RESEARCH QUESTION

Is the decision to report a crime to police influenced by demographic characteristics of the victim and/or characteristics of the crime?

LITERATURE

- The majority of crimes are not reported to the police, and there is little known about why some crimes are reported and others are not (Block & Maxfield, 2011; Hart & Rennison, 2003).
- One of the most important factors in whether a victim reports a crime to the police is the seriousness of the offense (Kääriäinen & Sirén, 2011; Tarling & Morris, 2010).
- Prior research indicates that a weapon used during the commission of the crime increases the odds of reporting (Baumer & Lauritsen, 2010; Morgan & Oudekerk, 2019).

HYPOTHESES

Hypothesis 1: Crime incidents in which the offender has a weapon will be reported to law enforcement more often than incidents where no weapon was present.

Hypothesis 2: Crime incidents in which the offender was unknown to the victim will be reported more often than incidents where the victim was acquainted with the offender.

Hypothesis 3: Crime incidents that occur in closer proximity to the victim’s home, are violent, include victims who report a larger number of crime incidents in the last year, victimize females, victimize those with a higher level of income, and victimize older citizens will be reported more often.

METHODOLOGY

- Data was obtained from the National Crime Victimization (NCVS) Concatenated File 1994-2020.
- **Dependent variable:** Did you report the incident(s) to law enforcement? (Yes/No)
- **Independent variable:**
  - **Demographic Variables**
    - Age, sex, household income
  - **Crime Incident Variables**
    - Weapon, relationship to offender, distance from victim's home, the number of crime incidents, type of crime
- A binary logistic regression model was used after multiple imputation was complete and the complex sampling design was accounted for.

RESULTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Weapon Present</th>
<th>Offender is Stranger</th>
<th>Crime Distance</th>
<th>Violent Crime</th>
<th>Crime Incidents</th>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Income (Log)</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Constant</th>
<th>Adjusted Count R²</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>.70</td>
<td>.50</td>
<td>- .24</td>
<td>.47</td>
<td>-.38</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td>.40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Standard errors in parentheses. *p < .05, **p < .01, ***p < .001

REFERENCES


