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DURKHEIM'S ANOMIE THEORY ON CIVIC PARTICIPATION

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Purpose of the Project

- Emile Durkheim predicted that accelerated change in society whether that be economic, social, or political result in a state of normlessness or anomie. Researchers proved Durkheim's theory by looking at the 2008 economic crash and correlating suicides (Hodwitz and Frey, 2016).
- Other researchers looked at Durkheim's theory on the political upheaval in Eastern Europe (Arts, Hermkens, & Wijck, 1995).
- Researchers proved that other factors like depression and alcoholism don't effect Durkheim's theory (Fernquist, 2007).
- Bernburg (2002) used anomie to define crime.
- Research found that people are more likely to participate in civics when the system is fair.

Hypotheses

My overall hypothesis is that voter participation will be higher in the states where organic solidarity is more apparent. The overall hypothesis is subdivided into five other hypotheses.

H1 – The first subdivided hypothesis is that voting will be less in states of higher suicides and vice versa.

H2 – The next hypothesis is that higher divorce rates will decrease voting and vice versa.

H3 – The third hypothesis is higher marriage rates increase voting.

H4 – Income is being tested as an independent variable for the hypothesis that in the states of higher income, voting will be higher.

H5 – The last hypothesis is that Kiwanis clubs per state and voter participation will have a positive correlation, meaning the more involved people are through Kiwanis clubs, the more likely people vote.

Methods and Results

H1- A two-tailed Pearson Correlation ran on voter participation and suicides. A significant relationship is shown.

Correlations			
		Voters in 2008 election	Suicide Rates per state
Voters in 2008 election	Pearson Correlation	1	-.508**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	50	50
Suicide Rates per state	Pearson Correlation	-.508**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	50	50

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

H2 – An ANOVA ran on the relationship between divorce and voting. There is no significant relationship.

ANOVA					
Voters in 2008 election					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	74303333.194	20	3715166.660	.656	.828
Within Groups	130305402.533	23	5665452.284		
Total	204608735.727	43			

H3 – An ANOVA ran on the relationship between marriage rates and voter participation. There is no significant relationship.

ANOVA					
Voters in 2008 election					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	139463733.253	27	5165323.454	.602	.895
Within Groups	188751143.167	22	8579597.417		
Total	328214876.420	49			

H4 –A correlation ran on income and voter participation. No significant relationship is found.

Correlations				
		Voters in 2008 election	MedianIncome	
Voters in 2008 election	Pearson Correlation	1	.076	
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.598	
	N	50	50	
MedianIncome	Pearson Correlation	.076	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.598		
	N	50	50	

H5 – A one-tailed Pearson Correlation run on Kiwanis clubs and voter participation. A significant correlation is found.

Correlations			
		Kiwanis Clubs	Voters in 2008 election
Kiwanis Clubs	Pearson Correlation	1	.337**
	Sig. (1-tailed)		.008
	N	50	50
Voters in 2008 election	Pearson Correlation	.337**	1
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.008	
	N	50	50

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed).

Summary of Findings

After running both a Pearson Correlation and ANOVA test on all variables, only two hypotheses were found significant. Hypothesis one was found significant at a .000 level on the Pearson Correlation. It was not found significant for the ANOVA. Hypothesis five was found significant for both the ANOVA and Pearson Correlation. It was found significant at the .008 level for the correlation and at a .001 level for the ANOVA after being recoded into five groups. These results conclude that a significant negative correlation is found between suicides and voter participation on the states. They also conclude that there is a positive correlation and relationship between the number of Kiwanis clubs per state and voter participation.

Limitations

The most prevalent limitation is the data is aggregate. Another limitation is that data was left out of divorce rates per state. The data is missing rates for California, Georgia, Hawaii, Indiana, Minnesota, and New Mexico. Another limitation is that not all the hypotheses were supported. Only two out of five were supported, so it is hard to translate this data towards the overall hypothesis. It would be easy to call the overall hypothesis incorrect with only two out of five subdivided hypotheses being correct, but the two that were correct had some truth to them. Suicides predict anomie, thus the states of higher anomie had less voter participation. This is steadfast with my hypothesis. Kiwanis club participation is an example of common sentiments and values among people, so voter participation is higher in states with more Kiwanis clubs. In order to have a well-rounded idea of whether to count or discount the hypothesis, more research will have to be done on the subject.