

BIAS MOTIVATION IN CRIME: A Theoretical Examination

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Abstract

This paper assesses the social problem of racially motivated crime that occurs within our communities. Racially motivated crime is also known as bias motivation and this type of offense is personal in nature, pertaining to one's race, ethnicity or nationality, religion, disability, or sexual orientation. There are various categories of bias that influence an individual to participate in the execution of a hate crime. The Labeling Perspective and the Constructionist Perspective are examined to assess a theoretical interpretation of this complex social problem. There is substantial controversy in regards to what exactly constitutes a hate crime and how this discrimination of one another effects members of our communities, affecting behavior as well as shaping social norms, violations, and deviant behavior correlated to the occurrence of bias acts of criminal activity.

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A Theoretical Examination in Bias Motivated Crime

Hate crime or bias motivation refers to hate-motivated violence and this type of offense is personal in nature, pertaining to one's race, ethnicity or nationality, religion, disability, or sexual orientation. There is substantial controversy in regards to what exactly constitutes hate crime and how this discrimination of one another influences members of our communities, motivating behavior as well as shaping social norms and deviant behavior correlated to the occurrence of bias acts of criminal activity. Hate crime may typically be described as criminal behavior that is motivated by a formulation of prejudice; however, what constitutes as being prejudicial also ranges, but is considered to be an assumption, belief, or opinion that is utilized as a basis for action (Jacobs & Potter, 1998). A hate crime that is associated to one's sexual orientation is an incident that is often not reported due to the degradation associated with being ostracized based on an individual's sexual preference (Espiritu, 2004).

The Hate Crime Statistics Act (1990) entails the thorough and detailed collection of crimes that incorporates "...Prejudice based on race, religion, sexual orientation, or ethnicity, including where appropriate crimes of murder and non-negligent manslaughter; forcible rape; aggravated assault, simple assault, intimidation; arson; and destruction, damage, or vandalism of property" (USDOJ, 1999). Hate crime is also known as bias crime and there appears to be some minor controversy pertaining to the definition of what a hate crime is and this may also be an issue on a state level due to the fact that the statutory definitions of hate crime vary from state to state (Jacobs & Potter, 1998). The Bureau of Justice Administration (1997) states "Hate crimes-or bias motivated crimes-are definable as offenses motivated by hatred against a victim based on his or her race, religion, sexual orientation, ethnicity, or national origin" (Robinson, 2007). The Anti-Defamation League explains, "A hate crime is any crime committed because of the victim's actual or perceived race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, disability, gender, or sexual orientation" (Robinson, 2007). The National Education Association clarifies "Hate crimes and violent acts are defined as offenses motivated by hatred against a victim based on his or her beliefs or mental or physical characteristics, including race, ethnicity, and sexual orientation" (Robinson, 2007). The definition of what constitutes as being a hate crime can be defined by one's motive in addition to the effect on other members of the racial group. Incidences of hate crime produces a sense of trepidation and intimidation towards all members of a group based on their racial characteristics.

Hate crime is not a criminal offense that can be fully comprehended based strictly on its behavioral manifestations, statistical information, or causes (Perry, 2003). Hate crime is a complex social problem that desires much research pertaining to the manner in which this behavior is executed; furthermore research is recommended in relation to the process of racial victimization. According to MacLean (1986), there is much to be learned about the conceptualization of hate crime and this cannot be solely gathered by studying criminal events and should therefore incorporate social dynamics and a thorough examination of the varying characteristics associated with the motivation behind this form of victimization (as cited in Perry, 2003).

Federal Hate Crime

The Supremacy Clause of the United States Constitution provides national protection and a sense of sovereignty when the occurrence of a crime threatens the wellbeing of citizens throughout the nation (Spiga, 2008). The Federal Interstate Commerce Clause grants permission to the federal government to have criminal jurisdiction to govern interstate business issues pertaining to the telephone, television, trucking, United States Postal Services, national security, the military, Federal taxes, Federal benefit entitlement programs, and air travel (Spiga, 2008).

