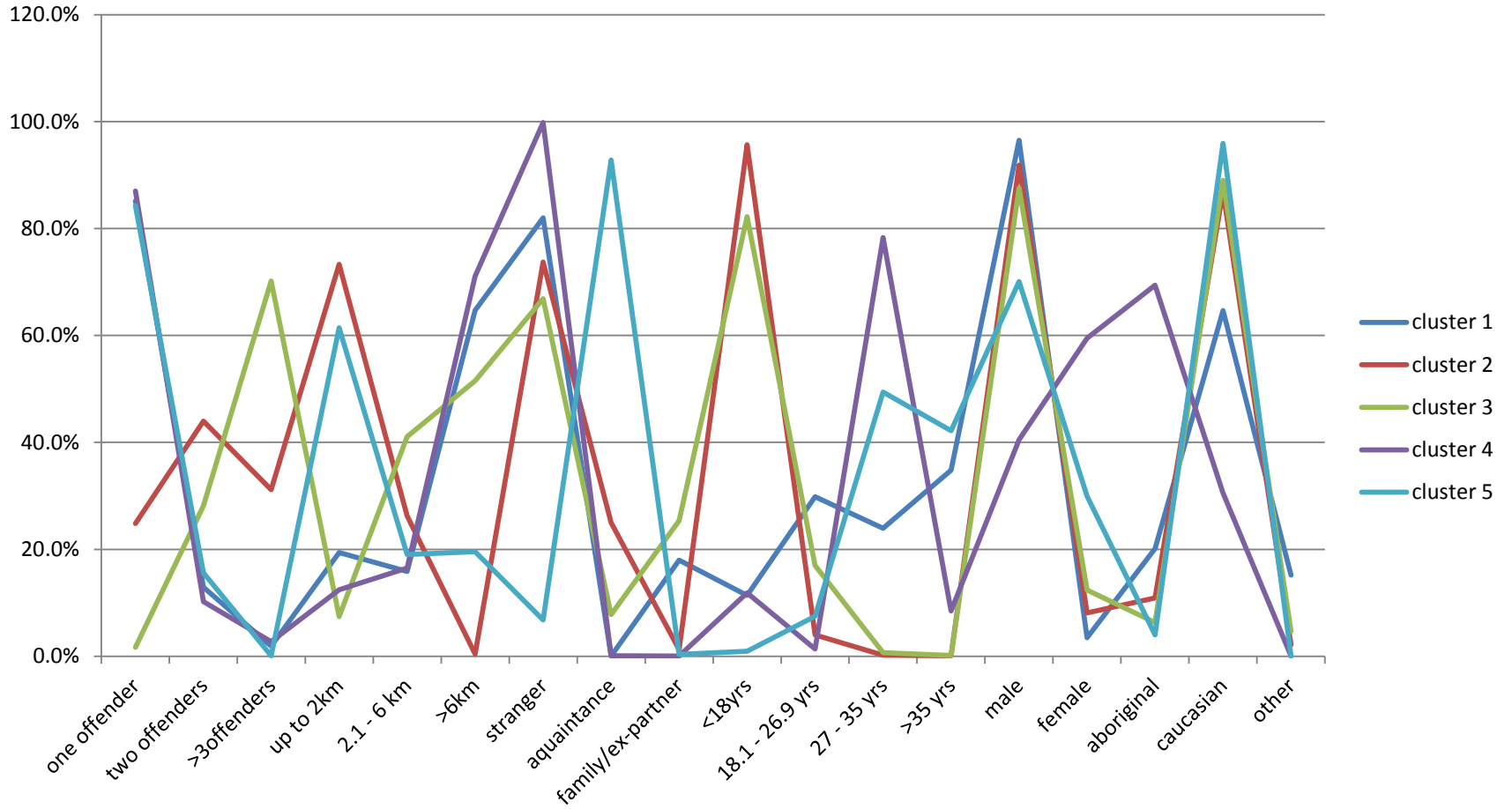
# Diagram showing significant variable relationships for offence

