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Comparing the Effects of Racial Segregation on Homicide Trends in Two Major US Cities

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Comparing the Effects of Racial Segregation on Homicide Trends in Two Major US Cities

An honors thesis presented to the
Department of Criminal Justice,
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In partial fulfillment of the requirements
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and
graduation from The Honors College

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Research Advisor: Alan Lizotte, Ph.D.

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Abstract

This study focuses on the effects that racial segregation has on homicide rates. Using two major cities that have similar demographics, Chicago, Illinois and Los Angeles, California, this paper studies homicide rates at checkpoints over a span of time while also recording poverty rates and racial isolation. The Uniform Crime Report put out by the Federal Bureau of Investigation will provide data about homicides in the two cities for the respective years. Racial segregation is still an incessant issue throughout the country and causes issues through three major factors, economy, culture, and politics. These issues cause tension between minority and majority societies that may ultimately lead to violence within communities. Chicago, Illinois is known for its high racial segregation while Los Angeles, California has been listed as one of the most racially integrated major cities in the United States. These two cities present similar experimental groups that may show that the difference in segregation rates might have an effect on violence, particularly homicide. The hypothesis is that if a city is more racially integrated, like Los Angeles, then it is more likely to have a lower homicide rate as a result of fewer racial tensions.

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List of Figures

Figure 1: The Percent of the Population of Chicago by Racial/Ethnic Category	13
Figure 2: The Percent of the Population of Los Angeles by Racial/Ethnic Category	14
Figure 3: The Percent of the Population Below Poverty Level Overtime	14
Figure 4: The Rate of Homicides Overtime for Chicago and Los Angeles.....	15

Table of Contents

Abstract	ii
Acknowledgements	iii
List of Figures	iv
Introduction	1
Review of the Literature	
Introduction	2
Economy	2
Cultural	3
Political.....	4
Child Development.....	5
Chicago.....	6
Los Angeles	7
Conclusion.....	8
Methods	
Groups.....	10
Procedures.....	11
Statement of the Problem	11
Results	
The Percent of the population of Chicago by racial/ethnic Category	13
The Percent of the population of Los Angeles by racial/ethnic Category	14
The Percent of the Population Below Poverty Level Overtime	14
The Rate of Homicides Overtime for Chicago and Los Angeles.....	15
Discussion	
Poverty	16
Homicide.....	17
Hypothesis Discussion	17
Limitations	19
Conclusion	21
References	24

Introduction

Studies have shown that the causes of homicide range from various factors such as mental health, poverty, violence in the media, area, and the like. Though these factors are important, racial segregation also plays a role in these trends. Racial segregation has proven to place strain on societies throughout history and continues to do so through fundamental differences. Though racial segregation has been managed and improved historically, there are still neglected issues of it in situations, such as real estate bias, that ultimately lead to highly segregated areas (Massey, 1995). These biases further allow for isolation amongst races that causes tension both directly and indirectly as a result of differences in economy, politics, and culture. Racial segregation tends to result in impoverished communities amongst the minority groups. The poverty results in tensions that are only strengthened by underrepresentation in politics that cause less funding for the minority section and therefore stress factors become an issue (Shihadeh & Flynn, 1996).

Chicago, Illinois, a major city within the United States, is known more recently for its increasing homicide rates. Chicago also happens to be one of the most racially segregated cities in the country. On the contrary, Los Angeles is listed as one of the most racially integrated major cities within the United States. Chicago and Los Angeles both have similar dynamics within the cities although located in different parts of the country. The largest major difference between the two cities is the racial inclusion and isolation. Studying how two similar cities may be violently affected by racial isolation may help to analyze the underlying issue with segregation that still exists. Often times segregation is neglected because most people tend to think it was fixed with the Civil Rights Act of 1968 as well as other historical movements (Massey, 1995). This, however, allows for ignorance of the problem that still segregates many

societies therefore allowing for many impoverished minority communities. Unfortunately, this problem has proven to cause tension that ultimately results in racial violence. A study focusing on homicide in these two similar cities may show how the segregation in certain areas leads to the high homicide rates being considered a major problem today.

Review of the Literature

Introduction

Throughout history racial violence has been an issue that has been addressed and readdressed on numerous occasions. Racial violence can be defined as “acts with violent consequences in which victims are racially fungible” (Blee, 2006). Often times, discrimination is a large factor in the ongoing violent conflicts between races as violence is seen as a consequence of discrimination. Though the Civil Rights Act of 1968 disallows racial discrimination in sale or rental of housing, many times real estate is racially skewed as a result of mortgage denials, real estate bias, and the like. This discrimination when looking for houses causes segregation in numerous societies. Because of racial biases in housing, this further causes racial isolation and extends to the business community. More often than not the isolated black communities tend to be impoverished (Massey, 1995). A study of 151 big cities throughout the United States showed that the probability of choosing a random black resident who is isolated racially is more than 50%. Further research showed that 25% of the cities in the study exhibited 75% or more situational isolation implying extreme levels of racial segregation (Shihadeh & Flynn, 1996, p. 1339).

