The Disproportionate Incarceration of America’s Minority Youth

by Julie L. Borchers

Creighton University

Introduction – Troubled Times

According to the 2000 Census, minority youth in the United States represent 23% of the total population aged ten to seventeen. However, this same group comprises nearly 52% of the population of juveniles who are detained or in some form of confinement. The numbers are even more alarming in states with larger minority populations. In the District of Columbia, minority youth represent 72% of the youth population and 97% of total youth who are detained. However, in Maine, minority youth represent only 3% of the youth population and 3% of the detained youth population. Across the nation, individual states are struggling with this issue, and nearly all fifty states have a larger percentage of minority youth in detention than the percentage of minority youth in the state. The majority of research indicates that there is not a racial predisposition toward crime. How then do we explain variation in the percentage of minority youth detained from state to state (weighted according to the total minority youth population of a given state)?

The terms “juvenile” and “youth” will refer to citizens of the Untied States between the ages of ten and seventeen. This is the age range as defined by the term “youth” on the 2000 Census. In the majority of states age ten is the youngest age at which a juvenile may be subject to punishment for the commission of an offense, and seventeen is most frequently the upper age of jurisdiction for juvenile courts. Minorities include African Americans, Hispanics, American Indians, Asians, Pacific Islanders, and those identified as “other race.” Confinement includes
detention of youth in any form. This could be a juvenile correctional facility, training school, or any other type of center in which the youth is not free to leave at his/her will. It does not include those youth on probation or serving community service hours as punishment for an offense.

Analysis will be constrained to states within the United States using the most recent census data. Because juvenile criminal activity is handled primarily at a state level, individual states will be the unit of analysis. Statistics from the 2000 Census will be used because this data provides the most current picture of the youth minority detention situation. Because there is no federal level of the juvenile court system, and because there are many differences from state to state, all fifty states will be considered. This provides not only the greatest range of detention rates, but it demonstrates the differences in proportion from state to state while allowing for systematic differences between states as well.

Disproportionate minority confinement is a serious issue and should be treated as such. Many see it as an infraction of civil rights and citizen equality, serious allegations in a democratic nation-state where all races are thought to be treated equally. Organizations, committees, and task forces have been established to examine disproportionate minority confinement among adults as well as youth. State legislatures and non-profit organizations have devoted vast amounts of time and resources, but current efforts have yet to show any effect on the number of minority youth in detention facilities. For these reasons, this topic is of great important to a variety of groups. It is of particular concern for parents of minority youth who view their children as being treated unfairly by the juvenile justice system. It is also important to civil rights organizations seeking to protect the freedoms of minority citizens of the United States. Finally, it is important to the local, state, and federally elected officials whose
constituents are affected by disproportionate minority confinement and who are accountable for the large amounts of public resources that have been devoted to studying the issue.

Those who should be most concerned with this issue, as well as those who could potentially have the greatest impact upon changing disproportionate rates, are educators. One of the goals of public education is to produce well-rounded, informed, and law abiding members of society. The mere fact that any youth at all are committing crimes requiring some form of detention demonstrates that the education system is failing those youth. States with a higher percentage of juvenile minorities being detained indicates a flaw in the educational system, as it is failing only a portion of the youth population. If a determination can be made as to why minorities comprise a greater percentage of youth detention populations in some states then a solution to resolve the disproportionate representation can be formulated and implemented.

Minority confinement has been studied to a greater extent among adults. Some of the commonly cited causes include lack of education, low socioeconomic status, and inadequate legal representation. However, less work has been done concerning minority youth and confinement. I hypothesize that there is a link between the availability of afterschool programming and the number of minority youth in some form of detention. Specifically, those states with a greater number of afterschool programs available to students will have a lower percentage of minorities comprising the juvenile detention population. However, the schools with the greatest number of minority students typically have the least amount of funding available for such afterschool programming. Most crimes committed by juveniles occur between the hours of 3:00 PM and 4:00 PM (Sickmund & Snyder, 1999). During this time, students have been released from class for the day, but their parents have not yet returned home from work. If
afterschool programming were universally available at all schools, states would lower the juvenile crime percentage overall, as well as decrease the minority confinement rate.

