Mean Severity and Hate Bias Intent: Effects of Crime on the Community

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Abstract

- Crimes with a specific hate element in particular were examined. The impact on the community due to hate crimes is examined with reports filed with the LAPD. This study investigated the mean severity of crime as it affected the community as a whole. We examined the mean severity of the crime depending upon the bias intent. The mean severity of the crime was measured using the Cormier-Lang scale. Our research team also used a community impact scale to measure four elements. These elements include a message element, material element, temporal element, and threat element (Dunbar, 2004). We examined the relationship between the community impact of these four elements and the mean severity.

Research Questions

- The study addressed the following research questions:

- (1) what is the mean severity of the crime as it relates to the bias intent, i.e., race/ethnicity, religious affiliation, and sexual orientation?
- (2) what is the relationship between the bias intent and the impact on the community?
- (3) is the mean severity of the crime influenced by whether the crime is committed within a public arena?
- (4) how is the mean severity of the crime correlated with each of the four community impact elements?

Methodology

- Sample:

The study was conducted using 508 reports of hate crime offenses from the 2003 calendar year data set. The reports were coded and analyzed by members of a University of California, Los Angeles hate crime research team.

Methodology

- Measures:

1) Cormier-Lang Crime Index (Quincey, Harris, Rice & Cormier, 1998). Using LAPD hate crime reports, the research team rated the mean severity of crime on the Cormier-Lang scale.

2) Bias Intent-The primary crime attribution is rated based upon the three major categories: race/ethnicity, religious affiliation, or sexual orientation.

3) Community-Impact Scale (Dunbar, 2004) The research team rated the four elements on the community impact scale. These include the message element, material element, temporal element and threat element. The total overall community impact was determined by combining these four elements.

Procedure

- The method used to conduct the experiment included record review and content analysis of the mean severity of the crime, the bias intent of the crime, and the community impact as a whole and with four separate elements. Analysis of the crime reports for the bias intent was conducted by a team of university research assistants under the supervision Dr. Edward Dunbar, Ed. D. The reports were examined to determine specific bias such as race, religious affiliation and sexual orientation to be the main factor contributing to the crime.

- The severity was measured by the Cormier-Lang scale. This helped to determine the mean severity of the offenses. The four elements of the community impact scale included the message element, material element, temporal element and threat element. The overall impact on the community was rated by record review after completing the other scales.

Results

- A one-way ANOVA of the hate crime data (*N* = 508) revealed the severity of hate crime offenses for the bias intent of sexual orientation (*M* = 80.07, *SD* = 35.18), race/ethnicity (*M* = 68.76, *SD* = 31.98),and religious affiliation (*M* = 58.75, *SD* = 23.95), *F*(2, 505) = 8.55, p<.001. Figure 1 represents the mean severity of each bias intent category. (research question 1)

Results

- Cross-tabulation correlations between bias intent and community impact were examined (*N* = 479). Community impact was categorized into three groups: no impact, mild impact, and moderate impact. For race/ethnicity bias intent, the analysis revealed n = 146 for no impact, n = 97 for mild impact, and n = 21 for moderate impact. For sexual orientation bias intent, the analysis revealed n=52 for no impact, n = 57 for mild impact, and n = 13 for moderate impact. For religious affiliation bias intent, the analysis revealed n = 44 for no impact, n = 40 for mild impact, and n = 7 for moderate impact. (research question 2)

Results

- A one-way ANOVA revealed the severity of hate crime offenses when bystanders were present (*N* = 484). When bystanders were absent, the mean severity of hate crime offenses was less severe (*M* = 65.01, *SD* = 29.56). When bystanders were present, the mean severity of hate crime offenses was more severe (*M* = 84.58, *SD* = 35.75), $F(1, 482) = 34.26$, $p<.001$. (research question 3)

