



Crime Prevention Spending, Too Much, Too Little, Or Just Right?

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Introduction

Crime is one of the largest ongoing issues in American Politics and is routinely discussed in debates relating to safety and government responsibility. Opinions differ on how much the federal government should spend to combat crime, with some individuals advocating for increased funding while others prefer unchanged or reduced spending. These differences in opinion may be influenced by demographic factors such as gender, age or political party. Understanding how attitude towards crime prevention spending is crucial as it provides insight on the general public's opinion on government decisions.

Hypothesis & Variables

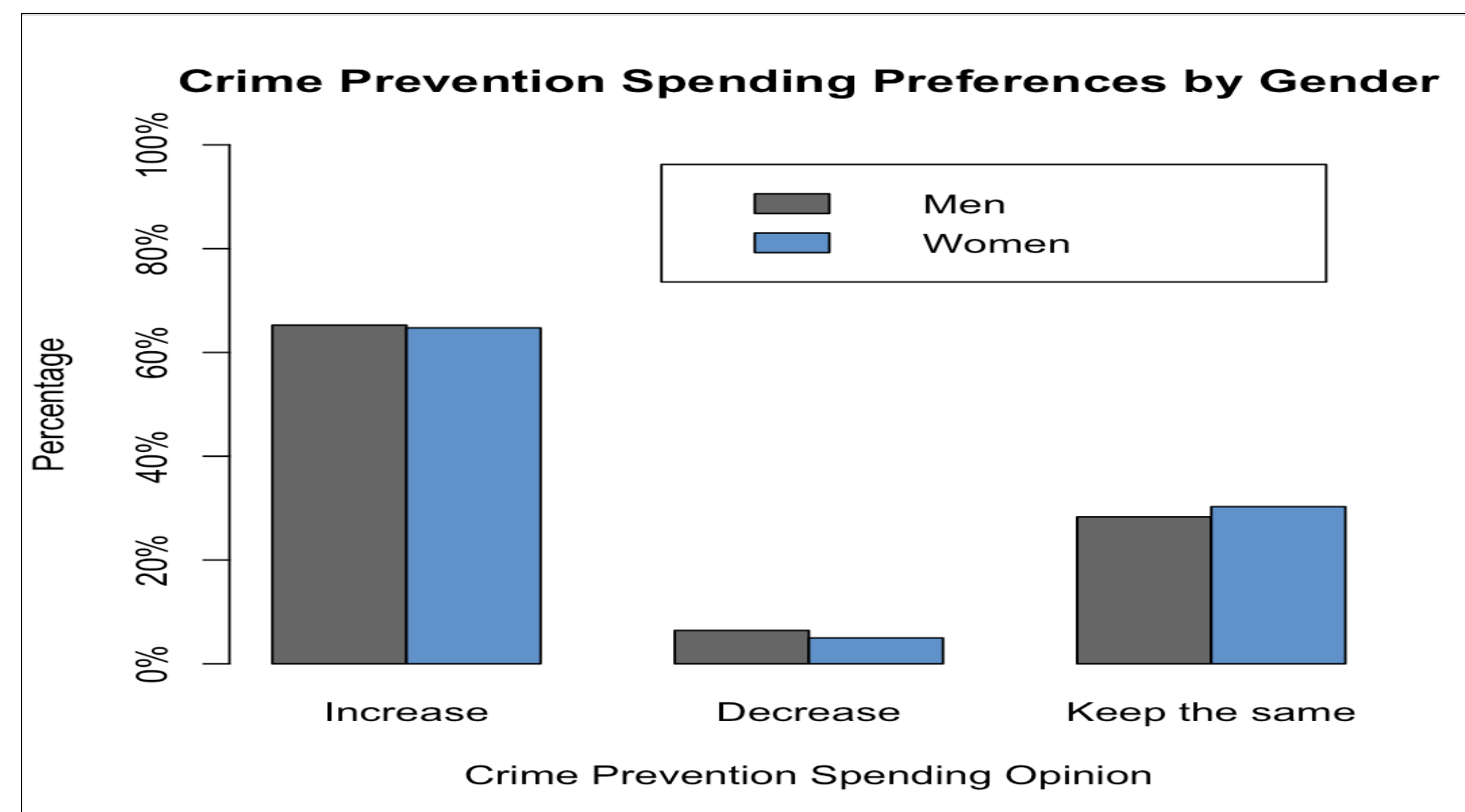
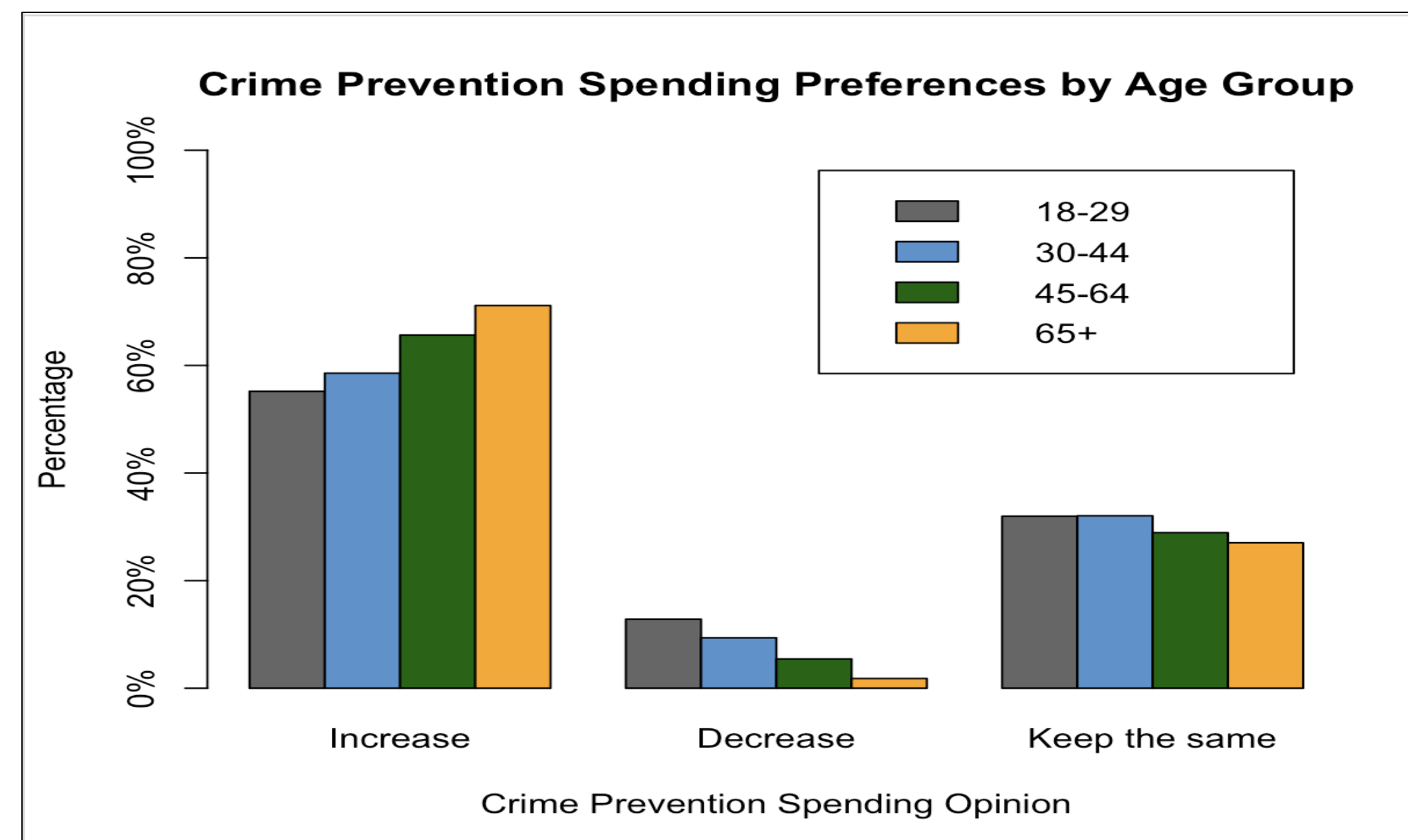
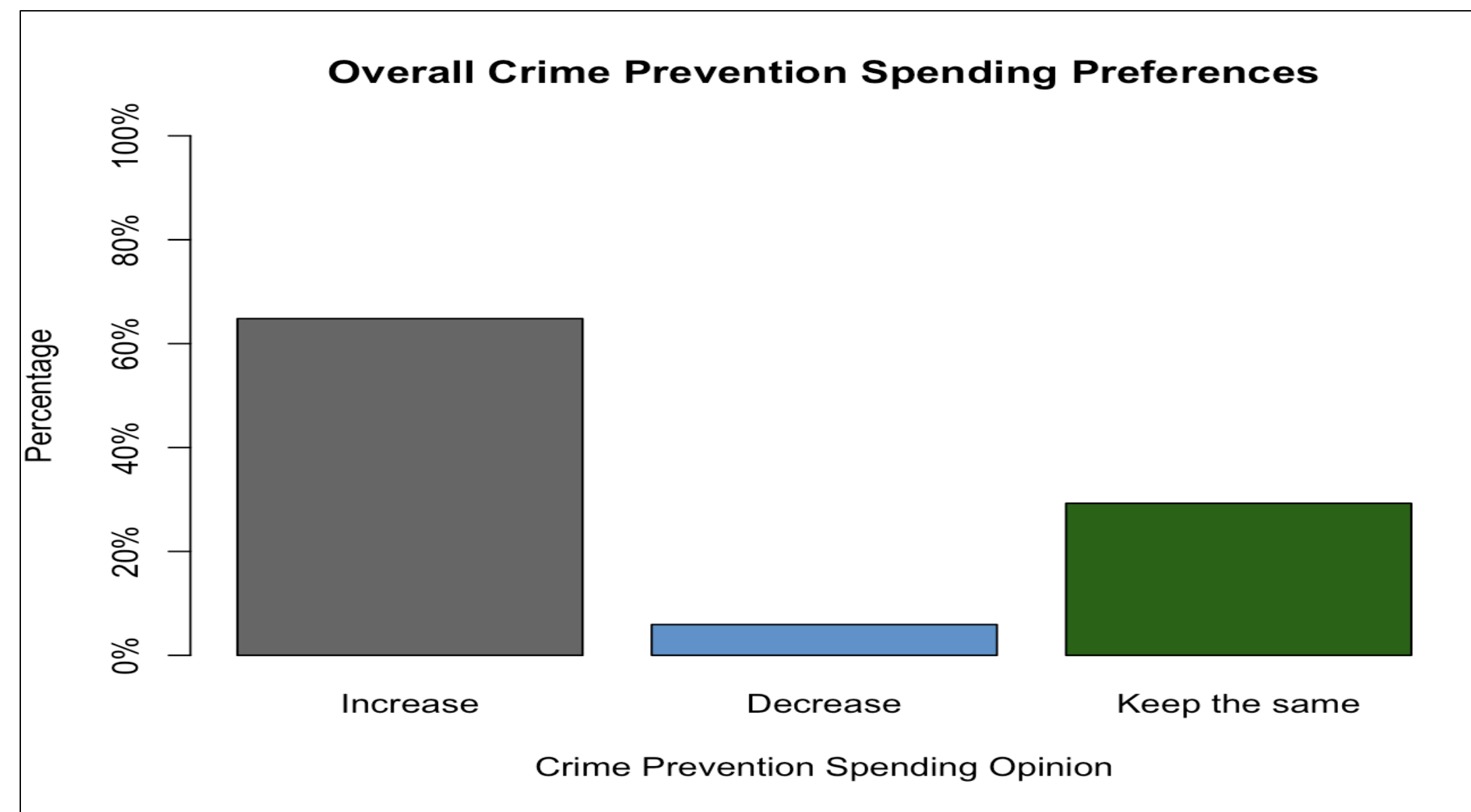
In a comparison, older individuals will be more likely to support increased spending on crime than younger individuals

