

Influence of socio-economic status on the likelihood of getting arrested in chica...

[Sociology](#)



The paper "Influence of Socio-Economic Status on the Likelihood of Getting Arrested in Chicago" is a worthy example of a term paper on sociology.

There are many debates of scholars on the issues of police discretion and equity of police decisions to arrest people based on various suspect characteristics (Douglas, Visher, & Davidson 234). This paper provides a review of the theories related to the degree to which socioeconomic status influences police arrest decisions followed by an analysis of arrest decisions in Chicago. Suspects socioeconomic status

Many researchers have carried out qualitative studies suggesting that police behavior and socioeconomic status of suspects were two variables correlated with each other. Based on the research results carried out prior to the 1980s individuals from the lower class were more likely to be arrested than those of the higher class (Law. jrank. org, n. p.). Smith also has found that the chances to be arrested were higher in neighborhoods with greater economic disadvantage (cited by Lum 8).

However, other studies have shown that there was no independent influence of suspects' level of wealth over police' arrest decision (Law. jrank. org, n. p.). The main argument here was the fact of a high correlation between an individual's socioeconomic status and race in the United States. Kirk (73) also has carried out research examining the social context and ethnic/racial disparities in arrest. His findings indicate that the arrest of suspects is associated with structural features of neighborhoods, namely, the concentration of poverty in a specific location. As whites typically live in the areas with lower levels of concentrated poverty and blacks typically live in the areas with higher levels of concentrated poverty many researchers

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suggest that neighborhood characteristics and race are two dependent variables (Kirk 63). Therefore, socioeconomic status could be hardly viewed as an independent variable, which objectively could reflect the situation (Law. jrank. org, n. p.).

Socioeconomic status influences the likelihood of getting arrested in Chicago

Taking into consideration the statistical data related to the number of arrests by race in Chicago and socio-economic status of the residents of Chicago, it is possible to figure out the correlation between socioeconomic status of individuals of different races and the risks of arrests. There are identified several key factors of socio-economic status, including the level of educational attainment, unemployment rate, and income. Below is provided an overview of the level of education and unemployment level among the residents of Chicago categorized by race. The highest level of Chicago adults with less than a high school diploma was fixed among Hispanics/Latinos (43%), followed by HN Black (19%), Asian (14%), and the lowest – among whites (7%). The unemployment rate among Whites is the lowest in Chicago (7, 8 as of 2009), while the unemployment rate among Blacks was almost three times higher (21, 4%). The level of unemployment among Hispanic/Latino was 13, 3% (Chicagohealth77. org, n. d.).

By utilizing the previous researches and results of the literature review it is possible to analyze the recent statistics of arrests in Chicago and back it up with the above presented theoretical findings. In 2010 the total number of arrests for different types of offenses in Chicago was equal to 167, 541

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(Daley & Weis 35). Based on the racial classification of the individuals arrested in Chicago there was presented the following distribution:

103, 228 arrests - African American

28, 114 arrests -Hispanic

11, 745 arrests - Caucasian

789 arrests -Asian

200 arrests - Unk.

99 arrests - Native American (Daley & Weis 35).

This statistical data illustrates that the largest number of arrests in Chicago is among the African American population, followed by Hispanic population.

Conclusion

The paper has provided an overview of the key theories related to the influence of socioeconomic status on the likelihood of getting arrested in Chicago. Practically all scholars have identified a correlation between the socio-economic status and race among the US population. The research has shown that the socio-economic status of African-American and Hispanic/Latino racial populations was lower than the socio-economic status of the White population. Therefore, it is possible to state that there is a high correlation between the socio-economic status of suspects and their race. As the prevailing number of arrests in Chicago is referred to the African Americans, it is possible to conclude that their socio-economic status also influences the likelihood of getting arrested in Chicago. However, the variable of socio-economic status should be viewed in combination with the race variable.

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