As incarceration increases, public safety decreases

**Hypotheses**

- **More formal social control mechanisms** (i.e., arrests and incarceration) → greatly **disrupt community structures**
- higher perception of **disorder**
- undermines **collective efficacy**
- lowered **public safety**

I hypothesize that as incarceration rates in a country increase, public safety will decrease.

**Research Question**

How does incarceration affect public safety in developed countries?

**Motivation**

- George Floyd’s death (2020) highlighted racial injustices in US criminal justice system
- **Police brutality** and **incarceration** rates increase yearly despite protests
- Police legitimacy and overall public trust in US institutions are at an all-time low
- 2022 midterm elections emphasized increasing funding for law enforcement
- Increased funding and higher incarceration rates are assumed to make civilians safer
- Scholars focus on policing and crime rates

The impact of incarceration (the result of procedural justice) on the community (for whom procedural justice exists) is less known.

**Methods**

- DV: **public safety**, measured by “Safe Living” (Sustainable Governance Indicators)
  - Internal security policy (50%)
  - Homicide rates (16.67%)
  - How safe people feel (16.67%)
  - Confidence in police (16.67%)
- IV: **prison rates** (World Prison Population)
- Control: police adherence to law, level of democracy, Gini index, unemployment rate
- OLS Multivariate Regression
- Country-year data
  - 2014 – 2022, missing 2021
  - 41 countries, all OCED and EU

**Results/Discussion**

Holding all other variables constant, there is a **statistically significant** relationship between all but unemployment rate.

**Future Directions**

- More countries and years, include 2021
- The US should decrease reliance on incarceration and invest in communities
- By understanding how externally induced social disorders affect the public, future scholars can reduce adverse community reactions to social change to keep civilians safe.

**Acknowledgments**

The ABCD REU is funded by the National Science Foundation (Award #2150143)

**Further Information**

https://tinyurl.com/HWANG-Report