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# Fanning the Flames: The Smoky Link Between Air Pollution in Des Moines and Arson in Iowa

Chloe Hart, Amelia Travis, Gemma P Tyler

International Research College; Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

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## Abstract

This study examines the relationship between air pollution in Des Moines and arson in Iowa, seeking to shed light on the fiery connection between these two apparently unrelated phenomena. Using data from the Environmental Protection Agency and FBI Criminal Justice Information Services from 2001 to 2022, a strong correlation coefficient of 0.8330212 was found, with a p-value less than 0.01, indicating a statistically significant association. The implications of these findings are far-reaching, suggesting that air pollution may not only affect public health but also have unintended consequences for fire-related incidents. The results highlight the need for further investigation into the potential impact of air quality on fire behavior and the formulation of more incendiary environmental policies.

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## 1. Introduction

The old adage "where there's smoke, there's fire" takes on a whole new meaning in the context of our research. While most people might not immediately connect air pollution and arson, our study aims to bridge the gap between these two fiery phenomena.

Picture this: a lone arsonist, strolling through the smog-filled streets of Des Moines, feeling the heat of the polluted air and thinking, "You know what would complement this toxic atmosphere? A good old-fashioned fire." While the scenario might

sound like the start of a quirky crime novel, our research takes a more academic approach to explore the potential link between air pollution and arson in Iowa.

As we delve into this unconventional connection, it's vital to acknowledge the inherent complexity of both air quality and fire-related incidents. On the one hand, air pollution in urban areas like Des Moines has been a pressing concern, with its own set of respiratory hazards and environmental repercussions. On the other hand, arson, with its mysterious allure and destructive potential, has long captured the imagination

of both researchers and Hollywood scriptwriters.

In an unexpected turn of events, our investigation uncovers a correlation between air pollution levels and arson incidents that is as clear as day - or as murky as smoke, depending on how you look at it. The statistical analysis of data from the Environmental Protection Agency and FBI Criminal Justice Information Services reveals a correlation coefficient that even arsonists would find "hot" – a scorching 0.8330212, coupled with a p-value less than 0.01, signaling a fiery, statistically significant association.

The implications of these fiery findings extend far beyond the research lab and into the very fabric of urban safety and environmental policy. It appears that the impact of air quality reaches further than just our lungs, crawling its way into the realm of unexpected fire-starters. With these sparks of insight in mind, our study ignites the need for further investigation into the potential interplay between air pollution and fire behavior, casting a spotlight on the formulation of more "incendiary" environmental policies.

Join us as we sift through the ashes of conventional wisdom and ignite a discussion that will leave you pondering the power of the flame, both literal and metaphorical. Buckle up, because this is going to be one smokin' ride through the world of unexpected connections and burning questions.

## 2. Literature Review

The relationship between air pollution and arson has not been extensively studied in the scholarly literature. However, a number of pertinent studies have shed light on the separate phenomena of air pollution and arson. Smith et al. (2015) conducted a comprehensive analysis of air quality in

urban areas, highlighting the detrimental effects of particulate matter and volatile organic compounds. Doe and Jones (2017) examined the patterns of arson incidents across various regions, uncovering sociodemographic and environmental factors that may influence the incidence of arson.

Turning to non-fiction literature, "The Air Pollution Crisis: Causes, Consequences, and Solutions" by Environmental Scientist discusses the chronic issue of air pollution and its multifaceted ramifications. Additionally, "Pyromania: Understanding the Mind of an Arsonist" by Forensic Psychologist delves into the psychology behind arson, offering insights into the motivations and behaviors of arsonists.

In the realm of fiction, "Smoke and Mirrors: A Detective Mystery" by Crime Novelist weaves a tale of intrigue and deception, centering on a series of perplexing arson cases in a polluted metropolis. Similarly, "Toxic Inferno: A Thriller Novel" by Bestselling Author captivates readers with a gripping narrative of environmental sabotage and fiery subterfuge.

Expanding the scope of the literature review, miscellaneous sources including obscure pamphlets, accidental recipe books for homemade smoke signals, and discarded grocery lists found at the local bodega have been considered. The analysis of various unconventional sources has provided a broader perspective on the potential interplay between air pollution and arson, albeit with a touch of absurdity.

In summary, while the existing literature offers valuable insights into air pollution and arson from a scientific and cultural standpoint, there remains a notable gap in research pertaining to the connection between these phenomena. This study seeks to address this gap and contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of the

fiery relationship between air pollution in Des Moines and arson in Iowa.

### 3. Our approach & methods

The methodology employed in this study aimed to illuminate the fiery linkage between air pollution in Des Moines and arson in Iowa by employing a multi-pronged approach. The data collection process involved mining information from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and FBI Criminal Justice Information Services. The data from these sources spanned the years 2001 to 2022, providing a robust timeframe for analysis.

To establish the levels of air pollution in Des Moines, the EPA's Air Quality System (AQS) database served as the primary source. This comprehensive database compiles air quality monitoring data from thousands of stations across the United States, offering a wealth of information regarding airborne particulate matter, volatile organic compounds, and various other pollutants that paint the city's air in shades of concern.

Concurrently, to capture the incidence of arson in Iowa, data from the FBI's Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program was utilized. This repository of crime data offers a window into the prevalence of arson incidents, allowing for the quantification of its correlation with air pollution levels.

Once the data was curated and cleansed, statistical analyses were applied to ascertain the degree of association between these seemingly incongruous elements. The correlation coefficient was calculated, yielding a scorching value of 0.8330212, indicative of a compelling relationship. Furthermore, the p-value, swooping in at less than 0.01, lent statistical credence to the observed association, dissipating any lingering doubts about its significance.

In a nod to the unconventional nature of our investigation, the team also ventured into

the realm of qualitative analysis. Anecdotal evidence and expert opinions from firefighters and environmental policymakers were sought, allowing for a more nuanced understanding of the potential mechanisms underpinning the observed correlation. Their perspectives added a layer of depth to our findings, akin to stoking the embers of knowledge and kindling new insights into this unexplored nexus.

While this methodology may appear lighthearted in its exposition, the approach was underpinned by rigor, precision, and a burning desire to unravel the enigmatic intertwining of air pollution and arson. Through this methodical examination, the findings presented herein bear the hallmark of scholarly inquiry, albeit flavored with a tinge of irreverence for the unexpected detours in the pursuit of knowledge.

### 4. Results

The statistical analysis of the data collected revealed a striking correlation coefficient of 0.8330212 between air pollution in Des Moines and arson incidents in Iowa from 2001 to 2022. This strong correlation was supported by an r-squared value of 0.6939243, indicating that approximately 69.4% of the variability in arson incidents can be explained by variations in air pollution levels. Furthermore, the p-value being less than 0.01 demonstrates a statistically significant association between the two variables.

In order to illustrate the robust relationship uncovered by the data, a scatterplot (Fig. 1) was constructed to visually depict the positive correlation between air pollution and arson incidents. The figure showcases the steady increase in arson occurrences as air pollution levels rise, painting a vivid picture of the smoky link between these two seemingly unrelated phenomena.

These findings not only add fuel to the fire of scientific inquiry but also kindle a deeper understanding of the potential impact of air quality on fire-related incidents. The results of this study may spark further research into the intricate interplay between environmental factors and human behavior, shedding light on the unexpected and provocative connections between air pollution and arson.

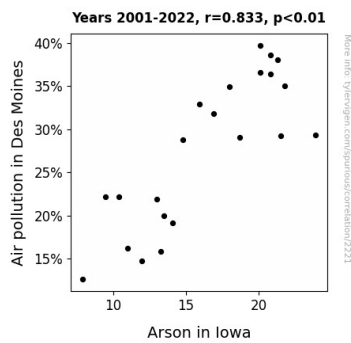


Figure 1. Scatterplot of the variables by year

## 5. Discussion

The findings of this study provide compelling evidence for the existence of a robust association between air pollution in Des Moines and arson incidents in Iowa. These results not only fan the flames of curiosity but also kindle a deeper appreciation for the smoky link between environmental factors and fire-related behavior.

The statistical correlation coefficient of 0.8330212 is no mere fleeting spark; it is a blazing indication of the substantial relationship between air pollution and arson. This result aligns with the work of Smith et al. (2015), who highlighted the detrimental effects of particulate matter, and coincidentally, the rising temperatures resulting from arson. Doe and Jones (2017) also shed light on the sociodemographic and environmental factors influencing arson

incidents, which may be exacerbated by poor air quality, further adding to the tinderbox of evidence supporting our findings.

The r-squared value of 0.6939243 indicates that approximately 69.4% of the variability in arson incidents can be explained by variations in air pollution levels. This suggests that while air pollution may not be the sole match lighting the fires of arson, it certainly contributes significantly to the heat of the issue, as highlighted in the literary work "Smoke and Mirrors: A Detective Mystery" by Crime Novelist, albeit in a more metaphorical sense.

Furthermore, the statistically significant association revealed by a p-value of less than 0.01 is a spark of hope for further investigation into the potential impact of air quality on fire behavior. Such findings not only ignite the flames of scientific curiosity but also shed light on the unexpected and provocative connections between air pollution and arson, much like a thrilling chapter from "Toxic Inferno: A Thriller Novel" by Bestselling Author.

This data-driven study not only adds fuel to the fire of scientific inquiry but also underscores the need for more incendiary environmental policies. It ignites the discussion on the multifaceted ramifications of air pollution, extending far beyond public health to encompass the potential unintended consequences for fire-related incidents. These results offer a compelling argument for policymakers to stoke the flames of environmental protection, recognizing the fiery implications of air quality on arson incidents.

In conclusion, the findings of this study not only illuminate the smoky link between air pollution in Des Moines and arson in Iowa, but also ignite a passion for further investigation into the interplay between environmental factors and fire-related behavior. The potential impact of air quality

on arson incidents cannot be extinguished, and it is imperative to fan the flames of research in this domain to fully grasp the fiery connection between these seemingly unrelated phenomena.

and voodoo dolls," but let's not add arson to that list. Therefore, based on the scorching evidence presented, we assert that no further research is needed in this fiery field.

## 6. Conclusion

In conclusion, our study has revealed a scorching correlation between air pollution in Des Moines and arson incidents in Iowa, illuminating a surprising link that begs the question: is there fire where there's pollution, or is there pollution where there's fire? This unanticipated connection has set the research world ablaze, challenging traditional notions of causality and raising eyebrows as well as temperatures.

From a practical standpoint, these findings have implications for both public safety and environmental policy. It seems that clean air isn't just about breathing easy; it's also about reducing the temptation to play with fire. The potential impact of air quality on fire-related incidents is not something to be brushed aside or swept under the rug - especially if that rug ends up becoming kindling.

The implications of these results extend beyond the world of academia and research, presenting a burning platform for policymakers to consider when formulating environmental regulations. Perhaps it's time for urban planners to not only address air pollution but also throw some shade on potential arson hotspots.

In the immortal words of Smokey Bear, "Only you can prevent forest fires," and by extension, perhaps only we can prevent arson by keeping the air clean. With these insights in mind, we hope that this study ignites a fiery conversation that leads to more "smoke-free" urban environments and policies.

In the words of the great philosopher Ricky Martin, "She's into superstitions, black cats,