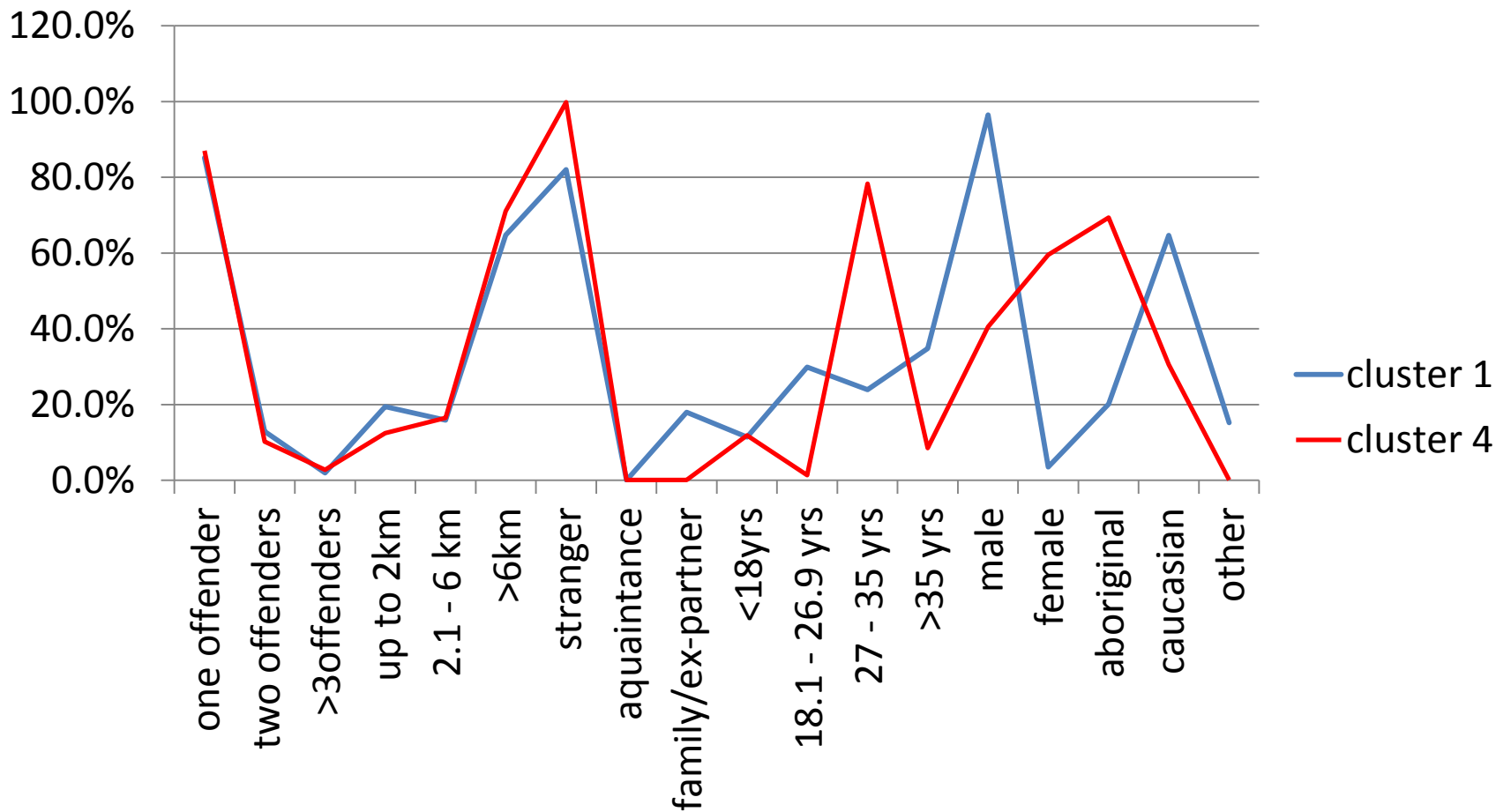


# Offender traits used for latent class analysis

Number of Offenders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•One offender</li><li>•Two offenders</li><li>•Three or more offenders</li></ul>
Distance travelled	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•Up to 2 kilometres</li><li>•2.1 to 6 kilometres</li><li>•more than 6 kilometres</li></ul>
Relationship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•Stranger</li><li>•Acquaintance</li><li>•Family/ex partner</li></ul>
Age	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•up to 18</li><li>•18.1 to 26.9</li><li>•27 - 35</li><li>•more than 35</li></ul>
Gender	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•Male</li><li>•Female</li></ul>
Ethnicity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•Aboriginal /Torres Strait Islander</li><li>•Caucasian</li><li>•Other</li></ul>