According to Federal Hate Crime law (1968) the federal authorities will step in and take jurisdiction for acts that criminalize the use of race, ethnicity, or nationality that interferes with a protected activity, such as attending school. This statute is somewhat limited in relation to the prosecution of hate crime due to the requirement set by Congress. The victim must be victimized while participating in a federally protected activity; therefore, this does not provide protection to individuals victimized based on their sexual orientation, gender, or disability (Cacas, n.d.). Bias motivated criminal activity encompasses a variety of dynamics to include the psychological, sociological, and emotional influences that reinforce this behavior. Upon the occurrence of a hate crime within a community or even when an individual is able to identify with a particular incident of hate crime, the incident affects members of the community and ultimately confirms that this form of prejudice does exist. There is a process of recognition among individuals as they examine and inquire the probability of this offense being inflicted upon them or others within the community (Craig, 2002). Therefore, individuals that are not victims of this type of crime are able to commiserate with the victim and may possibly suffer from some form of vicarious traumatization. The next section examines the attention and bias portrayed within the media during the coverage and reporting of acts of hate crime.

Media Attention and the Reflection of Racism

There are certain incidences of hate crime that receive media attention, sometimes on a national level, and there are others that go unnoticed altogether. This section examines the possible reasons as to why certain offenses gain more attention than others. Media bias refers to the reporting of news in a subjective manner versus an objective manner. According to Michelle Malkin, a newspaper columnist and TV commentator, hate crimes committed by blacks against whites causes discomfort within the national media to present stories such as this to the public (as cited by Witt, 2007). There appears to be a predetermined set of parameters that society has towards the issue of hate, race, and crime. When offenses committed do not appropriately measure up to these parameters, there is much hesitation to present the details of the offenses to the public. Glenn Reynolds, a law professor at the University of Tennessee, confirms that there is a correlation between white on black crime that receives more attention versus black on white crime (as cited by Witt, 2007).

The perception of media bias is a prevalent dynamic that effects the manner in deciphering which offenses will provide more stimulation of interest to the public and nation than others. However, these recognizable racial disparities of underreported offenses of hate crime can be interpreted as unfair conviction of black on white offenses (Parker, 2007). According to the

Anti-Defamation League, it is mandatory to have hate crime laws due to the offenses that are committed that instill fear throughout minority communities causing significant impairment to the unity of society (as cited by Parker, 2007).

It is natural to resent or begrudge those that appear to receive more attention within the media than others for the same acts of violence. This concept purports that there is disparity among races in society that not only affects one's social status, socioeconomic status, political and occupational opportunities, but also one's justice. The dichotomy associated with "justice for all" is prevalent within the dynamic of media bias and hate crime, authorizing certain offenses towards racial groups as more significant and noteworthy of grievance than others.

Theoretical Perspectives

The following section will examine the implementation of the theoretical constructs that pertain to the social interaction of deviant behavior and hate crime. The social framework of race relations incorporates a theoretical construct founded on the postulation that: 1) there is agreement pertaining to the highest level, 2) members of the minority are constructed for the purpose of reaction to the inequality and elimination from competitive strain, 3) integration occurs to strive for equality and opportunity, economic maturity, and political progression, and 4) the assimilation of minorities into the primary groups of society modifies the construct and is a continuous advancement (Niemonen, 2002).

Labeling Theory

The foundation of the labeling theory is based on the symbolic interactionist theory in which there is substantial meaning in the societal reactions of social life (Liska & Messner, 1999). Thus, the labeling theory primarily concentrates on the microphenomena versus the macrophenomena. According to Lemert (1951, 1967) there is a power struggle prevalent within our society in which individuals strive for social power and dominance (as cited by Liska & Messner, 1999). Becker (1963) accentuated that race is a master status and may at times contribute to discrimination, ultimately affecting social order, social status, and overall social interaction (as cited by Liska & Messner, 1999). Furthermore, Schur (1971, 1979) examined the correlation between what actually influences deviant behavior and the social process pertaining to being labeled a deviant. He concluded that individuals are not considered deviant based upon the norm violation but rather based upon who they are (Liska & Messner, 1999). Social scientists that support the labeling theory analyze the correlation between those who participate in deviant behavior and choose to violate social norms to that of being labeled a deviant.

