Police Crime Against Black Victims, 2005-2014

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Criminology Consortium
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Background

- Critical Race Theory & the Criminal Justice System
  - Race permeates all stages and processes of the criminal justice system, starting with police street encounters, interactions during police calls for service, and in the discretionary decision-making and powers of individual officers (Stinson, 2020).

- Institutional Racism in Policing
  - *Terry v. Ohio* (1968) laid the foundation for the continued proliferation of racially biased policing. Blacks are almost three times more likely than Whites to be pulled over by the police in a traffic stop (Epp, et al., 2014).
  - Many police officers fear Black people (Stinson, 2020). Gabbidon (1994) coined the term “blackaphobia” to describe fear of Blacks as criminals.

- Police Legitimacy & Procedural Justice
  - Police legitimacy is established through informal judgments people make about procedural justice (i.e., whether they are treated fairly by the police).
  - Many Black people are very distrustful of the police (Anderson, 2000).

- Police Militarization
  - Police typically invoke a warrior mentality and work in quasi-military organizations.
  - The President’s Task Force on 21st Century Policing (2015) recommended that “law enforcement culture should embrace a guardian mindset to build public trust and legitimacy.”
Methods

• This study is part of a larger research project on police crime that examines cases of nonfederal sworn law enforcement officers arrested since January 1, 2005.

• Google News search engine and Google Alerts are utilized to find and track cases and officers.

• Inclusion Criteria:
  • Individual was a sworn nonfederal law enforcement officer at the time of arrest and/or commission of the crime
  • Officer was arrested on or after January 1, 2005
  • Officer was arrested and/or criminally charged.

• Unit of analysis: Criminal arrest case
  • This allows for us to track multiple cases for a singular officer

• This study focuses on victim race in police crime arrest cases during the decade 2005-2014.

• One limitation of the study is that missing data on victim race in many cases reduced the sample size.
Descriptive Statistics

- Our sample includes **865 criminal arrest cases**. Victim race is known for all cases.

- Descriptive statistics are tabled for officer, agency, and victim characteristics.
  - 94.3% of cases involve a male officer
  - 52.6% of cases occurred while the officer was on-duty
  - Cases ranged in officer rank from street level officer to chief
  - Officer’s age ranged from 21 to 73 ($\bar{x} = 37.38$, sd = 8.77)
  - Officer’s years of service ranged from 0 to 49 ($\bar{x} = 10.91$, sd = 7.68)
  - 91.6% of cases involve an officer employed by an agency within a metropolitan county
  - 42.3% of cases involve an officer employed by an agency within the Southern region of the United States
  - **38.7% of cases involve a victim whom was identified as Black**
  - 73.8% of cases involve a victim whom was a stranger or acquaintance to the officer
  - 85.2% of cases involve an adult victim
  - 63.0% of cases involve a male victim

(Full Tables are Available Upon Request)
## Bivariate Associations

### Victim Race Bivariate Associations

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable Label</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>$\chi^2$</th>
<th>df</th>
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(Full Tables are Available Upon Request)
## Bivariate Associations

### Violence-Related Bivariate Associations

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(Full Tables are Available Upon Request)
CHAID Model

Violence-related crime vs Other crime type

Victim Race Dichotomous: Is this person White or Black?
Adj. P-value=0.006, Chi-square=32.392, df=1

Profile-motivated crime vs Other crime type
Adj. P-value=0.000, Chi-square=200.313, df=1

Arrested officer pulled, fired or threatened w/ gun
Adj. P-value=0.000, Chi-square=13.490, df=1

Alcohol related crime vs Other crime type
Adj. P-value=0.000, Chi-square=64.191, df=1

Duty Status
Adj. P-value=0.000, Chi-square=63.923, df=1

Is this a State Court or Federal Court case?
Adj. P-value=0.000, Chi-square=4.558, df=1

Not alcohol-related

Alcohol-related

Off duty at time of offense
On duty at time of offense

State Court
Federal Court
Conclusion

- Criminal arrest cases of law enforcement officers with Black victims are more strongly associated with violence-related crime compared to police crime against non-Black victims.

- Over 40% of the arrest cases involve police crimes against Black victims where the arrested officer brandished a firearm.

- Policy Implications?
Thank you!

Henry A. Wallace Public Police Crime Database

https://policecrime.bgsu.edu/

Police Integrity Research Group

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