Results

- A Pearson correlation between mean severity and each of the four community impact elements revealed the mean severity for the message element to be significant (*M* = 0.184**). The mean severity of both the material element (*M* = 0.65) and the threat element (*M* = .036) were revealed to be insignificant. The mean severity of the temporal element was revealed to be significant although the relationship was inversely correlated (*M* = -0.097*). (research question 4)

Figure 1 Mean Severity and Bias Intent

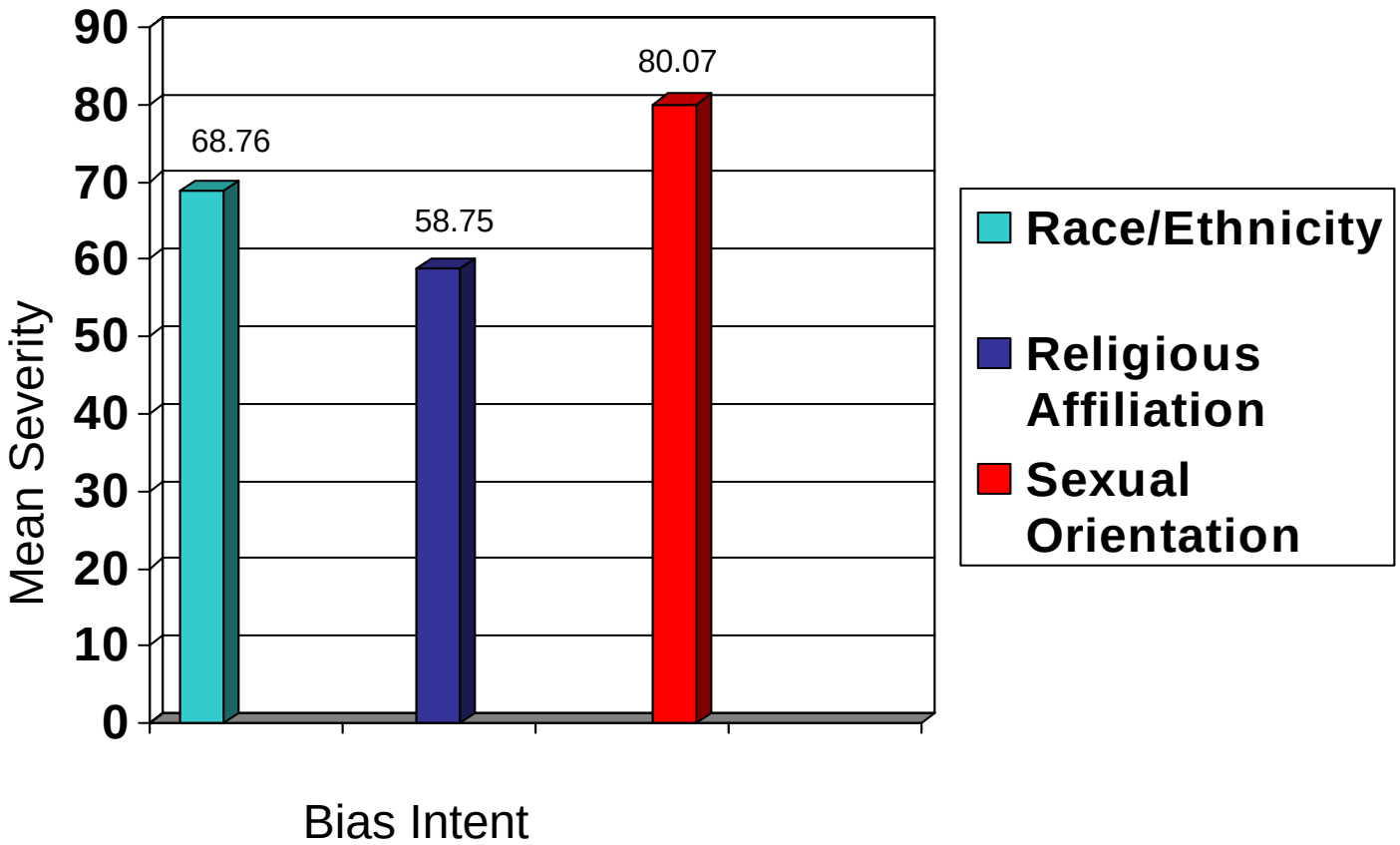


Figure 2 Community Impact and Crime Attribution

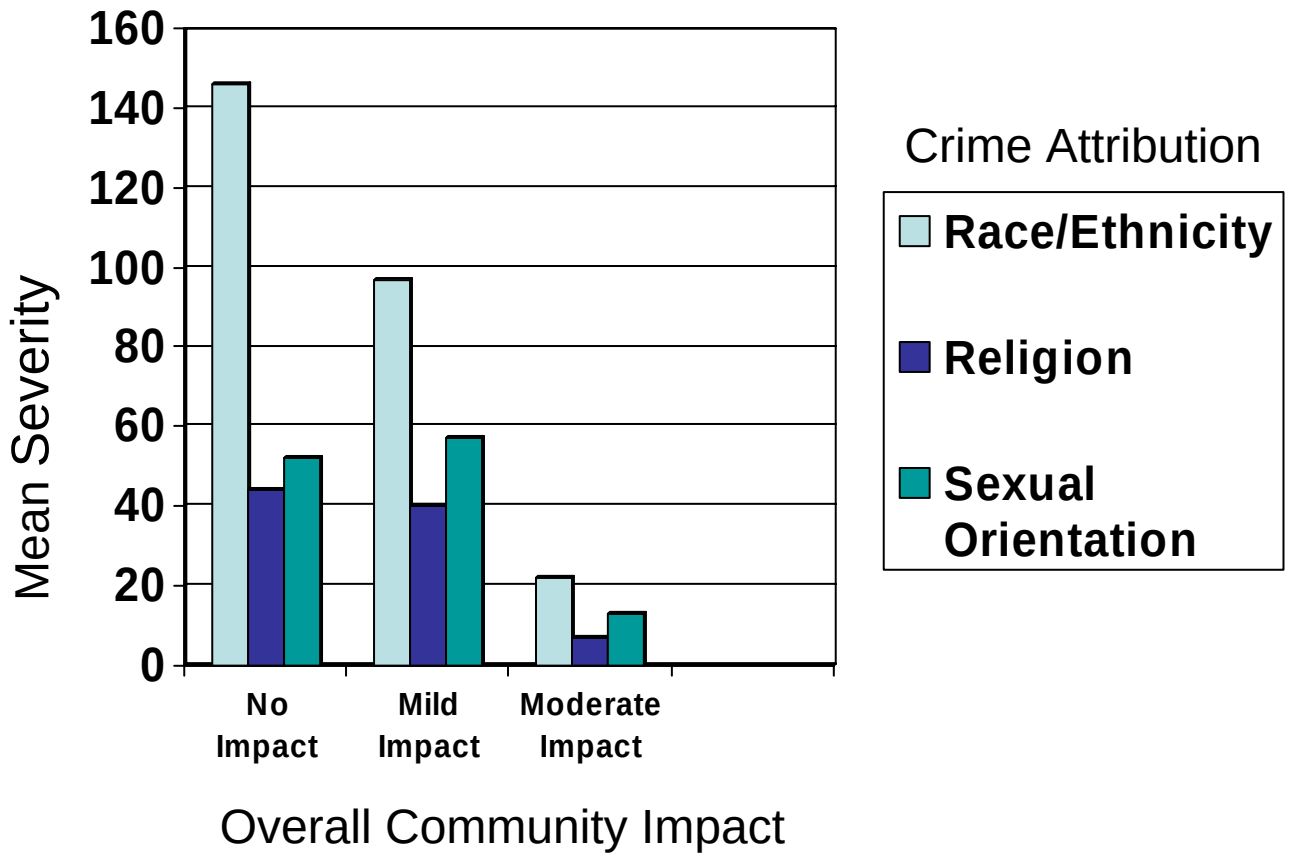