This project uses data from the American National Election Studies (ANES) 2024 dataset.

- Independent Variable: Age of Respondent
- Dependent Variable: Amount of Money Spent Preventing Crime
- Control Group: The 45 to 64 year old demographic, which makes up approximately 25% of the US population.

Literature Review

Public opinion for the budget on crime prevention spending has changed in the last few years, with increased support for raising funding rather than reducing it. Reports from the Pew Research Center and US News & World Report show that about 47% of Americans favor increased spending on crime prevention, while only 15% support decreasing, the remaining 38% of participants are indifferent. These results suggest that attitude towards crime prevention spending is shaped by larger concerns of public safety and rising crime. Additionally, these attitudes vary across different demographic groups. Data from Statista and other sources show that older individuals are significantly more likely to support increased spending, while younger individuals are more divided. These findings show that age plays an important role in shaping attitudes towards crime prevention spending. This project builds on this research by examining whether similar patterns appear in the ANES 2024 dataset.



Data Analysis

The data indicates that the older an American is, the more they are in favor of increasing spending on crime prevention, with the 65+ demographic favoring it by 70%. Conversely, the younger an individual is, the more likely they are to support a decrease in crime prevention spending with 15% of 18-29 year olds favoring a decrease. For this analysis the 45-64 demographic was established as the control group, as that group is currently 25% of the US population. The 45-64 demographic's willingness to increase crime prevention spending is 8% more than the 30-44 demographic and 11% more than the 18-29 demographic. However, the 65+ demographic is 7% more likely to increase spending when compared with the 45-64 year old group.

Methods & Findings

Data for this project was sourced using the American National Election Studies (ANES) 2024 dataset. The analysis was conducted using R and RStudio. The data was cleaned by removing invalid negative responses and recoding variables into clear categories. Crosstabulations were also used to examine the relationship between age, gender and the opinions on crime spending. Percentages were calculated to compare how different groups responded to the crime prevention spending question, and bar graphs were created to visually represent these relationships.

The results show that a large amount of respondents support increasing spending on crime prevention with about 55-71% across age groups favoring an increase. Age has a clear effect on these opinions as support for increasing spending raises the older the age group is, from about 55% for those who are 18-29, to over 70% among those who are 65+. Younger individuals are more divided, with about 32% preferring to keep spending the same compared to 27% for the older respondents. In contrast, differences between men and women are relatively small, suggesting that gender has less influence on crime prevention spending compared to age.

Conclusion & Bibliography

Overall, the results show that age plays a major role in determining opinions on crime prevention spending, while gender has a smaller impact. Older individuals are more likely to support increasing spending while younger individuals are more split in their views. These findings support existing research and emphasize the importance of demographic factors such as age, in understanding the public's attitude towards crime prevention spending.

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