**Literature Review – More than Black and White**

There is a great deal of literature concerning the subject of minority incarceration, particularly with regard to African-Americans. However, it is apparent that there is a lack of consensus, as well as conflicting information regarding variable direction, and spurious relationships between commonly identified variables. In addition to these problems, the present literature also focuses primarily on adults, creating a need for information regarding youth. While the research is quite varied, it can be narrowed into three main theories: political or institutional flaws, social and psychological factors, and economic conditions.

The first theory involves a connection between government institutions, including the individuals who dispense government services, and the minority incarceration rate. The core argument is that there is a problem with the system itself, which leads to a greater percentage of minority arrests, trials, convictions, and sentences. This group of hypotheses places the blame on the shoulders of the government, the law, and those who are responsible for enforcement of the law. It is not the actions of the individuals committing crimes, but the way in which the system is designed and executed that causes minorities to be over-represented (Jones-Brown & Markowitz, 2000).

Support for this theory is evidenced by the fact that minorities are arrested at higher rates, charged with more serious crimes, and, on average receive longer sentences than do whites. Several researchers have called this phenomenon “institutional racism.” Supporters of this hypothesis assert that it is the institutions administering justice, namely the police and the courts, which are racially biased in favor of whites. Some charge that the police officers and judges
themselves are racist, while others blame racially discriminatory laws and policies. Supporters of this hypothesis also claim that this problem is compounded by the fact that the justice system is comprised mainly of white, upper class males (Albonetti, 1999; Bridges & Crutchfield, 1988; Dannefer & Schutt, 1982; Helms & Jacobs, 1996). One researcher sites evidence that in recent years, there has been a decline in the percentage of blacks serving on juries. He links this to criteria established by the court or by the state for jury service. He further claims that these criteria serve to keep the minority population underrepresented in the jury selection pool, which in turn decreases the likelihood that the final jury will be representative of the actual population. A jury that is not representative of the population decreases the likelihood that the defendant will get a fair trial (Alejandro & Bing, 2000).

While the theory seems plausible on the surface, it fails to take into account several key factors. States laws are created by state legislatures, the composition of which varies from state to state. However, in most states this body is comprised of primarily upper-class, white males. While they may have some unconscious predisposition toward creating laws that favor their own race, it is highly unlikely that such laws are responsible for the magnitude of the discrepancy. It is also unlikely that the civil rights lobby would even allow such proposals to become law, and if they did, the laws would still be subject to judicial review. Idealists choose to believe that such racial discrimination is not occurring in today’s society and certainly not at the hands of the police or the judges. However, while there may be some members of the criminal justice system who are racists, it is again unlikely that the actions of these few individuals would create such a widespread problem. The institutional argument also identifies a constant as the cause of discrimination when it focuses on the system. There is only one system, and simply stating that
that system is biased assumes not only a constant, but also a blanket response to a very diverse problem.

The largest amount of work in the area of disproportionate minority incarceration focuses on social factors as causes for minority incarceration. This theory emphasizes the decisions of individuals and the society in which they live as causes for the resulting criminal behavior. The hypotheses in this area vary greatly, and the data has yielded conflicting results in many cases. Social factors are also subject to change over time, from city to city, and vary according to geographic region of the United States as well, facts which much of the data fail to take into account.

African-Americans comprise a larger percentage of the incarcerated minority population than any other minority group, and one particular hypothesis asserts that this relationship is based on historical factors. The first of these hypotheses states that because the ancestors of most African-Americans in the United States were slaves, they have a predisposition toward violence. This caused a chain of violence, which has been passed down to each successive generation. It has also led to a history of pathology or criminal activity (Gordon et. al., 1994). However, another study refutes this claim by suggesting that there is no racial predisposition toward violence, but that the predisposition deals with the socialization of minorities into society, not the fact that they are minorities (Jones-Brown & Markowitz, 2000).