Constructionist Theory

The constructionist perspective is based upon the philosophy of phenomenology in which one's social interpretations of society influence their behavior or actions. This social interpretation constructs their reality or world and their subjective interpretations determine what is or is not considered to be deviant behavior (Liska & Messner, 1999). Katz (1988) posits that individuals that participate in deviant behavior are attracted to this type of behavior for several reasons (as cited by Liska & Messner, 1999). It is possible to be seduced by deviant behavior and to find a form of fulfillment in participating in unconventional behavior. Individuals may also choose to commit a crime with the goal of retaliating to humiliation or limitations placed upon them within their social interpretations.

Constructionists desire to examine the construction of the social world in deviant's and the various influences affecting racial, ethnic, and gender interpretations as well as the environmental and historical materialization of being labeled a deviant (Liska & Messner, 1999). The constructionist perspective of deviant behavior analyzes the conceptualization of appropriate versus inappropriate behavior. This perspective is rooted in phenomenology and considers the interpretation and perception of what is deemed to be deviant behavior in addition to the establishment of unconventionality. Constructionists credit the social world as the fundamental theory associated with the classification and identification of phenomena that exists within

disparate circumstances and the subsequent repercussions correlating to conduct that is considered inappropriate (Liska & Messner, 1999).

Social Interaction and Deviant Behavior

Behavior whether it be deviant or not, is judged and held accountable to the traditional normative context of conventional conduct. The social conflict that exists when participating in the course of judging what is considered to be deviant or non-deviant behavior is extremely ambiguous. With that being said, those that are typically on the higher end of the pecking order in relation to social status will discover that their perspective of normative behavior is considered the reference of what is acceptable conduct (Liska & Messner, 1999). There are social categories that exist to aid in the identification of deviants in addition to confirming the particular act indeed represents deviant behavior and violates a social norm. Merton (1968) attributes social disorganization and anomie in a manner of adaptation typologies to represent the various influences of deviant behavior and Hagedorn (1997) associates social disorganization and anomie to specific oppositional behaviors and values that have also been adapted and are not easy to change. According to Merton (1968) innovators are able to adapt to the various set of circumstances and conditions presented in relation to lower class communities, lack of opportunities, and economic difficulties (as cited in Hagedorn, 1997).

The framework of the labeling theory focuses upon the social process and interaction of individuals within society and within their own social networks. The perspective of the labeling theory underscores the correlation between the role one's actions and the reactions received from their conduct as well as manner in which these reactions shape their overall identity and role within society (Liska & Messner, 1999). Due to the fact that the labeling theory is based on the symbolic interactionist theory, the application of society's reactions to one's conduct is therefore considered to be a label. Once an individual is labeled a deviant, their social role is modified and a level of indignity pertaining to social relationships, employment opportunities, and the social and psychological hazard of participating in future deviant behavior may also be elevated due to the label (Liska & Messner, 1999). It is apparent that those labeled as deviants may be dissuaded to become anything other than the deviant that they are. This conditions participation in criminal activity due to the fact that deviants are stigmatized and possibly ostracized at times by others. The labeling theory does not focus on the norm violation itself, but rather the definition of what deviance is. There are individuals who participate in deviant behavior; however, not all individuals who participate in deviant behavior are classified or labeled as such.

Deviance is correlated with the conduct that combats normative values and standards established within society. Preeminently, the subject of deviance is best comprehended when correlated to social circumstances; therefore, an action that violates conformity within the conventional spectrum of appropriate behavior ultimately ensues a reaction from society that denotes this particular violation as atypical behavior. However, it is intriguing to note that occasionally individuals may perceive their conduct to be manipulated by external forces within society versus the recognition associated with their individual autonomy. Therefore, social construction may be interpreted as the divergence and agreement prevalent within society with the goal of comprehending the interactive process between behavior and deviance. According to Cloward and Ohlin (1960), Tannenbaum's perspective of role performance and criminality is ultimately correlated to patterns prevalent in relationships that are essential to condition values. Sutherland (1944) agreed that criminal behavior was indeed learned; however, the social structure within a

given community is also partial to providing opportunity for youth to participate in delinquent behavior (Cloward & Ohlin, 1960).

Labeling Theory and Constructionist Theory and Hate Crime

If deviant behavior is a social process, the labeling theory denotes a sense of commitment to the participation of unconventionality as well as highlighting one's identity as being a deviant. This labeling can be interpreted as a form of stigmatization associated with various identities of deviant behavior. Divisions among racial and social class can be encouraging of diversity within society. The labeling theory does not thoroughly provide an explanation to the correlation of the hierarchies of race, class, and gender, which are critical to the comprehension of hate crime.

Labeling theorists are typically more interested in studying sensational deviants versus concentrating on the consequences that result within struggle of power and dominance within social interactions that exist among the majority and the subordinate groups of society (Perry, 2001). The incidence of hate crime identifies the status of the offender as well as reiterating the subordinate position of the victim. According to Cornel West, the dynamics pertaining to the criminology of hate crime has been ignored and disregarded by theorists; therefore, it is necessary to incorporate theory with the correlation of crime and minority groups within society to understand the oppositional relationship among cultural and structural dimensions of power, authority, inequality, and criminal behavior (as cited by Perry, 2001).

Social constructionists examine the developmental process in the identification and classification associated with certain populations as being victims (Best, 1995). According to this perspective, hate crime is a social problem that is not restricted to a specific culture or region. According to Pfuhl & Henry (1993) deviance may be simplistically portrayed as the interaction between performers and spectators in which behavior is addressed, perceived, interpreted, and evaluated in relation to one's conventional and customary conduct existent within particular cultures, environment, or circumstances. Individuals are ultimately socially constructed due to the social reality and social causality that results from acting in a specific manner with a conscious purpose (Pfuhl & Henry, 1993). Due to the fact that there are numerous police departments that do not provide accurate information pertaining to the occurrence of hate crime, there are communities that are not represented and go underreported for acts of this kind.

Bias Motivation in the Criminal Justice System

According to Walker, Spohn, and DeLone (2007) focus on the population and association of the authority prevalent in the relationship of political power significantly affects the criminal justice system in a variety of ways. The identification of race associated with crime has the propensity to be conceptualized and conditioned as a form of cause and effect, cat and mouse, typical contingencies pertaining to racial expectations, disparity, threat, and power (Walker, Spohn, & DeLone, 2007). In relation to discrimination, Wilbanks supports the argument that racial prejudices exist within the criminal justice system and contradicts the association of the criminal justice system as being exemplified by this formation of discrimination (as cited by Walker, Spohn, & DeLone, 2007). Gross (1997) states that if there were no form of discrimination within the criminal justice system, our prison system would not be racially disproportionate. It is interesting to note the domesticated dynamic of race, violence, expectations, and demarcation within our communities and the manner in which the complexity of this issue consistently feeds

our society resulting in imitation and assimilation. Fine and Weis (1998) examine this type of complexity in relation to race and violence, social expectation versus economic arrangement, corruption in policing, perspective versus reality and justice within a realm of injustice.

The issue of racial discrimination is prevalent within the sentencing process of African Americans and minorities on trial and heading to prison. Whether or not there is a significant correlation between race and severity of sentences is highly debatable. Upon the investigation of racial disparity within the criminal justice system, there are two concepts that must be considered: warranted and unwarranted variations among offenders. According to Stolzenberg & D'Alessio (1994) warranted variations reference legally relevant issues associated to the sentencing process that considers the type of crime that was committed in addition to the level of severity pertaining to the particular offense, as well as the criminal history of the offender. Unwarranted disproportion associated with the sentencing process incorporates the unofficial classification of one's racial status in relation to the severity of the sentence received (as cited by Bushway & Piehl, 2001).