Figure 3 Effects on Mean Severity when bystanders are present

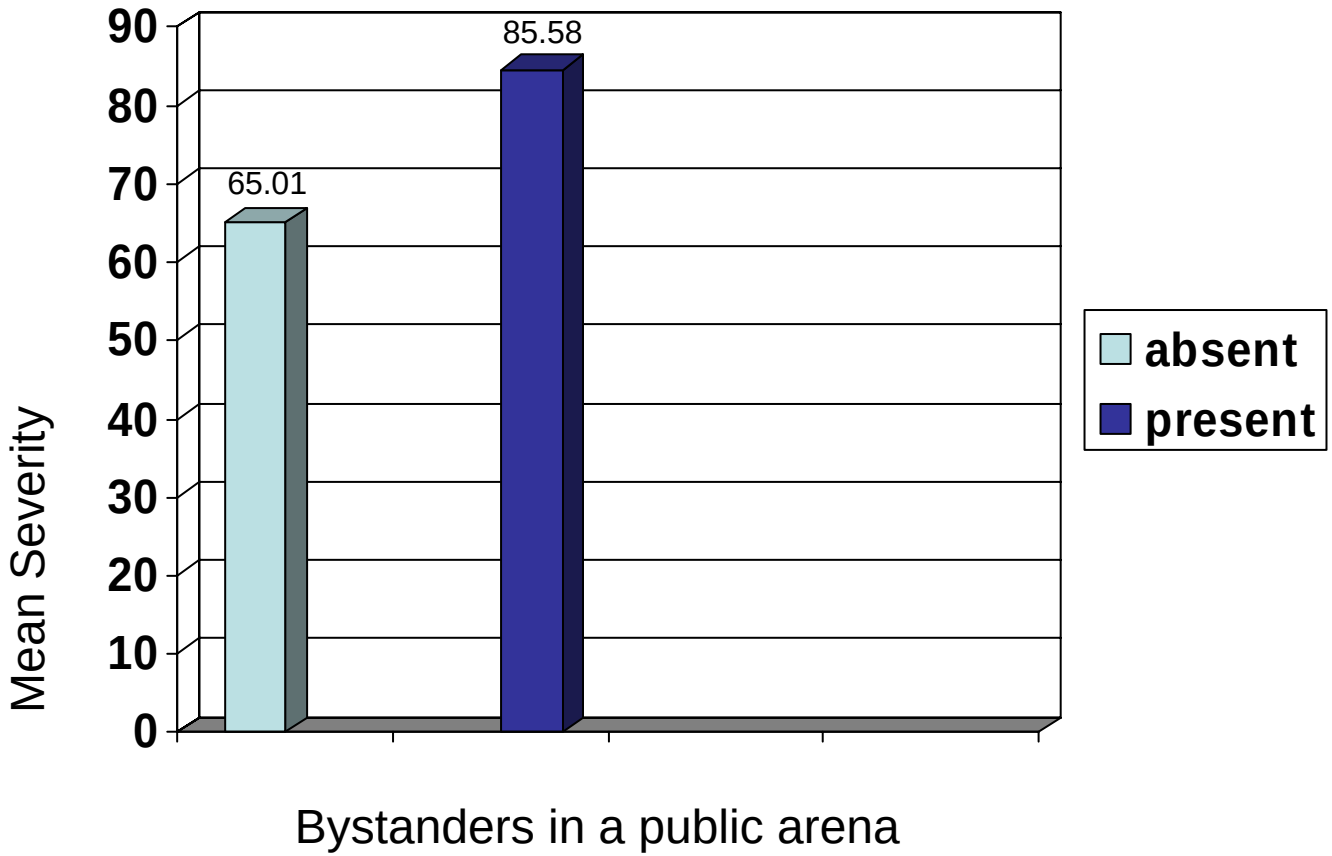
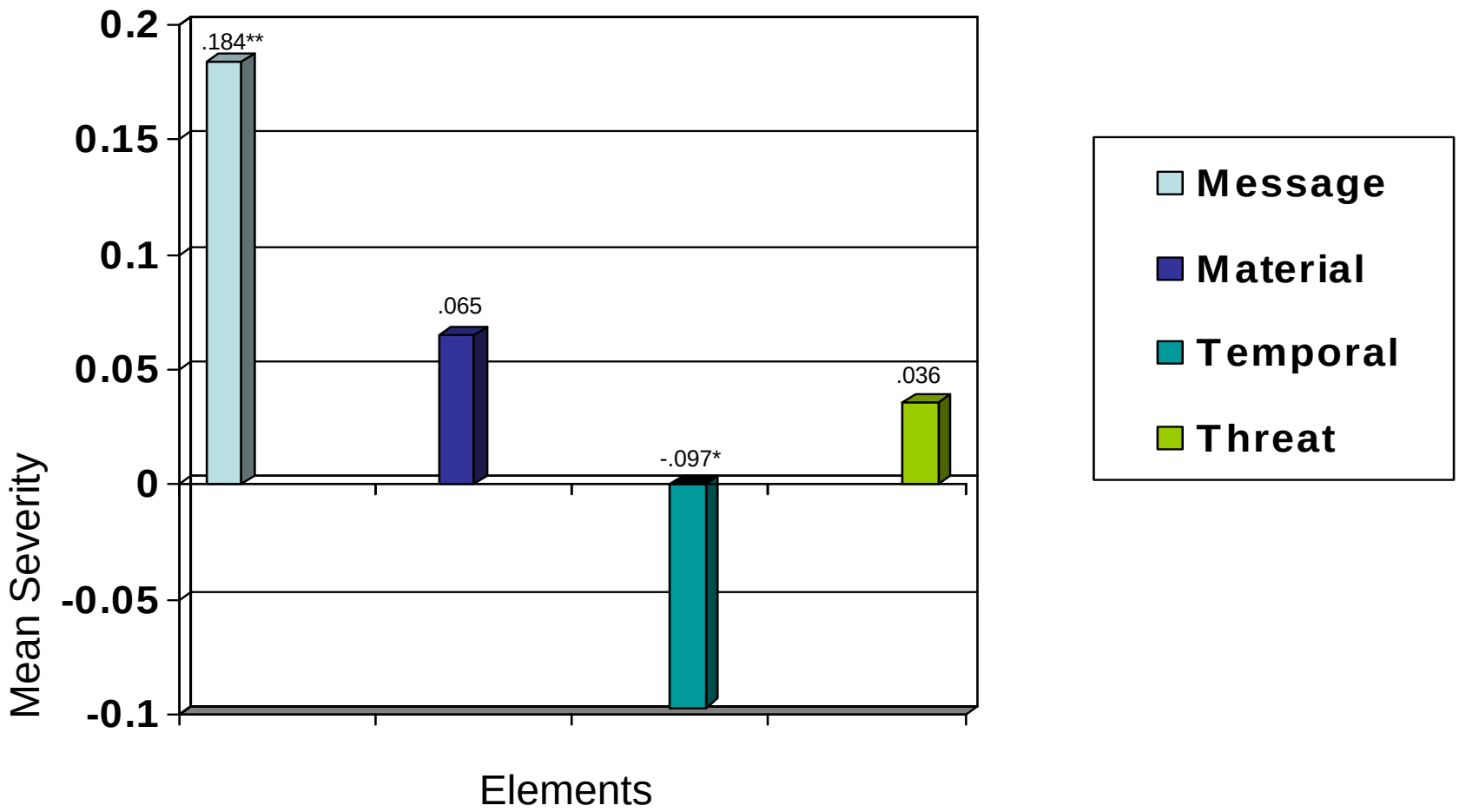


Figure 4 Mean Severity and Community Impact Elements



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