# Five clusters of Offender Traits from Latent Class Analysis





# Offence Characteristics used in latent class analysis

How did they enter

- door
- window
- roof

Fingerprints

- fingerprints present
- fingerprints not present

How many rooms

- 0 rooms/ didn't get in
- 1-3 rooms
- 4-5 rooms

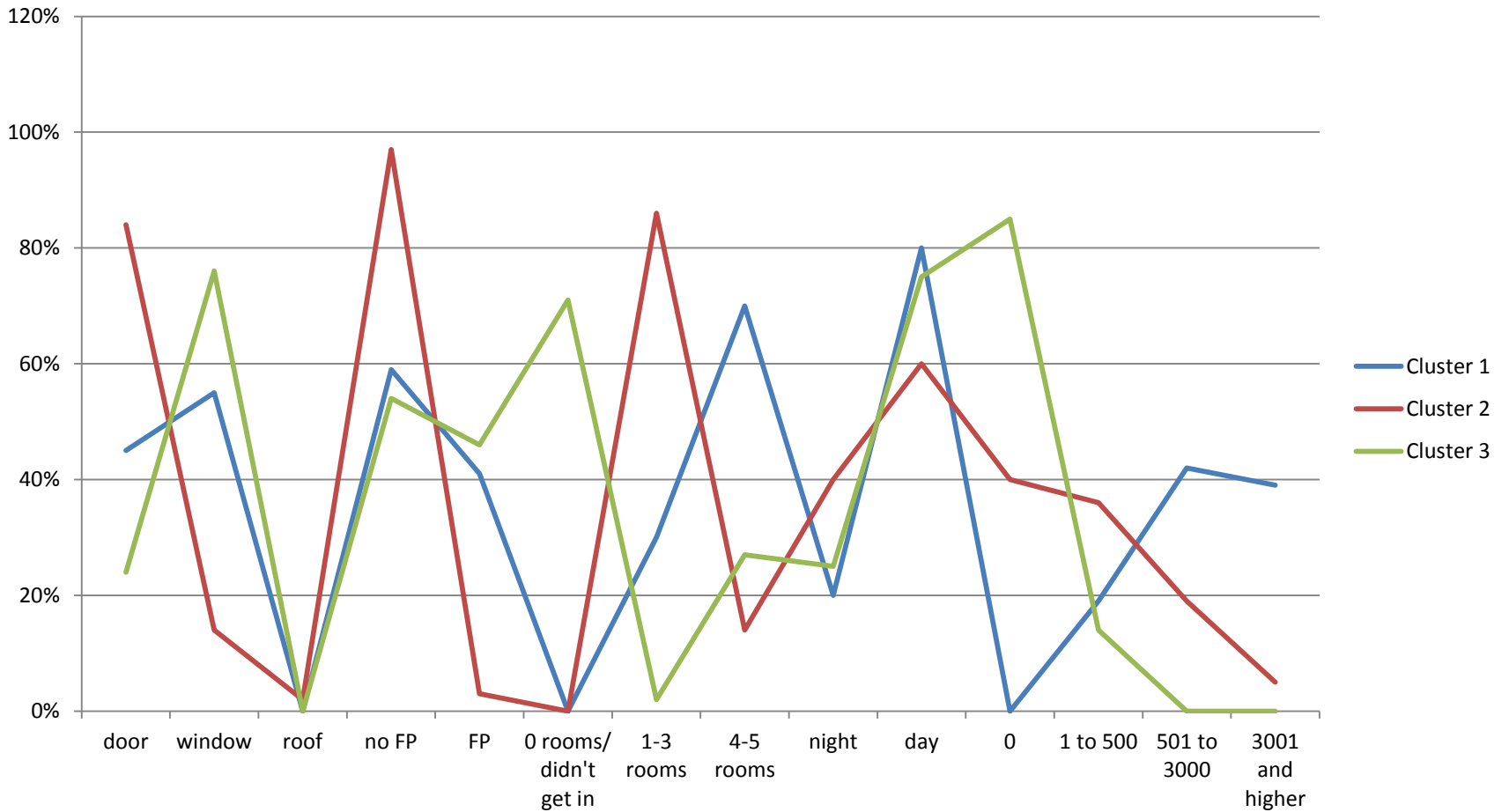
Day or night

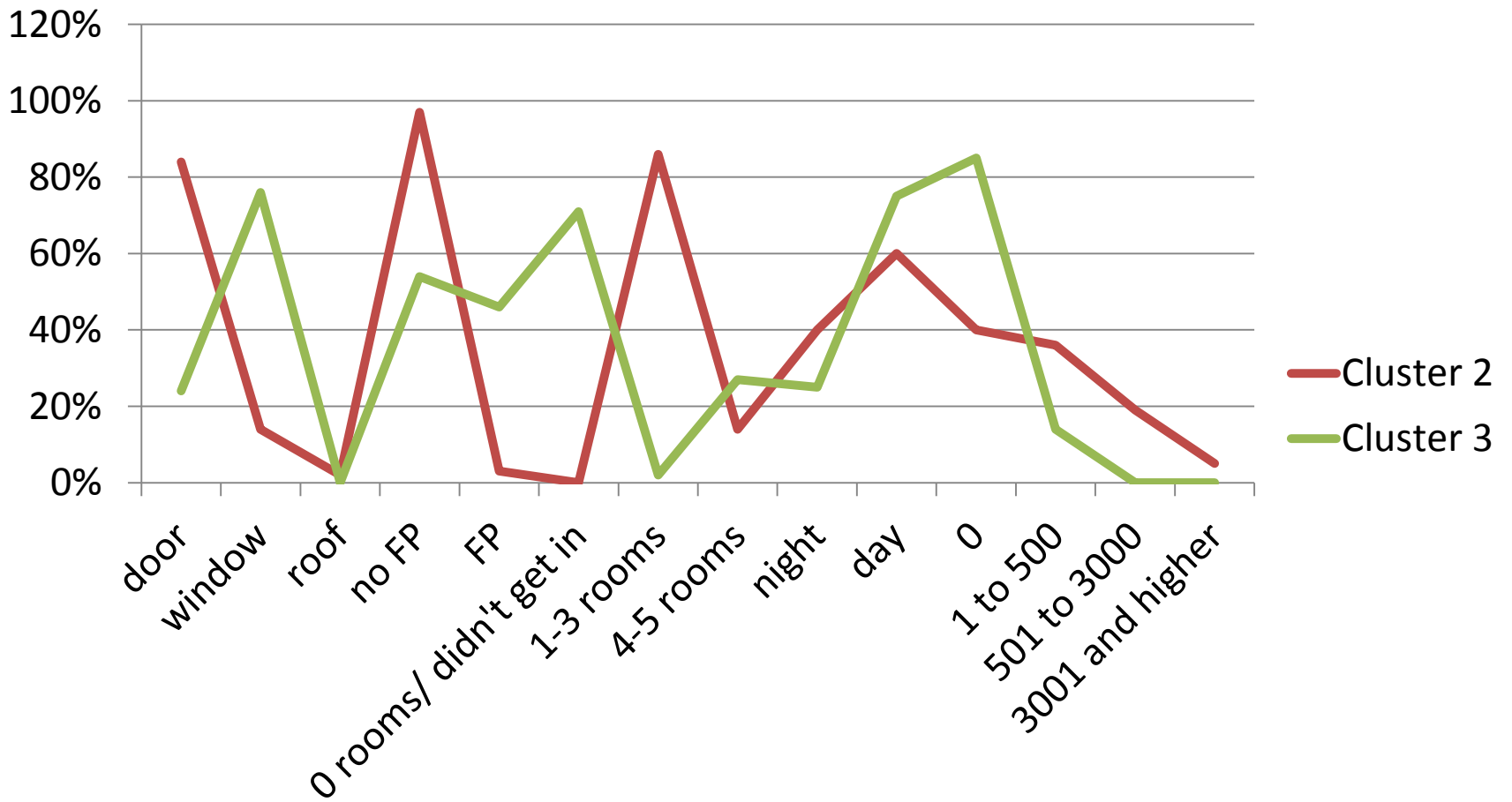
- day
- night

Value of property

- 0
- 1 to 500
- 501 to 3000
- 3001 and higher

# Three Clusters of Offence characteristics







# Offender traits and offence characteristics for Latent Class Analysis

Age