Economy

There are three major components to consider when analyzing the differences in isolation and these are economic, cultural, and political differences. To begin, economics tends to be one

of the most studied controversies when considering racial discrimination and racial isolation. In most cases, black neighborhoods tend to be much poorer than their white counterparts and this is extended by the loss of a lot of the black middle class. With no middle class, vertical integration through economic change is severely decreased. This further separates the gap between affluent blacks and inner-city black communities. The economy is influenced by the rates of segregation within a society. Massey (1995) showed that it is easy to see how segregation may result in income differences. Studying a city of 96,000 whites and 32,000 blacks throughout a series of 16 neighborhoods, Massey was able to conclude that the average poverty rate for blacks was about 10% less in integrated societies (1995). Studies of racial poverty differences nearly always show that blacks and other minorities have a higher rate of poverty compared to whites. Shihadeh and Flynn found that 30% of black residents lived below the poverty line compared to 10% of whites (Shihadeh & Flynn, 1996, p. 1330).

Cultural

Second, cultural differences also affect the segregation between races. Role models and peers within communities influence others and therefore beliefs of the members of a certain community become very similar yet are different from those of other surrounding communities. This creates what the authors call “oppositional ghetto practices” that ultimately lead to conflict and isolation. Because of deprivation from the white community (in job markets, housing, and the like) other minorities feel the need to prove worth. Asserting manhood in the form of violence is a common approach in doing so. Another cultural difference in many communities is found through black youth attachment and female-headed households. Shihadeh and Flynn found that black teens between ages sixteen and nineteen have very weak attachments to major social institutions. This includes a lack of a job, lack of a high school degree, and lack of

involvement in armed services. This proved to lead to frustration that then makes it difficult for a community to support the same “mainstream goals” (Shihadeh & Flynn, 1996, p. 1336).

Secondly, the rates of female headed households are significantly higher in black communities compared to white communities. This may be a result of black male joblessness but is also a cultural difference amongst black women who often prefer to be the head of the household.

There is a difference in values amongst minority communities that conflicts with that of majority communities (Shihadeh & Flynn, 1996, p. 1331).

Political

Finally, political conflicts are often a factor in the differences that may result in violence. Political influence is a major factor in allocating resources within communities. Because people of minority races are usually dominated by whites, many times their needs are not individually represented throughout politics. With that said, needs are met as they may benefit the majority of the area. The further black communities are separated and the more segregation that exists, the less concern there is to care for the needs of those particular neighborhoods. Whites have less to gain from public funding of the minority communities when the isolation of those communities is so prevalent and therefore segregation results in a loss of voice to many minority communities. 151 US cities with an independent variable of black empowerment shows that African Americans are underrepresented in the political aspects of many cities.

Underrepresentation further allows for lack of funds and lack of a voice in a political environment and therefore causes qualms between minority communities and majority communities (Shihadeh & Flynn, 1996, pp. 1332-1341). This final component that contributes towards racial violence is a matter of tension derived from this lack of representation. Through

that, there is a lack of funds that further separates the community and only increases the means of conflict as frustrations are heightened by the lack of support.

Child Development

With all three of these components considered, it is important to note how segregation can affect children's development. Children are influenced by parents, peers, and community role models. With segregated societies there often is bias within what children are taught. Differences in culture are taught to children who then face their racial counterparts with conflicting views on the way the world works (Niles & Peck, 2008). Children's emotional and social developments are results of the role models around them therefore if children are taught the aforementioned "prove your worth" strategy, then violence may be seen as a good option (Shihadeh & Flynn, 1996, p. 1331). Massey explains that in many black impoverished communities the "code of violence" is taught as a means of survival from peer to peer or parent to children (Massey, 1995). Niles and Peck studied how segregation and poverty affect children's educational, social, and emotional development by analyzing Child Parent Centers (CPC) in Chicago. The children in the Child Parent Centers, Niles and Peck were able to find that the children of integrated and middle-class neighborhoods felt more secure in their development. They examined this through questions and studies that analyzed the children's social adjustment in school, assertive social skills, task orientation, perceived self-competence, peer social skills, and total competence. In doing so it was clear that children of low class segregated communities were much less socially developed and emotionally secure than those counterparts (Niles & Peck, 2008).

These Child Parent Centers happened to be set up in Chicago, Illinois, one of the most segregated cities in the United States. Child Parent Centers are programs that help parents give

extra opportunities to their children for educational and social development. These centers are located near elementary schools and are set to offer support to children ages three through nine. Studies of children in CPC programs show a vast difference in the improvements of children in middle class integrated communities versus lower class segregated communities. The children in segregated and impoverished communities receive a greater benefit from the program improving in each of the categories listed greatly. It was concluded that this is a result because those children enter the program at a much lower base standard than those of the children from integrated middle-class societies. Having a farther way to go seems to be the reason that the CPC is so imperative for the children (Niles & Peck, 2008). With that said, the CPC's show that children of segregated society have a much slower and lower development than others of integrated communities. Chicago is a very segregated city in the United States that is why programs like these Child Parent Centers are so important.

Chicago

Chicago is also home to an extremely high crime rate in addition to the high segregation and poverty rates. This is a result of segregated societies that then lead to disorganization within societies. Gang violence is a major cause of high homicide rates in many large cities including Chicago. Mares (2010) suggests that gang violence is not necessarily a function of the gang itself rather it is merely a reaction and result that arises from conflicts between a shared social world. Instead of simply blaming crime on an "inherently bad group of people," digging deeper shows that the violence stems from different beliefs economic statuses, and the like. Once again leading back to the three main components in racial violence, economy, culture, and politics. Gang prevalence is the outcome of poverty and social disorganization that is born and emphasized through racial segregation. Studying Chicago neighborhoods led to the discovery

that gang violence isn't merely a set of people looking to commit illegal acts, but is actually a community in itself fighting a conflict of beliefs with others in society. Neighborhood heterogeneity and disadvantage both had positive effects, showing strong correlation (Mares, 2010). This only further proves the theory that gang violence can be derived from segregation and poverty through social disorganization rather than being as simple as "a group of violent kids."

