

# Research paper on gender, employment, age, ethnicity and educational factors infl...

[Sociology](#), [Social Issues](#)



## **INTRODUCTION**

**GOAL STATEMENT:** To determine the profile of robbers arrested in the state of Massachusetts.

**INDEPENDENT VARIABLE:** a. Gender

b. Ethnicity

c. Age

d. Employment

e. Educational Background

## **RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

What gender is more often arrested for robbery in the state of Massachusetts?

What ethnicity is arrested for robbery in Massachusetts?

What age category is arrested for robbery in the state of Massachusetts?

What occupational status is arrested for robbery in the state of Massachusetts?

What educational background is arrested for robbery in the state of Massachusetts?

## **HYPOTHESES AND THEORIES**

**H1:** MEN ARE ARRESTED MORE FOR COMMITTING VIOLENT CRIMES THAN WOMEN DO.

**T1:** The most possible reason surrounding this could be that women commit less crime than men do. Men are usually raised to be active or aggressive or risk taking in nature and thus have more opportunity and an inclination to

commit crime. In most families, men are the ones on whom the whole family depends. Thus, many a times when the man of the house is unable to fulfill the needs, he lands up committing crime. The aggressiveness within them increases and so does the crime rate among them and thus men are arrested more often.

## **H2: AFRICAN-AMERICANS AND HISPANICS ARE USUALLY ARRESTED FOR ROBBERY THAN THEIR WHITE COUNTERPARTS.**

T2: While there are studies to confirm that African-Americans and Hispanics are more predisposed to committing violent crimes, this theory is rooted from the idea that majority of these racial groups living in Massachusetts are members of gangs. In addition, a large fraction of these groups are unemployed who are in need of resources to survive.

## **H 3: PEOPLE OF YOUNGER AGE (BELOW 40) ARE USUALLY ARRESTED FOR ROBBERY THAN THE ELDERLY IS.**

T 3: Young people are quicker, stronger and more cunning than the elderly. The younger crowd are more confident that they can get away with a crime when they are at their prime because they have the ability to move faster at this age as when they get older.

#### **H 4: PEOPLE WITH NO STABLE EMPLOYMENT ENGAGED IN ROBBERIES THAN THEIR EMPLOYED COUNTERPARTS.**

T 4: People have needs for survival which necessarily requires the means to avail it like money. If they are unemployed and not suited for welfare, some would resort to do something illegal like robbery to have means to survive.

#### **H 5: PEOPLE WITH LOWER EDUCATIONAL STATUS COMMIT ROBBERIES MORE OFTEN THAN THOSE WITH COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY DEGREES DO.**

T 5: Usually people who are lacking in education does not have any means to get better opportunities and earn their living. They are usually discriminated and not given the opportunity to be employed for lacking credentials. Given this condition, people who are uneducated and lacks the appropriate educational background are forced to do crimes.

### **SAMPLING PROCEDURE**

This report is being compiled in order to find out what types of gender, occupational, employment, age and racial factors are important with those, who are arrested for committing or intending to commit robberies in the state of Massachusetts. The research is descriptive in its nature, although it heavily relies on the statistical findings. In order to collect the data, random checks of the police departments in the different counties of the state will be conducted. In order to access the data, I will approach the chiefs of the police departments with the request to provide the relevant statistics and make any suggestions they consider necessary for this report. Letters,

requesting the information required and their prior consent to participate in the process will be sent. Once the data is collected, SPSS statistical software will be utilized for the needs of data interpretation. Once their explicit consents are obtained, the process of data collection and data interpretation will commence. The time required for the data collection and its respective interpretation fluctuates between nine months and one year.

The questionnaires will be sent by electronic mails to the Chiefs of police departments, and supported by a phone call asking them to pay attention to our research requests. It will be specifically emphasized, that their commentaries and opinions regarding present research project outside the scope of the questionnaire will be highly appreciated.

### **The project intends to collect 10, 000 robbery case materials in the:**

Worcester State Police Detective Unit,

Berkshire State Police Detective Unit,

Suffolk State Police Detective Unit,

Bristol State Police Detective Unit,

Plymouth State Police Detective Unit,

Cape and Islands State Police Detective Unit,

Norfolk State Police Detective Unit,

Essex State Police Detective Unit,

Middlesex State Police Detective Unit,

Hampshire State Police Detective Unit

Hampden State Police Detective Unit

The local correctional facilities and units.

A sample size of 10, 000 robbery cases produces a sampling error of 20% based on 80% confidence interval.

COVER LETTER

Massachusetts Department of Public Safety

50 Maple Street # 3,

**Milford, MA 01757,**

United States

Attn: Massachusetts Department of Correction Facility

RE: Research Proposal

The objectives of this letter is to require your assistance in cooperation in conducting a research project aimed at identifying gender, occupational, age, educational and racial factors pertinent to the people charged with robberies in the state of Massachusetts. The purpose of this research project is to assist law enforcement agencies in developing comprehensive and effective policies of crime prevention and investigation in the state of Massachusetts. Several similar pieces of research have been conducted nationwide and in other states while in Massachusetts the factors influencing robberies have not been empirically explored insofar.

The outcomes of this research will be published in several national academic journals, and we will enjoy the opportunity to produce a copy of our results for the needs of your police unit.

We will highly appreciate your assistance in the process of data collection. To be more specific, we request to be provided with 1, 000 incarcerated for

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robbery. You may find the details of the information we require in the attached questionnaire. If you have any other concerns, opinions or suggestions, which were not mentioned in the questionnaire, you are welcome to share them. Your assistance and cooperation are highly appreciated. Please, deliver the copies of these questionnaires (1000 copies have been attached to this letter) among the prison population of your detective unit/correctional facility particularly those who have been incarcerated for robbery.