- up to 18
- 18.1 to 26.9
- 27 - 35
- more than 35

Number of offenders

- one offender
- two offenders
- three or more offenders

Ethnicity

- aboriginal/Torres Strait Islander
- caucasian
- other

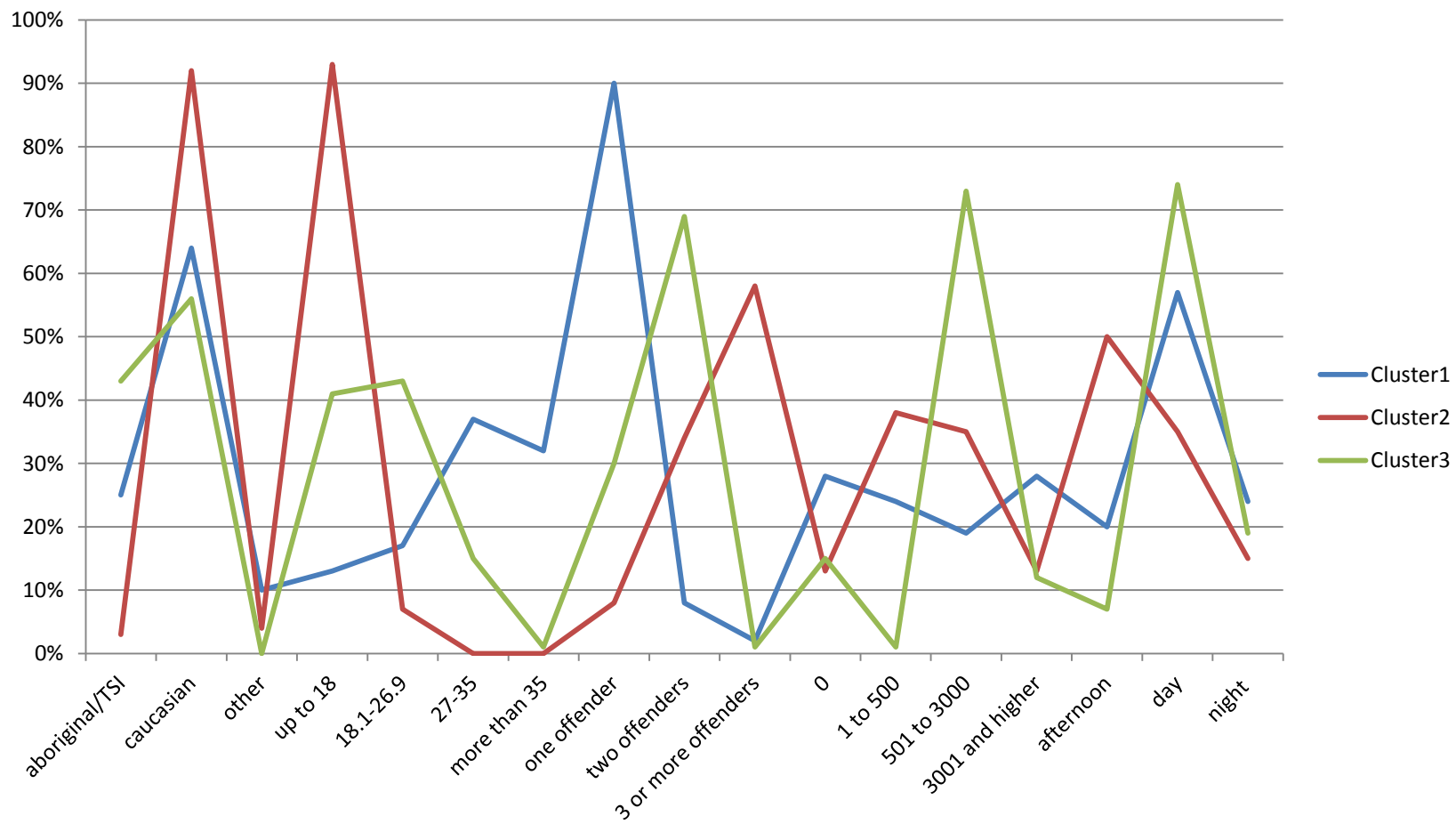
Day or night

- day
- afternoon
- night

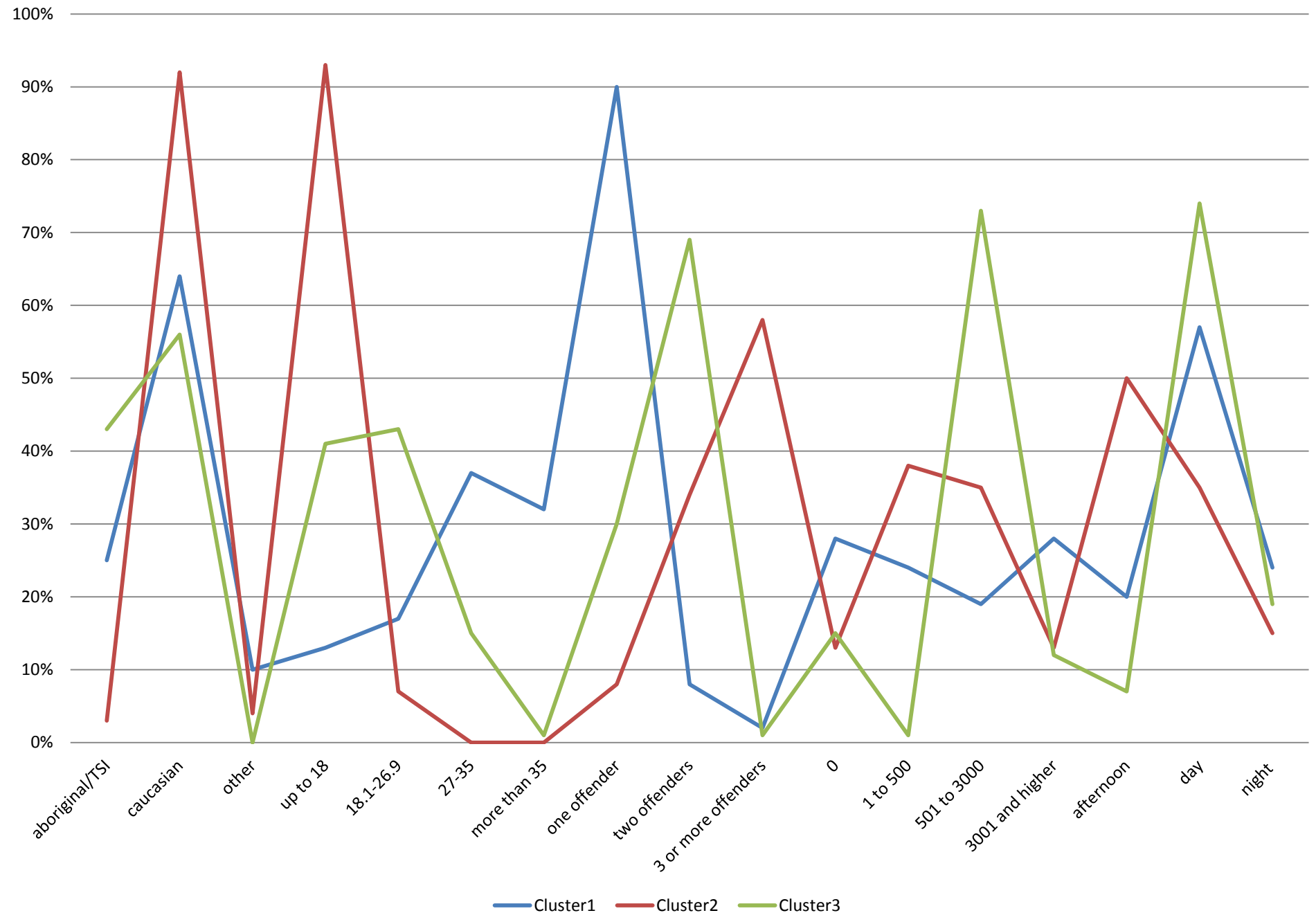
Value of property

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# Three cluster model of offender traits and offence characteristics



# Chart Title



Cluster1 Cluster2 Cluster3

LCA Cluster	Day Afternoon Night	Age	Number of offenders	Stolen property value	Ethnicity