Research confirms that the Hispanic and African American population are more likely to be sentenced to prison and for longer periods of time in addition to be less likely to have their sentence reduced than Caucasians. There is a correlation between the elevated level of African Americans that are incarcerated and the population that is comprised primarily of African Americans in addition to communities with high rates of unemployment (Walker, Spohn, & DeLone, 2007). In relation to minorities, members of the Hispanic population are at a disadvantageous disposition than African Americans, possibly due to the negative stereotypes associated with the Hispanic culture.

When implementing a set of successful practices to confront the issue of discrimination with discretion utilized in the sentencing process, it is essential to incorporate several strategies to reduce and prevent this form of bias from affecting the lives of minorities. According to the United States Sentencing Commission (2007), uniformity and proportionality is necessary due to the vast disparity within the courts among similar offenders, convicted of comparable crimes (USSC, 2007). The many opinions and viewpoints of what to focus on during the sentencing process can be rather problematic; therefore, appropriate legal representation is necessary to diminish the challenge of discretion.

The development of a rational sentencing classification that is capable of monitoring when the court system does not abide by the guidelines within this system will assist in the specification as to what has the most profound result in the digression of typical guidelines. Guidelines constructed for judges within the court system can examine the fundamental aspect of the offense committed and the appropriate punishment for that offense. Specificity for sentencing guidelines for recidivists or repeat offenders should be implemented within this process due to the fact that an individual who consistently demonstrates acts of deviant behavior should receive a sentence that reflects this unconventionality. Guidelines pertaining to the sentencing process and the elimination of discretion is a complex issue that requires accountability from the federal court system, this may be accomplished through the method of judicial review. The integration of what criminal activity has taken place and in regards to what state or locality must not be ignored in regards to the perceived severity of the offense. This is exemplary of just one of the many valid disputes of sentencing related to ensuring justice for the injustice that transpires based on situational incidences. However, the dichotomy associated with implementing a system to

reduce bias and discretion within the court system is achievable as judges follow guidelines to address racial disparity prevalent within society in relation to the variation of sentencing.

When sentencing, judges use discretion to decide the appropriate level of punishment in relation to the crime committed and the criminality of the offender's history; therefore, a form of judicial discretion is necessary at times to decipher what is the best interest of the courts and the community and is prevalent within the criminal justice system (Bushway & Piehl, 2001). It is evident that equality within the courts is an aspect that has not been achieved as of yet (Walker, Spohn, & DeLone, 2007).

Crime Statistics Analysis

Due to the fact that there are numerous police departments that do not provide accurate information pertaining to the occurrence of hate crime, there are communities that are not represented and go underreported for acts of this kind. The Federal Bureau of Investigation is responsible for compiling data reported by police departments to incorporate in the Uniform Crime Report statistics. This data is completed each year and is representative of the locality, criminal offense, and frequency of offenses throughout the United States. Therefore, when various police departments choose to misrepresent the amount of hate crime that takes place within their communities by not reporting all incidents, this may be perceived as judgment by authorities that this form of crime is insignificant (Crawford, 2007). The following states do not have hate crime laws and therefore do not participate in the reporting of such acts of violence to the FBI, they are Alaska, Hawaii, Indiana, Kansas, New Mexico, South Carolina, and Wyoming. Law enforcement agencies report hate crimes either on a monthly basis or on a quarterly basis and can do so directly to the FBI or through their individual state Uniform Crime Report Programs.