Los Angeles

On the opposing side, Los Angeles, California is ranked the in the top four for the most integrated cities in the United States. The area at one point became majority-minority and began teaching 92 of the 244 languages at public schools. In addition to that, Los Angeles offers a significantly diverse community wherein restaurants, stores, entertainment, and other similar entities contain a wide range of different races. The economic factors are very similar to the majority of cities, as white poverty rate is about 8.5% while minority poverty ranges from 16% to 24%. However, when analyzing the political landscape, there is a diversity that ensures representation of various minority groups (Charles, 2006). This includes two of the three components that contribute to racial violence and represents the opposition from segregated societies like Chicago. It is prevalent, that disastrous social and economic conditions would not exist if racial segregation did not exist. Racial prejudices prevalent in the resistance to racial integration include traditional prejudice and group prejudice, a commitment to a specific group or status. Though these prejudices still exist in places like Los Angeles, they are severely diminished due to the integrated status of the city (Charles, 2006).

Even with the integration rate as high as it is, there are still homicide issues in Los Angeles. This however, is supposedly due to the low-income neighborhoods that exist in the

city. Redelings, Lieb and Sorvillo studied how homicide affects life expectancy and found an increase in both black and white male life expectancy. Black and white males had a significantly lower life expectancy than that of the other studies including other races and females, who all had life expectancies exceeding 70. In learning that the elimination of homicide increases the life expectancy of both majority and minority males is expected however the expectancy for black males after the elimination of homicide grew by a much larger amount, from 65.2 to 68.6 compared to white males (64.2 to 64.7). This shows that white males are much less affected by homicide therefore bringing about a point that intra-racial violence may be a larger issue of homicide (Redelings, Lieb, & Sorvillo, 2010).

Conclusion

Intraracial violence is a reoccurring consequence of segregation in addition to the interracial violence mentioned in previous studies. Often times, results show that higher segregation causes problems and violence between same race individuals. Focusing on how the addition of Hispanics affects black and white communities, Parker and Stansfield found that the growing integration of Hispanic populations had a statistically significant effect on the inhibition of violence and black homicide rates. Racially segregated black societies had much higher homicide rates however, the integration of Hispanics had no impact on the white homicide rates (Parker & Stansfield, 2015). Therefore, intraracial violence caused by segregation is a factor in high homicide rates. This further supports the original hypothesis that an increase in integration may lower homicide rates both interracial and within the same race. The economic, cultural, and political issues derived from racial segregation inspire tension between communities and that has proven to spark violence between members in various forms including interracial, intraracial, gang violence, and the like.

Through these research findings, it is clear that segregation has a cause and effect relationship with homicide whether it be direct or indirect. Directly, segregation presents tensions through the difference in culture of many communities. These “oppositional ghetto practices” shape the way that children in societies develop based on their influences (Shihadeh & Flynn, 1996, p. 1330). Segregation also affects violence and homicide indirectly in the sense that it can cause low income in communities, especially those communities that have a large number of minority residents. Poverty has a significant correlation with violence and homicide due to the stress and frustrations that it causes between different class levels. Impoverished communities are enhanced through further racial isolation as political underrepresentation causes a loss of funding for an isolated minority community, or a loss of vertical integration due to a lack of a black middle class (Shihadeh & Flynn, 1996, p. 1330). Segregation can indirectly affect violence through gangs as well due to a lack of social cohesion between races. This disorganization further brings out conflict over turf, beliefs, and other similar issues. (Mares, 2010). These direct and indirect consequences of racial segregation all end up leading to violent outcomes and therefore have proven to have an increasing impact on the homicide rates in highly segregated and high crime areas, such as Chicago, Illinois. The differences in homicide rates between two major cities that differ in their rate of integration may tell how severely a society is impacted by the segregation amongst its members. Los Angeles and Chicago are similar in population and have similar dynamics that in turn may emphasize their major difference of the level on integration within.

Methods

Groups

According to the US Census Bureau, Chicago, Illinois has a population of 2,716,450 people as of 2017. The portion of the population that is white is around 48.7% while African Americans make up 30.9% and Hispanics 29.8% (these statistics account for those who identify as a mix of race/ethnic group). About 21.9% of the community is under 18 while 51.5% are female. The percent of the community with a complete high school education is 83.1%. As for the economy, the total percent of civilian labor force over the age of 16 is 66.4% and the mean household income reaches around \$50,434. The percent of the city that is in poverty is 21.7% (U.S. Census, Chicago, 2017). Chicago is known for its high rate of segregation and as of 2016, 56% of the minority population would have had to have moved in order for the city to reach complete integration. Amongst the neighborhoods in Chicago, the ones that were 75% or more nonwhite happened to show a median income that was 29% lower than that of the rest of the city (Goldsborough, 2018).

