

Good example of the
incarceration rate of
homicide cases in
colorado research
pap...

[Sociology](#), [Population](#)



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Theory

Since the start of the 21st century until 2012, the homicide rate of Colorado, USA has been in a declining rate. There is a need to discuss how incarceration rates affect the society, especially how it influences crime in the area. Incarceration assumes that the offender is prevented to further commit crimes by incapacitation. Strategies of incapacitation focus on reducing crimes by interruption or disruption of the offender's career (Piquero and Blumstein, 2007).

In addition, incarceration affects not just the present crime rate, but it is also believed that the future of the community is being influenced by the impacts of incarceration. For example, having criminal records have negative effects on an individual. These includes bans on educational loans, housing and cash assistance, denial of military benefits and restrictions on type of employment, which further exacerbates socioeconomic status (Wheelock and Uggen, 2006).

Hypotheses

The primary hypothesis of this paper is that the increasing incarceration rates results to a decline in homicide cases in Colorado, USA. It has been observed that there is a decline in homicide rate from 2000 to 2012. To be exact, between 2000 and 2012, there have been 2, 102 cases of homicide in the said state. Comparing this to the record of the previous thirteen years (from 1987 to 1999) which totaled to 2, 403 cases, the number of cases declined. Although it seemed close, it should be noted that population is in a steady growth which means that as the number of people in Colorado increases; the number of homicides remains almost the same. In fact, for better comparison, homicide rate per 100, 000 people should be preferred. Indeed, the average homicide rate per 100, 000 people from 2000 to 2012 is just 3. 4, while the average homicide rate per 100, 000 people from 1987 to 1999 is 5. 2 (DisasterCenter, n. d.).

Needless to say, the homicide rate of Colorado from 2000 to 2012 declined comparing to the previous thirteen years as well as previous decades. With this, the question in mind is how this decline happened. Moreover, an increasing incarceration rate of people charged with homicide cases is apparent, not only in Colorado, but in the entire country (Science 2. 0, 2014). Is there a connection between this increasing incarceration rates to the declining homicide rates?

Methods

A steady-state model, named as Avi-Itzhak and Shinnar Incapacitation Model, assumed that a finite number of offenders commit crimes at a certain rate

during the entire duration of their criminal careers. This model states that as an offender spends more time in prison, the fewer crimes they he can accumulate in the community. Also, in this model, there exist five parameters in determining the amount of crimes prevented by incapacitation: the crime rate of the offender when free, the likelihood of the offender to be arrested and convicted, the likelihood of the offender to be imprisoned, the average imprisonment time, and the duration of the offender's criminal career (Piquero and Blumstein, 2007). Therefore, incarceration is a major factor of changes in the criminal activities of individuals, which eventually influences the community.

Furthermore, in order to further justify the hypothesis of this paper, data from the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Statistics will be used to back the claims of this paper. Table 1 below is generated from the UCR data generating site which shows the rate of homicide in Colorado during 2000 to 2001.

Source: FBI, Uniform Crime Reports as prepared by the National Archive of Criminal Justice Data ([http://www. ucrdatatool. gov/](http://www.ucrdatatool.gov/))

The estimated murder rates are based on the number of reported offenses per 100, 000 populations. This data were gathered from all the reporting agencies and estimates were made for those areas that are unaccounted for. Using this data will help in comparing the present incarceration rate to the past rates in order to determine its effect on homicide rate.

Results & Conclusion

Since it has been accepted that there exists a fixed number of offenders in the population, then, it should only follow that as more offenders are incarcerated, fewer offenders are left in the general population (Pinard, 2010). Therefore, increasing incarceration rates must have been a major factor in the declining criminal rates in Colorado.

In conclusion, Incarceration affects an offender's life dramatically. This means that as incarceration rate increases, the likelihood of criminal activities decreases. This is because of the fact that a finite number of offenders exists in a population. And since incarceration prevents the offenders to commit further crimes, an increase in incarceration rate would only mean that fewer offenders will be left in the population. Thus, increasing incarceration rates is a major factor in the declining criminal rates, including homicide cases, in Colorado.

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