In 2007, there were approximately 13, 241 agencies that participated throughout the United States in reporting varying incidences of hate crime to the FBI. Of these agencies that chose to participate, only 2, 025 agencies actually submitted reports of hate crime to the bureau. The population covered in this process was 260,229,972. The number of incidents of hate crime reported out of all states totals to 7,624 with approximately 3,870 of these incidents attributable to race. Out of the 3,870 incidents of race related hate crime, 749 were Anti-White, 2,658 were Anti-Black, 61 were Anti-American Indian/Alaska Native, 188 were Anti-Asian/Pacific Islander, and 214 were Anti-Multiple Races or Groups (USDOJ, 2007). Although the total of incidents reported to reflect race related hate crime totals to be approximately 3,870, there were a total of 4, 724 offenses and 4,956 victims of these offenses. Eighty-four agencies that chose to participate in the Hate Crimes Program reported that no hate crimes occurred in their immediate jurisdiction (USDOJ, 2007).

The majority of hate crimes take place in or near one's residence with 32.5 percent, near roads, highways, and alley streets with 20.3 percent, at schools with 12.1 percent, in parking lots or garages with 6.0 percent, and 9.4 percent reported are unknown for the location of the offense, and 19.8 percent involve multiple locations see Figure 1 (USDOJ, 2007). The correlation to those that were victimized, 52 percent of the victims were targeted because of the offender's bias against race and 69.3 percent were victims of an offender's anti-black bias.

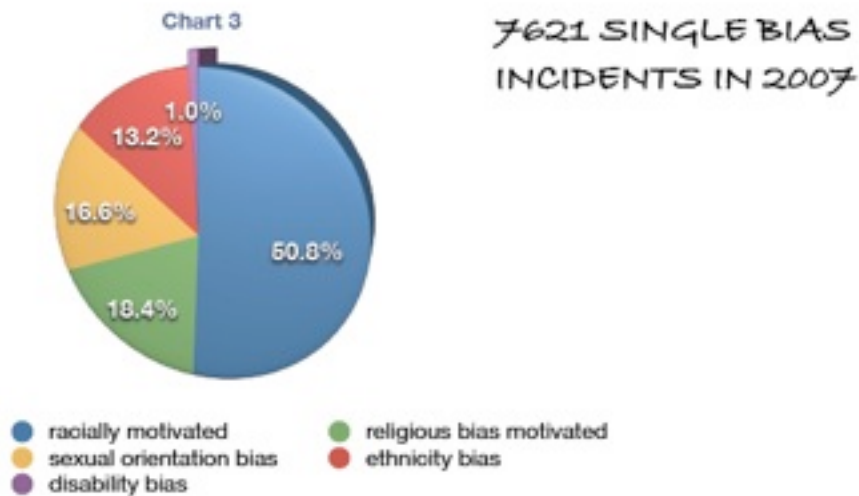
Figure 1: *The Occurrence of Hate Crime*



Figure 2 displays the types of bias motivated crime that took place in 2007. Approximately 50.8 percent of hate crimes reported in 2007 were racially motivated, 18.5 percent were due to religious bias, 16.6 percent were reportedly due to sexual orientation bias, 13.2 percent were motivated by ethnicity bias, and 1 percent was motivated to disability bias (USDOJ, 2007).

Figure 2: *Racial Bias: Hate Crime Offenses That Were Bias Motivated in 2007*

	racially motivated	religious bias motivated	sexual orientation bias	ethnicity bias	disability bias
Region 1	50.8	18.4	16.6	13.2	1



Approximately 69.2 percent were victims of an offender’s anti-Jewish bias, 58.9 percent were victims of an offender’s anti-male homosexual bias, 61.6 percent were targeted because of an anti-Hispanic bias, and 64 victims were targets of an anti-mental disability bias (USDOJ, 2007). Figure 3 displays the religious based bias motivated criminal activity reported for 2007. The racially motivated acts of hate crime that were committed are displayed in Figure 4 with 69.4 being Anti-Black, 18.4 Anti-White, 6.0 Anti-Multi-Race, 4.6 Anti-Asian, and 1.6 Anti-American Indian. Out of a total of 9,535 victims of hate crime, approximately 56.7 percent were victims of crimes against persons, 43.1 percent victims of crimes against property, and .02 percent accounting for victims of crime against society (USDOJ, 2007).

