



# Investigating Minority Representation in Florida Sheriff's Offices

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## Research Question

- How does the minority representation of sheriffs affect racial disparities in arrest rates in Florida counties?

## Background

- Since the tragic death of George Floyd in Minnesota in 2020, the criminal justice system has come under increased scrutiny, prompting a reevaluation of law enforcement practices and their implications for social equity.
- Central to such discourse are sheriff's offices, which play a pivotal role in upholding public safety and administering justice at the county level.
- In the State of Florida, where disparities in law enforcement outcomes have been documented, understanding the role of sheriffs is paramount in addressing systemic inequalities.
- By involving communities, sheriffs can work collaboratively to address racial disparities in arrest rates.

## Methods

- Used OLS regression to examine the racial composition of Florida sheriff's offices and investigate the correlation between their demographic makeup and the arrest rates for Black individuals, utilizing 2020 Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) data by county.
- By analyzing the racial demographics of law enforcement agencies alongside arrest rates, the research aims to elucidate potential disparities in policing practices and outcomes.
- Understanding these dynamics is crucial for addressing systemic biases and promoting equitable law enforcement practices.

## Preliminary Results

OLS Models	(1)	(2)
	<b>Black/White Arrest Rate Gap</b>	<b>Black Arrest Rate</b>
<b>Black Sheriff</b>	-24.862**	-39.153***
<b>Democratic Sheriff</b>	3.376 (10.443)	-0.847 (12.643)
<b>Manager Form of Gov.</b>	20.270*** (7.269)	19.433** (8.801)
<b>Commissioner Voting: Single Member</b>	-18.349*** (6.374)	-19.035** (7.717)
<b>Gini Index</b>	336.615*** (89.342)	288.442*** (108.167)
<b>Public Safety Budget Per Capita</b>	-0.008 (0.012)	0.013 (0.015)
<b>Percentage of Budget in Public Safety</b>	-37.211 (32.553)	-66.906* (39.412)
<b>Constant</b>	-115.031*** (41.145)	-68.477 (49.815)
<b>Observations</b>	67	67
<b>R2</b>	0.368	0.334
<b>Adjusted R2</b>	0.293	0.255
<b>F Statistic (df=7; 59)</b>	4.904***	4.233***

Figure 1: Arrest Rates in Counties  
 Note: \*p<0.1; \*\*p<0.05; \*\*\*p<0.01  
 Two-tail significance levels; Clustered standard errors

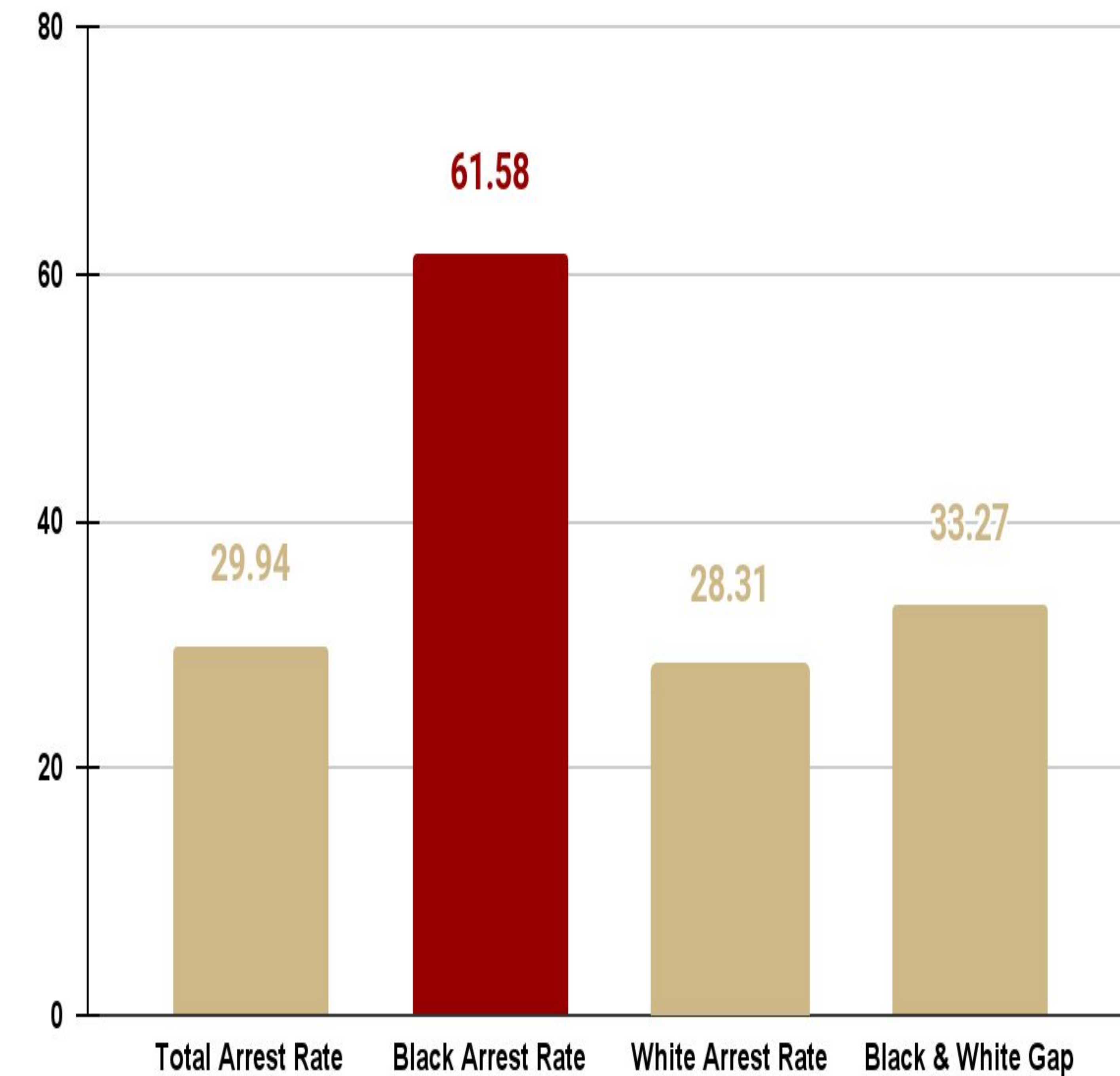


Figure 2: Average of Arrest Rates of Black and White Citizens in Counties within the State of Florida

## Conclusions & Policy Implications

- Counties with a Black sheriff are more likely to have a reduced racial gap in arrest rate, along with a lower black arrest rate
- Counties with a manager form of government are more likely to have a bigger Black/white racial gap in arrest rate.
- Law enforcement agencies should prioritize recruitment and retention efforts to increase the representation of minority groups
- Newly elected sheriffs could produce shifts in priorities, personnel, and policing approaches, along with implementing implicit racial bias training.

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