<p><b>1</b> <b>The Professionals</b></p>	<p><b>Day or night</b></p>	<p><b>Adult</b></p>	<p><b>1</b></p>	<p><b>evenly spread</b></p>	<p><b>caucasian, some aboriginal</b></p>
<p><b>2</b> <b>The Learners</b></p>					
<p><b>3</b> <b>The Movers</b></p>					

LCA Cluster	Day Afternoon Night	Age	Number of offenders	Stolen property value	Ethnicity
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<b>2</b> <b>The Learners</b>	<b>Afternoon day</b>	<b>youth</b>	<b>2 or more offenders</b>	<b>low</b>	<b>caucasian</b>
<b>3</b> <b>The Movers</b>					

<b>LCA Cluster</b>	<b>Day Afternoon Night</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Number of offenders</b>	<b>Stolen property value</b>	<b>Ethnicity</b>
<b>1 The Professionals</b>	<b>Day or night</b>	<b>Adult</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>evenly spread</b>	<b>caucasian, some aboriginal</b>
<b>2 The Learners</b>	<b>Afternoon day</b>	<b>youth</b>	<b>2 or more offenders</b>	<b>low</b>	<b>caucasian</b>
<b>3 The Movers</b>	<b>Day</b>	<b>youth Young adults</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>medium</b>	<b>caucasian or aboriginal</b>



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# Progression?



