

The Impact That School Resource Officers Have on a School Shooting

Research Questions

- Do School Resource Officers (SROs) reduce the amount of deaths when a school shooting occurs?
- Do SROs reduce the amount of casualties when a school shooting occurs?

Background

- Despite school shootings being a very rare occurrence, they are highly publicized.
- Policy-makers have implemented a host of security measures over the last decade, most notably SROs.
- SROs are put into schools to better protect the faculty and students.
 - *The Indicators of School Crime and Safety 2017 report the majority of schools use an SRO.*

Significance

- Prior research regarding SROs has yielded mixed results when analyzing their effectiveness.
- There is no literature discussing the impact of SROs on school shootings.
- Despite decreases in violence and victimization within the school, communities and policy-makers continue to call for increased security measures (Kupchik et al., 2015).

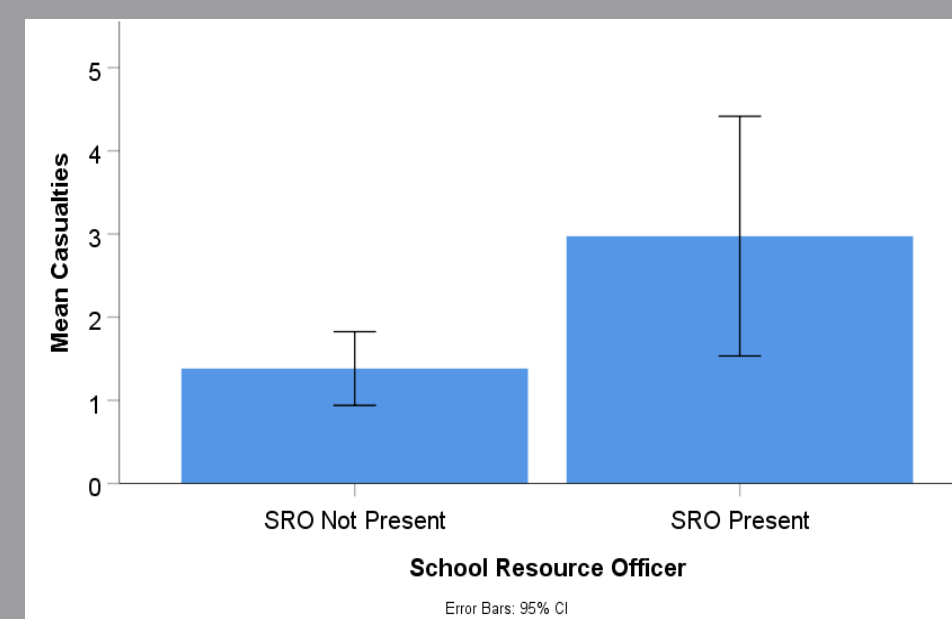
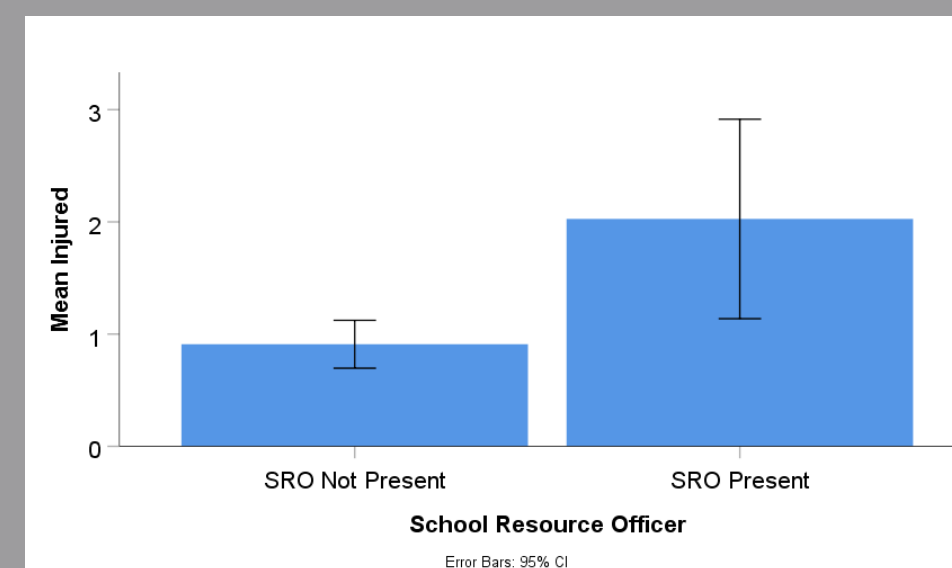
Data

- All school shootings ranging from 1999 to 2018.
- N = 221 school shootings
- Publicly available at the [Washington Post](#).
- Detailed dataset compiled of variables describing:
 - The school
 - The school shooter
 - The outcome of the shooting
- The dataset also consisted of a multitude of school-level variables like the percentage of students on free/reduced lunch.
- Most importantly, variables that detailed whether or not an SRO was present and how many casualties occurred.
- All other variables were controlled for while analyzing the relationship between SROs and the amount of casualties.

Data

Differences in Injuries and Casualties When SROs are Present Verses Not Present During a School Shooting

1999 – 2018



Findings Summarized

- When an SRO is present, compared to not present, it is not likely that there will be more deaths in the shooting.
- When an SRO is present, compared to when an SRO is not present, individuals are more likely to be injured.
- We combined the amount killed and injured to have a “casualties” statistic and found that there are more casualties when an SRO is present.

Discussion

These results paint an interesting picture that much of the public would not believe or disagree with.

Media outlets sensationalize school shootings, which elicit an emotionally invested response from policy-makers and school administrators.

While school shootings are rare, and not increasing, security measures, specifically SROs, are increasing in presence among schools.

However, according to this data, SROs do not necessarily keep the schools safer.