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DATA-480

**What Effects Do Conceal Carry Laws Have on Gun Violence in The United States of America**

***Overview:***

This research report delves into the inner workings of gun violence in the United States of America. With the intention of determining if there is reasonable correlation between individual states conceal carry laws and their gun violence rates. These rates in each state being broken down to homicide and suicide rates as well in order to come to a true idea of what laws facilitate what problems. Lots of biases on this topic have rooted its head so my goal is to come to a conclusion regarding this question without bias.

***Prediction:***

Going into this research project there were a few predictions that I had made. These assumptions were mainly made of off what I have heard throughout the news and online media. However, I also had slightly more insight into violent crime growing up more so than the average person due to my father being involved in law enforcement. My first prediction States with less strict guns laws will have higher homicide rates than states with stricter gun laws. My Second main prediction is that there would be more states that have constitutional carry laws/ permit-less carry laws. My final prediction is that the vast majority of gun related deaths in the United States will be suicides.

***Process:***

This process started with a search of good reliable data. The data that I was looking for did not all exist on a single datasheet, so I had to collect all of the data and then construct a datasheet. First the overall gun death numbers came from the CDC. This data was broken down into categories of the type of death i.e., suicides, homicides. Next I got the current populations for each state from the US Census (2022). Once the populations were put into the table the data from the CDC was broken up into the following parameters:

* Death Avg. per year
* Wounded Avg. per year
* Suicide Deaths Avg. per year
* Suicide Wounded Avg. per year
* Homicide Deaths Avg. per year
* Homicide Wounded Avg. per year
* Children/Teen Death Avg. per year (each state has this broken down based on what happens more suicides(red)/homicides(blue))

This data was averages for each state over a five (5) year period using data from the years 2016 – 2020. For each state I calculated the per capita results for each of the above categories per 100k. This was done because out of the fifty (50) states there are very drastic population differences between them that made the data not completely truthful. These calculations allowed for data to be presented in a more transparent light. The final part that needed to be added, also arguably the more important, was the individual concealed carry laws for each state. I broken the state laws down into three (3) parameters:

* Type of Concealed Carry
* How The Permit is Issued
* Other Restrictions

This part of the research proved to be the most intensive and time consuming. Being able to read and comprehend legal code from all fifty (50) states was a significant challenge. Type of Concealed Carry refers to that states type of law, meaning if they require a permit to conceal carry (Permit Required), don’t require a permit to conceal carry (Permit-less Carry), and if there was a mix or other weird restrictions or lack of restrictions (Constitutional Carry). For all intents and purposes Permit-less Carry and Constitutional Carry are the same type. How The Permit is Issued regards how each state goes about issuing concealed carry permits to their citizens. In my research there was three (3) different ways states went about issuing their permits. The first is called ‘Shall-issue’ and means that the state must issue permits to people, the next ‘May-issue’ means that it is up to the state if they want to issue permits to people, and ‘Does-not-issue’ means that the state does not issue permits to anyone. Other restrictions were broken down into the tiers (None, Low, Medium, High) depending on all the other requirements that are needed to be able to be able to carry in a state and or get a permit within that desired state.

***Findings:***

The first main finding that the data showed was the breakdown of states and the totals for types of concealed carry:

* Permit-less Carry: 21
* Constitutional Carry: 4
* Permit required: 25

Therefor the country breakdown is pretty much 50-50 between Permit-less Carry/Constitutional Carry and Permit required. The next breakdown was for the other restrictions between states:

* High: 5
* Medium: 10
* Low: 20
* None: 15

This shows that the distribution of restrictions amongst the states is more concentrated towards the lower end of the restriction range. The next set of data is the ten (10) highest per one hundred thousand (100,000) in total deaths:

PC – Permit-less Carry, PR – Permit Required, CC – Constitutional Carry

Second letter refers to restrictions (H/M/L/N)

1. Alaska (PC/N) (23.61)
2. Mississippi (PC/N) (23.25)
3. Louisiana (PR/L) (22.40)
4. Alabama (CC/L) (21.62)
5. Wyoming (PC/L) (21.59)
6. Missouri (PC/L) (20.88)
7. New Mexico (PR/H) (20.46)
8. Arkansas (PC/L) (19.69)
9. Montana (PC/N) (19.37)
10. South Carolina (PR/L) (18.57)

