

# The U- shaped Crime Recovery during COVID- 19

Adnan Miyar\*

*Department of Criminology, University of California Santa Cruz, USA*

## COMMENTARY

The existing empirical evidence suggests a reduction in aggregate crime as a consequence of the COVID-19 lockdown. However, what happens when lockdown measures are relaxed? This paper considers how the COVID-19 pandemic affects crime rates throughout Mexico when the stay-at-home orders end. We use national crime data from Mexico's National Peace System, which reports municipality-level rates on assault and battery, theft and property crime, fraud, drug crimes and extortion, and homicides. Our results show that the bulk of crimes follow a U-shaped trend—when the lockdown ends—crimes rise back to pre-pandemic levels.

Pandemics fundamentally change the way citizenry interact. The COVID-19 pandemic is not any exception. As an example, adjustments employed conditions have led to a big share of people to transition to remote work. Likewise, individuals have transitioned their purchases to e-commerce transactions instead of brick-and-mortar stores. Worldwide crime patterns have also adjusted and show a clear decline during the COVID-19 pandemic, especially through lockdowns that reshape criminal-victim interactions.

Mexico ranks together of the countries experiencing the worst COVID-19 outbreaks. Mexico's initial cases appeared in early March 2020, and Mexico entered into a national lockdown from late March 2020 to May 2020. Beginning in June, restrictions eased to the local and state level. Mobility in Mexico declined after the start of the contagion stage, plummeting even more during the official national lockdown. Mobility recovered slightly after easing restrictions, through October 2020 (the conclusion of our analysis). Moreover, Mexico may be a country with high criminal

activity thanks to a decade-long war, leaving a severe toll in terms of human lives and violence. Under such circumstances, Mexico offers a singular context to explore whether non-structural events like an epidemic alter criminal activity, permanently or temporarily.

Criminal activity may decline due to a rise in criminal's pro-social behavior. The crime may fall after a catastrophic event thanks to the altruistic behavior of criminals. During this case, criminals engage in pro-social behavior to engender a "therapeutic community," promoting social cohesion across classes. If the therapeutic-community effect occurs during the pandemic, social cohesion, including pro-social behavior, should increase. This improved social cohesion may end in falling crime rates. The sense of renewed community during the outbreak is one among the best resources for handling the crisis and may be utilized in policing strategies. Further, this point of crisis is a chance to create up the legitimacy of the police.

The economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic may increase crime. Households in Mexico were severely suffering from the COVID-19-related recession. The authors' document that over the primary three months of the pandemic, individuals in Mexico lost one-third of their income and nearly 20% of people lost employment. The leads to apply to jobs within the formal and informal sectors, partly explaining the drop by mobility in Mexico. Despite this profound job loss, the Mexico's government didn't offer new public policies to assist affected groups. Moreover, Mexico has fewer remote work opportunities than high-income countries, weaker public support systems, and a bigger informal sector. These poor economic conditions may increase criminals' willingness to commit crimes for economic gain.

\*Correspondence to: Adnan Miyar, Department of Criminology, Department of Criminology, University of California Santa Cruz, USA, E-mail: adnan@gmail.com

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