The kansas city gun experiment

The Kansas Gun Experiment Order No. 329776 November " 09 The Kansas Gun Experiment To conduct any kind of research a good research design is required. A research design provides us with a plan that outlines the types of tools or methods that are to be used for research. This paper is about the research design used by the Kansas City Gun Experiment and also about the National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS).

Introduction

The three major types of research designs are experimental, quasi-experimental, and pre-experimental. In the Kansas City Gun Experiment the Quasi-experimental design was used. This design is similar to experimental design, but here instead of random assignment, matching is used. Experiments are not the only research designs used to conduct research. There are other types of data-gathering strategies that can be used such as surveys, case studies, participant observation and unobtrusive measures. The most common type of unobtrusive measure is the Uniform Crime Reports (UCR) where existing data collected and maintained by the FBI is used. The National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS) is a part of UCR.

The Kansas City Gun Experiment

This experiment undertaken by the Kansas City Police Department was based on the theory that gun seizures and gun crime are inversely proportional. According to this theory gun seizures increase with the decrease of gun crimes. In order to test this theory and to reduce gun crime in Kansas City the Police Department used the quasi experimental design. It ordered extra patrol attention on gun crime " hot spots". They conducted a target beat for 29 weeks. Specific and varied techniques were used by

officers to detect guns, illegal weapon owners and high-risk youths. In order to protect civil liberties all searches and frisks conducted had to conform to legal guidelines. All arrests made for carrying illegal weapons had to be approved by a supervisory detective. A University of Maryland evaluator accompanied the officers when they went out to gather information. The data gathered was then analyzed.

The major findings of the report

It was found that gun seizures in the target area increased by more than 65 percent and gun crimes declined by 49 percent whereas there was no significant change in areas not covered by the experiment. There was also a significant drop in homicides in target areas. The experiment also proved that the police can implement a program to increase seizures of illegal guns and that the productivity of Police officers increased when they were given the opportunity to focus only on gun detection in crime hot spots without being duty-bound to answer service calls. This program was also cost effective.

The National Incident Based Reporting System (NIBRS)

NIBRS is a part of The Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program, a Federal law enforcement program. The UCR gets crime information from across the country through law enforcement agencies. On the other hand NIBRS is an incident-based reporting system and is more sophisticated than UCR. Here when a crime is detected by the law enforcement, a variety of data concerning the incident is collected. This data includes factors like the nature of the incident, the type of offense, the characteristics of the victim and the offender and the types and value of property that has been stolen and recovered. . For instance it describes them as domestic violence, gun

assaults, hate crimes or child abuse. The NIBRS covers a wide range of offences when compared to the UCR. The range of offences includes 22 categories of crime covering 46 offenses. The UCR system covers only 8 index offenses and provides only the general characteristics of the persons. According to Frank Hagan (2009), " Although the UCR is a valuable source of information on crime, it's worth emphasizing that, in addition to underreporting, its validity as a source of crime data is affected by things such as the politics of crime reporting by police departments, neglect of white-collar crime, and better recording and reporting of crime". NIBRS provides the law enforcement agencies and the academicians more comprehensive data for training, planning, management, and research purposes. Since it covers a wider range of offences the law enforcement officers, the public and analysts are able to understand the trends in different types of crime and their harmful effects. The crime data can also be utilized for planning strategies, analysis of crime and even manpower planning. NIBRS facilitates more effective utilization of limited resources.

References

1. Hagan E. Frank, Research Methods in Criminal Justice and Criminology, Allyn & Bacon; 8 edition (July 3, 2009)