This data was referring to the overall death rate between states with Alaska having the highest per capita in the United States. The next set of data is the ten (10) highest per one hundred thousand (100,000) in total wounded:

1. Mississippi (PC/N) (93.66)
2. Louisiana (PR/L) (63.49)
3. Alabama (CC/L) (60.81)
4. Delaware (PR/H) (57.50)
5. South Carolina (PR/L) (45.42)
6. West Virginia (PC/N) (44.19)
7. Georgia (CC/N) (40.01)
8. Tennessee (PC/L) (38.66)
9. Missouri (PC/L) (37.48)
10. Kentucky (PC/N) (33.95)

This data was referring to the overall wounding rate between states with Mississippi having the highest rate per capita in the United States. However, there was a very interesting data point of Delaware being 4th on the wounded list, but on the death list it was 38th. This was the largest discrepancy between two cities. Mississippi, Louisiana, and Alabama were both in the top 4 between the two data points. The next set of data is the ten (10) highest per one hundred thousand (100,000) in total suicide deaths.

1. Wyoming (PC/L) (18.48)
2. Montana (PC/N) (16.20)
3. Alaska (PC/N) (16.10)
4. West Virginia (PC/N) (13.23)
5. New Mexico (PR/H) (12.94)
6. Idaho (PC/N) (12.73)
7. Oklahoma (PC/L) (12.19)
8. Arkansas (PC/L) (11.73)
9. Missouri (PC/L) (11.21)
10. Nevada (PR/M) (11.16)

The next set of data is the ten (10) highest per one hundred thousand (100,000) in total homicide deaths.

1. Louisiana (PR/L) (12.43)
2. Mississippi (PC/N) (12.13)
3. Alabama (CC/L) (9.98)
4. Missouri (PC/L) (9.22)
5. South Carolina (PR/L) (7.89)
6. Maryland (PR/M) (7.68)
7. Tennessee (PC/L) (7.44)
8. Illinois (PR/M) (7.37)
9. Arkansas (PC/L) (7.27)
10. New Mexico (PR/H) (6.94)

This shows that there is a disconnect between homicides and suicides when pertaining to gun violence. It also shows that the rates at which suicides happen is much higher than homicides. There is also at least one state from each restriction type represented in each data point. The final data point is the Teen/Child Death rate:

* Homicides: State total (28)
  + H:2 M:9 L:11 N:6
* Suicides: State total (19)
  + H:1 M:1 L:8 N:9
* Tied: State total (1)
  + H:0 M:0 L:0 N:1
* N/A: State total (2)
  + H:2 M:0 L:0 N:0

This was the most interesting part of the data. It showed that the states with less strict laws/regulations were more likely to have their teen/child population commit suicide however, the states with stricter laws were more likely to have their teen/child population commit homicides. This was very interesting to see because when compared to the adult population there are only 5 states that have higher rates of homicides than suicides, being Illinois, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, New Jersey which is a make up of states of varying law/regulation strictness. The total deaths ended up being 40,490 on average with the breakdown of Suicides being 23,882 (58.98%) and Homicides being 15,791 (39.00%).

***Conclusion:***

In conclusion the data from this research shows that this topic is very complex and needs much more research into the area. However, there are still some conclusions that can be drawn. There were three (3) states that were near the tops of most list being Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama all these states have very similar laws. The states that trended towards the top of the Suicide death list had less strict laws/regulations when compared to the Homicide death list. This proves one of my main predictions wrong regarding less strict laws and higher homicide rates. The other interesting conclusion is regarding teen/child gun deaths. Teens/Child’s were much more likely to commit homicides (28/50 states) than the adult population (5/50 states). Whereas they were much less likely to commit suicides (19/50 states) than the adult population (45/50 states). However, they followed the trend of states with stricter laws/regulations had higher homicide rates when states with less strict laws/regulations had higher suicide rates. My prediction about suicides being most of the death was correct with them making up almost 60% of gun deaths every year on average. The true problem that was documented in this research seems to be a gun suicide problem more so than a gun homicide problem that is correlated to states concealed carry laws/regulations. Therefore, if states where to increase concealed carry laws/regulations they would reduce the risk of suicides due to gun violence however they will not necessarily reduce the risk of homicides due to gun violence.