Other research notes that in large cities, racial minorities tend to segregate themselves from the rest of society or form their own culture in a particular area of the city. This then leads to heightened racial tensions and the tendency for cultural misunderstandings, which often result in a violent resolution (Flynn & Shihadeh, 1996). However, one would assume that the crimes would occur between rival racial groups, but another researcher notes that the majority of crimes
committed by African-Americans involve African-American victims. Instead of interracial criminal activity, most crimes occur between members of the same race (Hawkins, 1987).

Still other hypotheses find links between the lack of a traditional family structure and rates of incarceration. Some have asserted that children who grow up in single parent families, or with guardians who are not the biological parents, are more likely to be incarcerated later in life. Because these children have a lower level of supervision and often a lower socioeconomic status, due to only one income in the household, they are more likely to commit a crime or be involved in criminal activity. A large percentage of minorities grow up under such circumstances and are therefore more likely to commit a crime and be incarcerated (Gordon et. al., 1994; Jackson, 1997).

A final social theory in this group states that the psychological factors of racism drive several minorities toward criminal activity. Because of their predisposition toward violence, minorities are incarcerated at higher rates than whites. Racism is a fact of life for many minorities; it is often unprovoked and can be extremely hurtful to the members of a particular race. It can also lead to violence or retaliation at other racial groups or individuals. One theorist claims that this constant struggle can psychologically affect groups of minorities very significantly. Individuals also tend to identify themselves with a group of persons who are racially similar. Minority groups have a greater instance of poverty, violence, and incarceration, which can have significant psychological influences on other members of the group as well. As a way to cope, group members turn to violence or are driven to violence out of frustration and anger (Gordon et. al, 1994; Eron et. al., 1994).

The final major theoretical approach links economic factors to criminal activity. This theory follows the line of reasoning that individuals with less money commit more crimes and
are therefore incarcerated at a higher rate. The majority of the literature seems to indicate that a lower socioeconomic status is linked to a greater instance of criminal activity. However, why those with a lower socioeconomic status commit more crimes is a point of contention. Some assert that it is due to a lack of education, while others claim that the poor are just victims of circumstance. Still others site racial tensions between those competing for limited jobs as the source of violence among this group of people.

Research indicates that there is a link between socioeconomic status and rate of incarceration. An individual with a lower level of income is more likely to be incarcerated than an individual with higher level of income committing the same offense (Myers, 1987). The reason most commonly sited for this discrepancy is a lack of adequate legal representation. An individual with a higher income is able to afford better legal representation and is therefore more likely to receive a lower sentence or no sentence at all (Fogarty & Humphrey, 1987). This puts those with lower incomes, primarily minorities, at a disadvantage. Portions of the literature also indicate that other factors affecting socioeconomic status may also have significant links to the rate of incarceration. These include unemployment and welfare. Individuals who are jobless or receiving government aid of some form are likely to have a low socioeconomic status and live below the poverty level. Again, minorities are more likely to be unemployed and/or receiving welfare. Therefore, some conclude that these factors are also linked to the rate of incarceration (DiIulio, 1996; Myers, 1990).

It seems only natural that those with less money would commit more crimes, particularly property crimes. This behavior is not a psychological predisposition on the part of given groups of society to become involved in illegal activity. It is need-based behavior rooted in the necessity for money and possessions or driven by the materialistic desires commonly associated
with the culture in the United States. Those with less money want the same material possessions as those who are better off. However, while this may be a plausible explanation for adults, it does little to benefit minority youth incarceration rates. Very few youth have a full-time job or are responsible for their own income. It is hard to generalize from an adult income whether a youth is more or less likely to commit a crime.

