

Vera Institute of Justice

Criminal Justice Issues and Prisoners' Rights

<https://www.vera.org/publications/employment-and-crime-a-review-of-theories-and-research>

Policy Issue Resources

Publication

This is a review and analysis of the literature on the relationships between employment and crime from several different disciplines: economics, sociology, anthropology, and the recent body of manpower program evaluations for criminal justice populations. The review of economic literature focuses on two competing explanations of employment and crime relationships: the economic model of crime developed by neoclassical economists, and the more structural approach of segmented labor market theorists. The review of sociological literature encompasses various third factors (family, education, and age) that have been seen as qualifying the relationship between employment and crime. Structure of opportunity theory and subcultural literature related to employment and crime issues are also considered. Finally, surveys of early manpower program evaluations in a criminal justice context and recent major impact evaluations are reviewed.

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