Figure 3: *Religious Bias: Hate Crime Offenses*

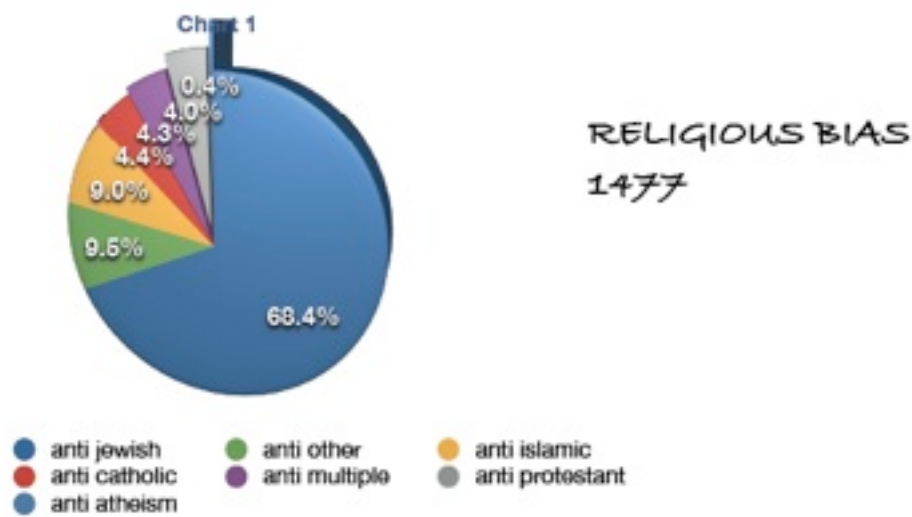


Figure 4: *The Breakdown of Racially Motivated Crime for 2007*

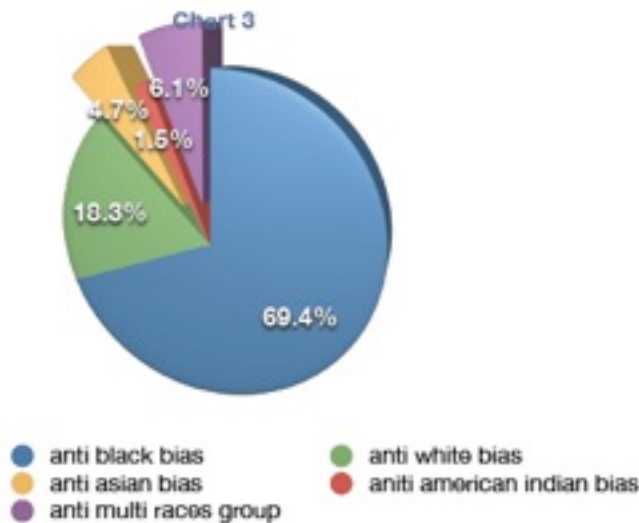
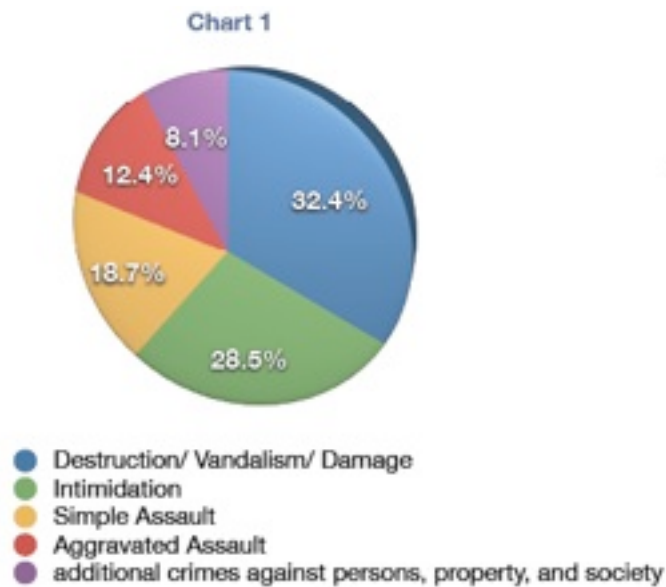


