
Analysis Of The Factors Predicting The Increase Or Decrease On Hate Crime Within Certain States

Diversity is a broad concept with several dimensions. The term is commonly used to describe various types of race, ethnicity, or gender. Hate crime refers to bias-motivated crimes. Hate crimes can include violent or property crime. This paper will examine the factors that predict the increase or decrease on hate crime within certain states. It will begin with evaluating the term, diversity, and examining the impact of diversity that surfaced in the wake of a more heterogeneous population.

Diversity and Hate Crime

In political studies, this term is referred to as a degree of differences in identifying features between individuals of a population. Diversity includes several important sections: socio-economic status, sexual orientation, ethnicity, gender identity, gender, race and age. Socio-economic status refers to one's social standing or class based on income, occupation and education. Sexual orientation involves the gender (male or female) to which a person is attracted to. Types of sexual orientation include heterosexual, homosexual, bisexual, asexual and pansexual. Gender identity is a how a person identifies (male or female) which may or may not correspond with their birth sex; whereas gender refers to what a person was at birth. Ethnicity and race are often mistaken as synonyms but the two words are different. Ethnicity is the term for the culture of people in a particular geographic region, including one's heritage and language (German, Spanish, Chinese). Race is associated with biology; an example of race is brown or white. Hate crimes are hardly a new phenomenon. In the United States, hate crimes have been inspired largely by religious and racial bias.

In the past two centuries, cross burnings to drive black families from predominantly white neighborhoods, swastikas painted on Jewish synagogues, and the Ku Klux Klan's lynchings of African Americans are few of the examples of hate crimes in this country. Allen (1996) tested the socioeconomic status and property crime rates in Socioeconomic Conditions and Property Crime. His empirical findings concluded that a decrease in absolute poverty and income inequality are associated with increased criminal activity. According to Stacey, Carbone-Lopez, and Rosenfield (2011) a significant question in Demographic Change and Ethnically Motivated Crime: The Impact of Immigration on Anti-Hispanic Hate Crime in the United States. The question asked: "To what extent is anti-Hispanic hate crime related to patterns of immigration to the United States?" This particular study found that hate crimes against Hispanics will be elevated when and where Hispanic immigration has grown.

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Prior studies have assisted in finding a relationship between demographic changes and hate crime rates. Grattet (2009) discovered that changes in the minority population result in an increase of all types of hate crime in primarily White neighborhoods in Sacramento, but there are decreases in hate crimes against Blacks in predominantly non-White neighborhoods. With these findings, the authors stated that these studies focus on a single community and are unable to provide insight regarding the broader impact of demographic change on hate crime. Therefore, to address this gap in this particular literature, the authors used a proxy, Black-White relations, to examine the relationship between the Hispanic immigration rates and hate crimes directed at Hispanics in the United States.

Impact

Diversity is stated as accepting an individual's uniqueness whether it involves one's race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, etc. Benefits of a prospering, diverse nation can possibly improve the nation's economic strength. Diverse societies can harness the talents of different groups of people to make for a more robust economy. Exercising diversity as a benefit for our economy can also shrink the income inequality, in particular, the gender gap. However, the issues seem to overpower the benefits of diversity within the United States. Herek (2009) conducted a survey from a U. S. national probability sample of lesbian, gay, and bisexual adults with a sample size of 662. "Approximately 20 percent of respondents reported having experienced a person or property crime based on their sexual orientation. Other studies had a specific focus on age groups. Herek mentioned a particular study conducted by other researchers. In a sample of 194 gay, lesbian and bisexual youths from 15-21 years old across the United States, 22 percent had been sexually assaulted, and 44 percent had been threatened with attack.

Herek admitted that using these studies to derive an estimate of the population prevalence of hate crime victimization against U. S. sexual minorities are difficult considering the differences in sampling strategies, time frames within which they evaluated victimization, and how they reported their data. For example, some studies reported findings separately from men and women, or bisexuals and homosexuals, while others did not. He introduces the term sexual stigma, a cultural belief system where homosexuality is discredited and socially constructed as invalid relative to heterosexuality. He conducted his study based off enacted stigma, felt stigma, and demographic data. Gay men are at the greatest risk for person and property crimes. In previous years, he discovered that most crimes are perpetrated by heterosexuality-identified men who may have more hostile attitudes toward sexual minority males rather than sexual minority females. Hansmann and Scheitle studied the correlation between religion and hate crime. The two researchers use two data sources to conduct their study. The UCR, based on police reports, contradicts the increase in hate crimes rates, suggesting that a downward trend in the number of religion-related hate crimes mirrors the overall downward trend for all hate

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crimes.

In contrast, the NCVS, which is based on victim reports, suggests that religion-related hate crimes have been relatively stable in number. As a result, the NCVS reported that Americans typically experience, or at least perceive, around 50, 000 religion-related hate crimes per year. From the UCR, they found that police typically classify a little over 1, 000 crimes per year that is motivated by a religion bias. Due to the opposite results, these two sources leave much to be desired. Hate Crime Laws According to The Bureau of Justice Assistance, or BJA, forty-seven jurisdictions across the country have enacted some type of legislation created to combat hate crimes. These jurisdictions use three legislative approaches to combat hate crimes — prohibiting general behavior motivated by bias, prohibiting specific intimidating actions, and enhancing penalties for criminal acts motivated by bias. Several states including Florida, Ohio, and California, have passed laws banning certain activity at certain places, such as vandalism and intentional disturbances at places of worship. District of Columbia and Florida banned acts such as burning a cross or placing a swastika or other symbols on another's property for intimidation purposes. Other jurisdictions like New York, have passed legislation punishing any behavior motivated by bias as one offense. The New York hate crimes statute forbids bias-motivated harassment or discrimination. Although these statutes seem to be protecting potential victims, they have been challenged on the grounds that they violate the first amendment of the U. S. Constitution. Those who oppose hate crime laws argue that “punishing an offender more harshly when that person commits a crime due to bias against a particular class of people penalizes his or her thoughts, therefore, violating the first amendment. ”

The hate crime problem has moved up the political agendas of policymakers at every level of government in the past few years. Based on this particular literature, in four years, the Justice Department and Congress have approved new initiatives designed to combat hate crimes and violence. However, potential victims may not know a reporting system is put in place to protect them. If potential victims can see a well-publicized case result in a strict sentence for the offenders, they will be more likely to report future hate crimes, making the possible perpetrators more discouraged from acting on impulse. According to the BJA, “Policymakers may want to focus on developing initiatives and strategies that promote training for judges, law enforcement, prosecutors and new laws to ensure that all hate crimes are acted upon. ”

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