Los Angeles, California has fairly similar statistics with a population of approximately 3,999,759. Amongst this population, 52.4% are white, 9% are African American, and 48.6% are Hispanic or Latino (these statistics account for those who identify as a mix of race/ethnic group). As for age, 21.6% are under 18 with 50.5% of the population being female. Around 75.9% of the population has at least a high school diploma. The labor force over the age of 16 accounts for 66.2% of the population while the mean household income is \$51,538. Finally, the percent of the city that is considered below the poverty level is 21.5% (U.S. Census, Los Angeles, 2017). These numbers are significantly similar to those of Chicago, Illinois making these two cities good candidates for this study. Los Angeles is known for being one of the most integrated cities

in the United States. The cities inclusiveness is found through integrative businesses, racially diverse social functions, and integration in the school systems.

Procedure

Because the cities being used are comparatively similar in many different aspects as shown previously, studying the homicide rates in each will show statistical differences between the two. *The Uniform Crime Report* put out by the FBI records the number of murders for major cities throughout the United States every year since 1985. This study will include statistics from the years 1985, 1990, 2000, 2010, and 2017. This data will show the differences in the homicide trends over the last few decades comparing the two cities being studied. Once these statistics are recorded, they will be plotted on a line graph to show how the homicide trends differ. In addition to the homicide trends, poverty rates for the respective years will also be recorded including a variation of poverty by race for the respective cities. These will also be plotted on a line graph to show the differences within the cities. Poverty has a relation to racial segregation as noted in the various aforementioned articles. If in conjunction with the hypothesis these values will correlate with those of the homicide rates recorded.

Statement of the Problem

Currently the homicide rate in Chicago, Illinois is overwhelmingly high compared to that of other major cities and there is large debate over why. One reason considered is the gang violence throughout the city. Gangs have become a rising issue in many major cities especially Chicago and are involved on the national, regional, and local levels. These gangs are involved often in drug trafficking that leads to violence and also fight over beliefs and turf wars (Lyman, 2017). A second thought of cause is gun control in Chicago which may cause a high number of firearm homicide. There was a sharp decline in the number of stop and frisks conducted in the

year 2016 and in that year, homicides rose 58%. Because of the lack of stop and frisks, more people were able to carry firearms without detection which in turn may have led to the vast increase in homicides (Cassell & Fowles, 2018, pp. 19-23). Finally, a reason being blamed for the high number of homicides is the overwhelming amount of people below the poverty line. Poverty has proven to put extra stress on individuals that may ultimately lead to criminal behavior (Shihadeh & Flynn, 1996). Often times poverty is a result of racial isolation because minority groups are ignored, and needs are not met as a result of underrepresentation. The racial segregation places extra tensions amongst the communities which may also be a factor in rising homicide rates.

Racial violence has historically caused problems throughout various communities. The rights of minorities have been an ongoing issue for centuries beginning with slavery, moving to unequal rights, and also unequal facilities and treatments. These have been fixed to a major extent however there are still issues regarding race. All races now have equal rights and equal facilities however there are still biases in real estate and banking that may affect where minorities are able to live. There are still issues with police fairness with racial issues such as the Ferguson, Missouri case in which racial violence broke out as a result of a court hearing wherein a police officer was not sentenced after shooting and killing a black individual (Cassell & Fowles, 2018, p. 34). With these issues still existing within communities, even on a smaller scale, there are still tensions amongst neighborhoods. These tensions are ultimately becoming a large factor in heightening homicide rates.

Chicago, Illinois is known for the highly segregated society as it is listed in the top fifteen most segregated metropolitan areas in the United States (Goldsborough, 2018). The segregated society has proven to place tension in the three major areas previously mentioned, economy,

politics, and culture. It also affects child development as explained with the Child Parent Centers in Chicago. The children in these “neglected” communities have a harder time developing social and emotional skills that are essential to everyday life. This then affects their ability to place control around the stress that comes from the common differences between minority and majority groups. In addition to this, influencers and role models affect youth development and often times in these minority areas there are gangs associated with the community. This brings forth the easy chance for children to fall into a gang life style and buy into things such as the “code of violence.” These types of things may ultimately be heavy factors in the rising homicide rate within the city of Chicago, Illinois and even other highly segregated cities (Niles & Peck, 2008).