It is obvious from the literature that major gaps still remain. The research to date has focused almost entirely on adult African-American males resulting in a lack of information about other races, ages, and females. By focusing on a little-tested theory and by narrowing the scope of my research to minority youth, I will close some of these gaps. I hypothesize that there is a link between the availability of afterschool programming and the number of minority youth in some form of detention. Specifically, those states with a greater number of afterschool programs available to students will have a lower percentage of minorities comprising the juvenile detention population. Research in this area has already determined that nearly 50% of adolescents are engaging in behaviors that put them at risk for criminal activity (Burt et. al., 1998). By providing an alternative to these behaviors, fewer youth will be at risk, which in turn means fewer youth detentions. I will also test for relationships between household structure and the level of youth minority incarceration, as well as average family income and the level of youth minority incarceration.

**Hypothesis and Theory – Give the Youth an Option**

I hypothesize that there is a link between the percentage of minority youth incarcerated in a state and the average number of afterschool programs offered per school in a state. Specifically, those states with more afterschool programs per school will have a lower percentage of minority youth comprising the juvenile detention population. Afterschool
programming provides a dual purpose in reducing not only the number of youth who are
arrested, but also the number of youth detained. Such programs occupy students in the hours
during which they might otherwise be unsupervised and can also serve as an educational venue
for specific crime deterrent programs, as well as other holistic opportunities.

The majority of crimes committed by youth aged seventeen and under are committed
during the hour from 3:00 PM to 4:00 PM (Sickmund & Snyder, 1999). The most common
reason cited for this period of high criminal activity is lack of supervision. The vast majority of
youth under age seventeen are still involved in elementary and secondary education. From
3:00PM to 4:00 PM, youth have completed their classes for the day, but their parents have not
returned home from their occupation. This leaves an alarming number of America’s youth
unsupervised. Without parental supervision, youth are more likely to try drugs, engage in sexual
activity, and also commit a criminal offense (Sickmund & Snyder, 1999). Afterschool programs
provide not only an alternative option to criminal activity, but supervision that would otherwise
not be available. The more afterschool programs available, the more youth that can participate.
Therefore, states that have a higher number of afterschool programs on average will have fewer
youth serving in some form of detention, but states that do not offer a large number of
afterschool programs or none at all will force youth to choose another alternative, increasing the
likelihood that the alternative is criminal activity.

In addition to increased supervision, afterschool programs also offer a unique educational
opportunity. The time can be tailored to specific “at risk” groups of youth. Programs can serve
to promote racial tolerance, help students with school subjects, improve social skills, provide
mentoring opportunities and time management skills, as well as career and family counseling.
These programs can be used to warn students about the dangers associated with risky behavior or
the consequences of their actions. Afterschool programs can also increase physical fitness and give youth an opportunity for safe levels of competition and aggression.

Data and Methods

Data for the dependent variable, minority youth incarceration rate, were obtained from the 1999 Census of Juveniles in Residential Placement, an annual census conducted by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, a division of the U.S. Department of Justice. This report presents by state the percentage of minority youth in detention. The census indicates by race the percent of youth detained. By subtracting the white category from 100%, I arrived at the total percentage of minority youth in detention; this included minorities identified as African-American, Hispanic, American Indian, Asian, and other. For this variable only two states have an extremely low percentage of minority youth incarcerated. These are the state of Maine with 3% and New Hampshire with 6%. The majority of states are in the range of 40-60%, however three states have an extremely high percentage of incarcerated minority youth. These were Washington D.C. with 97%, Hawaii with 90%, and New Jersey with 84%. The overall range is ninety-four. The mean is 52.37%, the median 55%, and the mode 41%. These indicators of central tendency are very alarming considering that the minority youth only comprise 23% of the national youth population.

21st Century Community Learning Centers are the only federally funded afterschool program funded through the U.S. Department of Education. While there are several other federally funded youth programs, this is the only one whose emphasis is primarily directed at afterschool. Each year since 1998, Congress has allocated a sum of money for this program. States are then able to write grant proposals to receive this funding. By using the funding data for the 1999-2000 academic year, I divided the total amount of money that each state received by
the number of children between the ages of five and seventeen as reported by the U.S. Census Bureau for 2000. I then arrived at the average amount of federal money spent per child in each state in the United States. There are eleven states that did not receive 21st Century Community Learning Center funding for the 1999-2000 academic year. This could be due to several factors. Because funding for the 21st Century Community Learning Centers is based on a grant system those states may not have felt the need to submit a grant proposal. It is also possible that they did submit proposals, but the U.S. Department of Education did not find the programs worthy of funding. Other possibilities include receiving sufficient funding for afterschool programs from local donors or the state government. For the remaining states the minimum is $0.13 per student in the state of New York and the maximum $7.90 per student in Vermont. This yields a range of $7.77. The mean for this data is $1.70, the median $1.15, and there is no mode.

