

# Effects of Education on Female Crime

Although males still commit the majority of all crime, female crime rates have risen dramatically in recent decades. This paper examines the effects of educational attainment on female incarceration and arrest rates.

We estimate that an additional year of education lowers incarceration rates among black women by about 0.8 percentage points and white women by about 0.04 percentage points, on average.

## Effects on Incarceration

Whites	Blacks
-0.0350	-0.0771
(0.0111)	(0.0474)

IV Estimates in percentage terms. Census data for years 1960-1980. Estimates conditional on age, year, state of birth, state of residence, cohort of birth effects, and state of residence  $\times$  years effects. Instrumental variables are compulsory schooling laws. Standard errors in parenthesis.

We also estimate that a one-year increase in average education reduces arrest rates 35.62 percent in violent crimes and 14.93 percent in property crimes, on average.

## Effects on Arrests by Offense

Violent	Property
-0.3562	-0.1493
(0.0520)	(0.0520)

OLS Estimates. Arrest data from the Uniform Crime Reports, FBI. Education data from Census. Years 1960, 1970, 1980, and 1990. Estimates conditional on percentage black, age  $\times$  offense, year  $\times$  offense, age  $\times$  year, state  $\times$  age, state  $\times$  offense. Standard errors in parenthesis.

Among violent crimes the main effects are on murder and aggravated assault. Whereas among property crimes the main effects are on motor vehicle theft and arson.

## Effects on Arrests by Offense

	Violent		Property
Murder	-0.4768 (0.0710)	Burglary	-0.0181 (0.0649)
Robbery	-0.0897 (0.0845)	Larceny	-0.0464 (0.0576)
Assault	-0.4573 (0.0636)	Vehi. theft	-0.4377 (0.0950)
		Arson	-0.1807 (0.1027)

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In current research we are combining the years of education with measures of quality of education to estimate a general human capital effect on crime. As part of this agenda we are interested in understanding whether quality and quantity are complements or substitutes when it comes to deterring criminal behavior. That is, can we remedy low quality of education with more years of education, or vice versa?

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