Figure 5 displays the manner in which hate crimes occur in relation to the categorization of the offense with destruction, vandalism, and damage being the most popular form of harassment. According to the Federal Bureau of Investigation (1999), young males are more inclined to participate in committing a hate crime and arrested for these crimes and violent crimes in general (Johnson & Byers, 2003). Another consistent demographic pertaining to perpetrators of hate crime is the level of education. Individuals that are less educated tend to hold more prejudice against the racial and ethnic diversity of others (Johnson & Byers, 2003). The next section will address the strategic interventions in preventing future incidents of hate crime from occurring in our communities.

Figure 5: *Types of Offenses for Hate Crimes*



Recommendations and Strategic Intervention in Incident Prevention

In addressing the following strategic interventions, the ultimate goal is to prevent future incidents of hate crime from occurring in our communities. In addition to the construction of the premeditative aspect of hate crime, there are also social and individual factors that should be considered in the examination of the occurrence of bias motivated crime. It is recommended that the realistic preventions of this type of criminal activity needs to initiate in the process of improving the relationships between members of the community in which prejudice is prevalent and discrimination is a contributing factor towards the perception of others. It appears that law enforcement masks incidences of hate crime at times to protect individuals in the community that may identify with the perpetrator or with the victim of the crime. This restricted information prevents individuals from being aware of the hate crime prevalent among their communities. Due to the fact that this sort of crime is considered classified and possibly camouflaged, is damaging to those who are victims of these hate crimes and may prohibit accurate reports of violence to law enforcement for lack of action, respect, and attention devoted to the victim. If the public was aware that there was indeed an issue of hate among the members of their community, there are possible actions that may be considered to ameliorate this tension between one another.

It is also recommended that all law enforcement officials participate in large-scale hate crime training programs for federal, state, and local authorities. This will provide the education and practical awareness of these types of offenses so that officials will recognize and acknowledge the particular category in which an offense is considered to be a hate crime. This awareness can be implemented through a Hate Crime Training & Awareness Program that will also provide information pertaining to the unconstructive characteristics that can result from not participating in reporting incidents of this nature. The enactment of the Local Law Enforcement Hate Crime Prevention Act is a legislation that would grant permission to federal authorities to participate in the investigation and prosecutorial procedures of these types of acts.

There is a necessity to raise funds to address anti-bias hate crime prevention through the education of members of our community and to reach out to those who have been victimized in this manner. In order to address practical and realistic strategies in preventing an incident such as this from reoccurring, it is important to note that awareness and intervention must be incorporated within the substructure organizations of each community. Awareness of this type of offense should be addressed within the school systems and should follow suit into the campus arena of colleges and universities throughout the region. If students are able to be educated and trained to recognize the behavior associated with bias motivation, they will be able to commiserate with those of other gender, race, culture, ethnicity, and sexual orientation in a non-bias manner.

It is necessary for law enforcement authorities to approach the issue of hate crime and bias motivated offenses seriously. A community effort is needed to address the particular needs within each community and to associate public awareness and education appropriately. Members of organizations such as churches, city council, neighborhood watch, directors of education within the school board, officials employed within colleges and universities, and authorities within the police departments need to work together to confront this issue in an effort to prevent such an incident from occurring again.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the issue of hate crime is prevalent within communities throughout the nation, rendering a reformation of this type of persecution among members of our society. Hate crime is dehumanizing and may be perceived as a personal attack upon an individual's identity. Media coverage and media bias are prevalent within the realm of journalism and will always be an issue that is debatable upon location, perspective, critique and analysis of events. The labeling theory, as well as the constructionist theory, are associated to the social interactions of individuals and groups within society, as well as their actions and perceptions of others. If law enforcement agencies on a state and federal level collaborate with officials and leaders throughout organizations in the community to address the factors that influence members of the community to participate in this behavior, the effort would be highly beneficial in preventing future incidents of this nature.

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