For this discussion, I chose to review the UCR crime statistics for the city of Tallahassee, FL. The reason for this choice it is approximately sixty (60) miles from my home, the state capital, home of Florida State, national champion football team, and Florida A & M University. The city of Tallahassee boasts a population, according to the UCR, of approximately 185,461 that includes a diverse combination of individuals, college students and professional individuals. With this type of diversity, Tallahassee has the college life of dorms, bars and professional buildings downtown with other areas that are considered a high crime area. According to the UCR, in 2012, the violent crime rate in Tallahassee demonstrated 853.009 per 100,000 individuals but can fluctuate due to the influx of students and politicians. As stated by Bruce (2008, p. 167), the use of population for the determination of the crime is not recommended but depends upon the statistic that can create an inaccuracy. This can be relevant to an area such as Tallahassee due to the population within the city is constantly fluctuating with the university and state government officials that can affect the statistics.

After perusing the UCR data, I reviewed the data for the number of robberies that had occurred within the city of Tallahassee. I was surprised the low number, 525, of robberies that occurred in 2012 due to the amount of festivities, football games, and state government functions. With the amount of influx of individuals, I thought the amount of robberies would be greater than what was listed but realize that the agency may have classified a robbery as a burglary or another classification that may affect the way the crime is measured (Bruce, 2008, p. 161). For me with the amount of professionals and students, a higher amount of robberies would have been documented but only covers the crime if law enforcement is aware of the incident and reported.

The data that I perused, robberies, was located within the UCR and is collected monthly from local law enforcement reports that is used to measure crime across the United States (Santos, 2013, p. 79). The data is based upon the clearance of the cases that are cleared by arrest. For example, I had approximately eighteen (18) fraud cases that involved one (1) individual and a letter was forwarded from the State Attorney’s Office stating the intention to file charges within the case(s). With the letters, I was advised the case would be cleared as an arrest, resulting in a clearance.

However, problems exist, in reference to the robberies and other violent crimes that are not reported to law enforcement in Tallahassee. Also, the UCR may not include robberies that are committed at commercial establishments that differ from non-commercial robbery rates, robbery of a person. This would depend upon the agency of the reporting procedures. Another area of concern, the UCR uses the hierarchy coding system, an example if a rape and robbery occurs, only the rape is reported (Santos, 2013, p. 79). Therefore, the robbery may not be reported and the reporting is voluntary resulting in a lower published rate that may not be accurate.

For future reporting, crime rates of multiple counties have been underestimated due to populations have not contributed to the crime count. These shortcomings can be compensated for by careful examination for a determination or extent within the gaps of input of robbery. A new method should be developed to improve the procedures that allow for sufficient testing that would allow the ability to estimate crime (Maltz & Targonski, 2002, p. 316). The classification error for robbery within the UCR statistics can vary with any of other violent crimes. Efforts within the future should seek ways to statistically adjust the robbery rate for accuracy based upon variation of the known error and aggregate the total. With the reliance upon the data presented within the UCR, it is imperative that efforts are continued for improvement within the accuracy of the reporting of the crime of robbery.

Reference

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