**Learners**

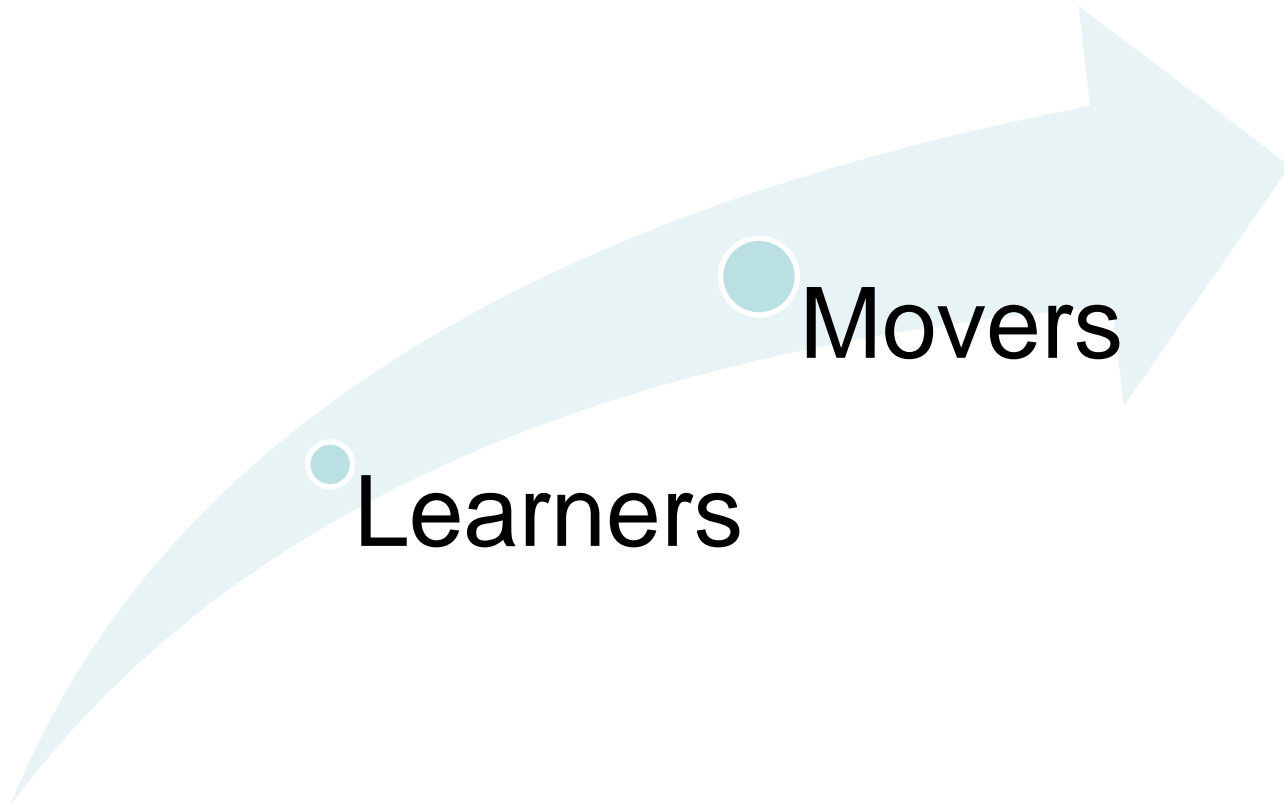


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# Progression?