Results

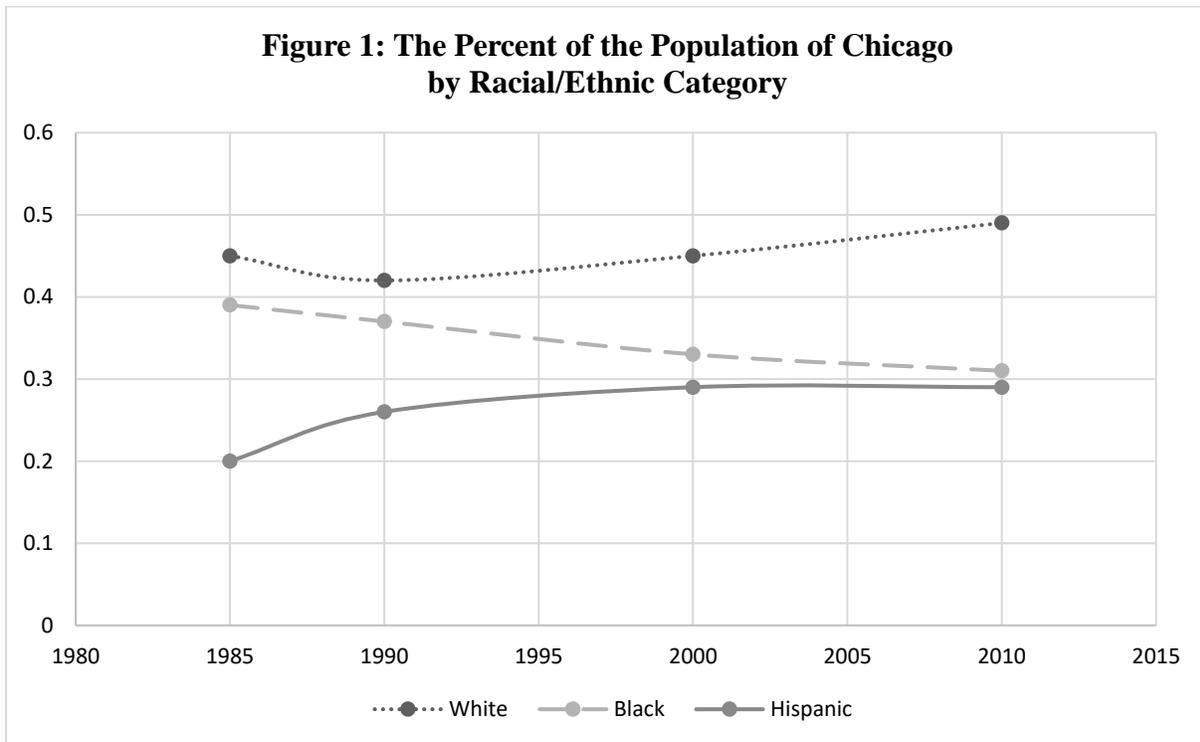


Figure 2: The Percent of the Population of Chicago by Racial/Ethnic Category

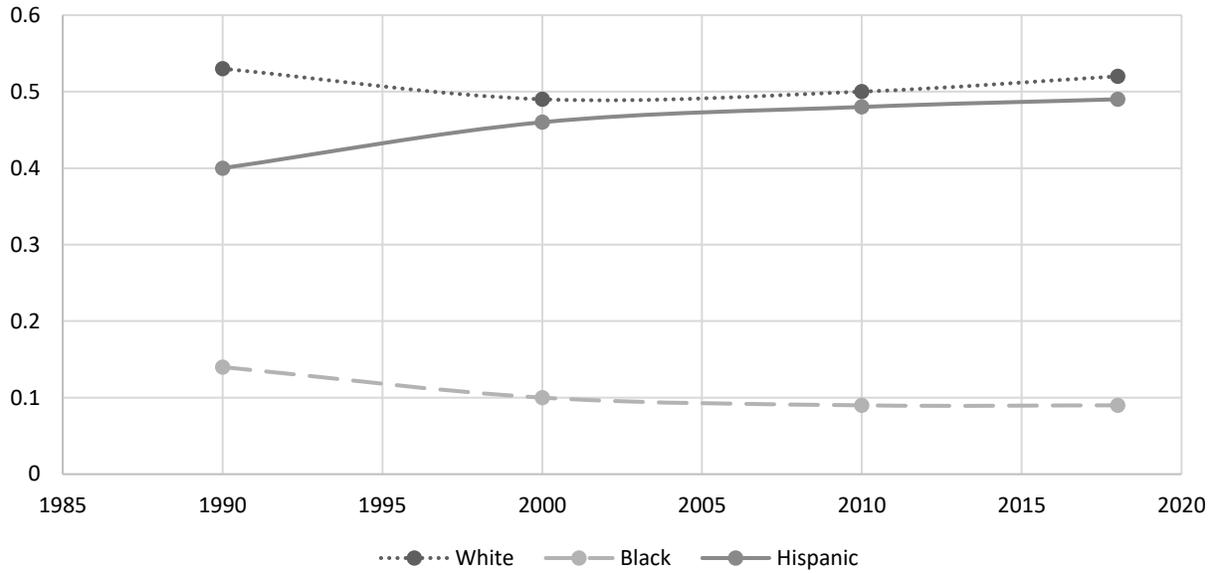
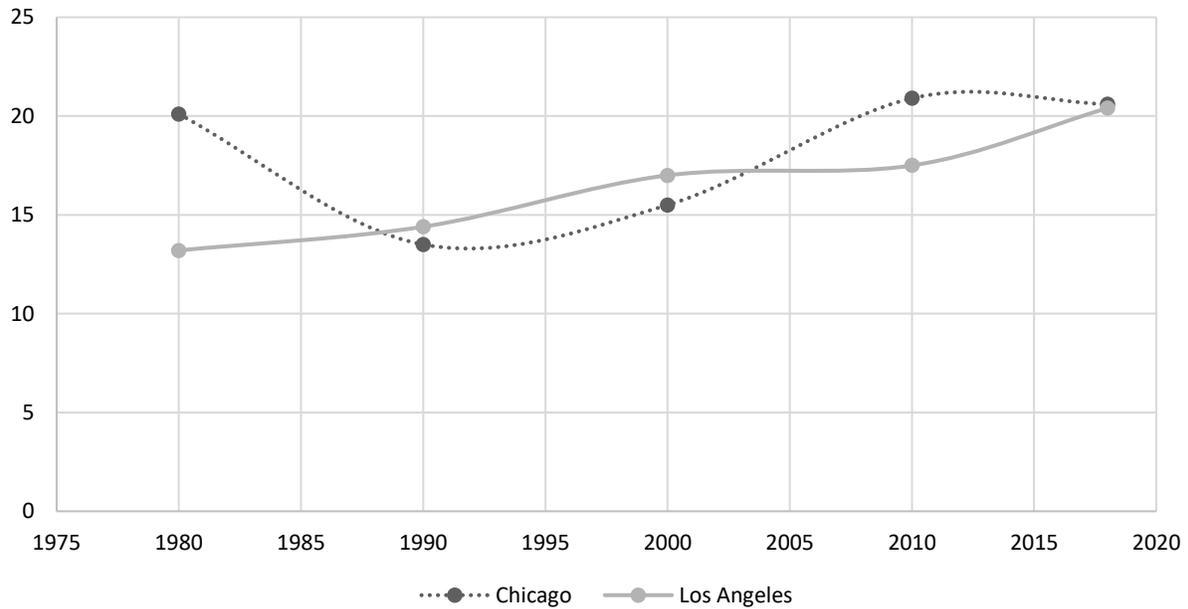
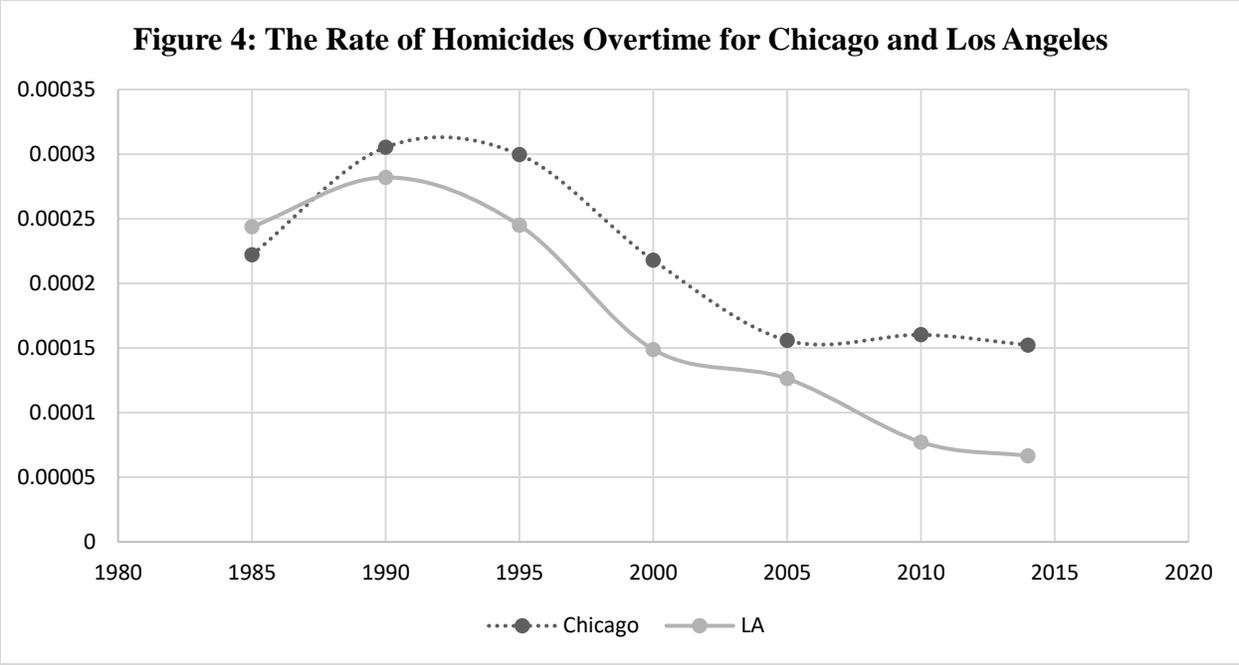


Figure 3: The Percent of the Population Below Poverty Level Overtime





The charts above show the demographics by race for the two cities included in this study. As shown, in both cities the majority of the population is white. The chart also, however, shows that in Los Angeles has a larger Hispanic population than that of Chicago. These charts examine the demographics of the cities overtime that pertains to this study because often times minority races tend to be in poverty. The third chart compares the overall poverty between the two cities showing the discrepancies that may affect homicide rate. The difference in poverty also has relation to the segregation of races because of the ability to afford certain housing due to financial means. This therefore further affects the tensions that arise as explained in the review of the literature. Finally, the last chart shows the homicide rates between the two cities and how they vary overtime.

Discussion

The results provided show the variations between the two chosen cities in population by race, overall poverty, and homicide rates. To begin, when examining the overall demographics it is clear that the white population is the majority in both cities. Los Angeles, however, differs in

the sense that there is a large Hispanic population and a lower African American population. This could be due to Los Angeles' proximity to the United States' southern border with Mexico therefore the migration rate is higher than that of Chicago. Chicago has a large number of all black neighborhoods and the black population sits in the middle of the white and Hispanic populations. The African American population seems to be slowly declining while approaching recent years but the white population is increasing. This separation could ultimately be a cause of furthered segregation because the populations, especially in Chicago tend to live separately as well.

Poverty

Moving forward, when comparing overall poverty rates overtime between the two cities the rates seem to interlock and change positions during different years. Between 1990 and 2000 Los Angeles has the higher rate of poverty however once the timeline hits around 2003 the two switch. From there until 2018, Chicago's poverty rate is higher than that of Los Angeles and then starts to come down and the two meet at 2018. Looking at the homicide rate chart, the two lines for each city seem to follow a similar trend. However, Los Angeles has a lower homicide rate than Chicago in all years except for 1985. In 1985, it is clear that Chicago's poverty rate seems to be declining while Los Angeles' is slowly rising. In examining the effect that poverty has on violent crime this could explain the higher homicide rate for that year. Los Angeles' poverty rate however does not change drastically overtime as this line seems to be more constant than that of Chicago. Chicago's poverty rate has a larger change in slope that could be a result of changes in poverty between the races. For example, a large drop in number of African American families in poverty can change the average drastically as shown in the line. Whereas Los

Angeles does not have a drastic change it seems to be more constant showing a possible lack of outliers.

Homicide

The homicide rates of the two cities show that Chicago, with the exception of 1985, has the higher rate of the two as expected. Both rates follow the same pattern over time as the slopes look similar. However Chicago's slope is shifted upwards for the majority. There are a number of explanations for this including racial tensions, gang violence, and gun laws as noted in the literature review. This study expected that the homicide rates for Chicago would be higher than that of Los Angeles due to segregated living that may cause racial tension. It is clear that the homicide rates overtime support this idea however the poverty rates have an interesting outcome. Over the course of the research for this study, it was noted that poverty might also have an effect on violent crime, such as homicide. With this information in mind, it was hypothesized that the poverty graph would show a correlation with the homicide charts and therefore the graphs would look alike. However, the poverty levels shift changing which city has a higher level depending on the year specified. The charts do not match. The time when homicide rates were the highest is not the time when poverty rates were the highest for either city. An explanation for this could be that other factors besides poverty are influencing homicide rates such as gang violence or distribution of guns.

Hypothesis Discussion

In addition to this, it was originally hypothesized that Chicago's poverty level would be lower than that of Los Angeles due to the number of African American families living in segregated neighborhoods. The results, however show that the poverty rates are fairly even and switch overtime between which city has a higher rate of poverty. The lack of consideration for

the number of Hispanic people living in Los Angeles could account for this refuted hypothesis. There is a large population of Hispanic people without a high school education, having low English proficiency, and the like that may contribute to poverty status. With that said, the number of Hispanic people in Los Angeles is extremely close to that of the white population and that may contribute to the lack of segregation as well as a possible lack of underrepresentation for an ethnic group that may be considered a minority. Whereas, in Chicago the white population is increasing while African Americans and Hispanics are clearly in the minority. This could be a cause of the high level of segregation that Chicago currently has.

Through research it was found that often times racial segregation may lead to poverty in certain areas as minorities are underfunded and/or underrepresented in a political sense. With this in mind, the original hypothesis was that the larger the racial gap the higher rate of poverty. This was not necessarily shown in the findings because the poverty chart does not seem to fit this theory. Though the poverty rates did not show a similarity to the homicide rate chart or match the expected results with the demographic numbers, this does not mean that there is no relationship between racial segregation and violent crime. Chicago's significant difference in the rate of white people compared to the rate of minority racial and ethnic groups like black and Hispanic can serve as a way of showing the nature of segregation. Because Los Angeles has such a high population of Hispanics and a low population of African Americans, the integration rate is increased due to the variation in races. This is not a white dominated city. Rather it is more integrative due to its variety. On the other hand, Chicago has an increasing white population with a decreasing minority population that may lead to further segregation due to a white dominated area and real estate bias as described in the literature review.

Focusing on these facts is important because racial tensions can be an important factor in causing violent crime. As stated in the literature review, segregation amongst races often leads to discrepancies in economic status, political representation, and even fundamental cultural views. These things have proven to cause violent crime including homicide due to tensions from the three mentioned factors. With that said, the fact that Chicago shows more of a white dominated areas with minority races on the decline would make sense when compared to the chart showing homicide rate. Los Angeles being less white dominant and having a higher minority population of Hispanics points to a less violent society due to a lack of racial tension that may occur in more segregated areas like Chicago.

Overall, the results do not show exactly the results that would support the hypothesis. However, they do show results that can help draw conclusions about their relationship between racial segregation and homicide. The research from the literature review gave information about the effects of racial segregation on different communities. The results on homicide rates were as expected as Chicago was clearly on a higher slope than Los Angeles. Though the results about poverty did not fit the original hypothesis as they did not reflect the homicide rates, the demographics of the two cities allow for possible drawn conclusions due to the white dominated community in Chicago as discussed above. The results are unclear about the racial involvement in homicide and that is a limitation in this study. However, inferring from the results shown is possible based on prior research and the numbers found for demography and homicide rates.

Limitations

This study, focusing on how racial segregation may affect homicide did have certain limitations due to the inability to obtain certain information. Also, it is not something that may be tested specifically rather it must come from historical information. With this said, one

limitation of this thesis was the fact that I did not have information about the offender and victim races as well as statistical information about segregation rates within the cities being studied. Without these figures for each city it is nearly impossible to directly link the homicide rates with segregation rates. Had these figures been available it would have been much easier to look at correlations between the two variables of segregation and homicide. Without these rates, the research for this study had to take a roundabout approach based on information obtained through the review of the literature.