In addition to my hypothesis, I will also a test hypothesis involving a link between the minority youth incarceration rate and the average household income, which thus becomes the second independent variable. To test this variable I used the median income data per state from 1999 as reported by the U.S. Census Bureau. This data ranges from $29,696 in West Virginia to $55,146 in New Jersey for a difference of $25,450. The average income per state is $41,346 the median is $40,624, and there was no mode for this data.

The third independent variable is family situation. This variable involves a hypothesis with a link between the number of single parent households in a state and the minority youth incarceration rate. For this variable, I again used data from the U.S. Census Bureau. Based on the 2000 Census of Population and Housing, I was able to obtain the total number of single parent households, both male and female, with children under age eighteen. I then divided this number by the total number of households per state, as reported in the same study, to arrive at the
percentage of households per state with one parent and children under eighteen. In North Dakota only 7% of all households have only one parent and children under age eighteen. Several other states in the Midwest also have a low percentage of single parent households. In Minnesota and Nebraska 7.8% of the households with children are headed by a single parent, and in Iowa only 7.5%. However, in Mississippi this number is as high as 12.3%. Many of the other Southern states also have relatively high percentages. Louisiana has 12%, and Arkansas and the District of Columbia both have 11.3% of households headed by single parents. The range of the data is 5.3%. The average is 9.082%, the median, 8.8%, and the modes 8.1%, 8.2%, 8.7%, 9.2%, and 9.8%.

To control for the fact that the percentage of minority youth in residential placement or confinement may be a function of the total number of minority youth in the state, this will be used as a percentage as one of the independent variables. In addition to residential placement statistics, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention also reports statistics for the entire juvenile population. Data for 1999 will be used. The state with the lowest percentage of minority youth is Vermont where they comprise only 2.4% of all youth. The state with the highest percentage of minority youth is Hawaii with a total of 75.1%. New Mexico, California, and Texas also have a high percentage of minorities in the population with 54.3%, 52.2%, and 45.9% respectively. The District of Columbia has 72.2%. For this data the mean is 23.4%. The median is only 19.4%, and the modes are 10.8% and 19.4%.

The four independent variables, as well as the dependent variable, are all interval in nature. I will regress all four independent variables on the dependent variable, minority youth incarceration rate. The r-squared value and f-statistic will also determine in conjunction with this analysis. The r-squared value explains the amount of change in the dependent variable that
is determined by the independent variable or variables. Explaining all of the change in a dependent variable is impossible, but this analysis should explain a great deal of the change. The closer that the r-squared value is to one, the greater the amount of variation of the dependent variable is explained by the independent variables. The F-statistic indicates the relative strength of the relationship between the dependent variables and all of the independent variables as described in the equation of the line when all the data points are graphed. The coefficients in the equation are determined using the unstandardized beta. In this way, the entire equation takes into account how much each of the independent variables affects the dependent variable when the other independent variables are held constant. These further indicate the nature of the relationship between the dependent and independent variables.