**We thank you in advance for your assistance and participation in this socially significant research project.**

Sincerely,

## **The Research Team**

Enclosures (1)

### QUESTIONNAIRE

The objective of this questionnaire is to get the most accurate and detailed responses from the criminals, arrested or convicted on robbery charges.

Giving truthful and full answers will be extremely helpful for unbiased and accurate data collection. We thank you for the time you spent.

Instruction. Please, give the most appropriate response to each question.

### **What is your gender?**

a. Male b. Female

**What is your race?**

- a. Asian
- b. Hispanic
- c. African American
- d. White American
- e. Others

**How old were you when you were arrested? \_\_\_\_\_**

- a. Below 25 y. o.
- b. 26 – 35 y. o.
- c. 36 – 45 y. o.
- d. 46- 55 y. o.
- e. Above 56 y. o.

**Are you employed when you were arrested?**

- a. Yes
- b. No

**What is your educational level?**

- a. College/ University Graduate
- b. Undergraduate
- c. High school Graduate
- d. Uneducated
- e. Others

**LITERATURE REVIEW**

## Article #1

Steffensmeier, Damien.; Feldmeyer, B.; Harris, C. T.; Ulmer, J. T. (2011).

Reassessing Trends in Black Violent Crime. *Applied Criminology* 49: 197–251

The main message of the study is to emphasize the importance of the racial factor in robberies on the nationwide scale. The research team found out that the members of the Hispanic and Afro-American communities of the United States are more disposed to robberies and other violent crimes. In particular, the chances of being arrested for a robbery if a potential

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delinquent is of Latino or Afro-American origin are 1.5 higher, than if he is a white American. At the same time, this research articulates that individual biological characteristics do not matter, but the social surroundings and financial well-being of the Afro-American and Hispanic communities are the primary reasons for their intensified predisposition to the delinquent activities. The authors concluded, that historically many Afro-Americans and Hispanics live in the communities with tolerable, and sometimes even encouraging attitudes towards crime. For many members of them, delinquent activities are recognized as acceptable methods of earning for living, in the event other, legal methods of supporting their families are not available.

In this article, the research team emphasized the importance of education as an effective deterrent of robberies, burglaries, and other property crimes. In particular, the researchers articulated that the educational level of high school and higher reduces the chances of engaging in violent crime for two primary reasons. A well-educated person is less likely to become a robber because he has higher chances of pursuing legitimate careers. Thus, this paper helps in understanding how employment in US can affect the crime rate and motivate The Massachusetts Department of Correction agency and the research team to plan intervention programs.

## **Article #2**

Bontrager, S., Bales, W., & Chiricos, T. (2005). Race, Ethnicity, Threat and the Labeling of Convicted Felons. *Criminology* 43: 589-622

Among its other messages, this study found out the relationship between

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employment and predisposition to robbery, burglary, theft and other property crimes. The authors explored the main motives, which drive the delinquents to assaulting others and figured out that the primary influencing factor behind their behavior is financial. Consequently, those who have stable sources of income are considerably less predisposed to robberies and other violent crimes. In order to become a robber, these people have to cross the psychological barriers only, while for those without stable employment and steady income these barriers are less strong because of the need to satisfy basic financial necessities.

Furthermore, this study puts emphasis on the fact that living beyond the poverty line is not sufficient to motivate an individual to become a robber or a burglar. It is sufficient for the people to satisfy their basic physiological necessities (food, shelter and clothing) in order to remain law-abiding citizens. Naturally, there are few exceptions to this rule. For instance, the authors concluded that those seeking to obtain some luxury items (their percentage is insignificant) are not deterred by employment. However, for the overwhelming majority of Americans steady income and employment are effective restraining solutions. This study will help the Massachusetts Department of Correction Facility and us in our research to figure out ways to educate these robbers in such a way that they can meet their ends meet without committing crime.

## **DATA ANALYSIS**

The analysis of the collected robbery cases in the state of Massachusetts as determined in the survey that was conducted. 1, 000 respondents were

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selected from 12 correctional facilities in the State of Massachusetts. A margin of sampling error of 20% has been utilized with confidence level of 80% has been applied to the study.

This table supports our assumption that Afro-Americans and Hispanics are more predisposed to robbery than other members of the American community.

### **Hereby, our assumption that the males are more prone to violent crime is supported.**

This table demonstrates that less educated people are more inclined to violence.

#### RESEARCH FINDINGS/CONCLUSION

Once the data was interpreted, all our hypotheses were confirmed. In particular, the tables given above showed that a) the males commit robberies in 76% of the cases, b) Afro-Americans and Hispanics account for 36% and 33%, respectively, of the robberies offenders and c) the senior citizens and middle-aged population of the State of Massachusetts are less likely to be engaged in robberies.

Moreover, the collected data confirmed our initial assumption that educational level and employment are important determinants of disposition to crime. In particular, we found that the highest percentage of the robbers in the State of Massachusetts have secondary education only or no education at all. The citizens with college or university education are 16% less likely to be charged with robbery than those with high school diplomas. Unemployed Americans have 71% chances of being convicted of robbery.

Overall, it is reasonable to infer that conventional assumptions about race, gender, age, employment and education in relation to robberies appear to be valid. Therefore, the policies and anti-crime strategies of the law enforcement authorities should take into consideration these findings.

## **PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED**

During the course of the study the first thing I noticed was how difficult it was to actually get the raw data. Majority of the people that I interviewed all claimed they were innocent while some refused to provide accurate details about their personal information and the details of their case. Security was also a problem because it was not easy getting face to face with people who were charged with a crime. Majority of these robbers were also charged with homicide, murder and rape.

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