Employment, Education and Crime During Emerging Adulthood

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Previous research has found that employment can reduce participation in criminal activities in the lives of older adults. Conversely, the opposite effect is found concerning employment in the lives of adolescents. This study fills a gap looking at the time in-between for persons in emerging adulthood. I also examine whether the effects of education and employment on crime are additive or interactive, and explore whether the association between education, employment and crime is conditioned by neighborhood disadvantage.

Data and Measures

National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent to Adult Health (Add Health)
- 4 Waves of data (1995-2008)

Analytical Sample:
- Waves 1, 3, 4 (N = 14,800)

Key Measures:
- Dependent Variable - Crime
  - Count variable of crime participation at wave 4
- Employment
  - Measure of if the respondent is working at least 10 hours per week
- Education
  - Measure of if the respondent is enrolled in any type of education

Disadvantage
- Average of the proportion of low income families, proportion of families below poverty level, proportion of families receiving public assistance, proportion of families with a female head of household, and unemployment rate.

Negative Binomial Models

Crime regressed on education, work and neighborhood disadvantage

Intercept

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Model 1</th>
<th>Model 2</th>
<th>Model 3</th>
<th>Model 4</th>
<th>Model 5</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>.067***</td>
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<td>-1.03***</td>
<td>-1.00***</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Standard Errors in Parentheses

* p < .05, ** p < .01, *** p < .001

N = 14,800

Neighborhood Disadvantage interacts with employment in emerging adulthood in its association with crime: Unexpectedly, increases in disadvantage are associated with a 13% reduction in crimes for those who are not employed during emerging adulthood. On the other hand, increases in disadvantage are associated with an increase in crimes for those who are employed in emerging adulthood.

Enrollment in college during emerging adulthood is associated with fewer crimes in adulthood, though employment appears to be unrelated to crime in adulthood, at least as a main effect.

Summary of Results

Next Steps

Further analyses considering differences by crime type, number of hours working & enrollment type.