In addition, the standardized beta and t-value will be reported and analyzed. The standardized beta indicates the amount of change in the dependent variable as the result of one standard deviation in the independent variable. From the standardized beta values, inferences can be made from the sample group to the total population. The t-values indicate the strength of the relationship between each of the independent variables and the dependent variable. If the t-values are greater than two or less than negative two, the significance level for each of the independent variables will be less than 0.05%. This level of significance is important as it indicates that the relationship between the dependent variable and the independent variable falls within the 95% confidence interval. This further indicates that a relationship of this magnitude would only occur 5% of the time if there was no relationship between the dependent and independent variables.
Results – Minority Population Links

The hypothesis for this research stated that the percentage of minority youth in correctional facilities in a state can be decreased by funding more afterschool programs in that state. The regression analysis, t-values, and significance level indicate that there is a relationship between the dependent variable, percentage of minority youth incarcerated, and three of the independent variables: total percentage of minority youth, amount of afterschool funding per student, and median household income.

The independent variable, total minority youth population, has the most explanatory power in the analysis. For this variable, a t-value of 7.851 was reported with a significance level of zero. This means that a difference in the means of the dependent variable and independent variable has a 0% chance of occurring if it is assumed that there is no relationship between the two variables. For the independent variable, afterschool funding per student the t-value was -3.080 with a significance level of 0.003, again indicating that there is a 0.3% chance of obtaining a difference in means of this magnitude if no relationship is assumed. Median household income had a t-value of 2.319 with a significance level of 0.025. This indicates a 2.5% chance that this difference could occur if there was not a relationship between the variables. Finally, for single parent household, the t-value was 1.051 with a significance of 0.299. For this final independent variable there is a 29.9% chance that a difference of this magnitude could occur if no relationship between the variables is assumed. This significance level is above the 0.05 level commonly used. This means that the relationship does not fall within the 95% confidence interval. To use this variable in the analysis it would be necessary to lower the confidence interval, thus making the results less reliable and less indicative of a significant relationship. (See TABLE 1)
### TABLE 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>T-value</th>
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<tr>
<td>Total Minority Youth</td>
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<tr>
<td>Afterschool Funding</td>
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<td>.003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household Income</td>
<td>2.319</td>
<td>.025</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single Parent Household</td>
<td>1.051</td>
<td>.299</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The constant value for this regression analysis was –5.366. Using this value in conjunction with the unstandardized beta values it is possible to obtain the f-statistic and overall equation of the line when the regression equation is graphed. The unstandardized beta values are simply the coefficients for each of the x-values in the equation. For this regression analysis using the dependent variable, percentage of minority youth incarcerated, and the four independent variables (total minority youth population, afterschool funding per student, median household income, and percentage of single parent households), the overall equation of the line is \( Y = 0.0946X_1 - 2.508X_2 + 0.001X_3 + 1.763X_4 - 5.366 \). (See TABLE 2) The f-value for this equation is 39.268 with a significance level of 0.000. These values indicate that the equation is significant and that values of this magnitude would never occur if there was no relationship between the dependent variable and each of the four independent variables.
While the unstandardized betas explain the change in the equation of the line, they are based solely on the sample. Standardized beta in turn serves as an indicator for the actual population. It represents a change in the dependent variable as the result of one standard deviation in the independent variable. In the regression analysis for the independent variable total minority youth, the standardized beta was 0.733. This indicates that as the minority youth population of a state goes up one person, the youth incarceration rate will rise by 0.733 people. The standardized beta value for afterschool funding is –0.221. This means that as afterschool funding increases by one dollar per student, the incarceration rate decreases by 0.221. States would have to spend four dollars more per student than they are currently spending on afterschool funding to keep one youth out of prison. The standardized beta for household income is 0.175. This indicates that as a household income rises by $1.00, the minority youth incarceration rate increases by 0.175 persons. For the final independent variable, single parent household, the standardized beta is 0.098. As single parent households with children under eighteen increases by one percent in a state, the minority youth incarceration rate increases by 0.098 persons. (See TABLE 3)
TABLE 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Total Minority Youth</td>
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<tr>
<td>Afterschool Funding</td>
<td>-0.221</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household Income</td>
<td>0.175</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single Parent Household</td>
<td>0.098</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

By entering the independent variables in order of strength of explanatory power from strongest to weakest, it is possible to obtain a regression model with the highest possible r-squared value. This value indicates the percentage of the dependent variable that is explained by the independent variable. For this model with the independent variables, total minority youth population, afterschool funding per student, median household income, and percentage of single parent households, in that order, the r-squared valued is 0.754. This means that 75.4% of the dependent variable is explained by these independent variables. This roughly seventy-five percent is an excellent indicator of a strong relationship.

