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Article Summary

Hate Crime and Place:
The Spatial and Temporal Concentration of Bias-Motivated Crime in Washington, DC

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Summary

This Study explores the spatial stability of hate crimes reported to the police in Washington, D.C. Using open-source data gathered by the Metropolitan police department, Wenger and Lantz geospatially analyze hate crime incidents at the street segment, intersection level. The findings of this study suggest that hate crime is spatially concentrated and stable.

Methods

The data on hate crime incidents in Washington, D.C. were derived from an open- source dataset provided by the Metropolitan police department. This dataset includes all hate crime incidents reported to the police department from 2012 to 2018. Street segments, and intersections (SSI) was the unit of analysis for this study. Using the location data that was recorded as street intersections or block units, the researchers geocoded the locations of the hate crime incidents to account for unspecified intersections. The sample size of 19,753 included 13,031 street segments and 6,722 intersections. In order to determine if hate crimes have spatial stability over time, the authors used a spatial point pattern test.

Results

The results of this study find that hate crimes occur on less than 1% of units (SSI) each year in Washington, D.C., suggesting a high degree of spatial concentration. Additionally, this study finds that 38.3% of SSIs with at least one hate crime account for 50% of hate crime overall. The spatial point pattern test revealed spatial stability (>.700) for each year in the 7-year period. However, the stability reduced over time, suggesting a drastic increase in hate crimes with less spatial concentration.

Implications

This study indicates that dramatic increase in hate crime between the period of 2015 to 2018 have remained spatially consistent. The spatial stability of hate crimes suggest that incidents of hate crimes are occurring within the same areas over time and are not spreading to new locals. The geospatial properties of hate crime are important to understand as they may imply revictimization of communities targeted in the past.

For more information see Wenger, M. R., & Lantz, B. (2021). Hate crime and place: The spatial and Temporal concentration of Bias-Motivated crime in Washington, D.C. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence,* 1-26. doi:10.1177/0886260520987817