

Education and How It Impacts Arrest Rates

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the relationship between education and the number of arrests. This study looks at how education or lack of an education impacts the rates of arrests, using data from the San Luis Obispo County. It looks at different contributing factors such as income, race and police profiling while also looking at the environment of the individuals and how these factors play a part in the relationship between education and arrest rates.

Education is a big factor in one's life and can help reduce arrest rates, especially in youth because if they are involved in a positive recreational activity or program, they are less likely to commit a crime. This study aims to determine how education impacts the number of arrests being made if education was high.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Statement of the Problem

The educational opportunities for people go a long way in their future. When these opportunities are low, then they are more likely to make the wrong choices and the likelihood of getting arrested and incarcerated increases. With low-income cities that don't have a lot of after-school programs for youth or employment openings for people, there is a higher rate of arrests. The police authorities turn to profiling the community because most impoverished neighborhoods are close to overpopulation.

Background of the Problem

Criminal activity has always been a part of society and depending on the years, there have been times where arrest and incarceration rates were lower than most. Crime seems to be dependent on the educational and economic factors. In the 1800s there was a specific kind of inequality that came within races, but the factor that had a hand was the issue of education attainment. There was a common view in the postwar period that linked educational attainment with a provision of the necessary skills for upward mobility. "...lower-class juveniles who failed to secure an adequate education had little chance of improving their circumstances and that frustration led them to 'acute discontent' and 'aberrant behavior.'" (LaFree, Drass, p. 617).

These days, there is still a connection between the opportunities for education and crime. By looking at cities or even counties, there is a large disparity between cities or counties of a wealthy income and those with a much lower level of income. Through the income per city, the resources, opportunities and support services are reflected. Smaller and poorer cities have less to

offer their residents which often lead to higher crime causing a high rate of arrests and incarceration.

Purpose of the Study

By looking closely at the impact that education and employment have on arrest rates, we can see that the lack of these opportunities create a higher risk of getting arrest and sometimes, later incarcerated. By knowing the factors behind arrest rates, it can show the public that there are various methods to decrease arrest rates and recidivism that involve education and employment opportunities.

Setting for the Study

This study will take place as data collection and research for a senior project at California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo. The study will also pull from data collection and research gathered from the cities of Oceano, Nipomo and Arroyo Grande.

Research Questions

This study is structured around research questions based on literature and articles focused around educational and employment opportunities and how it affects the rates of arrests, using the various subsets of income, race and police profiling/targeting. The study also looks at how communities can decrease the number of arrests and reduce recidivism.

1. In what ways does the educational system help run the criminal justice system?
2. What kind of education or lack thereof has an impact on the number of arrests?
3. What steps are taken to educate and employ the public to decrease criminal activity?
4. When those who are arrested and incarcerated find a career, does it reduce arrest rates?

5. What steps can a structural society do to decrease recidivism?

Definition of Terms

Targeting: to use (a person) as a target, to mark out or identify (a place, person, etc.) as a target (Oxford English Dictionary, 2015)

Profiling: Selection for scrutiny by law enforcement officials, etc., based on superficial characteristics (as ethnic background or race) rather than on evidentiary criteria (Oxford English Dictionary, 2015)

Recidivism: The action of relapsing into crime, or reoffending, esp. habitually; the tendency to behave in this way (Oxford English Dictionary, 2015)

Organization of the Study

This study will be organized into five chapters to help guide the reader through the background information on education and its relation to arrest rates to the data collected that is interpreted in this study. Chapter One states the problem of the study and gives a description on what it is about. Chapter Two is a literature review that uses the research collected to overview education and how it truly impacts arrest rates. Chapter Three includes the methodology used during the data collection. Chapter Four contains the research questions and the data that was collected for each research question. Chapter Five, the concluding chapter, summarizes the results of the study and gives encouragement for parents to seek higher education for their children, which can impact arrests and incarceration rates in the future.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

The review of literature focuses on the relationship and connection between education and arrest rates. More specifically, how education along with all the other subsets (income, employment, race) affect the number of arrests.

How the Educational System Helps Run the Criminal Justice System

Research by Stephen J. Steurer, John Linton, John Nally and Susan Lockwood (2010) found that the idea of education will play a big part in the criminal justice system because “Education is an excellent reentry tool.” (p. 41) Gerry Gaes, an additional researcher, looks in “The Impact of Prison Education on Post Release Outcomes” and finds out how those who are incarcerated can benefit from a “prison-based education” (p. 42). He includes that even college graduates are able to benefit from “further education and specialized certification.” (p. 42).

Research by Cornelius Frolik (2013) found that the better and higher the high school graduation rates are, then the lower the crime rates are. In the research, Denise Justice, superintendent of the Ohio Central School System states, “High school dropouts often have limited job opportunities, and some people without economic opportunities sometimes turn to crime out of desperation.” Still, there is no direct connection between graduation rates and crime rates. Bob Wise, president of the Washington, D.C -based Alliance for Excellent Education, says, “Dropping out of school does not automatically result in a life of crime, but high school dropouts are far more likely than high school graduates to be arrested or incarcerated.” This research is based off a report by the Alliance for Excellent Education, who looks at high school graduation rates in Ohio. The report shows that education does have an impact on crime as, “Students who remain engaged in their schoolwork are less likely to end up on the streets, and

school may help develop values and skills that can prevent students from later engaging in criminal activities.”

Research by Derek Messacar and Philip Oreopoulos discusses how the decision to drop out of school stems from the idea of disengagement from an early age. “Thus, policies that combat early disengagement may also prevent at-risk students from falling into a downward spiral, where missing school causes them to fall behind in their studies, which, in turn, makes them feel even less motivated to attend classes and puts them farther behind.” (p. 13). Messacar and Oreopoulos use their research to show how states should be providing programming to “raise high school graduation rates” which will engage students in academics and keep them off the streets, as other research shows.

Impact of Education or Lack Thereof on Arrest Rates

Research by Lance Lochner and Enrico Moretti (2004) used data on arrests and incarceration to estimate the impacts of education on crime and found that “...schooling is associated with a lower probability of arrest and imprisonment.” (Section IV). Using three different data sources, they end up finding and concluding that “...schooling significantly reduces criminal activity.” (Section VI) but it is not easily explained. Many things are dependent on the characteristics of the offenders, state policies or even the wages which impact education.

Research by Lance Lochner and Randi Hjalmarsson (2012) used data from aforementioned researchers, Lochner and Moretti (2004), who estimated the different effects of education on the different types of crime. The types of crimes ranged from violent crimes (murder, rape, robbery and assault) and property (burglary, larceny, motor vehicle theft and arson) and they found that “...a one year increase in the average years of schooling reduces both

property and violent crime by about 11-12 percent.” (p. 51). But the number is general as the effects of education “vary considerably” within the types of crimes.

Research by Peter Z. Schochet, John Burghardt and Sheena McConnell (2008) state that through an educational and training program called Job Corps can help guide a youth to become more responsible and employable. “Job Corps significantly reduced arrest and conviction rates, as well as time spent incarcerated.” (p. 1874). They found that Job Corps had a larger impact on the decrease of less serious crimes like disorderly conduct than on more serious crimes such as murder. This program is geared for “disadvantaged youth” and certain differences had to be addressed like age and program readiness, but overall “The National Job Corps Study found that Job Corps improves outcomes for disadvantaged youth.” (p. 1883).

Ways to Decrease Criminal Activity

Research by David William Collier (2012) defines the theory of “broken windows” when a city maintains and monitors small crimes such as vandalism, can prevent more serious crimes from occurring. This theory was developed by James Wilson and George Kelling in 1982. In Collier’s research many of the methods used to decrease crimes in various selected states are seen as “controversial”, such as Maricopa County in Arizona. Sheriff Joe Arpaio of Maricopa County “employs multiple methods to both punish and deter criminal behavior.” (p. 22). Some of his efforts include providing only two meals a day to save taxpayer money, posting all the mug shots of everyone who has been arrested and also initiating programs such as “the S.T.A.R.S (Sheriff Teaching Abuse Resistance to Students) program, an e-learning program designed to educate juveniles about the perils of drugs, alcohol, violence and gangs...” (p. 22). Despite how controversial Sheriff Arpaio’s methods may seem, “The crime rate there has dropped nineteen percent between 2004 and 2008.” (p. 23).

Research by Chantal Di Placido, Terri L. Simon, Treena D. Witte, Deqiang Gu and Stephen C.P. Wong shows (2006) focuses on the treatment of gang members to reduce both recidivism and criminal activity which in turn will affect the rates of arrests and incarceration. "...it is important to reduce gang violence both inside prisons and in the community." (p. 94). Three institutional methods used to reduce gang violence are separating and isolating gangs and their members, dissociating from the gangs and the usage of correctional treatment. This research shows that "...correctional treatment programs should be provided to gang members as an alternative to static or administrative gang management approaches such as isolation and segregation." (p. 95). One program was described as "a psychotherapeutic gang intervention program that encourages participants to accept responsibility/accountability for their offending behavior." (p. 95). Another program described "...offers a program for gang members who wish to renounce their association, which includes interacting with members from other gangs, signing a renunciation form, and learning about cultural awareness, anger management and other skills." (p. 95). It is important to note that the success of these programs have no systematic evaluation and are limited to mostly anecdotal evidence. Still it is apparent that the "appropriate correctional treatment" that follows the risk of the individuals who offend (the higher the more effective), the needs that contribute to an individual's criminal activities and the accommodation and maximized responsiveness of the treatment, do reduce gang violence in correctional facilities and out in the community. "...effective correctional treatment should be considered as one of the approaches in the management and rehabilitation of incarcerated gang members." (p. 111).

Career opportunities and the Reduction of Arrest Rates

Research by Lori Latrice Martin (2011) discusses how prisoner reentry back into the community is pushed by the factors of education and employment. "Researchers have concluded

a lack of educational attainment and/or work experience has made reintegration into the community after prison and complying with parole or probation requirement difficult for many offenders.” (p. 136-137). The research states that many offenders end up returning to a criminal lifestyle because of the lack of opportunities and the lack of support. “Ex-offenders who find securing gainful employment a challenge, may find more success if they were self-employed or empowered owner of a cooperative business.” (p. 139). With the opportunity to become employed and financially stable, those who are arrested and incarcerated are less likely to return to a correctional facility and it is theorized that it can also reduce arrest rates as they won’t be out on the streets.

Research by Malgorzata Glinska and Derry Voysey Wade (2013) “...focuses on three programs that teach inmates to take an entrepreneurial approach to their unique challenges. In giving offender tools and a positive framework, these programs help them to create employment opportunities for themselves and others.” (p. 1). These programs are a prison outreach program that use employment to reduce recidivism. With the success of these programs, it is easy to see how it can also affect arrest rates. Bert Smith, CEO of the Prison Entrepreneurship Program says that “A lot of this has to do with attitude. They show up, they interview, and they are ready.” (p. 5). While these programs are specifically for offenders coming out of prison, the programs seem to have high hopes to be for those who aren’t specifically coming out of prison.

Ways to Decrease Recidivism

Research by Peter J. Lathrop (2011) shows how both academic and non-academic programs help with the rehabilitation of those who have been incarcerated as the rates of recidivism decrease. “...the importance of non-academic programs, such as communication and interpersonal skill competency, life skills, and values training. These types of programs tend to

facilitate competence and confidence acquired through other educational-academic programs.” (p. 93). When people learn these skills, they are able to transform themselves and shell out the person they used to be.

Research by Chloe Lancaster, Richard S. Balkin, Roberto Garcia and Alexandra Valarezo (2011) focuses on “court-referred youth” and how to reduce recidivism for this type of population. They provided counseling services as their approach to reduce recidivism and found that “...primarily of Latino/a ethnicity, were significantly less likely to reoffend if provided counseling services. Three out of five court-referred youth did not reoffend when they received a community-based intervention, and the likelihood of maintaining progress after participating in a life skills group for 7 weeks increased if clients passed the 3-month threshold of not reoffending.” (p. 491). It is apparent that counseling services bring a kind of support that has seemed inaccessible in the past, but will benefit those who use the services.

Research by LaKeesha N. Woods, Stephen A. Lanza, William Dyson and Derrick M. Gordon (2013) discusses the move to promote health to reduce recidivism and increase reentry back into the community. “The prevention framework can help providers and men returning to the community conceptualize and recognize multiple risks and proactively develop a comprehensive plan not only to address immediate needs but also to put supports in place to prevent potential difficulties.” (p. 837). The promotion of health creates a community of support made for reentry for those being released from a correctional facility.

Research by Christopher Uggen (2000) has founded that for a certain population of offenders (criminal offenders over 26 years old), the turning point to reduce recidivism is work. “Offenders who are provided even marginal employment opportunities are less likely to reoffend than those not provided such opportunities.” (p. 542). Though the research shows that the

program does not completely reduce crime, it does have an impact on reducing the rates of recidivism on the older population of those who offend. This population seems to be more open to these kinds of opportunities and stay out of the facilities and be a part of the community.

Chapter 3

Methodology

In this chapter, we will discuss the methodology used to collect data for this study with an experiment where a handful of participants, four, attended a one-hour class conducted by the researcher. The participants took a questionnaire before and after the class. In between the questionnaire, the participants listened to a presentation headed by the researcher and engaged in an interactive activity of role-play.

Data Sources

The data collection for this study comes from surveys completed by a certain number of adults who are the caretakers of children between the ages of 12-15. The parents will be from the city of Oceano. Other data will come from the San Luis Obispo County Probation Department, who handles cases from all over the county, which will show the arrest rate numbers from the year of 2012-2013. Graduation, drop-out, suspension and expulsion rates will also be included and will have been taken from the “School Accountability Report Cards” of the Lucia Mar Unified School District website.

Participants

Participants include the parents of children between the ages of 7-15 years old. The participants will be all female and Hispanic between the ages of 30-50.

Experiment Design

This experiment is an idea created by the researcher and her advisor, Dr. Dan Eller. The experiment consists of an hour class created by the researcher. The class will begin with a five

questionnaire that will be provided below. After, the researcher will present a short 15-minute lecture on the topic of how education impacts arrest rates. This will allow an additional 10 minutes of discussion between the participants and the researcher. Following will be a 25-minute interactive activity of role-play. The role-play will include two scenarios, one of which will have the “student” graduate from high school. The second scenario will have the “student” drop out of high school, commit a crime and then be arrested by an officer. At the end, the participants will again re-take the questionnaire and give it to the researcher before leaving the class.

Questions

1. Is your child currently in school? If so, where?
2. Will you encourage higher education for your child? Why? Why not?
3. Does your child have the same educational opportunities as other children? Please explain.
4. Do you think there is a slight chance your child might turn to crime? If so, do you think environmental factors or lack of after-school programs contribute to this problem?
5. What do you think the percentage is of your child getting arrested before finishing high school? (0-25%, 25-50%, 50-75%, or 75-100%)?

Data Collection

The data collection methodology for this study will be the responses to the questions given to the participants before and after attending the class session. The questionnaires will consist of five questions with responses created by the participants. It will also include the numbers collected from the state of California, the San Luis Obispo County Probation

Department and the Lucia Mar Unified School District, more specifically, Nipomo High School, Lopez Continuation High School and Arroyo Grande High School.

Data Presentation

Communication with the participants will all be in person. The contact before the class will be through email and phone with the main teacher of the class, Ximena Ames. The questionnaires will be printed out in paper and given to the participants before and after the class. This method of data collection and presentation ensures that it will be presented in the most complete and objective way possible.

Limitations

There are some obstacles to this project out of my control. The first is that this is a 10-week course. Because of this short time frame, I was not able to conduct the study as I had planned. Originally, I wished to conduct a resource fair for the communities of Arroyo Grande and Oceano, but due to the time restraint, I was not able to. I also had to extend my time to finish writing the project because there was not enough time to complete it.

Another limitation is the access to the parents of the children who I planned on conducting the experiment with. Finding a variety of parents to conduct the experiment with was difficult and limiting since not many organizations reached out to me and many were hard to find.

This led to another limitation of the small number of participants. Because the classes were on Thursday mornings, the time conflicted with a class that I was taking over the summer.

This pushed me to only be available for the last class session, where only a small number of participants were present as compared to a larger number in the beginning.

My last limitation was the year of the data collected. The website of the Lucia Mar Unified School District only has data available for the academic school year of 2012-2013. This forced me to use only data from that year as opposed to current data from the year of 2014-2015.

Chapter 4

Data Analysis

Chapter 2 will summarize the participant's responses to the questionnaire and will also conclude what the researcher has found using the data collected from the San Luis Obispo County Probation Department and schools of Nipomo, Arroyo Grande and Lopez Continuation High School. Both the responses and data will be compared to what the research literature has stated about how education impacts arrest rates.

Description of Participants

The participants were all female mothers of Hispanic ethnicity ranging from ages 30-50. The participants all lived in the city of Oceano.

Survey

To get an idea of whether or not parental caretakers believe that education is important for their children and does keep them out of crime, they all answered a five question survey asking about the importance of education and the likelihood of their child committing a crime. The survey was supposed to be taken before and after the presentation, but the participants said they would not change their answers and so a discussion was prompted about the next step, which will be taken into account below. The written responses will be available at the end of the chapter for full access to the answers.

Table 1

Table 1 notes the responses on the questionnaire by the participants before the presentation by the researcher.

Table 2

Table 2 notes the concerns brought up by the participants after the presentation instead of filling out the post-questionnaire.

Table 1

Responses from the four participants asking about their child's education and the risks of crime.

Participant	School	Encouragement	Opportunities	Risk	Percentage
1	Arroyo Grande HS	Y: Better Future	Not economically	Hopes not	0-25%
2	Battles Elementary	Y: College Dreams	ESL & doesn't qualify for some school programs	Hopes not	0-25%
3	Fairgrove Elementary	Y: Better & more opportunities	ESL acts as obstacle	Yes	0-25%
4	Paulding MS	Y: Better Future	Y: Has seeked best for child	Hopes not	0-25%

Table 2

Instead of post-questionnaire, participants relayed concerns about the next step.

Current Obstacles	What can be done
Programs are too expensive	Government funding
Language is a barrier: Not everyone knows English	
No access to programs in other locations (transportation)	Transportation opportunities
Summer programs are decreasing	Increase in programs
After-school learning programs taken away	
Children without supervision/care	Quality parent-child connection

Data Collection

The data below in Tables 3, 4, 5 and 6 are the data collected from both the San Luis Obispo County Probation Department and the “School Accountability Report Cards” from the Lucia Mar Unified School District. The tables show the arrest rates from the quarterly year of 2012-2013 and the graduation, drop-out, expulsion and suspension rates from the academic school year of 2012-2013. There are also tables including the arrest rates in the state of California and of the United States of America. These numbers were taken online from the US Department of Justice, more specifically, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention.

Note that the arrest rates from the San Luis Obispo County Probation Department are for any minor up to the age of 17 years and 364 days. The arrests are from all over the county including incorporated cities such as Arroyo Grande and unincorporated areas such as Oceano and Templeton. The rates are all the arrests referred to the probation department by the police department, which are received quarterly. Referrals are cases that are looked over by the probation department to see if they need to be sent to the District Attorney's Office to be filed or to be rejected. The cases are not always filed, but they are always referred, which are the numbers which are used below by the researcher.

Table 3

Table 3 notes the rates of suspension, expulsion, graduation and drop-out rates (within one year) in the high schools of Nipomo, Lopez Continuation and Arroyo Grande on the academic year of 2012-2013.

Table 4

Table 4 notes the rates of suspension, expulsion, graduation and drop-out rates (within one year) of the Lucia Mar Unified School District and of the state of California in the academic year of 2012-2013.

Table 5

Table 5 notes the rates of arrests by the San Luis Obispo County Probation Department of the quarterly year of 2012-2013.

Table 6

Table 6 notes the total arrests made in the United States and in the state of California in the year of 2012.

Table 3

Academic rates in three high schools of Lucia Mar Unified School District in the academic school year of 2012-2013.

High School	Suspensions	Expulsions	Graduation	Drop-Outs (1-year)
Nipomo	6.7	0.6	96.22	2.9
Lopez Continuation	3.7	0	90.78	6.1
Arroyo Grande	5.4	1	95.99	3.1

Table 4

Academic rates in Lucia Mar Unified School District and state of California in the academic school year of 2012-2013.

Area	Suspensions	Expulsions	Graduation	Drop-Outs (1-year)
Lucia Mar Unified	4.8	0.5	90.78	6.1
California State	5.1	0.1	80.44	11.4

Table 5

Arrest rates of minors of the San Luis Obispo County in the quarterly year of 2012-2013.

Quarters (July 1, 2012 – June 30, 2013)	Arrests
Q1 (July, Aug, Sept)	209
Q2 (Oct, Nov, Dec)	194
Q3 (Jan, Feb, March)	200
Q4 (April, May, June)	194
Total	797

Table 6

Arrests made in the United States of America and the state of California in the year of 2012 for every 100,000 youth.

Location	Total Arrests
USA	3,941
California	2,913

*** With a total population of 4,150,100 ages 10-17

Education and Its Impact on Arrest Rates Research Questions

For this study, the following five research questions were created to determine how the educational system helps run the criminal justice system, how education impacts the rates of arrests, the steps taken to educate and employ the public on how to decrease criminal activity, if arrest rates decrease if those incarcerated find a career and the steps a structural society can take to reduce recidivism.

Research Question #1: In what ways does the education system run the criminal justice system?

This question was researched in order to determine what role the educational system plays in regards to the criminal justice system. This question is important to even begin to think why the two issues are interconnected.

As noted in Tables 3 and 5, the number of graduation rates is high, close enough to 100 percent with the arrest rates of San Luis Obispo County seemingly high. In reality, compared to the arrests made in the year 2012 in the state of California, San Luis Obispo County only made four percent of the total arrests (2,193). Considering the high graduation rates, this shows that continuation and completion of education does encourage and motivate youth to seek other alternatives instead of a life of crime. Education can decrease the number of arrests if youth are investing their time on seeking a better and successful future for themselves.

Research Question #2: What kind of education or lack thereof have an impact on the number of arrests?

This research question looks at how education or lack of an education has an impact on the number of arrests being made, specifically using the data collected in the San Luis Obispo County.

As noted in Table 1, the participants of this research hope that their children do not turn to a life of crime but due to the lack of support of educational and extracurricular programs in their programs, they also understand that there is a possibility that their child becomes a delinquent. One participant states, “I do think that there is a lack of after-school programs that motivates the youth to participate in them so they don’t end up in the streets.” If there is a lack of educational programs for youth, then the number of arrests will increase since the youth will most likely commit a crime. When there are programs for the youth to participate in, especially when they are not in school, the numbers of arrests are low.

Research Question #3: What steps are taken to educate and employ the public to decrease criminal activity?

This research question was asked to determine the possible ways to decrease criminal activity while also educating and employing the public which would be a good benefit for society. This is an important question to ask since the public can take matters into their own hands to reduce criminal activity in a positive way.

Based off the responses of the participants as seen in Tables 1 and 2, creating programs for the youth can help with decreasing criminal activity. If there are recreational and educational programs for youth, especially when they are not in school, they can use their skills and find a

passion that doesn't involve in something criminal. Looking in another direction, employment is also a big factor as the literature review has stated in decreasing criminal activity, especially if it is a career an individual enjoys. The steps to be taken are support and awareness of the connection between these two issues to raise support for programs within a community for their members.

Research Question #4: When those who are arrested and incarcerated find a career, does it reduce arrest rates?

This research question looks at those coming out of the criminal justice system and how education and employment plays a part in reducing arrest rates. When those who have been arrested and incarcerated find a career, the arrest rates do reduce as they do not turn back to the life they were living that had them arrested and incarcerated in the first place.

Though this topic was touched in the presentation by the researcher, the literature review states that prisoner re-entry back into the community is increased by a stable and fulfilling career. When someone who was incarcerated goes back into the community without any support or guidance, they are most likely to re-offend therefore increasing the rates of arrests and incarceration. When the individual is re-entered back to the community with support and mentorship, they are more likely to stay out of trouble and continue staying out of incarceration.

Research Question #5: What steps can a structural society do to decrease recidivism?

This research question was asked to determine the steps a society can do to reduce recidivism, the issue of people going back to incarceration after being released. This is important to ask as society has to come to terms with the fact that those who are being incarcerated are a part of our society and so efforts to reduce recidivism are beneficial.

Looking at the responses of the participants and the audience the researcher was looking at, the youth population; Table 2 shows the obstacles and possible solutions to reducing recidivism. It can be even taken as steps to reduce arrests, therefore opening up the idea that incarceration and recidivism won't be an issue. For the participants they thought that after-school programs and access to these programs has been a great obstacle in their city of Oceano. Because the youth have nothing to do, many end up in the streets and make bad choices that end up in an arrest. One participant stated and said, "If it is about education, then it has to start with the young children, the ones in elementary." If little kids can be proactive and find a positive activity, they are less likely to commit a crime in their future.

Survey Responses from Presentation (Translated from Spanish)

Participant 1

1. Is your child currently in school? If so, where?

Yes, in Arroyo Grande High School

2. Will you encourage higher education for your child? Why? Why not?

Yes because I want the best future for him

3. Does your child have the same educational opportunities as other children? Please explain.

Yes in regards to education, but perhaps not economically

4. Do you think there is a slight chance your child might turn to crime? If so, do you think environmental factors or lack of after-school programs contribute to this problem?

I hope not. And yes, I think that there is a lack of many after-school programs that motivates the youth to participate in them and not end up in the streets

5. What do you think the percentage is of your child getting arrested before finishing high school? (0-25%, 25-50%, 50-75%, or 75-100%)?

0-25%

Participant 2

1. Is your child currently in school? If so, where?

Yes in the Battles school in Santa Maria

2. Will you encourage higher education for your child? Why? Why not?

Yes, definitely, I want my son to continue with his education. I would like him to go to a university

3. Does your child have the same educational opportunities as other children? Please explain.

I think that he doesn't have the same opportunities. One is that his first language is Spanish. Secondly, for being middle-class, he doesn't qualify for many school programs.

4. Do you think there is a slight chance your child might turn to crime? If so, do you think environmental factors or lack of after-school programs contribute to this problem?

Yes, I think that there is a possibility, but as a parent I have put him in doing activities such as soccer, swimming and I also take him to the library. But I have seen how some parents don't have the money nor the time to do these activities with their children and this affects them. There should be after-school programs so that the children can occupy their time and not fall into delinquency.

5. What do you think the percentage is of your child getting arrested before finishing high school? (0-25%, 25-50%, 50-75%, or 75-100%)?

0-25%

Participant 3

1. Is your child currently in school? If so, where?

In Fairgrove

2. Will you encourage higher education for your child? Why? Why not?

Yes, I would like for my child to have better and more opportunities

3. Does your child have the same educational opportunities as other children? Please explain.

I don't know...I think so but at the same time I think that the language is an obstacle.

4. Do you think there is a slight chance your child might turn to crime? If so, do you think environmental factors or lack of after-school programs contribute to this problem?

Yes

5. What do you think the percentage is of your child getting arrested before finishing high school? (0-25%, 25-50%, 50-75%, or 75-100%)?

0-25%

Participant 4

1. Is your child currently in school? If so, where?

In Paulding Middle School

2. Will you encourage higher education for your child? Why? Why not?

Yes because we have to look at her future and where she has a good education, a good career where she feels good and, because she is a woman, to always motivate the best for her and for her to have an objective in life.

3. Does your child have the same educational opportunities as other children? Please explain.

Yes, because we explain [to her] that she has high intelligence and she has to take advantage of everything for her future.

4. Do you think there is a slight chance your child might turn to crime? If so, do you think environmental factors or lack of after-school programs contribute to this problem?

I would hope not but like but like most say, the environment where she is at and the people that she surrounds herself with day to day [plays a part]. We try to talk with her and give her advice so she can know the friends she should keep.

5. What do you think the percentage is of your child getting arrested before finishing high school? (0-25%, 25-50%, 50-75%, or 75-100%)?

For me its 0-25%, but like always the pressure of friends counts a lot. But we are always dedicating [time] to her.

Chapter 5

Discussion and Recommendation

Summary

This study was conducted due to the proximity of three correctional facilities in the San Luis Obispo County. A county jail, state prison and juvenile are all in close proximity which gives a shadow over “the happiest city in America.” Due to the high praise and expectations of education in the county, this study was done to show the impact of education on arrest rates using a specific year.

To find the information on how education has impacted the arrest rates, numbers were pulled from three close high schools in the San Luis Obispo County while comparing it to the arrest rates of minors in the year 2012-2013. The data was collected, analyzed and presented to a small group of mothers in Oceano to initiate discussion. The participants also responded to a questionnaire before the presentation which included the following questions:

1. Is your child currently in school? If so, where?
2. Will you encourage higher education for your child? Why? Why not?
3. Does your child have the same educational opportunities as other children? Please explain.
4. Do you think there is a slight chance your child might turn to crime? If so, do you think environmental factors or lack of after-school programs contribute to this problem?
5. What do you think the percentage is of your child getting arrested before finishing high school? (0-25%, 25-50%, 50-75%, or 75-100%)? The questions on the survey were asked to determine how important the participants thought education was for

their children and also determined whether their children had a greater risk of being arrested due to the environmental factors such as having residency in Oceano as compared to Arroyo Grande. The questions prompted a discussion after the presentation that brought up concerns and possible solutions that concerns education and crime.

Discussion

In addition to the data collected in Chapter 4, an interactive activity was also completed during the researcher's presentation with the participants. The three available participants were asked to engage in two different role-play scenarios which will be described below. Through examining the debriefing of the role plays, the data collected found in Chapter 4 and the existing literature found in Chapter 2, it is possible to make the following conclusions regarding the original research questions.

Role-Plays:

The role-play scenarios were made up by the participants but the first scenario had to include the matter that the student had graduated from high school and would be attending a university. The second scenario had to include the matter that the student had dropped out of high school, committed a crime and was arrested.

The three participants chose three characters in the first scenario. The three participants role-played as described below:

Participant 1: Student's mother

Participant 2: Student

Participant 3: High school teacher

The scenario in this case played out where participant two, as the student, has just graduated high school. Her mother, played by participant one, is glowing with pride as she hugs her daughter and congratulates her. The high school teacher, who was played by participant three, commends the student knowing she will go far in life. The scene was very brief but all three participants understood their roles well as displayed by the debriefing.

In the debriefing, the researcher asked each participant these questions (who are still acting as their characters):

- How are you feeling right now?
- How has this situation made you feel?
- Do you have anything else you would like to add?
- Are you ready to step out of your role?

The debriefing focus in on the characters played by the participants and has them empathize with their roles which will contrast with their actual life role, for most. For the debriefing of the first scenario, the first participant as the student's mother said she felt proud of her daughter. Proud and happy that she graduated high school and was able to continue her education and have a successful life. The second participant as the student was feeling extremely happy at graduating high school. She said that after many struggles, she had completed something. The third participant as the student's teacher said she was happy and satisfied for her student. She was feeling happy that she's not one more that will end up on the streets.

The second role-play scenario had the student dropping out of high school, committing a crime and getting arrested. The three participants chose their roles as described below:

Participant 1: Student's mother

Participant 2: Student

Participant 3: Arresting Probation Officer

This scenario played out where participant three, as the student, has already dropped out of high school and was taking illegal drug substances, was arrested and booked into juvenile hall. The mother is at home while the probation officer has just booked the juvenile into the detention center. The same questions were used in the debriefing of this role-play as mentioned above.

The debriefing of this scenario the first participant as the student's mother said she was feeling sad. She was sad because as a parent, she couldn't do anything. It became out of her hands and she couldn't do anything to help. When she saw the arrest of her daughter, she was sad but at the same time she was hopeful that the probation department can do something to help. The student, played by the second participant, said she was feeling angry at that moment. She was angry at her mother and at the probation officer because she got arrested. But she also feels hurt and sad because she has found no sense in life and isn't satisfied in her life right now. The final participant said that, as the arresting probation officer, was feeling sad about the arrest because it is another kid who has wasted their life. But she is also happy because the child was caught and so maybe they can change their mind about the path they are currently on.

After answering these questions, the participants were asked if they were ready to step out of their roles, to make sure that they understand it was a role play.

Using this activity, the data collection and literature review, the following questions can be answered about the research questions.

Research question #1: How the educational system helps run the criminal justice system?

Judging from the responses of the participants after the presentation, it can be stated that the educational system helps run the criminal justice system in the way where individuals commit crimes because there are no opportunities for them to do otherwise. Using the data

collected, the largest number of arrests (209) made in the year of 2012-2013 was during the first quarter for the San Luis Obispo County Probation Department which was during the months of July, August and September. These months are mostly connected to summer, where the youth aren't in school. Looking at the number of arrests and how education is lacking, for the majority, it can show how the education system, or lack of one, helps run the criminal justice system.

The literature also supports this idea as presented by a report by the Alliance for Excellent Education, who looks at high graduation rates in the state of Ohio. Their report states, "Students who remain engaged in their schoolwork are less likely to end up on the streets, and school may help develop values and skills that can prevent students from later engaging in criminal activities."

Overall, there is an understanding about the relationship between the two systems and how the lack of educational opportunities may lead to crime opportunities, which leads to high arrest and incarceration rates.

Research Question #2: What kind of education or lack thereof has an impact on the number of arrests?

Based on the survey results located in Chapter 4, the type of impact that education has on the number of arrests is that they are related to each other in a way where one influences the other. Using the numbers from the Central Coast, all three high schools used in this research had very high graduation rates, meaning a high educational level. The county also had a total of 797 arrests the year of 2012-2013. While this may seem high, the arrests are four percent of the total arrests made in the state of California in the year of 2012 which was 2,913. This states that having a good education and continuing education decreases the number of arrests made. It can

be said that it may be due to the youth not being pushed to committing a crime since they are motivated by education to seek something else in their life.

This is also supported by the literature review as in the research by Lance Lochner and Enrico Moretti. They concluded that "...schooling significantly reduces criminal activity." This is not an easy conclusion and it has many depending factors such as the characteristics of those who committed the crime, state policies and the wages which can impact education.

Still, it can be said that education influences the number of arrests as education provides another lifestyle for people. It opens the doors for many and can deter one of being arrested for committing a crime. When education is a play and provides a lot of opportunities, the arrests decrease as no crime is being committed.

Research Question #3: What steps are taken to educate and employ the public decrease criminal activity?

The steps taken to educate and employ the public in an effort the decrease criminal activity all varies within a city. In San Luis Obispo since the location of the Sheriff's Office and the Probation Department is located in the city, the awareness of different opportunities to be active in the community in a positive way is high. There is also a good relationship between the community members and law enforcement. While this does not impact arrests, it does create an atmosphere where crime is low compared to other cities. The opportunities for education and employment are also more abundant and taken more into consideration.

In the city of Oceano, while under the jurisdiction of the Sheriff's Office, is about 15 minutes away. The relationship between law enforcement and this city is more distant. It was apparent when talking with the participants who weren't aware of all the free and available programs for their children. The steps that can decrease criminal activity is creating programs for

youth that teach life skills and also build a friendly relationship between them and law enforcement, but also making these programs available and accessible for people to participate in.

As shown with the literature in Chapter 2, when programs are available for those who are in criminal activity, it can help them steer away from that lifestyle. This in turn, does decrease criminal activity as the number of people committing crimes goes down. If programs such as these are able to stop people from re-offending, then there is a possibility that other programs can keep people from committing a crime.

In the end, programs that build relationships, help find employment, raise awareness and educate people are one of the most important steps to take to decrease criminal activity.

Research Question #4: When those who are arrested and incarcerated find a career, does it reduce arrest rates?

Using the high graduation rates of the three high schools selected in this research and estimating that around 75 percent will continue onto higher education before obtaining a career or finding a job right after high school, it can be said that arrest rates can decrease especially if the students are making good money. For the specific population of those who are arrested and incarcerated, when they do find a career that suits them and is legal, arrest rates can be reduced as it can be seen as a type of rehabilitative and re-entry program.

The literature review agrees with this as stated by researcher, Lori Latrice Martin, who said, “Ex-offenders who find securing gainful employment a challenge, may find more success if they were self-employed or empowered owner of a cooperative business.” It becomes apparent that for those who have been arrested and incarcerated in a correctional facility, they can find success and have a chance of not re-offending again if they are able to find employment, even

more so, if they found a career they were passionate about. Arrest rates can be reduced if individuals are not at risk of re-offending which is possible if they have had opportunities to put their skills in something else such as a job.

Overall, finding a career is a good step to decreasing the number of arrests being made as it does deter from the criminal lifestyle which is shown by the literature review and by using the data collected for this study.

Research Question #5: What steps can a structural society do to decrease recidivism?

When speaking to the participants after the presentation, the idea of unity and coming together as a community of Oceano is a large issue. There is a distant relationship between the Sheriff's Office and this community which doesn't help with their problems of crime. There is no sense of community because at a glance, the city doesn't really work together. In this case, the steps that this society needs to do is to come together to even think about decreasing recidivism. While the participants did have a couple ideas, mostly reaching out to the youth, being able to have programs and opportunities for those who have been released from a correctional facility and being able to re-enter is important. For the larger society, there needs to be a different form of thinking about those who have been incarcerated. Accepting the fact that they are our community members and we need to help them re-enter our society will greatly decrease recidivism.

The literature review agrees with this idea as shown by Peter J. Lathrop who shows the rehabilitation of academic and non-academic programming. "...the importance of non-academic programs, such as communication and interpersonal skill competency, life skills and values training. These types of programs tend to facilitate competence and confidence acquired through other educational-academic programs." When taught life skills, one can take these skills and end

up completely re-entering the community and building a name for themselves. These programs teach values and skills that a person needs to grow and become successful in life, which in turn will decrease recidivism.

Overall, a society needs to start thinking of those who have been arrested and incarcerated as part of our society before creating and supporting programs that teach life skills and values that do help decrease recidivism.

Recommendations for Practice

After completing this study, considerable data and analyzed on the topic of how education impacts arrest rates. Given the information, it is important to emphasize the most influential content and present it for anyone looking to see a connection between education and arrest rates. Some recommendations for practice include programs for the youth, the power of education and rehabilitative programs that will teach life skills.

Programming for the youth

Through the discussion held after with the participants of this study, it is obvious that programs for youth whether they be educational or recreational are important to keep them occupied and also give them opportunities to develop. It can give them motivation to want more in their life and also decrease their chances of committing a crime.

The power that is held through education

Education makes a big difference in the lives of people and when people are educated they are able to make choices for themselves and also build themselves up. Education holds a lot of power for a person in that it opens the door for someone and allows them to benefit from all

the opportunities that are given to them. Education holds a different kind of power than an offense in that it helps a person move forward with their life.

Rehabilitating through life skills

The act of rehabilitating has always been around, but there have been different types of rehabilitation. As discussed in this study, the teaching of life skills and values to people who have been arrested or incarcerated can help move them forward with their lives. It teaches them fundamental skills that they probably didn't know before and help them be successful in their life without having to go back to incarceration.

Study Conclusion

In conclusion, given the findings of the study, there should be qualitative research done regularly on how education impacts arrest rates because there are so many underlying factors to this relationship that it is hard to pinpoint it with just one study. Income, environmental factors such as location and accessibility, and employment are a couple of factors that help determine how education impacts arrest rates. Because the United States has a rather large incarceration rate, it is important to determine how education impacts this issue so there can be changes to our educational system to help decrease arrest and incarceration rates. Overall, this study presented data that confirmed educational and recreational programs are necessary for a youth to develop or else they succumb easily to committing an offense. This study can be applied to most cases of increasing programs to decrease the number of arrests. This study serves as an educational tool for professionals involved in seeing how education and arrests connect with each other. Anyone interested in seeing how education impacts arrest rates could potentially benefit from using this study for further research in the subject area.

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