Conclusions and Implications – Don’t Just Throw Money at the Problem

The results indicate that the largest factor in predicting the minority youth incarceration rate is the total number of minority youth in the state. Based on the standardized beta, this relationship was more than twice as strong as the next strongest independent variable. There is also a statistically significant link between the dependent variable and the amount of federal funding each state receives for afterschool programming and also the average household income per state. For each of these variables, the significance level was less than 0.05% as reported in TABLE 1. While these independent variables are, in fact, related to the dependent variable, their
explanatory power is significantly less than the total minority youth population. When the independent variables are rank ordered in terms of strength, my hypothesis is the second strongest variable. While, there seem to be other factors involved, the case for afterschool funding is relatively good. The t-value of –3.080 and significance of 0.003 indicate that there is indeed a relationship between the dependent variable and the independent variable identified by my hypothesis. However, the standardized beta value of –0.221 demonstrates that this relationship, while it is not entirely weak, it is not a relatively strong relationship either. (See TABLE 4)

TABLE 4

<table>
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<tr>
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<th>Unstandardized Beta</th>
<th>Standardized Beta</th>
<th>T-value</th>
<th>Significance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Afterschool Funding</td>
<td>-2.508</td>
<td>-0.221</td>
<td>-3.080</td>
<td>0.003</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Part of the reason that that independent variable, afterschool funding, yielded weaker results than expected could be attributed to the data. The data that was used was obtained from the U.S. Department of Education and reflected only the funding that states received from this department of the federal government. Afterschool funding comes from many sources, public, private, federal, state, and local. Besides the U.S. Department of Education, the U.S. Departments of Justice and the U.S. Department of Agriculture also fund portions of afterschool education. This, in addition to any state contributions, local contributions, or private donations from companies or non-profit organizations comprise the majority of the resources available for afterschool funding. The U.S. Department of Education is not the primary source, nor the largest source of funding for these types of programs. However, obtaining an accurate analysis of all afterschool funds used in any given state is nearly impossible. In addition, because afterschool
programs are often not administered by the school themselves, there is a lack of accountability as to how many dollars were received and how many youth participated. While every attempt was made to ensure that as much data as possible was obtained from the same source, this was not entirely the case. The data also varied over a two-year period. These factors also could have attributed to lower values than expected for several of the independent variables.

While these factors explain about 75% of the causes, 25% still remains unexplained. Subsequent research should focus on other socioeconomic factors, systematic problems, or geographical region as possible indicators of why disproportionate minority incarceration is occurring. Further research should analyze specific minority groups to determine if this problem can be narrowed to a smaller portion of the population or if all minority groups are affected equally. It should also examine those particular states where the minority youth incarceration rate is much higher than that total minority youth population, as several of the causes could be unique to a particular state. In addition, it remains to be determined how the extent to which the disproportionality of incarceration is affected as the percentage of minorities in a state increases.

These results of this analysis are generally inconclusive. While the research presents a stronger case for the fact that as the minority youth population of a state goes up so does the youth incarceration rate of that state, there is also evidence that more funding in afterschool programming could help slow the incarceration rate. However, it would take a great deal of funding to have any substantial effect. Also stating that the two percentages (minority youth incarceration rate and total minority youth population) are linked does nothing to explain the disproportionality that exists in confinement between minorities and non-minorities. The fact remains that in many states, the percentage of minority youth detained is over twice as large as the percentage of minority youth in the state.
Policymakers should use this information as a starting point to examine the numerous other issues that have arisen as a result. While there are a lot of questions that remain to be answered, this research provides a good basis for further examination. At this stage, policymakers should not allocate money to the problem; they should focus of finding the source of the problem in order to determine the most effective solution.
References


United States Census Bureau: [http://www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov)