



How Societal Attitudes Affect Public Safety

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INTRODUCTION

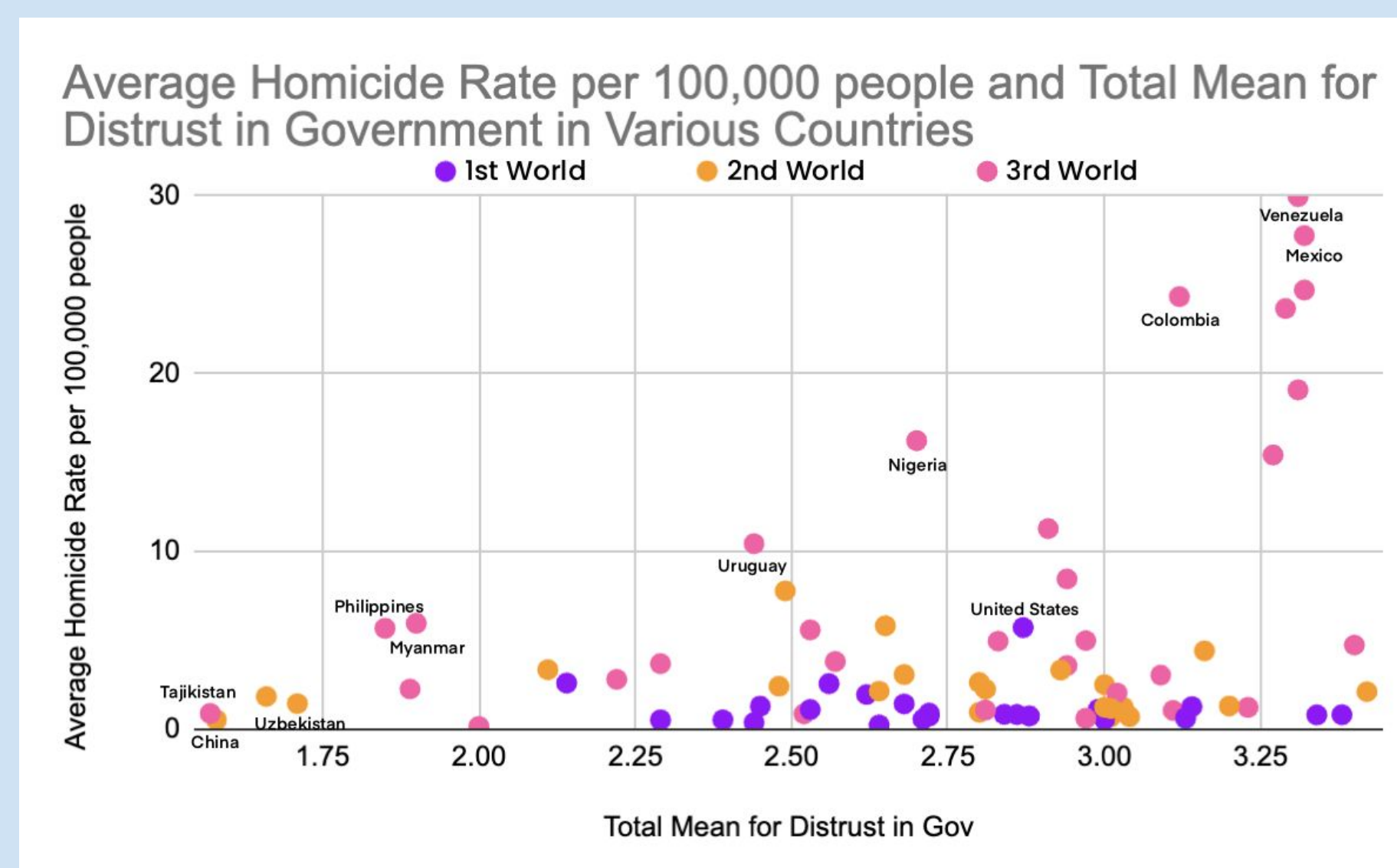
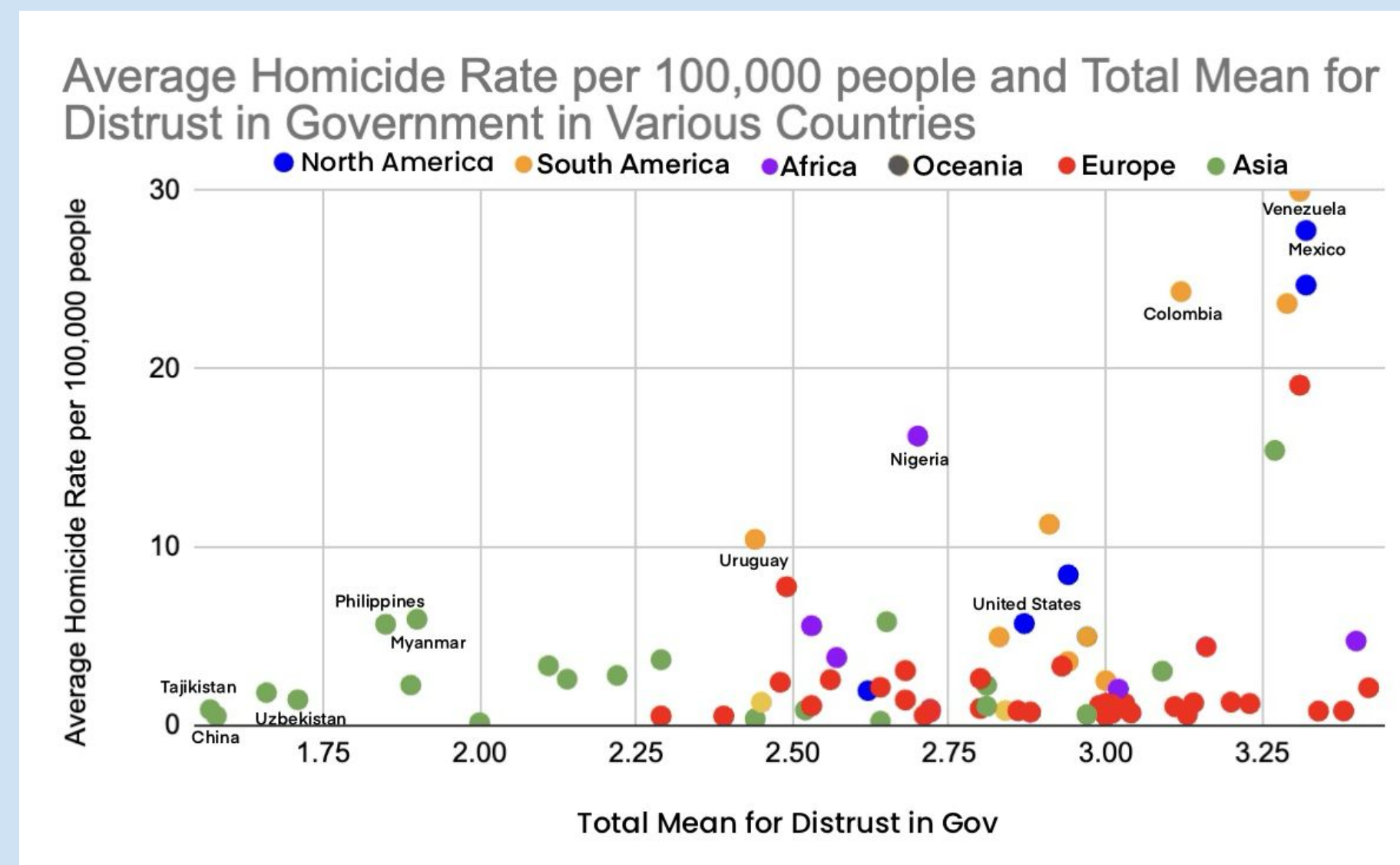
This project examines the relationship between social values and violent crime across countries, with a specific focus on how cultural attitudes may influence patterns of violence. Among these diverse factors, gender norms and trust in authority are particularly influential. In many respects, they directly shape individuals' beliefs, behaviors, and patterns of interaction within society.

This study chose to focus on two key relationships.

- Gender norms and sexual assault rates.
- Trust in authority and homicide rates.

By comparing these relationships across a range of nations, the study explores whether differences in societal values are associated with differences in patterns of violent crime.

DATA AND FINDINGS



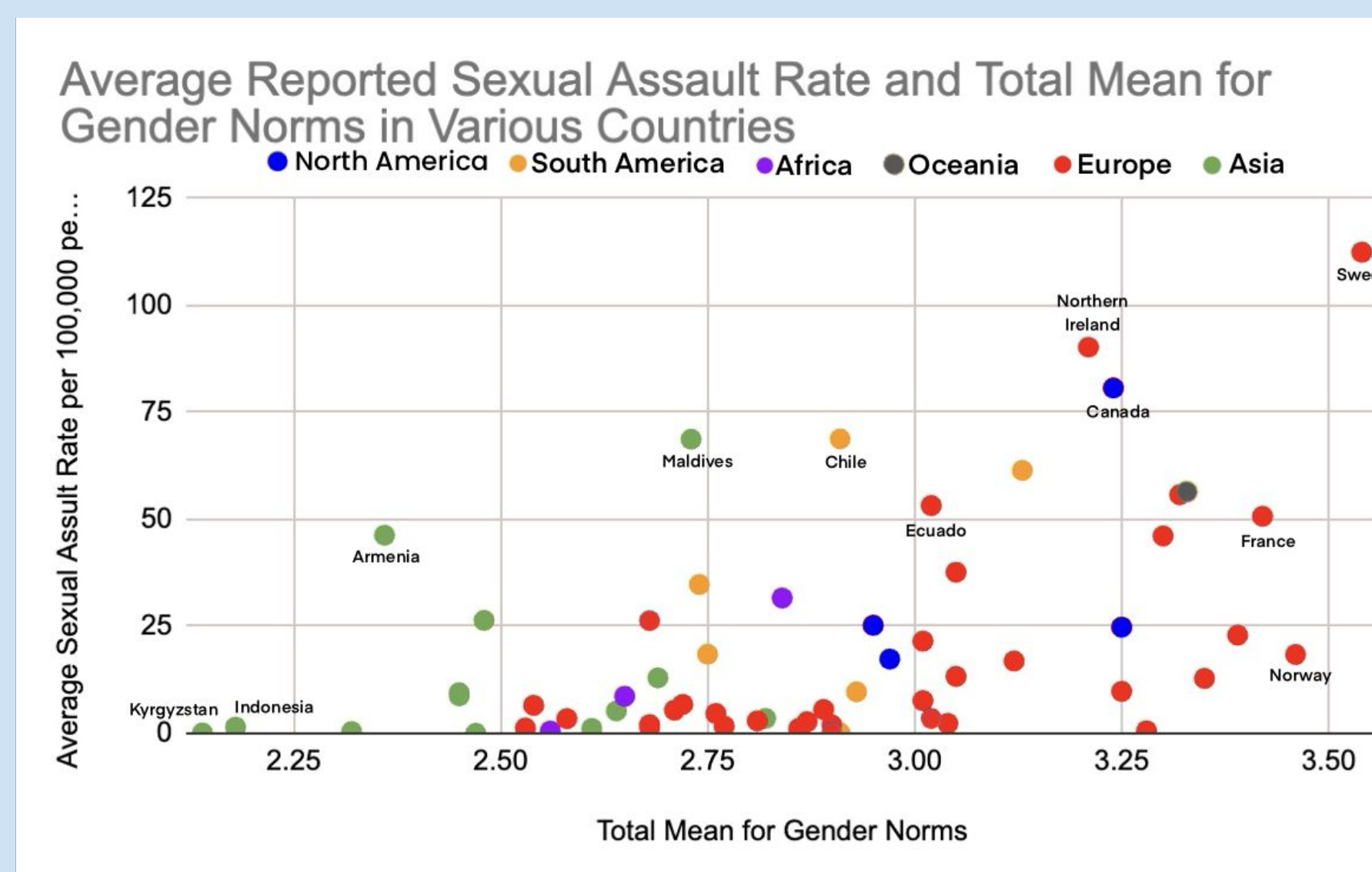
Distrust in the Government and the Reported Homicide Rate
There is a weak positive correlation.

- There are some patterns in geography, but there is still a lot of randomness, given that the data is scattered across most countries outside Asia and Europe.
- This correlation is primarily driven by developing countries, in pink, formerly called Third World nations.
- The former First (developed) and Second World (communist bloc) nations, represented by purple and orange respectively, are highly clustered within the low-homicide zone.

Gender Norms and Sexual Assault Rate

A moderate positive correlation

Europe (red) and North America (blue) exhibit the most egalitarian gender norms and report the highest rates of sexual assault.



CONCLUSIONS & IMPLICATIONS

Legal institutions matter more than social values when it relates to crime rates.

Government distrust correlates with homicide rates, driven specifically by Third World countries. Other nations show almost no correlation. Despite shared factors like corruption and poverty, former communist states have far lower murder rates, likely due to stronger state control and robust police forces that trace to the communist emphasis on social order.

The greater the equality in gender norms, the higher the reported rate of sexual assault; this primarily reflects the social openness, willingness to report, and record-keeping capabilities characteristic of developed nations

Further research should use variables such as corruption indices, Gini coefficients, and rule-of-law indices to conduct multivariate regression analysis. Victim survey data should be used rather than official reporting rates.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGIES

This study adopts a quantitative, cross-national observational research design to examine the relationship between certain social values and violent crime rates. The research does not involve experimental manipulation. It analyzes naturally occurring data across countries.

Data Sources

1. World Values Survey (WVS), Wave 7 (2017–2022)
2. United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)

Measurement of Gender Norms

Q28 When a mother works for pay, the children suffer
Q29 On the whole, men make better political leaders than women do
Q30 When jobs are scarce, men should have more rights to a job than women
Q31 On the whole, men make better business executives than women do

Scale

Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1	2	3	4

DISCUSSION, ANALYSIS, AND EVALUATION

This study examines the relationships between societal norms and two critical safety indicators across countries: reported homicide rates vs. trust in government, and reported sexual assault rates vs. gender norms.

1) Homicide vs. Trust in Government

No positive correlations at all when when grouped by geographical regions. But when analyzed through political and economic history, a overall positive correlation between low trust in government (higher “Total Mean for Distrust in Gov” scores) and higher reported homicide rates. Third World countries are the sole drivers of this trend.

2) Sexual Assault vs. Gender Norms

There is a positive correlation between more progressive gender norms (higher x-axis scores) and higher reported sexual assault rates.

The more egalitarian gender norms become → the lower society's tolerance for sexual assault → the more empowered victims feel to report the crime → the higher the official reporting rate.

Evaluation/Limitations

- Multiple confounding factors, (poverty, inequality, drug trade, culture, policing effectiveness, etc.) are not controlled for.
- Sexual assault data is heavily influenced by reporting rates and legal definitions.
- “Total Mean” used in the measurement of social value scores simplifies complex, multi-dimensional concepts. Survey data and crime statistics may not be perfectly aligned in time, as the WVS collected data over different time periods between 2017 and 2022.

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