Stand Your Ground
Dataset Introduction

Abstract

This dataset contains information on 237 criminal cases litigated in Florida, United States, between 2005 and 2013. Ackerman, Goodman, Gilbert et al (2015) investigated whether, in this setting of Stand Your Ground applicability (Fla Stat. 776.012, Fla Stat. 776.031, Fla Stat. 776.032), there exist statistically significant race differences in conviction. Multiple predictor logistic regression was used to model outcome event of conviction (n=204, # events = 75) in relationship to the primary predictor defined as race of victim = White race (versus other) in the 204 cases with complete data. Selected covariates were included in model development to explore variations in this relationship by: race of the accused, specifics of the crime (e.g., did crime result in death) and type of legal proceeding (e.g., investigating agency). Ackerman, Goodman, Gilbert et al (2015) found that, compared to Non-White victim cases, cases in which the victim was White were statistically significantly more likely to result in conviction, overall and after adjustment for other statistically significant predictors (adjusted relative odds OR = 2.19, 95% CI = 1.13 - 4.20). These data are suitable for teaching purposes only and it is noted that these data are selected. It is appropriate for a first year applied data analysis course or equivalent. The data is mostly clean. However, the data requires some manipulations prior to modeling and there are some missing values. See below, **Additional Information for Instructors**.

Background

Violence and racial and cultural inequities in the American criminal justice system produce socially unjust public health and require additional research to inform new laws (and their implementation) that are "blind" to race and culture. In this regard and importantly, while advances in the social sciences have yielded promising frameworks for understanding race and culture, the incorporation of these frameworks in public health research designs is often limited. What is needed are more scientific investigations of human behaviors (e.g., violence or the litigation of violence) and their interrelationships with human identity indices (e.g., race and culture, etc.). Ideally, such studies would leverage common and accepted definitions of race and culture with the goal of informing future criminal justice policy development.

Ackerman, Goodman, Gilbert et al.'s (2015) study is an example of bridging social sciences advances in understanding race and culture with public health research addressing violence and equality in the criminal justice system. This dataset contains data from the 237 criminal cases in Florida, United States, between 2005 and 2015, that met the conditions for Stand Your Ground applicability in Florida. Most of the data were obtained from the publicly available Tampa Bay Times Stand Your Ground database. Additional data, as needed, was obtained from publicly available (online) court documents and news reports.

Study Objective

The goal of this investigation was to assess the relationship between event of conviction and race of the victim (White versus other), overall and after adjustment for other statistically significant correlates of conviction, in the setting of Stand Your Ground Law applicability in Florida, United States, between 2005 and 2013.

Study Design

Retrospective cohort.

Subjects & Variables

237 cases
24 variables

This dataset is comprised of selected information from the 237 cases (including 25 cases with multiple suspects and/or multiple victims) in the publicly available Tampa Bay Times Stand Your Ground website (Tampa Bay Times, 2013). All are "related to Florida's 'Stand Your Ground' (SYG) law from 2005 to 2013." The Tampa Bay Times source data reflect two inclusion criteria: 1) a request for a 'Stand Your Ground' immunity hearing; or 2) "circumstances that appeared to reflect the Legislature's intent when it passed the law". As some cases had missing data, Ackerman, Goodman, Gilbert et al.'s (2015) applied four exclusion criteria prior to modeling (see, Figure 1 of the publication): 1) outcome pending; 2) missing race of victim; 3) multiple outcomes; or 4) unknown weapon of victim. This yielded the "analytic sample" of n=204 cases.

Note that some cases with multiple suspects (all with the same outcome) are included in the final dataset, as are some cases with multiple victims. The handling of individual-level variables such as age or injury status, with multiple individuals in a case is explained in the data dictionary.

Additional Information for Instructors

This dataset is particularly appropriate for providing students with "real world" practice in data cleaning, coding of exclusions, and creating new variables. It is also appropriate for instruction in data description and multiple predictor logistic regression.

Citation(s)

Ackerman N, Goodman MS, Gilbert K, Arroyo-Johnson C and Pagano M. "Race, law and health: Examination of 'Stand Your Ground' and defendant convictions in Florida" Social Science and Medicine, vol. 142, 2015, *http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2015.08.012*

Tampa Bay Times, 2013, August. Florida's Stand Your Ground Law: Explore our 'Stand Your Ground' Data. Accessed between October and November 2014. Retrieved from *http://www.tampabay.com/stand-your-ground-law/data.*

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