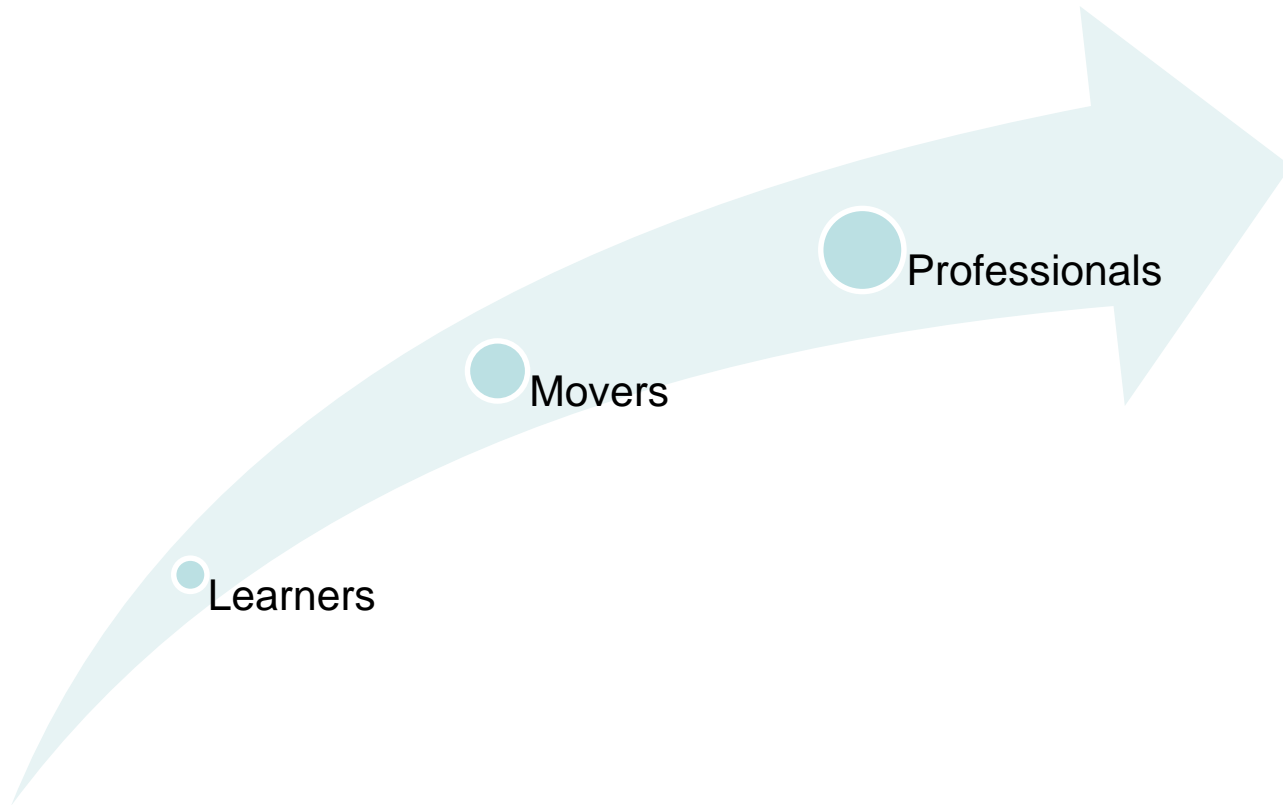
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# Progression?



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# What are the practical implications for policing ?

- Fox, Farrington, Chitwood and Jones (2013) tested theory
  - Treatment/control group, with nearly identical arrest rates
  - Training on how to use profiles in investigation for treatment group
  - Looked at arrest rates over 6 months
  - when offender-offence typologies were used to target known offenders, the identification of the offender at unsolved burglaries tripled for the test compared with the control police forces
  - Treatment group – increase in burglary clearances (4 X rate of control group)



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# But???

- Did they use similar police resources in the control or treatment area
- were similar officer resources were devoted to the key task of 'known offender targeting', for which offender-offence profiles might be especially helpful.
- An experiment where similar officers per burglary case were used, and the only difference would be the offender-offence typology, would be a more precise test of the typology's value.





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# Adelaide?

- Opportunities to police differently?
- Prior research – best evidence for solvability, how solvability can predict detection outcomes, how important first response and investigations are.
- Problems – reporting, process, identifying real time trends
- Initial screening, linking by clusters for prioritising forensic testing and focusing investigations.
- Use with other strategies – cocooning, predicting repeat targets, hot spot policing
- Once arrested, link offender to other unsolved crimes





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# Limitations

- Offender criminal history/behavioural characteristics
- More information
- Testing



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- Classification of burglars/burglaries
- Possible model of how the offending behaviour of burglars may alter as they age (learners, movers, professionals)
- Differences from US/UK/Dutch
  - Distance/minority/older offenders leaving DNA/younger leaving fingerprints
- Similarities
  - Cooffenders younger/lone offenders older
  - Longer journeys by older
  - Most during daylight, guardianship important
- Understanding of burglar-burglary characteristics and typologies at solved incidents that could be further developed.
  - Assist in investigations
  - Cost and efficiency benefits, victim satisfaction
- Built on burglary research but more required





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