As stated in the literature review, the three major factors that may affect racial tension are cultural differences, political differences, and economic differences. It is extremely difficult to track specific cultural differences between race and is also difficult to historically justify the amount of tension being placed on different races due to this factor. Political differences can also be difficult to track due to a lack of studies and statistics on the political differences between races and their effects. With this said, the research discussed in this paper focused primarily on the economic differences that cause racial tension. There is a lot of historical data that shows not only how poverty can be due to racial segregation but also research showing how poverty has a correlation to violent crime. With this information, an indirect approach was taken when looking at the two cities in this study. By examining the demographics of each city while looking at the poverty rates overtime for each individual location, the study shows how poverty may be affected by both the demographics as well as the labeling of each city as highly integrated (Los Angeles) or highly segregated (Chicago). In doing so, these results were then compared to the homicide rates of each city. Though this is not a direct approach focusing on segregation and its correlation with homicide, the study was able to take a factor that is highly influenced by segregation and compare that to its effects on homicide.

As stated, another limitation with this study is the reliance on historical data that inhibits the ability to tailor the data specifically to the hypothesis. This is not a study that is able to be tested specifically with subjects that are put in specific situations for the purpose of the hypothesis. Because of this, the research for this study must rely on statistical data that is collected for other reasons such as Census data. These statistics must then be collected and used to draw conclusions rather than simply showing a direct correlation, or lack thereof, between the two factors being studied. There is also no “perfect” group for this particular study which makes it difficult to find two complete opposites. For example, although Los Angeles is considered highly integrated, the society is still not perfectly integrated and therefore, there are still some segregated parts that could produce violent crime. These issues could influence the data collected because the research is not able to be manipulated like it can in certain field studies.

Conclusion

This study focused on the homicide rates of two demographically similar cities with one major difference, racial isolation rates. In doing so, the hope was to see the difference in homicide rates at checkpoints over a span of almost 40 years (1980-2017). It was hypothesized that the homicide rates in Chicago, Illinois would be significantly higher than those of Los Angeles, California. This is because the hypothesis supports the idea that racial segregation contributes to homicide. Through the study, the homicide rates for each year in the respective cities were found through the FBI database the Uniform Crime Report. What unfortunately can't be found is the homicides divided by the race of victim or offender. Because of this it will be more difficult to note which populations are affected homicide more than others and therefore will be less specific when attempting to tie it with race. With that said, looking at the poverty rates, the racial isolation, and the homicide rates of the years listed and both cities will hopefully

be enough information to show the correlation between the three variables. This correlation will represent the factors leading up to racial violence and therefore homicide. It will look at how racial segregation may correlate with both poverty and homicide. It is expected that racial isolation will have a strong positive correlation with poverty, and that these two will also have a correlation with the homicide rate.

At the conclusion of the study and the research provided, the data is somewhat unclear. The hypothesis was correct in the sense that the homicide rates for Chicago were higher than that of Los Angeles. With that said, the research pointed to the idea that racial segregation would influence poverty rates potentially due to economic differences within the races. It was then hypothesized that racial segregation may influence poverty which could influence the homicide rate. However, the poverty statistics collected show that Los Angeles and Chicago, over time, have had varying poverty rates that interlock with each other and change throughout history. The poverty chart did not reflect the homicide chart like the hypothesis expected. Chicago's homicide rate could be higher due to other factors such as those previously mentioned like gun laws and gang activity. Though this is true, it is not necessarily appropriate to completely rule out the idea of racial segregation's effect on homicide trends. This theory was not necessarily disproved rather the limitations prohibit this study from fully proving or disproving the original hypothesis.

For future research, it may be helpful to further explore the three factors that influence segregation as well as exploring what segregation truly entails. In the case of comparing poverty with segregation this brings researchers to a chicken and egg scenario where there are contradicting theories of whether poverty causes segregation or segregation causes poverty. Regardless of the final answer to this phenomenon, it is clear that both influence each other.

Further studying the influence on violent crime may need to include a more in depth search into the segregation piece of this study. It would make sense that racial tensions arise from segregation and research has shown this to be true. Looking further into this idea of how segregation causes tension may lead to further connections with the homicide rates. With that said, while doing research for this study, it was clear that overtime the Census got more and more specific in the statistics it collected. There is a possibility that in the future the victim and offender races may be available, which could enhance this study and tailor it more towards the hypothesis.

Overall, although the results were concluded unclear, there are still some things to take away from the research done. As the further research options show, looking further into segregation and its causes as well as its effects may allow for a better understanding of the overall concept and its ability to cause tensions. Though it is probable that there are other factors influencing homicide and that segregation does not stand alone, this could also be the case for the opposite situation. There could be other factors that contribute to a smaller homicide rate, not to mention there may also be other factors that influence the poverty rate. The poverty rates did not reflect the homicide rates however this does not necessarily mean that poverty is only influenced by racial segregation or vice versa. Therefore it is possible that a future study that may allow for a more direct approach to proving or disproving the hypothesis (i.e. with victim/offender race information available) could produce more conclusive results. This study opened a gateway to potential research into a historical problem that seems to still exist in a minor way. Though racial segregation does not necessarily mean what it meant 60+ years ago, it still exists in a form and could potentially be influencing violent crime, specifically homicide.

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